SOCIAL ECOLOGICAL FACTORS IN SHAPING THE ATTITUDES

AND RESPONSES OF MINISTERS' CHILDREN TOWARD

FULL-TIME CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

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A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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by

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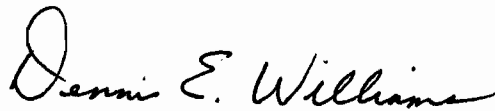
APPROVAL SHEET

SOCIAL ECOLOGICAL FACTORS IN SHAPING THE ATTITUDES

AND RESPONSES OF MINISTERS' CHILDREN TOWARD

FULL-TIME CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

Kam See Cheung Fung

Read and Approved by:

Dennis E. Williams

Dennis E. Williams (Chairperson)

Hal K. Pettegrew

Hal K. Pettegrew

Date _May 1, 2004_

To Bill,

my love and encourager,

to Kam-Yan and Wood-Yan, my delight and joy,

always supportive in prayer, to my parents for

raising me, to my professors for showing me

the qualities of good teachers,

and to my Savior for

guiding me each

step of my

spiritual

journey.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

PK	Preacher's kid
PKs	Preachers' kids
SBTS	The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
SSAA	Sunday School Average Attendance
SWI	Seminary Wives Institute

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PREFACE

The wisdom, kindness, counsel, and assistance of many have contributed to the present study. I really appreciate Dr. Dennis E. Williams, my supervising professor, and his wife, Cornelia C. Williams, who have continually given encouraging and positive support during my entire research process.

I am thankful to Dr. Hal K. Pettegrew, who introduced the insights of social science research to me in his seminar. I still remember his cheerful welcome on my first day in the office of the School of Leadership and Church Ministry. I am indebted to both professors for taking the time to read and comment on my work.

I am thankful to Dr. Mark E. Simpson for guiding me step by step on social science research. I still remember the first meeting with Dr. Simpson and his kindness of encouraging me to apply for the Ed.D. program. I have grown both academically and spiritually. I sincerely appreciate his leadership of the Ed.D. program.

I am also thankful to Dr. Scott E. Wigginton, a family life professor, who took the time to comment on the key interview questions and the questionnaire. His classes opened my eyes to the theoretical foundations of the study of families.

I also appreciate Marsha K. Omanson's thorough work in style check for this study. I am amazed at her attention to details as well as her skill and patience in explaining the seminary style formats. She has transformed the style check into an art!

No description can express my gratitude toward my husband, pastor, and leader, Bill. I could not have finished this work without his leadership and support. He is

an example of a servant leader. Kam-Yan, my elder daughter, is my thanksgiving as her name means in Chinese, and Wood-Yan, my younger daughter, reminds me constantly of the living grace of the Lord as her name reflects in Chinese. As the mother of these two children of a minister (PKs), I sincerely pray that this study can enable me to understand them more.

The extended families in Hong Kong, Canada, and Australia have been very supportive for our studies. Both my husband and I are thankful for their kindness, especially in taking care of our elderly parents while we were studying in the United States.

I am also thankful for all the volunteers who helped to pretest the interview questions and the questionnaire as well as all the ministers' children who participated in this study. Without their contribution, this study could not be completed. Their life stories are very touching, and I have grown through the experience of sharing a glimpse of their spiritual walk.

Finally, I thank the Christian friends who have been praying faithfully for my family while both my husband and I were writing our dissertations. The computer and style technical support provided by Vera Tong, Raymond Chu, and Dr. Xuechun Zhao, the statistical support by Ning Zhang, and the research advice by Dr. Lily K. Chua are good examples of Christian love.

All glory be to my Lord and Savior! Thanks for blessings beyond measure!

Kam See Cheung Fung

Louisville, Kentucky

May 2004

CHAPTER 1

RESEARCH CONCERN

In the poem, "Sons," Ruth Bell Graham vividly penned the painful struggles of

mothers in raising the children with fathers who are too involved in the ministry to have

time to let their sons know them.

> But what of the ones forsaken, Lord, even for You?
> These sons now grown, who've never known fathers
> who had undertaken to leave all and follow You?
> Some sons, wounded beyond repair, bitter, confused, lost.
> These are the ones for whom mothers weep, bringing to You in prayer.
> Nights they cannot sleep – these, Lord, are what it cost." (Graham 1997, 836)

Ministers' children (commonly known as PKs) have unique struggles because

of their fathers' profession. Growing up in a minister's family is a challenging

experience. Life in a minister's family is compared to that of being in the fishbowl or

glass house (Lee and Balswick 1989). The social ecology of the minister's family system

is different from that of other families, especially in terms of its relationship with the

minister parent's work place, the church (Lee 1986; Lee and Balswick 1989). The role of

the minister puts the family into a very close relationship with the church. In short, the

work system and the family system of the minister overlap one another (Friedman 1985;

Lee 1987; Lee and Balswick 1989).

There are many variables in the study of families. Some issues commonly

mentioned in the study of clergy families and ministers' children are expectations and

perfectionism, stereotyping and the PK myth, a sense of "differentness," family

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relationships and values, peer relationships and values, boundary ambiguity of church and clergy family, frequent relocations, schooling, finance, time stress, identity formation, denominational and community influences, lack of support network, and special assets of growing up in ministers' families (Anderson 1995; Lee 1987; Schaar 1992). Anderson also identifies seven stress factors of ministers' families in the following order: lack of time together, finance, marriage conflict and wife's role, performance expectations, criticism of family behavior and values, lack of privacy, and difficulties in developing social ties (Anderson 1995).

When the issues of raising PKs are discussed, there are usually more negative comments than positive ones. Cameron Lee's *PK: Helping Pastors' Kids through Their Identity Crisis* and H. B. London's tapes on *Preachers' Kids: Exploring Challenges Beyond the Pulpit* both emphasize the prevalent negative PK experience. More writing and research on the positive experience of PKs are necessary for the benefits of minister's families and for Christian ministry as a whole. A minister's family has an enormous potential for raising children with a positive attitude and response toward the Christian ministry. It is necessary for clergy parents to understand the social ecological factors shaping their children's attitudes and responses toward the Christian ministry.

There is a cry for the need of high quality full-time Christian workers and leaders all over the world. Ministers' families can be a blessing to the church in raising godly children who will be quality Christian leaders and workers. Children can learn Christian leadership from the daily interactions with their parents if the parents are conscious and intentional about their impact on their children in terms of leadership training. "Parenting is discipleship" (Cook 1999, 183). Children growing up in Christian

leaders' families have first hand experience with the leaders. They have a great potential for Christian leadership. Furthermore, clergy parents need to be aware of the dynamics of the subsystems in their social ecology and the resultant impact on the PKs if they want to be intentional in raising PKs who support full-time Christian ministry.

This researcher acknowledges that this study is entering a "terribly complicated and mysterious area of reflection" because Christians believe in the divine initiative of God in calling individuals to have faith in Him through Jesus Christ (Fowler 1992, 338). Furthermore, the response to full-time Christian ministry also suggests divine work beyond human control and prediction. Bearing the above in mind, it is this researcher's intention to explore factors in the social ecology of the ministers' families that shape the PKs' attitudes and responses to full-time Christian ministry. It is hoped that the persons involved in the social ecology of the PKs are sensitive to their impact on the development of the PKs. Church leadership and clergy parents need to reflect on whether they are influencing the PKs positively towards full-time Christian ministry or if they have become stumbling blocks.

There is very little research on the experience of PKs (Anderson 1995; Lee 1987; Schaar 1992; Stevenson 1982). The clergy family is a neglected area of study despite its significant influence on Christian ministry (Mace and Mace 1980). Lee calls for more systemically organized anecdotal information to be obtained on the experience of ministers' children (Lee 1987, 268). This researcher wants to contribute to the study on PKs from a social ecological perspective.

An ecological approach involves systems thinking. It enables the researcher to focus on the processes and dynamics of the interactions of the systems rather than on

linear or multiple causations with the focus on the individuals (Friedman 1985, 16). The environment perceived by an individual who interacts within and with it is called the "life space" or "psychological field" (Lewin 1951, xi, 240). "Psychology has to view the life space, including the person and his environment, as one field" (Lewin 1951, 240). An understanding of the phenomenological perspective (the person's perception) as more important than the environment is helpful for this study.

PKs may have positive or negative experience in their upbringing. The research concern of this study is to find out from the perception of the adult PKs the social ecological factors involved in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry.

Research Purpose

The focus of the present study is to explore and analyze the social ecological factors involved in shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry. The study can add to the limited amount of research on PKs, broaden Christian leaders' understanding of the PK lives, and inform clergy parents who seek to raise PKs with a positive attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry.

Delimitations of the Study

The following delimitations serve to focus the study:

1. This study seeks to be an exploratory study moving toward an understanding of the research concern and laying the foundation for future study.

2. This study is intended to be descriptive.

3. This study utilized the self-perception by the adult subjects rather than an evaluation of performance of the clergy parents.

4. This study does not prove that effective clergy parenting will produce ministers' children who will go into full-time Christian ministry.

Research Question Synopsis

The four research questions that drove this study were as follows:

1. What are the social ecological factors that positively shape the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?

2. What are the social ecological factors that negatively shape the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?

3. Among the social ecological factors, which factors are predominant in shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?

4. What is the effect of the predominant social ecological factors on shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?

Terminology

The following definitions and terms are presented in the context in which they are used in this dissertation. They are offered in order to clarify their use in this current study.

Attitude. "A psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor" (Eagly and Chaiken 1993, 1).

Boundary. "The *boundary* of a subsystem is that which conceptually or physically distinguishes it from other systems" (Lee 1987, 14).

Calling. "God's summons and designation of individuals to particular functions and offices in his redemptive plan" (Packer 2001, 200).

Clergy. "Collective term for ordained deacons, priests, and bishops" (O'Collins and Farrugia 2000, 45). The present researcher uses the terminology *clergy* synonymously with the terminology *minister*.

Conservative evangelical. The terminology *conservative evangelical* is used in contrast with the characteristics of *liberal Protestantism*, which is a movement in the nineteenth and twentieth century Protestant theology that underplays the uniqueness of Christian revelation and reduces Christianity to just a striking phenomenon in the history of religion (O'Collins and Farrugia 2000, 139). See *Evangelical* for more information.

Differentiation. A term employed in family systems theory to mean "the striving to keep one's being in balance through the processes of self definition and self regulation; refers to one's average ability to maintain distinction between intellectually and emotionally based functioning" (Erdman 1996, 4).

Ecology of human development. "The ecology of human development involves the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded" (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 21).

Evangelical. An adjective or noun referring to Protestant Christians who emphasize substitutionary atonement, justification through faith, the supreme authority of the Bible, human depravity, and evangelicalism (Mohler 1996, 31; O'Collins and Farrugia 2000, 83). In short, "evangelicalism is simply Protestant orthodoxy" (Mohler 1996, 31).

Exosystem. "An exosystem refers to one or more settings that do not involve the developing person as an active participant, but in which events occur that affect, or are affected by what happens in the setting containing the developing person" (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 25).

Family Systems Theory. The "theory advanced by Bowen that emphasizes the family as an emotional unit or network of interlocking relationships best understood from an historical or transgenerational perspective" (Goldenberg and Goldenberg 1991, 324).

Full-time Christian ministry. Serving the Lord in Christian churches or organizations in a full-time capacity. The term *full-time* is not used for the exact hours contributed, but rather for the sense of Christian institutions fully supporting the ministers with regard to the ministry.

Macrosystem. Refers to consistencies, in the form and content of lower-order systems (micro-, meso-, and exo-) that exist, or could exist, at the level of the subculture or the culture as a whole, along with any belief systems or ideology underlying such consistencies; in this study, examples are the denomination, community, and national culture (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 26).

Mesosystem. A *mesosystem* comprises the interrelations among two or more settings in which the developing person actively participates. It is a system of microsystems. For the clergy family, the microsystems of family and church form the *mesosystem* (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 25).

Microsystem. A pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given setting (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 22). In this study, the family, the church, and the school are the microsystems of the minister's child.

Minister. A person set apart and employed by a church to exercise spiritual functions and the ministry of leadership in the church; a term also used for the *clergy* in Protestant Church (O'Collins and Farrugia 2000, 159; Davis 1999, 148). The terminologies *clergy* or *pastor* are used in a synonymous context with *minister* in this study.

Ministers' children. Offspring of ordained ministers in the Christian Protestant tradition at any age or developmental level – young children, adolescents, or adult children (Schaar 1992, 12). The terms *PKs* and *ministers' children* are used synonymously in this study.

Ministry. Service to God and to others in Christ's name (Davis 1999, 137).

PK. An abbreviation from the term preacher's kid, referring to the child of a minister. The plural form is PKs. The term *PKs* will be used in the present discussion to refer to ministers' children in the Christian protestant tradition.

Response. Any behavior elicited by a stimulus, and a synonym sometimes used for this term is *answer* (Bruno 1986, 197-98); an act of responding; something constituting a reply or a reaction (Merriam-Webster 1996, 998). The present researcher uses the terminology *Response* as an act of responding to full-time Christian ministry.

Setting. A place where people can readily engage in face-to-face interaction; such as the home, school, and church (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 22).

Social ecology. The term *ecology* is borrowed from natural science by Bonfenbrenner to emphasize the interconnectedness of members of the various social systems or contexts. The systemic interconnectedness between members of the clergy family and the social environments they inhabit (Lee 1987).

Social ecological factors. Factors arisen from the various levels of social systems which influence the ministers' children, such as the family relationships (microsystem), the interaction of the church and the clergy family (mesosystem), school (microsystem), church board meetings (exosystem), denominational and national culture (macrosystem). In addition, factors such as faith and calling are discussed as social ecological factors in this study although they are usually classified as spiritual factors.

Triangulation. A term used in family systems theory referring to the relationship among three parties; such as the pastor, the spouse, and the congregation or the pastor, the pastor's child, and the congregation (Schaar 1992, 14). It is "an attempt to resolve a relationship dilemma by moving towards relationship fusion with a third person or object; viewed as the basic building blocks of an emotional system" (Erdman 1996, 4).

Triangle. A three-person system (Bowen 1978, 478). The term *triangle* is also used as a verb, such as *triangle in* a third person when tension mounts in a two-person system (Bowen 1978, 478). *Triangling* is the present participle of the verb *triangle* referring to the action of the formation of a three-person system.

Procedural Overview

In order to answer the research questions, data gathering were obtained in semi-structured individual interviews. Demographic data and background information were gathered in the *Questionnaire for the Adult Children of Ministers* (Appendix 2) given to the ministers' children prior to the interview sessions. The interviewee was asked to tell his/her life story of the experience of growing up in a minister's family. The key questions asked in the interview were focused to answer the research questions, and

they were given to the participants together with the questionnaire prior to the interview sessions.

The data collected from the interview sessions were audiotaped and transcribed as word documents. The transcript was returned to the participant for validation purpose. An abstract of the findings of the research was given to the interviewees.

Together with the field notes and the researcher's journal entries, the researcher analyzed the data for the coding of patterns and themes. The demographic and background information collected was analyzed and reported together with the findings from the interviews. Finally, implications for educational and leadership ministries were explored and recommendations for future research were suggested. It is hoped that the findings will serve as a voice for PKs to inform clergy parents and broaden Christian leaders' understanding of PKs.

Research Assumptions

The assumptions underlying the current study will be as follows:

1. The experience of the ministers' children shapes their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry.

2. Childhood experiences have an impact on adults even after they have left their parental home.

3. The qualitative methodology is a valid and appropriate methodology for exploring data concerning human experience; in this case, PKs' perception of the experience of growing up in ministers' families (Guba and Lincoln 1988).

CHAPTER 2

PRECEDENT LITERATURE

There is an extreme paucity of research literature on ministers' children. Most

of the works available are anecdotal in nature. The study of ministers' children is often

found embedded in the study of ministers' families (Lee 1987). No research literature can

be found on the attitudes and responses of ministers' children for full-time Christian

ministry. This review covers an analysis of the biblical-theological foundations,

theoretical foundations, social ecological factors of ministers' families, ministers'

families as a center for spiritual formation, and psychosocial development of ministers'

children. The five sections of precedent literature review will provide an exploration of

the relevant and foundational literature to inform the current study.

Biblical-Theological Foundations

This researcher goes to Scripture first, and then to literature from Christian

writers to inform the inquiry into the biblical-theological foundations of this study. This

segment of the precedent literature review focuses on three issues:

1. The biblical-theological understanding of marriage and family.
2. The biblical-theological understanding of ministry.
3. The biblical-theological understanding of identity.

Biblical-Theological Understanding
of Marriage and Family

The Baptist Faith and Message, Article XVIII: The Family adopted at the 1998

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Southern Baptist Convention meeting states clearly that the family is the foundational institution of human society ordained by God. "God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood or adoption" (Ware 1999, 7).

"The Family" amendment to the *Baptist Faith and Message* has four main components. They are: marriage, purpose of marriage, the biblical teaching on the nature of manhood and womanhood, and children as blessing from the Lord (Ware 1999, 6-7). Gangel also has a thorough discussion on a biblical theology of marriage and family, where he examines all the books of the Bible that relate to marriage and family (Gangel 1977a; Gangel 1977b; Gangel 1977c; Gangel 1977d). It is a pioneer work that addresses the "vast vacuum of thorough biblical treatment of family literature (Gangel 1977a, 55). The following discussion will cover a biblical-theological understanding of marriage and family.

Created by God

The family system is established by our Creator God as described in Genesis. God created humankind in His image (Gen 1: 27). Genesis 2 gives a beautiful account of the creation of a woman as the partner of the first man. It is a description of the divine wisdom of God in creating a companion and helper for Adam. The Bible is very clear about marriage as "the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime" (Ware 1999, 6). God instituted the first family for the man and the woman, Adam and Eve.

Equality of Persons, but Different Roles

The woman is made in the image of God. Her role is to be Adam's partner to

fulfill God's plan for their lives. There is equality of persons as both are created in the image of God, but differences in roles. The husband and wife relationship is a reflection of the relationship between Christ and His church (Eph 5:23-24). Husbands are called to "exercise loving leadership while wives exert gracious and submissive support" (Ware 1999, 7). God designed the husband and wife to complement one another in their partnership in the marriage.

Harmonious Couple Relationship

It can be assumed that Adam and Eve lived harmoniously together as a couple before sin entered human history. "The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame" (Gen 2: 25). They were able to communicate so perfectly physically, emotionally, and spiritually that they had nothing to be ashamed of or to hide from each other. The first couple, before the Fall, provides a paradigm for Christian couples to follow. Their fall gives us a lesson to learn from in dealing with sin and temptation. The Christian leader's family must be aware of the reality of sin and temptation.

Purpose of Marriage and Family

The Bible is very clear about the purpose of marriage. It provides fellowship and lifelong companionship for the couple (Gen 2:18, 21-25), gives a blessed context for holy sexual expression in marriage (Gen 2:24; 1 Tim 4:3,4; Heb 13:4), and it is God's means of filling the earth with His images (Gen 1:27-28; 9:1; Ps 127:3; Ware 1999, 6-7). The purpose of marriage and family is to be a blessing to humankind and to glorify God as the members of the family seek to honor God in their relationships.

Gangel summarizes God's intentions in creating marriage and family as: companionship, demonstration of love, sexual fulfillment between husband and wife,

perpetuation of the race, climate for growth and nurture, and visible demonstration of spiritual truth (Gangel 1977a, 55-57; Gangel 1977b, 150-53; Gangel 1977c, 248-52; Gangel 1977d, 318-22). Gangel explores all the books of the Bible to discuss the above purposes (Gangel 1977a; Gangel 1977b; Gangel 1977c; Gangel 1977d).

Function of the Family as a Social System

The creation of the family as a climate for growth and nurture is of special interest to the present study as it seeks to explore the social context for the development of PKs in terms of their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. Gangel calls the family "the primary grouping within the social fabric of any culture" (Gangel 1977a, 59). The functions of the family include: sheltering, government, education, socialization, communication, worship, and service (Gangel 1977a, 59-61; Gangel 1977b, 156-57; Gangel 1977c, 254-55; Gangel 1977d, 325-27).

Christian Parenting

It is the parents' responsibility to train up a child (Prov 22:6). Modeling, teaching, and discipline are important parental responsibilities (Gen 18:19; Deut 6:1-9; Prov 19:18; Prov 22: 6, 15; 23:19; 29:15; and Eph 6: 1-4). Besides taking care of the physical needs of the children, the parents are to teach the children spiritual matters. Bringing up the children to know the Lord is a commandment for parents. Christian parenting is comparable to Christian discipleship (Cook 1999, 184). The goal of parenting is to bring up the children to grow in Christlikeness in the transformation of their lives.

Christian parenting goals. Christian parenting goals are stated clearly in the Bible. For example, Deuteronomy 6:5-9 teaches us to convey spiritual truth to our

children diligently in the context of our daily interaction with them. Raising the children up to love the Lord and building Christian character should be the main objectives of Christian parenting. Children's outward performance are more obvious, and thus can easily be detected, so many parents tend to focus on the outward behavior rather than the heart issues of values. Benny Phillips points out that it is important to move from the outward performance to the inward issues of the PKs' hearts (Phillips 1997, 56). As Proverbs 4:23 states above all else, people guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life. Lee is correct in pointing out that the importance of grace and forgiveness, "Parenting that demonstrates the realities of grace and forgiveness in everyday life provides a solid foundation for the child's spiritual life" (Lee 1992, 145).

Parents' relationship. It must be noted that a healthy marriage of the minister and his wife is an important element for the growth of their children. Herrmann points out in her study on missionary children that the warm marital relationship of the father and mother of missionary children is basic for the development of a sense of security of the missionary children (Herrmann 1977, 106). "It is the quality of the relationship between husband and wife which carried continuity into the relationship between father and his son or daughter and between mother and her son or daughter" (Herrmann 1977, 106). Lee also emphasizes the strength of the parents' marriage as a highly visible demonstration of Christian character in terms of being a living demonstration of values they teach their children (Lee 1992, 197).

Family as a Reflection of God's Relationship with His People

The body model discussed in 1 Corinthians 12 reflects the biblical-theological

teaching on relationships. Kenneth Boa puts relational spirituality as one of the twelve facets of spirituality (Boa 2001). "Because God is a relational being, the two great commandments of loving him and expressing this love for him by loving others are also intensely relational" (Boa 2001, 28). Family relationship reflects God's relationship with His people. The husband and wife relationship is used as an analogy with the relationship between Christ and the church (Eph 5: 22-33). The parent-child relationship is comparable to the relationship of God and His people. In the Lord's Prayer, God is addressed as Father in heaven (Matt 6:9). The relationships in a godly family should reflect the way God treats His people – full of loving-kindness.

Spending Time Together as a Family

The name of the Messiah as Immanuel "God with us" is another recurring theme of the Scripture (Isa 7:14; Matt 1:23; John 1:14; Rev 21:3-5). God is present with His people, and He treats them with loving-kindness. The relationship of the Trinity provides a paradigm for Christian family relationship and communication. The biblical relationships among the family members reflect God's abundant grace and abiding presence. It is a great model from which busy clergy parents can learn. Being too busy with ministry to have time to minister to one's own children is a dilemma. The minister as a father serves to model God's love to His children. His presence is important in building family relationships.

A Model of a Theological Basis
of Family Relationships

The above biblical-theological foundation of marriage can also be expressed from the perspective of the following model of family relationships. In *The Family*, the

Balswicks have a discussion on family relationships in terms of the "overarching biblical themes of *covenant*, *grace*, *empowering*, and *intimacy*" (Balswick and Balswick 1999, 11). The four sequential stages of covenant, grace, empowering, and intimacy are nonlinear (Balswick and Balswick 1999, 11). They interact together for the growth of the family. Family relationship is a dynamic process of growth. The growth is toward mature and "deeper levels of mutual commitment, grace, empowering, and intimacy" (Balswick and Balswick 1999, 20).

Balswicks' Theological Model of Family Relationships

The Balswicks' theological model of family relationships is summarized as follows:

1. "The concept of covenant is the fundamental and essential element in developing a theology of the family" (Balswick and Balswick 1999, 19). Covenant relationship is based on unconditional commitment.

2. The second element, grace, is expressed as "to forgive and be forgiven" in the family relationship (Balswick and Balswick 1999, 25). Great parents are ready to forgive.

3. The third element, empowering, is expressed as "to serve and be served" in family relationship (Balswick and Balswick 1999, 27). Jesus's servant-leadership is the model for the proper use of power in the family. The purpose is to build one another up.

4. The fourth element, intimacy, can be expressed as "to know and be known" (Balswick and Balswick 1999, 31). Open communication is important for family relationships.

5. These four elements of family relationships are derived from how "God enters into and sustains relationships with humanity" (Balswick and Balswick 1999, 21).

6. "The Bible teaches that God desires all humankind to be in relationship with the Creator as well as in relationship with one another" (Balswick and Balswick 1999, 21).

7. Humans are fallen, so they fail in the relationship with God and others.

8. Humans are hopeful because of the salvation of Jesus Christ on the cross.

9. Jesus "is our model and enabler as we seek to live out our lives and relationships according to God's purpose" (Balswick and Balswick 1999, 21).

*The Important of Grace
in Family Relationships*

Lee also points out the importance of living grace. "Clergy should not be expected to be models of living perfection, but of living grace. . . . they earn the freedom to fail with their children, even as they try in grace to grow as parents" (Lee 1992, 146). The grace of Jesus Christ is vital for healthy Christian spiritual formation. In a similar way, grace enables PKs to grow in the difficult dynamics of family and church expectations. As the heavenly Father is gracious, can the minister as earthly father be less in the relationship with their children? Lee wisely stresses that clergy parents be models of living grace.

**Sin as the Obstacle for Growth
in Family Relationships**

Sin is a reality. Sin is the violation of God's principle of love to Him and to humankind as stated in the Great Commandment (Mark 22:37-38). Humans are not just born into a sinful world, we are inclined to sin as descendents of Adam and Eve (Rom 5:12). All have sinned (Rom 3:23; Ps 51:5). It is important for PKs and the ministers' families to understand the role of sin in human behavior. It provides a framework for them to interpret why people behave a certain way. The clergy parents need to face their own sins too, and be able to confess them at the heart level; for example, as Phillips points out, bitterness comes to PKs when they see bitterness in their parents (Phillips

1992, 28). He gives a piece of golden advice: do not criticize the church in front of the children (Phillips 1992, 28).

Biblical-Theological Understanding of Ministry

It is very important to know the meaning of ministry for the minister to maintain a balance in terms of the time spent for the church and his family as well as setting the priorities. Ministry includes both the work at church and in the family. The literal meaning of ministry is service to the Lord. Davis points out that the formation of a covenant people is the beginning of a theology of ministry (Davis 1999, 134).

The Nature of Ministry

The nature of ministry can be summed up as mission, servant, and priesthood (Tenney 1976, 236-37). When the church obeys the Great Commission as stated in Matthew 28:18-20, the church is ministering in terms of missions. Furthermore, "The most common New Testament term for ministry is διακονεῖν with its correlates" (Tenney 1976, 233). The term is applied to the service of all believers (Tenney 1976, 236). To minister is to serve. Another perspective of ministry is priesthood. "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God" (1 Pet 2: 9). Believers are priests. Sacrifices of praise, service, and self-dedication are offered (Tenney 1976, 236).

The Ministry of Leadership in the Church

"Because of their advocacy of the ministry of every Christian, Baptists will always experience tension between the responsibility of every believer and the role of those who are called to leadership in the body" (Davis 1999, 148). *The Baptist Faith and*

Message of 1963 states, "Its [the church's] Scriptural officers are pastors and deacons" (George and George 1999, 142). Stewart Newman sums up in his discussion of *Ministry in the New Testament Churches*:

> A ministry of "servants," recognized for the services they rendered rather than for the position they occupied, represents the purest forms of the ministry in the early church. This is the only form of ministry which is consonant with the essential character of Christian faith. (Newman 1958, 61)

The Purpose of Ministry

When we minister to people with the love of Jesus, we are continuing His ministry on earth. Christ is our role model for servant leadership in ministry. Ministry is "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built" (Eph 4:12). It is for equipping the saints to build up the church. "From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work" (Eph 4:6).

Glorifying God

The ultimate purpose of all Christian service is to glorify God. "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen" (1 Pet 4: 10, 11).

Minister

The term *minister* is from the Latin word referring to *servant*. The verb form

refers to *serve*. *Minister* is a person authorized to exercise spiritual functions in the church; a term also used for the *clergy* in Protestant Church (O'Collins and Farrugia 2000, 159). It refers to a member of the body of men and women in the Christian Church ordained to the service of God (Schaar 1992, 12). The *minister* is called of God to a position of responsibility rather than privilege (Liefield 2001, 776).

Servant Leader

A minister is a servant leader as exemplified by Christ's life and his teaching. "Jesus understood his mission in terms of the Servant of the Lord" (Davis 1999, 135). Jesus clearly stated his mission as a servant leader. "Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:43-45). Jesus illustrated his teaching of servant leadership by washing the feet of his disciples (John 13:1-17).

Responsibilities of the Office of Ministers

Ministers are also called pastors in the church. According to the *Baptist Confessions, Covenants, and Catechisms*, the office of pastors "shall be to read, to admonish and teach, to warn, to discipline, to ban in the church, to lead out in prayer for the advancement of all the brethren and sisters, to lift up the bread when it is to be broken, and in all things to see to the care of the body of Christ, in order that it may be built up and developed" (George and George 1999, 26).

Domestic Qualifications for Ministers

The requirements for overseers in the church are clearly spelled out in

1 Timothy 3:2-7 with a similar list in Titus 1:6-9. The Bible warns the ministers, "If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?" (1 Tim 3:5). The domestic qualifications for ministers are stated in 1Timothy 3:2, 4-5. The ability to lead the family is an important qualification for the minister to lead the church well.

1 Timothy 3:4

"He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect" (1 Tim 3:4). Commenting on 1 Timothy 3:4, Gangel stresses that the minister as a father should not rule like "the autocratic tyrant in the home (which would probably lead to the same leadership style in the church) but being able to manage the affairs of the household *with dignity*" (Gangel 1977d, 327). Knight points out that the word προϊστάμενον (to manage) "emphasizes the leadership role of the one who has been placed at the head of the family or church and who is therefore responsible to rule, direct, and lead" (Knight 1992, 161). The obedience of the children is the evidence of the leadership of the minister. The focus is on the minister's domestic leadership.

Titus 1:6

Besides 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1:6-9 also addresses the qualifications of ministers. "An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient" (Titus 1:6). Similar to 1 Timothy 3:4, 5, Paul stresses obedience. Furthermore, Paul states that the children of the elders should share the faith with their fathers. "The original τέκνα πιστά may mean 'faithful children,' but 'believing children' is intended here, referring to those who are old enough to have made a personal decision" (Hiebert 1978, 430). If the minister's

children continue to lead an unbelieving life, the minister's ability of leading others to the faith will be questioned (Hiebert 1978, 430). In other words, the children's conduct and faith are the evidence of the minister's leadership ability.

Family Relationships Affect Relationships in the Ministry

Lee suggests that a person's family relationships continue to define the present interpersonal relationships (Lee 1987, 5). "As much of the family literature has stressed, a person's relationship to one's own family of origin has defined and continues to define the parameters of present interpersonal relationships" (Lee 1987, 5). The ministers' family life does affect how they function in the ministry.

Be Sensitive to the Ministers' Family Needs

Langford calls the church to be sensitive for the pastor's family duty and needs (Langford 1998). Langford uses the word "abandonment" to describe ministers and their relationship with their family members (Langford 1998, 51). He cites the sad examples of the families of John Calvin, Samuel Wesley, and John Wesley to show a history of family neglect (Langford 1998, 51). Langford points out the unrealistic expectations on the ministers and their families, "On the one hand, a church may demand the minister come to his calling with a family as part of the package. On the other hand, the same minister may be expected to serve the church as if his family did not exist" (Langford 1998, 51).

