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Peggy M. Riethmuller
Major professor

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AN INVESTIGATION OF MINISTERS' PROFESSION-RELATED SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

By

David Mutuku Kitonga

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ABSTRACT

AN INVESTIGATION OF MINISTERS' PROFESSION-RELATED SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

By

David Mutuku Kitonga

The purpose of this study was to investigate the profession-related self-directed learning activities carried out by ministers in their quest to acquire skills, attitudes, and knowledge required for improving professional competence.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted for the purpose of developing a survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was pretested twice, with subsequent revisions, before it was mailed to a random sample of 140 ministers in the United Methodist Church who had seminary training and two years or more of practice in the ministerial profession. There was a return rate of 72.9% following two follow-up mailings.

The following conclusions were reached:

Ministers utilized a diverse number of learning activities which varied from one minister to another. They preferred to learn by activities in which they had active personal participation. They least preferred to learn by passive participation. The most important learning activities used by ministers were: 1) reading books (98%), reading periodicals (91%), attending organized learning

activities (91%), learning by doing/practicing (76%), and consultation with colleagues (76%).

There was no significant difference between age levels, locations, or lengths of professional service, and the importance of self-learning by doing/practice or consultation with colleagues as preferred learning activities.

Ministers participated in organized learning activities primarily to learn professional skills. The most influential factors for their participation were leadership quality, personal goals, congregational needs and reasonable cost. Academic credit was not an important factor.

Ministers controlled their learning even in the church-organized continuing education. Self-directed learning was a major and important component of profession-related learning. They knew what they needed to learn and sought out this learning.

The major learning barriers for ministers were situational and institutional. These included inability to arrange time for learning, lack of learning opportunities, lack of funds for learning, and professional stress. Inability to learn by self or to decide on learning needs were not major learning barriers for ministers.

This study's findings on ministers confirmed other studies conducted on other professions and self-directed learning.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to:

My parents, Mrs. Priscilla Ndindi Kitonga and the late Mr. William Kitonga Munyaka who initiated me into the learning enterprise. They provided the learning resources that were necessary to keep me in the learning track. I am very grateful for their unwavering support for the education of their children.

They taught me the value of hard work and persistence, and instilled in me the will and courage to pursue excellence. They taught me to love God, His creations, and knowledge. To them I owe my deepest gratitude and honor.

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To God, for enabling me to accomplish this project.

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Chapter I

Statement of the Problem

Background of the Study

There is a growing concern for ministers' professional obsolescence, given the fast social changes in today's society. The ministers' professional demands have greatly increased and their roles have expanded and become more complicated (Adams 1966, Preston 1976, Gamble 1984). A minister has more professional issues to deal with than ever before. The effects of rapid change challenge all authority, not the least that of the church. The ministers' responsibility is increased, given the increased social stress on the communities that the minister has to serve.

According to Alvin Tofler (1971), the too-fast technological advancement and change in too short a time is responsible for social disorientation, new social roles, fractured families, organizational upheavals, high social mobility, and wide diversity of life styles. The traditional , social and religious mores have been challenged by this rapid change phenomenon. The fast technological advancement and rapid social changes are challenging all professions to learn to adjust and cope with

the demands of changes and to maintain professional competence.

While there are ministers who are effective in relating to the emerging needs and new challenges, an increased number of ministers are becoming ineffective in their ministries (Dittes 1962; Rayburn 1985; Walsworth 1978; Cochrane 1981; Thomas 1968; Mills and Hesser 1972). Studies of ministers show high professional stress, increased number of burned out ministers, and an increasing incompetence among ministers (Rayburn et al. 1986). The stress generated by the changing demands on the ministerial profession is often too great to cope with and leaving the ministry has been one way of escape.

The effectiveness of the church's ministry in society is declining (Preston 1976; Stewart 1974; Wiersbe 1988). Studies done on ministers indicate a strong need for an understanding of how to relate the Christian faith to a rapidly changing society (Gamble 1967; Mills and Hesser 1972; Preston 1976).

In order for ministers to improve professional competence and become more effective in ministry they need to learn more effectively. Mark Rouch (1974) linked competence in ministry to continuing education. Continuing education was the instrument through which competence was achieved. Rouch defined continuing education as "an individual's personally designed learning program which

begins when basic formal education ends and continues throughout a career and beyond. It is unfolding process which links together personal study and reflection and participation in organized group events" (1974:16).

Because of the great need for ministers to learn to cope with the demands of the profession, given the rapidly changing society and professional stress, self-directed learning (self-learning) has been suggested as a vital part of a minister's education (Gamble, 1984; Malcomson, 1981).

A study done on twelve denominations in the United States and Canada found that the factors which appeared to be most influential to the decision of the ministers to participate in continuing education were: 1) a perception that the subject matter would contribute to increased competence for ministry; 2) presence of self-assessed continuing education; and 3) self-formulated goals (Gamble 1984). There is a need for ministers' effective profession-related, self-directed learning, given the rapidly-changing society, in order to maintain professional competence and effectiveness.

Cyril Houle (1980), in Continuing Learning in the Professions, quoting Dill and Elton (1965), said "self-directed learning is imperative in a changing world." Also Brookfield (1982) says that self-directed learning is the prime way for man to cope with the world around him.

Guglielmino and Guglielmino (1984, 1987, 1988) found there was mounting evidence which suggested workers of the future would need the ability to take more responsibility for the management of their learning. The Guglielminos' study on managers of some 500 Fortune companies found that managers believed professional success "today and tomorrow" was largely dependent on the skills of self-directed learning.

The rapid rate of change demands professionals design their own learning in order to cope with the demands of the constant change. Tofler (1971) described the illiterate of the year 2000 A.D. not as the individual who cannot read and write, but the one who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn. Future professional success becomes dependent on learning how to learn.

There is a growing awareness and need for self-directed learning among the professionals in their quest to maintain competence in their work in a fast-changing society. Even the definition of continuing education for ministers has been evolving and refining to focus on the individual minister's learning needs and self-directed learning efforts. For example, Connolly Gamble, Executive Director of Society of the Advancement of Continuing Education for Ministry (SACEM) in 1960 defined continuing education as "a lifelong program of systematic, sustained study" (Gamble

1960). By 1975 he had modified his definition of continuing education to read as:

> An individual's personally-designed learning program developed with the help of colleagues (laity and fellow clergy) to improve vocational competencies, which begins when formal education ends and continues throughout one's career and beyond. An unfolding process, it links together personal study and reflection, and participation in organized group events in a related series of 'more-or-less organized events' (Gamble 1975:3).

The refining process of 25 years has added the following five essential concepts to Gamble's initial definition of continuing education for ministers:

1) the necessity of interaction of learning and experience;
2) the initial responsibility should rest with the minister-learner to begin individual planning for continuing education;
3) acceptance of the role of both laity and other ministers to provide input into the forming of the minister-learner's individual plans;
4) a variety of activities over the entire life-span where acceptable, and
5) goals growing from an emphasis on ministry skills and theological knowledge to include personal evaluation and refreshment.

For ministers to improve their competence in the ministerial profession, they need to be effective in their skills of self-directed learning. Tough (1971) and Knowles (1975) have outlined basic skills that are necessary for self-directed learning and have pointed out that such skills are necessary in every learner.

The growing phenomenon of ministers' lack of effectiveness, professional stress and attrition from ministry raises some profound questions, such as: what causes effectiveness in the ministerial profession? How do ministers learn profession-related skills necessary to improve competence and to cope with the changing and increasing demands on their work life? The last question is the major concern for this study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the profession-related, self-directed learning activities carried out by ministers in the United Methodist Church, Western Michigan Conference, in their quest to acquire the skills, attitudes, and knowledge required for improving professional competence in their work. The researcher attempted to: 1) describe the actual and preferred learning activities of ministers; 2) examine the relationship between the selected demographic characteristics and the learning preferences; 3) examine how ministers engage in organized

learning activities: a) how ministers decide to participate in organized learning activities; b) the extent to which ministers are engaged in the organization of their learning in church-organized and provided continuing education; 4) describe the supports that ministers identify as important in their on-going profession-related learning; and 5) identify the barriers that hinder ministers' profession-related, on-going learning.

Scope of the Study

Ministers are experiencing a lack of effectiveness in their profession. This is partially because of the changing demands on their profession. Literature on ministers' continuing education in the profession indicate that effective self-directed learning in the ministerial profession is not only important but essential in improving the ministers' competence. If the ministers have to serve their community effectively, it seems that they must have the skills for self-directed learning. Rouch (1974), in Competent in Ministry, says competence is having the tools with which to work. One such tool, Rouch says, is a growing knowledge of oneself and the world around him/her. The skills of self-directed learning are essential in achieving these tools. There is, however, very little known about ministers' self-directed learning in their profession.

Traditionally, much of ministers' continuous learning after seminary has been through organized educational programs, mainly seminars, extension courses, and conferences. Much attention is given to the content of learning in these educational programs, rather than the learning process. Very little attention is given to how individual ministers prefer to learn. In a review of literature on ministers' professional learning, Ferro (1985) found that the largest amount of materials which discuss the ministers' professional continuing education are hortatory or programmatic. The literature review clearly indicates the lack of self-directed learning.

Given the increasing lack of effectiveness expressed by ministers in their profession, it is important to learn how ministers learn professional skills, knowledge, and attitudes to remain current and to improve their competence after seminary training. It is necessary to know how ministers' profession-related self-directed learning can be facilitated. This is especially a major concern in the professional continuing education of ministers.

Adults are actively learning in order to increase their effectiveness in the tasks that they perform. According to Knox (1985), adults tended to assess the difference between their current proficiency level and the one they wanted to attain and then seek educational experiences to close the gap. Also Knowles (1984), contends:

> Adults are motivated to devote energy to learn something to the extent that they perceive that it will help them perform tasks or deal with problems that they confront in their life situations. Furthermore, they learn new knowledge, understandings, skills, values, and attitudes most effectively when they are presented in the context of application to real life situation.

According to Tough (1971) and Knowles (1984), adults take great responsibility for their learning. Tough's work illustrated that adults are highly active learners and extremely self-directed. In self-directed learning, the learner makes choices concerning the directions and options available to achieve proficiency or to accumulate necessary knowledge. Even learners who hesitate to take major responsibility for their learning do appreciate the opportunity to select and plan for learning activities that fit their needs, interests, and tasks that they need to perform (Brockett 1985; Knowles 1975). Self-directed learning may be mistakenly associated with the notion that the learner carries out his activities in isolation and independently. Rather, self-directing learning often includes intimates, peers, instructors, friends as part of the learning process. All these individuals may help at various stages of learning (Knowles 1975).

Profession-related learning makes up a large percentage of all what adults learn. The studies done by Allen Tough (1971, 1978 and 1979) indicate that the majority of all

learning efforts by adults are occupation-related and are almost entirely conducted in a self-directed manner by the individual adults. He found that 73 percent (and later 80 percent) of all learning projects were self-initiated, planned, and conducted. Numerous other studies have been done to verify Tough's theory (Penland 1977; Coolican 1974, 1975; Morris 1977; Brookfield 1980, 1982a). A verification study conducted by Allerton (1974) also found that 62 percent of the learning projects pursued by ministers were related to vocational (ministry) duties such as preaching, teaching, administration, counselling, and visiting. Allerton found that 85 percent of all ministers who participated in the study were satisfied with their self-directed efforts to learn in the ministry.

Verification studies on self-directed learning leave many questions unanswered. A need has been expressed for researchers to go beyond the verification mode of self-directed learning (Tough 1978; Cross 1981; Brookfield 1986). Little is known on what goes on in the learning projects. For example, what major barriers do ministers encounter in their self-directed learning? How would they prefer to learn? What resources and supports do they identify as helpful to their learning? What learning activities are they engaged in? The major concern in ministers' continuing education is not on what the ministers are focusing their learning, or whether they are learning, but how the learning

can be facilitated. This concern is the major focus of the study.

Areas of Inquiry and Research Questions:

The following areas of inquiry are used to guide this study:

1). How do ministers conduct their learning in their quest to gain knowledge, skills or attitudes necessary to maintain competence in their professional duties?

a) What professional duties are ministers engaged in?

b) What types of learning activities are ministers pursuing to learn their ministerial duties?

c) What types of learning activities do ministers prefer to use?

2). Do the preferences for learning activities cited by ministers differ significantly between groups within selected demographic characteristics?

3). How are ministers engaged in organized learning activities?

a) What criteria do ministers base their decision on for participation in continuing education activities?

b) To what extent are ministers engaged in the organization of their learning in church-organized and provided continuing education?

c) How do ministers distribute their learning between self-learning at home and learning at organized learning activities?

4). What learning resources and supports do ministers identify as important in their on-going profession-related learning?

5). What major barriers do ministers encounter which hinder their on-going profession-related learning effectiveness?

Research Assumptions

The research procedures of this study are based on the assumptions that:

1). Ministers, as professional practitioners and adult learners, have been participating in many and varied learning activities which are mostly profession-related

2). Ministers know and understand the types and variety of actual and preferred learning activities that they have been participating in, and they would be able to respond to questions asked and describe the learning activities to the researcher.

3). Ministers do not learn in isolation, they seek learning assistance from both human and non-human sources.

4). Ministers are experiencing various barriers in their profession-related learning

5). A carefully planned pilot study on a small number of ministers followed by a self-administered survey questionnaire can effectively obtain the information required by this study.

Overview of Research Methodology

This research used descriptive research methodology. According to E. Babbie (1986) the three purposes of research are exploration, description, and explanation. Descriptive research aims at describing facts and characteristics of a given area of interest factually and accurately. "Description is the precise measurement and reporting of the characteristics of some population or phenomena." (Babbie 1986:91). As Borg and Gall (1983:354) put it, "descriptive studies are primarily concerned with finding out 'what is' ...observation and survey methods are frequently used to collect descriptive data."

The survey method was chosen as appropriate for this study because it is recommended as the method of choice when it is important to establish the status of a given phenomenon (Mouley, 1970). This is done by asking a specific population of individuals what they know, believe or value about a given phenomenon. According to Babbie (1973) such information can be collected through three methods of survey

administration: face-to-face interview, telephone interview, and mail questionnaires. This study used face-to-face interviews and mail questionnaires.

A six-step procedure was followed in conducting this research. These steps were consecutively as follows: 1) an open-ended face-to-face interview, 2) developing a questionnaire, 3) testing the questionnaire, 4) revising the questionnaire, 5) administering the revised questionnaire, and 6) collecting, analyzing and summarizing the data.

Descriptive statistics, frequency counts and tables were used to summarize, present, analyze, and draw conclusion from the data. The analysis of variance (f-test) was used to investigate the relationships between the demographic variables and the learning preferences reported by the ministers who participated in the study.

Limitations of the Study

During the open-ended face-to-face interview the researcher may not have been able to write all the information and responses that the research participant gave. Also the research participant may have given fragmented or incomplete responses or omitted some important information.

The random survey sample selected included only practicing ministers who had at least two years of professional service following seminary professional

training. There is a wide variety of other ministers who have no professional training but who have been practicing in the ministerial profession. Others had seminary training but had not practiced for two years to meet the criteria of the study sample.

Also a small sample used for the open-ended interviews and for testing the questionnaires may have affected both the reliability and validity of the study.

To address the problems concerning the face-to-face interviews the researcher wrote the complete reporting of the interview within four hours, following the interview, adding any responses which might have been left unrecorded during the interview. Also during the interview the researcher restated the research participants' responses for confirmation and clarity. Open-ended probing questions were used when necessary to draw out any omitted responses during the interview. Since an open-ended interview has minimal pressure on the participant to give a direct answer, it was expected that the responses to the questions were accurate and representative, and minimally affected the validity of the study. The researcher tested the instrument with ministers who were not part of the open-ended interview sample but who met the same qualifications as study participants. This increased the validity of the study.

The problem concerning the small sample in the interviews was addressed by 1) the use of one person, the

researcher, to conduct all of the interviews so as to maintain consistency in asking the same questions to each of the participants, 2) the use of open-ended interviews and 3) testing and revising the questionnaires twice.

Delimitations

The researcher limited this study to the ministers of the United Methodist Church, Western Michigan Conference, who had seminary training and a minimal length of two years of professional practice. While no attempt was made to generalize this study beyond the findings of this particular population of ministers, the sample is a microscopic picture of ministerial profession.

Definition of Terms

Learning: The acquisition of knowledge, attitudes, or skills and the mastery of behavior in which facts, ideas or concepts are made available for individual use (Verner, 1962).

Learning Barriers: In this study, learning barriers are factors--personal (dispositional), institutional or situational, which are deterents to adult learners' participation in self-planned or organized learning activities (Cross 1981).

Learning Activity: What the learner does, individually or as a member of a group, in the process of learning.

Organized Learning Activity: In this study, an organized learning activity means a short course, seminar or workshop in which the participants are registered or enrolled, and offered at a particular time and place under the auspices of a recognized continuing education agency.

Continuing Education: "A process through which persons beyond the age of compulsory attendance in secondary schools, engage in planned activities with conscious intentions of bringing about changes in information, knowledge, understanding, skills, appreciation and attitudes; or to identify and solve problems" (Poulton, 1975, p.10).

Self-Directed Learning: "A process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes." (Knowles, 1975:18).

Profession-Related Self-Directed Learning: An ongoing self-planned and voluntary learning to acquire knowledge, skills, and attitude which are necessary for the enhancement of competence and effectiveness in ones practice of occupational duties.

Significance of the Study

This study makes significant contributions in several areas. It contributes to the knowledge and literature on ministers' continuing education and to the adult learners' profile. The study also provides vital and lacking information on the self-directed learning experiences, behaviors and concerns of ministers.

This study identifies and describes the learning activities and experiences, barriers to learning, learning preferences and the supports that ministers identify as important to effective learning in their profession. The findings of this study have significance for both educators and individual ministers as adult learners. The planners of ministers' continuing education (which include several State and Land Grand Universities, seminaries and Bible colleges, and many church organizations and interdenominational bodies) may be helped by this study's findings to understand the factors that enhance or facilitate ministers' learning effectiveness in their profession. The Board of Ordained Ministry committee on ministers' continuing education in the United Methodist Church, Michigan Conference, may especially benefit from the findings.

Given the increasing lack of effectiveness by the ministers, the findings of this study are significant to the providers of ministers' continuing education. There is no study done specifically on ministers that shows how

ministers learn and prefer to learn in the profession to cope with the ever increasing demands of their profession.

Ministers are finding it difficult to cope with the changing roles in the ministry, according to Benes (1965:8):

> Time was when he was responsible for the preaching of the word and the pastoral care of his flock. Today he is required to fill several roles simultaneously, some of them complex and demanding. He is expected to be involved in every organization in the church, and in a number of good ones outside as well, and to be a hearty promoter of all worthy causes. He must be a preacher, administrator, teacher, psychiatrist,... and community leader (Benes, 1965:8):

An increasing number of ministers have been leaving their profession in response to the demands in the ministry. C.W. Stewart has observed:

> Contemporary studies by Mills, Schallert, Hessert, and others show that in the present period that instead of breaking down, today's troubled clergyman is dropping out. The study of Ex-pastors shows that only 1 percent of the United Church of Christ pastors were dropping out in 1969. Father Schallert's study of Roman Catholic priests at the same period showed an alarming rise in demitting priests, 7 percent in 1969 with a projected figure of 15 percent by 1975. Mills earlier study of United Presbyterian ministers shows that under stress clergy of United Presbyterian ministers shows that under stress clergy leave the profession rather than endure the difficulties they face (Stewart, 1974:17-18).

According to Rayburn, Richmond and Rodgers (1986) ministers have high occupational stress. Their study found that ministers and also other church leaders

> ...have fewer rational/cognitive coping resources,... they are less apt to have

> systematic approach solution, less ability or willingness to set and follow priorities, are most distractible and less likely to be able to reorganize their work schedules,... These findings are in general agreement with reports from many religious leaders that concern their needs for better learning to cope with and manage time constraints and demands upon their time and energy" (Rayburn, Richmond and Rogers, 1986:543).

In the area of general adult education this data contributes additional data to the present body of research on self-directed learning activities. The previous research studies clearly point out extensive self-directed learning activity in both general adult profession and in groups of professionals. This study's findings also complements findings of earlier studies of general adults and professional groups relative to the importance of self-directed learning.

The motivations for learning and resources cited in the study offers insight about how and why of the ministers learning. The wide diversity of ministers' choices of learning activities in the findings reflect the individual ministers learning needs and preferences and point to the implications for program planning changes for ministers continuing education planners. The findings from this study suggest the need for additional researching individualized behaviors of ministers in their use of self-directed learning.

Finally, individual ministers who participated in the study benefited, as both the interviews and questionnaires were informative and caused them to think about the ways they learn and the value they receive from their learning. The ministers who participated and affirm their values. The findings of the study also substantiated and affirmed the value of self-directed learning as a learning behavior which is effective in improving ministers' professional competence.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I is the statement of the problem. It includes the discussion of the general background of the study, posing the situation that makes this study necessary. The purpose of the study and its scope are also presented, including the areas of the inquiry. The study methodology, assumptions, assertions and the significance of the study are also discussed.

Chapter II reviews the literature on 1) ministers' continuing education; 2) self-directed learning; 3) professional continuing education; and 4) continuing education.

Chapter III presents a more complete picture of the methodology used for this study. This chapter discusses the population, study sample, research design, The instrumentation, and data collection and analysis.

Chapter IV is the presentation and analysis of the research data findings.

Chapter V is the study conclusion. It includes the summary of the study, conclusion, implications and suggestions on ministers continuing education, drawn from the findings, and provides suggestions for future research.

Chapter II

Literature Review

Introduction

The review of literature relevant for this study is drawn from the following sources: continuing education, adult learning theory, continuing professional education, ministers continuing education, ministers' profession and stress, and self-directed learning.

The literature on continuing education is examined under the following sub-headings: Introduction, Participation by General Adult Learners, Barriers to Participation, Participation and Demographic Variables. The Adult Learning theory is reviewed. Continuing professional education literature is examined under: Introduction, Profession-Related Learning, and Reasons for Participation. The ministers' continuing education literature is covered under: Ministers' Continuing Education and Participation. The Ministers' Profession and Stress Literature is reviewed. The sub-heading for self-directed learning literature are: Learning Activities and Supports, and Minsters' Continuing Education and Self-Directed Learning.

Continuing Education Literature

Introduction:

Adults are actively involved in various learning activities, which may be formal or informal, organized and unorganized, private (individual) or in groups, and in short- or long-term. Adults are learning in order to increase their effectiveness in the tasks that they perform. According to Knox (1985) adults tend to assess the difference between their current proficiency level and the one they wish to attain and then seek educational experiences to close the gap. Also Knowles (1984) contends:

> adults are motivated to devote energy to learn something to the extent that they perceive that it will help them perform tasks or deal with problems that they confront in their life situations. Furthermore, they learn new knowledge, understandings, skills, values, and attitudes most effectively when they are presented in the context of application to real life situation.