Calling

In the New Testament, calling denotes God's verbal summons to repentance, faith, salvation, and service (Mark 2:17; Luke 5:32; Mark 1:20; Acts 2:39; Packer 2001,

199). Traditionally, Christians would use the terminology *calling* to refer to their entry to

full-time Christian ministry. Calling can be a complex and confusing issue. "There are

many psychological elements which go into the making up of the 'call of God'. Even if

we limit the discussion to the call to the ministry, it is still complex and confusing"

(Drakeford 1964, 269).

Called to Ministry

The complexity of the call to the ministry is because it involves a series of calls

as suggested by Neibuhr, Williams, and Gustafson (Drakeford 1964, 270; Niebuhr 1956,

64).

> (1) The *call to be a Christian*, which is variously described as the call to
> discipleship of Jesus Christ. . . ; (2) *the secret call*, namely, that inner persuasion or
> experience whereby a person feels himself directly summoned or invited by God to
> take up the work of the ministry; (3) *the providential call* . . . which comes through
> the equipment of a person with the talents necessary for the exercise of the office
> and through the divine guidance of his life by all its circumstances; (4) the
> *ecclesiastical call*, that is, the summons and invitation extended to a man by some
> community or institution of the Church to engage in the work of the ministry.
> (Drakeford 1964, 270)

To add to the confusion and complexity of calling, there are entirely

contradictory concepts about the call to the mission field (Drakeford 1964, 260-70).

> At either end of the continuum, there stands an extremist group. One of these
> maintains that all are expected to go to the foreign mission field unless there is
> some hindrance to prevent them from going. The other idea is that one must not go
> unless he feels a strong individual compulsion to do so. (Drakeford 1964, 270)

No subjective sense of calling. Garry Friesen has an interesting description of

his ordination examination by a council of thirty pastors and church representatives on

the discussion of the meaning of the call to ministry (Friesen 1981, 318-19). In his

personal experience, he does not have any unique sense of a "call" to ministry. He quoted

1 Timothy 3:1 to express his desire to serve the Lord (Friesen 1981, 319). He stresses that while God clearly lay down qualifications for leaders for effective ministry, he does not require a mystical call despite what is often taught (Friesen 1981, 320).

Friesen points out that one's sense of a call should not be "the ultimate anchor in the heavy seas of Christian ministry" (Friesen 1981, 320). He stresses the revealed biblical qualifications over the subjective sense of calling (Friesen 1981, 320). "Instead, believers should enter full-time Christian service for the reasons and with the qualifications established by the Bible" (Friesen 1981, 321).

A special sense of calling. On the contrary, Stagg points out that the term "called to ministry" carries the special connotation beyond the call common to all God's people (Stagg 1988, 29). Sometimes, the term "equipping minister" is used to refer to the person called to equip and prepare others for the work of ministry (Eph 4:12; Stagg 1988, 29). "The life and work of the minister moves on a motivation of 'mission' or 'call'" (Oates 1992, 370). The sense of calling gives the minister a sense of mission and vocational commitment (Oates 1992, 370).

The minister's integrity demonstrates the authenticity of the call. Charles H. Spurgeon emphasizes holiness in the life of ministers, "Whatever 'call' a man may pretend to have, if he has not been called to holiness, he certainly has not been called to the ministry" (Thomas 2001, 20).

Calling is an issue that surrounds the discussion on ministry. The question is on "whether the New Testament ever described a prerequisite "call" to ministry other than the general commands of Christ and the recognition of the local church" (Liefield 2001, 777). "Because of their advocacy of the ministry of every Christian, Baptists will

always experience tension between the responsibility of every believer and the role of

those who are called to leadership in the body" (Davis 1999, 148).

J. I. Packer has a helpful discussion on the issue of calling in the *Evangelical*

Dictionary of Theology (Packer 2001, 199-200). He explores the concept of *call* and

calling through the Old Testament and the New Testament. "The concept passes through

various stages of growth before it reaches its final form in the NT epistles" (Packer 2001,

199). For Packer, besides the general call for all Christians to lead a godly life to serve

the Lord in terms of the Great Commission and the Great Commandment, he emphasizes

the special call from God for leadership ministry (Packer 2001, 199).

Some Interpretations of Calling

Calling is defined as "God summoning men by his Word and laying hold of

them by his power to play a part in and enjoy the benefits of his gracious redemptive

purposes" (Packer 2001, 199). It is an act of "summoning that effectively evokes from

those addressed the response which it invites" (Packer 2001, 199). The concept of calling

develops from a more corporate nature with regard to the nation Israel in the Old

Testament (Isa 51:2, Hos 11:1, Isa 43:1) to the more individual nature referring to the

Christians in the New Testament (Packer 2001, 199).

Calling is also specifically referring to "God's summons and designation of

individuals to particular functions and offices in his redemptive plan" (Packer 2001, 200).

J. I. Packer used the following verses from the New Testament for illustration: Romans

1:1 for apostleship, Acts 13:2 and Acts 16: 10 for missionary preaching, Hebrews 5:4 for

high priesthood (Packer 2001, 200).

Response to Calling and the Present Study

The present research acknowledges that it is ultimately the call of the Lord for individuals to enter into full-time Christian ministry. Some may have a special "calling" experience like that of the apostle Paul (Acts 9:3-6) while others may not have a strong subjective sense of the calling. They may desire to serve the Lord in full-time Christian ministry and have the required biblical qualifications to do so (1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1; 1 Pet 5:1-4; Friesen 1981, 321). The call evokes a response from the individual as to follow the direction of the invitation or not. The response and struggle of Jonah in the Old Testament is a classic example of not responding to God's call to a specific ministry.

Influential personalities in the call. "Studies in the experiences of people who feel that God has called them into the ministry reveal that in this area, as in any other in life, great decisions are influenced by other people" (Drakeford 1964, 273). Drakeford discusses four studies by Southard, Crawley, Felton, and Draughon to show that the pastor is the most important in terms of influential persons in the call (Crawley 1947; Drakeford 1964, 273; Draughon 1962; Felton 1949; Southard 1953). According to the above studies, the second influential person is the mother, and the third is the father (Drakeford 1964, 274). "Even though the call is secret, there is generally some human instrumentality involved" (Drakeford 1964, 274).

In the present study on PKs, the pastor is also the father of the PK. Instead of having three most influential persons for the PK's response to the call, there are just two, the parents. It is important to consider the persons who are influential in the PKs' lives, and seek to better prepare them for their role in the important decision of the PKs in their response to the call (Drakeford 1964, 274). The present research seeks to find out the

social ecological factors that would make the attitudes and responses to full-time Christian ministry positive. As the PKs grow up in the social ecology of the ministers' family system, they develop their identity. An exploration of the biblical-theological foundation of identity development is important for the research concern.

Biblical-Theological Understanding of Identity

The crucial questions of psychosocial development are: Who am I and why am I here? We are made in the image of God. The special "breath" at creation made us unique compared with other animals. The creation accounts for "Who I am." God's creation is the reason and source of one's being. Humanity's chief aim is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever. This is the answer for "Why am I here?": "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (1 Cor 10:31).

Faith in Christ and Identity

In the search for identity, knowing Jesus Christ as the true God and the revelation of God among mankind is the answer to the search. "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14: 6). The great I AM is the way for getting to know God. If one does not know the great I AM, the Creator, one cannot truly know who he/she is as being created by Him. True knowledge is through the revelation of God in Jesus Christ and the Scripture.

Christian Identity

The Christian identity is centered on the person's relationship to God through the redemptive work of Christ as revealed in Scripture (Rom 3:22-25; John 15:1-8).

Christians are granted the status of being children of God as their ultimate identity (John 1:12). The quest for identity is both an inward and upward journey. There are further discussions on identity in the following, such as in the sections of vocational choice and identity formation as well as Erikson's psychosocial developmental theory.

Theoretical Foundations

Having discussed the biblical-theological foundations, this section addresses the theoretical foundations for the research concern. The ecological metaphor used for the family is drawn from the concepts of ecology in nature as suggested by Urie Bronfenbrenner in *The Ecology of Human Development* (Bronfenbrenner 1979). Cameron Lee states in his theoretical framework that the influence of systems outside the family should not be ignored in the study of families (Lee 1987, 1989). Lee's dissertation, "The Social and Psychological Dynamics of the Minister's Family: An Ecological Model for Research", is a thorough piece of work in the application and synthesis of an ecological and systems approach to the study of the minister's family (Lee 1987). The present study seeks to build upon Lee's work on the social ecology of the minister's family.

Lee and Schaar seek to understand ministers' families from the perspective of Bronfenbrenner's four levels of systemic influence (Lee 1987; Schaar 1992). According to Schaar, the most important factor influencing the achievement of gifted PKs is that of family relationships (Schaar 1992). The clear patterns that emerged from Schaar's research are personalities, family relationships, importance of the PK myth, boundary ambiguity between the parents' workplaces and the home, and the effects of macrosystemic influence (Schaar 1992).

Social Ecological Approach and Family Systems Theory

The studies conducted by Urie Bronfenbrenner, Murray Bowen, Edwin Friedman, Vygotsky, Cameron Lee, and Jack Balswick have contributed to the ecological understanding of the clergy family (Bronfenbrenner 1979; Bowen 1978; Friedman 1985; Vygotsky 1978; Cameron Lee 1986, 1989, 1992; Lee and Balswick 1989). Vygotsky's concept of development in context highlights the social interactions that govern a person's experience (Vygotsky 1978). Murray Bowen's Family Systems Theory sheds light on the dynamics of work and family systems of ministers (Bowen 1978). Urie Bronfenbrenner's metaphor of Russian dolls vividly conveys the concept of development as a series of nested structures, each inside the next (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 3). Edwin Friedman proposes the thesis of three interlocking family systems that ministers find themselves in because of their profession: their own nuclear families, the families in the congregation, and the church as a big family (Friedman 1985). Friedman, a student of Bowen, applies the Bowen Systems Theory to clergies (Catholic, Jewish, and Christian) in his book *Generations to Generations* (Friedman 1985). Moreover, Cameron Lee and Jack Balswick call specifically for an understanding of the minister's family and its relationship with the congregation from a social ecological perspective (Lee 1986, 1989, 1992; Lee and Balswick 1989).

**A Social Ecological Approach Calls for
Systems Thinking**

A social ecological approach calls for a systems analysis. "In ecological research, the properties of the person and of the environment, the structure of environmental settings, and the processes taking place within and between them must be viewed as interdependent and analyzed in systems terms" (Bronfenbrenner 1979). In this

research, a systems perspective is used to describe the interdependent interactions and dynamics in the social ecology.

A Paradigm Shift from the Individual to the Organic Whole

The social ecological approach to the study of family calls for a paradigm shift from the individual model to the systems model (Friedman 1985, 40). The systems model highlights the relationships and the resulting dynamics. The systemic forces of emotional process are the focus in the systems model (Friedman 1985, 17, 40). Systems thinking focuses on the organic whole rather than the individual parts. It is a way of thinking characterized by "seeing effects as integral parts of structures rather than as an end point in linear chains of cause" (Friedman 1985, 18). It is natural to think of linear causation or multiple causations instead of systems thinking where all the parts are interacting with one another (Friedman 1985, 16). In systems thinking, the unit of analysis is not on the individual organism, but rather on the interactional system as an organic whole (Lee 1987, 12).

A Shift of Focus from Content to Process

In systems theory, the focus is on the emotional process rather than on symptomatic content (Friedman 1985, 18). The way the family members think and relate can give any incident the destructive power (Friedman 1985, 50). It is not the incident, but the way the family members relate that causes the problem. The emotional processes need to be considered. It is important to distinguish process from content. The focus on process helps individuals see the larger picture.

The systems analysis and the ecological approach must consider the larger picture as a whole. The individual is studied in his or her social context. The organic

whole provides information for the understanding of the individual. The individual is viewed as part of her social context and is capable to change herself in order to change the system.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecology of Human Development

Bronfenbrenner's concepts of the ecology of human development are important for the understanding of the social ecology of ministers' families. An ecological perspective helps to put the ministers' children in the social context, and be able to see the interactive dynamics involved in shaping them.

The Social Ecology of Ministers' Families

Bronfenbrenner's theory of social ecology provides a framework for the study of ministers' families (Lee 1987, 6, 35). "The ecological environment is conceived topologically as a nested arrangement of concentric structures, each contained within the next" (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 22). There are four levels in Bronfenbrenner's theory of social ecological systems. "These structures are referred to as the micro-, meso-, exo-, and macrosystems" (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 22).

Definitions of the Four Structures

The first structure is the microsystem. "The microsystem is a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given setting with particular physical and material characteristics" (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 22). The microsystems of a minister's child involves the family, the church, and the school.

The second structure is the mesosystem, which refers to the interrelations among two or more settings in which the developing person actively participates

(Bronfenbrenner 1979, 25). The mesosystem of a minister's family refers to interrelations of the church and the family.

The third structure is the exosystem. "An exosystem refers to one or more settings that do not involve the developing person as an active participant, but in which events occur that affect, or are affected by, what happens in the setting containing the developing person" (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 25). For example, the deacons' board meeting is the exosystem of the minister's child.

The fourth structure is the macrosystem. "The *macrosystem* refers to consistencies, in the form and content of lower-order systems (micro-, meso-, and exo-) that exist, or could exist, at the level of the subculture or the culture as a whole, along with any belief systems or ideology underlying such consistencies" (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 26). In this study, examples are the denomination, community, and national culture. The macrosystem does affect the developing individual, and without an ecological perspective of all the systems, the influence can easily be overlooked.

The macrosystem is the broader context, and the microsystem is the narrower context. The building blocks for faith development are formed in the level of the microsystem (Neal 1998, 127). The family and the church are examples of an individual's microsystems. "Both the home and the church are part of the process of faith development, sometimes working in concert, sometimes at odds" (Neal 1998, 127).

**The Clergy Family and the Church
as Microsystems**

The current research considers the dynamics of the microsystems of the minister's family and the church in shaping the PKs. For the purpose of the present study, the focus will be on the dynamics of the interactions in the level of two of the

microsystems, the clergy family and the church. The ecological approach serves as a framework that the forces from the larger context will not be ignored in the studies of the microsystems. Once again, the metaphor of the Russian doll as a series of impact is applicable (Bronfennbrenner 1979).

Bowen Family Systems Theory

The social ecological approach calls for systems thinking with the focus on the organic whole of a system. Family Systems Theory also calls for systems thinking with the focus on the emotional processes of the organic whole of the family. It refers to the "theory advanced by Bowen that emphasizes the family as an emotional unit or network of interlocking relationships best understood from an historical or transgenerational perspective" (Goldenberg and Goldenberg 1991, 324). Murray Bowen's Family Systems Theory contributes to the study of the context of the minister's family. Murray Bowen's Family Systems Theory points out some of the intra-family dynamics. Bowen believes that people are shaped by the family and the society in which they live, but they have the capacity for self-directed change because when one member of the system changes, the whole systems changes (Bowen 1978).

The forces at work in families are powerful, and they can impact the members for a long time even after the members have left the system. Family members tend to behave in ways to avoid anxiety, and to achieve a homeostasis. The Bowen Family Systems Theory is a systems theory of emotional functioning (Bowen 1978, 304). The focus is on the emotional processes of the family's relationship systems.

The concepts of Bowen's family systems theory, especially differentiation and triangulation, are helpful for us to understand the minister's family.

Differentiation of Self

Differentiation refers to defining a self or working toward individuation (Bowen 1978, 539). "The separation of one's intellectual and emotional functioning; the greater the distinction, the better one is able to resist being overwhelmed by the emotional reactivity of his or her family, and is thus less prone to dysfunction" (Goldenberg and Goldenberg 1991, 322). Bowen calls the concept of differentiation a cornerstone of the theory (Bowen 1978, 306).

In order to understand differentiation, it is important to distinguish between the solid-self and the pseudo-self postulated by Bowen. The solid self is made up of firmly held convictions and beliefs (Bowen 1978, 200). The pseudo-self is made up of knowledge incorporated by the intellect and of principles and beliefs acquired from others, which can be changed by emotional pressure to enhance one's image with others or to oppose the other (Bowen 1978, 201). It is important to point out that the greater the undifferentiation, the greater the potential problems will be (Bowen 1978, 203).

According to Bowen, it is possible to reconstruct an effective family emotional system for the differentiation of self (Bowen 1978, 539). Differentiation of self also refers to "the forces within the family that make for togetherness and the opposing forces that lead to individuality" (Goldenberg and Goldenberg 1991, 148). There is tension between the family's needs as a unit and the individual family member's needs to develop as an individual. Friedman vividly describes the tension with two pronouns, "I" and "we" (Friedman 1985, 27). That is, the tension is between the collective and the individual. When individuals are not able to differentiate from their family, they experience a condition called fusion with their family.

Emotional Triangles and Triangulation

Besides differentiation, emotional triangles or triangulation is another

Bowenian concept that can help us to understand the emotional process of clergy families

in its unique socio-ecological context. The concept of triangles describes the way any

three people relate to each other and involve others in the emotional issues between them

(Bowen 1978, 306). Emotional triangles form the basic building block in a family's

emotional system (Bowen 1978). Triangulation refers to "a process in which each parent

demands that a child ally with him or her against the other parent during parental

conflict" (Goldenberg and Goldenberg 1991, 332).

The purpose of triangulation is to bring about homeostasis into a family to

decrease the level of anxiety; however, the problem that causes the stress is not being

tackled. It is used to avoid the stress of facing the real issue. In short, the triangulated

person is being used to maintain a certain level of homeostasis to a system. The problem

of triangulation is that the persons involved are more concerned with reducing anxiety

than problem solving.

Friedman's Three Interlocking Family Systems

Edwin Friedman applies the Family Systems Theory to the study of clergy

families. He proposes the thesis of three interlocking family systems that ministers find

themselves in because of their profession: their own nuclear families, the families in the

congregation, and the church as a family (Friedman 1985).

**Fusion of the Microsystems
of Work and Family**

The work of the minister's profession is almost inseparable from his family.

"The life of the congregational family is intricately intertwined with that of the minister's family" (Lee and Balswick 1989, 17). They call for an understanding of the ministry and the minister's family in terms of their relationship to each other from a social ecological perspective (Lee and Balswick 1989, 17). "Our basic thesis is that parish ministry constitutes a unique environment and that the clergy family cannot be fully understood apart from its relationship to this environment" (Lee and Balswick 1989, 17).

The family processes in the church, in the clergy's family of origin as well as in their own nuclear family interact together and impact the members involved. Friedman alerts the clergy to be sensitive to the emotional processes he is involved in as a person and clergy (Friedman 1985). An awareness of the emotional process will free the clergy to address the process rather than just on the content of the presented problem. Friedman's family model provides "insight concerning leadership within a congregation and leadership within a personal family" (Friedman 1985, 2). "There is an intrinsic relationship between our capacity to put families together and our ability to put ourselves together" (Friedman 1985, 3). The priority of a wise leader parent should be giving enough grace and space for the children to define themselves (Lee 1992, 49).

Systems Thinking

Friedman calls for systems thinking in his family theory (Friedman 1985). As a student of Murray Bowen, Friedman applies Bowen's family systems theory to the understanding of broader "families" such as religious congregations (Friedman 1985). Both theories will inform the study of family processes and their impact on the members of the system. Systems thinking differs from linear causation and multiple causation thinking (Friedman 1985, 14-17). Family systems theory focuses on the systemic forces

of emotional process rather than on the content of specific symptoms (Friedman 1985,

17). It creates different strategies for inducing change (Friedman 1985, 17). Systems

thinking is a dynamic concept of taking the whole interdependence of a system or several

systems interacting together. The body is a good example of systems thinking where the

various organs work together. When the organism is examined in its wholistic totality, it

is systems thinking. The biblical metaphor of the church as a body is a vivid illustration

of systems thinking (1 Cor 12:12-30). In systems theory, the structure of the systems

rather than any individual is the focus (Friedman 1985, 19). Another analogy can be

drawn from good chess players, who look at the whole system strategically in order to

win a chess game.

Emotional Processes of the Social Ecology of Ministers Families

Friedman applies the family systems theory to the clergy families in terms of

the Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant traditions (Friedman 1985). Furthermore, Lee applies

Bronfenbrenner's social ecological model to the study of ministers' families in the

Christian Protestant tradition (Lee 1987). In the following, the application of the above

discussions of a social ecological perspective and the systems theory to the study of

ministers' families and PKs will be discussed. The discussion will focus on two

emotional processes, differentiation and triangulation.

Self-differentiation and Leadership

Leadership through self-differentiation is a way of thinking (Friedman 1985,

249). "Because the focus is on the development of the leader's own being, it requires less

knowledge overload about other methods" (Friedman 1985, 249). "Effective family

leadership is not simply a matter of leading people to a goal or to feeling good about their

togetherness. It must also be judged by criteria such as the growth of the followers and the long-term survival of the family itself" (Friedman 1985, 249).

Three Distinct Components

There are three distinct components to leadership through self-differentiation. First, the leader must stay in touch. Second, the leader can take non-reactive, clearly conceived, and defined positions. Third, the leader will be capable to deal with the sabotage to maintain his or her differentiation (Friedman 1985, 229). The concept of leadership through differentiation is an organic one (Friedman 1985, 230). It alerts the leader to his self-differentiation as well as the processes in the work system and family system. Differentiation is a sign of maturity. The sense of the identity of one's true self serves to give a sense of purpose and direction. A clear sense of purpose and direction is required in quality leadership.

"For, as long as the choice to follow or quit has been allowed, the leader has challenged the followers to define themselves, in particular, to decide whether to go along, quit, or find a new leader" (Friedman 1985, 232). The clergy father's ability to differentiate himself and the ability to allow the child to be differentiated will empower the child to form his or her identity and be differentiated. The choices of the child, such as career choice, will be a genuine expression of the self defined, instead of as a way to fulfill some role expectations. The connection of the clergy father with the child is important too according to this concept of leadership and self-differentiation. They need to stay in touch.

Differentiation and the PK Experience

PKs' teen years are a challenge in terms of their identity formation because of

their complex social ecological systems. "The poorly differentiated P.K. may internalize unreasonable expectations and the conflicts that go with them" (Lee and Balswick 1989, 180). The PKs may learn that honest expression of frustration and anger is not acceptable. Some may grow up denying the feeling of such emotions (Lee 1992; Lee and Balswick 1989, 181).

Psychosocial Interaction and Identity Formation

Identity formation or differentiation of identity does not happen in a vacuum. Erikson expressed this in the key term of "vital involvement." The development of personality is a result of interaction between the individual (psyche-) and the environment (social-) (Yount 1996, 48). The PK's identity is formed by the psychosocial interaction between himself and his social ecology. The expectations from the congregation and the parents can accumulate tremendous pressure. Proper boundaries are needed to protect the family from the "fishbowl" experience" (Lee 1987, 1992; Lee and Balswick 1989). The children should be given the freedom to be children: to be allowed the space to be far less than perfect (Sanford 1998). The pressure and stereotypes of PKs can stifle the struggle for identity formation. The focus should be on PKs as Christians, not as ministers' children, because true identity comes from a genuine relationship with Christ.

Differentiation and the Clergy Family

"This means, of course, that leaders have an obligation, to their family . . . , to their Creator, and to their species, to keep working at their own self-differentiation" (Friedman 1985, 233). Friedman calls the differentiation of self the leadership challenge (Friedman 1985, 233).

Fusion of the Work System
and the Family System

Differentiation of self is an issue that the clergy family needs to be aware of because of the nature of the role of the clergy. He is trapped in three interlocking family systems (Friedman 1985). Edwin Friedman proposes the thesis of three interlocking family systems that ministers find themselves in because of their profession: their own nuclear families, the families in the congregation, and the church as a family (Friedman 1985). If the minister is not careful, he can find himself in the midst of the pressure from these three family systems.

Clergy's work is unique compared with other professions in that it is easy to be fused with his family life (Friedman 1985; Lee 1987; Lee and Balswick 1989). The "fusion" can be a problem for the clergy and his family members.

Differentiated Clergy Parents

When the clergy parents are highly differentiated, they can face problems and try to solve them. If the clergy couple is undifferentiated, they might triangle their children into their relationship with the church (Lee 1987, 1992; Lee and Balswick 1989). The children will suffer from unnecessary pressure of the triangulation. Triangling the children in the mesosystem of the interaction of the church and the family is a reflection of parental immaturity.

Differentiation and the Identity Formation
of the PKs

The differentiated parents will trust their parenting and allow the children to make their individual decisions and bear their responsibilities (Lee and Balswick 1989,

180). Thus, the children can grow up with more confidence and differentiation. The differentiation helps them not to internalize unrealistic expectations and conflicts. They are much more equipped to stand the pressure to be perfect and to conform. Note that in the social ecology of the clergy family, unrealistic expectations and conflicts are real issues that PKs need to face.

From the perspective of developmental psychologists, such as Fowler's stages of faith development, the sense of ownership of values occurs after being allowed the freedom to struggle with the issues (Fowler 1992; 1995). The family is a basic unit for a person's psychosocial development. The concept of differentiation also closely resembles Eric Erikson's theory of identity formation (Erikson 1968). Wise clergy parents should be intentional in their own growth as well as their children's growth toward differentiation. They must be aware of the dynamics of the interaction of the microsystems of family and church (Lee 1987). Great care is taken not to violate the boundary issues of the family and the church. The key is in the ministers' hands as to how differentiated they themselves are.

Triangulation and the Clergy Family

In the study of PKs, a clear understanding of triangles and differentiation is helpful for a clear picture of the dynamics involved in the social ecology. The following questions will help to clarify the issues involved in the development and growth of the ministers' children (Lee and Balswick 1989, 176).

> 1. Are the relationships among the clergy couple, the congregation, and the PK relatively differentiated?
> 2. Are there tendencies toward forming triangles?
> 3. In what kind of triangles do PKs get entangled? (Lee and Balswick 1989, 176)

Triangulation is used to avoid the anxiety of facing the real issues honestly. Understanding triangulation can enable the real issues to be exposed.

When the clergy family has a low level of differentiation with regard to its relationship with the church, the clergy family can become easily triangulated into the issues of the church and the home (Lee and Balswick 1989). The children are especially vulnerable in being triangulated into the tension between church and the clergy home. They might even be the scapegoat to be used for the clergy parents to avoid facing the tension between the clergy couple and the church. In some situations where there is a fight between the clergy and the church members, the clergy's children can be unfairly triangulated into the dispute as the members can approach them so easily at church (Lee 1992). The children might not be mature enough to be able to bear the pressure of the tense relationship between their father and the members of the church.

The clergy parents may also give pressure to their children to behave perfectly. Scripture verses such as 1Timothy 3:4, 5 and Titus 1:6 are sometimes used to justify the parents' position of imposing strict rules on the children. What the church thinks and the success of the father's ministry can be used to justify the parents' use of strict rules (Lee 1992). Triangulating the church into parenting responsibility can be detrimental for the children as they may end up blaming the church for all these strict rules and regulations.

**Reaction of Ministers' Children
in Triangulation**

PKs grow up with two strikes of triangulation against them (Lee and Balswick 1989, 179). First, they were left emotionally unprotected with no parental advocate to filter the congregation's demands, and second, they had no target for their frustration

(Lee and Balswick 1989, 179). It is important to note that triangling is a way of avoiding responsibility for our feelings and a refusal to take a stand (Lee and Balswick 1989, 179). Godly parents will try their best to shield any harm from their children. Triangulating the children into the clergy's relationship with the church is equivalent to inflicting harm on the children.

Triangling the ministers' children can be used as a way to survive the pressures the ministers are experiencing. Lee and Balwick wisely point out that PKs' behavior is not the real issue (Lee and Balswick 1989, 177). The real issue can be the conflict between the congregation and the minister. Both the clergy couple and the congregation may choose to focus on the PK's behavior as the conflict rather than addressing specifically the real issues of their conflict because the latter will produce a lot of anxiety (Lee and Balswick 1989, 179). Triangling in the PKs to the conflict between the congregation and the minister can diffuse some of the interpersonal tension between them.

Triangulation is an avoidance behavior. It is the avoidance of having to face the truth. The emotional impact can range from confusion to anger. It is negative on those who are unfairly being triangulated into the relationship. It can add confusion to children who are too young to understand the issues and the interpersonal dynamics among all the adults involved. The reaction can be emotional cut off, rebellion, or quietly playing the role of scapegoat (Juergensen 2000, 66).

The concept of boundary is important as an antidote for triangulation. "When the boundary between the clergy family and the congregational family are adequate, where triangling is kept to a minimum, P.K.s can grow up with a full appreciation for the value of the parish ministry" (Lee and Balswick 1989, 182).

Social Ecological Factors of Ministers' Families

With the framework of a social ecological approach and the discussions of the emotional processes of Family Systems Theory in the previous sections, the following section will focus on the social ecological factors of the unique social ecology of ministers' families. The social ecological factors are from the interaction of the subsystems of the social ecology.

For the size of the current study, the discussion will be mainly on the social ecological factors from the interrelations of the church as a microsystem and the minister's family as another microsystem. "The absolute minimum context, however, for understanding the minister's family is its relationship to the congregation" (Lee and Balswick 1989, 59). The following will highlight some of the important themes or factors found in precedent literature. Most of the literature found is not from an ecological approach, except the works by Schaar, Lee, and Balswick (Lee 1987; Lee and Balswick 1989; Schaar 1992).

Stress in Ministers' Families

Being human but expected to live as perfect saints can be a very stressful experience for everyone in the glass house. The following titles reflect the wide interests of stress in clergy families: *The Stressors of Clergy Children and Couples: Reliability and Validity* (Ostrander, Ceglian, and Fournier 1993), *The Stressors of Clergy Children Inventory: Reliability and Validity* (Ostrander, Henry, and Hendrix 1990), *Work and Well-being in the Two-Person Career: Relocation Stress and Coping among Clergy Husbands and Wives* (Frame and Shehan 1994), *Denomination Perceptions of Stress and the Provision of Support for Clergy Families* (Morris and Blanton 1994), *Get a*

(Balanced) Life! (Preston 1998), *Protection from the Pressures* (Perry 1997), *The*

Influence of Work-Related Stressors on Clergy Husbands and Their Wives (Morris and

Blanton 1994), *The Tensions of Our Calling* (Noyce 1980), *Clergy Divorce: A Study of*

Issues and Emerging Ecclesiastical Structures (Goodling and Smith 1993), *Is the*

Pastor's family Safe at Home? (Goetz 1992), *Marriage Counseling with Clergy Couples*

(Houts 1982), *Stress and Purpose: Clergy Spouses Today* (Oden 1988), and *Sources of*

Marital Stress in the Clergy (Barbour 1990). From the titles, one can see that stress is a

concern in the study of clergy families.

Stressors of the Ministers' Families

Ministers' families enmeshed in the minister's work system experience

stressors unique to the family-work systems of the ministry (Lee and Balswick 1989).

Some unique stressors have been identified and discussed in research and precedent

literature (Gibb 1986; Lee and Balswick 1989; Ostrander, Henry, and Hendrix 1990;

Schaar 1992). Lee and Balswick point out that the origin of the stressors can be difficult

to assess (Lee and Balswick 1989). Common stressors related to ministerial family

experiences such as frequent relocation, isolation, and church expectations can be family-

originated or ministry-originated (Graham 1982; Mace and Mace 1980; Moy and Malony

1987; Grauf-Grounds 1988.).

The present research is interested in the children's perception of the stressors

related to the ministerial occupation and how the stressors have shaped their attitudes and

responses toward full-time Christian ministry. The various clergy family members may

perceive the stressors differently, and thus the members may process the stressors

differently and have different outcomes for the stressors (Gibb 1986, Hsieh and Rugg

1983; Moy and Malony 1987; Ostrander, Henry, and Hendrix 1990; Schaar 1992).

Living with a Calling to the Ministry

"Don't you understand? God called me to serve these people. My work is to do the Lord's work. How can I refuse? They need me" (Butler 1998, 104). The spouse or children of any pastor with the above mentality will find it hard or even guilty to compete with the congregation for the time and love of the pastor. "Are ministry and marriage conflicting covenants?" (Noyce 1980, 18). Living with a calling to the ministry can be both a stressor and a blessing. Marriage and the ministry are both covenants – not merely contracts (Noyce 1980, 18). The commitment is long term and unconditional by implication.

The solution is in recognizing that "each vow is given to God" (Noyce 1980, 20). Therefore, faithfulness to God is our ultimate goal (Noyce 1980, 20). We are called to serve God; therefore, we should seek to serve God faithfully in the family as well as in the church. In other words, the pastor's family is also the part of the ministry. The success of marriage and the ministry are closely related. The core of ministry is an expression of love to our heavenly Father and to fellow humankind. The marriage covenant is reflective of our covenant with our heavenly Father. Commitment is the logical beginning point of family relationships (Balswick and Balswick 1999, 20). It is the essential factor of marriage and family relationship. When the minister is not a loving person, his very being contradicts the calling of the ministry.

Langford explores the influence of a family of origin on the call to ministry (Langford 1998, 73-83). He uses his own personal story to address the failure to balance his time and attention between his calling and his family. His book and dissertation, *The Pastor's Family*, is a story of confession and recovery from family neglect (Langford

1998). He uses his own case in pointing out the danger of perpetuating a

multigenerational cycle of negative family dynamics (Langford 1998, 79).

"Consequently, I acknowledge that my experiences as the oldest child in an alcohol-

affected family influenced my call to ministry, and I also understand that similar

influences affect others who have chosen to be helpers in society" (Langford 1998, 79).

Time Stress of Ministers as Parents

The time pressure is a serious issue because of the demanding nature of the

ministry. The pastor's role is one of the few professions that requires twenty four hour

availability. The time pressure is one key issue the pastor needs to manage. Proper

boundaries need to be set; otherwise, the pastor finds it hard to be available for his own

family. The Maces listed the components that contribute to the pastor's heavy schedule:

> The pastor has many roles: administrator, organizer, pastor (including counseling),
> preacher, priest, and teacher.
> The pastor's heavy workload.
> Working when others are free.
> The element of uncertainty in terms of personal time. The pastors are "on call
> twenty-four hours a day".
> Much of the work is emotionally exhausting.
> His sense of vocation makes him compulsive. Some become "workaholics."
> (Mace and Mace 1980, 61-65)

Parental Availability

Quantity and quality of time spent with children are equally important.

Without enough time, it is impossible to have quality time. Parental availability is closely

related to positive experience in growing up as a PK. Campell shows that PKs who had

both parents available to them as children make up the largest percentage who went to

services frequently (Campell 1998). According to his research, the childhood experience

is most positive when both parents are available. Interestingly, Campell reports that PKs' perception about the distinctiveness of the clergy family, its cohesiveness and pressure to succeed are also strongly associated with the availability of parents (Campell 1998, 50, 55). On the other hand, not spending enough time with the children could have a far-reaching negative consequence. The children will have bitter feelings about the ministry because it seems that the ministry has taken their father, mother or sometimes both parents away from them (Campell 1998; Lee 1987, 1992).

Intimacy with Parents

The childhood variable of distance-intimacy with regard to the experience of growing up in the home of a minister has significant correlations with the variables of the adult PK in terms of doctrine, involvement, and calling according to Ristuccia (Ristuccia 1991). Ristuccia states that the more intimacy prevailed in the PK's childhood, the more likely the PK is to make adult religious choices similar to the father's (Ristuccia 1991). The empirical findings are placed within a theological framework of the Fatherhood of God (Ristuccia 1991). The Trinitarian model of intimate relationship is the model for the earthly family relationship: communication and connection are crucial.

Involving Ministers' Children
in the Ministry

Shelley has a good discussion about raising the children to love the church (Shelley 1988, 72-79). He points out that allowing children to enter the parents' world when they are interested to do so is important. Shelley is right in stating that involvement with the children does not always have to mean adults doing kids' things. It can be the other way round, for example, bringing the children to special meetings if they enjoy them. Involving the older children in our ministry such as visitation can be enlightening

too. When the children touch the lives of others together with their parents, they will understand their parents more, and thus have more respect for the meaning of the ministry. Ralph Nite Jr. shared about an experience of waking up at mid-night to assist his father to lift up a handicapped elderly lady of the congregation from the floor back to her bed. He was touched deeply by his father's genuine love for the helpless by being involved (Morgan and Nite 1998, 102-105).

Balance between Family and Ministry

The lack of time with children is a major problem in most pastors' homes. The famous evangelist Billy Graham shared the same struggles. "The traveling ministry was a costly investment of my time as far as my sons were concerned. Both of them, like many of their generation in the sixties and seventies, went through severe tests of their faith and standards" (Graham 1997, 834). In his autobiography, he states what he would do differently about his life: ". . . and I would spend more time with my family. . . . Every day I was absent from my family is gone forever. Although much of that travel was necessary, some of it was not" (Graham 1997, 852-53).

Mathewson shares his pastor father's solution by giving the family an extended time to offset his lack of availability. Instead of resenting the father's intense involvement, the children look forward to the extended family time such as their annual camping trip (Mathewson 1992, 33-35). As in Billy Graham's case, he tried his best to live a normal life for the time he was at home by spending as much time with the children as possible (Graham 1997). Furthermore, the spiritual input and availability of Ruth Graham and her parents for their children were crucial for their children's spiritual development (Graham 1997).

Boundary Violations

Since the microsystems of church and the minister's family are very closely related because of the nature of work of the minister, boundary problems can occur both psychologically and physically. The term "boundary" refers to "interactions that occur where two social systems meet" (Lee and Balswick 1989, 80).

Lee and Balswick describe the triple threat in ministry (Lee and Balswick 1989, 79). "In particular, the minister's family is confronted by the triple threat of three interrelated *boundary* problems: idealization, impoverishment, and intrusion" (Lee and Balswick 1989, 62-63).

Lee lists six boundary violations in the social environment of PKs.

1. Congregations expecting too much of the clergy family's time and energy.
2. Clergy neglecting to maintain clear boundaries with their congregations.
3. Letting the demands of the pastors' professional role and image contaminate the parent-child relationship.
4. Idolizing the clergy family.
5. Making clergy responsible for their children's actions, and PKs responsible for their parents' actions.
6. "Triangling" PKs into conflicts that have nothing to do with them. (Lee 1992, 53)

PKs grow up in a complicated social environment. When the boundaries are not clear, the expectations too unrealistic, and triangulation too stifling, the PKs growing up will not have enough space to differentiate themselves to a clear sense of who they are. It is important to note that ministers' families are not passive victims of their congregation and when the ministers are sensitive to the boundary issue, they can improve the situation proactively (Lee and Balswick 1989, 81; Juergensen 2000, 215).

Expectations and Perfectionism

The theme of role expectations placed on members of the clergy family is

intense and often emotionally charged (Lee and Balswick 1989, 59). The stress from unrealistic expectations on the clergy couple and their children can be very detrimental to the growth of the whole clergy family. Unrealistic expectations and perfectionism can be from the congregation or from the clergy couple themselves. When clergy couples and the congregation have a clear understanding of the problem, preventive measures can be taken for the healthy nourishment of the clergy family.

Drake reports that 87% of the clergy children in his research feel an enormous amount of pressure to be better than other children because their father is a minister (Drake 1995). It is interesting that although 61% of the clergy children in the study believed that the ministry could be a rewarding profession, 93% indicated that they had no desire to be part of a ministerial family in their adult lives (Drake 1995). Among the variables unique to the pastoral home, the strongest predictor of weak religious commitment is the PK's perception that more is expected of him/her (Anderson 1995).

Perfectionism

A recurring theme in the literature on PKs is about the danger of perfectionism. *I Have to Be Perfect: And Other Heresies* is a book written by a PK to confront the issues of expectations on and perfectionism among PKs (Sanford 1998). Another PK simply wrote a book called *Perfectionism* to examine the phenomenon (Adderholdt-Elliott 1987). Little attention has been given to this subject, and yet it is one of the most critical issues PKs face. Perfectionism is a result of social learning that occurs during childhood (Adderholdt-Elliott 1987, 7). "Family pressure, self-pressure, social pressure, media pressure, and unrealistic role models combine in a Big Push that propels you into a lifetime of worrying, feeling guilty, and working too hard" (Adderholdt-Elliott 1987, 7).

Lee and Balswick call it the "tyranny of the best" (Lee and Balswick 1989, 167). When PKs are constantly told that they could do better, they may end up like chasing the wind. It seems that their goal can just be beyond their reach (Lee and Balswick 1989, 173). A book written by a PK, *Perfectionism: What's Bad about Being Too Good*, explores the problem of perfectionism (Adderholdt-Elliott 1987). Children need the grace to be allowed to fail and be human (Lee 1992; Adderholdt-Elliott 1987) Let grace abound in the clergy home.

In the study on PKs, it is necessary to examine perfectionism to understand the pressure of growing up in the social ecology of the ministers' families. Being children of ministers does not imply being perfect although many people unrealistically assume the ministers and their family members to be perfect. Bauer confronts the six myths of PKs and calls for a critical examination of the myths about the ministers' families as being perfect (Bauer 1994).

Expectation of Perfectionism
on the Clergy Couple

The "goldfish bowl" experience of being watched all the time is stressful. The Maces called the game "Let's pretend" (Mace and Mace 1980, 55). In order to meet the expectations, the clergy couple has to maintain "a surface harmonious relationship" (Mace and Mace 1980, 55). The implication is simple: the clergy couple has to choose between hypocrisy and humiliation if they have a problem. The inconsistency and hypocrisy of the clergy parents' life perceived by the PKs are detrimental to their spiritual development. Hypocrisy is very detrimental. After a funeral service of a famous pastor, the four adult children commented sarcastically on the superhuman descriptions attributed to their father. "Who *was* that man they spoke of?" (Butler 1998, 104). The

above pastor has worked so hard for others, and yet has totally neglected the family.

Hypocrisy is the main obstacle for genuine faith development.

Expectations from the Congregation
for Perfectionism on the PKs

The expectations PKs experienced can originate from both outside

(congregational expectations) and inside (values) of themselves (Lee 1992). Many PKs

suffer from the notion that they have to be perfect because they are the pastors' kids.

Bauer is right in pointing out that one of the myths about PKs is that they are perfect

(Bauer 1994). The congregation wants to see perfect models of Christian living in PKs.

Sometimes PKs behave as if they were acting in a drama. The structure of

Cameron Lee's book on PKs is based on that of a drama, with growing up in the clergy

family as the stage, the expectations as script, and the people involved as the players (Lee

1992). To some PKs, their self-worth is dependent on the comments of those who are

watching how they perform (Lee 1992). Lee's metaphor of drama depicts vividly the

"fishbowl" experience of the pastor's family (Lee 1992, 26). The perceived pressure to be

perfect could create a strong fear of failure and insecurity in the children (London 1998,

side 4). As parents, the pastors and their wives should be sensitive enough to protect their

children from the congregation's unreasonable expectations. Lee points out well that

children who are left alone to interpret what others expect may distort or exaggerate

expectations in the process (Lee 1992, 102). According to Anderson's research on the

religious commitment of PKs, perception of expectations was the most frequently

mentioned dislike (Anderson 1995).

Expectations of Following
the Clergy Father's Steps

PKs live under a high level of expectations and stereotypes because of their

complex social ecology. There are both positive and negative expectations/stereotypes on

them. The expectations that PKs will one day follow the father's steps to be a minister is

a common positive expectation on them. Very often, it is simply assumed that the PKs

will become a pastor. As for the female PK, she is expected to get married to a pastor if

the denomination will not ordain woman (Lee and Balswick 1989; Lee 1992).

"Pastors' children automatically go into ministry" is one of the six myths about

ministers' children, which needs to be confronted (Bauer 1994, 31). Ministers' children

are simply assumed to become ministers one day (Lee and Balswick 1989, 173). PKs

who come from a long lineage of pastors will suffer the most pressure for their career

choice (Lee and Balswick 1989). Expectations and calling for full-time Christian ministry

are different. The PKs are caught in the microsystems of church and family. The

assumption that they will go into full-time Christian ministry can be from the

congregation, their parents and even themselves. When facing career choice, the PK

might feel guilty if he has not chosen to be a minister (Lee and Balswick 1989, 173).

"Many pastors' children are called into ministry; some are coerced into ministry. Others

simply are not called into ministry; some sadly resist God's call out of their own

rebellion" (Bauer 1994, 31). God takes the divine initiative in calling individuals into

ministry. Responding to the call to full-time ministry or not is a decision between the

individual and God.

Not an Extension of Clergy Parents

A person should not be expected to be in full-time ministry when he grows up

just because his father is a minister. PKs are not the extension of their clergy parents. They have and they need to form their own identity. Lee also gives the warning that such an expectation can hinder the PKs' progress toward self-identity (Lee 1992, 96). They should be allowed to develop in the same way as the children from any Christian families. They should be given room to make their own choices in career and in ministry according to their desire and gifts.

The development of Billy Graham's son, Franklin, is a good illustration (Graham 1997, 835-39). He developed from a rebellious son to an ordained minister. It is the fruit of his parents' unconditional love, perseverance, and continuous prayers in hope from the human perspective. Ultimately, God is the one who calls him into ministry, and he responds.

Career choice is related to internal factors such as one's talents and self-image as well as external factors such as parental approval, the family's sense of identity and value to the larger community (Lee 1992, 97). Sometimes, it takes trial and error for a person to determine the career choice.

Viewing PKs as the representation and extension of their parents can involve the subtle pressure of the PKs going into full-time ministry (Lee 1992, 97; Bauer 1994, 31). The pressure is especially high on the clergy's son. As young children, they might be asked again and again by the church members whether they will be pastors like their parents some day (Lee 1992, 97). The daughters might feel similar pressure too if the denomination ordains women. "Pastors' children who are struggling to maintain an identity separate from their parents' may feel that entering the ministry is tantamount to personal suicide" (Lee 1992, 98). It is important to note that going into the ministry

depends on the call from God. Being a family member of a clergy will not automatically qualify the person to be called.

To Become a Pastor or Not

Expectations and calling are not the same. PKs need the freedom of career choice. The freedom to choose is a boundary issue. The PKs need the room to seek the Lord's will in terms of career choice. Instead of playing the role of God, the clergy couple needs to pray for their children. Using the lens of systems theory discussed earlier, career choice relates to differentiation of self. When the congregation and the parents intervene with the PKs' career choice, they are triangulating themselves into the relationship of the PKs and their career choice.

PKs need to wrestle with the expectation, from their mesosystem (the interaction of the family and the church), for them to follow their parents' step into the ministry. Many need to wrestle with the issue of expectations and calling as well as the guilt of not choosing to be a pastor as expected (Lee 1992, 100). Lee points out the two realizations with which PKs need to wrestle. "(1) Fulfilling the Lord's call is not the same as meeting human expectations, and (2) one need not be in a formally recognized ministry to serve God" (Lee 1992, 100). Compared with children from other Christian families, PKs need to struggle with the issue of career choice more. They need to come to terms that Christians can serve God in many different capacities other than full-time Christian ministry. They also need to wrestle with expectations too (Lee and Balswick 1989).

Vocational Choice and Identity Formation

Vocational choice is a specific aspect of the identity formation process of

identity (Steele 1988, 92). In order to make a genuine choice, an individual may have to do some trial and error. PKs need to be allowed freedom to make their career choice. This ties in with Bowen's concepts of differentiation, especially the concepts of the solid-self and the pseudo-self (Bowen 1978, 200-03). When being pressurized to make a choice to ease the stress, it may reflect a choice from the pseudo-self. It will not last long. Lee gives the warning that the expectation of PKs to go into ministry automatically can hinder the PKs' progress toward self-identity (Lee 1992, 96).

Career and identity. The struggle of career and identity is more prevalent because of the unique social ecology of the minister's family in its relationship with the church. The pressure of expectation from the mesosystem (interaction of the microsystems of family and church where the PKs are actively involved) is much greater than a non-PK. Vocational choice can become an issue. The visibility and people's expectation can make life miserable for the PKs. When they go into the ministry, the past experience in their mesosystem may affect their function as pastors trapped in the three interlocking family systems again (Friedman 1985). Unresolved emotional process can be an obstacle for their function in the new family systems.

Ministers' Families as a Center for Spiritual Formation

PKs have the advantage over other children in meeting many missionaries, ministers, and other PKs. Some may even stay in their homes for a few days. One of the joys of PKs is to know missionaries and many godly people first hand. Parents can take the opportunity to tell the life stories of these people to nourish their children as living examples of the faith. Genuine faith lived at home speaks louder than many sermons.

Family as the Forming Center for Spiritual Development

The experience of growing up in one's family of origin is an important piece of building block for the formation of the Christian minister. Family life and religious commitment are closely related. The family is the forming center for spiritual development (Thompson 1989).

Johnson's research indicates that religious students tend to come from religious homes and non-religious students tend to come from non-religious homes (Johnson 1973). "The data indicated that students report their parents as generally similar to themselves in religious commitment and that religious students tend to perceive their families as more happy, warm, and accepting than nonreligious students" (Johnson 1973, 144). Earlier studies have also indicated a strong correlation between parent and child religious needs and values (Newcomb and Svehla 1937; Allport et al. 1948). Dobbins also points out the importance of Christian parenting in terms of preparing the children for Christian service (Dobbins 1951, 219). "One of the holiest privileges of Christian parents is to dedicate their children to the service of Christ, and then help the children to find their place in the will of God in whatever vocation they may follow" (Dobbins 1951, 219).

Family and Faith Development

In order to inform the study on the attitudes and responses to full-time Christian ministry of the adult children of ministers, an examination into the literature concerning family and faith development will provide foundational information for the discussion.

The family is a universal social structure. "Families may be thought of as *ecologies of faith consciousness*" (Fowler 1992, 337). Fowler uses the term *consciousness* to include "life-style and patterns of action as well as the images, beliefs and values which inform and arise from them" (Fowler 1992, 337). Fowler points out that the ongoing process of formation and transformation is a *social* matter (Fowler 1992, 337).

Fowler asks an important and relevant question for this study, "Can these characterizations of a sequence of 'ways' of composing and committing in faith help us make sense of the way different types of families sponsor (or block) their members in faith development?" (Fowler 1992, 337). The present research is seeking to understand the way social ecological factors of the ministers' family sponsor (or block) the development of the ministers' children in terms of their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry.

Family as a Center for the Transmission of Values

The results of Warren's study on clergy children were supportive of a difference between clergy and non-clergy children in terms of moral-religious emphasis (Warren 1995). Attitudes and responses are the reflection of the inside and the outside of the PKs toward full-time ministry respectively. "I've appreciated the fact that I feel at home in Scripture and in the presence of God. Part of that is due to the environment in which I was raised" (London, Smith, and Stowell 1987, 133). Shaping the attitudes and responses of the PKs toward full-time ministry relate to the result of the interaction of the external dynamics and the internal perception of the PKs toward the value of Christianity.

**Family Relationships and
Religious Commitment**

According to Anderson and her research on PK religious commitment,

relationships are important in the transmission of values (Anderson 1995). "Solid parent

child relationship does impact the PKs positively in terms of religious commitment. The

ability to form and maintain relationships is important for religious development"

(Anderson 1995). The unique variables relating to clergy families will make positive

relationship difficult if not impossible (Lee 1987). The time stressor and the frequent

relocation are some of the examples (Lee 1987; Schaar 1992).

The strongest predictor of weak religious commitment was the PK's perception

that more was expected of him/her (Anderson 1995). Intimacy with each parent correlates

positively with religious commitment (Anderson 1995). According to Anderson's

research, the more religiously committed PKs came from homes characterized by a

positive parental relationship with positive spiritual role models, quality family time,

freedom to be themselves, and boundaries between church and home (Anderson 1995).

She also points out that influences other than being a PK appear to have a greater impact

on the religious commitment of the PK (Anderson 1995).

**Instilling Godly Leadership Qualities
in the Children's Lives**

Dobbins points out the influence of Christian parents in terms of opening the

hearts and minds of their children to the call to the Christian ministry (Dobbins 1951,

219). The family is the first place of socialization for the children. Parents are leaders,

and they can instill leadership qualities in their children's life. The influence on their

children is life-long. It is sad to see that in this world of materialism and individualism,

parents are too busy for their children. Christian parents are no exception. The pastors'

families are also suffering from the lack of time for their children.

Psychosocial Development of Ministers' Children

The concepts of identity formation will inform the study on PKs. Identity

formation does not happen in a vacuum. Erikson expressed this in the key term of "vital

involvement": "the development of personality as a result of interaction between the

individual (psyche-) and the environment (social-)" (Erikson, Erikson, and Kivnick 1986,

32; cited in Yount 1996, 48). The PKs' identity is formed by the psychosocial interaction

between themselves and their social ecology.

Erikson's Psychosocial Developmental Theory

"Problems of identity are part of the experience of every individual in a world

of increasing change" (Welchman 2000, 1). The notion of personal identity is the focal

point in the psychosocial developmental theory. Erikson's concern is the fundamental

questions of life and identity. He provides a deeper understanding between the person and

society. "The eight pairs of psychosocial poles from infancy to old age are: basic trust vs.

mistrust, autonomy vs. shame/doubt, initiative vs. guilt, industry vs. inferiority, identity

vs. identity confusion, generativity vs. isolation, generativity vs. stagnation, integrity vs.

despair" (Welchman 2000, 57).

Identity

The term identity "connotes both a persistent sameness within oneself

(selfsameness) and a persistent sharing of some kind of essential character with others"

(Erikson 1959, 102). Erikson admits that the term identity retains some ambiguity

(Erikson 1959, 102). It can refer to: individual identity, a continuity of personal character, ego synthesis, and solidarity with group ideals (Erikson 1959, 102). Identity is the definition of self by oneself and others. "My identity is what I sense most deeply as myself, but it is also that by which I am identified and recognized" (Welch 2000, 1).

"Identity crisis" is a term from Erikson's psychosocial theory. Erikson's whole life is characterized by the quest for his own identity. Erikson describes identity versus role confusion in adolescence (stage five), and all Erikson's eight stages of psychosocial development is about personality development. The psychosocial task in adolescence is to resolve the identity crisis triggered by the rapid physical changes in the body. Identity formation is a lifelong process of development in addressing the question of who I am. "Identity formation neither begins nor ends with adolescence: it is a lifelong development largely unconscious to the individual and to his society" (Erikson 1959, 113). Erikson's focus on identity shed light on the understanding of the identity formation of PKs.

Identity Formation of Ministers' Children

The present researcher uses the term identity formation to refer to the lifelong psychosocial development of the PKs in their unique social ecology. It is important to point out that the clergy parents and the congregation should "recognize" that PKs need space for their free role experimentation of identity formation (psychosocial moratorium). ". . . for it is of great relevance to the young individual's identity formation that he be responded to, and be given function and status as a person whose gradual growth and transformation make sense to those who begin to make sense of him" (Erikson 1959, 111).

Many PKs have struggled with the question, "Who am I, really?" At the adolescent stage, Erikson describes the "danger" of this stage as role/identity confusion

(Welchman 2000, 54). According the Erikson, "The wholeness to be achieved at this stage I have called a sense of inner identity. The young person, in order to experience wholeness, must feel a progressive continuity between that which he has come to be during the long years of childhood and that which he promises to become in the anticipated future; between that which he conceives himself to be and that which he perceives others to see in him and expect of him" (Erikson 1968, 87). Many people relate to PKs on stereotypes than on who they really are as individuals. Many PKs learn to play their part according to the perceived expectations. This can make identity formation difficult.

Summary

Being able to be aware of the dynamics of the unique social ecology and still be able to differentiate enough to set the boundaries are signs of leadership maturity. The experience of grace is powerful in the growth of our children. Grace is powerful enough to transform a person. The key word in parenting is grace (Lee and Balswick 1989, 173). Children need to experience grace from their parents in order to live a life of grace. "Clergy should not be expected to be models of living perfection, but of living grace. . . . they earn the freedom to fail with their children, even as they try in grace to grow as parents" (Lee 1992, 146).

The grace of Jesus Christ is vital for healthy Christian spiritual formation. Christian spiritual formation and identity formation are closely related. "Spiritual formation and identity development are also mutually supportive processes" (Steele 1988, 95). Grace also enables PKs to develop a positive identity formation instead of

identity confusion in the difficult dynamics of family and church expectations, and in the

unclear boundary between the two microsystems in which they are involved.

A Profile of the Current Study

The precedent literature review has demonstrated the complex social

ecological systems of PKs, and a need for empirical research. The biblical-theological

discussions of marriage and family, ministry, and identity have laid a foundation for

research.

The precedent literature review of the theoretical foundations, such as

Bronfenbrenner's ecology of human development, Bowen's family systems theory,

Friedman's three interlocking family systems, and Lee's ecological and systems approach

to the study of ministers' families, serves as a framework for the empirical research on

PKs (Bowen 1978; Bronfenbrenner 1979; Friedman 1985; Lee 1987).

The discussion of the social ecological factors of ministers' families provides

some background information for the coding of themes and patterns of the factors that

shape the attitudes and responses of PKs toward full-time Christian ministry. The

precedent literature review on ministers' families as a center for spiritual formation and

the psychosocial development of ministers' children sheds light for an understanding of

the spiritual and psychosocial development of PKs as related to their families.

The design of this study was significantly impacted by the precedent literature

review. As the present researcher developed the Semi-Structured Interview Questions for

Adult Children of Ministers (Appendix 1) and the *Questionnaire for the Adult Children*

of Ministers (Appendix 2) for this study, the influences of each area of precedent

literature review were evident.

The methodological design of the current study seeks to explore, identify, and analyze the social ecological factors in shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry. The current study utilized the perception of the adult PKs on their experience of growing up in ministers' families. Through the life experience of the adult PKs, recurrent themes and patterns were identified and analyzed. The qualitative research methodology enabled the researcher to dig deep into the phenomenon and to examine the data to construct a rich and meaningful picture of a complex and multifaceted situation (Leedy and Ormrod 2001, 147).

The qualitative research methodology also provided a window for an understanding of the PKs' perception of their life experience of growing up in ministers' families. The results from this study can serve as a voice for PKs to broaden Christian leaders' understanding of PK lives. They can also add to the limited amount of research on PKs, and inform clergy parents who seek to raise PKs with a positive attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

This descriptive qualitative research was designed to identify and analyze the

impact of the social ecological factors experienced by ministers' children that shape their

attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. This chapter describes the

methodology and procedures used in this research. In exploring the social ecological

factors in shaping the attitudes and responses of the ministers' children toward full-time

Christian ministry, four research questions were discussed.

Research Question Synopsis

The four research questions that drove this study were as follows:

1. What are the social ecological factors that positively shape the attitudes and responses
   of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?

2. What are the social ecological factors that negatively shape the attitudes and responses
   of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?

3. Among the social ecological factors, which factors are predominant in shaping the
   attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?

4. What is the effect of the predominant social ecological factors on shaping the attitudes
   and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?

Design Overview

Qualitative research was employed in order to explore and analyze the social

ecological factors of the ministers' family system in shaping the attitudes and responses

of the ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry. The naturalistic paradigm was chosen because its axioms provided a better fit for the sociobehavioral phenomena for the current study on PKs.

This research seeks to study the life experience of PKs from their perspective. This qualitative research involved an investigation of lived experience of adult PKs, and the research fell under the tradition of ethnographic study and was informed by life history research (Gall, Borg, and Gall 1996, 593). The qualitative life history research tradition involves the study of individual's life experience from his/her perspective (Gall, Borg, and Gall 1996, 593).

Naturalistic Inquiry Paradigm

The methodology of this qualitative research is in keeping with the naturalistic inquiry paradigm (Guba and Lincoln 1988; Lincoln and Guba 1985). The qualitative paradigm is also called the constructivist approach or naturalistic, the interpretative approach, or the postpositivist or postmodern perspective (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Smith 1983; Quantz 1992; Creswell 1994, 4).

Social scientists consider the qualitative research tradition as a more suitable choice for the investigation into phenomena such as life experience and sociobehavioral phenomena (Gall, Borg, and Gall 1996, 591; Guba and Lincoln 1988, 96). Moreover, if there is a limited amount of previous research to guide a new study, a qualitative methodology is needed (Guba and Lincoln 1988). The research literature on ministers' children and their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry is very limited; therefore, it is appropriate to employ the qualitative methodology.

Guba and Lincoln provide axioms/basic assumptions that distinguish the

conventional (positivistic, scientific, quantitative) and the alternative (naturalistic,

qualitative) paradigms in the social sciences (Guba and Lincoln 1988, 93-96). The

scientific and naturalistic paradigms are more than just different preferences for

methodologies (Guba and Lincoln 1988, 93). The key differences are the nature of

reality, the relationship of the knower to the known, the outcomes of inquiry, the

dynamics of action, and the role of values in inquiry (Guba and Lincoln 1988, 93-96). In

the study of PKs, Schaar cites Guba and Lincoln's axioms and explains their relationship

to her case study (Schaar 1992, 222-25). The naturalistic inquiry paradigm includes the

following five axioms (Guba and Lincoln 1988, 93-96).

1. The nature of reality: Individuals construct their own realities, which results in multiple perspectives of realities. The individuals function metaphorically as actors of the realities created. This axiom is important for the inquiry into the experiences of the PKs. Rather than using an extreme relativist approach in this study, the multiple realities refer to the individual interpretations of experiences as the PK constructs the meaning of the perceived reality. In addressing issues of ultimate reality, the Biblical position of certainty in ultimate reality is being upheld in this study.

2. The relationship of the knower to the known: The researcher and the participants are interactive in the interviewing process. They are interactive by the very presence of the researcher. There are three levels of relationship: response, disturbance, and interaction. This axiom informs this researcher to be aware of her role in gathering the information from the participants. Particular attention will be given to the building of trust in the interviewing process so that the participants will feel more freely to share their life stories and experiences in growing up in the ministers' families.

3. The outcomes of inquiry: Instead of causality, the researcher looks for patterns and relationships of meaning (Lincoln and Guba 1985, 151). The concept of an unfolding or emergent design as the inquiry process goes on is important (Guba and Lincoln 1988, 98). Whether the working hypotheses can apply to some other time or contexts depends on the similarity of time or contexts. In short, the anticipated outcomes are local working hypotheses useful for understanding with an emic perspective (Guba and Lincoln 1988, 112). The emphasis of qualitative research is on the form of collaborative inquiry between the researcher and the participants (Guba and Lincoln 1988, 99).

4. The dynamics of action: Elements found in a situational context are in dynamic interaction. The natural setting, rather than a laboratory, is appropriate for the observation of the dynamics of action. Thus, separating some particular sets of relationships to label them "cause and effect" is arbitrary and meaningless. This axiom is relevant for this current study to explore some insights into, rather than looking for cause and effects, the complex patterns in the social ecology of the ministers' families that shape the PKs' attitudes and responses to full-time Christian ministry.

5. The role of values in inquiry: The study on humans is not value free because humans are not value free. The values of the researcher and the respondents inevitably influence the research process. It is important to note the cultural differences between the researcher and the respondents. The choice of research paradigm also reflects the researcher's value as well. Guba and Lincoln suggest the choice of inquiry paradigm to be based on the fit of the paradigm axioms to the phenomenon to be studied (Guba and Lincoln 1988, 96).

Qualitative Research Methodology

The qualitative research methodology was employed because very few projects had been conducted on ministers' children, and none could be found on the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry. A qualitative research helps to define what needs to be studied, as it is descriptive, thematically analytical, and able to generate hypotheses. As discussed in the above section, the qualitative research methodology fits the subject matter of the study on the life experience of PKs (Gall, Borg, and Gall 1996, 591).

Through interviews, questionnaires, observations, field notes, data analysis, and narrative analysis, this study revealed how the experience of growing up in a minister's home impact upon the PKs' attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. A comparison and contrast of the multiple perspectives illuminated an understanding of the phenomenon (Creswell 1998; Guba and Lincoln 1988). The subject matter of this research involved the study of the impact of interpersonal relationships and social structures. The use of qualitative research is desirable in providing a rich and thick

description of the phenomenon under the study. Thick description means the complete and literal description of the individual being studied (Merriam 1998, 29-30).