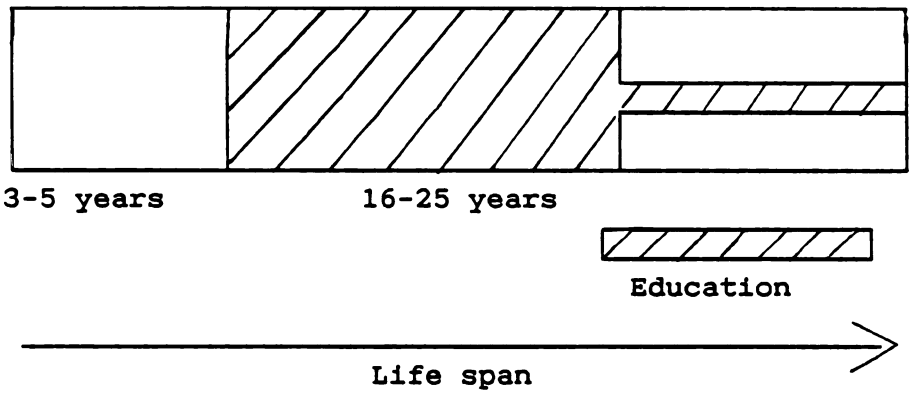
All learning opportunities which can be taken up after full-time compulsory schooling has ceased, full-time or part-time, including vocational and non-vocational study, is continuing education (Venables 1976:19). Education continues after the initial, compulsory education, for the remainder of the life span. Jarvise (1983) sees continuing education as post-initial education:

> Continuing education may, therefore, be seen to be a continuation of the educational provision beyond initial education, especially in the vocational sphere, and it is also a concept that

> implies no criticism of the present system. Indeed its major concerns seem to focus upon the provision of vocational continuing education, access to it, and extension of it.

Continuing education, according to Houle (1980), is a term which refers specifically to post-initial education, but since its parameters are being restricted in the general use of the word it has assumed special significance in professions.

A model of continuing education



Adapted from Peter Jarvise (1983) Adult and Continuing Education: Theory and Practice, p. 36.

Participation by general adult learners

Adults participate in continuing education programs that meet their vocational, personal, and social needs. John Lowe (1982) used Havighurst's adult developmental tasks to determine the reasons for participation in continuing

education. According to Lowe (1982), adults participate in continuing education for vocational, personal, and social needs:

1) **Vocational Needs** - Adults between the ages of 18-40, especially men and young fathers, are involved in continuing education to upgrade their jobs, to keep current job employment purposes, or to prepare to switch jobs. Women with grown up children may seek additional education for extra income. Men, before retiring, may seek some skills for future work, although the drive for education decreases as a person reaches the end of his or her career.

2) **Personal Needs** - This is a concern to become more cultivated. Women over 40 with more leisure time and fewer financial constraints tend to be more motivated to take continuing education classes. They have been deprived of education due to child-bearing and domestic chores. Men tend to be concerned about this drive at 50 or before retiring to prepare for leisure activities. Young adults with good and stable jobs may seek education to learn new knowledge or skills. Young married women eagerly seek education pertaining to home affairs and their spouses.

3) **Social Needs** - Participants of all ages are simply interested in meeting people through continuing education classes. Some regard attending certain classes as a means of maintaining or achieving social status in the community.

According to Robinson (1985), learning is purposeful. Purposeful learning occurs when individuals experience a problem, or a need or goal they want to reach, and start a self-inquiry in which the individual learner draws on any resources available (books, others' experience, or experts) to acquire the learning deemed necessary to meet the need or goal. This suggests that learning is controlled by the individual learner.

Houle (1961) explored purposeful learning. He studied individual orientation to participation in continuing education and identified three basic orientations to learning: 1) the goal-oriented learners who have clear-cut objectives they want to accomplish; 2) the activity-oriented learners or the social-participation oriented; and 3) the learning-oriented learners who seek knowledge for its own sake. Houle found that the majority of the learners he studied were goal-oriented, followed by the learning-oriented, and activity-oriented. All the learning was purposeful, and controlled by the learner.

Boshier and Collins (1985) synthesized Houle's seminal study. In "The Houle Typology after twenty-two years: A large scale empirical test," Boshier and Collins have provided a comprehensive analysis of the reasons that appear to encourage participation in continuing education activities. The basic clusters of reasons are cognitive, interest, social stimulation, social contact, external

expectations, community service, and professional advancement.

In a summary of findings of over-thirty surveys on participation in continuing education, Cross (1981), stated:

> 1. The reasons people give for learning correspond to their life situation: i.e. people with jobs want better jobs and are interested in further education to get them. Interest in job-related goals for continuing education begins to decline at age 50 and drops off sharply after age 60. 2. Typically one-third of the potential learners cite 'personal satisfaction' as one of their reasons for learning. 3. A low of 10% to a high of 39% of the potential learners who respond to such surveys identify 'to seek knowledge for its own sake as their primary motivation.' The majority of adult learners do not regard traditional, discipline-based subjects as satisfactory for participation in continuing education. 4. Various studies have found 8% to 28% of the learners interested in obtaining degrees or certificates for their participation. Younger learners with college backgrounds are most likely to be degree-oriented. Most studies, however, show about two-thirds of the respondents on surveys admit 'escape' is one reason for pursuing education, but rarely offer it was the primary motivation for participation. Respondents who cite 'escape' as a motive see continuing education as an opportunity for meeting new friends, are likely to be interested in hobbies/recreational subjects, and are people who lack other social outlets. 6. 'The desire to learn to be a better citizen' is not a strong reason for learning. About a quarter of the respondents name it as one reason among others. This observation varies with the social situation; i.e. a surge in demand for energy courses in the last decade has waned in the present decade.

Barriers to Participation

The major clusters of barriers that discourage adults from participation in continuing education have been studied and developed by Darkenwald and Valentine (1985). They include a lack of course relevance, lack of confidence, time constraints, low personal priority, cost, and personal problems. Darkenwald and Larson (1980) summarized research on the barriers to participation in adult learning as follows: informational barriers--those related to the individual's general awareness of the educational resources offered to him/her in his/her community; situational barriers--those related to the individual's life situation, income, health, family responsibilities, work obligations and places of residence; institutional barriers--those include procedures and practices that exclude or discourage participation, like inconvenient schedules, locations, transportation, and lack of information; dispositional barriers--those are defined by Darkenwald (1980) as individually and collectively held beliefs, values, attitudes or perceptions that inhibit participation in organized learning activities--like fear of school, lack of interest, and lack of confidence.

According to Lowe (1982), the four main factors influencing non-participation in organized continuing education classes are described as:

1. Personal factors: fear of the unfamiliar, ridicule, emotional insecurity, negative attitudes toward schooling, lack of money, uncertainty of future rewards, mental and physical handicaps.
2. Domestic factors: difficulty in getting away from home, opposition of a member or members of the family, and impossible conditions of study.
3. External factors: shift work, fatigue after work, and lack of transportation.
4. Other factors: facilities are unavailable or unsuitable. The timing and location of programs may be inconvenient; programs are not publicized; programs offered are not what adults want; some adults do not participate because they feel they can learn on their own.

Participation and demographic variables

Johnstone and Rivera (1965), in a national survey, identified social strata as a determinant of participation. According to Cross (1981), "of all the variables that have been related to educational interest and participation, the amount of formal schooling has more influence than any

other." This conclusion was supported by other researchers (Boaz 1978; Okes 1976).

In the literature, formal education attainment is consistently referred to as the single most powerful predictor of continuing education participation (Anderson and Darkenwald 1979; Wainiewicz 1976). By controlling for formal educational attainment, the independent effects of not only age but other ascribed and achieved social position variables has usually been reduced to nonsignificance.

A study by Allen Tough (1971) found that there was little or no significant difference in the levels of involvement in learning projects of respondents in his non-random and methodologically loose research study. A more controlled extension of Tough's work, however, revealed systematic differences based on formal educational attainment (Penland, 1977).

In an investigation of 98 randomly selected employees of the Florida Power Corporation, Seaman and Schroeder (1970) concluded, "A positive correlation was found between the level of education of the participants and the extent of their educative behavior at the .05 level of significance." Their conclusion supported the generalization that the greater an individual's education level, the greater the level of participation in continuing education.

Anderson and Darkenwald (1979) identified chronological age in the continuing education literature as another

predictor of participation. Age, like educational attainment, seemed to operate independently of related variables such as income and occupation. According to Cross (1981):

> Younger people tend to be pursuing credentials and laying the groundwork for later career specialization; those in the age range of 25 to 45 are concentrating largely on occupational and professional training for career advancement; and those 50 and older are beginning to prepare for use of leisure time.

Also, Cookson (1986) suggested that "so consistent has the finding of an inverse relationship between age and adult education participation been reported that it is almost considered a truism" (p. 134).

Family income as a predictor of participation seemed to be influenced by other variables (Anderson & Darkenwald, 1979); however, the lack of income appeared to be a result of low educational attainment.

Geographic access and participation in continuing education was studied (Bashaw 1965; Boas 1978). Their findings revealed regional differences between the West, where participation was higher, and the Northeast and Midwest. Much of the difference can be accounted for by greater accessibility to free continuing education programs in the West. Other factors affecting geographic access include appropriateness of programs, educational attainment of the general population, and a higher societal

participation rate. Geographical access also involved the issue of population density (Boaz 1978). Boaz concluded that people living in suburban areas were more likely to participate in educational activities compared to those living in areas of sparse population or in dense central cities.

Adult Learning Theory

Adult educators have attempted to deal with the unique problems of adult learning through the adaption of theories about child learning. In an attempt to offer some further distinction between these two learner groups, Knowles saw the need for integrating and differentiating concepts of adult learning. He developed a theory of adult learning that captured the experience and research findings about adult learners unique characteristics. He introduced the term of andragogy into the American literature in 1968, although the term itself had been used in Germany since 1833.

Malcolm Knowles defines andragogy as "any intentional and professionally guided activity that aims at a change in adult persons" (Knowles 1978). Andragogy is more than defining a clear-cut differentiation between child and adult learners. According to Knowles:

> Andragogy assumes that the point at which an individual achieves a self-concept of essential self-direction is the point at which he psychologically

> becomes adult. A very critical thing happens when this occurs; the individual develops a deep psychological need to be perceived by others as being self-directing. Thus, when he finds himself in a situation in which he is not allowed to be self-directing, he experiences a tension between that situation and self-concept. His reaction is bound to be tainted with resentment and resistance (Knowles 1978).

The concepts that are central to andragogical approach include: self-concept, experience, readiness to learn, a concern about personal growth and development, and an orientation to learning that is both problem-centered and pragmatic. The concept of andragogy is predicated upon the assumption that the maturity and experience of adults predispose them to the need to be self-directing in their learning activities and to be perceived as self-directing by others. Knowles used teaching theory and behavioral and humanistic psychology, and proposed that physical and psychological needs in the self-directed learner, together with experience and ability, create an interior disposition that is receptive to continued learning. This theory of adult learning emphasizes the development of an attitude toward self-directed inquiry in which the individual is capable of creativity using learning resources available to satisfy individual learning needs.

Knowles (1950) believed that the essential characteristics to the learning process are a desire to

learn, a willingness to expend the effort needed to learn, and a sense of satisfaction that is received in the learning process. In these characteristics, Knowles reflected Dewey's earlier summation of the processes of need, effort, and satisfaction. He found that there are numerous ways to learn, and an understanding of learner needs is essential and concluded: "successful programs start where people are" (Knowles 1950:25).

Self-directed learning as a concept of andragogy is a proactive learning (Knowles 1978). Pro-active learning moves the responsibility for the initiative and sense of discovery from the teacher to the learner. Traditionally, pedagogy requires the learner to react to teacher stimuli. Reactive learning has thus to be considered as a poor preparation for lifelong learning. The proactive approach is begun by the learner's attempt to meet needs and to satisfy goals (Knowles 1978). It is Knowles's opinion that experiences that involve the individual most directly in self-directed inquiry are apt to produce the greatest learning.

In reflecting Dewey and Maslow, Knowles (1970) suggested that societal and institutional needs and goals will have to be congruent with the needs and goals of individuals as attempts are made to offer learning that will enable self-directed learners to develop in directions that are beneficial to themselves and to the society as a whole.

Knowles would agree with Rogers that it is most important to establish a climate for learning that characterizes trust, informality, openness, mutual respect, warmth, and caring. It is also important to engage the learners in diagnosing their own needs for learning. Knowles (1978) found success using a learning contract that allows the self-directed learner to establish needs on the basis of a contemporary model. The learning contract that is drawn up embodies learning objectives, learning resources, and the strategy for their use, evidence of accomplishment, and, finally, a criterion to be used as a means of validating the learning experience.

In his theory of andragogy, Knowles points out that an adult brings motivations, goals, expectations, and experience to the learning situation that are totally different from children. Knowles advised that adult educators pay attention not only to these differences but also the adult need to be self-directing in the quest for the development of their own resources.

There are several key assumptions about adult learners which form the foundation of modern adult learning theory and further describe differences between adult and child learners. These distinctions are helpful in understanding adult learning. Edward Lindeman, strongly influenced by the educational philosophy of John Dewey, was a pioneering theorist in adult learning around 1926 and set forth these

theories. Subsequently, these theories have been supported by contemporary research and continue to be relevant today. They are as follows:

1) Adults have a different orientation to learning given their multiple roles, life tasks, responsibilities and opportunities. Their orientation to learning is life-centered; thus the appropriate units for organizing learning are life situations, not subjects.

2) Adults have more accumulated life experiences than do children as a result of their numerous roles and responsibilities. Experience is the richest resource for adult's learning. Each person's experiences make them unique as their specialized talents and developed interests.

3) The development phases of adulthood affect the adult's physical, social, and psychological areas of life. Individual differences among people increase with age. Therefore, adult education must consider differences in style, time, place, and pace of learning.

4) Adults are motivated to learn by their needs and interests which they believe learning will satisfy. Therefore, these needs and interests must be the starting point for adult learning activities. Adult learning is most often of a practical and problem-centered nature.

5) Adults have a deep need to be self-directing and autonomous in their learning style. The role of the

instructor must be that of learning facilitator rather than one of transmitter of knowledge (Knowles 1978).

In his development of these theories, Lindeman did not dichotomize adult versus youth education, but rather adult versus "conventional" education. This implies that some children might also learn better when their needs and interests, life situations, experience, self-concepts, and individual differences are considered (Knowles 1978).

These generalizations about the characteristics of adult learners apply in part to all adults. There are, however, specific features which further identify the learning characteristics of professionals and these will be discussed in the attempt to better understand ministers as adult learners.

Continuing Professional Education Literature

Introduction

The difference between continuing education and continuing professional education is in the focus of learning. Cervero and Scanlan (1985) described the difference between continuing and continuing professional education in the following way:

> continuing education may be thought of as generic field of practice and research. Continuing professional education is a subspecialty of continuing education that focuses on programming for person who have earned their professional qualifications in some field and who have subsequently

> sought additional educational experiences to remind them of what they once knew and have forgotten, to acquaint them with knowledge that has developed since they earned their qualifications, and to help them solve personal and professional problems of various kinds.

Profession-related Learning

Professionals, as a group, are most likely to continue their education (Aslanian & Brickell 1980). The explanation of this is a complex one, but in part results from the commitment to uphold their professional obligations. Also, professionals have relatively high incomes, access to numerous resources, and enjoy a varied lifestyle. Berg (1973) and Houle (1980) both report that a good indicator of one's potential participation in continuing education is a positive track record of past participation. Professional learners are also generally better established in their communities, more mobile and more confident in their abilities than adults at large.

Aslanian and Brickell (1980) found that professionals frequently become disenchanted with formal education and lean towards directing their own learning. Generally, however, pre-professional education does not assist professionals in the development of self-directed learning skills. The emphasis in preparatory training is on the authoritative presentation of information.

Professionals generally report their learning to be of a problem-solving nature. Houle (1980) indicates that a professional's work almost automatically demands continuing learning. Seventy percent of useful and job-related learning resulted from personal and collegial problem-solving activity. In a survey of 290 scientists and engineers, Margulies and Raia (1967) found that 42% of professionals saw "on-the-job problem-solving" as the most fruitful learning experience.

Houle suggests that there are four types of professionals who are engaged in learning:

1. **Innovators:** continually striving to improve, have plans for what they want from learning, respond to invitational seminars, take pride in their expertise.

2. **Pace setters:** Progressive, but are not the first to try a new idea. They legitimize an innovation for other people.

3. **Middle majority:** They support an innovation because pace setters have approved of it.

4. **Laggards:** They only learn what they have to in order to stay in practice. They are an embarrassment to their colleagues.

Within the professions, the traditional view has been that the continuing education function must be directed by its own members. The emerging view is that individuals trained in the field of continuing education have the most

appropriate background for this function. According to Cervero (1988), while there is an increasing movement towards the emerging view, its adherents are still in a significant minority. Griffith (1985) estimates that of all people who perform continuing education function within the professions, 96 percent have been trained only in the content of their profession. The remaining 5 percent either have their formal training only in education (4.5 percent) or have been trained both in their profession and in education (5 percent). Continuing education for the professions as a field of education is quite young. As such, it is guided by concepts that have not been fully thought through or adequately tested (Cervero 1988).

Reasons for Participation in Continuing Professional Education

People in the professions are actively participating in continuing educational activities. The reasons for participating are: professional development and improvement, professional service, collegial learning and interaction, professional commitment and reflection and personal benefits (Grotelueschen 1985). Grotelueschen found in his research that reasons for participation differ significantly according to the type of profession, career stage of the professional, and personal characteristics such

as type of practice setting and numbers of years in profession.

The reasons for participation in continuing professional education are as varied as the professions. However, a large amount of participation is motivated by the need to maintain one's professional competence. Price (1967) and Houle (1980) suggest that a professional's desire to learn arises from the intensity with which a practitioner feels a sense of personal inadequacy in difficult situations. In addition, there may be a licensure or organizational mandates for professionals to document their educational participation. This is true for physicians, lawyers, and accountants in some states. Many professionals, curious and eager to keep their minds active, engage in continued learning as a natural extension of everyday life. Lawrence Jacks confirmed this belief in his statement, "Earning and living are not two separate departments or operations in life. They are two names for a continuous process looked at from opposite ends ... a type of education based on this vision of continuity is, obviously, the outstanding need of our times" (Jacks, 1932).

According to Houle (1980), "most studies have dealt with samples of the general population, and personal and social factors associated with the extent of participation are too gross to be useful in explaining the differential participation of members of professions." Arden

Grotelueschen (1985) also comments that much research has taken place in the area of participation in continuing education, mainly focusing on the general adult population. "It is important to make a distinction between continuing education in general and continuing professional education in particular" (Grotelueschen 1985). Grotelueschen suggested that continuing professional education was unique and distinct from continuing education due to three factors: the referent population, the nature of participation, and the educational benefits derived from participation. Research about motivation for participation in continuing professional education, Grotelueschen concluded, required a recognition of the uniqueness of that population.

A study conducted by Price (1967) was based on the premise that the desire to continue learning arose from a sense of personal inadequacy in a difficult situation. Questionnaires were mailed to 1,000 nurses asking for a self-report on the continuing education needs they had experienced, and for anecdotes to illustrate situations in which such needs were paramount. The respondents revealed their needs to solve specific patient care problems, the necessity of practical and theoretical knowledge, and the capacity to relate to fellow professionals and clients as reasons for participation. The three orientations identified were similar to previously identified orientations (Burgess 1971; Morstain & Smart 1974).

Several studies have been done on the professionals' motives for participation in continuing education. Carp, Peterson, and Roelfs (1974) sampled the general population and classified the respondents by occupation as well as other categories. The classification by occupation allowed for the examination of data regarding "professional workers."

A study done by Sovie (1972) on the learning orientations of nurses reported eight learning orientations: learning, personal goal, occupational goal, professional goal, societal goal, need fulfillment, personal socialibility, and professional sociability.

Grotelueschen's research of professionals' reasons for participation based on Houle's (1961) typology of adult learning orientations. Houle (1961) described three learning orientation categories: activity-oriented, learning-oriented, and goal-oriented. The Houle typology was the basis of the Continuing Learning Orientation Index (Sheffield, 1964), the Reasons for Participation Instrument (Burgess 1971; Grabowski 1972), and the Education Participation Scale (Boshier 1971; Boshier & Collins 1982). While these instruments provided valuable information, they were of limited applicability to unique professional populations.

Using the thirty-question Participation Reason Scale, Grotelueschen clustered motives for professional

participation into six orientations (Grotelueschen 1985: 40-41): "(a) professional improvement and development, (b) professional service, (c) collegial learning and interaction, (d) professional commitment and reflection, (e) personal benefits and job security, and (f) professionalism."

The deterrents, or rather barriers, to professionals' participation in continuing education activities were studied by Scanlan and Darkenwald (1984). These deterrents included general apathy towards participating in continuing education, lack of quality programs, family constraints, cost of attending programs, lack of benefit (worth of participation), and conflicting demands of professionals' work time, especially scheduling difficulties (work constraints). Learning in continuing professional education, as in any other education, is controlled by the individual learner, especially in the planning and selection of the learning activities and experiences.

Ministers as professionals must participate in continuing learning activities. Attention to their unique adult learning characteristics will facilitate more effective learning. Adults experiences, needs and interests, self-concept, and life situations significantly affect their learning behaviors. Therefore, assumptions about adult learning must include the unique factors associated with their learning patterns. The ministers, as

one type of professional adult learner, have additional unique learning needs, given their occupational focus and mission.

The professional must be able not only to absorb the evolving knowledge and theoretical concepts of a field, but also to learn the skills for implementing that knowledge; such education cannot be obtained from simply attending a class or seminar.

Ministers' Continuing Education and Participation

The experience of stress has been one major factor in motivating ministers to learn. A national study of 4,984 clergy in 21 predominantly white Protestant denominations concerning occupational stress and continuing education showed that status inconsistency, relative to deprivation and career stress appeared to influence ministers toward greater continuing education need, with high stress as the most powerful influence (Mills and Hesser 1972). Also in this study, one third of the study participants recorded no organized continuing education activity. More than one-half (52%) indicated high need for learning to relate Christian faith to the rapidly changing society. Professional skill development (27%) was the most frequent reason for participation in continuing education. The major barriers to learning were time pressure (68%) and inadequate financial support (47%). Other studies were done later and

confirmed these findings (Bonn 1975; Gamble 1984). Research has shown that ministers' primary reason for participation in continuing education was to increase knowledge and skills for performing ministerial duties. Other reasons include desire to increase self-understanding, intellectual stimulation, keeping relationships, and spiritual renewal. Gamble (1976) lists certain incentives and expectations to ministers' involvement in continuing education as:

1. to be more competent;
2. to look for self-fulfillment;
3. to understand some subject better;
4. to rethink the priorities of life;
5. to move out of your isolation and into an attractive setting with a change of pace and new associations;
6. to escape parish frustrations for a time;
7. the promise of high status and prestige.

Because of the great need for ministers to learn to cope with the demands of the profession, given the rapidly changing society and professional stress, self-directed learning (self-learning) has been suggested as a vital part of ministers' education (Gamble 1984; Malcomson 1981).

In 1974, Mark Rouch, a United Methodist Church minister, linked competence in ministry to continuing education. Continuing education was the instrument through which competence was achieved. Rouch defined continuing

education as "an individual's personally designed learning program which begins when basic formal education ends and continues throughout a career and beyond. It is an unfolding process which links together personal study and reflection and participation in organized group events" (1974:16). He considered short-term organized courses and seminars as one component of a minister's continuing education. Rouch contrasted continuing education with lifelong learning. Continuing education was an act, episode, or experience of the pastor, Rouch believed, while lifelong learning was a way of life, an attitude, or dimension. The aim of the continuing education episode was to produce growing competence. Without that aim, Rouch felt there was nothing to be gained.

Rouch outlined various stages of a minister's professional career and identified continuing education tasks for each lifespan stage (1974:104-138). The minister's first career stage was labeled the establishment stage. It was subdivided into the trial and advancement periods. During the trial period, ministers tried the job on for size. The continuing education tasks of this stage included a need to be involved in a colleague group with others and skill training. During the advancement period, ministers moved rapidly toward personal career goals. In this period, the tasks of continuing education included

career assessment, human relations training, and theological studies.

The ministers' second professional career stage was the mid-career which began around age forty with the realization that the minister was no longer a young adult and that opportunities for advancement were not limitless. The tendency in this stage was to maintain or conserve previous accomplishments. The continuing education tasks were to examine, refine, and sometimes rediscover self-identity; to establish new career goals or examine and refine those already held; and to acquire skills and knowledge appropriate to the new goals and self-understanding.