Population

The targeted population for this study is ministers' children who are adults in full-time Christian ministry or those preparing for full-time Christian ministry in North America. An accessible population refers to "all the individuals who realistically could be included in the sample" (Gall, Borg, and Gall 1996, 220). In this study, they included adult PKs who were students, staff, and faculty at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Sample and Sampling Technique

For this study, a non-probabilistic sample was used. The sample was drawn from the population of ministers' children who were adults preparing for full-time Christian ministry or in full-time Christian ministry on the campus of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, which had one of the largest enrollments among the conservative evangelical seminaries in North America. There were over 3300 students, with about 75% male students and 25% female students (Southern Baptist Theological Seminary 2004). The conservative evangelical nature of the institution added homogeneity to the sample. The present researcher, as part of the community, had access to the sample, which added a factor of convenience.

The sample included seminary students, faculty, and staff who were ministers' children. The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is conservative evangelical in nature, so those who choose to attend or teach there are also conservative evangelicals. The faculty and students represent conservative evangelical Christians. Although the

seminary belongs to the Southern Baptist denomination, the student body includes those coming from other denominations as well.

The researcher sent flyers (Appendix 4 and Appendix 5) to the all campus mailboxes of current students, faculty, and staff members of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, including the Seminary Wives Institute (SWI), in order to identify the ministers' children on campus. She requested those who were ministers' children to fill in and return the reply slip. She also advertised twice in *Towers*, a biweekly newspaper of SBTS, to request PKs to participate in the study.

In the first round of recruitment effort, she received twenty-three responses. About a month later, a second round of recruitment for volunteer PK participants was conducted by placing flyers in all campus mail-boxes and an advertisement in *Towers* again. She sent more than four thousand flyers altogether to the campus mail boxes. Large posters were also put up on the student services notice board in the lobby near the post office.

Seeing the difficulty of recruiting adult PKs for the study after the first round of advertising, the present researcher decided to include all responses that met the inclusion criteria, instead of just limiting the sample to thirty as original planned. In about two months of recruitment effort, she received a total of thirty-four responses that met the inclusion criteria. The researcher conducted interviews with them individually.

Sample Delimitations

The rationale underlying each of the sample delimitations was as follows:

1. The sample of participants was comprised entirely of volunteers who respond to the researcher's request for an individual interview. The sample was further delimited to

faculty, staff, and students on the campus of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

2. The sample was delimited to ministers' children at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for the convenience of access by the researcher.

3. The sample was delimited to ministers' children at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary because it has one of the largest enrollments among the conservative evangelical seminaries in North America.

4. The sample was further delimited to ministers' children who are adults (twenty-one and older) because of their cognitive ability to report on their experience of growing up in the minister's family and their relative distance from their families of origin to report on their childhood experience more objectively.

5. The sample was further delimited to ministers' children from North America for the similarities in culture.

6. The sample was further delimited to ministers' children whose fathers were ministers for at least ten years before the ministers' children were eighteen years old. This allows enough time for the ministers' children to be shaped by the experience of growing up in the minister's family in their formative years of childhood.

Limitations of Generalization

The accessible population for this study was restricted to the adult ministers' children at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Therefore, generalizing to the target population of adult ministers' children is thus limited. Additionally, generalizations made concerning the results of this study are limited to the population from which the samples are generated. This study is exploratory in nature. Only future research will establish the degree to which these findings can be generalized to a larger population. The following sums up the limitations of generalization of the research findings.

1. The results of this research are limited in generalizability to adult ministers' children who are at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, including the seminary students, the staff, and the faculty.

2. This study does not necessarily generalize to ministers' children outside the conservative evangelical field.

3. This study is limited in generalizability to ministers' children whose fathers are full-time Christian ministers.

4. The results of this research do not generalize to ministers' children who are internationals.

Instrumentation

"The human is the instrument of choice for the naturalist" (Guba and Lincoln 1988, 105). The qualitative methodology falls under the naturalistic inquiry paradigm (Guba and Lincoln 1988, 92). The semi-structured interview questions (Appendix 1) and the *Questionnaire for Adult Children of Ministers* (Appendix 2) designed by the researcher for demographic and background information of the participants were used as instruments to collect data for the study.

The interviewee was asked to tell his/her life story of the experience of growing up in a minister's family. The key questions asked in the interview were focused to answer the research questions. The instruments in a qualitative study also include previous theoretical issues and concepts, the researcher, the participants, and the in-depth interviews. Based on precedent literature, the researcher designed key interview questions addressing the research questions. The interview questions and the questionnaire were given to the ministers' children prior to the interview sessions.

The data collected from the interview sessions were audio-taped and transcribed as word documents. The transcript of the interview was sent back to the each participant for validation purposes. Together with the field notes and the researcher's journal entries, the researcher analyzed the data for patterns and themes to answer the four research questions. An abstract of the findings was sent to each participant.

Procedures

Prior to the collection of data, permission was secured from The Southern

Baptist Theological Seminary to conduct the research study using human subjects on its

campus. Upon receiving permission from the seminary, the researcher started her

research. Further permission from the respondents themselves was secured, and was kept

in record. Demographics of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary were secured

from the seminary. An advertisement about the research was put in the Seminary

newspaper, *Towers*. The researcher also sent flyers (Appendix 5; Appendix 6) to the on

campus mailboxes of the seminary faculty, staff, and students to invite those who were

PKs to participate in this research project.

A professor teaching in the area of marriage and family at The Southern

Baptist Theological Seminary was employed to validate the semi-structured questions

(Appendix 1) for the interview and the *Questionnaire for the Adult Children of Ministers*

(Appendix 2) to collect demographic and background information. Three volunteers –

who approximated the appropriate sample – were selected for pre-testing. They were

invited for an interview individually and asked to respond to the questionnaire to provide

the necessary feedback to correct and fine-tune the format and clarity of the inquiry

intended.

All the interview findings were anonymous. The interviewees were marked

with made up names to distinguish them for the convenience of discussion. The

demographics were used as part of the data for this research. Each interview was about an

hour in length. The interview was semi-structured and open ended. The interviewee was

asked to tell his/her perception of the influences of his family and social ecology to

his/her attitude and response towards full-time Christian ministry. Demographics were collected with a brief demographic and background information questionnaire called *Questionnaire for the Adult Children of Ministers* designed by the researcher. The key questions used in the semi-structured interviews were designed to answer the research questions.

For the purpose of narrative analysis and accuracy in reporting data, the interviews were recorded in audiotapes so that the exact details and the nuances of the way the life story being told can be registered and analyzed. The way the participant communicates his/her life story adds meaning to the content itself. All subjects were asked to give informed consent for the research and for being audio-taped. Audio-taping the interviews ensured accuracy and efficiency. The researcher noted her observations of the interviewees as they told their life stories and experience as PKs. Data from field notes and the personal journal of the researcher contributed to the analysis of the life stories and experience of the participants.

The data from the interviews were transcribed and typed up as word documents. The transcript of each interview was sent back to the interviewee for verification. The data were analyzed for the emerging patterns that answered the four research questions. The demographic and background information were also analyzed and compared. Finally, implications for educational and leadership ministries were explored and recommendations for future research suggested. It is hoped that the findings will serve as a voice for PKs to broaden Christian leaders' understanding of PK lives. An abstract of the findings of the research was given to the interviewees.

The Researcher

"In interpretive research, the researcher herself becomes an instrument who

asks certain questions, summarizes the story, analyzes texts for themes, and interprets meaning along with the participants" (Chua 2001, 74; Heliker 1995, 75). Thus, the present researcher finds it necessary to make her context explicit for the readers to maintain a sense of awareness of her possible influence upon the research.

This research was partly shaped by the researcher's experience as a Chinese pastor's wife raising two minister's children (PKs). During the years when her husband was pastoring a church in Hong Kong, and she was working full-time ministering to students, she experienced the impact of the demand of ministries on her family. Raising children was a challenge when both parents were so busy with the ministry and work. She was concerned about the potential impact of the family on the children, especially on their attitudes toward the ministry. Furthermore, the researcher also had ample opportunities to meet with the parents of her students. From her counseling experience on students and parents, it appeared to her that the family was very important for the students' healthy development. The above contributed to her interest in family studies.

The interest in families and children as well as her role as a mother of two PKs developed into actual research work when the researcher came to the United States for doctoral studies in Christian Education and Leadership. The exploration started from research into leaders' families and PKs for her course work. Then, her study became more focused on the social ecological factors in shaping the PKs. If ministers' families have so much potential as a training ground for their children to be future church leaders, there is a need for a thorough understanding of the dynamics involved in the shaping process. From the researcher's observation, there seems to be no empirical research available related to the factors in shaping the attitudes and responses of PKs toward full-time Christian ministry.

Finally, the present researcher acknowledges that as with any other interpretive research, there are the possibilities of researcher's bias and influence because of her educational and cultural background as well as her theological position, which are unavoidable although she has made an effort to be as objective as possible in her analysis of the findings.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the analysis and reports the findings of the study in accordance with the four research questions. By using semi-structured interview questions (Appendix 1), the *Questionnaire for Adult Children of Ministers* (Appendix 2), and observations, this study explored the social ecological factors involved in shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry. The findings are displayed in the form of descriptive analysis.

Compilation Protocol

The study was carried out by using semi-structured interviews and questionnaires given to the participants before the interviews. The questionnaire served to collect demographic data and information related to the PK experience in terms of their social ecology. Together with the data collected from the interviews as well as the researcher's journal and observation, the data from the questionnaire also added details and background information for the descriptive analysis. Permission to use the data was received by the participants' informed consent forms (Appendix 4).

The researcher marked the value of the Likert scale items on the questionnaire by hand. The average score was computed in Excel. Each item has four scales, which are 1 (strongly agree), 2 (agree), 3 (disagree), and 4 (strongly disagree). The findings of the questionnaire were incorporated in the descriptive analysis. The demographic and

background information as well as the written comments were reported as part of the

descriptive analysis. All the findings were anonymous. The interviewees were marked

with fictitious names to distinguish them for the convenience of discussion. Each

interview was about an hour long. The interview was semi-structured with some key

questions designed to answer the four research questions.

The researcher conducted thirty-eight interviews between September 3 and

November 21, 2003. She found out during the interview processes of four interviews that

the interviewees did not meet the inclusion criteria. The first one did not live in the same

household with his father when he was growing up. The second one was a student's wife,

but she was not enrolled in any program on campus or working on campus, and the third

one was a student on campus, but her father was not a full-time minister until later in her

life. The fourth one was an SWI student, but her father was a bivocational minister.

Furthermore, on top of the thirty-eight interviews, two scheduled interviewees did not

show up. After a few follow up phone calls, the researcher still could not get in touch

with them to find out the reasons. It might be due to the busy schedule of these two

students. The researcher had also received two telephone enquiries from students' wives,

but they did not meet the inclusion criteria, such as the father needed to be a full-time

minister before the PK turned eighteen. There was also an enquiry from a student that just

turned twenty.

Therefore, the researcher was able to use the information from thirty-four

successful interviews and the questionnaires from the same group of PKs that had met the

inclusion criteria.

For the purposes of narrative analysis and accuracy in reporting the findings

from the interviews, the interviews were recorded on audiotapes so that the exact details

and the nuances of the way the PK life experience being told could be registered and analyzed. The researcher noted her observations of the interviewees as they told their life stories. Data from the field notes and the personal journal of the researcher contributed to the analysis of the experience shared by the participants. The findings were reported in the descriptive analysis.

The data from the interviews were transcribed and printed as word files. The transcripts of the interviews were sent back to the interviewees for verification. The researcher examined the data and implemented the procedures for conducting a content analysis as suggested by Gall, Borg, and Gall (Gall, Borg, and Gall 1996, 358). The data were analyzed for the emerging patterns and themes that answered the four research questions. The report and analysis of findings were completed at the end of February. From the recruitment process in late August 2003, to the completion of the analysis in late February 2004, it took about half a year for the research process of data collection and analysis.

The report of the findings begins with the contexts of the participants. Then, the chapter discusses the patterns and themes of the social ecological factors identified that cut across all participants. Throughout this chapter, transcript extracts are utilized to illustrate the points being addressed. An abstract of the findings of the research was given to the interviewees.

The notations in the transcript extracts adapted the transcription conventions employed in life story research (Chua 2001, 88; Holstein and Gubrium 2000, 243).

Brackets [ ], researcher's comments.
Capitalized words, emphasis on a particular word or syllable.
Colons (: or ::), prolongation or stretching of sounds. Multiple colons indicate prolonged stretch and pause.

Double slashes (//), researcher's questions and responses while the PK is talking.
Ellipses (. . .), omission of some intervening talk or irrelevant information.

Descriptive Analysis

The findings and generalizations drawn from this study were informed by the

results of a descriptive research methodology. Its intent was to explore and describe the

social ecological factors in shaping the attitudes and responses of the ministers' children

toward full-time Christian ministry. The analysis of the data was used to present the

picture of the research concern. Therefore, a descriptive analysis was the most

appropriate choice of the representation of the data. As for statistical measurements,

descriptive statistics as defined by Gall, Borg, and Gall was chosen. Descriptive statistics

is defined as "mathematical techniques for organizing and summarizing a set of

numerical data," such as the central tendency (Gall, Borg, and Gall 1996, 175).

Since the focus of this study was on the description of the social ecological

factors involved in shaping attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time

Christian ministry, the choice of descriptive analysis contributed to the clarity of the

verbal portrait. It was not a causal study, which required the use of statistics of

probability. In short, this research was asking the question, "What are the social ecology

factors involved in shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-

time Christian ministry?" The choice of descriptive analysis of the themes and patterns

served to give the answer.

The descriptive analysis provided a generalized portrait of the perception of the

PKs and the descriptive statistics was able to show the prominent characteristics of the

social ecological factors of the ministers' children. The result allowed for an

interpretation of the effect of the social ecological factors in shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry.

Findings and Display

Due to the nature of this ethnographic study, informed by life story research, the report of findings differs from that of a general qualitative research study report. The chapter begins with the contexts of the participants in terms of demographic and background information that enable the readers to have a fuller understanding of them in their contexts. Then, the discussion of themes and factors in accordance with the four research questions follows. For the readers' reference, the percentage, mode, mean, and standard deviation of the findings of the Likert scale response questions of the *Questionnaire for Adult Children of Ministers* are listed in Appendix 3.

Participants' Contexts

This part exhibits a brief profile of the adult PKs who were the participants in this study. Fictitious names were selected to ensure anonymity. The interview transcripts, the questionnaires, field notes, and journals revealed the participants' contexts in terms of their demographic data and socioeconomic background. The participants' contexts provided a framework for the proper identification and interpretation of patterns and themes.

Personal Context

The data of the thirty-four participants showed an age range of twenty-one to fifty-four (seventeen in the age range of 21–25, thirteen in the age range of 26–30, one in the age range of 31–35, two in the age range of 36–40, and one in the age range of 51–

60). In short, over 88% of the participants were under the age of thirty. The participants included twenty-two males and twelve females. Seventeen were married and seventeen were single. As for ethnic background, they all put down white or Caucasian. They were born and raised in the United States.

There were twenty-eight students, three faculty members, and four staff members (one staff member was also an SWI student). There were nineteen Master of Divinity students, one Master of Arts of Worship student, one Master of Church Music student, five Boyce College students, and two Seminary Wives Institute students (one student was also a staff member). Boyce College is an undergraduate college considered one of the five schools of SBTS. The Seminary Wives Institute (SWI) is listed in the Boyce College for equipping seminary wives for the ministry.

Twenty-nine PKs were born into the ministry. Their fathers were ministers before their birth. Five PKs' fathers became ministers when the PKs were children (one was eighteen months old, one was three years old, two were seven years old, and one was eight years old).

When asked about whether the PKs had lived in a parsonage, fifteen indicated part of the time, fourteen reported never, and only five stated all the time. The feelings toward living in an parsonage can be negative. Wesley felt as if he lived in the church.

> We all felt it [his father's stress] of course. We always lived in a parsonage, right next to the church. We threw a rock from the house, and broke the church window! We broke some more stuff too. We lived at a church though.

Socioeconomic Background

Four PKs rated their financial status while growing up as "not enough," eight rated as "just enough," seventeen rated as "enough," and five rated as "more than

enough." The following examples demonstrate the financial burden some PKs had to go through with their parents.

Fourteen PKs' mothers worked outside the home with the following careers: seven teachers, one secretary, one interpreter, one nurse, one editor, one accounting clerk, one orthodontic assistant, and one dental assistant. Many PKs expressed the reason for their mothers to work was to supplement income. In two cases, the ministers needed to become bivocational for some time in their ministry for financial reasons to support the family.

Denominational Background

Twenty-seven of the participants grew up in the Southern Baptist denomination. Five were from other Baptist denominations, and two were from independent churches (non-denominational churches). The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is from the Southern Baptist denomination; therefore, there is a high proportion of Southern Baptists on campus. When asked about their present denominations, there were thirty-one from the Southern Baptist denomination, one from another Baptist denomination, and two from independent churches.

Home States and Relocations

It can be hard for the PKs to name their home states because many of them had lived in different states when they were growing up. It reflected the high mobility of ministers' families. The thirty-four participants reported one hundred and twenty-one relocations, and many did not include moving within the same city. Therefore, the average number of major moves per PK as reported was more than three times while they

were growing up. The average number of the states they grew in was slightly more than two states.

The thirty-four participants reported seventeen states in the U.S.A. as their home states, with eight from Kentucky, where the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is located. Most of them reported the last state they lived in prior to coming to the seminary as their home state. The seventeen home states reported were: Kentucky (n=8), Tennessee (n=3), Oklahoma (n=3), Ohio (n=3), Indiana (n=2), North Carolina (n=2), Missouri (n=2), Florida (n=2), South Carolina (n=1), Georgia (n=1), Arkansas (n=1), Alabama (n=1), Mississippi (n=1), Texas (n=1), New York (n=1), Pennsylvania (n=1), and California (n=1). The PKs were from a diverse geographical background in the United States.

The thirty-four participants listed twenty-six states in the United States and three other countries they had grown up in: Kentucky (n=9), Tennessee (n=7), Oklahoma (n=5), Ohio (n=5), Texas (n=5), Alabama (n=4), North Carolina (n=3), Missouri (n=3), Indiana (n=3), Georgia (n=3), Arkansas (n=3), Pennsylvania (n=3), New York (n=2), Florida (n=2), Colorado (n=2), South Carolina (n=2), Virginia (n=2), Kansas (n=1), New Mexico (n=1), New Jersey (n=1), Washington (n=1), California (n=1), Mississippi (n=1), Maryland (n=1), Connecticut (n=1), and Illinois (n=1). Three of them had lived overseas when their parents became missionaries. One PK lived for about three years in Canada, another one lived in Africa for a year, and the third one spent three years in Brazil.

Out of the thirty-four participants, twelve reported that they grew up in one state in the United States. Upon closer examination, only three actually grew up in the same church from birth, and they reported zero number of moves during their father's

ministry. Five PKs' fathers moved to a different church when they were very small and stayed there to pastor, such as when Tom was eighteen months, Vera and John were two years old, and Tony and Mathias were four years old. They considered themselves as growing up in the latter church. They also reported that they did not really remember the moves. Most of these PKs expressed that they knew it was an exception in their cases of staying in the same church for such a long time. Four PKs, even though they reported growing up in the same state, had to move three to seven times to different parts of the same state because of their fathers' change of churches. In short, only eight out of thirty-four participants reported a strong sense of longevity in the same church.

Number and Sizes of Churches
PKs' Fathers Served in

The average total number of churches the PKs' fathers served in when the PKs were growing up was about three. When the PKs were growing up, three fathers served in one church, eleven served in two churches, seven served in three churches, six served in four churches, five served in five churches, one served in nine churches. Furthermore, one PK could not remember how many his father had served in. He just remembered his father had changed churches many times.

Most PKs reported the sizes of the churches their fathers served in when they were growing up in terms of the Sunday worship attendance. Tim Davis, a knowledge specialist in the Market Research and Intelligence at LifeWay Resources, said in an email correspondence with the researcher on December 11, 2003, "LifeWay's definitions for small, medium and large churches are as follows: small 0 – 99 in Sunday School Average Attendance (SSAA), medium 100 – 499 in SSAA, large 500 – 999 in SSAA, and mega

1000+ in SSAA." Since most of the participants did not specify how they defined church size when they reported their church sizes, and most told the researcher that they just reported what they saw on Sunday, the present researcher adapted the definition provided by LifeWay. The numbers were adapted to refer to Sunday worship attendance. Since the PKs' fathers served in an average of three churches, and the sizes varied, the average size or the one that the PK stayed longest were chosen to give the readers a frame of reference to picture the background of the PKs.

While the PKs were growing up, one father served in a small church, twenty-three served in medium size churches, six served in large churches, and four served in mega churches. In other words, most PKs grew up in medium size churches with less than 500 in Sunday worship attendance. Since a lot of participants (n=27) grew up in the Southern Baptist denomination and a majority of them (n=31) indicated their present denomination as Southern Baptist, the following data are provided as a frame of reference although the number of churches when the PKs were growing up were different. According to the information provided in an email correspondence with the researcher on February 17, 2004 by the List Management Department of LifeWay Christian Resources: the current number of Southern Baptist churches according to the church sizes are: 22988 small churches, 9518 medium churches, 744 large churches, and 273 mega churches.

Analysis of the Research Questions

The questionnaires and the interview questions addressed the four research questions. Each research question was addressed by examining the interview data and the

questionnaire items or clusters that relate to that research question. Themes and patterns were identified according to the rich and thick data provided by the interview transcripts. The questionnaires and the field notes served to supply further information for the interview transcripts to be clearly understood.

The focal point of the most significant positive influence on the PKs was their families, especially the life of the father as a parent and a minister. The microsystem of the family seemed to outweigh any other microsystems, such as church and school in terms of positive influence. Most PKs reported their negative experience in terms of church conflicts and forced terminations of their fathers. In other words, the negative influence was perceived as from the interaction of the PKs' fathers and the church, that is, in the mesosystem.

Most reported that the influence of the school in their formative years was not as important as their experience in their families and the churches. A number of PKs reported the positive influence of Christian professors and college ministers when they were in college with regard to their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. It seems that from their school experience, many reported the college experience as positively influencing them in their faith commitment. It reflected Fowler's stage four of faith development: Individualistic-Reflective faith (Fowler 1995, 182). Most students left home in their college years when they were about eighteen. The college experience provided opportunities for them to own their faith away from their families and churches.

Some of the themes identified may not necessarily be classified as social ecological factors in a strict sense. Since the PKs came from the Christian faith background, many of them reported spiritual and theological factors. The transforming

power of God, calling experience, and prayers are some of the examples. Since the research is exploratory in nature, the present researcher finds it important to report these factors.

Furthermore, transcript extracts were selected for the purposes of illustrations. Because of the limited amount of space, it is impossible to report all the details of the transcripts from the interviews. The researcher selected the transcript extracts that were most representative of the themes or factors under discussion. In order for the transcript extracts to be as close to the spoken language as possible, some grammar rules were intentionally ignored.

In addition, for the purpose of clarity in presenting the findings, the discussion is divided according to the four research questions, and under each research question, the factors were grouped under the three major microsystems of the PKs. Therefore, repetitions were sometimes unavoidable. Some of the experiences can be categorized under different headings. Furthermore, categorizing and compartmentalizing human experience can be artificial at times. Therefore, although the findings were reported in four major sections according to the research questions and the microsystems of the PKs, they should be interpreted with the awareness of the holistic nature of human experience. The researcher is also intentional in letting the voices of the PKs speak for themselves through transcript extracts. It is the researcher's hope that the readers can "hear" what the PKs try to communicate from their experience of growing up in ministers' families.

Research Question Number 1

The first research questions asked, "What are the social ecological factors that positively shape the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time

Christian ministry?" The interview data and the questionnaire responses have contributed to the identification of the themes to address research question number 1.

Questionnaire item number 41 asked the respondents to indicate their degree of agreement to the following question, "I think my experience growing up as a PK has positively influenced me in terms of my attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry." The four-point Likert response scale offered the following choices: "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." The survey respondents (n=34) revealed that a total of twenty (58.82%) "strongly agree", ten (29.41%) "agree", and four (11.76%) "disagree" with the statement. In other words, thirty respondents (88.23%) agreed that their experience growing up as a PK had positively influenced them in terms of their attitude and responses toward full-time Christian ministry.

The Family Microsystem

In sorting through the interview data, the researcher discovered that most of the PKs (n=30) identified their parents as an important influential factor in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. Many PKs (n=13) ranked the influence of parents as the number one influential factor. Some (n=9) singled out the father as the most influential person in their life as well as in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. Words such as "no doubt," "without a doubt," and "undoubtedly" were used by some PKs to emphasize their certainty that the father was the most influential person in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry.

The questionnaire data also revealed the impact of the family on the PKs as very strong. Thirty (88%) interviewees agreed that their experience of growing up as PKs

had positively influenced them in terms of their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. The findings from the interviews and the questionnaires are consistent. They point to the impact of the experience of growing in the ministers' families.

The family is the forming center (Thompson 1996). From precedent literature and the biblical-theological foundations of families, the result of the ministers' families as the primary influential factor in shaping the PKs is not surprising. To be more specific, many PKs included (n=22) their fathers as the biggest influence on their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. Since the research was on attitudes and responses of the PKs toward full-time Christian ministry, it was not surprising that the focal point of the findings was on the fathers because they were ministers, directly related to the ministry on a day to day basis.

The findings show that a healthy family is very important in shaping the PKs positively in terms of their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. Curran identified fifteen traits of a healthy family in *Traits of a Healthy Family* (Curran 1983). The healthy family does the following: communicating, affirming and supporting, respecting others, trusting, sharing time, fostering responsibility, teaching morals, enjoying traditions, sharing religion, respecting privacy, valuing service, and getting help (Curran 1983). The PKs that reported positive experience also indicated that they had good family relationships and their families reflected the traits of healthy families identified by Curran.

The Strong Influence of the Family

The findings of the present study reflect the factors for positive religious

commitment in Anderson's research (Anderson 1995). According to Anderson, the more religiously committed PKs came from homes characterized by a positive parental relationship with positive spiritual role models, quality family time, freedom to be themselves, and boundaries between church and home (Anderson 1995). In this study, most PKs reported their parents as the most significant factor in shaping their attitudes and responses toward the ministry.

Father as the Most Influential Factor

Many PKs indicated that their fathers (n=9) or both parents (n=13) were the most important positive factor in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. In other words, 65% of the PKs (n=22) included their fathers as the most influential positive factor. Their fathers were at the same time their pastors. The Christian faith centers on relationships: both vertical relationship with the heavenly Father through the atonement of Jesus Christ on the cross as well as the earthly connections with other people. The earthly connections are a reflection of the life relationship with God. Family relationships between the minister father and the PK are concrete examples.

A reflection of God the Father. The relationship with the earthly father influenced the PKs' relationship with the heavenly Father in many ways. It seems that the earthly father, though not perfect, is a reflection of the heavenly Father, and the PKs learned the character of the heavenly Father through their experience with the earthly father. Wendy's father was a compassionate man. When describing the love of her father, Wendy was touched and was in tears.

I know my dad is a wonderful dad. Um:: everything that he has done, both my parents, [tearing] you're going to get me crying now, . . . has been for my benefit, and for the glory of God. . . . He has always pointed me to the Father when he doesn't know the answers. . . . He's very giving of himself; time wise, and he loves the people he's ministering to, even though they drive him crazy sometimes [chuckling]. . . . He's a very good reflection of God the Father. He's not perfect, but God is.

Jade stated that her father set an example as well as being the key person who directed her in her relationship with the heavenly Father.

My father is a very giving person. And um:: he set an example that the heavenly Father is very giving to his children. As far as having an impact in my salvation experience, I would say that the key person in that would have been my father, of course there are a lot of people that influence you when you make that decision. But I would definitely say that my father was the key person who directed me in my relationship with the Lord. . . . Very positive experience.

Relationship with father. Brad's relationship with his father was the number one factor in shaping him. His father reflected God's patience and grace to him. Brad had open communication with his parents. He would turn to them for help even when he was tempted to sin. He was influenced by his godliness. He wanted to be a preacher because of his father's positive influence.

I had a unique relationship with him. Not only is he my pastor, he is also my dad. He absolutely influenced the way I perceive God. When I was my daughter's age [three], if I had been asked what do you think God looks like, I definitely would have pointed to my dad. . . . The number one factor in shaping my attitude toward Christian ministry and the number one factor in shaping my response toward full-time Christian ministry was my relationship with my dad. There is no doubt.

Father as best friend. A number of PKs used the term best friends to describe their relationship with their fathers. "He [dad] is my best friend other than my wife," Ray proudly said. Ray's good relationship with his father had influenced his relationship with the heavenly Father. This was how Ray described his dad, "He's a very compassionate

person. It does help me in terms of my relationship with God. It helped me to see Christ in him. I look at God as a close close [*sic*] friend."

Father as a model for future husband. Christina respected her father. Besides being her hero, he was also a model for her future husband. No wonder she named her father as the most influential factor in her life.

> I pray that God brings a husband that is as godly as my dad. I pray that that kind of grace filled attitude and approach to church, and as loving and true as my dad is. And as convicted as he is.

A model for life and ministry. Nelson found that he imitated his father in his preaching. He acknowledged that his father was a big influence. He took his father as the number one influential factor on his life.

> I think undoubtedly it would be my father, who will be the most important factor and I am sure it's in the ways that I don't even begin to perceive yet. But you know just as I find myself in ministry experience even when I hear myself preach. You know when I see my response to people, I say, "Man, that looked like Dad." [Laugh] . . . And so Dad has given me the most realistic aspect of ministry. More than anything else. . . . Dad is my greatest model undoubtedly in my life.

Shaping the understanding of ministry. Similar to Nelson, Matthias also used a similar phrase, "without a doubt" in listing his father as the most influential factor in shaping his understanding of ministry. The whole being of his father became a model for Matthias to imitate for the ministry.

> Without a doubt, my father [as the most important factor]. Of course, there is the call. God called me into the ministry, and that's what got me into the ministry. I wouldn't be in ministry if He hasn't called me. But in terms of what's shaped my view and attitude is my father, without a doubt, has shaped my understanding of ministry. . . . Who he is, what he does, how he lives, and seeing how God has used him to build a great church.

Integrity and consistency. For Roy, his father's integrity was the number one influential factor.

> My dad's integrity. . . . The absence of a problem. . . . A sincere person. You don't get two different people at church and at home. He is not perfect, but he is real and authentic.

Christina named her respect for her father as the most influential factor. His father's consistency and integrity earned her respect.

> First of all the most important thing is that my respect for my father as a minister. I respect him as a man because he's consistent. His attitude is that he's the same at home and the same at church. And that's a very important factor seeing my parents' consistency in living out their Christian life. I respect my dad as a man and his integrity and that.

PKs Learned Spiritual Matters by Seeing Their Parents' Examples

Children learned from their experience. Like many PKs, Beth ranked her parents as the number one factor in shaping her attitudes and responses toward ministry. She called them living examples. This is Beth's impression of her father in terms of compassion and spiritual discipline, and she was challenged by his example. She was away from home now, and she could still imagine that her parents were on their knees praying for her.

> I think my dad is greatest ever. His humility and his compassion, his sacrifice, just his unconditional love, the way he accepts people as they are. . . . Anytime I visualize my dad, he's with his Bible in his hand. When I stay up late, and the light of the living room was on, I know he's reading his Bible. When I get up sometimes at five o'clock, he's up reading his Bible. That has made an impression on me. . . . I think they are on their knees praying for me. As I am growing older, I know they are praying for me more than anything.

The visual impression of parents' joy in the ministry and spiritual disciplines was an important factor in shaping the PKs. Christina gave a very vivid description of the impact of visually seeing her parents study the Bible.

Oh, the area of ministry that I felt called to going to is women's ministry. . . . And I watched her do that ministry. . . . I have seen my mother minister to women. . . . I've seen her involved in them, and she's always very open with me about these things, about the things that she's doing. Another great factor is that I always saw them reading the Bible, I mean my parents in the morning and see that at the kitchen table. . . . And to see what joy she takes in learning and studying these things. And so that has greatly influenced me going into specifically wanting to work and serve women ministry now. Because I've seen it work in the local church. I love it. I love it.

Daphne was a Boyce student. In her family, she could see first hand her parents' zeal for the ministry and their love for the Lord. Her parents' role modeling made her want to be in the ministry regardless of the difficulties she saw and experienced.

Um:: I think my family is one of the reasons why I wanted to be in the ministry because I see their love for the Lord even through difficult circumstances. They don't give up. Their drive for that. I think my family is very missions minded. . . . . Seeing my dad go on mission trips constantly to India and Brazil my family would go. Just being involved in that constantly and seeing it first hand, I was able to see a lot of things that other people didn't see. You know but I still want to be a part of it. The difficulties, but I also got to the joys in it, the blessings of it.

Daphne pointed out that her family was definitely the most positive factor in shaping her attitude toward the ministry. She appreciated the fact that her family never pushed her to be in the ministry. It was her decision.

Bill emphasized his positive home experience. He used the home experience to describe the first part of his life story. Positive terms such as haven and glorious were used to describe the experience. It is interesting to note that the term haven was used by a few PKs to describe their homes.

The first part would just be about the home experience. Things dad and mom would do for us. The first part would be about the glorious home that I lived in. The haven of home that we had.

Dan was very thankful that for the spiritual foundation their parents had laid in his life. Similar to the answers of most PK participants, the family is ranked as the

number one influence in shaping his attitude and response toward full-time Christian

ministry.

> Number one is my family, the family that God placed me into. I only begin to appreciate the foundation they laid. The more I grow, I more I realize by God's grace, by His sovereignty, divine pleasure, He placed me in the family that He did. And only working with those foster kids that I begin to realize the blessing that was.

Titus had a learning disability when he was a child, and he was very touched

by God's blessings in terms of the love of his parents.

> I really see myself [when I was] growing up, I was slow in everything I did. I was not a good kid. I was born [choking], sorry, to the best family in the world. Given so many opportunities, so many examples. First chapter [chapter title to describe his life story] may be "Blessed by God."

Ray also found his strong Christian family the most influential factor in

shaping him. Besides his dad, his brother was also a minister. They provided support for

one another even now as adults.

> I would definitely say that the thing that shaped me most was my family life. Just coming from such a strong Christian family. . . . Just a scriptural family. That's where my wife and I get all our strength from. Whenever we had a problem, we'll call my dad and mom, my brother and his wife. We lean so much on them and they on us. Because when they have problems, they call us.

Parents as Positive Spiritual Role Models

Questionnaire item number 30 asked the respondents to indicate their degree of

agreement to the following statement, "My parents are positive spiritual models for me."

The four-point Likert response scale offered the following choices: "strongly agree,"

"agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." The survey respondents (n=34) revealed

that a total of twenty-three (67.65%) "strongly agree," eight (23.53%) "agree," and three

(8.82%) "disagree." Therefore, the majority (91.18%) of the PKs agreed that their parents

were positive spiritual models for them." The mean was 1.41, between "strongly agree"

and "agree." Interestingly, questionnaire item number 29 stated, "My parents' behavior at home and at church is consistent." The result from the questionnaire was similar to item 30. It seems that parents' consistency at church and at home made them positive spiritual models for the PKs. The findings from the interviews also revealed a similar result. Thirty PKs mentioned that their parents were an important positive influence in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry.

Mother's ministry involvement as models for female PKs. Alice found that her mother's involvement in ministry served as an example for her.

> My mom was an excellent pastor's wife. She would always look for the person who's sitting by himself. She would reach out for the person who's needing to be reached out to the most, so I think that seeing that example has helped me in terms of ministry.

Christina was impacted by her mother's role model on women's ministry. She was preparing herself at Southern for women's ministry.

> Oh, the area of ministry that I felt called to going to is women's ministry. My mom eight years ago began the woman's ministry at our church. She teaches a Bible study now. And I watch her do that ministry. And they went from just having twelve women to over four hundred that come to our Bible study. I mean it's incredible. . . . I have seen my mother minister to women with depression, women with infertility problems, and um:: women who have left their husbands, and who have affairs and calling them to discipline and accountability to restore them into the body. I've seen her involved in them, and she's always very open with me about these things, about the things that she's doing.

Parents' role model in ministry. Tony ranked his parents' role modeling in ministry as the most influential factor in shaping his attitude and ministry toward full-time Christian ministry.

> Probably the most influential:: factor would be watching my father and mother and how they um::: conducted themselves, how my father conducted himself as a pastor and um:: [pause] through good times and through bad times. So I feel like that is

probably the most influential factor in shaping my attitude of knowing that um:: when we serve God, then He does care for us. When we serve God, His blessings are on us. Even though our circumstances are bad, we can still serve God. Just seeing my parents do that for years pouring their lives into people, um:: then that shaped my attitude of wanting to pour my life. And the response would be to pour my life and to glorify God through that.

The work ethic of Jack's father shaped him significantly. He ranked it as the most significant influence on his attitude and response for full-time Christian ministry.

My father modeled his life after Paul. He was spent for the gospel. He gave me a good model of work ethic for the Kingdom to be busy. I have slacked off, don't work as hard. We tried to be more disciplined in our time management. . . . My father's work ethic is huge, just being totally devoted to ministry. That has a huge significance in my life.

Ministry model. For Madeline, her parents' showed her in their life and actions what ministry was.

Start with family then. I would say family is the highest. I guess the word that comes to me is "ministry model." Because like I said, my parents showed me in their action what ministry was . . . I would say family number one.

May, in her early twenties, was a PK, a youth minister's wife, a seminary wife, and a staff member on campus. She found that watching her family and getting her parents' viewpoint about ministry were the first and foremost on her ministry model. Her parents had provided an example for her to follow.

I think with that aspect of having that quietness and keeping a quiet home, um::: I think my parents are very servant oriented, and so::: I am more comfortable with servant roles more than anything else. I prefer to be behind the scenes. I want to continue that. And then I think just having that creativity they bring us up and for creating God's doctrines and principles in our lives and to continue to do that for my children and also try to do that to help the women to learn to do that.

Keith's parents modeled servant leadership and that had a profound impact on him.

Yeah, well:::: I think first and foremost are my parents. I think my parents, while not perfect, they do have a clear New Testament understanding of ministry that to

me as I have matured myself, it's profound to me because it's fairly simple, but I think it's very accurate. Um:: that's definitely a positive.

Brad was greatly influenced by his parents' passion for the ministry.

My parents' love of the ministry was THE strongest contributing factor (outside of my call) for pursuing a life of full-time Christian ministry.

Alice stated, "I think probably the most positive influence was my father's passion." Alice's father was a pastor as well as a traveling evangelist.

Parents' priority in family and spiritual matters. Vera used the word "utopia" to describe her positive experience. She found that her parents' priority in spending time with the family and in spiritual matters had a great influence on her. She wrote in her notes to the researcher, "They raised us 'normally' not concerned about what others thought as much as the spiritual well being of their children." This was how she described her parents in her own words.

> I think the most important factors in shaping my attitude would be my parents always keeping their priorities, always having family time, always incorporating the Lord in what we did, praying over things and decisions together as a family. . . . I really think that is the most influential thing in seeing both having their quiet time.

Parents' consistency in the faith. Connie stated directly that her parents' consistency was the primary factor in shaping her view toward the ministry.

> The primary factor in shaping my view toward Christian ministry was my parents' consistency. I knew that although they were not perfect people, they were committed to the ministry. They love the Lord and they love us, so that was the number one shaping ministry.

From the questionnaire result, 31 (91%) interviewees agreed that their parents' behavior at home and at church was consistent.

Parents' Attitudes toward Ministry

Bill ranked his parents' positive attitude toward the ministry as the primary

influential shaping factor of who He was. They were his role models in terms of the faith

in trusting God. Their emphasis on family has a positive impact on Bill too.

> The attitude my parents had toward the ministry are very positive. Very good role model as far as trusting the Lord to take care of their needs and the emphasis they put on family. I think both probably shaped who I am today. The Lord used that to shape who I am today. I think my parents are the biggest thing.

Roy's parents' attitude toward ministry hugely influenced him and his brother.

> I think he [younger brother] and I both would agree that the fact my mother was supportive and positive about ministry and church, my dad in particular, was a huge influence, hugely shaped the attitude that we had about the church.

Vera also ranked her parents as the most important factor in shaping her

positive attitude toward full-time Christian ministry.

> I think the most important factors in shaping my attitude would be my parents always keeping their priorities, always having family time, always incorporating the Lord in what we did, praying over things and decisions together as a family.

Jimmy witnessed a lot of bad things that happened to his parents in terms of

the ministry, such as being forced to resign twice, and having to work in churches with a

lot of problems; however, the parents' positive attitude of perseverance in ministry

became the primary influence on Jimmy's attitude and response toward full-time

ministry.

> The way my parents handled everything. It was really good. Everything sort of ticked me off. But they were happy still moving. They just kept doing more and more. It reminds me a lot of Paul. He was in prison. He still rejoiced. It's rough. We were still a happy family. We went back to church still and had great time of that.

Mother's positive and supportive attitude. Roy, age 36, was a parenting

minister in a mega church under his father's leadership. In looking back on his life as a

PK, he found that his mother's positive and supportive attitude toward his father's

ministry had influenced him and his brother positively. He ranked his mother's

supportive attitude toward the ministry as the second most positive influential factor on

him in terms of his attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry.

> I really feel that my mother's attitude was a tremendous influence on the attitude
> that my brother and I have toward church and ministry. She was very positive about
> the church. And she was and is a tremendous supporter of my dad. In fact, I think it
> is one of the greatest reasons that my dad's ministry has been so successful in so
> many ways is that my mother has been a support to him. Held him up, so to speak.
> Respected him.

Roy's mother was intentional in being positive about the ministry because she

sensed the influence she would have on her two sons.

> She sensed, I think, the impact that her attitude would have on the kids. I know that
> she could have shaped us in a negative way, had she wanted to. But she saw a
> bigger picture. I think that's why I am in ministry today.

Roy was in full-time ministry now, and his younger brother, though not in full-

time ministry, was very supportive of the ministry. "He is on the worship team and is

very involved, and has very positive feelings about our church and Christ."

Alice was also influenced by her mother's compassion for people, which she

stated as the second most positive influence in terms of her attitude toward ministry.

Attitudes are contagious. Connie was shaped by her mother's attitude toward

the ministry. She decided to respond to the Lord's call with a similar attitude although it

meant financial pressure for her just as she had experienced in growing up in her family.

> Um and so there were a lot of people that say why would you want to go into the
> ministry because you have the ability to be financially successful. I think a lot was
> shaped when my mother was so ill. Because I remember talking to her about if she
> regretted the fact that by worldly standard, if she were to die, she would not be
> considered successful because my family always rented the house and drove old
> cars. Well, she said, "The two things that last forever are God's word and the souls
> of people. And if you give your life to those things, your life will matter."

Vera's mother was also very supportive of her dad's ministry.

> She was very supportive of my dad. . . . And was never negative about him. I had
> never got to hear never got to know if she had ever frustrated with him or. They

never disagree in front of us. She has always seen her job to be taking care of the family so he can do his job in the ministry.

The supportive attitude of Christina's mother was very important in shaping her attitude toward the ministry. Her mother provided a positive example for her and her sibling to support the father's ministry. She described her mother as supporting the ministry "one hundred per cent."

> I have never seen her once be um [pause] angry or have hard feeling toward the church because they would take my dad away. I remember one time they were dressed up to go out to dinner and they looked great. And they were going to go out to dinner, and just they were going to get out of the door, the phone rang. One of the deacons had passed away. Man, he was very involved at church. They looked at each other, and mom said, "You need to go and be with this family." He said, "What about dinner?" And she said, "It's OK. We'll go out another night."

Father's positive attitude toward ministry. Many PKs reported the positive impact of their fathers' positive attitude toward full-time Christian ministry. Tom had a very positive experience growing up. He was working as one of the three associate ministers in a mega church under his father's leadership. His father's positive attitude toward ministry was one of the key reasons for him to be in ministry.

> I rarely hear dad come home with any private problems that were happening within the church. He was always positive about the situations of church. He never shared negative things in public. I never heard my dad making a negative remark about a person. That's kind of a big benefit as I was saying that earlier. I realize how important the church is to him to the ministry. It belongs to Christ. So it's been a real encouragement not to hear any complaints. He's been very positive. And that helped a lot. //His attitude toward the ministry and the ways he handles ministry give you a very positive attitude.// Yes, it's one of the big reason I am doing what I am doing today.

Parents' Supportive Spirit for the PKs to
Go into Full-time Ministry

Many PKs had expressed their parents' support in their pursuit of full-time

Christian ministry. It is interesting to note that in response to questionnaire item number 38, "My parents encouraged me to enter full-time Christian ministry," many PKs wrote or said a few words to clarify that their parents did not pressure them. They emphasized that going into the full-time ministry was their decision. For example, after circling 1 for strongly agree, Titus added this note, "Not pressure, but support my calling." The mean for this item is 1.97, where 1 refers to strongly agree and 2 refers to agree. The findings revealed that eleven (32.35%) "strongly agree" and fourteen (41.18%) "agree." In other words, about three quarters of the PKs agreed that their parents encouraged them to enter full-time Christian ministry.

Bill's parents never pressured him to go into the ministry; however, they were very supportive and encouraging after they learned that Phil had surrendered to the call for preaching.

> My father was very supportive. He and my mother never would have said we think you should go into the ministry because they didn't want to pressure me into it. But as soon as I indicated that's what I thought God was leading, they were very supportive, very encouraging, very prayerful, and very excited.

Dawn's parents served as a concrete example of parental support for the PK's response to God's call for the ministry. They expressed their support by counseling the PK about the calling, financial commitment, and prayers.

> That summer I went to a youth camp and I was still sensing the call. My mom noticed that I was dealing with something, and she came right out and asked, "Is God calling you to the ministry?" At that point, I knew for sure it was God because my mom knew exactly. I told her that I thought He was. My parents were very supportive of me, but I never felt that they were pushing me toward ministry. They helped me pay to go to a Christian university where I got a degree in Biblical Studies and Teaching English as a Second Language. They now are very supportive of my husband and I while we are at seminary preparing for wherever God will lead us. They help us out financially and I know they pray for us. We are not certain what ministry God will lead us to at this time but I know that my parents will be supportive.

Father's unconditional support. Roy had an exceptionally good experience in growing up as a PK. He described his family relationships as healthy and good. His father had a tremendous impact on him when he became a minister himself. When Roy was hurt and broken in an earlier ministry experience, he called his father from another state. The father's unconditional support and love had an important impact on him of whether to go on to be in full-time Christian ministry or not. After the conversation, Roy decided to go home. He took baby steps to go back into full-time Christian ministry again. This was part of the midnight (because of time zone difference) phone conversation Roy remembered after all these years.

> "Dad, would you still love me if I was not in the ministry?" Roy asked his dad over the phone. His dad laughed and said, "I love you even if you were pumping gas in a gas station!"

Roy's dad was very supportive of him. He described his dad as a safe place to turn to. When Roy was at the lowest point of his adult life when he worked as a minister himself, the unconditional support of his father helped to restore him back to ministry.

> For the next several months after the early ministerial failures, I did a lot of soul searching. I was touched and broken by the support of the church. About fifty people came to the airport to meet me. It is extremely safe to know that my dad is a safe place. I was very touched. It was the lowest day of my life, but I know that people care. I was very touched and broken at the same time.

PKs allowed to make their own decisions. Many PKs indicated that although their parents supported their decisions for responding to the call, they had not pressured them. Tom's response reflected some clergy parents' positive response when their children shared with them about the call.

> How did they respond? Oh, very very [*sic*] excited. But at the same time, I know they don't want me to feel obligated because people would say that hey you are probably going to be a preacher too and stuff. That's the last thing I want to be. I

want to make the decision for myself, so they didn't push on me or anything. But they were very encouraging. I think dad had all along been praying for that for all three of us though.

Ministers' Time Spent with PKs

The church of Beth's father was blooming. Young families were pouring in. A new building project was on the way. Beth understood that it was more worthwhile for people to be saved than for her to sit around with her father watching television. She was willing to share her father as long as she had enough time with him first. When she knew that she still had her place in the heart of her father, it was all right to share.

> I share my dad with three hundred other people. Just let me have my time with my dad. Sometimes he'll say no to other people. And that's when I know that he sacrifices other things to invest in us.

It took Matthias's father the death of a young daughter to implement some changes for him to be able to spend more time with his family. Matthias's father pastored a church in California that had grown from sixty people to more than two hundred and fifty people in two years. Then one day, a tragedy happened. His six year old daughter was killed when crossing the street to school. Matthias was four at that time.

> And uh ::, but he really didn't have a lot of time for family. . . . BUT, when Charis died, he rethought through his life and his priorities. He felt guilt over the fact that he was unable or did not spend very much time with Charis before she died. . . . And so, at that point, he began::: began [sic] to spend more time with his family and less time at the church and in ministry. And that also caused him not too long after that to:: to um become co-pastors with actually two other men. . . . He then at that point, instead of preaching Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday night, he was just preaching Sunday morning. . . . And they divided the responsibilities.

Matthias found that his dad had tried to spend as much time home as he can since that tragic accident. "And so my dad has always uh tried to spend as much time home as he can. And for the size of the church, I think he has done a pretty good job in

spending time with us." After his father's painful awareness of his lack of time with his family, he made some changes together with his church to allow him to spend more time with his family.

Making an effort to spend time with PKs. It was very important for the PKs when their fathers showed up in their special events. When the schedules were tight, the ministers needed to make a special effort to be present.

Roy's father was aware that ministry was not family friendly. Roy reported that his father had tried his best to find the balance. His father tried to get the schedule from Roy's coach very early on to plan his time to be at each game.

> My dad worked very hard and worked a lot of hours. But he tried really hard to convince us that we were priority, and spent time with us, whether be on vacations or playing ball in the yard. . . . My brother and I both played a lot of sports. Every afternoon or evening that we had a game, he would make it a priority to be there. To this day, I don't know how he did that knowing what his schedule was like. But he would ask for our basketball schedules before they were even printed. . . . He would put all those games in his calendar. That's really important to me.

Jade had a very good relationship with her father. She remembered vividly that her father was in every basketball game that she played as she was very athletic.

> I cannot remember a time he put any thing of the church before like an event or something, a big event, like a basketball game I would be playing in, any kind of concert that we might be in. You know, there was NEVER like, "Oh, I am sorry I got to study for my sermon, I can't be there."

Jimmy's father was very busy as a pastor; however, he reported his father as always there. He thought that the effort made a lasting perception. His mother home schooled Jimmy and his siblings. They had family time together with father by staying up late.

> We are very very very [*sic*] close. Mostly because of the home schooling and we go through so much together. . . . When dad was in Moody, he was working full-time

and going to school at the same time. It was tough. But if it meant if that we have to stay up till midnight to have our family time, that's what we did. Most dinner was at 10 o'clock. That's the time dad came home to have some family time. . . . He's always been there. He's a full-time jeweler, full-time minister, and he was in school. He was always there when you needed anything. He was always in our little shows. He's making an effort to be present.

John's father was the only pastor at a church of about 200 people. He could easily worked over seventy hours a week, as described by John; however, John realized that he wanted to spend time with the children. The time spent with father became a good memory.

Father wanted to spend time with us. That's one reason he wanted to home school us. We started going to public school half a day, and he would spend time with us in the afternoon. One of the good memory is that on every Friday, his day off, he would take us to White Castle. We always had the same meal. He did make time to spend with us. . . . Even though it was obvious that he was pressed for time, he tried to come home to see us during the day. His effort was very much appreciated.

Vera's father, though described as a workaholic by her mom, was very intentional in spending time with children and family. Vera found her dad very available when she was growing up.

He [dad] was very available. He would pop in for lunch and he's always home for supper, and he was always home for bedtime. . . . He was very intentional about his time. So mom says today my dad is a workaholic today. He works all the time. She says even when we were young, he was. But he was so intentional about the time he was home that we did not know that when we were younger. . . . He's still that way. He's kind of always has that routine.

Bill used the term "made time" to illustrate his perception of his father's conscious effort for the children. As the only pastor at a church with about a hundred and twenty people, Bill's father was busy; however, he did not let the church take precedent over the family.

I don't think I could have a better dad. He always made time for my brother and I. He's always there. Nothing, no one in church took precedent over us. We were number one to him. We always knew that. He was a busy man. He worked hard, but

we always knew he would be home with us in a significant amount of time. He taught us.

Time spent with each child individually. Connie's father spent Saturday mornings individually with each child. The time provided an opportunity for Connie to have an in depth communication with her father. It also showed her father's intentionality in spending time to shape each child.

> Like growing up, on Saturday mornings, he would take one of us out for breakfast individually. And that had a big influence on making me want to go into the ministry because I was able to talk to him about the desire God had put in my heart, and he was able to sort of guide me as to what I want to do in my life. In other words, his style is very nurturing.

Christina's father was very intentional in spending time with the children individually throughout the week. Her father took the time to communicate with each child, and that was important for their relationship building. "We have a real neat friendship. . . . We had those great dialogue that always is going on. And that took place when I was younger till now." The following provided a picture of what he did with each child.

> My dad takes time to spend with us individually. He would carve out time throughout the week. This isn't lunch every week, you know. He would take my sister to the mall because he knew she loved to do that. He'll go golfing with my brother because that's one of his favorite things. He and I always go to get coffee together or we go to the bookstore together. Because we like to do that. We spend time together. He spent time with us individually and as a family.

Learning from previous generation's mistake. Some PKs reported that their fathers were PKs too. A number of ministers were intentional in spending more time with the PKs because they did not get that from their own fathers. Dawn's father learned from his own experience that he should make sure he spent enough time with his children.

> My dad's dad was a minister and was never home, he was "married to the church." He regrets that now and tries to spend more time with his grandkids, but he was too

late with his children. My dad was determined to put his family first and to spend as much time with us as possible. We made sure that we ate every meal together around the table. That was something that was very important to my parents. We also did fun things together. My parents never wanted us to feel that church work was more important than us.

Spiritual Nourishment at Home

Many PKs reported that their family gave them a strong spiritual foundation. Many were led by the parents to the Lord at a young age. The following is Jade's experience.

As we were growing up at a young age, I can't remember really. I guess the key spiritual moment that I remember, my first memory is when my father clearly explaining the gospel to us, and how to become a Christian. Discussing that with me at a really young age. [Chuckling] But I was asking questions, and so it's not that he was trying to impose. I was asking questions. I was so involved with the church and the Holy Spirit was working in my life. I remember speaking with him. It's always a priority in our family to pray.

Jade's family also spent regular time in prayer and family devotion together when they were children. She was baptized by her father at age eight. She also pointed out that the spiritual foundation was the most important factor in shaping who she was.

Alice's family dinner time provided natural teaching moments. Her father was a consistent spiritual leader at home and at church. She described her experience as very positive, "That [daddy's teaching over dinner table] was a positive thing and where daddy really was a spiritual leader at home teaching us."

We always had dinner together. That was always a very special family time. And there was a lot of teaching during that time. I remember conversations where you know daddy was helping us with our standards and morals.

Vera pointed out the shaping power of her parents' focus on the spiritual well-being of the children.

Godly parents who kept their priorities in order, who had their quiet times daily and loved our church people and ministry. They raised us "normally" not concerned about what others thought as much as the spiritual well-being of their children.

For Connie, the spiritual discipline at home had helped to shape who she was, and she would definitely keep the ritual when she started her family.

> I would definitely try to keep the spiritual nourishment. Every morning, we would read the Bible and sing. In the evening, we read a missionary biography. In the school year, we start at 7:00 in the morning. And in the evening, at 8:30.

The Church Microsystem

Church relationship reflected the interaction of the microsystems of the clergy family and the church. Across the interviews, there is a pattern for the PKs to describe their experience in their families as well as the churches in great length. It seems that their focuses were on these two microsystems and their subsequent influences on them. Many PKs ranked their experience in the church as the second most influential factor in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry.

Good Church Relationship and Church Experience

Questionnaire item number 43 asked the respondents to indicate their degree of agreement to the following question, "My family's relationship with the church was good." The four-point Likert response scale offered the following choices: "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." The survey respondents (n=34) revealed that a total of nineteen (55.88%) "strongly agree" with the statement, fourteen (41.18%) "agree" with the statement, and one (2.94%) "disagree" with the statement. In other words, almost all PKs (97.06%) agreed that their families' relationship with the church was good.

Questionnaire item number 47 asked the respondents to indicate their degree of agreement to the following question, "My relationship with the church members was positive." The four-point Likert response scale offered the following choices: "strongly

agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." The survey respondents (n=34)

revealed that a total of twenty-one (61.76%) "strongly agree" with the statement, eleven

(32.35%) "agree" with the statement, one (2.94%) "disagree," and one (2.94%) "strongly

disagree." In other words, almost all PKs (except two) agreed that their relationship with

the church was positive.

It was interesting to note that a number of PKs reported negative experiences

such as forced termination and church conflicts, but still the majority reported positive

relationship between their family and the church.

Looking forward to go to church. Matthias had a great church experience.

He enjoyed all the programs at church. He also enjoyed the people there. He grew up

with them. In the following excerpt from the interview, we can almost feel Matthias'

enthusiasm about church. He looked forward to church. His positive feelings were

communicated with words and phrases such as "look forward to," "a fun time," "love to

go," and "very at home."

> Yes, we have a great youth group. I grew up with a lot of these kids, so we have
> been friends our whole life. A lot of them were my cousins. I probably had six or
> seven cousins in the same youth group. I was very at home there. I love the church.
> I look forward to Sundays, which was my favorite day of the week. I look forward
> to Wednesday nights because I'll go to youth groups, or when I was a kid, I would
> go to Havana. And all my friends are there. It is just a fun time to hang out and on
> Tuesdays, I love to go on visitations and go out to witness to people.

Parents made ministry experience enjoyable. Dawn's parents made ministry

involvement fun for the children. They also gave them an age appropriate choice of how

much they wanted to be involved. When the choice was given, Dawn gladly chose to

participate because ministry was enjoyable. This eventually led her to want to go into

full-time Christian ministry. "I think helping my parents with their ministry and the fun

times we all had in ministry was very influential in my decision to follow Christ's call in my life."

> To me growing up as a minister's kid was great! I enjoyed it. I enjoyed being at the church and helping my parents with things they had to get done to prepare for Sunday or a special event or whatever. There were times that my brother and I got tired of being at church like any kid would and certain times of the year it felt like we "lived" at church. However, my parents made things fun for us and included us in things they were doing so that we would not feel like we were being pushed aside. When we were old enough to stay home alone, we did not have to go to church every time my parents went to take care of something, but a lot of times I would choose to go with them.

Minister as peacemaker for good church relationship. Vera called her father a peacemaker. He was able to pastor the same church for over twenty years. His relationship with them was peaceful and harmonious. The people at church, which was a large church of over 800 Sunday worship attendance, treated him and his family with warmth and acceptance. An example was the expression of love and kindness in remembering the anniversary he began to pastor that church. This is how Vera portrayed her father in terms of the relationship with church.

> I probably grew up in a little bit of a utopia in my mind what I thought. It was just perfect, wonderful. I know that my parents have problems here and there in the church, but my dad is such a peacemaker. He's good at diffusing things that are not important, keeping things from escalating to the boiling point. So we always had a very good relationship with the church.

Bill used positive terms such as "good," "positive," and "enjoy" to describe his church experience. He had a good experience at church.

> I had good experience at church. I enjoy church. Enjoy being there. So I think just having a positive church experience as well as a positive home life, I think those would be the biggest factors in shaping that [attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry].

Bill's parents intentionally sheltered him and his brother from the negative aspects of the church, which had contributed to the positive experience at church.

For the most part, I had a good relationship with the people at church. For the younger part of my life, mom and dad never never [*sic*] discussed the problems of the church in our presence. So we, my brother and I, were sheltered from the negative aspects of the church. So we enjoyed church as they wanted us to.

It is interesting that although Bill's family suffered financially when the church could not pay them, he still ranked his church experience as positive and influential in his attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. It seems that his parents intentionally sheltered them from the negative experience and it was effective in shaping Bill to be positive about church.

The longest place we stayed was in St. Louis when I was ten to sixteen, the church quit paying my dad for a while because of the financial problem, so we didn't have money. We had to rely on gifts from people. The church ended up paying dad back some of the money. But while we were there, some of the time, it was very difficult. But they sheltered us even from that as well. . . . We didn't know all the details.

The positive church relationship became an important factor in shaping Vera's attitude toward full-time Christian ministry. She described the appreciation and love the church expressed concretely toward her parents. She had longevity in the same church.

I think just probably a wonderful home church that isn't critical of our family, but very supportive. EVERY year, on my dad's anniversary being there, how many years. It's like twenty-four years in January. They always do a little bit something for them. And then on a big anniversary, like for his 20th year being there, my mom is from Maine, but she's a hundred percent Finnish, and always wanted to go to Finland. So they sent my parents on a ten day trip to Finland for their 20th year being at church. . . . I remember for some anniversary they drove a lawn mower down the middle of the aisle for my dad after we had just built our house. They had just always been very appreciative.

Bill also stated the positive church relationship as being the second most important factor after the impact of his family.

I had good experience at church. I enjoy church. Enjoy being there. So I think just having a positive church experience as well as a positive home life, I think those would be the biggest factors in shaping that.

Good church relationship as a positive factor. Dan also stated the positive

church relationship as the third most influential factor in his attitude toward full-time

Christian ministry. "I guess another positive one would be my church influence in my

life. Their involvement with me." The influence of the church was classified as factors

outside the home, which was interpreted by Dan as very influential.

> Thirdly, all the outside factors that the Lord had placed, whether it's been
> professors at school, whether it's been my youth group, whether it's been my youth
> pastor, all those secondary influences outside my family. I just wouldn't be who I
> am. I just wouldn't be where I am without them.

Matthias, 23, planned to start a church as his father did. He compared his

church to a warm and loving extended family. The love and care of the people at church

had a positive influence on him in shaping his positive view toward church people.

> My church is just a very very [*sic*] neat church. It's a big church [about 2500
> people], but it really feels like a big family. You can tell when you go into the
> church that everyone really loves the Lord and loves each other and people are very
> friendly and people don't just say it. They really care. And uh:: as I grew up, there
> are lots of people in the church who had a huge impact on my life. Laymen that
> took time to take notice of me and to invest some of their time and some of their life
> into my life. And so I really do look at a lot of those people like their family even
> though they were not technically, they feel like it because they feel like aunts and
> uncles and grandparents and of course it's only spiritually. It has a feeling of
> family.

Clear Boundary between Church and Home

Vera had a very positive experience growing up as a PK. She described the

family and church relationship as very positive. Her father did a good job in setting the

boundary in terms of family time and shielding the children from the spotlight.

> The church grows steadily [about 800 worship attendance]. I was so outgoing and
> so involved in church that it never bothered me being in the spot light a little. And
> my dad also was very careful to keep out of the spotlight as much as possible. He
> never used us as illustrations in sermons. . . . He's just careful to keep our family
> time. Both of my parents are private people. They did a little shielding. I am sure to

keep us from knowing everything in the church, and from the church from knowing everything at home.

Even when Vera was living in the parsonage, her father was careful in setting the boundary.

> Um:: there was just a separation even at the parsonage [lived in the parsonage until the age of about 11]. There was distinct family time that was not interrupted by anything going on at the church. And we also knew that there were times daddy had to be in the church. So there was a mutual respect for the two.

Shielding the PKs from church conflicts. The father could set a proper boundary between home and church in what could be shared at home. Roy had a very positive experience growing up as a PK. He had very good church relationships too. His father sheltered him from some of the problems of the church by not talking about them in front of the children.

> In the same way, my dad could have been critical about negative, complaining about his job and things like that. But he didn't do that, at least not in front of us. And he sheltered us some from the problems of the church. And I think he can go overboard there. As we matured, you can overhear things anyway, he would be more open with us.

Beth's father was good in not telling her everything although she could see a lot of things from tagging along in ministry at a young age already.

> Being in the pastor's family, you see the different sides of ministry. My dad is very good in not telling us. I've seen lots of aspect of ministry through him. When I was little, I would tag along. I've learned a lot. They just need the Lord, and he's right there.