Pre-retirement was the final stage in a minister's professional career. This stage, which usually occurred about five to seven years before retirement, involved contemplated retirement and a decline in life powers. In this stage, the continuing education task was to develop a skill or be introduced to a body of knowledge that would be useful in retirement.

Ministers' continuing education though was dominated by the ideas of Gamble, Steward, and Rouch. All three linked competency in ministry to continuing theological education. Other variables were also studied.

Bonn (1974) surveyed 4,634 clergy and identified four factors which influenced participation: (1) time and money provided by congregations; (2) denomination; (3) other

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clergy and support factors, i.e. family, number of children; and (4) the attitudinal dimensions. Further findings were that 66% of the clergy respondents participated in at least one continuing education program during 1972 and 1973.

Hollister (1968) studied the relationships of a minister's use of time, participation in leisure activities, and continuing education among clergy in urban congregations of Santa Clara County, California. He found that congregation size was not significantly related to work week, private study, or leisure. The need for relaxation was the main reason for participating in leisure activities which included continuing professional education. Ministers serving larger congregations had higher salaries and social status, participated more often in continuing education and other programs, and were more likely to hold membership in national organizations.

MacKenzie (1978, 1980) conducted studies in urban parishes in the Midwest on barriers to participation in adult religious education. He reported seven factors:

1. Programmatic non-relevance was found among 14 percent of those not participating.

2. Involvement in other activities ranked highest in the twenty to twenty-nine age group.

3. Physical incapacity was highest among older persons.

4. Alienation from church activities was found most frequently among young and middle-aged adults with more than twelve years of schooling.

5. Negative attitude towards education and resistance to change were found among many adults over fifty-four, and at least one-fifth of the adults in the twenty-six to fifty-three age group.

6. Estrangement or feeling of not belonging was found among all age groups.

7. Marginality, or a non-joining life style, was found in one-third of those sampled.

In his study, McKenzie (1980) replaced the barrier of physical incapacity with confusion which was found most frequently among middle-aged and older groups.

Klever (1966) studied the value orientations and participation in continuing professional education by clergymen. Klever found that educational participation was significantly related to one's value orientations, but not to the religious traditions of the sample: 55 ministers, 55 priests, and 55 rabbis in the greater Chicago, Illinois area.

Ministers' perceived needs for continuing professional education were studied by Rossman (1974). The population was Yale Divinity School graduates and the sample was the classes of 1943, 1948, 1953, and 1958. Nearly all respondents were pursuing some sort of continuing education-

—largely formal seminary credit courses, urban church institutes, mission or overseas study tours, and in clinical fields such as sociology and psychology. About one-third of the 1948 and 1953 graduates, but less than one-fourth of the 1958 class, reported involvement in continuing informal education related to biblical or theological topics. Uncertainty characterized most respondents when asked about their future plans for continuing education. Time and money were given as the reasons for their uncertainty. Respondents showed the strongest future interest in practical courses aimed at improving their organizational and program work. Rossman also found that interest in continuing professional education declined in proportion to length of time away from seminary graduation.

Several dissertations about continuing professional education for clergy have been written on a variety of topics. These topics include: organizational structures of continuing education (Belsheim 1982; Belue 1974; Emler 1973; McCash 1966; Newell 1974; Norris 1979); perceived needs of pastors for continuing education (Burnett 1974; Carter 1984; Fortier 1972; Jones 1981; Morris 1977; Traylor 1981; Wagener 1975); program, program attendance, and quality of programs (Courtenay 1976; Serig 1977; Shell 1981; Wright 1985); and clergy/lay cooperation in continuing education (Cuny 1982).

Carter (1986) cited five reasons for ministers' continuing education participation: building on Word and

Sacrament ministry; growing as a Christian person; developing personal gifts and skills; equipping God's people for ministry; and implementing the church's mission to the world. The first reason involved the minister's personal nourishing by the Gospel in contrast to merely using the Bible as a professional tool. The second reason included rest, refreshment, renewal, and re-direction in one's personal life in order to be motivated for ministry. The third reason targeted ministry skills which require growth or conservation. The fourth reason involved assisting the parish laity in developing their own ministry in the church and in their own daily lives. The final reason for participation emphasized the mission of spreading the Gospel to the world through more effective and competent ministers. The reasons for attending continuing education episodes were focused on enhanced, competent ministry.

Ministers' Profession and Stress Literature

There is a growing concern for ministerial professional obsolescence, as is also in the other professions, given the fast social changes in today's society. The ministers' professional demands have greatly increased and their roles have expanded and become more complicated (Adams 1966; Preston 1976; Gamble 1984). A minister has more professional issues to deal with than ever before. The rapid change challenges all authority, not the least that of

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the church. The ministers' responsibility is increased, given the increased social stress on the communities that the minister has to serve.

The minister's professional stress is increased by the multiple roles he is expected to play:

> Today a doctor may specialize in only one aspect of medicine, or an architect may design only office buildings and disqualify himself from preparing house plans. Such specializations are accepted. But generally, a minister is expected to make several visits a week, preach well, teach, counsel, be an effective administrator and motivator, be good at public relations, and at solving interpersonal problems, while doing the work of an evangelist (Irvin 1989:129).

While there are ministers who are effective in relating to the emerging needs and new challenges, an increased number of ministers are becoming ineffective in their ministry (Dittes 1962; Rayburn 1985; Walsworth 1978; Cochrane 1981; Thomas 1968; Mills and Hesser 1972). Studies of ministers show high professional stress, increased number of burnout ministers and an increasing incompetence among the ministers (Rayburn, et al. 1986). The stress generated by the changing demands on the ministerial profession is often too great to cope with and leaving the ministry has been one way to escape.

The church ministry effectiveness in the society is declining (Preston 1976; Stewart 1974; Wiersbe 1988). Also the studies done on ministers have indicated a great need

for an understanding of how to relate the Christian faith to the rapidly changing society (Gamble 1967; Mills and Hesser 1972; Preston 1976).

Church ministry has been characterized as a profession in crisis. Houle (1980) mentions Tom Brown's listing of the seven kinds of crises to which ministers are subject. These crises provide some insight on the challenges facing ministers. It is important to see these crises also as stimuli to learning. The crises are:

1) integrity--no longer believes in the creeds of the church;

2) power--feels that neither s/he or the church has significant community influence;

3) capacity--sense of personal inadequacy for dealing with the situation of ministry;

4) failure--sees him/herself on a downward path leading to a sad termination of a career;

5) destination--doesn't know how to plan and advance his/her own career;

6) role--can't decide what role(s) are primary;

7) meaning--fears that the profession has no place in the modern world.

Ministers are finding it difficult to cope with the changing roles in the ministry. According to Benes:

> Time was when he was responsible for the preaching of the word and the pastoral care of his flock. Today he is required to fill several roles simultaneously,

> some of them complex and demanding. He is expected to be involved in every organization in the church, and in a number of good ones outside as well, and to be a hearty promoter of all worthy causes. He must be a preacher, administrator, teacher, psychiatrist, ..., and community leader (1965:8).

An increasing number of ministers have been leaving their profession in response to the demands in the ministry. C.W. Stewart has observed that:

> Contemporary studies by Mills, Schallert, Hessert, and others show that in the present period that instead of breaking down, today's troubled clergyman is dropping out. The study of ex-pastors shows that only 1 percent of the United Church of Christ pastors were dropping out in 1969. Father Schallert's study of Roman Catholic priests at the same period showed an alarming rise in demitting priests, 7 percent in 1969 with a projected figure of 15 percent by 1975. Mills' earlier study of United Presbyterian ministers shows that under stress clergy leave the profession rather than endure the difficulties they face (Stewart 1974:17-18).

According to Rayburn, Richmond and Rogers (1986) ministers have high occupational stress. Their study found that ministers, and also other church leaders:

> ...have fewer rational/cognitive coping resources, ... they are less apt to have a systematic approach solution, less ability or willingness to set and follow priorities, are more distractible and less likely to be able to reorganize their work schedules, ... These findings are in general agreement with reports from many religious leaders that concern their needs for betting learning to cope with and manage time constraints

and demands upon their time and energy (Rayburn, Richmond and Rogers 1986:543).

Self-Directed Learning Literature

According to Tough (1971) and Knowles (1984), adults take greater responsibility for their learning. Tough's work shows that adults are highly active learners and quite self-directed. In self-directed learning, a learner makes choices concerning the direction and options available to achieve proficiency or to accumulate necessary knowledge. Even learners who hesitate to take major responsibility for their learning do appreciate the opportunity to select and plan for learning activities that fit their needs, interests, and tasks that need to perform (Brockett 1985; Knowles 1975). Self-directed learning may be mistakenly associated with the notion that the learner carries out his activities in isolation and independently. Rather, self-directed learning often includes intimates, peers, instructors, friends as part of the learning process. All these individuals may help at various stages of learning (Knowles 1975).

Profession-related self-directed learning makes up a large percentage of all of what adults learn. The studies done by Allen Tough (1971, 1978 and 1979) indicate that the majority of all learning efforts by adults are occupation-related and are almost entirely conducted in a self-directed

manner by the individual adults. Tough found that 73 percent (and later 80 percent) of all adults' learning projects were self-initiated, planned, and conducted. According to Tough, almost everyone undertakes at least one or two major efforts to learn each year and some may undertake as many as twenty. The average is eight learning projects a year. These learning projects may be related to an individual's job, hobbies, personal lifestyle, or to their families. They spent as few as seven hours and as many as several hundred hours on each project. Most learners directed their own projects, but some depended on groups, peers, teachers, or a non-human resource.

Numerous other studies have been done to verify Tough's theory (Penland 1977; Coolican 1974, 1975; Morris 1977; Brookfield 1980, 1982a). A verification study conducted by Allerton (1974) on ministers also found that 62 percent of the learning projects pursued by ministers were related to vocational (ministry) duties such as preaching, teaching, administration, counselling, and visiting. Allerton found that 85 percent of all ministers who participated in the study were satisfied with their self-directed learning to learn in the ministry.

Verification studies on self-directed learning leave many questions unanswered. A need has been expressed for researchers to go beyond the verification mode of self-directed learning (Tough 1978; Cross 1981; Brookfield 1986).

Little is known on what goes on in the learning projects. The description of adults and their learning projects was expanded by previous studies, but there were still many questions without answers. According to Cross (1981:199): "It would be helpful to know more about the reasons why learners are dissatisfied with the help they receive, what kinds of problems they experience, and what they think can be done about providing better help for self-directed learning."

Self-Directed Learning Activities and Supports

In a review of research literature related to the area of self-directed learning Coolican (1974) identified seven research studies that used the Tough (1971) approach. The review included Tough's (1971) original study, Coolican's own dissertation (1973), McCatty's (1974) study of Canadian professional men, Johnson's (1973) study of adult high school and GED graduates, and Peters and Gordon's (1974) research on rural and urban populations in Tennessee. Coolican's (1974) studies showed universal participation by the adult subjects in some type of learning project during any 12-month period. Populations varied considerably in the extent of activities. Self-planned projects were dominant in all the studies.

One of the studies reviewed by Coolican (1974), specifically the one conducted by McCatty (1974), it was

found that the desire for individualized subject matter was an important factor in almost half of all self-planned projects. It appears that a major advantage of self-directed learning, according to this study, should lie in the freedom to determine what is learned. By definition self-directed learners want to learn enough to solve their rather unique problems, and do want a solution. People turn to other people most frequently for assistance in learning--first to friends and relatives and then to paid experts. Books and pamphlets rival paid experts as resources. Classes are a distant fourth.

Three learning activities (methods) were most commonly used by the adults in those learning projects: practice, reading and discussion, respectively. Listening, observation, and instructors were also used, but not as often. The most frequently used methods were all active, involving the learner directly; and the least commonly used techniques were passive, watching or listening to someone else do something.

Coolican (1974) recommended, among other things, that adult educators should help adults increase their competencies for self-directed learning by learning how to determine their educational needs, organizing learning experiences, and evaluating the outcomes. Coolican suggested that self-directed learning should be outside the responsibility of adult education, and posed two major

questions: "What are the grounds for intervention," and "If the adult educator intervenes in the domain of self-directed learning, what does he influence and how?"

Tough (1978) reviewed 12 previous research studies on self-directed learning. He found that approximately 90 percent of all adults conducted at least one learning project a year. Self-planned projects, with the learner assuming major responsibility for selecting the goals and means for learning, were dominant, representing 73 percent of all projects. In relation to "other planner," i.e. the way the projects, which were not self-directed, were planned, Tough's findings showed that groups represented 14 percent, one-to-one planner helpers represented 10 percent, and non-human resources represented three percent. Tough further analyzed the planning function and determined that professional planners functioned in 20 percent of all group learning projects, one-to-one consultations, and in the creation of non-human programmed resources. Amateurs--the learner's friends and peer groups--handled 80 percent of the project planning. One finding was clear, "adults want additional competent help with planning and guiding their learning projects" (Tough 1978:15).

Tough (1978) concluded that while most of these studies provided more information on other aspects, they added more to the breadth rather than the depth of understanding adult learning projects.

In 1979, Penland, in a national probability sample, verified some of the findings of Tough and associates regarding self-initiated and self-planned learning. He found that books were rated "extremely important" resources by 71 percent of his population, exceeded as a preferred resource only by knowledgeable friends and relatives. Similarly, 44 percent of Penland's respondents indicated that reading was the best way for them to learn, exceeded slightly by the more social learning mode of "seeing or observing" which was rated best by 45 percent. Penland (1979) found that those engaged in formal learning were considerably more likely to depend on books as their best source of information than those working on so-called practical projects.

Spear and Mocker (1981) conducted a study to analyze the adults' descriptions of their learning activities to determine those factors that organize nonformal learning but which apparently lie beyond the consciousness of the learner. The concept of "Organizing Circumstance" was introduced in this study as defining those elements in the adult's life space that provide motivation, resources, activities, and overall direction to the planning and conduct of a learning project. It was concluded that most of the Tough-like basic surveys assumed or tried to equate the self-planned learning process with the process employed traditionally in planning or organizing formal education.

The researchers argued that this is a basic error, since the planning of formal education activities is in the hands of a person who already has command of the subject matter. The reverse, they said, is the case with self-planned learning. They continued by saying that the assumptions of similarity between the two processes have led to faulty understanding of the planning process for self-directed learning. The importance of environmental factors in the planning and conducting of self-directed learning projects was established by the study.

Another significant study on self-directed learning was conducted by Brookfield (1982a; 1982b). Brookfield interviewed 25 "successful independent learners" in England. In order to participate in this study, the adults were required to meet two criteria: first, each adult needed a high level of expertise in one specific area--expertise that had gained the person both local and national recognition. Second, the learner needed to have acquired the knowledge through means other than formal learning. The term "independent learning" was applied to that learning that is independent of external instructional direction and independent of institutional accreditation or recognition.

The data was collected using a semi-structured interview. He used a grounded theory approach for coding of interviewee comments, the identification of major substantive themes, and the generation of concepts and

classifications. He also had a randomly chosen subsample of ten correspondence students (students enrolled in distance education programs, e.g. Open University, National Extension College, etc.). They were chosen for the purpose of comparison with the independent learners. This was done to see the extent to which the correspondence students exhibited independence and autonomy in their learning. The most relevant findings of Brookfield's (1982, 1985) study as they relate to this study are discussed on the following pages.

Brookfield's study identified three major characteristic attitudes: (a) learning was gradual; it seemed to have no end; (b) the learners were aware of their interest; and (c) Brookfield's subjects had the feeling they belonged to a society of learning. These learners identified themselves as belonging to a larger learning community, a group of enthusiasts sharing the same pleasures, concerns, and difficulties. They felt themselves to be members of an intellectual fellowship in which there was no sense of knowledge being privatized. They felt that members were ready to share their knowledge and experience with anyone who asked.

Brookfield found in this study that the independent learners were gregarious in their learning, and concluded: "independence clearly did not mean isolation" (Brookfield 1982a:50). The exchange of information was the most

frequently mentioned benefit and this was reported as taking place at the level of individual member contacts. Individual members would come to learn about each other's specialties and exchange ideas on new techniques as well as to offer advice on the solution of problems.

The most important sources of information identified were the human resources of accumulated knowledge and expertise contained within the groups; and those group members possessing skills in a specialist area were consulted for assistance in solving problems. Unskilled and relatively skilled enthusiasts were prompted to contact the learner to obtain specific advice or special equipment. In this way, the specially skilled learner came to serve as a resource consultant and skill model for enthusiasts possessing various degrees of expertise.

Brookfield's study found that there was evidence to show that the kinds of difficulties a researcher might label as problems were regarded as enjoyable challenges, or interesting diversions, by the independent learners themselves. For example, the problem of finding an effective way of managing bee swarms, the central concern of the apiarist, was not regarded as a difficulty blocking the progress of his learning, but rather as the absorbing focus of his efforts, a source of continuing interest and enjoyment.

The whole concept of problems in learning seemed to be alien to Brookfield's study participants. And at times it became almost impossible for those adults to recall any difficulty they had experienced. The correspondence students showed a much greater awareness of constraints and limitations. They identified three broad categories of difficulty: (a) trying to make sense of multi-disciplinary perspectives in course materials; (b) dealing with an intimidating workload in the face of inadequate study time, and working in isolation.

These independent learners, according to Brookfield (1982a), represented a submerged dimension of educational activity. On the whole, formal education provision was regarded by the independent learners as irrelevant to their situations. The correspondence students in Brookfield's study exhibited a heavy reliance on books, lesson units, and broadcast. The independent learners placed much less emphasis on material resources, declaring instead their preference for the consultation of peers and learning groups as sources of information. References to library usage were recorded in 10 interviews. Another interesting finding from Brookfield's (1982, 1985) research was the fact that 11 independent learners had assembled extensive private reference libraries.

Danis and Tremblay (1985) carried out a critical review of the generally current adult learning principles comparing

the learning principles suggested by experts in the literature with those suggested by successful, self-taught learners in the description of their own learning experiences. The 10 subjects in this study met the same criteria as those in Brookfield's (1982) study--they had been engaged in long-term self-directed learning projects (at least four years), they were socially recognized as experts in their field of learning, they had less than 10 years of schooling, and the knowledge and skills in their field of learning had not been acquired in school. This study was divided into three phases. In the first phase, learning principles were identified from the literature. In the second phase, a content analysis of the self-taught adults' learning experiences was carried out. Finally, in the third phase, a comparative analysis of the principles suggested by the subjects with those suggested by the authors was conducted.

The study findings of Danis and Tremblay (1985) were as follows:

1. Experience as the central dynamic of the learning process: "All self-taught adults' learning approaches consist of a time for action and a time for reflection, both occurring simultaneously or alternatively."

2. Learning contents: "The more knowledge or skills the self-taught adults have acquired, the more they will seek assistance from specialists in their field of

learning." Another important principle: "Self-taught adults have a tendency to narrow down their learning content to specialized aspects of their field of learning."

3. Self-teaching methods and the pace of the learning process: "Self-taught adult learners do use a variety of settings, methods, and resources in order to learn and emphasize the importance of controlling the pace of their own learning process."

4. Influence of the environment, the subjects of the present research emphasized the two-sided transactions they engaged in with their immediate environment rather than the one-sided support they could receive from that environment.

5. Use of learning media: "The use of books or consultations with experts only occur once the self-taught adults have familiarized themselves, in various ways, with their field of learning."

6. Use of human resources: "The self-taught adults build up networks or resources which evolve in terms of the level of expertise the learners have acquired in their field of learning."

7. Notion of locus of control: "Throughout their learning process, the self-taught adults assume the monitoring of their own learning, even when consulting an external agent or when participating in a formal education activity."

8. Motivation: "The self-taught adults' motivation increases as their competence is recognized and as they are invited to transmit their knowledge or skills to others." The researchers reported that the subjects of this study emphasized the importance of pleasure linked to the act of learning. There was a tendency of the adults involved to prompt others to engage in learning as a result of the exhilaration that they themselves had experienced.

9. Orientation to learning: Immediacy of application, efficiency, and the pragmatic application of adult learning stood out clearly from the findings. Self-taught adults did not limit themselves to learning that was to be applied in the immediate future. Most of them seized opportunities to acquire knowledge or skills that might eventually be useful in the long term. Furthermore, the participants in this study seemed to be learning-centered and subject-centered.

Guglielmino and Guglielmino (1984, 1987, 1988) have found that there is mounting evidence to suggest workers of the future will need to be able to take more responsibility for the management of their learning. Guglielminos' study on the managers of some 500 Fortune companies found that the managers believed professional success "today and tomorrow" is largely dependent on the skills of self-directed learning.

The rapid rate of change demands professionals design their own learning in order to cope with the demands of the

constant change. Alvin Tofler (1971) described the illiterate of the year 2000 A.D. not as the individual who could not read or write, but the one who could not learn, unlearn, and relearn. Future professional success is dependent on learning how to learn and the skills of self-directed learning.

Cyril Houle (1980) in Learning in the Profession, quoting Dill and Elton (1965), said, "self-directed learning is imperative in a changing world." Also, Brookfield (1982) said that self-directed learning was the prime way for people to cope with the world around them.

Ministers' Continuing Education and Self-Directed Learning

Traditionally, much of ministers' continuous learning after seminary has been through organized educational programs, mainly seminars, seminary extension courses, and conferences. Much attention is given to content in these educational programs. Very little attention has been given to how individual ministers prefer to learn. In a review of literature on ministers' professional learning, Ferro (1985) found that the largest amount of materials which discuss the ministers' professional continuing education are hortatory or programmatic. The literature review also indicated a lack of self-directed learning in the ministers' continuing education.

A study done on twelve denominations in the United States and Canada found that the factors which appeared to be most influential to decisions of the ministers to participate in continuing education were: 1) a perception that the subject matter would contribute to increased competence for ministry; 2) presence of self-assessed continuing education; and 3) self-formulated goals (Gamble 1984). There is a need for ministers' effective self-directed professional learning, given the fast-changing society, in order to maintain professional competence and effectiveness.

While there has been a lack of emphasis on the self-directed learning in the ministers' education, the definition of continuing education for ministers has been evolving and refined to focus more on the individual minister's learning needs and self-directed learning efforts. Connolly Gamble, Executive Director of the Society of the Advancement of Continuing Education for Ministry (SACEM) in 1960 defined continuing education as "a lifelong program of systematic, sustained study" (Gamble 1960). By 1975, he had modified his definition of continuing education to read as:

> An individual's personally-designed learning program developed with the help of colleagues (laity and fellow-clergy) to improve vocational competencies, which begins when formal education ends and continues throughout one's career and beyond. An unfolding process, it links together personal study and

> reflection, and participation in organized group events in a related series of 'more-or-less organized events' (Gamble 1975:3).

The refining process of 25 years has added the following five essential concepts to Gamble's initial definition of continuing education for ministers:

1. the necessity of interaction of learning and experience;
2. the initial responsibility should rest with the minister-learner to begin individual planning for continuing education;
3. acceptance of the role of both laity and other ministers to provide input into the forming of the minister-learners individual plans;
4. a variety of activities over the entire life-span where acceptable, and
5. goals grew from an emphasis on ministry skills and theological knowledge to include personal evaluation and refreshment.

In 1974, Charles William Steward recognized the need for continuing theological education as a basis for a minister's changing life tasks. The thesis of his book was "the minister's continuing education should be related to his changing career needs; i.e. the minister should plan his education to enhance, support, and increase his personal resources so that he may be productive throughout his entire

work life" (Steward 1974:136). Steward gave the impression to his readers that continuing theological education was self-directed learning which occurred inside or outside the parish context.

According to Gamble (1975), the interaction between ministers' learning and practice has been recognized and the responsibility of the clergy-learner in the parish context has been identified as the essential ingredient in individual plans for continuing education. The importance of self-direction learning is not a totally new concept in the Christian ministry. According to Niebuhr (1956):

> Those who have fought their way through clear cut definition of their task and office often say that they have had to do this in isolation, without real help from school or church, and that maintenance of their sense of specific vocation is highly personal responsibility.

For ministers to improve competence in the ministerial profession, they need to be effective in their skills of self-directed learning. Tough (1971) and Knowles (1975) have outlined basic skills that are necessary for self-directed learning and pointed out that such skills are necessary in every learner.

Summary

This chapter has reviewed selected literature on continuing education, continuing professional education, self-directed learning and ministers' continuing education.

The studies on participation in continuing education by the general adult learner population show: 1) participation is motivated by personal needs and the learner's self-formulated goals; and 2) there is a wide variation in the reasons given for participation.

Participation has been studied from different perspectives. The dominant perspective is that of learning orientations: social, goal, and activity (Houle 1961). Others like Lowe (1982) used needs orientations (vocation, personal, and social). Other studies used the reasons for participation as the guiding concept to study motivation (Boshier and Collins 1985; Cross 1981). Several continuing education participation instruments have been developed using the reasons for participation, and Houle's (1961) seminal study on learning orientation (Burgess 1971; Sheffield 1964; Grotelueschen 1985).

Professionals as a group have unique characteristics in their learning orientations. Their learning is more focused to their occupations. But the specific reasons for their participation in continuing education are as varied as the professions. A large amount of their participation is motivated by the need to maintain and improve professional competence. Studies on professional continuing education show that participation is related to specific professional tasks and personal goals. Collegial interaction is also another major factor influencing participation in

professional continuing education. Houle's (1961) learning orientation also applies to professional learning.

There is a wide variety of reasons for ministers' participation in continuing education. Ministers indicate a need for learning to relate faith to the rapidly changing society (Mills and Hesser 1972; Bonn 1975; and Gamble 1984). Ministers are participating in various learning activities to gain knowledge and skills to perform their ministerial duties. Keeping relationships with colleagues and a search for spiritual renewal are also important factors in ministers' participation in continuing education.

The studies done by Penland (1977), Brookfield (1982), and Dann and Tremblay (1985) show that self-directed learners use a wide variety of learning supports and resources (human and materials) to learn their self-determined areas of interests and needs. They do not learn independently or in isolation but they control their own learning. While the specific resources and supports and learning barriers may vary from a group of learners to another, the research studies conducted on self-directed learning complement Allen Tough's (1971, 1978) study. Tough found that adult learners took the initiative and responsibility to learn what they needed to learn and control their learning.

Chapter III

Methodology of the Study

This chapter presents the research methodology used for this study. It discusses the population, sample, the instrumentation, data collection procedures, and the method of analyzing the data.

Population

The population of this study was the United Methodist Church ministers in the Western Michigan Conference. This population was selected because all ministers are practicing professionals. According to Houle (1980), Jarvice (1983), and Cervero (1988), those practicing in the professions are actively involved in continuing education learning activities. United Methodist Church ministers are encouraged to participate in continuing education events to improve professional competence (Gamble 1984; Cochran 1981; Rouch 1976). According to The Discipline (1984), Article 446, ministers of the United Methodist Church "shall be expected to continue their education throughout their careers, including carefully developed programs of study augmented periodically by involvement in organized educational activities. Pastors shall be asked by the

district superintendent in charge of the conference to outline their programs of continuing education for the year."

Sample

According to Alreck and Settle (1985), the most desirable sample for survey research is the random sample in that it is most representative of the entire population. The sample for this study consisted of 140 randomly selected ministers who were full members of United Methodist Church, Western Michigan Conference. In order to be a member, a minister is required to have professional training and two years of service. The sample selection was done from a mailing list of the United Methodist Church ministers, West Michigan conference, using a table of random numbers. A random sample of 140 who were full members was picked from the population. Of the 140 questionnaires sent, 102 (72.9%) were returned. Out of those returned 10 were not usable, and 92 (65.7%) were used for this study.

Research Design

This research used descriptive research methods. According to E. Babbie (1986), the three purposes of research are exploration, description, and explanation. Description research aims at describing facts and characteristics of a given area of interest factually and

accurately. "Description is the precise measurement and reporting of the characteristics of some population or phenomena" (Babbie 1986:91). As Borg and Gall (1983:354) put it, "descriptive studies are primarily concerned with finding out 'what is'...observation and survey methods are frequently used to collect descriptive data."

The survey method was chosen as appropriate for this study because it is recommended as the method of choice when it is important to establish the status of a given phenomenon (Mouley 1970). This is done by asking a specific population of individuals what they know, believe, or value about a given phenomenon. According to Babbie (1973), such information can be collected through three methods of survey administration: face-to-face interview, telephone interview, and mail questionnaires.

According to Shaughnessy and Zechmeister (1985), there are three survey research designs: the one-shot or cross-sectional study, the successive independent samples study, and the panel or longitudinal study. The one-shot or cross-sectional survey research design was chosen for this study. In this design a sample population is selected, and standardized data are then collected from the sample at one point in time. The purpose of the one-shot survey is to describe the characteristics of a population at the time of the study (Borg and Gall 1971; Shaughnessy and Zechmeister 1985; Babbie 1973).

Although descriptive research does not address causality, it has heuristic value in that it helps to establish facts and relationships which may later lead to the development of causal laws. It was expected that the results of this study would determine the status of the ministers' profession-related learning activities from the ministers' perspective.

Instrumentation

Introduction

A six-step procedure was followed in conducting this research. These steps were consecutively as follows: 1) an open-ended face to face interview; 2) questionnaire development; 3) testing the questionnaire; 4) revising the questionnaire; 5) administering the revised final questionnaire; and 6) collecting and analyzing the data.

The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with a purposive sample of seven ministers from the Lansing District of the United Methodist Church. This district has some seventy full time practicing ministers of the United Methodist Church. Open-ended questions were used in the interviews to investigate the ministers' areas of profession-related self-directed learning, concerns and what is important to them in their learning efforts. Terrance L. Albrecht says "open-ended questions call for a broad

response and allow answers in any direction" (Albrecht, 1980:241).

The information gathered from the open-ended interviews, in addition to personal knowledge and experience, and from previous research and literature, was used by the researcher to develop a preliminary questionnaire instrument. The questionnaire instrument was primarily based on the research findings and concepts developed by Tough (1978), Penland (1979), Coolican (1974), and Scanlan and Darkenwald (1984). Other researches were also used. The literature on ministers were used and compared with the information from the interviews. The preliminary questionnaire instrument was tested on a convenience sample of five ministers. The ministers completed the questionnaire and returned their feedback to the researcher. Also the ministers were asked by the researcher to give comments concerning the questionnaire instrument. The comments and feedback from the ministers were used to revise the questionnaire. The revised questionnaire was tested and revised again.

The final revised questionnaire, in a self-administered format, was mailed to a random sample of 140 ministers of United Methodist Church in the West Michigan conference for data collection. This sample was drawn from the ministers who were full members of the United Methodist church, in the West Michigan Conference. All ministers who were full

members had two years of practice following seminary training.

As there were no relevant instruments available to use in this study, a self-administered survey was designed to gather descriptive data about the profession-related learning activities, learning supports, and learning barriers as perceived by these ministers.

The construction of an adequate survey instrument is a very important aspect of a survey study. According to Mouley (1980), next to the chance of a suitable topic and population, no other aspect of a survey study is more crucial to its success than adequate construction of the survey itself.

Face-to-face exploratory interviews

The first step in the construction of a survey instrument is the conceptualization. This step involves a thorough review and grasp of the available literature, the objectives of the study, and the nature of the data needed (Babbie, 1973). While the understanding of the literature can point out the general areas of significance, survey researchers may gain a more realistic perspective of the important variables in their study by conducting exploratory interviews with the representatives of the population for whom the survey is intended (Mouley 1970; Sheatsley 1983).

Because of the exploratory nature of study and limitation of literature on the topic of ministers' profession-related self-directed activities, information for survey construction was obtained by conducting exploratory interviews. The research conducted face-to-face interviews with a purposive sample of seven ministers from the population of the United Methodist Church ministers in the West Michigan Conference. In a purposive or judgmental sampling, the researcher uses his/her judgment to choose respondents who fit the purposes of the study, rather than just choosing the nearest available individuals as in convenience sampling (Bailey 1978).

Because of the exploratory nature of this phase of survey research, it was important to use a diverse sample of ministers. The interview sample included three female and four male ministers who represented rural and urban church settings.

Open-ended questions in the interview protocol were used to investigate the areas of inquiry for this study. Open-ended questions allow the respondent considerable freedom to determine what information to give voluntarily, including attitudes that closed questions might miss (Denzin 1970).

There are some disadvantages to open-ended questions according to Stewart and Cach (1974). Open-ended interviews require a skillful interviewer who is able to control the

interview, redirect responses without creating repercussions in the thought flow that could reduce the enthusiasm of the responses which follow.

The interviews were carried out in a friendly and relaxed climate. In order to ensure such a climate, the researcher engaged the respondent in casual conversations at the beginning of the interview. Before the interview began, the respondents were oriented with the following information:

1. The nature and purpose of the interview.
2. Participation in the interview was voluntary.
3. Confidentiality of respondent and responses would be maintained.
4. Copy of the research findings would be made available for respondents who were interested in obtaining them.

To ensure adherence to the research questions, an interview guide was used. Borg and Gall (1983) recommended the use of an interview guide.

Interview guide

Qn. 1. (a) (Broad question) What types of duties are you engaged in your ministry?

(b) Which duties are most important and common (daily, weekly, and monthly) in your ministry?

Qn. 2. (a) (Broad question) How do you learn these duties in an on-going basis?

(b) How did you obtain the information necessary to 1) keep yourself current and/or 2) to acquire skills or knowledge necessary to perform each of those duties in the last six months?

(Optional Qn. How did you learn each of those duties?)

Probes:

-In what ways

-where

-from whom

-how much time

(c) How would you prefer to learn these duties if you were to learn them again?

Probes: why?

what advantages?

Qn. 4. Tell me about your involvement in continuing education at your home or away from home. How have you conducted your continuing education in the last year?

Probes:

What were the areas of learning?

Where?

Why did you participate?

How was it planned?

How was it evaluated?

What subjects and topics?

Qn. 5. What types of support and resources do you feel are essential and important in the future learning of your ministerial duties?

Probes:

-human supports/resources?

-material support/resources?

-non-material?

-others?

Qn. 6. What made it difficult for you to learn these duties?

Probes:

-what major barriers?

-what restraints?

- •work-related
- •human
- •personal?
- •non-material
- •material

The information from the exploratory interviews and from the literature was used for the construction of the questionnaire.

Questionnaire Item Development

Following the exploratory interviews the next step in the construction of a survey was item construction (Borg and

Gall 1983). Items for this survey were constructed using numerous guidelines available and suggested in the survey literature (Borg and Gall 1983; Babbie 1973; Berdie and Anderson 1984; Selltiz, Wrightsman, & Cook 1981). This study used the following list of such guidelines and suggestions for item construction:

1. Questions should be relevant to most respondents
2. Sentence structure should be clear and simple to understand.
3. Respondents should be asked about information that they are competent to answer reliably.
4. Items should be specific and clear.
5. Items should ask for one bit of information at a time.
6. Items written in the negative should be avoided.
7. The use biased terms should be avoided.
8. Items should be put in psychological logical order.
9. The items should be put in an order which does not influence answers that precede or follow them.
10. Response alternatives in close-ended (fixed response) questions should be mutually exclusive to cover all significant alternatives.
11. Each item on the questionnaire should be developed to measure a specific aspect of one of the study objectives or hypotheses.

There are four types of survey questions: questions of fact, of information, of opinion or attitudes, and of behavior. These types of survey questions appear in two forms, free responses or fixed responses (Backstrom and

Hersh-Cezar 1985). Although most questionnaires contain a mixture of both response formats, the choice is determined by the nature of the problem. Mouley (1970) suggested that free-response questions should be used in earlier stages of the investigation of a topic and fixed-response questions in the final stage of the questionnaire. Also, the length of the questionnaire should be reduced by the use of fixed-response questions to ask simple, informative questions.

In this study, the researcher used questions of fact, information, and behavior to investigate the learning behavior of the United Methodist Church ministers. Both free and fixed-response formats were used in the item construction. As a result, a preliminary (draft) questionnaire was developed for pre-testing.

The questionnaire was developed from the information from literature and studies on ministers, the interviews on the study objectives, and self-directed learning theoretical concepts developed by Allen Tough (1971, 1976, 1979), Penland (1979), and other adult learning researchers. While Allen Tough used a "learning project model" to guide his study, this study used learning activities as the guiding concepts. Lists of ministerial duties, learning activities, content areas for learning, learning supports, and learning barriers were developed and used on item construction on the questionnaire. Before the lists were used in the

questionnaires, the items were categorized according to related clusters.

Area of Inquiry and Research Questions

The following areas of inquiry were used to guide this study:

1) How do ministers conduct their learning in their quest to gain knowledge, skills, or attitudes necessary to maintain competence in their professional duties?

   a) What professional duties are ministers engaged in?
   b) What types of learning activities are ministers pursuing to learn their ministerial duties?
   c) What types of learning activities do ministers prefer to use?

2) Do the preferences for learning activities cited by ministers differ significantly between groups within selected demographic characteristics?

3) How are ministers engaged in organized learning activities?

   a) What criteria do ministers base their decisions on for participation in continuing education activities?
   b) To what extent are ministers engaged in organizing their learning in the church-organized and provided continuing education?
   c) How do ministers distribute their learning between self-learning at home and learning at organized learning activities?

4) What learning resources and supports do ministers identify as important on their on-going profession-related learning?

5) What major learning barriers do ministers encounter which hinder their on-going profession-related learning effectiveness?

The survey questionnaire included six major sections. The first area of inquiry of the study was covered by sections I and II of the questionnaire. Section I covered professional duties of ministers (ten items). Nine closed questions were used, requiring a "yes" or "no" response. The items for this section were from the listing from the interviews. A tenth question, open-ended, was included for important items which might have been excluded. Section II covered actual learning activities (16 items) and preferred learning activities (15 items). Questions 11 to 26 covered the actual learning activities and contained the activities which were reported in the interviews. A Likert type scale (1-5) was used to measure the frequency of engagement in these activities (5- Once each day; 4 - Once each week; 3- Once each month; 2- Rarely but at least once each year; 1- Never). One question was left open for a possible additional learning activity not included in the questionnaire. Four more items of actual learning activities required a "yes" or "no" response. Preferred learning activities were covered by a list of actual learning activities for the respondents to rate the importance of each learning activity on a four-point Likert Scale (4- Very important; 3- Important; 2- Somewhat important; and 1- Unimportant).

Section III covered organized learning activities. The first 10 items covered the criteria for a decision to attend

organized learning activities (12 items). These questions required rating of importance on each criterion on a four-points Likert Scale (4- Very important; 3- Important; 2- Somewhat important; and 1- Unimportant). Five items covered the distribution of learning between learning in self-learning and organized continuing education away from home. The questions asked the respondents to indicate how they learned each of the provided major areas of learning, if they did, by self learning at home or in organized learning events away from home. The last part of section three covered the extent of ministers' engagement in church-organized and provided continuing education (6 items). The first question asked the number of continuing education events the respondents attended in the last 12 months. The following four questions asked the percent of all learning events that were required, voluntary, self-selected, and organized by United Methodist Church. The sixth question asked whether the respondents were encouraged to attend.

Section IV covered the learning supports and resources. The first part covered the learning assistance ministers turn to for help (5 items). A five-point Likert-type scale was used to measure the frequency of the learning assistance that was needed (5- Nearly always; 4- Often; 3- Sometimes; 2- Rarely; 1- Never). The second part covered important learning supports (9 items). The respondents were asked to rate the importance of each learning support listed on a

four-points Likert-type scale (4- Very important; 3- Important; 2- Somewhat important; and 1- Unimportant).

Section V covered learning barriers which ministers experience. Twelve questions, using a five-point Likert-type scale, were used to measure how often the barriers were experienced (5- Very often; 4- Often; 3- Sometimes; 2- Rarely; and 1- Never). The barriers listed were reported in the interviews, most of them as a confirmation of the literature on ministers.

Section VI covered the demographic characteristics of the study participants. Ten questions covered the age, gender, experience, location, congregation size, educational level, seminary training, current study status, type of training, and funds allocated for continuing education.

Pre-testing questionnaire

After the development of the draft questionnaire, the next step is to pre-test it (Borg and Gall 1983). Pre-tests refer to the testing of the study design. The purpose of conducting pre-tests is to assess item clarity and to locate errors in the formatting or directions (Babbie 1973). The pre-test sample should be selected from a population similar to that from which the researcher plans to draw research subjects. Also, according to Borg and Gall (1983), the pre-test form of the questionnaire should provide space for the respondents to make comments about the questionnaire itself

so they may indicate whether some questions seem ambiguous to them, whether provisions should be made for certain responses that are not included in the questionnaire, and other points that can lead to improving the questionnaire.

This study adopted the pre-testing strategy proposed by William Belson (1981). Belson's pre-testing strategy is as follows:

1. Respondents are asked to repeat their understanding of the meaning of the question in their own words.
2. Questions are revised and retested until they are understood by all or most of the members of the pretest sample.
3. Techniques for administering the questionnaire during the pre-test should be essentially the same as planned for the main study.
4. The number of cases in the pre-test sample need not be large, especially if the subjects are taken from a well-defined professional group.

The draft questionnaire in this study was pre-tested on a convenience sample of five United Methodist Church ministers. The ministers were encouraged to give feedback comments to the researcher concerning the questionnaire instrument, especially the item construction, clarity, and ideas on the items and sections. The pre-test form of questionnaire included a space for comments.

Revising the questionnaire

The pre-test comments and feedback information from the sample of ministers was used to develop a complete and final questionnaire. The revised questionnaire was tested and revised again on the same sample. The respondents' comments concerning the questionnaire were carefully read, noted, and incorporated into the questionnaire. The specific information on how to improve the questionnaire was especially used and incorporated in the appropriate places. The researcher looked for suggestions on clarity, item construction, and formatting. Ambiguous wording was clarified throughout the questionnaire, and specific response categories added or deleted as suggested by the pre-test sample respondents.

Administering the Final Survey and Data Collection

The questionnaire and cover letter were the main sources of information the respondents referred to in deciding whether or not to complete the questionnaire. Thus, great care was taken in making the format of the questionnaire attractive and encouraging a potential respondent to complete the questionnaire (Borg and Gall 1983).

Some rules of questionnaire format have been developed based on experience and research on questionnaire designs (Berdie and Anderson 1974). These rules are:

1. Make the questionnaire look attractive.
2. Organize and lay out the questions so that the questionnaire is easy to complete as possible.
3. Number the questionnaire items and pages.
4. Include brief, clear instructions, printed, if possible, in bold lettering.
5. Use examples before items that might be confusing or difficult to understand.
6. Begin the questionnaire with a few interesting, non-threatening items.
7. Include enough information in the questionnaire so that items are meaningful to the respondent.
8. Make the questionnaire as short as possible and consistent with the study's objectives.
9. Important questions in a long questionnaire should not be put at the end of the questionnaire.

These rules of questionnaire formats were followed and used as a checklist for the questionnaires in this study before posting them to the selected sample.

The major problems in doing a questionnaire survey is to get a sufficient percentage of responses to use as a basis for drawing conclusions, and the single most important factor in determining the percentages was the letter

transmittal. According to Gall and Borg (1983), the respondents should be given a good reason for completing the questionnaire and sending back to the researcher at a given time. The transmittal letter should also give assurance of confidentiality if sensitive information is asked. Purpose of the study should be explained briefly and in such a way as to make the subject feel that the study is significant and important.

In order to ensure a sufficient return rate of the questionnaires for this study, a letter of transmittal, based on the above guidelines, was sent with the questionnaires. Also, the follow-up techniques were used. The first follow-up postcard was mailed to the entire sample exactly one week after the initial mailing. This follow-up served both as a thank you to respondents for sending in the completed surveys and as a reminder to potential respondents regarding the importance of their participation. In the event that the survey had never arrived or had been misplaced, opportunity to contact the researcher for replacement was given. The second follow-up postcard was mailed to non-respondents after exactly three weeks after the initial mailing. This was a reminder to potential respondents that their participation was important. An offer to replace the questionnaire was made. The third follow-up followed five weeks after the initial mailing. This last follow-up was a replacement of a survey

questionnaire, cover letter, and a stamped return envelop, with a special appeal for participation.

Validity and Reliability

Since the instruments were developed by the investigator, validity and reliability must be addressed. There are four types of test validity recognized in educational measurement: content, concurrent, predictive and construct. Construct, concurrent, and predictive validity were not able to be tested because of insufficient data from previous studies and a lack of available instruments to test the variables in this study. Content validity was chosen as the most appropriate test of validity for this study.

Content validity is the degree to which the test items represent the content the test is trying to measure and the total universe of content in that area (Borg and Gall, 1971). Unlike other types of validity, content validity is tested subjectively (Borg and Gall, 1971). There is no statistical test for content validity. A review of the literature indicates material necessary for item construction but it is based on subjective judgment of the investigator (Crano and Brewer, 1973). The content areas for the instruments knowledge of ministers' professional duties, learning activities, learning supports, and learning barriers were estimated by the judgment of the investigator based on the review of literature, consultation with experts

on ministers, and from the information provided by the questionnaire pretest evaluation (feed-back) forms completed by ministers. All ministers who participated in the pretest agreed with each of the content areas as representative of the ministers' profession.

Reliability is the level of consistency of measuring instrument (Borg and Gall, 1971). It is easier to determine reliability than validity. Reliability is usually expressed as a coefficient indicating the extent the test is free of error variance (Borg and Gall, 1971). The internal consistencies of the instruments used for this study were assessed through computation of alpha coefficients. The coefficient alpha for the actual learning activities scale equalled 0.67 (n=74). The scale for preferred learning activities had a coefficient alpha of 0.69 (n=74); the scales for learning supports and learning barriers measured 0.63 (n=74) and 0.74 (n=74) respectively.

Data analysis

Data analysis was started as soon as the questionnaires were received. The responses from the self-administered survey were prepared for computer analysis using the statistical package provided for social sciences (SPSS-X). The outputs obtained were primarily frequency distributions, percentages, valid percentages, cumulative percentages, totals, and descriptive statistics. Rank order was made where necessary. Tables were drawn explaining the results.

For research questions investigating the relationship between independent and dependent variables (question 2), the Analysis of Variance (f-test) was used to analyze the quantitative data.

Summary

Chapter Three has presented the research methodology used for this study. The chapter discussed the population of the study, study sample, research design, instrumentation and procedures, reliability and validity, data collection, and analysis. The next chapter is the presentation and analysis of the research data.

CHAPTER IV

Presentation and Analysis Data

Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and findings of data collected from the survey instruments and procedures described in Chapter III. The findings of the analysis of data related to the research questions are presented.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the profession-related, self-directed learning activities carried out by ministers in the United Methodist Church, Western Michigan Conference, in their quest to acquire the skills, attitudes, and knowledge required for improving professional competence in their work. The research questions in this study were:

1). How do ministers conduct their learning in their quest to gain knowledge, skills or attitudes necessary to maintain competence in their professional duties?

a) What professional duties are ministers engaged in?

b) What types of learning activities are ministers pursuing to learn their ministerial duties?

c) What types of learning activities do ministers prefer to use?

2). Do the preferences for learning activities cited by ministers differ significantly between groups within selected demographic characteristics?

3). How are ministers engaged in organized learning activities?

a) What criteria do ministers base their decision on for participation in continuing education activities?

b) To what extent are ministers engaged in the organization of their learning in church-organized and provided continuing education?

c) How do ministers distribute their learning between self-learning at home and learning at organized learning activities?