Bill's parents sheltered his brother and him from the negative aspects of the church when they were young. He reported good relationship at church.

> For the most part, I had good relationship with the people at church. For the younger part of my life, mom and dad never never [sic] discussed the problems of the church in our presence. So we, my brother and I, were sheltered from the negative aspects of the church.

Mathias pointed out the importance of shielding the PKs from the church conflicts. Parents should be careful what and how they share with their children about church conflicts. Wisdom is needed. Matthias's father explained to him why he shielded the family from any church conflict. Matthias found that it was positive on him.

> My father never ever spoke badly of anyone in the church. And he even told us why not to do that. Later in life, he told me why not to do that. Because I am going into ministry, I am going to have children, and I am into the same situation. It is because, and he didn't do it with my mom either, he never talked bad about people at church either because you come home, and someone had treated you wrongly, you tell your wife and you tell your children, all of a sudden they are mad at that person. And they had a bitterness towards that person because how dare they are to hurt my father or treated him that way. My father goes back and talks to the person and there is reconciliation with that relationship and so he's forgiven them. The problem is the family hasn't forgiven them.

Focusing on God and the Positive

Christina's father was very careful about his word. He never mentioned anything negative about the ministry in front of the children. He experienced a church split recently. He continued to direct the children to focus on the positive and on what God was doing.

> I am telling you I've never heard my dad mention one negative thing about the people that um I've seen him frustrated, I've seen him maybe get a little discouraged, but he's very careful in guarding what he says and what comes out of his mouth about them. And so, what he speaks to my brother, my sister, and I is, "God is doing a work at our church. People are coming to know Christ on a continual basis. We're beginning to see all these different things. Look at what God is doing. Let's not dwell on these negative things because God's working in changing us through it."

Ray called himself an optimistic person. Although his family had experienced some church conflicts, focusing on the positives of ministry helped him not to be discouraged by the sufferings his parents went through in church conflicts, such as being accused with things that his father had never done or some church members purposefully hurt the feelings of his mom in order to provoke his father.

Seeing all the good things that had happened in ministry had far outweighed the bad. Seeing my dad's ministry, the new couple that had never accepted Christ, and they come, seeing a person was so shy when we first moved there, and then they break out of their shells, . . . seeing those amazing things God does in your ministry far outweighs the negative.

Dawn's parents had actually gone through very tough experiences in their church, such as the painful experience of forced termination. Her parents chose to focus on God's faithfulness and the good aspect of church life. It had a positive influence on Dawn's attitude toward full-time Christian ministry.

I think that if my parents had a more negative outlook on being in the ministry and if they did not try to see the positive things in life that my attitude would be very different. My parents chose to focus on the faithfulness of God and the good aspect of church life rather than dwelling on the hard times in life and the not so perfect church members. . . . My parents tried to focus on the good people in the church, which showed my brother and I that we should do the same.

Positive Handling of Expectations

Alice shared that although the expectation from the church was there, she could follow along with the expectations in terms of her values.

There was an expectation on me to have very high moral standards, but I didn't fight against that in any way, or feel like I was being pressured. I just felt like that was who I wanted to be. And um:: I was always very proud of the fact that we have very high moral standards in our family.

Vera also had no problems in facing expectations from church because like Alice, she always wanted to do the right thing. The expectations and the PKs' values were a good fit.

There were probably were expectations. I would say::: that would be the norm for the church to have expectations. It was fine with me because I:: tend to be a people pleaser. I had no trouble with expectations put on me. I always wanted to do the right thing to make my parents, I guess to make them proud. Anyway, so um:: there probably were, but never super evident that people were putting expectations on us. We never felt pressurized.

Ministry Involvement and Exposure

The PKs grew up with the ministry. When their fathers let them be involved in the ministry, they could learn a lot of hands on experience when growing up in the ministry. Tom had been going to pastors' conferences when he was small, and he enjoyed them. His father was skillful in making it an enjoyable family time too.

> I would always go to the pastors' conferences and Southern Baptist Conventions with my family. And I love listening to the preaching. Don't like the convention itself as much. Sometimes it's interesting. //It's more for adults, right?// Yes. But, um still go today. I only missed a couple in my life, I think. But the pastors' conference itself is incredible. I just love listening to Biblical preaching and expository preaching. So, that's been a good factor. //So your daddy brought the whole family to go with him together. // He sure had. Sometimes, he would take special trips or take different ones by ourselves, so that's good. //So those trips are conference for him, and he's bringing the family with him. He's trying to spend time with them, and the children enjoyed it too.// Yes, oh we love it. We did fun things. We visited the zoos and went to base ball games. It's fun.

Bill's dad let him enter into his world of ministry, and had made it an enjoyable experience for him. He was able to see his father in the ministry first hand. Instead of taking ministry as something that takes all of father's time, ministry is shared with children.

> I enjoyed the ministry just by doing stuff with dad. He took me hospital visiting with him, he always took us to the convention with him, the Southern Baptist convention. I enjoyed that type of stuff.

For Connie, the experiential knowledge from being involved in ministry and seeing how real ministry was being conducted constituted the second most important factor in shaping her attitudes toward ministry.

> And I think the second thing [influential factor] would just be the experiential knowledge of day after day, month after month, year after year of doing ministry and seeing what's involved, the grief and the joy involved there.

May found that her upbringing equipped her to be the wife of a youth minister. When she was a teenager, the youth minister's wife mentored her, and she had a lot of

hands on experience in youth ministry in her youth group. She used the word

"blossomed" to describe her growth in the youth group. Being involved and having a

good ministry experience had a positive impact on PKs.

> We did a lot of backyard Bible clubs during the summers, and we did church musical and things like that. . . . We're very good about having our conversation. We talked about Scripture and doctrine or something like that. . . . Our youth ministry was where I felt I kind of really blossomed because our youth group was VERY GOOD and very creative. And our youth minister kind of let us lead on some of that creativity. We in fact developed a lock in retreat. . . . We used that as a kick off for the Experiencing God program. . . . Our youth group was very good in outreach.

Longevity in the Same Church

Three PKs actually grew up in the same church from birth, and they reported

zero number of moves during their father's ministry Five PKs' fathers moved to a

different church when they were very small and stayed there to pastor, such as when Tom

was eighteen months, Vera and John were two years old, and Tony and Mathias were

four years old. They considered themselves as growing up in the latter church. They also

reported that they did not really remember the moves. Most of these PKs expressed that

they knew it was an exception in their cases of staying in the same church for such a long

time. Only eight out of thirty-four participants reported a strong sense of longevity in the

same church. They regarded longevity as a positive experience.

Roy, 36, noted that the longevity in the same church had huge impact on him.

He ranked it as the fourth most positive influence on his attitude and response toward

full-time Christian ministry. In fact, his father's church grew from 350 to 2000 when he

turned eighteen, and it had been relocated twice when he was growing up, but his family

did not move. They stayed in the same house. The longevity in the church added a sense

of stability for the PK when he was growing up.

Beth also found that longevity in the same church was a blessing.

We had that blessing of being in the same church for the past fifteen years. We moved when I was fifteen to Benton, KY (small town). I've only been to two churches. The first one's membership is about 300, and the second one is 450.

The School Microsystem

Across the interviews, the participants tended to focus more on their experience in their families than that in the church. Many of them just briefly talked about their schooling experience. Max was more direct when asked about the impact of the experience at school on his attitudes and response toward full-time Christian ministry, "I can't think of any way. I can't think of anything that is pertinent here."

Questionnaire item number 52 asked the respondents to indicate their degree of agreement to the following question, "My overall experience of schooling was a positive one." The four-point Likert response scale offered the following choices: "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." The survey respondents (n=34) revealed that a total of eleven (32.35%) "strongly agree," and sixteen (47.06%) "agree." In other words, twenty-seven (79.41%) PKs thought that their overall experience was a positive one.

Compared with the impact of the family and church, the PKs seemed to think their schooling seemed to play a relatively less significant role in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. This can be illustrated by what Brad stated, "My schooling had very little to do with it only because it was already very deeply engrained within me that I was going to go on to full-time ministry." For him, the choice of the boarding Christian high school and the Christian college was the result of his commitment to serve in full-time Christian ministry. The teachers at school simply affirmed his decisions to become a preacher.

Positive Schooling Experience

The general schooling experience was positive. Some PKs expressed that in the schools, they met different kinds of people. The experience enabled them to have more empathy toward people. In the public school, the school experience provided opportunities for the PKs to serve non-Christians students.

To serve and to learn to accept different kinds of people. Wendy played the role of a peer counselor to some students, and Nelson started a prayer group in his high school to reach out to the non-Christian students. The following is Wendy's description of her peer counseling experience in high school.

> I think it positively influenced me. For some reason when I was in school, because of my morals and my walk with the Lord, the underdog, people with problems come to me all the times. I was a listening person. I guess I just show caring that they didn't get from people who were popular, who were snuffing them. And I was pretty confident in being not a part of them. I made friends with the normal kids or problematic kids, who had problems at home or just low self esteem.

May learned to keep an open mind to accept different kinds of people. This was May's summary of her public school experience.

> I think again just going back to viewing people [pause] as people, just recognizing that we are all fallen, and of course at school I had a variety of people to see, you know, just the different types. . . . And accept people for who they are and just helping them see Christ and come into, and just being an example, and being an encouragement to where they need to be.

Positive influence of Christian teachers at Christian school. Brad went to a Christian boarding school. He had a very positive experience there. His calling was affirmed by the teachers because of similar world view.

> My schooling only enhanced my desire for full-time Christian ministry. Very positive. Because it was a Christian school, when people asked me what I was going to do, I told them I wanted to be a pastor. . . . The teachers affirmed that.

The positive spirit of teaching as a ministry reflected by the Christian teachers Ray met in his Christian middle school had an impact on him. He was touched by their sense of ministry. He remembered one in particular, "In middle school, I saw the life of a really good Christian teacher."

Roy's overall experience at school was positive. The solid teaching of a Bible teacher at the Christian school had an impact on him. He ranked the experience as the fifth positive influence on him.

> My favorite teacher at the Christian Academy was my Bible teacher. That did have a positive effect on me. Having a solid Bible teaching was a huge impact on me. That's one of the reasons I went back there to teach.

Home schooling as insulation from negative peer influences. John was home schooled from second grade on. He had a very positive experience in home schooling. He found the experience helped to insulate him from some of the negative influences, such as peer pressure, in the public school.

> Probably the biggest influence that it [home schooling] had was that it confined me. I wasn't exposed to the negative things that public school students were exposed to. I think that something possibly I had missed. But I think that some of the things I missed I wanted to miss. I think peer influence at school is huge, and is mostly negative. It probably helped my spiritual growth, I would say. Because it insulated me from a lot of negative influences.

The College Experience Provided Space
for Spiritual Growth away from Home

Most PKs left home when they turned eighteen as they moved onto college. Many reported the experience of ownership of the faith as they had to face the reality of the test of faith in life on their own. Most PKs' description of their spiritual growth in college years seemed to reflect stage four of Fowler's theory of faith development,

Individualistic-Reflective faith (Fowler 1995, 182). "This stage is marked by a double development. The self, previously sustained in its identity and faith compositions by an interpersonal circle of significant others, now claims an identity no longer defined by the composite of one's roles or meanings to others" (Fowler 1995, 182).

Christian values being tested. Dan went to a secular university with a full scholarship for athletic development in baseball. It was where his faith and values were tested by the teammates in baseball teams. The secular values among them were partying with girls and drinking, which were not compatible with the Christian values he grew up with.

> I got a scholarship to play baseball. I went to a secular university. I never went to church. We played every Sunday. We had a fall and a spring schedule. I had no friends. When I was at school, I didn't go to church. The guys that I hanged out with, they partied with girls.

After much soul searching, Dan decided to give up the scholarship and his dream of being a business major in this popular university. He moved on to a Christian college, and eventually became a Biblical Studies major. He pointed out that God had used the desert experience to grow and guide him in the path for full-time Christian ministry. He became a different person with the ownership of the faith in facing the temptations in life. "I am a different person. I have grown so much. I have learned a lot. I can see valleys and peaks." Right now, Dan was in the peak experience of seminary training. Dan found that he was in the will of God although he needed to work full-time and even double shifts in a restaurant to pay for his seminary education.

Influence from mentors in college. Many PKs were influenced by spiritual mentors they met in college. Jack's father was a fundamentalist. It seems that he grew a

lot at college through the influence of a godly professor and a pastor who functioned as his mentor.

> At college [Christian college], there was a professor who really helped me to open my eye to the understanding of the Bible and fully who God really is. . . . Then the pastor from Birmingham, his mentoring and his preaching, I always say that I learn from his pulpit in a year than I have ever learned at school. . . . He is in many ways my mentor. I still talk to him on a regular basis. He preached at my ordination service. I am very close to him.

Influence from Christian books. Besides people, Jack was influenced tremendously by reading books outside his fundamentalist background. He came to a fuller understanding of God. He ranked the books that he came to read in his college years as the third most influential factor, after his father's work ethic and the pastor mentor he met, in shaping his attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry.

> The other thing that happened at college at the same time it was neat how God works and orchestrates things. I was also reading, I think I started reading A. W. Tozer, and then a friend gave me a book, John Piper's book, *Desiring God*, and I later read Jonathan Edwards. Jonathan Edwards's book *The End for Which God Created the World*. Probably, it was probably one of those books that opened my eyes to the full reality of who God is and who we are in light of Him.

Positive peer influence at college. Jimmy was influenced by many godly peers he met. He named the peer influence as the second most important factor. He was transformed by a good Christian testimony. Jimmy's parents let Mark stay with them when he commuted to the seminary from Indiana every week. Mark had impacted Jimmy in terms of missions. Jimmy' parents also took Doug in when he was forced out of his home by his parents because of his choice to study in Boyce College.

> But stuff like my friend Doug, my friend Mark, and people like that, my parents and how they responded to it all and all that, like their support. My friend Doug, even though they [his parents] did not support him, he was very much focused on. He was very together with it now. Now it was very good for me. Like all the people

around me kind of help me through all. [Seeing them] pulling through hard stuff just the same as I am trying to do as everyone else, and everyone just still perseveres and goes on.

Other Positive Factors

Positive and consistent religious experience outside the family and church can be a very positive influence on the PKs' attitude and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. The reality of God is experienced in other microsystems of the PKs.

Positive Missions Experience

Some PKs had been on short time mission trips in other countries such as Mexico, the Philippines, Kenya, Cambodia, and El Salvador. They reported their short-term missions experience as transforming. In all these cases, they were the one who chose to go on the mission trips. Their experience was very different from two PKs who reported very negative experience when they had to move to the mission field because their parents became missionaries.

The PKs' eyes were open to the needs and the reality of God's work in other parts of the world, outside their homes and their churches. In other words, the faith experience outside their familiar contexts did strengthen their spiritual growth, and thus had a positive impact on their attitudes and responses toward ministry.

Matthias's description of the effect of the impact and effect of the missions experience is a good summary of how others felt about their mission trips.

> I went to a mission trip to El Salvador several years ago, and that had a big impact on my life. We would preach on the street, and there were anywhere between a hundred and six hundred people. That's really a neat experience to see what God was doing in places outside of my church and outside of what I am used to, and outside of my country to see that God is working in other places was really influential on my attitude towards ministry.

Darrell's missions experience had impacted him in the ministry direction he would eventually take.

> Um, so yeah the Lord just really taught me a lot through especially the Cambodia trips. And::: I really feel like, and my wife feels like this too, and she hasn't actually gone on an international mission trip yet, but somehow missions is going to be involved in what God want us to do.

Prayer Support

The PKs' metacontext of the Christian faith provided them with spiritual influences such as prayer support. Many PKs reported that they knew their parents, grandparents, and church people prayed for them regularly. Being prayed for by the people around was counted as a positive factor in the social ecology of PKs. Matthias's parents prayed for him daily. They had even been praying for his wife since he was a baby. He described prayer support as a great experience.

> My mother has prayed for me every day of her life since I was born. She's also prayed for my wife since I was a baby. And my father I know prays for me all the time. And they prayed for:: Leanne. Now, they did not know her name at that time, of course. But they prayed for her as I grew up and obviously, they were thinking my wife somewhere out there growing up and so they prayed for her all the time. Also, my grandparents pray for me every day, and there are literally hundreds of people at my church that every time we go back, like I preach at the church or something, they tell me, "We pray for you." Many of them told me they prayed for me every day. And so that's great.

Tom stated, "Dad is a man of prayer." His father did not pressure him or his siblings into the ministry. He prayed for them.

> I think dad had all along been praying for that for all three of us though. He said that in his prayer journal for a long time. Dad is a man of prayer. That God answered his prayer concerning me. He has answered his prayer concerning my sister because she married a preacher. He always prayed for that from the moment she was born that she would marry a preacher. And my brother, dad has prayed for him to be a missionary if that's the direction God would have him. Paul has not made that official yet. I mean he really is a missionary. I guess he didn't have any title. So I kind of curious of what Paul would end up doing. [Paul has been to Brazil and speaks fluent Portuguese. He is preparing himself.]

Darrell came from a very warm family. He called his mother "a prayer"

because she prayed a lot.

> Mom, she was definitely the glue for the family. . . . Knowing what's going on in everybody's life. She just loves God. She is a prayer. She prays a lot. Even today.

Research Question 1
Overall Conclusions

The first research question was, "What are the social ecological factors that

positively shape the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time

Christian ministry?" The PK participants in this study almost unanimously pointed out

their parents, especially their fathers as the most influential social ecological factor in

shaping their attitude and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. Throughout the

interviews, the focal point seemed to be on the family microsystem, especially on the

father as the minister. The family microsystem is the most important social ecology that

has an impact on the PKs.

Many positive factors came from the family microsystem. There were

relatively fewer positive factors mentioned in the church microsystem, and finally, even

fewer positive factors were identified from the school microsystem.

From the family microsystem, the positive factors identified were the parents,

especially the father as the most influential factor, family relationships, relationship with

the father, parents' role modeling, parents' consistency in the faith, parents' attitude

toward the ministry, parents' supportive spirit for the PKs, parents' focus on the positive

side of ministry, ministers' time spent with PKs, ministers' balance of family and church,

and spiritual nourishment at home.

From the interaction of the family and the church microsystems, the positive factors identified were good church relationships and church experience, clear boundary between home and church, focusing on God and the positive, ministry involvement and exposure, and longevity in the same church.

In the mesosystem of the family and the church, it seems that the father functioned as a filter through which negative factors from the church microsystem can be screened out from the PKs. The father, to a certain extent, reflected to the PK what ministry and life of a minister were. Their portrayal seemed to influenced the perception of the PKs on ministry and the role of a minister. Furthermore, a clear boundary enables the PKs to have the space to be shielded from some potential negative experience at a young age.

From the school microsystem, much less data were reported compared with the family and church microsystems. The general experience at school was positive. Some PKs met good Christian teachers at Christian schools who laid a solid Biblical foundations for their spiritual development. Some PKs attending public schools found the experience enriching for them to serve and to learn to accept different kinds of people. Some PKs were home schooled, and some of them reported the positive experience in being insulated from negative peer influences. PKs reported their spiritual growth in their college years. Some PKs went to Christian colleges. Their growth was through the interactions with Christian professors, college ministers, and reading missionary biographies and Christian books to which they were introduced. A number of PKs reported the sense of ownership of the faith when they were away from home in college. They seemed to reflect stage four of Fowler's theory of faith development, Individualistic-Reflective faith (Fowler 1995, 182).

Other positive factors include short-term mission trips, where the reality of faith was witnessed outside the familiar home and church microsystems. Some PKs described strong prayer support by loving people surrounding them such as parents, extended family members, and church people as a positive factor.

Research Question 2

The second research questions asked, "What are the social ecological factors that negatively shape the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?" The following themes have indicated the importance of the father's relationship with the church and the overall church experience as perceived by the PKs. Other themes such as the father's lack of time with the PKs have been found. The findings are organized according to the family, the church and the school, the three microsystems of the PKs.

Questionnaire item number 41 asked the respondents to indicate their degree of agreement to the following question, "I think my experience growing up as a PK has positively influenced me in terms of my attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry." The four-point Likert response scale offered the following choices: "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." The survey respondents (n=34) revealed that a total of four (11.76%) "disagree" and zero "strongly agree" with the statement. In other words, four respondents (11.76%) did not agree that their experience growing up as a PK had positively influenced them in terms of their attitude and responses toward full-time Christian ministry.

The interesting thing that puzzled the researcher was that many PKs had reported negative experience while growing up, especially from the church, and yet only

four indicated that their experience of growing up as PKs had not positively influenced

them in terms of their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. It

implied that the negative experience might have been filtered through something so that

the majority of PKs participants (*n*=30, 88.24%) in this research indicated that their

experience of growing up as PKs had positively influenced them in terms of their

attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. Another explanation might be

because questionnaire item 41 was the last statement under the section of "My

Experience of Growing up in a Minister's Family." Therefore, the respondents might be

referring to their experience in their homes.

Interaction of the Family and the Church Microsystems

Most of the negative factors reported by the PKs were from the interaction of

the family and the church microsystems; therefore, instead of artificially grouping them

separately under the family microsystem and the church microsystem, the factors are

grouped under a common heading of the family and the church microsystems. The very

reason these factors were so influential is due to the overlap of the minister's work

system (exosystem) and the church as a microsystem. The overlap brings the family in

close interaction with the church. The result of the interactions of these two microsystems

influenced the PKs tremendously.

Financial Pressure

Financial pressure was expressed by many PKs as negative during the

interview even though most had ranked their financial status in growing up as PKs as

"enough" or "just enough." Finance was also one of the major reasons some of the mothers of the PKs needed to go to work.

Keith's family had to do gardening to supplement food. The lack of adequate financial support, when the PK perceived the church could do better, had led to the feeling of resentment expressed by the PK during the interview. It was interpreted as mistreating the minister, and lack of care and support. Being older, in his late thirties, Keith also expressed the concern he had for the young seminarians. He felt sad that some might have to step into poverty similar to his father's experience of being the pastor of a rural church.

When asked about why her father needed to be bivocational for three of the seven churches he pastored, Jade responded, "We needed additional financial support for our family and it allowed my father to have even more interaction with the community." Jade's mom worked as a school teacher.

Connie cited financial pressure as a negative factor in her PK experience. Similar to the experience of a few other PKs, such as Jack and John, her family had to live week to week on the limited budget.

> And just the financial pressure. I think for a young child, young teenager to be aware of financial pressure can be [detrimental] because I never wanted to ask for anything, never wanted to make my parents think that I am not thankful for the things that I have.

John grew up in a large family of seven children. His father's salary was very low although the church people's social status was about middle class. It became a very negative factor for him in terms of his attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. John found it negative in that "their obvious need for him [his father] didn't translate appreciation for him."

For John, his father's willingness to sacrifice financially had a negative impact on him. Although he marked finance as "just enough", he reported his family had to live week by week financially. Finance was very tight for his family. He stated, "My dad did everything right. But he still influenced me negatively in the pastorate."

Besides old and unreliable cars, John also recalled the experience of having to live in a very poor housing condition. They rented a 1905 farm house as their home.

Um::: I remember we grew up in a farm house that we rented. It was built in 1905. It was pretty run down in a lot of ways. It's kind of draughty. I remember in the winter time we lived in Ohio, it was very cold in winters. A lot of times, we would all have a family bonding experience because we would all go down to the family room where we had a wood stove and we heated the whole house with the wood stove. We had to chop our own wood and things. And so we all camped out there. We would get our sleeping bags because it was so cold upstairs that it wasn't healthy to live in. . . . The people at the church were pretty middle class. People had money. It wasn't like a really poor town. We moved out of that house when I was seven. . . . I think God used it. I don't regret it. But that influenced me negatively toward the pastorate.

The church that Bill's father served in could not pay the salary for a while because of the financial problem at church. It was very difficult for his family to survive.

The longest place we stayed in St. Louis when I was ten to sixteen, the church quit paying my dad for a while because of the financial problem. So we didn't have money. We had to rely on gifts from people. The church ended up paying dad back some of the money. But while we were there, some of the time, it was very difficult. But they sheltered us even from that as well. . . . Sometimes, I felt like the church didn't take care of us good enough like that. But as a whole, I think it's good experience. I would make it a negative church experience.

Financial stress was reported as a negative social ecological factor. The PKs did not have the choice of making financial sacrifice for the ministry, and yet some did suffer through the choice of their parents.

Keith also ranked his financial status as "just enough" when growing up as a PK. His family needed to do gardening to supplement income. "You know because we needed to maximize our income, we had a huge garden. I remember we spent a lot of

time gardening together." He was still bothered by the lack of provision for the ministers'

families. "Well, our car broke down, and nobody in the church gave extra money. And

you just take care of yourself. That was the attitude."

Another PK, Wendy, ranked her financial status in growing up as "not

enough." Her family was so impoverished that they had to move four times when they

were serving at a very difficult church because they could not afford the rent. With each

move, she had to change schools because of the different school districts. Her family

moved fifteen times altogether.

Negative Ministry Experience of Father

Witnessing the difficulties that their fathers went through as pastors was very

negative in shaping the attitudes and responses of PKs toward full-time Christian

ministry. John's struggle in total surrendering to the call of full-time Christian ministry

was an example. He struggled four years to be willing to surrender totally to the call.

> And then when I was sixteen, I fully surrendered. At twelve, it was a partial [surrendering to the call]. It was a critical period for me, twelve through sixteen. That was when I resisted from being the pastor the most. Now at this point, I don't necessarily feel the call to the pastorate. But I am willing to do that if God wants. Up until I was sixteen, I wouldn't do it. I would say, "I would be a youth pastor for you. I'll be the music minister. I'll do whatever you want me to except be a pastor because I knew how hard it was." I knew my dad had gone through. I knew what he had given up. I wasn't ready to do that.

John's struggle to respond to the call for full-time Christian ministry was

compounded by the well intentions of the evangelists he met as a kid. They advised him

to avoid the ministry as a pastor at all cost because it was the hardest thing.

> I still remember most of the evangelists that came to preach the Bible at my dad's church. Great people. I have very fond memory of it. But one thing they would warn me is if I could do anything else other than pastor, do it, in the Christian ministry. Pastoring is the hardest that you would experience in the ministry. They had done it before. They warned me and would say, "Do everything you could to avoid it." I

said, "Wow." They were very serious. They said it in a mild way so as not to offend dad. That's one of the big influences why I resisted surrendering into the pastorate.

John indicated that the experience of growing up as a PK had negatively influenced him in terms of his attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry. It is reflected in his answer for questionnaire item 41.

Father's Lack of Time with the Family

The workload of the pastorate consumed a lot of time and energy of the PKs' fathers. Roy's father used the term family unfriendly to describe the ministry. In order to build relationship with spouse and children, time is an important factor. It seems that those reported the father's lack of time with family seemed to report more negative experience. Some reflected the father's priority of church over family too.

Heavy workload of the ministry. "Church: Yes, We Do Live Here" was one of Dawn's chapter titles. She explained, "There were times and seasons when we were at church all night several nights a week." The workload of ministry was very heavy, and for some minister families, all the members were involved in the ministry.

Beth used twenty-four seven and on call to describe the workload of her dad. The church her dad pastored had three hundred in attendance in weekend worship. Besides her dad, there were just one music minister and one youth minister.

> I think it makes you appreciate more of what the ministry is because a lot of people don't realize my dad is just like a doctor, he's on call twenty four seven. It's not uncommon for the phone to ring at two o'clock in the morning with somebody needing him there, or somebody who's sick or you've got to visit this person or somebody this. He's never off the clock.

Marital problem. May's father was the only pastor at a large church. He had to spend a lot of time away from home. His marriage eventually became just functional.

He developed an affair with the church secretary, whose husband and she had been a good family friends of the pastor's family. In retrospect, May thought that if her parents had more time and opportunities to enrich their marriage, they would not have ended up in a divorce and the forced termination from the pastorate. May felt as if a rock had been thrown through the stain glass window. Her whole world was turned upside down.

> As much as their relationship was very geared on being good, and being good parents, and great examples and everything, um:: one of the masks that they continued to wear was their relationship with each other. . . . I think with the amount of time my dad had to spend apart from family, I don't think they were able to make close connections. From what I understood from talking with my father, they were very close early on and out of seminary that kind of time. But as time went on, my mother's epilepsy and her medication had made her very tired. . . . My dad dwelling so much into his job and work, um:: I think it just began to slowly cause a communication divide.

PK's resentment. Max's father spent all his time at the church. This was what Max wrote on two different parts of the questionnaire. "My father spent little time with me." "I resented the fact that my father spent so much time at the church that there was no time for me." When Max was a teenager, his father later became a professor at a Christian college, but things did not change. He did interim pastoral work during the weekends, and was away most of the time. Max had an opportunity to preach on a youth week; however, his father was not there to support and encourage him.

> We have in those days youth weeks, where the young people would do everything. I was the youth week pastor, so I had to preach [chuckling]. I could remember my sermon was really terrible. But people are very encouraging and positive. The pastor and the lay people really did encourage me. . . . //Did your father hear your first sermon?// I don't think so. Honestly, I don't remember [pause]. That's a good question. I don't think he was there. I think he was away.

Too busy with the ministry to spend time with PK. Jack's father was totally committed to the ministry. He did not have time for the family. "Negatively, it was that

we did not have family devotions. My dad never spent that time with us because he was so busy." Instead of being resentful, Jack found that this negative experience actually influenced him positively in terms of his parenting.

> In my family, we have two kids. We made it a point to spend enough time with our kids. We catechize our kids. And raising them in the Deuteronomy 6 model of raising children. So that was a big influence.

Lack of Family Devotion Time

The PKs who did not grow up with family devotion time wished their parents had done differently. Some fathers were too busy to spend time with their children even for spiritual nourishment. Others were from reaction toward poor examples seen from their own parents and friends, or assuming their children would be spiritually nourished at church.

Seth grew up in a very close family. Parents were intentional about spending enough time with the children; however, his parents were overreacting to a friend's poor example of "dogmatic" spiritual input at home that they totally ignored any structured time for family devotion.

> Um:: [pause] it's actually one thing I wish could have been changed a little bit when I was growing up. My parents um::: they had seen, they had friends who were in Christian ministry. And they were very dogmatic with their children. Children had to act a certain way. Children had to do certain things. They just forced a lot of things on their kids. My parents didn't want to do that on us live in such a tight and constrain stifling atmosphere. . . . Actually, very rarely do I remember having Bible studies, which I don't see as a fall back for us. But if we could have gone back and through it again, I wish we would have more family time of actually just Bible study or we just talk about our days, prayer time or something like that, or devotional time. Um:: we didn't have many of those. . . . They knew we were going to get that instruction at church even though I kind of wish they would have encouraged us more to read our Bible at home on our own more.

Lack of Support from the Father for
Going into Full-time Ministry

Jimmy, in his early twenties, had a very positive experience at home, and he

described his family relationship as very close. He gave a lively and funny description of his father's response when he and his sister went to the Philippines for a mission trip. It shows the struggle between fatherly protection and obedience to the Lord's call on his children.

> Another thing that I remembered my parents, my dad wasn't really supportive of me or my sister deciding to go into missions. He wants us to go into being ministers. . . . It's not that he doesn't want us to do what God wants us to. But at the same time, he doesn't want us to leave. He doesn't want us to leave the country and being in unsafe places, to not be around at home. He said, "I wish you wouldn't. But I can't say anything about it because God has called you there. I have to let you do it." . . . My mom was just like, "Well, if something is going to happen, and that's what God wants, there is nothing we could do about it." Dad was like, "OK, I'll let you go. But, um:: be careful. Just don't go into any cars with other people. Always watch out for this." I thought it was just kind of funny seeing him just freak out, "You WHAT?" [Laughed heartily]

Wesley met a lot of resistance from his father when he shared with his father about the desire of going into full-time Christian ministry. His father suffered from a lot of stress from the ministry. He did not want his son to go through a similar experience.