4). What learning resources and supports do ministers identify as important in their on-going profession-related learning?

5). What major learning barriers do ministers encounter which hinder their on-going profession-related learning effectiveness?

Area of Inquiry #1

How do ministers conduct their learning in their quest to gain knowledge, skills, or attitudes necessary to improve competence in their professional duties?

Question #1: What professional duties are ministers engaged in?

Ministers were asked the duties that they engaged in learning in the past 12 months. Table 1 shows the ministers' participation in a variety of duties. These are the duties ministers considered most important in their profession.

Table 1

Professional Duties:
Ministers' Participation

Professional Duties	Frequency (N = 92)	Percent (%)
Preaching	92	100
Teaching in church	88	96
Conducting worship	91	99
Administration	92	100
Counseling	89	97
Pastoral Care	91	99
Evangelism/Missions	89	98
Youth Ministry	70	80
Connectional Duties	89	97

The study participants indicated a high involvement in all the professional duties. The range of involvement is between 80% (lowest) and 100% (highest). All participants, 92 (100%) were involved in preaching and administration. Seventy participants (80%) were involved in youth work. All study participants were active professional practitioners.

Question #2: What types of learning activities are ministers pursuing to learn their ministerial duties?

Tables 2 and 3 are summaries of ministers' participation in their actual learning activities.

Table 2

Actual Learning Activities:
Degree of Ministers' Participation

Learning Activities (N = 92)	Rarely Fr (%)	Once a Month Fr (%)	Once a Week Fr (%)
Read newspapers	7 (8)	3 (3)	81 (89)
Read periodicals	0 (0)	13 (14)	78 (86)
Read lectionary materials	26 (29)	9 (10)	56 (62)
Read books	8 (9)	28 (31)	55 (61)
Watch T.V.	32 (37)	9 (10)	49 (54)
Listen to radio	39 (42)	7 (8)	45 (50)
Work with support groups	23 (25)	36 (40)	32 (46)
Consult with colleagues	20 (22)	37 (41)	34 (37)
Self-learning	42 (46)	28 (31)	21 (24)
Listen to cassettes	56 (61)	17 (19)	18 (20)
Confer with specialists	59 (64)	25 (28)	7 (8)

Table 3

Other Actual Learning Activities:
Participation in the Past Year

Learning Activity (N = 92)	No		Yes	
	Fr.	(%)	Fr.	(%)
Attend learning events	2	(1)	90	(99)
Learn by doing	4	(3)	88	(97)
Take college courses	71	(77)	21	(23)
Take correspondence courses	80	(95)	4	(5)

The learning activities that ministers indicated they used most frequently (each week) include: reading newspapers (81 [89%]); reading periodicals (78 [86%]); reading lectionary materials (56 [62%]); reading books (55 [61%]); and watching television (49 [54%]). In Table 3, the majority of ministers indicated high involvement in learning by doing (88 [97%]) and in organized learning activities (90 [99%]). Consultation with colleagues and working with support groups (Table 2) were used monthly as major learning activities. Monthly consultation with colleagues was 67 (69%) and working with support groups was 68 (86%).

Two learning activities were least used by ministers (Table 2). Fifty-nine (64%) indicated they rarely conferred with specialists. Fifty-six (61%) ministers rarely listened to cassette tapes. In Table 3, only 21 (23%) ministers took college courses and 4 (4%) took correspondence courses.

While there was a higher involvement in some learning activities than others, the responses show diversity in ministers' participation in different learning activities. This diversity is shown by the variation in the frequencies (Table 2) in which ministers used different learning activities. With an exception of reading periodicals, reading books and reading newspapers, in all the learning activities the frequencies were distributed over rarely, monthly, and weekly, with large percents in both extremes--weekly and rarely. The ministers varied the most in use of

radio and also TV while 39 (42%) ministers rarely listened to radio and 45 (50%) listened weekly. Thirty two (37%) ministers rarely watched T.V., while 49 (54%) watched weekly for profession-related learning.

Question #3: What types of learning activities do ministers prefer to use?

Table 4 is a summary of the ministers' preferred learning activities according to the degree of importance. The preferred learning activities are ranked according to the importance and summarized in Table 5.

Table 4

Ministers Preferred Learning Activities: Degree of Importance

Learning Activities (N = 92)	1 Unimport. Fr.	(%)	2 Somewhat Important Fr.	(%)	3 Important Fr	(%)	4 Very Import. Fr.	(%)
Read books	0	(0)	2	(2)	30	(33)	60	(65)
Read periodicals	0	(0)	6	(7)	30	(31)	56	(60)
Attend learning events	1	(1)	7	(8)	38	(41)	46	(50)
Learn by doing	1	(1)	21	(22)	39	(42)	31	(34)
Consult with colleagues	1	(1)	23	(25)	40	(44)	28	(30)
Read newspapers	5	(5)	19	(21)	36	(39)	32	(35)
Work with support groups	1	(1)	26	(28)	38	(41)	27	(29)
Self-learning projects	8	(9)	22	(24)	40	(44)	22	(24)
Read lectionary materials	15	(16)	23	(25)	21	(22)	33	(35)
Confer with specialists	6	(7)	43	(47)	34	(37)	9	(10)
Take college courses	11	(12)	40	(43)	27	(29)	14	(15)

Table 4 (cont'd)

Learning Activities (N = 92)	1 Unimport. Fr.	(%)	2 Somewhat Important Fr.	(%)	3 Important Fr	(%)	4 Very Import. Fr.	(%)
Listen to cassettes	19	(21)	45	(49)	24	(26)	4	(4)
Watch TV	19	(21)	52	(57)	19	(21)	2	(2)
Listen to radio	33	(36)	40	(44)	18	(20)	1	(1)
Take correspondence courses	56	(61)	28	(30)	7	(8)	1	(1)

Some learning activities clearly stand out in the data (Tables 4 and 5) as the most preferred learning activities used by ministers. These activities, in order of their importance, are: 1) reading books, 2) reading periodicals, 3) attending organized learning activities, 4) learning by doing, and 5) consulting with colleagues.

Table 5

Ministers' Preferred Learning Activities:
A Rank Order of Importance

Rank	Learning Activity	X	SD
1	Read book	3.63	.53
2	Read periodicals	3.54	.62
3	Attend organized learning events	3.40	.68
4	Learn by doing	3.09	.78
5	Consult with colleagues	3.03	.78
6	Read newspapers	3.03	.88
7	Work with support groups	2.99	.79
8	Self-learning study projects	2.83	.90
9	Read lectionary materials	2.78	1.11
10	Confer with specialists	2.50	.76
11	Take college courses	2.48	.90
12	Listen to cassette tapes	2.14	.79
13	Watch TV	2.04	.71
14	Listen to radio	1.86	.76
15	Take correspondence courses	1.49	.69

On a scale of importance (1-4), reading books was selected by 30 (33%) ministers as "important" and 60 (65%) as "very important" in their profession-related learning (Table 2). Reading books was the most important learning activity with a mean of 3.63 (Table 5), and had lowest variation of frequency scores in relation to all other learning activities, as indicated by a standard deviation of .53. In a one-choice selection of most important learning activity (Table 6), reading books was chosen by 26 (28.6%). Reading periodicals was the second most preferred learning activity by ministers with a mean of 3.54. Thirty ministers (31%) rated reading periodicals as "important" and 56 (60%) as "very important." Reading periodicals was also among the most important learning activities selected by ministers (Table 6). Attending organized learning activities was ranked third in the preferred learning activities (Table 5) with a mean of 3.40, and second in the most important learning activity (Table 6).

Table 6

Most Important Learning Activities:
One Choice Selections

	Learning Activity	Frequency (N = 91)	Percent (%)
1	Read books	26	28.6
2	Attend learning events	25	25.3
3	Consult with colleagues	13	14.3
4	Work with support groups	9	9.9
5	Read periodicals	5	5.5
6	Learn by doing	4	4.4
7	Self-learning study projects	4	4.4
8	Read lectionary materials	3	3.3
9	Confer with specialists	2	2.2
10	Take correspondence courses	2	2.2
	TOTAL	91	100

Thirty-eight (41%) ministers rated attendance to organized learning activities as "important" and 46 (50%) as "very important." Learning by doing, with a mean of 3.09, was ranked fourth preferred learning activity. Thirty-nine (42%) chose it as "important" and 31 (34%) as very important to their profession-related learning. Also, in Table 6, learning by doing was listed among the most important learning activity. Consultation with colleagues was the fifth most important learning activity, with a mean of 3.03 (Table 5). In Table 6, it was listed third by ministers in the most important learning activities. Forty (44%) indicated consulting with colleagues was "important" and 28 (30%) as "very important."

The least preferred learning activities are shown in Table 7. Table 7 is the summary of the learning activities that ministers do not prefer to use. These are the least preferred learning activities, ranked according to importance.

Table 7

Least Important Learning Activities:
One Choice Selections

	Learning Activity	Frequency (N = 89)	Percent (%)
1	Correspondence courses	30	33.7
2	Listening to radio	14	15.7
3	Watching TV	12	13.5
4	Listening to cassette programs	11	12.4
5	Reading lectionary materials	6	6.7
6	Reading newspaper	5	5.6
7	Taking college courses	3	3.4
8	Support groups	2	2.2
9	Learn by doing	2	2.2
10	Self-learning study projects	2	2.2
11	Confer with specialists	1	1.1
12	Attend learning events	1	1.1
	TOTAL	89	100

The least preferred learning activities, starting from the least important, are: 1) taking correspondence courses; 2) listening to radio; 3) watching television; and 4) listening to cassettes. These activities were ranked least important (Table 5) and selected by ministers as the four least important among the least important learning activities.

Fifty-six (61%) ministers scored correspondence courses as "unimportant" and another 28 (30%) as "somewhat important," making up a total of 91 percent of ministers who did not consider correspondence courses as important in their profession-related learning. Thirty three (36%) ministers indicated listened to radio was unimportant to their learning and 40 (44%) indicated radio was somewhat important. This showed that a majority of 76 (80%) ministers did not consider listening to radio as important learning activity. Watching television was considered by the majority of 52 (57%) ministers as somewhat important and by 19 (21%0 as unimportant. Only 19 (21%) of ministers considered watching television as important with only 2 (2%) ministers indicating television as very important. Watching television is the third least important learning activity indicated by ministers (Table 7). Listening to cassette tapes was considered as the fourth least important learning activity (Table 7). It is also listed among the last four activities in the rank order list of importance of the learning activities (Table 5). Nineteen (21%) ministers indicated cassette tapes as unimportant in their learning and 45 (49%) as somewhat important. This makes up a majority of 64 (70%) who did not consider cassette tapes as important in their learning. Only 24 (26%) ministers considered cassette tapes as important and only 4 (4%) indicated cassettes were very important.

Although some learning activities clearly stand out as most important or least important, ministers indicated a wide variation in the importance that they placed on the learning activities as shown by standard deviations (SD) ranging from .53 (smallest) to 1.11 (largest) in the 1-5 point scale. This diversity of importance placed on the learning activities is also confirmed in Table 6 (most important learning activities). In these tables, some learning activities appear in both the listing of most important activities as well as in the listing of the least important learning activity. This overlap can partially be explained by the minister's diversity of learning preferences.

Area of Inquiry #2: Do the preferences for learning activities cited by ministers differ significantly between the groups within the selected demographic characteristics?

Analysis of variance (f-test) was used to test the differences between the independent and dependent variables, all at $\alpha = 0.05$. Tables 8 to 12 present the ANOVA tests' summaries.

Null Hypothesis #1: There is no significant difference between the ministers' chronological age groups and the importance placed on self-learning by doing, as a preferred learning activity at the $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table 8

ANOVA: Self-Learning by Doing by Chronological Age

Source	SS	DF	MS	F-ratio	P-value (sig of F)
Chronological age (between)	6.909	2	3.454	2.254	.111
Residual (within)	136.395	89	1.533		

Since F-ratio (2.254), Table 8, is not statistically significant at $\alpha = 0.05$, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This means that the chronological age does not make difference in the importance ministers place on self-learning by doing as a preferred learning activity.

Table 9

ANOVA: Self-Learning by Doing by Location

Source	SS	DF	MS	F-ratio	P-value (sig of F)
Location (between)	1.084	2	0.542	.336	.715
Residual (within)	140.205	87	1.612		

Null Hypothesis #2: There is no significant difference between the ministers' location and the importance placed on self-learning by doing, as a preferred learning activity, at $\alpha = 0.05$.

In Table 9, the F-ratio (.336) is not statistically significant at $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore, the null hypothesis is retained. This means that location does not make a significant difference in the importance placed on self-learning by doing. There is no significant difference in the importance ministers from different locations place on self-learning by doing as a preferred learning activity.

Null Hypothesis #3: There is no significant difference between the ministers' years of professional service and the importance placed on self-learning by doing, as a preferred learning activity, at $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table 10

ANOVA: Self-Learning by Doing by Years of Professional Service

Source	SS	DF	MS	F-ratio	P-value (sig of F)
Years of Professional service (between)	4.696	2	2.350	1.509	.229
Residue (within)	138.605	89	1.557		

The F-ratio (1.509) was not statistically significant at $\alpha = 0.05$ (Table 10). Therefore, the null hypothesis is

retained. It is, therefore, concluded that a minister's length of professional service does not make a difference in the importance of self-learning by doing as a preferred learning activity by ministers.

Table 11

ANOVA: Consultation with Colleagues and Friends by Years of Professional Service

Source	SS	DF	MS	F-ratio	P-value (sig of F)
Years of professional service (between)	9.715	2	4.858	2.665	0.075
Residual (within)	162.241	89	1.823		

Null Hypothesis #4: There is no significant difference between the minister's years of professional service and the importance placed on consultation with colleagues and friends, as a preferred learning activity, at $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table 11 presents the ANOVA analysis of consultation with colleagues and friends by the minister's years of professional service. The F-ratio (2.665) was not statistically significant at $\alpha = 0.05$. The null hypothesis was therefore retained (not rejected). This means that ministers with different lengths (years) of professional service do not differ significantly in the importance they

place on consultation with colleagues and friends as a preferred learning activity.

Null Hypothesis #5: There is no difference between minister's location and the importance placed on consultation with colleagues and friends, as a preferred learning activity, at $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table 12

ANOVA: Consultation with Colleagues and Friends by Minister's Location

Source	SS	DF	MS	F-ratio	P-value (sig of F)
Location (between)	.055	2	.027	0.014	.986
Residual (within)	170.845	89	1.964		

Since, in ANOVA Table 12, the F-ratio (0.014) was not statistically significant, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This means that minister's location does not make difference in the importance ministers place on consultation with colleagues and friends as a preferred learning activity.

In summary, ministers from different age levels, locations, or lengths of professional service, do not differ significantly in the importance they place on self-learning by doing as a preferred learning activity. Also, ministers from different lengths of professional service or different

locations do not differ significantly in the importance they place on consultation with colleagues and friends as a preferred learning method. These also considered important preferred learning activities by ministers of different ages, professional experiences, and locations.

Area of Inquiry #3: How are ministers engaged in organized learning activities?

Question 1: What criteria do ministers base their decisions on for participation in continuing education events?

Table 13 presents the criteria according to the degree of importance.

Table 13

Ministers' Criteria for Decision to Participate in Organized Learning Activities: Degree of Importance

Criteria for Decision to Participate	Unimport. Fr.	(%)	Somewhat Important Fr.	(%)	Import. Fr.	(%)	Very Import. Fr	(%)
Leadership reputation for quality	0	(0)	1	(1)	32	(35)	59	(67)
Subject related to personal goals	0	(0)	2	(2)	21	(23)	69	(75)
Deals with congregational needs	0	(0)	9	(10)	42	(46)	41	(45)
Reasonable cost	2	(2)	16	(17)	44	(47)	30	(33)
Convenient dates	1	(1)	19	(21)	47	(51)	25	(27)
Sponsor's reputation for quality	3	(3)	17	(19)	45	(48)	27	(29)

Table 13 (cont'd.)

Criteria for Decision to Participate	Unimport. Fr.	(%)	Somewhat Important Fr.	(%)	Import. Fr.	(%)	Very Import. Fr	(%)
Appropriate timing	2	(2)	22	(24)	51	(55)	17	(19)
Interaction and fellowship with colleagues	1	(1)	26	(28)	44	(48)	21	(22)
Comfortable facility	15	(16)	45	(48)	25	(27)	7	(8)
Academic credit	26	(28)	47	(51)	11	(12)	8	(9)

Table 14 presents the rank of importance of the criteria that ministers base their decision on for participation in continuing education activities.

Table 14

Ministers' Criteria for Decision to Participate in Organized Learning Events: A Rank Order of Importance

Rank	Criteria	Frequency	Percent
1	Leadership reputation for quality	91	99
2	Subject related to personal goals	90	98
3	Deals with congregational needs	83	91
4	Reasonable cost	74	80
5	Convenient dates	72	78
6	Sponsors reputation for quality	72	77

Table 14 (cont'd.)

Rank	Criteria	Frequency	Percent
7	Appropriate timing	68	74
8	Interaction & fellowship with colleagues	65	70
9	Comfortable facility	32	35
10	Academic credit	19	21

The most distinctive and important criteria selected by ministers, in order of their importance were: leadership quality 91 (99%); subject-related to personal goals 90 (98%); and the learning event dealing with congregational needs 83 (91%). These seem to be the most crucial criteria that ministers base their decision for participation in organized learning events on. Over ninety percent (90%) of ministers indicated these criteria as important. Reasonable cost was also a very important criteria as indicated by a majority of 74 (80%) ministers.

Ministers indicated that four criteria were important, though not crucially important, for their decision to participate in organized learning events. These criteria were selected by a majority of at least seventy (70%). They include convenient dates (78%), appropriate timing (74%), and interaction with colleagues (70%).

The least important criteria were very clearly indicated by ministers as comfortable facility and academic credit. Only a small minority indicated these criteria were important. Comfortable facility was selected by thirty two (35%) as important and only nineteen (21%) indicated academic credit was important.

Question #2: To what extent do ministers organize their learning in the church-organized and provided continuing education?

Table 15 presents number of learning events that ministers participated in and the extent of engagement.

Table 15

Continuing Education Events:
Extent of Ministers' Engagement

Required learning events	11%
Voluntary learning events	87%
Self-selected learning events	86%
Learning events encouraged	69%
UMC organized learning events	63%
Other agents organized learning events	37%

Total number of learning events attended in the last 12 months: mean = 3.34; max. = 13; min. = 0, med. = 3, mode = 3.0, SD = 2.05)

Most of the ministers participated in 3 continuing education events. The majority of the events (63%) were

organized by ministers' own denomination (United Methodist Church) but a significant minority (37%) of the events were organized by other continuing education agents.

The majority of ministers were not required to attend learning events that they attended. Only a small number (11%) of events were required, although they were encouraged to attend the majority of the events (69%). Ministers indicated that they participated voluntarily in most of the learning events as indicated by a majority of 87 percent. Ministers (86%) also selected the learning events they wanted to participate in.

Ministers seemed to have control over the organization of their learning. They chose the learning events that they wanted, without being required, and their participation was voluntary. They were responsible for their learning in organized learning events. Also, ministers learned mostly (63%) in their denominationally-organized learning events.

Questions #3: How do ministers distribute their learning between self-learning at home and learning at organized learning activities?

Table 16 is a summary of the distribution of learning between self-learning at home and in organized learning activities. The content areas of learning are presented.

Table 16

Distribution of Learning Between Self-Learning Projects at Home and Organized Learning Activities: Ministers' Participation

Content of Learning	Self Learning		Organized Learning Activities		Content not learned in the last 12 months	
N = 92	Fr.	(%)	Fr.	(%)	Fr.	(%)
Biblical, doctrinal, and historical theology	61	(66)	24	(26)	7	(8)
Personal and spiritual growth	69	(75)	23	(25)	0	(0)
Skills for ministry	32	(35)	56	(62)	3	(3)
Issues in church and society	49	(53)	28	(30)	15	(16)
Career assessment and development	25	(27)	10	(11)	57	(62)

As shown by Table 16, all ministers learned in all five selected areas of learning. But a majority of 57 (62%) ministers did not conduct any learning in the area of career development.

Ministers were actively involved in four areas of learning. Three of the four areas that ministers were involved in learning were learned mainly by self at home, as indicated by the majority of ministers. Sixty one (66%) ministers learned biblical, doctrinal, and historical

theology on their own at home while a minority of twenty four (26%) learned in organized learning activities. Sixty-nine (75%) ministers learned spiritual growth on their own at home, while twenty-three (25%) learned in the organized learning activities. The issues in church and society were learned by self at home by a majority of 49 (53%) and in organized learning activities by a small minority of 28 (30%). Skills for ministry were learned mainly in organized learning activities as shown by a majority of 56 (62%) ministers. A significant number of ministers, 57 (62%), did not conduct learning in career assessment and development. Also, a small number of 15 (16%) ministers did not learn in the area of issues in church and society.

In summary, the majority of ministers' learning was done by self at home. However, the data also show that learning by self at home or in organized learning activities may depend on the area (content) of learning. Certainly, ministers learn skills for ministry mainly in organized learning activities.

Question #4: What learning resources and supports do ministers identify as important in their on-going profession-related learning?

Ministers in the study have sought assistance for their profession-related learning from a variety of sources (Table 17). Table 17 summarizes the ministers' sources of

assistance for learning, according to the frequency the assistance was sought for profession-related learning.

Table 17

Sources of Assistance for Learning: Frequency of Assistance Sought by Ministers for Profession-Related Learning

Source of Assistance N = 92	Never Fr.	(%)	Rarely Fr.	(%)	Some times Fr.	(%)	Often Fr.	(%)
Intimates (spouse, close friends)	3	(3)	9	(10)	25	(27)	54	(58)
Acquaintances and colleagues	3	(3)	5	(6)	32	(35)	51	(56)
Experts/other professionals	9	(10)	22	(24)	36	(40)	24	(26)
Small groups/ support groups	8	(8)	39	(43)	26	(29)	15	(17)
Non-human (material) resources	5	(5)	11	(12)	28	(31)	47	(51)

The sources of assistance most frequently used by ministers were: intimates (spouse and close friends), acquaintances and fellow ministers, and non-human resources (books, tapes, computers).

Fifty-four (58%) ministers often sought learning assistance from their intimates. Also fifty one (56%) of ministers in the study often sought learning assistance from their acquaintances, and forty-seven (51%) often used non-human resources for their learning. Only a small proportion

of ministers often sought assistance from experts (26%) and small groups (20%). But a significant minority (40%) of ministers do sometimes seek assistance from experts.

Tables 18 and 19 present the ministers' learning supports and resources-degree of importance and a rank order of importance respectively.

Table 18

Ministers' Learning Supports and Resources: Degree of Importance

Learning Supports N = 92	Not Import. Fr	(%)	Somewhat Important Fr	(%)	Import. Fr	(%)	Very Important Fr	(%)
Time for learning	3	(3)	4	(4)	36	(39)	49	(53)
Funds for learning	4	(4)	16	(17)	37	(40)	35	(38)
Spouse's support	5	(6)	15	(17)	39	(44)	29	(33)
Learning opportunities	5	(5)	23	(25)	48	(52)	16	(17)
Congregational support	4	(4)	26	(28)	46	(50)	16	(17)
Material resources	15	(16)	36	(39)	27	(29)	14	(15)
Support groups	31	(33)	41	(44)	16	(17)	4	(4)
Experts and mentors	35	(38)	40	(40)	17	(18)	0	(0)

Table 19

Ministers' Learning Supports and Resources: A Rank Order Of Importance

Rank	Learning	Frequency	Percent
1	Time for learning	85	92
2	Funds for learning	72	78
3	Spouse's support	68	76
4	Learning opportunities	64	69
5	Congregational support	62	67
6	Material resources	41	44
7	Support groups	20	21
8	Experts and mentors	17	18

The single most important learning support indicated by ministers was time for learning. Eighty five (92%) ministers indicated time for learning was an important support. Forty nine (53%) indicated that time for learning was very important. Other important supports, according to the order of importance, were: funds for learning (78%), spouse's support (76%), learning opportunity (69%), and congregational support (67%). Ministers differed in the importance they placed on material resources. Forty one (44%) indicated material resources were important.

The two least likely important learning supports were the use of support groups, indicated as important by 20 (21%) ministers, and the use of experts and mentors (18%). These two learning supports were ranked last in the rank order of importance (Table 19).

In summary, ministers sought learning assistance from a variety of sources. Ministers mainly learn from intimates, acquaintances and fellow ministers, and non-human resources. Their most important learning supports were, in order of importance wer time for learning; funds for learning; spousal support; learning opportunities; and support of their congregations. Use of experts was the least important learning support for ministers.

Area of Inquiry #5: What major barriers do ministers encounter which hinder their on-going profession related learning effectiveness?

Table 20 presents the frequency in which ministers experience various barriers that hinder their profession-related learning effectiveness.

Table 20

Profession-related Learning Barriers:
Frequency of Ministers' Experience
of Learning Barriers

Learning Barriers	1 Never		2 Rarely		3 Some-times		4 Often		5 Very Often	
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%
Inability to arrange time for learning	5	5	13	14	34	37	26	28	14	15
Lack of learning opportunities	10	11	14	15	41	44	17	19	10	10
Lack of money for learning	16	17	24	26	28	30	14	15	10	10

Table 20 (cont'd.)

Learning Barriers	1 Never		2 Rarely		3 Some-times		4 Often		5 Very Often	
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%
Professional stress	22	24	18	20	29	31	20	22	3	3
Inability to decide on learning needs	27	29	31	34	29	32	4	4	1	1
Lack of resource people and materials	29	32	45	49	15	16	1	1	2	2
Inability to learn by myself	36	40	33	36	17	19	5	5	0	0
Inability to find materials	31	34	41	45	19	20	1	1	0	0
Congregational lack of under-standing	43	47	38	41	9	10	1	1	1	1
Inability to elicit the support of experts	41	45	41	45	9	9	1	1	0	0
Conference's lack of under-standing	52	57	24	26	11	12	5	5	0	0
Spouse's lack of understanding	59	66	24	27	5	5	1	1	0	0

The rank order of learning barriers, according to the frequency they are experienced, is presented in Table 21.

Table 21

Profession-related Learning Barriers:
A Rank Order of Frequencies by Ministers

Rank	Learning Barrier	X	SD
1	Inability to arrange time for learning	3.34	1.07
2	Lack of learning opportunities	3.03	1.10
3	Lack of money for learning	7.76	1.23
4	Professional stress	2.61	1.17
5	Inability to decide on learning needs	2.14	.93
6	Lack of resource people and materials	1.94	.85
7	Inability to learn by myself	1.90	.89
8	Inability to find learning materials	1.89	.76
9	Congregation's lack of understanding	1.69	.78
10	Inability to elicit the support of experts	1.67	.70
11	Conference's lack of understanding	1.66	.89
12	Spouse's lack of understanding	1.42	.65

The four learning barriers which were most frequently experienced by ministers were inability to arrange time for learning, a lack of learning opportunities, lack of funds for learning, and professional stress.

Seventy-four (80%) ministers experienced inability to arrange time for learning sometimes or more often. Only five (5%) ministers never experienced this major learning barrier and 13 (14%) rarely experienced it. With a mean of 3.34 (Table 21), inability to arrange time to learn was ranked as the first major barrier.

The lack of learning opportunities was ranked second major barrier by ministers, with a mean of 3.03. Sixty-eight (73%) ministers experienced a lack of learning opportunities sometimes or more often. Only ten (11%) never, and 14 (15%) rarely, experienced a lack of learning opportunities. Lack of funds (money) for learning, as a major learning barrier, was experienced sometimes or more frequently by 52 (55%) ministers. Only 16 (17%) indicated they did not experience a lack of money for learning. Twenty four (26%) experienced it rarely. Lack of money was ranked third in the rank order of means of frequencies. The fourth major learning barrier was professional stress, experienced sometimes or more often by 52 (56%) ministers. Only 22 (24%) ministers indicated that they never experienced professional stress as a learning barrier, and 18 (20%) rarely experienced it.

Some learning barriers were considered least hindering to ministers' profession-related learning. These included lack of spouses' understanding of learning needs and lack of conference officials understanding of learning needs. Also, inability to learn by self was not considered a major problem. Fifty two (57%) never experienced conference officials' lack of understanding of their learning needs while 24 (26%) rarely did. Only 17 (15%) experienced this learning barrier sometime or more often. Some fifty nine (66%) never experienced spouses' lack of understanding of

their learning needs. Only 6 (6%) experienced it sometimes or more often. Only 24% experienced inability to learn by self sometimes or more often.

The majority of the barriers were not major barrier for the majority. There was a wide distribution in the scores, with the respondents varying from barrier to barrier as shown by the large standard deviations (Table 21). The frequency in which ministers experience learning barriers vary among ministers.

In summary, the most common learning barriers reported by ministers are inability to arrange time for learning (80%), lack of learning opportunities (73%), lack of funds for learning (55%), and professional stress (56%). Ministers vary in the frequency in which they experience different learning barriers. Lack of understanding of learning needs by spouses and conference officials are not major learning barriers. Also, inability to learn by self was not a major learning barrier.

Summary

Chapter IV has presented the summary and analysis of the research data. The next chapter presents the summary and conclusions of the study, its implications and recommendations for further research.

Chapter V

Summary, Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

Introduction

In the first section of this chapter is presented an overview of the study's purpose, procedures and major findings. A discussion of the major conclusions, drawn from the study findings, is presented in the second section. The third section includes the presentation of the implications. Finally, suggestions for future research are presented.

Summary

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the profession-related, self-directed learning activities carried out by ministers in the United Methodist Church, Western Michigan Conference, in their quest to acquire the skills, attitudes, and knowledge required for improving professional competence in their work. The researcher attempted to: 1) describe the actual and preferred learning activities of ministers; 2) examine the relationship between the selected demographic characteristics and a minister's

learning preferences; 3) examine how ministers engage in organized learning activities; 4) describe the supports and learning assistance that ministers identify as important in their on-going profession-related learning; and 5) identify the barriers that hinder ministers' profession-related, on-going learning.

The following areas of inquiry were used to guide this study:

1) How do ministers conduct their learning in their quest to gain knowledge, skills, or attitudes necessary to maintain competence in their professional duties?
   a) What professional duties are ministers engaged in?
   b) What types of learning activities are ministers pursuing to team their professional duties?
   c) What types of learning activities do ministers prefer to use?
2) Do the preferences for learning activities cited by ministers differ significantly between the groups within selected demographic characteristics?
3) How are ministers engaged in organized learning activities?

a) What criteria do ministers base their decisions on for participation in continuing education activities?

b) To what extent are ministers engaged in the organization of their learning in the church-organized and provided continuing education?

c) How do ministers distribute their learning between self-learning at home and learning at organized learning activities?

4) What learning resources and supports do ministers identify as important in their on-going profession-related learning?

5) What major learning barriers do ministers encounter which hinder their on-going profession-related learning effectiveness?

Design of the Study

This study used descriptive research methodology. A six-step procedure was followed in conducting the research. These steps were as follows: 1) face-to-face interviews; 2) development of a survey questionnaire; 3) pre-test of the questionnaire; 4) revisions of the questionnaire; 5) administering the revised questionnaire; and 6) analysis of the data.

A random sample of 140 full-member ministers of the United Methodist Church was selected for this study. There

was a questionnaire return rate of 102 (72.9%). Some questionnaires were not usable and 92 (65.7%) were used for the study. Descriptive statistics, frequency counts and tables were used to present, analyze and summarize the data. The analysis of variance (f-test) was used to analyze the quantitative data and to investigate the relationships between the selected demographic variables and the learning preferences reported by ministers who participated in the study.

Summary of Findings

Area of Inquiry #1

How do ministers conduct their learning in their quest to gain knowledge, skills, or attitudes necessary to improve competence in their professional duties?

Ministers used a wide variety of actual learning activities to learn multi-role professional duties. All study participants were highly involved in practicing all duties and participated in all listed learning activities. There was a diversity in ministers' use of different learning activities (Table 2).

The most common learning activities used by ministers were: reading, learning by doing, attending organized learning activities, and consulting with colleagues (Table 2). The most important and preferred learning activities were indicated by ministers as: reading books (98%);

reading periodicals (91%); attending organized learning activities (91%); learning by doing (76%); and consulting with colleagues (74%). Reading books was a single most important and preferred learning activity as indicated by a very high majority of 98 percent.

The least used actual learning activities by ministers were conferring with specialists, listening to cassettes, and taking correspondence courses (Table 2). Ministers also indicated that they least preferred to learn by taking correspondence courses, listening to radio, watching T.V., and listening to cassettes (Tables 5 and 7).

Although some learning activities clearly stand out as most important or least important, ministers indicated a wide variation in their preferences and the importance that they placed on the learning activities.

Area of Inquiry #2

Do the preferences for learning activities cited by ministers differ significantly between groups within selected demographic characteristics?

Ministers of different levels of chronological age do not differ significantly in the importance they place on self-learning by doing as a preferred learning activity.

Ministers from different locations do not differ significantly in the importance they place on self-learning by doing as a preferred learning activity.

Ministers' length of professional service does not make a difference in the importance of self-learning by doing as a preferred learning activity.

Ministers with different lengths of professional service do not differ significantly in the importance they place on consultation with colleagues as a preferred learning activity.

Ministers' location does not make difference in the importance ministers place on consultation with colleagues as a preferred learning activity.

Area of Inquiry #3

How are ministers engaged in organized learning activities?

The ministers who participated in the study indicated that the most influential factors for their decision to participate in organized learning events were leadership reputation for quality (99%), subject-related to personal goals (98%); the event deals with congregational needs (91%); and reasonable cost (80%). Ministers did not consider academic credit as an important factor for their decision for participation.

Ministers in the study seemed to have control over the organization of their learning. They chose the learning events that they wanted, and their participation was voluntary. Ministers indicated that they participated in

most of the learning events voluntarily as shown by a majority of 87 percent. Also, 86 percent of the ministers selected the learning events in which they wanted to participate. Only a small percent (11%) of their participation in learning events was required. Ministers were responsible for their learning.

Most of the learning events in which they participated (63%) were organized by the ministers' church denomination, the United Methodist Church.

Most of the ministers' profession-related learning was done by self at home. Most of the areas of learning (content) was learned by ministers on their own without attending learning events away from home.

Professional skills for ministry were learned predominantly at the learning events away from the home area. Only 35 percent learned skills for ministry at home on their own.

Area of Inquiry #4

What learning resources and supports do ministers identify as important in their on-going profession-related learning?

The ministers in this study looked for a variety of sources for learning assistance. The most frequently used sources of learning assistance were intimates (58%),

colleagues (56%) and non-human (material) resources (51%). Experts were used often only by 24 percent of the ministers.

The most important learning supports indicated by ministers were: time for learning (92%), funds for learning (78%), spousal support (76%), learning opportunities (69%), and congregational support (67%).

The ministers in the study indicated that use of experts were the least important learning support. The use of expert was shown as important only by 18 percent of ministers in the study.

Area of Inquiry #5

What major barriers do ministers encounter which hinder their on-going profession-related learning effectiveness?

The learning barriers that ministers in the study reported they most frequently experienced were: inability to arrange time for learning (80%), a lack of learning opportunities (73%), a lack of funds for learning (55%), and professional stress (56%).

Ministers varied in frequency in which they experienced different learning barriers.

The least experienced barriers included a lack of understanding of learning needs by spouses and conference officials.

Inability to learn by self was not a major learning barrier. Only 24 percent indicated that they experienced

inability to learn on their own, sometimes or more frequently, and only 5 percent experienced it often.

Conclusions and Discussion

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings stated in this chapter and also in Chapter IV.

Learning Activities

Ministers participated in many and different profession-related learning activities which differed from one minister to another. There was a diversity in both the participation and in preferences of learning activities. This means that ministers differed in their learning practices, approaches, and preferences to learn in carrying out their profession-related duties.

These findings are in agreement with the study findings on self-taught adults done by Danis and Tremblay (1985). They found that all "self-taught adult learners do use a variety of settings, methods and resources, in order to learn and emphasize the importance of controlling the pace of their learning process."

This may be explained by the characteristics of adult learners developed by Knowles (1978). In his theory of andragogy, Malcolm Knowles presents adult learners as having different orientations to learning given their multiple roles, life tasks, responsibilities, and opportunities.

This is true for ministers. They are adults with multiple roles, responsibilities, and opportunities available to them. They are likely to participate and also prefer to learn by different learning methods, given their diversity of personal and professional needs, goals, and available learning sources and opportunities.

Ministers in this study preferred to learn by learning activities in which they had personal and active involvement. They least preferred to learn by learning activities in which they passively participated. Coolican (1974) found that three methods most commonly used in learning by her study participants were practice, reading, and discussion, respectively. Listening, observation and instructors were used but not frequently. She found that the methods used most often for self-directed learning were all active, involving learners more directly. The least used techniques in her study were passive, mainly watching and listening to someone else do something. Coolican's study is verified by the findings of this study. Ministers preferred to learn by active participation, through reading, learning by doing, consulting with colleagues, and attending organized learning events.

Ministers also least preferred to learn by passive involvement. The least preferred learning activities by ministers were passive and included watching T.V., listening to cassettes, and listening to radio. Self-directed

learning as a concept of andragogy is proactive learning, according to Malcolm Knowles (1978). Proactive learning moves the responsibility for the initiative and sense of discovery to the learner, as opposed to passive or reactive learning, which traditionally has been the pedagogical approach. The proactive approach is begun by the learners attempt to meet needs and to satisfy goals (Knowles, 1978).

The most important learning activities utilized by ministers were, in order of importance, reading, learning by doing, consultation with colleagues, and attending organized learning events. These findings paralleled the results reported by other professionals. Hummel (1985) found that medical doctors mainly learned by reading, informal discussion, formal consultation, attending meetings, and interpersonal contact with colleagues. A study done on scientists and engineers by Marqulies and Raia (1967) found interaction with colleagues was the second most useful learning resource.

In 1979, Penland, in a national probability sample, found that reading books was rated "extremely important" resources by 71 percent of his population, exceeded as a preferred source only by colleagues and relatives. In Penland's study, 44 percent indicated reading as the best way for them to learn. An overwhelming majority (98%) in this study indicated reading books as their best way to learn.

It was found in this study that ministers from different age levels, locations, or lengths of professional service do not differ significantly in the importance they place on self-learning by doing. Also, ministers from different lengths of professional service or locations do not differ significantly in the importance they place on consultation with colleagues as a preferred learning method.

It seems that learning by doing and consultation with colleagues, as preferred learning activities, are valued by ministers across all age levels, lengths of professional service, and from different locations.

While previous research has indicated much use and importance of learning by doing and consultation with colleagues, this study verifies these findings and also tests the uniformity of importance of these methods across age, location, and length of professional service.

Organized Learning Events

The most important and influential factors for ministers' participation in organized learning events were leadership quality, personal goals, congregational needs, and affordable cost. Academic credit is not an important factor in influencing ministers to attend learning events away from home.

Ministers were problem- and needs-centered in their approach to continuing education events. They attended

learning events to meet immediate and practical needs, both personal and professional. The ministers in the study had control over their learning, even in the church organized continuing education. They were responsible for selecting the learning events of their choice and they chose events which met their personal and professional goals.

According to Knowles (1984):

> adults are motivated to devote energy to learn something to the extent that they perceive that it will help their tasks or deal with problems that they confront in their life situations. Furthermore, they learn new knowledge, understandings, skills, values, and attitudes most effectively when they are presented in the context of application to real situation.

In this study ministers attended organized learning activities for practical reasons. They attended learning activities which related to their personal goals and also congregational needs. They were pragmatic in their approach to continuing education. A study conducted by Burgess (1971) found that the desire to reach a personal goal and desire to comply with formal requirements were, among other reasons, major motivation for participation in continuing education events. This seems true of the clergy ministers. Although ministers learned mostly at home, they went to continuing education events for formal requirements, professional skills. McCatty (1973) reports his respondents were motivated by job-related learning which included

keeping up with the literature and new discoveries, as well as learning in order to handle particular cases. However, Lowe (1982) did find that one factor that influenced non-participation in organized learning activities was, "some adults do not participate because they feel they can learn on their own." In any case, whenever ministers participate they seem to be influenced by a desire to meet personal goals and learn professional skills. But affordable cost also seem to influence their participation. This is an institutional support which ministers do not get enough from their congregations and also conference. Ministers are dependent on their churches for both salaries and educational benefits. As Gamble (1984) points out, some ministers are rewarded more than others. For some churches, personal and professional development of ministers is not a priority.

Also, leadership quality seems very crucial to their decisions. It seems that ministers value leadership that they trust to conduct their continuing education. According to Gamble (1984), "religious leadership is a high-risk venture. It requires deep inner resources that leaders trust, as a basis for confidence in their ability to attract and hold followers." Leaders must continually draw upon those resources for strength, assurance, and competence so that they are able to assemble and maintain a following. Values of the teachers and facilitators of continuing

education seems to be held in high standard and this standard influences the ministers' participation in the learning events. Nearly all of the guest leaders for continuing education activities, conducted by United Methodist seminaries, come from theological seminaries, church-related agencies, and some from theological universities (Noris, 1979).

Ministers in the study took responsibility and conducted most of their profession-related learning on their own at home. They were self-directed learners. But they learned the professional skills mostly at organized learning events.

The United Methodist Church ministers studied learned much more beyond what the denomination required them to. Only 10 percent of their overall learning was indicated by ministers as required. The ministers in this study participated mostly in their denomination organization learning events.

Ministers in this study organized and controlled their own learning. Of all the learning that ministers conducted in continuing education events, 87 percent was voluntary and 86 percent of events were self-selected. This finding is comparable with Penland's (1977) and Tough's (1976, 1978) studies. Penland (1977) found in a national sample, that 76 percent of his survey respondents planned their own learning projects. Allen Tough (1978:10) used a learning project

model to study adult learners by the method of in-depth interview protocol. He found that 73 percent of all the learning projects conducted by adult learners were voluntary and self-planned. While this study used learning activity as a guiding concept, the findings are comparable. In a study of self-taught learners, Danis and Tremblay (1985) found, "Throughout their learning process, the self-taught adults assume the monitoring of their own learning, even when consulting an external agent, or when participating in a formal educational activity." Ministers in this study were self-taught adult learners. In self-directed learning, a learner makes choices concerning the direction and options available to achieve proficiency and to accumulate necessary knowledge (Tough, 1978; Knowles, 1984). Even learners who hesitate to take major responsibility for their learning do appreciate the opportunity to select and plan for learning activities that fit their needs, interests and tasks that they need to perform (Brockett, 1985).

Adults become increasingly self-directed as they develop from youth to adulthood. Malcolm Knowles (1978) speculated that as an individual matured, his/her need and capacity to be self-directing, to utilize his/her experiences in learning, to identify his/her own readiness to learn, and to organize his/her learning around life problems, she/he increases steadily from birth to adolescence and beyond. Ministers in this study had high

self-direction in their learning profession-related duties. According to a study conducted by L. Guglielmino (1977), self-directed learners have learning traits which include confidence, an ability to comprehend, initiative, organization, persistence, and a drive for autonomy as seen in the desire to plan and control their own learning activities.

Learning Supports and Resources

Ministers in this study did not learn in isolation. They sought learning assistance from many sources, both human and non-human. Intimates and colleagues provided most of the ministers' learning assistance.

The learning supports indicated as important in this study were time for learning, funds for learning, spousal support, provision of learning opportunities, and support from congregation. The single most important learning support was identified as the provision of time for learning. Experts and mentors were not indicated as important learning supports.

Brookfield (1982a:50) studied independent learners and concluded "independence clearly did not mean isolation." He found in his study that independent learners consulted with each other for learning. The learners identified themselves as belonging to a larger learning community who shared some concerns, pleasures, and difficulties. The independent

learners were actively learning from each other's specialties. They exchanged ideas on new techniques as well as offer advice on the solution of problems. Brookfield found that the most important sources of information were human resources, knowledge, and expertise contained within the groups. The group members possessing skills in specialist area were consulted for assistance in solving problems. This study supports Brookfield's study of independent learners. The ministers in this study learned from each other. They consulted with colleagues and friends and intimates. In Brookfield's study, the most valuable sources of information were identified as human resources. Ministers in this study sought learning assistance mostly from intimates, colleagues, and friends. A small majority of ministers (51%) did seek help from non-human sources.

In self-directed learning, the learner carries out his or her learning activities, not in isolation or on a solely independent basis (Knowles, 1975); rather, self-directed learning frequently includes peers, teachers, friends, and relatives, as an integral part of the learning process. This was found in this study to be true of ministers as they learned profession-related duties.

A study conducted by Penland (1979) indicated that 59 percent of participants turned to intimates for assistance in their learning. Penland's finding is supported in this

study of ministers. This study found that 58 percent of participants turned to colleagues often.

Experts were the least important resources of learning support. In a study conducted by A. Tough (1978:15), he found that the amateurs-learners' friends and peer groups handled 80 percent of all the learners' learning projects planning. Only 20 percent of all the learning projects were assisted by professional planners. Although Tough's study used the learning project model as a guiding concept, it is partially supported in this study. Professional planners in this study were not commonly used by ministers. Only 24 percent of ministers in this study used professional experts often. One advantage of learning through other people is that one may save resources, especially money and time. This may explain partially why experts are not used often by ministers. Besides learning from friends and colleagues provides fellowship and exchange of valuable information related to social networking and sharing of common problems.

The diversity in the use of different learning sources may be explained by the different individual learner's needs and goals to be accomplished in the learning. Different needs may need to be met by different learning support.

Ministers as self-directed learners value time and funds for learning. These were indicated as most important learning support. Ministers perform multi-role duties which take most of their personal and professional time for

learning. Time and money go together in learning. Time is needed to conduct learning and the money is needed for learning resources, materials, and travel. Spousal support is valued by ministers. Spouses are the closest source of support. The ministers can not only confide in their spouses but may get the necessary understanding and emotional support. Learning opportunities are related to the information, facts, or ideas that a learner may need in order to meet personal or professional needs or goals. Ministers value learning opportunities as self-directed learners who know the information that they need to get.

Ministers seek a variety of learning assistance, resources, and supports, both human and material to learn professional duties. They seek learning assistance mostly from human sources, especially their intimates and colleagues.

Profession-Related Learning Barriers

The most common and major learning barriers experienced by ministers were inability to arrange time for learning (80%), lack of learning opportunities (73%), lack of funds for learning (55%), and professional stress (56%).

Inability to learn by self or to decide on learning needs was not a major learning barrier for ministers. Major learning barriers of ministers were related to factors

beyond the ministers' direct control, mostly institutional, informational, or situational.

There are many and varied barriers to ministers on-going professional learning, mostly differing from one minister to another. The major learning barriers are those related to resources and supports that are necessary for self-directed learning.

Scanlan and Darkenwald (1984) found that the barriers to participation in professional continuing educational activities included conflicting demands of professional work time, cost of attending programs, scheduling difficulties (work constraints), lack of quality programs, and apathy towards participating in continuing education. The findings of the Scanlan and Darkenwald study are supported by this study of ministers. Ministers experience the same barriers other professionals experience. Earlier studies have shown the major learning barriers were time pressure (68%) and financial support (47%) (Mill and Hesser, 1972). In this study, inability to arrange time was the most common barrier (80%). Lack of funds for learning was experienced often by 55 percent of the ministers.