> And when I talked to my father about it. I was met with a lot of resistance. He really did not want me to go into the ministry. Like I said, he had gone through, and it really was not horrible things, but just the daily stress. Most of the pastors he worked with are in difficult congregations. He really wanted me to do something that would be um::: make money honestly. He wanted me to be financially sound above all other things. And it wasn't like they were godless people. I mean they were godly. But there wasn't a huge emphasis on things like that I think you can say "God at all cost. Following Christ at all cost."

Another reason why Wesley's father did not support him in the beginning for full-time Christian ministry was that there were many ministers in both parents' families. It was almost comparable to a family profession. His father was afraid that Wesley was just following the family tradition instead of having a genuine call to be in full-time Christian ministry.

> He's trying to talk me out of it basically. Later on as I had said, eventually he's accepted it. Now, he's supportive. I think he was scared that I was doing it because it was a family thing. He never came out and said that.

Pressure from being Having Many
Ministers in the Family

Many PKs have a lot of relatives actively involved in the ministry. Some PKs were third or even fourth generation ministers. Therefore, they had a long heritage of spiritual legacy.

Titus's grandfather, uncle, and father were pastors. The legacy had become a challenge for him when he found that the standard set by their models was quite high, especially with grandfather being a famous radio evangelist and uncle being involved in leadership role in a seminary. The spiritual legacy had become a challenge and intimidating experience for Titus.

> It was really scary because dad was such a perfectionist because I knew how far I had to go too. Very challenging. . . . He's just a righteous fabulous man. But having that kind of example was one of the things that make the challenge so hard because I knew the expectations. Something I saw myself lacking a lot. My dad's dad died when he was four. . . . Grandfather was a big time guy. My uncle was involved in the union association.

Father's Perfectionism and Expectations

Titus's father grew up with a very abusive stepfather. His father became a perfectionist so as not to cause additional trouble for Titus's grandmother. Titus commented, "Dad is an ideal. . . . It's incredibly challenging and intimidating [following in his steps]." Although Titus seemed to have a good relationship with his father, he lamented on the fact that his father was all reason, with not much emotion. He compared his father to a perfect debater.

> I could always find it easier to talk to mother than to dad. Because dad mostly would take the thing down to a rational level. When you have feelings to express, it's harder to express it like that. Because he's going to take it down to a rational level.

No wonder when Titus was asked to name those who influenced him the most, he said, "Probably mom and Dee are the most important influence. Dad was more perfectionist than Dee was." The father's perfectionism limited his potential influence on the PK. Titus found it easier to identify his faith with in an example of a twenty-two year old youth minister, Dee. The role model of Dee became the achievable goal for Titus while his father remained as a perfect ideal and an intimidating challenge. Although the expectations Titus's father had on him were reasonable, Titus still found it hard to be following the steps of a perfectionist with all the limitations he was aware of himself.

Parents' Hypocrisy at Church

There were some church conflicts at Jack's father's church. His mother could not handle the stress from the conflicts. "My mother does not handle conflict very well. She would start busy all of a sudden. . . . You know when mom is mad or upset. Sometimes, she has the problem of saying things she should not say about certain people." At church, Jack's parents expected Jack to put on a smiling face. Jack interpreted it as hypocrisy. This is how Jack described his feelings at that time.

> I would say that the one thing I despised was having to go to church and put on a smile when that wasn't what I was feeling. . . . My parents despised me for not being fake, sometimes. That I was supposed to go to church and put on a smile and I was supposed to be a preacher's kid. But I knew that at home, everything wasn't OK. I get a lot of grief for that. I didn't hide my emotion very well. I despise that fakeness. I felt like my parents would be at home talking about someone they were in conflict with, just really whacking on them pretty bad and cutting. We were going to church, and we're all best friends.

Father Viewed Ministry as a Job

Wesley did not have a good relationship with his father. He found it hard to talk to him. He found that he could not talk about spiritual matters with his father. His father viewed the ministry as just a job.

On a strange note, I never really got a sense of the spiritual side of the ministry at home. It was always the job, the practical side. So and that's really what turned me off in the ministry. It looked like a job, and it looked like a really bad job [laugh].

When asked if he would discuss theology with his father, Wesley gave four definite no's.

No, no, no [laugh], no. We still don't talk about theology [with dad]. You know anything we talk about in the ministry, he's more and more aggravated in the context of being religious. . . . Most of all we talk about is not doctrine, or godly things. Mostly on the practical side. If you are in the ministry, you got to visit people, smile that sort of thing. . . . Even now I don't feel comfortable at all talking to him about [pause] spiritual struggle or things like that. Just to make a decision based solely on what God had called me to do. I don't expect him to support me even now.

The Negative Impact of Relocations

The average number of major moves per PK was more than three times while they were growing up. The average number of the states they grew in was more than two states. The thirty-four participants listed 26 states in the United States and 3 other countries in which they had grown up. They reported 121 relocations, and many did not include moving within the same city. The PKs that moved when they were really young (4 or 5) did not report negative impact of the relocation on their life. Many PKs who had to move frequently expressed negative feelings about the relocations. Relocation was reported as a negative factor because many PKs perceived the moves as the cause of the loss of friendship.

Mixed feelings. Relocation was perceived with mixed feelings for some PKs and negative for others. Dawn had mixed feeling about moving. She moved five times. Interview question 10 stated, "If you were asked to use a sequence of book chapters to

describe your life as a PK, what chapter titles would you use?" (Chua 2001; Fowler 1995)
In response to this question, she named the first chapter of her life story as "The Great
Adventure."

> "The Great Adventure": I thought it was fun to move and meet new people and
> each church experience was unique because of my place in life and because of the
> different people and areas of the country we lived in. . . . When I was younger, I
> though it was fun and normal, but later on I hated to leave my friends and school.

Christina also gave a similar response. Relocation was very difficult for
Christina although she found it a positive learning experience. Similar to Dawn, she also
moved five times. She named her first chapter title about relocation as "On The Road
Again."

> I think for the first twelve years, I would have to say, "On the Road Again."
> Because we moved a lot during those first twelve years of my life. But again, those
> are positive things because I learned to adapt easily to change and to new situations.
> But it was very very [sic] difficult in the midst of it.

The loss of friends. The loss of friends was the common theme. The most
detrimental years for relocation seemed to be late childhood and teenage years. Those
that moved when they were college age reported that the relocations did not seem to
matter that much since they were going to college anyway. Alice and Grant, both seemed
to be introverts, expressed that the relocations had affected them very negatively in their
relationships in terms of making friends. It added a sense of loneliness and isolation in
their childhood years.

Jade moved seven times, and her father pastored nine different churches when
she was growing up. Like many other PKs, she described her experience as difficult,
especially during the high school years. She wished there would be fewer relocations.
"They were difficult adjustments to make as a child, but as I grew older I understood

more about the reasons and God's purpose in each move." She used a creative chapter title, "Needing a Place Called Home," to describe her feeling toward the move. Just like other negative experience, some PKs were able to filter through it and found meaning in the Lord with regard to the negative aspect of the events.

> There was one particular place that we lived for only a brief time. I think this is HOME to me. I had to move again. The move ended up to be a good time. Transferring to another high school is very challenging for any teenager. The Lord takes good care of us.

The age of relocation seemed to be important. For Ray, Virginia was home. He met his fiancé there. When he was seventeen, his parents needed to move to North Carolina for ministry in a new church. He had to leave his fiancé. It was hard. "I went home almost every weekend," Ray said. Home meant Virginia as his family was moved to North Carolina already. He visited his fiancé and friends in Virginia very often.

Max hated the moves because he had to make new friends. He had to move several times because his father changed churches a number of times.

> We lived in several different towns because my father changed churches. He didn't stay in a church for very long. I think the longest he stayed in a church was three to four years, so we moved several times. And I hated that because I had to make new friends.

Exposure to the Negative Side of Ministry

Wesley found that seeing too much of the negative side of the behind the scene experience in church was a negative experience. But in spite of it, it motivated him more to be in the ministry after he had struggled through the call for full-time Christian ministry as he saw a need to be filled.

> I think the most important thing has been seeing the inner workings of the church. I would say [pause] what goes on behind the Sunday morning smile or ways. It sounds like a cliché, but that's really influenced me because I don't think many people had seen in seven days in a week. To see that, honestly, the problems are what motivate me to be the best minister that I can.

Seeing the inconsistent life of people and other ministers at church was a negative factor. Madeline described the negative impact of the negative things and people she saw as a child growing up. It made her very realistic about ministry.

> I had a negative view of the church because things had happened, negative things. Like I said about the youth ministers, they were not being consistent, and to be honest certain people that um:: were not people of integrity that did not complete what they started in church. Just things like that would cause me to be very cautious. So the church as a whole I guess. . . . That I knew it wasn't all just roses. And so I definitely knew from early on it's not fun and games. There were some very difficult things about being in the ministry. And I saw that sometimes from the stress my dad had, coming home feeling stressed. And I knew that it was caused by just things in the church, people.

Boundary Ambiguity

Questionnaire item number 48 asked the respondents to indicate their degree of agreement to the following question, "I felt that I lived in a 'glass house' with little privacy." The four-point Likert response scale offered the following choices: "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." The survey respondents (n=34) revealed that a total of six (17.65%) "strongly agree," and fourteen (41.18%) "agree" to the statement. In other words, over half of the participants felt that they had little privacy in their social ecology of the church and family. It reflected boundary ambiguity.

"One time a lady told my mom she needed to lose weight and that her haircut was horrible," Dawn vividly illustrated the "nosiness" of some members. She added, "We also had a man look in our shopping cart one day at Wal-Mart and said, 'So this is what my money is going to!'" No wonder Dawn used the chapter title, "What's in Your Basket?" to describe the boundary violation of some church members.

Jade strongly suggested that there should be proper boundary as to what should be shared in front of the children at home about the church. Jade's parents in sharing the

negative things at church in front of her had communicated a negative attitude toward the ministry. It also made family life boring when the focus of the communications was on some negative events at church rather than on building up one another at home.

> My father did not separate from what was happening in the church and the home life. I feel like I was part of the ministry almost that I was involved. . . . Come home from Sunday morning church, and you sat for lunch. What do you talk about? . . . We would usually talk about the church, what's going on at church, what's happening this morning in the church and so and so, and this was happening. We need to pray for so and so. There was always a great emphasis on what was happening in the church. So I would say definitely say that would influence my attitude.

Expectations on the PKs to Go into
Full-time Christian Ministry

Questionnaire item number 45 asked the respondents to indicate their degree of agreement to the following question, "Church members expected me to go into full-time ministry." The four-point Likert response scale offered the following choices: "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." The survey respondents (*n*=34) revealed that a total of four (11.76%) "strongly agree" with the statement, ten (29.41%) "agree" with the statement, seventeen (50%) "disagree," and three (8.82%) "strongly disagree." In other words, less than half (41.17%) of the participants agreed that the church members expected them to go into full-time ministry.

Being the son of a very famous preacher can be "pretty big shoes to fill." Although Roy had very good experience growing up as a PK and had good relationships at church, he needed to fight against the expectations from some people at church even as an adult. He was working as a minister in the same church under his father.

> There is a sense that I do fight against expectations. When I came back home, and even today, eight years later, people asked me about when I will have my own church. I kind of rebel against their expectations inside. "Is it somehow a higher ministry than helping this church?" There are some of those expectations that as an adult I have to deal with them than I did as a child.

As a child, Roy did not have to fight against any similar kind of expectations. He wanted to go into the ministry.

> I do think that some people expected me to go into full-time ministry. But I don't know how high the expectations were. I expected to go into ministry [myself]. So I wasn't fighting against it.

Roy ranked the expectations of older people in the congregation for him to be a senior pastor just like his father as the number one negative factor. This was his response and struggle inside.

> If I could say something to the congregation, I would say, "Hey, let these preachers' kids grow up to be what God is calling them to be and not what you think they ought to."

Expectations to be Spiritual and Mature

Questionnaire item number 44 asked the respondents to indicate their degree of agreement to the following question, "Church members expected me to be extra spiritual and mature." The four-point Likert response scale offered the following choices: "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." The survey respondents (n=34) revealed that a total of nine (26.47%) "strongly agree," and seventeen (50%) "agree." In other words, over three quarters of the participants felt that they were expected to be extra spiritual and mature by the church members. While some PKs can cope with a certain amount of expectations from church, other PKs found the unrealistic expectations difficult.

PKs not allowed to behave as children. Beth and her siblings chewed gum at church as kids. In her experience, that became a reason for her father to be criticized in a ministry position interview. She found that being in the spotlight with people who had a high expectation could be negative.

We are in the spotlight all the time. "The pastor's kids chew gum at church." Commented a search committee. Oh, we're not being called because the pastor's kids chew gums. Petty things like that. For me, being in that spotlight has caused me to shine brighter.

Another PK, Wendy, described her difficult experience at a church vividly.

They put a lot of pressure on me, and my sister, brothers as children um:: to be the example. "You are the pastor's child, so therefore you have angels and halo. You are perfect." They expected a great deal more. They took it upon themselves to discipline us or scold us behind [my parents]. We were behaving like normal children, giggled, and made noise. And they would say, "Shush, be quiet, you are the pastor's daughter." The pastor's family is perfect. They are not like everybody else. They've got God on them, and God doesn't allow them to be undisciplined.

Too many responsibilities in the church. Along with the expectations, the PKs were loaded with responsibilities in the church. Although Connie's experience of growing up as a PK was very positive, and she was able to do her work well, she lamented on the fact that she was given more responsibilities in the ministry than other teenagers at her age. She felt a sense of differentness among her peers. She was aware that a few adults felt sorry that she had so much responsibility as at a young age.

It was kind of our whole family's call to ministry. Because of that, we were always very involved. . . . I wanted some space and less assumptions from the church. I was always in the nursery or helping with some kind of meal, or playing the piano. All these were happening when I was about thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen years old. I had all those responsibilities. I had the responsibilities of someone who's older, so I felt like a misfit. And I was very affirmed in it by my parents and by older friends. I was able to produce. I was kind of felt odd especially around people of my own age.

John also realized that he was given too many responsibilities at church. It was not just the amount of work that made the experience negative. The pressure from too much expectation as well as lack of appreciation caused his negative feelings.

That's where the pressure came in because we were expected to be at church all the time. And that's why the children were unappreciated a lot of times because we did a lot of work. I remember ushering, doing the soundboard, playing the piano, teaching the nursery, and Sunday school classes. I remember one Sunday in particular, I was

on the bulletin scheduled to do Scripture reading, ushering, the soundboard, and special music at the same service. . . . It's too much. This is not reasonable. I think that influenced my church relationship in that they expected a lot, but didn't appreciate much.

Expected to be in leadership positions. Beth had an overall positive experience in church; however, she found that people expected her to know everything. She also felt being "dragged" into leadership positions.

> A lot of times, you are expected to fill in roles. Just being dragged into leadership positions. If the Sunday school teacher is gone, Beth can do it. Since I've been in college, in any breaks I go home, I was asked to teach the children's class for the summer when nobody wants to do it.

Church Conflicts

A few PKs cried as they shared their fathers' conflicts with churches. Daphne used the term "feeling betrayed" when the youth minister she confided in turned against her father and forced him to resign.

Grant witnessed the turmoil his parents went through in church conflicts. The impact of church conflict had left a deep impression in Grant's mind. He remembered the details of his mother's reactions. He even remembered that what they were having for a Sunday lunch when his mother broke down and cried.

> In the second church, the first two years, the first half of my father's ministry there, there were definitely negative individuals, detractors in the congregation. Eventually they left the church. One by one they left. There were always small fires to put out, in dealing with people. . . . I think my mom took it all very personally. Anything that was directed at him, any words said behind back that were directed at him, she took personally. In a sense, it was emotionally straining for my mom. I remember one Sunday lunch particularly, we were eating spaghetti; my mom got up and went to her bedroom crying. She couldn't eat. It resulted in tension even between mom and dad. He didn't want her to take it personally.

Stress and Frustrations Brought
Home by Ministers

Although some pastors were described by the PK as being able to deal with

people with a lot of wisdom and godliness, the stress was still being witnessed by family

members. Alice's father experienced a church split and also division caused by a

scrupulous man who wanted to be the pastor, which caused her father's eventual

resignation after two years of harsh struggle.

> I think he [pause] I think he [father] did bring those things [stress from conflicts at church] home quite a bit. And we saw his stress and anxiety quite a bit. I also always saw him keep his cool at church. He always dealt with people with a lot of wisdom and godliness even in the midst of conflict.

Alice's father brought home quite a bit of the frustrations at church. She found

it both positive and negative. It was positive in terms of giving her a realistic view of

ministry; however, it was also negative in the following way.

> In a negative way, it encouraged us to be critical of others. And it encouraged this "we are the perfect family" attitude, and "kind of look what we have to deal with." That's negative.

Fathers' Forced Terminations by Church

Forced terminations were reported by many PKs in the present study. Brad

even used the term "fear" six times when he remembered how father was forced to

resign. Brooks Faulkner, the Senior Specialist in Pastoral Ministries Department at

LifeWay Church Resources, said in an email with researcher on December 11, 2003, "We

have 106 forced terminations per month in 2002 of ministers in the SBC." The impact on

the ministers' families can be imagined.

Barney Self, a counselor in the Pastoral Ministries Department at LifeWay

Church Resources, wrote to the researcher in an email reply on December 15, 2003,

"There are some 1200 ministers who are forcefully terminated each year. That would

yield an average of 100 per month in SBC life. I am not aware of any studies being done

by the SBC regarding this reality. At LifeWay, we just try to deal with the pain and suffering." The pain and suffering were experienced by the PKs too.

Unfairness, shock, and financial suffering. Dawn's father was forced to resign because the church hired a new senior pastor. "My Dad was fired from one church. A new pastor came in and he got rid of the entire staff. He wanted to bring in people he knew and had worked with before." Dawn's father called her mother, and her mother wisely prepared the children's heart before father came home to announce the bad news. They had to move in the middle of a semester back to the grandparents' place. Financially, they also suffered. "My Dad had to work at a department store so we could have some type of income."

Dawn expressed that the forced termination was surely unfair and it was a shock to all the family members. Her parents turned the potentially tragic experience into a faith experience for the whole family. Her father eventually found another pastorate.

Feeling betrayed and the whole world was shaken. Daphne's father was also forced to resign by the church leadership. Her youth minister was the leading person in forcing her husband to resign. Later, he became the senior pastor of the church, where Daphne grew up in from age three to seventeen. It was the same church that Daphne's father grew up in too. The forced termination became the most influential factor in Daphne's attitude toward ministry. It shook her whole world.

> I would say probably that the thing that really shook my world was the thing a couple years ago because I had grown up in this one church. I mean that was my life. I was there all the time. I grew up there. So many memories there. I feel like a lot of those memories, those good memories, were almost tainted. That was my childhood. I look back. I had good memories.

The painful experience of forced termination was also very difficult for Daphne's siblings. Apparently, except her baby sister, the others were negatively affected.

> My second youngest sister was about eleven. It was difficult for her to leave her friends. My brother is worse. He had to move in high school. My sister is fourteen months younger than I. She said that it would be really hard for her to trust a minister again. I know that she has a hard time trusting pastoral leadership again.

Seeing God's faithfulness and be transformed. Every year in May, Dawn's family would sing the hymn "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" to celebrate the new move into a new church after the painful forced resignation her whole family had experienced. She also married a young man, and together they are preparing to be in full-time ministry. "I have seen the good side and the bad side of people in the church. However, the good has outweighed the bad." Dawn summed up her experience with the chapter title, "To God Be the Glory." She wrote, "God has really blessed me throughout my life an all my experiences and even now while I'm here at seminary waiting for Him to point me to the next step of my life."

Daphne was also able to transform her very negative experience of father's forced termination into a positive one that eventually confirmed her calling. She used the metaphor of being refined by fire to describe the impact of the conflict on her. She compared her experience with the Joseph experience as described in Genesis 37 in terms of being betrayed by the people she trusted.

Feeling hurt and do not understand why. Tony's father was forced to resign recently after serving in the church for twenty-one years. The hurt was very deep because the people who turned against his father were described as kind people while Todd was

growing up in that church. Similar to some of the PKs' experiences described above, the

youth minister was involved in stirring up the deacons to force the pastor to resign. The

father suffered a lot as he had poured his life into the people at the church for the past

twenty-one years. "I feel like I wasted 21 years here," his father shared with Tony

recently.

> Um:: the second factor shaping my attitude and response toward full-time ministry,
> um:: [pause] that was probably the second factor, even though it would be looked at
> as a negative, but it wasn't a negative. At that point in my life was when God really
> was giving me a heart to pastor whether in States or in missions. It was at that point
> I realized the people that had been his [dad's] friends for twenty-one years, the
> deacons, had turned on him. I know that God justifies the righteous and defends the
> righteous. So my father would be able to be counted righteous [cold laugh]. It was
> not as morbid as it sounds [laugh]. Knowing that despite the worldly circumstances,
> God is using us to bring glory to Him even though it hurts, and we couldn't
> comprehend.

The School Microsystem

Questionnaire item number 52 asked the respondents to indicate their degree of

agreement to the following question, "My overall experience of schooling was a positive

one." The four-point Likert response scale offered the following choices: "strongly

agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." The survey respondents (n=34)

revealed that a total of six (17.65%) "disagree," and one (2.94%) "strongly disagree." In

other words, seven (20.59%) PKs thought that their overall experience was a negative

one.

Expectations and Stereotype

Questionnaire item number 50 asked the respondents to indicate their degree of

agreement to the following question, "The teachers expected me to be more mature

because I was a PK." The four-point Likert response scale offered the following choices: "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." The survey respondents (n=34) revealed that a total of four (11.76%) "strongly agree," and eleven (32.35%) "agree." Therefore, fifteen (44.11%) of the PKs indicated that their teachers expected them to be more mature because they were PKs.

Questionnaire item number 51 asked the respondents to indicate their degree of agreement to the following question, "The peers at school did not included me in their activities because I was a PK." The four-point Likert response scale offered the following choices: "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." The survey respondents (n=34) revealed that a total of one (2.94%) "strongly agree," and four (11.76%) "agree." Therefore, only five (14.70%) were excluded by peers because they were PKs. When cross checking with the interview results, it was similar. Only a few mentioned that they were excluded from their peers' activities because they were PKs.

Negative impact of stereotype. Seth was one of the PKs that reported negative experience with peers at school that had an impact on him. His school experience in middle and high school was very negative in terms of the expectations and stereotyping he suffered from as a PK. He needed to struggle through the issues of stereotypes later as an adult responding the call for ministry.

> The more I got into middle school and high school, where peer pressure starts to set in. I really cherish friendship with people because I didn't have that many friends. It became more aware to people that I was a pastor's kid. That I was different from them. I think that's the way they perceive me. I was supposed to be very spiritual and very proper. . . . My classmates expected me to be very spiritual and mature and "different." If I ever said or did anything out of the ordinary at school, it became public news very quickly.

Tom went to a public school. He had experienced confusion in terms of teachers' expectations of expecting PKs to be behaving as very good or very bad. Similar to many PKs' report, it did not affect him much. Tom stated, "Schooling hasn't influenced me too much."

> I did act up a little bit. The teachers would say, "We expect more out of you." Or they would say, "You are a PK. PKs are known for being bad." They used both extremes. I guess I responded with a little frustration. But it didn't affect me too bad. You know there are some confusions. They'll say both sides. Overall, it was OK. When I was growing up, it may have been difficult. But I have lived passed it.

Ray's mother taught first grade in the middle school that he attended. It was a small Christian school, with about 120 students. People knew his father too. Ray felt the pressure to be good.

> Mom taught at the first grade of the school I attended. . . . It was a little bit awkward. A lot of parents worked in the school there. It was a small private school. It was a lot of pressure. I took it on as my role as the good kid. Sometimes, I don't want to be the good kid.

A Sense of Differentness

Questionnaire item number 49 asked the respondents to indicate their degree of agreement to the following question, "I felt a sense of 'differentness' at school because my father was a minister." The four-point Likert response scale offered the following choices: "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." The survey respondents (n=34) revealed that a total of eight (23.53%) "strongly agree," and thirteen (38.24%) "agree" to the statement. In other words, a total of twenty-one (61.77%) felt a sense of "differentness" at school because they were PKs.

Although Dan was athletic and popular, he still felt a sense of differentness in the huge high school. When people knew that he was a PK, they looked at him

differently. He also realized that because of the secular culture, his Christian friends were picked on as Christians.

> But when I got to high school, it was a little bit different, because all of a sudden, instead of just having the kids from your elementary school, you have five or six who didn't know you, all of a sudden, you were seen as a pastor's kid. Still nobody ever made fun of me. But I could tell that they looked at me different. . . . And so fortunately, I didn't go to the parties, but they didn't make fun of me. I was very fortunate in that aspect that my faith was never ridiculed. The Lord kept that from me. Some of the kids at my church did go through that (being picked on).

Research Question 2
Overall Conclusions

The second research question was, "What are the social ecological factors that negatively shape the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?" Many PKs stated the experience of church conflicts as the most negative impact on them. Some conflicts escalated to the point of forced terminations, which seemed to have left permanent scars in their lives when they went through the painful experience with their fathers.

The overlap of the church microsystem and the family microsystem of the minister put the PKs in a unique social ecology. They had unique struggles because of their fathers' profession. Most of the negative social ecological factors reported by the PKs were from the interactions of the family microsystem and the church microsystem. For some of the factors, it was hard to delineate whether they just belonged to the church microsystem or the family microsystem. For example, the father's lack of time with the family would be grouped under the family microsystem, but it was also the result of the interaction of the minister and the church. The readers need to bear this in mind when reading the report of findings and the conclusions.

From the family microsystem, the negative social ecological factors identified were the following: negative ministry experience of the father, father's lack of time with the family, lack of family devotion time, lack of support from father for going into the ministry, pressure from having many ministers in the family, a long lineage of pastors in the family which caused the struggle to clarify the call, perfectionism, hypocrisy, too much responsibility at home, relocation, and financial stress.

From the church microsystem, the negative social ecological factors identified were the following: conflicts with the minister and the church, forced termination from the ministry, witnessing the negative side of ministry first hand, too many responsibilities at church, peer pressure, and unrealistic expectations from church members, expectations on the PK to be a senior pastor like his father, the family unfriendly nature of ministry, church and home boundary ambiguity, heavy workload of the ministry, and stress and frustrations brought home by the ministers.

Research Question Number 3

The third research question asked, "Among the social ecological factors, which factors are predominant in shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?" Tables 1 and 2 indicate the positive and negative social ecological factors that are predominant in shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry. The factors are recorded with the number of PKs out of the thirty-four participants that indicated them as influential in their attitudes and responses toward full-time ministry.

Interview question number 9 asked, "Among all the factors mentioned, which ones are most important in shaping your attitude and response toward full-time Christian

ministry?" The data from interview question number 9 informed research question number 3. The data from the interview provided further information.

The most predominant positive factor was the parents and the family experience. On the other hand, the most predominant negative factor was from the PKs' negative church experience.

Predominant Positive Social Ecological Factors

In response to interview question number 9, nine (26.47%) PKs ranked their fathers as the most important factor in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. Another thirteen (38.24%) PKs ranked their parents as the most important factor in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. By implication, twenty-two (64.71%) PKs included their fathers as the most important factor in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. Furthermore, a total of thirty (88.23%) PKs indicated that their parents were important in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry although some of them did not rank parents as the most important factor. Cross checking with the data from all the interview transcripts, the impact of these PKs' parents was considered positive, such as in being role models for the ministry and having a positive relationship with them.

Jonah, Wesley, Brant, and Max, however, were the four PKs who did not indicate their parents as influential in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. Max had resentment against his father for spending all his time with ministry, and he was influenced more by another pastor who spent time to mentor him. Jonah described his father as passive, and he found it hard to talk with him about

spiritual matters. He was influenced by other adults, such as missionaries that encouraged him. Wesley had a very bad relationship with his father, who brought home a lot of stress from church. He considered his father too shallow and practical to share anything spiritual with him. Brant was an adopted son. He did not become a Christian until age eighteen, and then he left for college. He found his experience at the Christian college a bigger influence. The Bible and the college mentors were very important in shaping him in his college years.

The predominant social ecological factors that positively shape the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry were the following: parents/family, youth ministers/other mentors, Christian college experience, sheltered from church conflicts, ministerial exposure and involvement, church experience, and missions experience. To avoid redundancy, the detailed discussions and illustrations of the specific themes and factors which positively influenced the attitudes and responses of the ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry for research question number 1 are not repeated in this section. Table 1 provides a visual display of the predominant positive factors.

Table 1. Seven predominant social ecological factors that positively shape the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry

Predominant Positive Factors		Number of PKs	Percentage of PKs
1	Parents/Family	30	88
2	Youth Ministers/Other Mentors	13	38
3	Christian College Experience	12	35
4	Sheltered from Church Conflicts	9	27
5	Ministerial Exposure and Involvement	8	24
6	Church Experience	8	24
7	Missions Experience	7	21

Predominant Negative Social
Ecological Factors

The predominant social ecological factors that negatively shaped the attitudes

and responses of the ministers' children toward full-time ministry were the following:

negative church experience, church conflicts, expectations from church members, forced

termination, financial stress, and lack of spiritual nourishment at home.

Most of the predominant negative factors clustered around the church

microsystem or more specifically the mesosystem of the church and the minister's

family. To avoid redundancy, the detailed discussions and illustrations of the specific

themes and factors which negatively influenced the attitudes and responses of the

ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry for research question number 2 are

not repeated in this section. Table 2 provides a visual display of the predominant negative

factors.

Table 2. Six predominant social ecological factors that negatively shape the attitudes and
responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry

Predominant Negative Factors		Number of PKs	Percentage of PKs
1	Negative Church Experience	15	44
2	Church Conflicts	12	35
3	Expectations from Church Members	10	29
4	Forced Termination	7	21
5	Financial Stress	7	21
6	Lack of Spiritual Nourishment at Home	7	21

Research Questions 3
Overall Conclusions

The third research question was, "Among the social ecological factors, which

factors are predominant in shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children

toward full-time Christian ministry?" The predominant positive factors were from the family microsystem, especially the parents. The father's role in setting the proper boundary between family and church, such as shielding the church conflicts from the PKs, appears to be important as the source of positive impact.

The predominant negative factors were church related; for example, the father's overwhelming amount of stress carried over from church to home, the conflicts between father and church, forced resignation, and financial stress. A predominant theme mentioned across the cases, although not strictly social ecological, was the PKs' calling for full-time Christian ministry and the transforming power of God. Many PKs expressed that these had overridden the negative factors they had experienced.

Research Question 4

The fourth question asked, "What is the effect of the predominant social ecological factors on shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?" The interview data have contributed to the answer of this research question. The following are the themes of the effects of the predominant social ecological factors identified. Similar to the formats of the previous sections, excerpts from the transcripts of the interviews are used for illustrations. Instead of putting the effect of each factor, the themes and patterns of the effects are presented here to avoid redundancy.

The PK participants were aware that the researcher was conducting a social science research; however, they pointed out that they had to "bring God into the picture." Therefore, the findings are also reported here. The effects of the predominant social ecological factors varied among the PKs. For example, many PKs would describe similar

factors, but instead of pointing out that the negative factors had a negative impact on them, some stated the positive impact out of negative factors. Besides the immediate and the sociohistorical contexts of the PKs, their Christian worldview provided a metacontext for them to interpret their life experience.

A common analogy used by the PKs was the Joseph experience as recorded in Genesis 37. Some PKs used the Joseph experience as an analogy to describe God's transforming power through their suffering. In other words, the PKs used a biblical-theological framework to interpret their experience. Some encouragements by the PKs are also included here because they reveal the effect of a transformed understanding of their unique life experience as PKs.

In the report of findings, the researcher quotes the effects reported by the participants themselves. Some effects can be inferred and informed by precedent literature and logical deduction. The self-reported effects by the PKs themselves seemed to be more important as it revealed their perception of the impact.

Learning about the Ministry and
Spiritual Matters at a Young Age

Most of the participants were born into the ministry. They could learn a lot from the role modeling of their parents for the ministry and spiritual matters at a young age. Across the interviews, the parents were ranked as the most influential factor in shaping the PKs. Some had specified the impact of the father. They also experienced the dynamics of the ministry first hand. The mesosystem of family and church provided a lot of potential for spiritual matters to be learned, and thus the experience gave them an early start in ministry.