Darkenwald (1980) summarized research on the barriers to participation in adult learning as: 1) informational barriers--those related to the individual's general awareness of the educational resources offered to him/her in his community, situational barriers--those related to the

individual's life situation, income, health, family responsibilities, work obligations, and places of residence; institutional barriers--those including procedures and practices that exclude or discourage participation, like inconvenient schedules, locations, transportation, and lack of information; dispositional barriers--such as individually and collectively held beliefs, values, attitudes, or perceptions that inhibit participation in learning activities, like lack of confidence and lack of interest.

Ministers' major learning barriers in this study were mainly situational and institutional. Ministers' lack of funds for learning, lack of local learning opportunities, experiences of work stress, and inability to arrange time for learning due to work obligations, were all related to ministers' life situations and institutional demands. While ministers could arrange to overcome some of these learning barriers over time, these are the barriers over which ministers do not have complete direct and personal control. These are barriers that other people, congregations or conference have some control. Inability to learn by self was not a major learning barrier for ministers. According to studies done on adult learners, individuals are in control of their learning. They know what they want to learn and they seek ways and opportunities to learn (Tough, 1978; Knowles, 1984). Their major problems are related to the situation, opportunities, and resources which adults use

to learn. When the adults are provided with the proper life situation, learning opportunities and resources, they are likely to succeed in their learning on their own.

Ministers in this study lacked essential learning supports for their profession-related learning. They lacked not only time and money to learn but they also lacked the learning opportunities necessary for them to get the information they need in their professional work. In addition, the work stress contributed to the learning barriers.

Implications of the Study for Continuing Education of Ministers

The findings of this study have implications to the educators and providers of ministers' professional continuing education. The study has described how ministers learn and identified the critical supports for profession-related learning, factors that influence ministers most in deciding to participate in continuing education events, and the barriers that hinder ministers' learning to improve effectiveness in ministerial work. Providers who are aware of the ways ministers learn, the sources ministers seek for learning assistance, the learning barriers they experience and how they make learning decisions, could offer assistance and meet the learning needs.

Ministers in the study were responsible and in control of their learning. They controlled the planning and selection of organized learning activities. Most of their learning was on their own at home. The ministers were highly self-directed learners. The learners determined what they learned. This means that ministers' input is very important for determining the relevance of learning help offered. There should be effective and efficient ways of communicating and getting feedback from ministers so as to determine their real learning needs and goals for continuing education. The providers of ministers' education could use needs assessment methods, surveys or participatory research to find the needs and learning contents for specific learning events. Ministers need to be involved in the planning stage of their continuing education. As Gamble (1984:64) pointed out,

> When the pastor is not clear about the purposes to be served in learning, the choice of events becomes more subject to mood. A tendency may be seen to gravitate toward the 'expert' who is knowledgeable and has organized the subject matter into manageable units. The pastor enters the learning situation, not as a self-directed learner but in a dependent mode. The teacher-learner relation tends toward pedagogy (with the learner a 'child') rather than andragogy (with the learner as an 'adult').

In order to provide continuing education to ministers as "adults" who are self-directed, and know their learning

needs and goals, the ministers' continuing education educators need to take the role of facilitators of ministers' learning rather than expert-teacher role.

Since the real life of ministers' professional continuing learning is self-directed, the scope of ministerial pre-service training, mostly done in the seminaries, needs to be more broadened to incorporate knowledge about self-directed learning. More faculty and administrative staff of the seminaries may need to be provided with opportunities to become more knowledgeable in the many published studies on self-directed adult learning. Over the last twenty years much study on adult learning characteristics have been done. Self-directed learning has dominated research on adult learning. Brockett and Hiemstra (1985:36) have recommended all educators of adults to be knowledgeable in self-directed learning. This means that both pre-service and in-service training of ministers should prepare ministers to understand and be able to use their self-directed learning behavior effectively. Self-directed learning can be made part of curriculum in the seminary education courses so as to ensure that ministers do not leave pre-service training without fully understanding vital learning behavior.

The facilitators (teachers) of ministers' continuing education certainly need to be knowledgeable on how ministers learn on their own. Collican (1974) recommended,

among other things, that adult educators should help adults increase their competencies for self-directed learning by helping learners determine how to determine educational needs, organize learning experiences, and evaluate learning outcomes.

In order to help ministers participate in more continuing education events, the events must relate to ministers' personal and professional goals and needs, as defined by the ministers. Especially the continuing education of ministers needs to be mainly related to congregational needs and professional skills. Ministers are likely to attend learning events that provide skills for ministry as well as relate more directly to the problems and needs faced by their own congregations. Most importantly, the leadership of the ministers' continuing education need to be those ministers trust and who have credibility. Ministers will also attend learning events that have costs they can afford. Since ministers indicate lack of funds, events that have relatively low costs, trusted leadership and subjects relate to skills and congregational needs will likely be attended by the majority of ministers.

Continuing education for ministers should not be heavily focused on academic credits. Majority of the ministers learn for professional skills in continuing education activities. Some ministers may be pursuing academic credit for the doctor of ministry.

Ministers learn mostly at home rather than in organized activities. They do not only read but also spend much time consulting with colleagues and learning by practice. Learning through practice and colleagues, though problematic to measure the learning, are vital learning experiences by ministers which could be recognized by the United Methodist Church as a Continuing Education Growth Unit (GU) just as reading is.

There is a need for the continuing education programs to offer a wide diversity of learning opportunities, and a variety of topics of learning. Ministers differ in needs and professional goals and turn to appropriate learning opportunities and activities to meet their diverse needs.

In order for ministers to learn effectively in their professions, their congregations will need to allow more time for ministerial learning. This can be done by reducing the ministers' time demands by congregations. Sharing church responsibilities with church members can provide more time for ministers to learn and to do the duties that are a priority and most essential to be done by the minister herself or himself.

The ministerial profession has multi-role duties. Some of the duties could be assigned to other leaders in the church so as to reduce the professional stress experienced by ministers, and also provide more learning time. The congregations need to provide funds for ministers continuing

education, for personal and professional development. The United Methodist Church should offer more learning opportunities locally for ministers who are not able to find learning opportunities within their reach. The findings of this study indicated that most of the continuing education events that ministers attend are organized by their denomination, United Methodist Church. Also, a study by Noris (1979) found that United Methodist seminaries play the major role in offering continuing education for ministers. United Methodist Church needs to take a major and responsible role to provide ministers with quality continuing education programs and help remove learning barriers.

While ministers did not indicate lack of learning support by congregation or denominational organization (conference officials), the majority of the ministers' learning barriers are those which are within the control of those institutions. Both the congregations and conference officials need to help ministers overcome learning barriers in order for ministers to learn effectively and provide quality professional service efficiently.

Recommendations for Further Research

It would be helpful to replicate this study with different samples and sample sizes of ministers so as to clarify some of the aspects of the findings, and test the

extent to which the findings can be generalized among ministers. This study can be replicated with ministers who have not had at least two years of professional service and who do not have seminary training, but who are practicing in the ministerial profession. The study could also be replicated with ministers of other denominational backgrounds. A replication of this study will increase its significance as well as raise more questions on the ministers' self-directed learning.

It is recommended that further investigations be conducted on ministers' profession-related learning to follow this study. Such investigations could include:

1) A study to determine the extent to which multi-role duties influence ministers' learning behavior.

2) A study to examine the extent to which professional stress is a motivator or barrier for ministers' profession-related learning.

3) A comparative study of actual and preferred learning activities, using a powerful statistical test(s) may give further insight into the problems facing ministers in their attempts to learn through their preferred methods.

4) An examination of factors which are not covered in this study, but which contribute to effective learning, such as attitudes and gifts (used in biblical contexts)--how they relate to self-directed learning and learning barriers in the ministerial profession.

5) A study to examine learning opportunities that various ministers prefer to have and how these preferences differ within demographic variables and individual minister's learning characteristics.

6) An exploration of the phenomena of the networking of colleagues among the ministers, and an investigation of types of learning assistance they provide each other, types of networks, specific processes of interactions, contents of consultation and possible learning barriers experienced in the network.

7) An investigation of ministers' reading behavior to determine the extent to which ministers are utilizing current and available sources effectively.

8) A study to examine the correlation between professional stress and participation in continuing education and to find if the degree of participation correlate with intensity of stress.

9) An exploration of the nature and content of profession-related learning assistance sought by ministers from intimates (spouses).

10) A study to compare the learning preferences used by highly self-directed ministers with those used by low self-directed ministers. The Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS) developed by L. Guglielmino (1977) could be used to measure self-direction.

11) An in-depth study on one or more of the important learning preferences in this study, like learning by doing (practice).

12) An in-depth study on this study's findings that ministers have major control of their learning, even in the church organized continuing education.

13) An in-depth study on how ministers profession-related learning barriers could be removed or minimized, from the ministers' own perspectives, and compare the findings with the perspectives of the providers of ministers' continuing education.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH RESEARCH APPROVAL DOCUMENTS

1636 H Spartan Village
Eat Lansing, MI. 48823

February 21, 1989

Bishop Judith Craig
200 Murph-Telegraph
155 West Congress
Detroit, MI. 48226

Bishop Craig:

RE: APPROVAL FOR STUDY ON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MINISTERS, MICHIGAN AREA.

This letter follows the discussions that I had with you on February 10, 1989 at the University Methodist, concerning my doctoral study proposal at Michigan State University. I greatly appreciated the fellowship, your understanding and helpful comments. Since then I have been working to incorporate your input into my study.

As I mentioned to you I need an approval note from you to conduct my study in your Michigan Area. Please address the letter to me on the above address.

I will continue to work with Reverend Sharon Zimmerman Radar on this project. She has been very helpful as my key contact person. I also plan to work with Rev. Ronald J. Thompson, (Chairman, committee on continuing education) who has helped me in this project in clarifying learning activities of the United Methodist Church ministers. He is willing to review my questionnaire with me before I send it to ministers.

I am attaching a statement of the purpose and focus for my study. I do believe that the project will benefit the ministers, planners of continuing education and the Michigan conferences.

Thank you for assisting me with this project.

Sincerely,

David M. Kitonga

cc. Rev. Sharon Z. Radar, University Methodist Church
Rev. Ronald Thompson, Marshall Methodist Church.

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
155 WEST CONGRESS SUITE [illegible] DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48226
(313) 961-8340

JUDITH CRAIG, Resident Bishop

OBERT E. HORTON, Assistant to the Bishop
IRGINIA A. KELLY, Executive Secretary

MICHIGAN AREA
DETROIT CONFERENCE
WEST MICHIGAN CONFERENCE

February 28, 1989

Mr. David M. Kitonga
1636 H. Spartan Village
East Lansing, MI 48823

Dear David:

This note is my way of granting approval for you to engage in a study of Continuing Education patterns among the United Methodist Pastors in the Michigan Area. I am interested in your work and will appreciate your report when it is concluded. I trust this note will be satisfactory for those who are supervising your work and for any others who may inquire as to my knowledge and approval of your work.

Faithfully yours,

Judith Craig

vk

APPENDIX B

RESEARCH APPROVAL DOCUMENTS BY MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

To: The Chairman, UCRIHS

From: David Kitonga

(1-805154)

Date: April 21, 1989

Subject: Application for Approval of Research and Exemption from Full Committee Review.

I am enclosing (1) a copy of research proposal information required for the committee to review my dissertation research design, and (2) two copies of chapter III (Research Methodology) of the proposal which was approved by my doctoral committee on December 9, 1988.

I am requesting to be exempted from the full committee review according to the category "C" - survey research involving interview procedures. Confidentiality of names in the interview will be kept through out the study. There is no possibility that any breach of confidentiality would lead to criminal, civil, financial, or employability risk of the participants.

Thank you for your positive response and for informing me about your decision in writing.

Current address:

David Kitonga

1636 H Spartan Village

East Lansing, MI. 48823

Res. Tel. (517) 353-6807

Abstract: For the University Committee for Research In Human Subjects.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the profession-related self-directed learning activities carried out by ministers in the United Methodist Church, Western Michigan Conference, in their quest to acquire the skills, attitudes and knowledge required for improving professional competence in their work. The study attempts to 1) describe the actual and preferred self-directed learning activities of ministers, 2) examine the extent to which the ministers are engaged in self-directed learning in the church-organized and provided continuing education. 3) describe the supports that ministers identify as important in their on-going profession-related self-directed learning and 4) identify the barriers that hinder ministers' profession-related self-directed learning. The motivation for this study is to investigate the on-going profession-related learning of church ministers in an attempt to determine how self-directed learning can be facilitated to maximize effectiveness and competence. This study will use the descriptive research methodology. Face-to-face interviews followed by a self -administered survey questionnaire will be the major instruments to collect the data. The researcher will contact a small sample (7) of participants by letter and telephone and seek voluntary permission for the interviews. Using an interview protocol of open-ended questions the research hopes to discover the major learning activities, learning supports and barriers, and the extent of involvement in organized learning events. A survey questionnaire, based on the interview information,will be developed. The survey questionnaire, in a self-administration format, will be sent to a random sample of one hundred ministers of the United Methodist Church, in the Western Michigan Conference, to complete and return to the researcher at their discretion.

Selection of Subjects

An informed consent form and information will be sent to a purposive sample, interviews participants, describing the purpose of the study, confidentiality of participants' names and anonymity of information. Participants will be requested verbally to participate in the interviews. For the questionnaires, a simple random sample will be selected from the listing of names provided by the United Methodist Church,Bishop's office. A cover letter, guaranteeing the confidentiality of participants' names and anonymity of information will be mailed to each respondent.

Anonymity/Confidentiality

The following steps will be adhered to:

1. The researcher will make a commitment to keep confidentiality of participants' names and anonymity of the information collected.
2. Only code numbers will be used for purposes of data processing - no names will appear in any publication of information collected.
3. After data is processed all records which contain the participants' identity will be immediately destroyed.
4. The data will be reported in a manner in which the participants identification cannot be associated with the information.

Risk/Benefit Ratio

The researcher anticipates no social, physical or legal risk to the participants. The interviews will use open-ended questions and will totally be non-directive and the participants will be completely free to continue or withdraw from the discussions at his or her own discretion. The questionnaire will be self-administered and the respondents will voluntarily participate or decline to participate.

Individual ministers who participate in this study will benefit as the interviews and questionnaires will be very informative and will cause them to think about ways they learn and will be able to identify their learning behaviors and affirm their values. The planners of ministers' education, including Land Grand universities and seminaries, will be helped by this study findings to understand factors that enhance or facilitate ministers' profession-related self-directed learning effectiveness.

Consent Procedures

The researcher will seek a verbal permission from each interviewee for the interview. The interviewee will also sign an informed consent form about the study procedures, purposes, nature, and voluntary participation, before the interviews. The questionnaire respondent will be provided with a cover letter explaining the purposes, nature, and voluntary participation. The respondent will be free to participate or not to participate.

A formal approval will also be gained from the organizational leaders of the United Methodist Church, Michigan Area, before the ministers are contacted for the interviews.

Agricultural & Extension Education

Michigan State University
410 Agriculture Hall
East Lansing, Michigan 48824 - 1039
(517) 355 - 6580

April 24, 1989

Dr. John K. Hudzik, Chair
UCRIHS
206 Berkey Hall
Campus

Dear Dr. Hudzik:

This is to advise that Mr. David Kitonga's doctoral committee met in December and approved the plan for his doctoral research entitled "An Investigation of Ministers' Profession-Related Self-Directed Learning Activities." I have also reviewed this proposal and approve of the proposed project.

Sincerely,

S. Joseph Levine
Associate Professor

SJL/mp

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH INVOLVING
HUMAN SUBJECTS (UCRIHS)
206 BERKEY HALL
(517) 353-9738

EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824-1111

May 5, 1989

IRB# 89-228

David Kitonga
1636 H Spartan Village
East Lansing, MI 48823

Dear Mr. Kitonga:

Re: "AN INVESTIGATION OF MINISTERS' PROFESSION-RELATED SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES **IRB# 89-228**"

The above project is exempt from full UCRIHS review. I have reviewed the proposed research protocol and find that the rights and welfare of human subjects appear to be protected. You have approval to conduct the research.

You are reminded that UCRIHS approval is valid for one calendar year. If you plan to continue this project beyond one year, please make provisions for obtaining appropriate UCRIHS approval one month prior to May 5, 1990.

Any changes in procedures involving human subjects must be reviewed by the UCRIHS prior to initiation of the change. UCRIHS must also be notified promptly of any problems (unexpected side effects, complaints, etc.) involving human subjects during the course of the work.

Thank you for bringing this project to our attention. If we can be of any future help, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Sincerely,

John K. Hudzik, Ph.D.
Chair, UCRIHS

JKH/sar

cc: S.J. Levine

APPENDIX C

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE COVER LETTERS

309 Erickson Hall
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI. 48823

June 6, 1989

Dear Pastor:

There is an increasing number of ministers who express concern about their lack of effectiveness in carrying out certain aspects of their ministry. This condition may be due partially to the fast social changes in today's society and the increasing number and variety of demands now being placed on ministers. The stress generated by these demands is often so great that many ministers have difficult coping with it. As a means of escape some leave the profession. Given the increasing lack of effectiveness expressed by ministers in their profession, it is important to learn how ministers learn professional skills, knowledge, and attitudes to remain current and to improve their competence after seminary training.

The purpose of this study is to investigate ministers' profession-related learning activities in order to provide a research base for guiding planners and providers of minister's continuing education. I am conducting this study under the direction of Dr. Peggy M. Riethmiller, Professor of Curriculum and Instruction. I am writing this letter to you to request your assistance in this study by completing a questionnaire.

Your help and cooperation in completing the enclosed questionnaire is very important and essential in order to gather information that will be truly representative of the learning activities of participants in the study. It would be greatly appreciated if you would take ten (10) minutes to complete and return the enclosed survey questionnaire.

This study will provide vital information to the United Methodist Church, Michigan Area, about a) how ministers learn, and prefer to learn to remain current and competent in the ministry; b) how ministers participate in continuing education; c) the barriers that hinder learning effectiveness; and d) the supports and resources that ministers identify as essential and important in their learning.

Please note that your participation is voluntary. Be assured that your name will not be used anywhere or associated with any information that you provide in the questionnaire.

The findings of this study will be made available to the Board of Ordained Ministry, West Michigan Conference. Also, copies of the abstract of the findings will be mailed directly to study participants who request it.

Thank you for assisting in this study.

Yours sincerely,

David Kitonga
Doctoral Student

Dr. Peggy M. Riethmiller, Ph. D.
Director of Dissertation

P/S. Please complete the survey as soon as possible and return it in the enclosed self addressed and stamped envelope.

THE WEST MICHIGAN CONFERENCE
BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

May 19, 1989

Dear Friend,

This is to introduce Rev. David Kitonga, from Kenya, who is a graduate student at Michigan State University. He is working on a doctoral program in the area of continuing education.

Over the past few months, David has consulted with me and the members of the Continuing Education Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry. He has also received a letter of approval from the Bishop to conduct his study. He has developed a questionnaire to be used with a statistical sample of the United Methodist clergy. Your help in completing the questionnaire will be highly appreciated.

David is a student from Kenya where he is an ordained pastor and works with pastors in their ongoing education. He hopes that what he might learn from our educational processes will be helpful to him upon his return to Kenya this fall.

Our assistance in his research will not only benefit this Christian student, but will provide information which he will share with us to guide our planning in this area.

Thank you for your help with this study.

Sincerely,

Dale D. Brown

Dale D. Brown, Chairperson
Board of Ordained Ministry

APPENDIX D

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire

Ministers' Profession-Related Learning Activities

A study of Ministers
United Methodist Church,
West Michigan Conference

Research Study Conducted
by:

David Kitonga, Ph. D. Candidate,
College of Education,
Michigan State University

Code number _____

Date _____

Questionnaire

Ministers' Profession-Related Learning Activities

Instructions:
(A) Please answer all questions in all the sections
(B) Mark only one response per item
(C) Please mark all your responses on the booklet itself

Section I. Professional Duties

Questions 1 - 10: Professional Duties:

Have you engaged in one or more of the following ministerial duties during the past 12 months? If yes, circle response "1", If no, circle response "2".

	Yes	No
1. Preaching/sermons	1	2
2. Teaching (sunday school, Bible studies, etc.)	1	2
3. Worship	1	2
4. Administration	1	2
5. Counseling	1	2
6. Pastoral care (visitations, burials, baptisms, marriages, etc.)	1	2
7. Evangelism/Missions	1	2
8. Youth ministry	1	2
9. Connectional/conference/district duties	1	2
10. Other important duties (Specify:_____)	1	2

Section II. Learning Activities

Actual Learning Activities

Questions 11 - 22: Actual Learning Activities

In the list below, please indicate the frequency with which you have engaged in each activity during the last 12 months in an effort to acquire information, skills, knowledge or attitudes related to your ministerial duties.
(Please put "1", "2", "3", "4" or "5" in the appropriate space at the begining of each question)

Key :
5 = At least once each day
4 = About once each week
3 = About once each month
2 = Rarely (but at least once each year
1 = Never

__ 11. Read books on the topic/subject
__ 12. Read Periodicals/magazines/journals
__ 13. Read lectionary materials
__ 14. Read newspapers
__ 15. Conferred with specialists
__ 16. Worked with support groups and friends
__ 17. Consulted/worked with colleagues
__ 18. Organized my own study projects (self learning) in my home
__19. Listened to cassette tapes
__20. Listened to radio programs
__21. Watched T.V. programs
__22. Other (specify:_____

Qns. 23 - 26. Have you engaged in one or more of the following learning activities during the past 12 months? If yes, circle response "1", If no, circle response "2".

	Yes	No
23. Took course(s) at nearby college/seminary	1	2
24. Learned by doing (practicing or trial & error)	1	2
25. Took correspondence course at home	1	2
26. Attended a learning event (seminars etc.) away from home	1	2

Preferred Learning Activities

Questions 27 - 42: Preferred Learning Activities

How would you rate the importance of each of the following activities in learning/updating your profession-related duties?

Key: 4 = Very important
3 = Important
2 = Somewhat Important
1 = Unimportant

__ 27. Read books on the topic/subject
__ 28. Read Periodicals/magazines/journals
__ 29. Read lectionary materials
__ 30. Read news papers
__ 31. Confer with specialists
__ 32. Work with support groups and friends
__ 33. Consult (work with) colleagues
__ 34. Take college/seminary courses
__ 35. Learn by doing (practicing or trial & error)
__ 36. Take correspondence course(s) at home
__ 37. Attend a learning event(s) (seminars etc.) away from home
__ 38. Organize your own study projects (self learning)
__ 39. Listen to instructional cassette tapes
__ 40. Listen to instructional radio programs
__ 41. Watch instructional T.V. programs
__ 42. Other very important activities (specify:_____

43. Which of the following activities listed in items 27-42 above would you rate as the **most important**? (Circle the item number corresponding to that activity above)

44. Which of these activities (items 27-42 above) would you rate as **least important**? (Underline the statement itself above).

Section III Organized Continuing Education

Questions 45 - 55:

When trying to decide whether or not to participate in an organized continuing education event, how important are each of the following criteria? (Please put "1", "2", "3" or "4" in the appropriate space at the begining of each question)

Key: 4 = Very important
3 = Important
2 = Somewhat Important
1 = Unimportant

__ 45. Reasonable costs
__ 46. Leaders' reputation for quality
__ 47. Some form of academic-credit or continuing education units
__ 48. Deals with Subject(s)related to my needs and goals
__ 49. Dates are convenient
__ 50. Deals with needs of my congregation (duties/tasks)
__ 51. Appropriate timing (length, season)
__ 52. Sponsoring agency's reputation for quality
__ 53. Comfortable accommodations/facilities
__ 54. Fellowship/interaction and learning from colleagues
__ 55. Other Very important criteria (please specify:_____

Questions 56 - 60:

Please indicate the primary source of your recent learning (last 12 months) in each of the following areas -- self-study or organized continuing education activities away from home, like seminars, conferences, etc.

Key:

Self-study (self-learning)	Organized C.E. (seminars, etc)	Does not apply (I have not participated in any learning activity in this area within the past 12 months)
1	2	9

56. Biblical, doctrinal & historical theology	__1	__2	__9
57. Personal and spiritual growth	__1	__2	__9
58. Skills for ministry	__1	__2	__9
59. Issues in church and society	__1	__2	__9
60. Career assessment and development	__1	__2	__9

Qn. 61
About how many organized learning events (seminars, workshops, retreats, etc.) did you participate in during the last 12 months? ____

Qn. 62 About what percent of these learning events (above) were you required to attend ? ____ %

Qn. 63 About what percent of these learning events (Qn. 61 above) were voluntary? _____%

Qn. 64. About what percent of these learning events (Qn. 61 above) were you responsible for selecting (the events) to attend? _____%

Qn. 65. Did church officials or others associated with the church ever encourage you to attend these events? __1. No. ___2. Yes

Qn. 66 About what percent of the learning events that you participated in during the last 12 months were organized by:

a) United Methodist Church _____ %
b) Other continuing education agents _____ %)

Section IV. Learning Supports and Resources

Questions 67 - 71

When you needed assistance with your profession-related learning, how often did you turn to each of the following sources for help?

Key : 5 = Nearly always
4 = Often
3 = Sometimes
2 = Rarely
1 = Never

__67. Intimates (spouse, close friends)

__68. Acquaintances and fellow ministers

__69. Experts, professionals

__70. Small groups working together, support groups

__71. Non-human resources (materials, books, tapes, computers etc.)

Qn. 72 - 80

How important were each of the following sources of support in deciding whether or not you would undertake a profession-related learning activity within the past 12 months?

Key:
4 = Very important
3 = Important
2 = Somewhat Important
1 = Not important

__72. Time for learning
__73. Funding for learning
__74. Understanding and support of spouse
__75. Understanding and support of congregation)
__76. Support groups and colleagues
__77. Support from other professionals, experts, mentors
__78. Adequate material resources (books, journals, tapes)
__79. Adequate learning opportunities and services (educational courses, programs, seminars, library services, etc.)
__80. Other very important source of support ? _____

Section V Learning Barriers

Qns. 81 - 92
In the last 12 months, how often have each of the following barriers hindered your pursuit of profession-related learning?

(Please rate your responses to the questions below by checking 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 against each question)

Key :

5= Very often

4= often

3= sometimes

2= rarely

1= never

__81. Inability to arrange time to learn

__82. Conference officials' lack of understanding of my learning needs

__83. Spouse's lack of understanding of my learning needs

__84. Congregation's lack of understanding of my learning needs

__85. Inability to find materials (tapes, books, journals etc.)

__86. Inability to elicit the support of resource people (experts/professionals)

__87. Lack of necessary resources (people, materials, etc)

__88. Lack of money(funding) for learning

__89. Lack of local learning opportunities

__90. Inability to decide what I needed to learn in support of my professional duties

__91. Work-related (professional) stress

__92. My lack of desire (inability) to learn by myself

Section VI. Demographic Information

(Please check (X) against the appropriate answer.)

93. Your Gender:
__1. Male __2. Female

94. Your Age: _____ years

95. For about how many years have you been practicing in the ministerial profession?
__1. 5 years or Under
__2. 6 - 10
__3. 11 - 15
__4. 16 - 20
__5. 21 - 25
__6. 26 - 30
__7. 31 years or over

96. In what setting is your church located?
__1. Rural __2. Urban/city __3. Suburban

97. What is the size of your congregation membership?
_____ members.

98. How much financial support was allocated by your church for your profession-related on-going learning in the last year?
$ _____

99. What is your highest educational level ?
__1. Bachelor's degree
__2. Master's degree
__3. Doctoral/specialist
__4. Other:_____

100. Do you have a seminary graduate degree?
__1. Yes
__2. No

101. Are you now working toward a higher degree program than that checked in the above item?

__1. No

If yes, please indicate which degree you are pursuing.

__2. Masters in seminary
__3. Masters in public university/college
__4. Doctoral in seminary
__5. Doctoral in public university/college

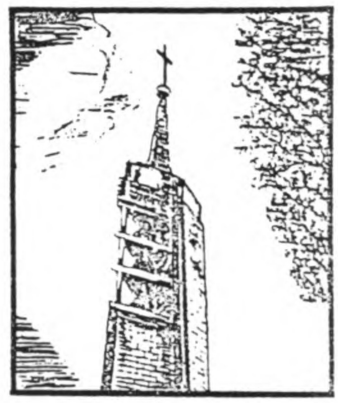
APPENDIX E

INTRODUCTION CORRESPONDENCE

,niversity United Methodist Church

1120 S. Harrison At Trowbridge • East Lansing, Michigan 48823 • 517-351-7030

aron Zimmerman Rader
bert L. Hundley, Jr.
istors



Dear .

Mr. David Kitonga, a Ph.D. student at Michigan State University is interested in working on a disertation regarding the strengthening of United Methodist pastors in their duties through continuing education. David wants to learn how we learn, why we choose to learn what we do, etc. following our seminary training.

In preparation for David's study, he would like to interview a few United Methodist pastors in the Lansing area to get an overview of perspective on continuing education of pastors. I have given David your name and phone number as one who might be willing to talk with him regarding this project. You will probably be hearing from him within the next week or so.

David is a student from Kenya where he is a pastor and works with pastors in their ongoing education. He hopes that what he might learn from our educational processes will be helpful to him upon his return to Kenya.

Thanks for hearing his request and for any time you can give to him for a brief interview.

Sincerely,

Sharon Zimmerman Rader

THE WEST MICHIGAN CONFERENCE
BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

December 1988

Dear Friends,

This is to introduce Mr. David Kitonga, from Kenya, who is a graduate student at Michigan State University. He is working on a doctoral program in the area of continuing education.

David has asked our help in providing information about our practice of continuing education, as well as what we feel is needed and helpful in this area. He hopes that his findings may be of help to us in the future.

Our assistance in his research will not only benefit this Christian student, but will provide information which he will share with us to guide our planning in this area.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Dale D. Brown

Dale D. Brown, Chairperson
Board of Ordained Ministry

1636 H. Spartan Village,
East Lansing, MI. 48823
Tel. (517) 353-6807

November 29, 1988

Rev. Sharon Zimmerman Rader,
University United Methodist,
1120 S. Harrison,
E. Lansing, MI.

Dear Sharon:

Thank you so much for the time that you took to discuss with me my study plans. You were so helpful and your suggestions were very encouraging.

I have found it necessary to discuss with you again before I present my study plans to Rev. Dale Brown, the chairman, Board of Ordained Ministry. I will make an appointment to meet with you this week if your schedules allow.

When we meet I would like to 1) outline my study plan to you and 2) to get your inputs on the plan and how to approach it in the United Methodist Church. This should not take more than thirty minutes.

Since my study follows up the studies that have been done on the United Methodist Ministers, I am enclosing some findings of some of those studies that served as the initial base for my study.

My desire in this study is to provide vital information which can be used to enhance the ministry effectiveness of the United Methodist Church. I believe that my study should relate to a need in the church, and also meet my academic requirements.

I look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

David Kitonga

1636 H. Spartan Village,
East Lansing, MI. 48823
(517) 353- 6807

December 3, 1988

Rev. Dale D. Brown,
Pastor, First United Methodist Church,
114 E. Michigan Avenue,
Battle Creek, MI. 49017

Dear Dale:

Thank you for the time that you took last week to discuss with me concerning my study on United Methodist misters' continuing education. I was very encouraged by your interest and support for my study.

It was nice to learn from our discussion that very little is known about how ministers conduct their own continuing education besides the continuing education units of workshops and seminars that are provided to them by the conference. My study directly investigates what ministers are doing in their continuing education for ministry and how their learning can be facilitated for the ministry to be more effective. My study will provide the vital information on the following areas:

1. How ministers have been learning and/or prefer to learn to keep themselves current and competent in the ministry.

2. The learning (continuing education) barriers that hinder ministers' effective learning in the ministry, and

3. The supports and resources that ministers identify as essential and important in their future continuing education learning efforts.

I was encouraged to learn from you that the findings from my study would be useful to the continuing education of ministers in your conference. The studies done by Walsworth (1978) and Cochrane (1981) at Michigan State University helped me greatly when I was selecting the areas of my study. I want my study to focus on something that is useful in fostering ministry effectiveness and on what is also needed by the ministers in the conference. This is how I expect my study to contribute to the conference.

I will get the listing of ministers' addresses from Rev. Sharon Zimmerman Rader, as you advised, so as to get the sample for my study. This will be appropriate as her office is very near Michigan State University. She has already been helping me a lot in providing the necessary information and contacts that I needed in order to plan my study.

I will keep in touch with you concerning the progress of my study.

Sincerely,

David Kitonga

cc. Rev. Sharon Zimmerman Rader
University United Methodist.

1636 H Spartan Village
East Lansing, MI. 48823

February 21, 1989

Rev. Ronald Thompson,
Chairman, Board of Ordained Ministry
Committee on Continuing Education,
United Methodist Church,
P. O. Box 110,
Marshall, MI. 49068.

Dear Rev. Thompson:

I greatly appreciated the time we had together to discuss my study proposal. Your comments, input and clarifications of continuing education in United Methodist Church helped me greatly in formulating my questionnaire. The continuing education material (green and yellow sheets) that you provided were very useful for my understanding of the organization of continuing education in United Methodist Church. Thanks.

Thanks also for your willingness to help me in the future with my study.

I will keep in touch. Keeping in contact with you is important as I desire my study to be relevant and useful to United Methodist Church.

Best wishes in your ministry.

Sincerely,

David Kitonga

cc. Rev. Sharon Zimmerman Radar
University Methodist.

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Interview Informed Consent Form

This study investigates the profession-related self-directed learning activities of ministers of the United Methodist Church, Michigan Conference. The study examines the actual and preferred self-directed learning activities, barriers, resources, and supports that ministers identify as essential and important in their ongoing profession-related self-directed learning. The study is designed to determine how self-directed learning can be facilitated among the United Methodist ministers so as to foster their ministry effectiveness.

" I understand that the information I give during the interview will be used for a research study as a part of David M. Kitonga's doctoral program at Michigan State University. I also understand that I am volunteering my time, one to two hours, to take part in the study, that I may withdraw or decline to participate with no penalty attached to such action and that all information collected will be confidential, reported as group data and no respondent names will be reported in connection with the data.

Signed: _____

(study participant)

Date: _____

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW GUIDE AND WORKSHEETS

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview questions

Qn. I. (a) (Broad question) What types of duties are you engaged in your ministry?

(b) Which duties are most important and common (daily, weekly, and monthly) in your ministry?

Qn. 2. (a) (Broad question) How do you learn these duties in an on-going basis?

(b) How did you obtain the information necessary to 1.) keep yourself current and/or 2.) to acquire skills or knowledge necessary to perform each of those duties in the last six months?

(Optional Qn.. How did you learn each of those duties?)

Probes: - In what ways
- where
- from who
- how much time

(c) How would you prefer to learn these duties if you were to learn them again ?

Probes: why ?
What advantages ?

Qn. 4. Tell me about your involvement in continuing education at your home or away from home. How have you conducted your continuing education in the last year?

Probes:

What were the areas of learning?
Where ?
Why did you participate?
How was it planned?
How was it evaluated?
What subjects and topics?

Qn. 5. What types of support and resources were essential and important in the learning of your ministerial duties?

Probes:

- human supports/resources ?
- material support/resources ?
- non-material ?
- others?

Qn. 5. What made it difficult for you to learn these duties?

Probes: what major barriers ?
what restraints?
- work-related
- non-material
- human
- material
- personal

Qn #1 (a

Areas c

(major

phrases

A.) _

B.) _

C.) _

D.) _

E.) _

Description of Interview data - work sheets

Types of learning Activities

Qn #1 (a)

Areas of learning (major categories and key phrases)	Learning Activities
A.) _____	
B.) _____	
c.) _____	
D.) _____	
E.) _____	

Interview data work sheet

Qn #1 (b). Learning preferences.

Areas of learning categories key phrases)	Learning preferences preferences list.
A._____	
B._____	
C._____	
D._____	
E. _____	

Interview data: work sheet

Qn. # 1. (c). Involvement in continuing education

Areas of learning	Location	Planning/ Evaluation	Reasons for participation
A. _____			
B. _____			
C. _____			
D. _____			

Interview data: work sheet

Qn #2 Learning supports

Areas of learning (Categories & key phrases)	Learning supports/resources listing
A. _____	
B. _____	
C. _____	
D. _____	

Qn. #3

Areas

(Categ

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Interview data: work sheet

Qn #3 Learning Barriers

Areas of learning (Categories and key phrases)	Learning Barriers listing.
1. _____	
2. _____	
3. _____	
4 _____	
5. _____	

Other

Obser

Inter

Interview data: work sheets.

Other study-related information:

Observations, stories etc. from the Interviews.	Researcher's comments

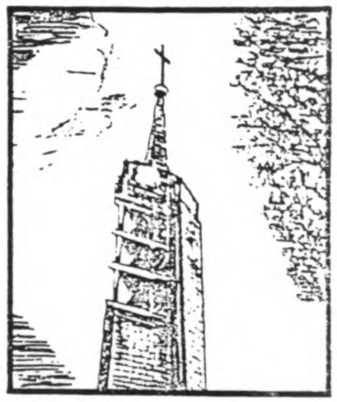
APPENDIX H

QUESTIONNAIRE PRETEST COVER LETTERS

Jniversity United Methodist Church

1120 S. Harrison At Trowbridge • East Lansing, Micnigan 48823 • 517-351-7030

aron Zimmerman Rader
bert L. Hundley, Jr.
stors



April 7, 1989

Dear

Mr. David Kitonga, a Ph.D. student at Michigan State University is working on a dissertation regarding the strengthening of United Methodist pastors in their duties through continuing education. David wants to learn how we learn, why we choose to learn what we do, etc. following our seminary training.

Over the past few months David has consulted with members of the continuing education committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry; Dale Brown, chair of the Board; and clergy members of the West Michigan Conference. He has developed a questionnaire to be used with a statistical sample of United Methodist clergy. Before administering the questionnaire, David would like to receive comment and feedback regarding the questionnaire. I have given David your name and phone number as one who might be willing to talk with him regarding this project. You will probably be hearing from him within the next week or so.

David is a student from Kenya where he is a pastor and works with pastors in their ongoing education. He hopes that what he might learn from our educational processes will be helpful to him upon his return to Kenya.

Thanks for hearing his request and for any time you can give to him for a brief interview.

Sincerely,

Sharon Zimmerman Rader

APPENDIX I

PRETEST CORRESPONDENCE

1636 H Spartan Village
East Lansing, MI. 48823

April 28, 1989

(Respondent's address)

Dear _____:

Thank you for accepting to participate in the review (pretest) of my study questionnaire on the United Methodist Church ministers' learning activities. This is an important part of my study.

I am enclosing the questionnaire for you to complete, make comments and return to me. Please follow these steps:

1. Read the cover letter (purpose of study).
2. Complete all questionnaire.
   (*Record the time taken to complete the 5 parts of the questionnaire itself).
3. Write your comments on the feed-back form enclosed at the end of question.

Your comments are very valuable to the success of this study and they will be used to make the final and complete survey questionnaire.

Thank you for completing the questionnaire and giving your feed back information.

Sincerely,

David Kitonga.

1636 H Spartan Village
East Lansing, MI. 48823

May 25, 1989

(Respondent's Address)

Dear _____:

Thank you so much for participating in the second pretest of my study questionnaire. The questionnaire is now complete and ready to be posted to the selected random sample of the study. In the pretest form you indicated your interest in the findings of this study. I will be very happy to post the abstract of the finding when it is completed.

I have greatly appreciated your cooperation and the time you took to help in this study.

Again, thanks for your understanding, friendliness, and willingness to participate in this study.

Sincerely,

David Kitonga.

APPENDIX J

PRETEST FEED-BACK FORM

Questionnaire Feed-back Form

1. How long did you take to complete the questionnaire? _____

2. How is this timing for the questionnaire ?
   - __1. Too long
   - __2. Just right
   - __3. Other (specify) _____

3. Was the questionnaire clear, easy to understand, and to complete? Please check one:
   - __1. All the questions were clear and easy to complete.
   - __2. Most of the questions were clear and easy to complete.
   - __3. Some questions were clear and easy to complete.
   - __4. Most of the questions were not clear and easy to complete.
   - __5. Other (specify) _____

Explain your answer _____
_____

4. For each question you did not understand clearly, please comment specifically on what you found difficult to understand.

Question Nos.	Comments:
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

(use the back for more space if needed).

5. How can this questionnaire be improved in terms of clarity of questions, sequence of questions and sections, format, ideas, additions, etc.? Give your comments:

6. What did you like about/in the questionnaire?

7. Were the categories listed in each section of questionnaire (duties, learning activities, etc.) representative of ministers?

APPENDIX K

SURVEY FOLLOW-UP POSTCARDS

Ministers' Profession-related Learning Activities

First Follow-up Post card
(One week after initial mailing)

June 19, 1989

Dear Pastor:

Last week a survey on ministers' profession-related learning activities was mailed to you. If you have already mailed your completed survey, I would like to thank you for your participation. If not, please do so today _ your responses are very important to the results of the study.

If you did not receive the survey or if it was misplaced, please call me collect as soon as possible at (517) 353- 6807 during the day or evening. I will be very happy to mail you another copy.

Again, thank you for your assistance and interest.

Sincerely,

David Kitonga
Doctoral Student

Ministers' Profession-related Learning Activities

Second Follow-up Post card
(Three weeks after the initial mailing)

June 26, 1989

Dear Pastor:

About three weeks ago a survey on ministers' profession-related learning activities was mailed to you. As of today I have not received your completed survey.

I am writing again because of the significance each response has to the value of this study. It would be greatly appreciated if you would complete and return the survey as soon as possible.

If you did not receive the survey or if it was misplaced, please call me collect as soon as possible at (517) 353- 6807 during the day or evening. I will be very happy to mail you another copy.

Again, thank you for your assistance and interest.

Sincerely,

David Kitonga
Doctoral student

APPENDIX L

MINISTERS' CONTINUING EDUCATION IN THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

CONCERNING CONTINUING EDUCATION

The Discipline, 1984

¶ 446. *Continuing Education.*—1. Ministers shall be expected to continue their education throughout their careers, including carefully developed personal programs of study augmented periodically by involvement in organized educational activities.

2. Pastors shall be asked by the district superintendent in the Charge Conference to outline their programs of continuing education for the year. The district superintendent shall also ask the local church to describe its provision for time and financial support for the pastor's program of continuing education.

3. Ministers in appointment beyond the local church shall give evidence of their continuing education program in their annual reports (¶ 443.2a).

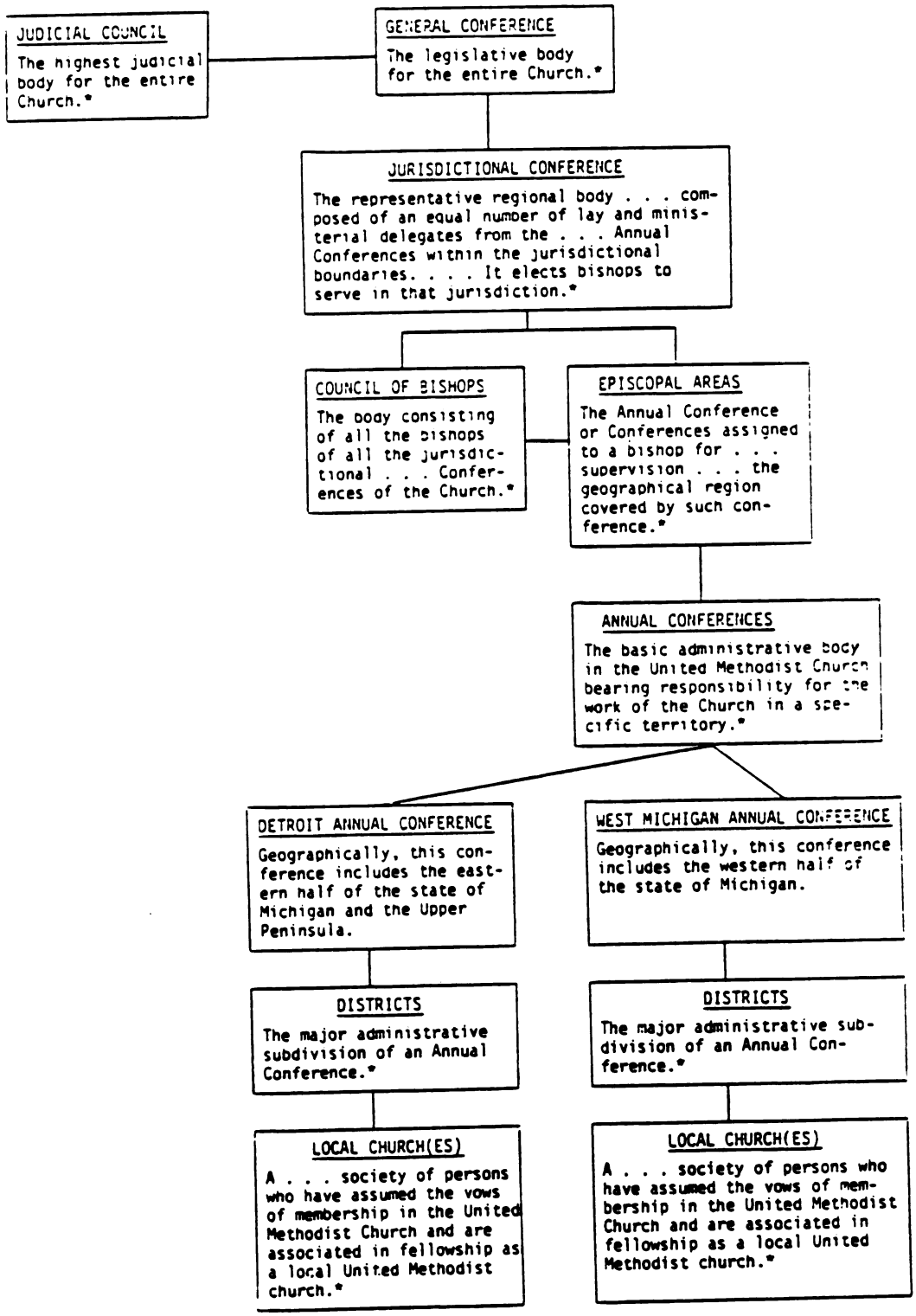
¶ 447. *Educational Leave.*—An ordained minister may request an educational leave of up to six months while continuing to hold a pastoral appointment. An Annual Conference may make such educational leaves available to its ordained ministers who have held full-time appointments for at least five years.

In most cases the ministers' continuing education program should allow for leaves of absence for study at least one week each year and at least one month during one year of each quadrennium. Such leaves shall not be considered as part of the ministers' vacation and shall be planned in consultation with their charges or other agencies to which they are appointed as well as the bishop, district superintendent, and Annual Conference Continuing Education Committee.

Financial arrangements shall be negotiated in the following manner: *(a)* for pastors it shall be done in consultation with the district superintendent and the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee; *(b)* for district superintendents, with the district Committee on Superintendency; *(c)* for conference staff, with the appropriate committee of the Council on Ministries; *(d)* for others in appointments beyond the local church, with the appropriate persons in their agency.

APPENDIX M

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION



*Definition from The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1980).

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