Many PKs reported the strong influence of their family, especially the role model of their parents in terms of their life. Godly responses of the parents toward struggles in life can leave a lasting impact.

Being in the social ecology of ministry, Madeline's earliest memory could represent that of many [n=29] of the PKs as they were born into the ministry. She began thinking about spiritual issues at a young age. Her earliest memories were of the church.

> I enjoyed my childhood. Because of my early experience in the church, I began to think about spiritual things from early on, and um:: so my earliest memories are being in church, being in Sunday school, being with friends at church. . . . And I really began thinking spiritual issues at a young age just because of the nature of what my dad did. We didn't just talk about spiritual things at church. We talked about them at home also.

"The earliest memory that I have was church ministry. Ministry is life. It's all that I have." Connie had a very positive experience growing up as a PK, to her, ministry was her life. Vera also had a similar experience, "Yeah, I always thought I will stay in the ministry." Vera was born into the ministry. She had an exceptionally positive PK experience. Her husband was also a PK, but he had a very negative experience. Here is her comparison.

> I probably grew up in a little bit of a utopia in my mind what I thought. It was just perfect, wonderful. I know that my parents have problems here and there in the church, but my dad is such a peacemaker. He's good at diffusing things that are not important, keeping things from escalating to the boiling point. So we always had very good relationship with the church. We were not at odd with the church, never had any splits, no major problems. And so I just, my background is so much different from Brad's [her husband, who is also a PK]. He expects trouble. He just knows it's going to happen. I am the opposite. I just assume that you probably can work in a church without it [trouble].

May's experience of growing up in a minister's home prepared her for her present role as minister's wife. She summed up the positive impact of her experience of being a PK by saying, "I had been there before."

Becoming a pastor's wife now, and lots of people asked me when I was in the ordination service, "Do you know what you are getting into?" And I said, "I had a pretty good idea because I had been there before." [chuckling]

Matthias's sister, Charis, was killed by a car while crossing the street when she was six. He struggled with the question of suffering of godly people as a child growing up. He found that his parents' response in this tragedy had a positive impact in shaping his view toward the ministry.

And so seeing my parents' response of faith during that time uh influenced me to be able to trust God even though I didn't understand why. And so that was influential in shaping my view of God, which later on would shape my view of ministry um because they are inextricably connected. I grew up as a kid very spiritually minded because of that.

Aspire to be in the Ministry since a Young Age

Most PKs interviewed grew up with the ministry. For them, it is not a matter of going into the ministry. They had never experienced life not with the ministry. Brad's father was the number one influence in shaping his attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry. He wanted to be a preacher since he was a little boy.

Um:: to be honest with you, I couldn't think of a time when I don't want to go into full-time Christian ministry. Um:: even from very early age. Probably four, five, or six years old. I would preach to my Sunday school class. I would just get a blank piece of paper and scribbled. That's my sermon. . . . For me, there is no other job to be done.

Vera, age 26, Brad's wife, used the phrase "stay in ministry" to convey her response toward full-time Christian ministry. She had a very positive experience growing up as a PK.

Yeah, I always thought I would stay in the ministry. It seemed easy. But that's not necessarily why I wanted to be in it. It just um seems like a good place to be. Ministry is good. It's a good situation.

Dawn found that the ministry involvement and the supportive people at church made her want to be in the ministry.

I have seen the good side and bad side of people in the church. However, the good has outweighed the bad. We had very supportive people at the last church my parents were ministering in and we were there the longest. I think that my involvement in that church and being with the people there made me want to continue on in ministry.

PKs Imitating Parents' Positive Attitudes toward Ministry

Many PKs referred to their parents as the most positive influence. Alice stated, "I think probably the most positive influence was my father's passion." The father's positive attitude toward the ministry even in tough times influenced Seth's outlook on ministry as a wonderful opportunity to serve people.

Even through tough time, he's never made ministry to seem like a burden. He's always communicated to us the joys of ministering to people. Um:: and how that has influenced me. I know very well that there is going to be good days and bad days in ministry. I already experienced that now. And I don't look at full-time ministry as a burden. I look at it as a wonderful opportunity to work with people.

Vera also ranked her parents as the most important factor in shaping her positive attitude toward full-time Christian ministry.

I think the most important factors in shaping my attitude would be my parents always keeping their priorities, always having family time, always incorporating the Lord in what we did, praying over things and decisions together as a family.

Roy's mother was intentional in being positive about the ministry because she sensed the influence she would have on her two sons.

She sensed, I think, the impact that her attitude would have on the kids. I know that she could have shaped us in a negative way, had she wanted to. But she saw a bigger picture. I think that's why I am in ministry today.

Positive Home Environment Enhanced the Response to the Call

A healthy and supportive home environment prepared the PKs to respond to the call positively. Beth was from a very supportive home. She found the experience of

growing up as a PK enhanced her call. Her upbringing, the support, and affirmation from parents contributed positively to her response to full-time Christian ministry.

> You were just brought up in an environment that makes you more hungry. . . . I know the Holy Spirit was convicting me. It's me that He wants. My dad's word is, "I know." Just to know that he can see me as a minister. It is a great affirmation. He's supportive. . . . Just my mom, everyone is supportive. . . . My experience enhanced my call. I don't know if I would be there if I had not been brought up that way.

Positive Perception of the Heavenly Father

One of the key interview questions was, "Describe in what ways, if any, your relationship with your father has influenced your perception of the heavenly Father." Most PKs agreed that their earthly fathers had an impact of their perception of God's character as the heavenly Father.

The relationship with the earthly father influenced the PKs' relationship with the heavenly Father in many ways. The earthly father, though not perfect, is a reflection of the heavenly Father, and the PKs learned the character of the heavenly Father through their experience with their earthly fathers. As Christian ministry refers to serving the heavenly Father, so the PKs' perception of the heavenly Father would certainly affect their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry.

Ruth's response represented the responses of many PKs. They realized the positive impact their fathers had on them in terms of their perception of God the Father and their desire to serve God.

> My Dad has definitely been a big influence in me in my perception of God – in his love, his stand for truth and the Word, and just in my whole coming to know Christ as my Savior and really wanting to serve Him and love Him. I think Christ is awesome because my Dad made Him and His Word awesome – and taught me to get in the Word and pray to God myself and therefore have my own exciting relationship with the Lord.

Jade stated that her father set an example as well as being the key person who directed her in her relationship with the heavenly Father.

> My father is a very giving person. And um:: he set an example that the heavenly Father is very giving to his children. As far as having an impact in my salvation experience, I would say that the key person in that would have been my father, of course there are a lot of people that influence you when you make that decision. But I would definitely say that my father was the key person who directed me in my relationship with the Lord. . . . Very positive experience.

Expectations Seen as Encouragement

The impact of unrealistic expectations and stereotyping can be negative. Once more, the effect depends on the PKs and their maturity in responding to them. Tom's father had taught him the proper perspective in handling expectations. He focused not so much on rules, but on relationships. The core of Christian life is on relationships.

> Sure. But sometimes, that [expectations from church members] was an encouragement. Majority of the time, it's kind of an encouragement than anything. It kind of helped us accountable to being careful. But one thing dad reminded us a lot growing up is not so much about rules as it is a relationship. And if we get caught up in just doing what everybody else wants us to do in following the rules, we kind of lose focus of the fact that Christian life is a relationship, is not just obeying rules. And if we are more concerned about abiding to what people say, sometimes you get caught up in the rules, rather than relating with Christ. I think it was helpful. Sometimes, it is a little tough, but it's OK.

Being Realistic about the Ministry

Being able to see ministry first hand since childhood is comparable to be able to see everything in back stage. If ministry is compared to the performance of a play, the PKs see constantly both the "actors" in the backstage and on the stage. Being able to witness how fathers dealt with church conflicts helps PKs to be more realistic when they go into the ministry themselves. Alice agreed that the experience is comparable to that of a vaccine to prepare her to face real life challenges in the ministry.

I grew up knowing that there were imperfect people in the church whereas other people who didn't experience that they may think that when you go into church work, everybody is going to be wonderful, sweet, and kind all the time.

Connie also stressed that although she was very positive in her attitude toward the ministry, she is very realistic too.

Um:: my attitude toward the ministry was very realistic. I never had any romanticize view of um "Oh, you just go into a church and preach God's word, and everything is going to be wonderful." [Chuckling]. . . . I understand the sacrifices involved.

Keith's upbringing as a PK had given him a realistic perception of the ministry. In fact, when he was sharing about the weakness of some church people and the financial stress his family had suffered, he was still irritated. "Yeah. You know. I think [sigh] I have to be careful. I even get a little irritated about it now [pause]."

I feel as a young child, I had an immediate and dominant awareness of what it meant to be in ministry, and the challenges and the opportunity of that. So there is no romanticized perception of the ministry. That's clearly not there.

Being Realistic about People

Being realistic about people is a theme many PKs reported from their negative experience in church. For Alice, knowing and witnessing her father going through the church conflicts, though a negative experience, helped her to be realistic about church people.

But in a positive way, I think as far as it [church conflict] affects my ministry now, I know that as long as I am ministering to Christians in the church that people are not perfect. When I suffer um:: you know insults or difficulties with a personality, I just know not to be shocked by that. I know you're just going to find that in any church. I think that it has really helped me.

Connie also had a realistic view on people. She did not expect a lot from people. She found it easier to associate with other PKs who understood her experience more.

>And sometimes, it makes me hard to trust people because the pastor's family's experience is so different than any other families' experience. I sometimes had the attitude of you don't really understand of what my life was like. You know. And so I always make friends with other preacher's kid, because I thought you understand what it's like to be giving on family vacations. And not to go because my dad had to do a funeral.

Beth was more critical of the people at church because she had seen everything behind the scene.

>I've just seen everything behind the scene. I think sometimes, it kind of distorts your perception maybe of church as a whole, maybe you don't necessarily. Every time, I go to the church, I know everything behind it. So sometimes, it can make me more critical of the people you know some of the things that go on. I know how it works together. A lot of people don't.

Brad's father was forced to resign twice, and Brad was very critical of the church members.

>The rudest people you're going to meet are the church members. I think my perception was developed through that experience [forced resignation].

The Struggle of Genuine Calling or Just Following the Father's Steps

The struggle is most vivid in the life of Tim and Rusty as both of them are currently serving in their father's mega church. Both of them had come to the conclusion that they were genuinely called and led by the Lord to do what they were doing. They were not just pleasing their father.

Bill described the second part of his life story as the struggle of calling and training. He came from a lineage of preachers. His grandfather, two uncles, and his father. Both his father and he had struggled through the calling experience for the certainty because it looked like a "family business." The lineage of preachers in the family influenced the PKs to search for the certainty of the call from God.

>I struggled with the calling to preach because I didn't want to do it because it is the family business or something. And my dad struggled with that same decision too.

When he was growing up, he felt the Lord was calling him to pastor. But since both of his brothers had surrendered already to preach, his dad thought he might be doing it because they were doing it.

Titus spent a long time to be certain of the call, "It's not so much I am fighting it as much as I want to make sure it was right because I just don't want to do it because that's what dad did." Besides his dad being a really good minister, his grandfather was a famous radio evangelist, and his uncle was a leader of a seminary. He even dismissed the call for a time because he did not want to be a preacher just because it was a family business.

> I always thought that call in seventh grade was, I dismiss it. You know, my grandfather was a pastor, my uncle was a pastor, I said, "It is just a family thing." Just thinking that. It's the family. It's not true. In the back of my mind, this is what I am really supposed to do. On the rational side, "Oh, this is just mind game you're just playing on yourself because that's what your family does."

Madeline struggled with the call for several years. She described that the struggle was to solidify her own faith and calling apart from her father and family.

> I think that lasts for several years. Basically throughout my college experience, I still wrestled with that. . . . But I think what really solidified my own faith, my own calling, apart from my dad, apart from my family, was my time in Mexico when the Lord was able to totally take me out of my comfort zone, where there was just me and God. And God was able to clearly spoke to me. I struggled with making sure that my calling was strictly from God and not just to please my parents.

Financial Hardship Made the
PK Struggle toward the Call

John witnessed the hardship, especially financially, that his father needed to go through. It was reflected by his response in the questionnaire, item 41, too. He did not think his experience of growing up as a PK had positively influenced him in terms of my attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry. "Probably as far as negative is the church's relationship with my father. In that their obvious need for him didn't

translate appreciation for him." His father's willingness to have little to nothing (financially) was also a negative impact on him toward full-time Christian ministry.

There were seven siblings in his family. His mom needed to go out to work as an orthodontic assistant to supplement income one day a week. His father took care of the children on his day off to allow his wife to work.

> And then when I was sixteen, I fully surrendered. At twelve, it was a partial. It was a critical period for me, twelve to sixteen. That was when I resisted from being the pastor the most. Now at this point, I don't necessarily feel the call to the pastorate. But I am willing to do that if God wants. Up until I was sixteen, I wouldn't do it. I would say, "I would be a youth pastor for you. I'll be the music minister. I'll do whatever you want me to except be a pastor because I knew how hard it was." I knew my dad had gone through. I knew what he had given up. I wasn't ready to do that.

Although Bill interpreted the financial stress as a positive experience and God used it to mature him, he still felt that the church did not take care of his family. In other words, the financial stress had affected his view toward the church negatively.

> Through that experience [church quit paying father], . . . I remember praying, and seeing prayers answered. Dad and mom led us through. When we had $700 worth of bills, we didn't enough money for it. We prayed over those bills. And then later, somebody brought the exact amount we needed to pay off the bill. Dad took care of us, and he led us to trust the Lord. Sometimes, I felt like the church didn't take care of us good enough like that. But as a whole, I think it was a good experience. I wouldn't make it a negative church experience. Sometimes I felt like that the church didn't care enough to take care of their pastor.

Negative Effects of Church Conflicts

As a child growing up in a ministers' family, Grant saw the reality of the life of a minister. The church conflicts from which his father suffered, in the early part of the second church he served, had some negative influences on Grant. He felt confused and frustrated. "I didn't understand why we couldn't just get along. I couldn't make sense out

of it. . . . I was frustrated with the people for not being team players." Fortunately, he had

a group of youth that were supportive of him. He also witnessed the negative emotional

impact of church conflicts on his mother. Being able to see the reality of a minister's life

impacted him to be very careful about the certainty of his calling. He spent ten years,

from age fifteen to twenty-five, in searching for the sense of certainty about the call to

full-time Christian ministry.

> I think the biggest impact that had um:: was that by seeing first hand as much as a
> child can the reality of what a minister's life is like, day in and day out. Not just on
> Sunday mornings, on Wednesday nights, not just when things are going well. . . .
> To see it all, the joys and the pain, it made me, not doubtful, but it made me really
> question and test to make sure that this was what the Lord was leading me, and this
> was not just what I was choosing.

The following is Grant's argument shaped by the first hand experience as a PK

that ministry comes with heartache and pain.

> If your goal is to live an enjoyable respected life, ministry is not the option because
> there is a lot of pain, a lot of heartache that accompanies that. So it's something that
> you just choose to do because it seems to be a very good occupation out of a list.
> Then, you are crazy, ignorant, misinformed. Other than that, you're called.

Christina's father was pastoring a mega church. There was a recent split, which

led to her struggle in responding to the call. Christina, in her twenties, was preparing for

women's ministry. The following was her struggle about the difficulties she would face

when she entered the ministry.

> BUT recently, it wasn't until recently with this split situation just now happened
> um:: that I think actually really um experienced all the hurt of the situation. I really
> internalized a lot of it, and the first time I've never ever asked the question, "Are
> you sure you called into the ministry?" . . . "God, why when I willingly walked into
> something, that has a potential to be so horrible? Like I've seen my parents walk
> through. Why am I doing this?" Even as soon as I asked the question, the answer
> came back, "Because I've called you to. Because I've called you to it."

Learning and Growing From
Church Conflicts

Sometimes, the effects of conflicts can be positive. The church conflicts

provided a training ground for Ray.

> I guess it [seeing the realistic side of ministry] helps me because I can look at it and
> think how I should and shouldn't react to things because I've seen what it was like.
> It makes me realize not to say too many things in front of somebody who is not in
> ministry. Like he has some friends in the church that were not in ministry. Very
> very [sic] close friends. And realize if they ever tried to tell them anything that was
> going on in the church, it just didn't work because they just didn't understand.
> Unless you're in ministry, you just don't quite understand. You can't say everything
> you want to say.

Ray described himself as an optimistic person. The church conflicts made his

family members stronger in terms of being supportive to one another as a family.

> People accused dad of things he didn't do. That was the hardest time in my church.
> A lot of people tried to attack my mom. It worked. It would hurt my dad a lot. My
> brother was going through a lot of things that he did [brother played the role of the
> rebel]. There was a lot of gossip. It usually made us stronger. When we were at
> home, we talked about it, and supported each other. It didn't tear us down at all. I
> guess God used my optimistic personality.

Forced Terminations as Hindrance for
PKs' Response to the Call of Ministry

Many PKs in this study witnessed fathers' forced terminations. The impact is

negative as expected. The forced terminations caused fears toward full-time Christian

ministry. Jimmy's father was forced to resign twice when he was growing up. His young

sister gave a very vivid portrayal of the treatments ministers received.

> After that, my sister said, she was probably six or seven years old at that time, after
> this had happened, she said, "You know what, ministers are like tissues, people
> used them up, and throw them out."

Jimmy was about twelve at that time. He found a lot of truth in his sister's

perception. Because of the negative experience, he decided as a young person not to be

involved in the ministry. For him, the experience was horrible.

And so, we are pretty much like this is not a cool thing. At that point, I pretty much decided I didn't want to have anything to do with it. I didn't want to have anything to do with church. I still saw churches, they are human beings, and stuff. It's not all bad. I still believe in Jesus, and didn't want to throw all those away. It's just the horrible horrible [*sic*] side of it all.

Brad also went through the painful experience of his father's forced termination twice. The experience almost stopped him from responding to God's call for full-time Christian ministry, and it gave him a very negative view of full-time ministry. He used the word "fear" six times in the one-hour interview. It was truly a scary experience which had a lasting impact, "Uh, even when I make a small mistake in a church setting, I get scared to death that small mistake is going to be something that gets me fired within the church setting."

I even still to this day even if I am the member of a church, I am very quick to defend the pastor because I am a PK. I've been afraid to be in a church and being kicked out from it. . . . It scares me to death. The greatest aspect of that fear is attacking my calling and my ability as a pastor. And secondly, it's attacking my ability to provide for my family. I don't want my kids to go through the pain of being pressured to leave. . . . I can think of three times over the course of my growing up with my dad that I can see my dad crying. Psychologically, it hurt him.

A Biblical World View of Suffering as an Antidote for Negative Experience

Many PKs interpreted their experience with a Biblical view of suffering. By the Lord's transforming power, the suffering was used for the growth of the PKs. The transforming power of the Lord was reckoned by many of the participants as the major influence on their positive response toward the ministry regardless of some negative factors. Strictly, the transforming power of the Lord is not a social ecological factor; nonetheless, many PKs claimed that it was the major force that had counteracted the negative dynamics about the Christian ministry they had experienced. The effect of

recognizing God's transforming power had changed the PKs' negative experience into

something positive.

Daphne felt a strong sense of betrayal by the church leadership she trusted

when they forced her father to resign. Based on her faith in the Lord and the

understanding of Scripture, she had a transformed view of the painful experience.

> I used to question, "Why are you allowing this to happen? How will this glorify you?" I always go back to the story of Joseph. I know that his story was a lot worse than mine. You meant it for evil, but the Lord meant it for good. A lot of those people in leadership, they didn't have good motives. But the Lord meant it for good. I know I am not going to completely understand it. But I know that God's purpose is good.

Bill was able to interpret his family's financial stress with a Biblical view of

suffering. He perceived the negative experience as positive in terms of being used by God

for his maturity. Suffering and ministry seemed to go side by side.

> Because God used it to make me more mature as Christian. I think when Christians view suffering as I can't believe God is letting this happen to me, they're not very mature. Because the Scripture always said if you follow me, you will suffer. Suffering is just being part of being a Christian. And the higher up in leadership you go, the more criticism you are going to receive, the more financial stress because you are depending on other people to provide for your need so you can give yourself to the work. If those people do not have the same vision as what is necessary, then they are not going to provide for your need.

In the midst of the painful experience of his father's forced termination from a

church he served for twenty-one years, Tony managed to be comforted by knowing

God's sovereign control. He was able to continue his response to the call in being trained

in the seminary to be a pastor.

> When I see that [pause], but God is working for His glory. I understand the sovereignty of God although before I wouldn't. I can't fully understand because they were such good friends. Just two or three days again, dad and I were talking about it. . . . A youth minister stirred up the deacons against him [dad]. . . . His sickness [Parkinson's disease] fell into it. But they didn't use it. They used false accusations. They had just grown tired of his sickness.

Negative Experience Enabled the PKs to
See the Needs of Ministers' Families

Madeline was in pastoral counseling training. She wanted to become a

counselor to help the missionary children in the mission field. Her PK experience as well

as her missions experience impacted her choice of ministry.

Forced termination was one major stressor that some PKs had to face while

growing up. Many PKs called for a support system for their families. Daphne expressed

her dream of a clergy family support network after her family went through the pain of

forced termination. There was no denomination support provided to her family.

> No. We are actually Independent Baptist. They [parents] went to a counselor for a
> while. They kind of went away on a weekend. I don't think they had any continuous
> counseling. Yeah, I used to imagine what an opportunity would be to start some kind
> of ministry to pastors' families. Even like a camp during the summer where the
> families could get together just to have a support group and then when they go away
> they had those contacts. You NEED that support. You need connection with other
> people that are dealing with [similar situation]. And to know that you are not alone
> to have that support.

May, a Southern Baptist, had gone through a traumatic experience of her

parents' divorce when she just turned eighteen, and her husband was forced to resign last

year. She called for more denominational support, and she aspired to be a counselor for

ministers' families.

> There really isn't [any support from the denomination]. . . . I think that the SBC
> [Southern Baptist Convention] is beginning to recognize that, and starting to correct
> that. Um:: I think there was supposed to be a ministers hotline that they can call.
> BUT . . . I think each association needs a professional psychologist on hand for just
> the pastorate and the ministers' families. . . . I do feel a heart or a big desire, in
> working toward being a counselor for the pastorate. . . . I just felt a huge need for
> the pastorate.

Having gone through the PK experience had enabled some PKs to be

empathetic and even protective of other pastors. Keith expressed that he was able to use

his PK experience in being supportive to the new pastor of a very troubling church that he attended as an adult. He was able to understand what the pastor and his family were going through based on his former experience.

Brad also expressed that he became very protective toward other pastors too. "I even still to this day even if I am the member of a church, I am very quick to defend the pastor because I am a PK."

Lack of Time with the Father Fostered Resentment against the Ministry

When the PKs perceived that their fathers devoted all their energy and time into church work and neglected them, there was a sense of resentment. They might assume that the ministry had taken their fathers from them. Max made a promise to himself that he would never go into the ministry because the misconception that all ministers needed to neglect their families. He had negative feelings toward full-time Christian ministry at a young age. Later, a wise pastor helped him to understand that maybe his father found it easier to do church work than family things.

> When I was a youngster growing up, I kind of made a promise to myself that I would never go into the ministry because my father devoted most of his time to the church, and I felt that he neglected me and my sisters and my brother. I felt like he neglected his family for the sake of the church, and I assume you had to do that. I assume all pastors did that. And so I really resented that. I can remember as a boy, I just felt it was unfair.

The Hurt from Knowing Fathers Being Mistreated by Church

Brad went to a boarding school, so he did not see a lot of the conflicts directly. But his sister saw it all. The bitterness and hurt can be imagined when friends from church turned against one's parents.

If you were to interview my sister, she saw it all. She's still very bitter about it. Very bitter. But they were so MEAN. When we were at the church in Virginia, they were just so mean. We had some people in the church. We were pretty good friends with. They just completely turned their back on my parents. Just their attitudes are terrible.

When asked about if her father's negative emotions from church conflicts had impacted the home, Jade sobbed through the whole process of describing the pain of seeing her father's suffering in the ministry.

Oh, I mean definitely, there had been times definitely when times he would be angry about things or he would be upset about what's going on at the church and just frustrated. I think that was negative at times. Honestly, you know, my mom, here my brother and I, there were times, say on a Saturday evening or whatever, we know Satan was really working and and [sic] um:: we would just pray that he would get through that. But that was very REAL [tearing and sobbing]. [Pause] Um:: that was a very real thing [sad tone, dry laugh]. I get my emotions from my father. But um: that was very real thing. I don't look back as being over like the um: I don't look at it as a negative thing. I just look at that as it is very real. [Pause] That to me, our family could see him being attacked at times when he was wanting to do God's will and lead the church so [tearing].

Seeing Too Much Stress from Ministry as an Obstacle for Responding to the Call

Wesley's father did not handle stress well. When Wesley was called, the thought of having to go through his father's experience was scary. His father's stress level was really high when he worked under a very demanding senior pastor. He gave a lively account of how he and his brother used to hide from dad to avoid meeting an angry father.

Usually, every day when he came home, he was angry. And we used to drag seeing my father every day come home from work. If we saw him coming, we would hide. But we would go and try to look busy, so we would be in normal or good mood, but as soon as dad got home, we would be down, upset about something. It was a stressful time for a while. I was uncomfortable around my dad a lot. The older I got, the worse it became. . . . I said it affected all of us.

His father's stress had become an overarching theme in Wesley's memory of his PK experience. It became a very strong obstacle for him to respond to the call.

> Generally, I had a negative view of ministry growing up. Not so much as a calling. I don't think it's unfair or anything. I had been in enough churches and seeing my father go through a lot of problems and stress, so I DIDN'T want to be in the ministry. If you would ask me when I was young what I would want to do. "I don't know. But I don't want to be a preacher." That would be my response. . . . Although I was really feeling I wanted to [respond to the call] at that time, I was really nervous about the whole thing because of what I had seen, I didn't want to go through that. The only part I've ever seen in ministry was dad coming home, angry or upset, disappointed. I didn't want that, but I knew I had been called, so I'll make it through.

It seems that the mental picture of the perception of the PKs had an impact on them when they respond to the call for full-time Christian ministry. Throughout the thirty-four interviews, there were themes of very positive images as well as very negative ones. What the PKs saw and remembered from their experience of growing up in the ministers' families seemed to have an impact on their attitudes as well as their struggles in their responses to the call for full-time Christian ministry.

Missions Experience Strengthens Spiritual Growth

Some PKs mentioned missions experience as transforming. In all these cases, they were the one who chose to go on the mission trips. Their eyes were open to the needs and the reality of God's work in other parts of the world, outside their homes and their churches. In other words, the faith experience outside their familiar contexts did strengthen their spiritual growth, and thus had a positive impact on their attitudes and responses toward ministry. The mission fields included the Philippines, Mexico, Kenya, and El Salvador.

Matthias's description of the effect of the impact and effect of the missions experience is a good summary of how others felt about their mission trips.

I went to a mission trip to El Salvador several years ago, and that had a big impact on my life. We would preach on the street, and there were anywhere between a hundred and six hundred people. That's really neat experience to see what God was doing in places outside of my church and outside of what I am used to, and outside of my country to see that God is working in other places was really influential on my attitude towards ministry.

The Calling for Full-time Christian
Ministry Sustained the PKs

Many participants shared about their calling experience. Some had more

unique calling experience while most of them shared the gradual process of confirming

their calling to full-time Christian ministry. Many PKs had experienced some negative

experience in some point of their life. The logical question the researcher asked many of

them was, "Then, why are you here studying in a seminary to prepare for the ministry

then?" Many of them would point to the profound impact of their calling experience that

sustained them through the difficulties. The call seemed to supercede everything. Yet, the

human factors were important as the PKs lived in their unique social contexts.

The forced resignations of Brad's father and Brad's negative ministry

experience as a minister himself almost caused him to give up ministry; however, the call

and support of his father sustained him.

It [daddy's forced resignation] almost stopped me and it did give me a very negative view of full-time ministry. //The logical question to ask is what makes you here?// I would have to say that the reason that I am here is because this is where God made it very clear I was supposed to be. //The call?// Yes. I could not get away from the call. I did not have a Jonah experience. . . . When we left, I sort of threw my hands into the air and said, "That's it. I will not be going back into the ministry." My father was the number one source of advice in those days.

Research Question 4
Overall Conclusions

The final research question was, "What is the effect of the predominant social

ecological factors on shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward

full-time Christian ministry?" In discussing the effect of the predominant factors in

shaping the attitudes and responses of the PKs toward full-time Christian ministry, some

of the effects were very self-explanatory and obvious. The effect of the positive

predominant factors included learning from good parental role models, imitating positive

parental attitudes toward the ministry, strong spiritual foundations, the PKs felt they had

a good relationship with father, being able to focus on the positive of the ministry, and

wanting to be in the ministry. Many PKs also reported that their relationship with their

earthly fathers shaped their perception of the heavenly Father.

   In short, the effect of the parents and the father as the minister seemed to be a

very important factor in shaping the PKs. Their life, role model, and relationship with the

PKs provided a strong spiritual foundation to them for the ministry. The impact of youth

ministers and other mentors also served as role models for the PKs. The Christian college

experience gave the PKs potential opportunities to meet other godly people to impact

them. It also gave them space away from their homes and churches to process their faith.

The ministerial exposure and involvement gave them a valuable learning experience. The

positive church experience influence the PKs' perception of ministry as positive. Finally,

the short-term missions experience opened the PKs' eyes to the reality of their faith

outside their microsystems, and strengthened their spiritual growth. Many of them were

motivated to be involved in the ministry from their missions experience. The positive

factors motivated the PKs to want to be in ministry.

   The findings indicated that those PKs who reported more positive experience

in growing up had fathers who were intentional about spending time with them as well as

shielding the negative effects of the ministry from them. The effect would imply time for building good relationships and bonding with children as well as time for the children to learn from them. Shielding the negative side of ministry, such as church conflict from the children helped them to be able to focus on the positive side of ministry, and not be affected negatively at a young age by the negative impact of ministry. It seems that the positive factors prepared the PKs for the ministry and enhanced their response to the call.

The effect of the negative predominant factors included negative attitudes and emotions toward full-time Christian ministry such as resentment, fear, a sense of insecurity, financial insecurity, struggling for the certainty of the call so as to distinguish it from "family business," being critical and realistic about the ministry, feeling hurt by church when father was forced to terminate the ministry, and feeling overwhelmed by the negative side of ministry when father failed to screen out the negatives. The lack of spiritual nourishment at home, such as family devotion, affected the spiritual foundation of the PKs for Christian ministry. Some PKs reported that the negative factors helped them to be empathetic toward other pastors and PKs and motivated to make a difference. It seems that the negative factors were obstacles and hurdles that many PKs had to work through in responding to the call.

Evaluation of the Research Design

The research design of this study was qualitative descriptive. It was composed of two instruments. First, the *Questionnaire for the Adult Children of Ministers* was used to collect demographic and background information of the PKs. Second, there were personal interviews of the same group of PKs. The qualitative descriptive research design was appropriate for the research purpose, which was to explore and analyze the social ecological factors involved in shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children

toward full-time Christian ministry. The research purpose has been thoroughly fulfilled by the research design.

The strength of this research design was that rich and thick data about the PKs' experience from the one-hour long interviews and the questionnaires could be explored. The researcher could understand the PKs' life experience by talking with them directly. The interviewing process provided a venue where questions and answers could be clarified immediately. The input from the participants has been carefully examined in order to present the findings and conclusions of this research.

In the current research design, the researcher and the participants were interactive in the interviewing process. Thus, a good rapport between them and a relaxing environment could facilitate the interview process. The researcher found that the campus environment was suitable for the interview. Most of the interviews were conducted in the lobby of the Legacy Center on campus, which had provided a relaxing, elegant, and quiet environment for the interviews. As a member of the seminary community, the researcher also had a natural and good rapport with the participants. All the participants were volunteers for the research, and they saw the need for a research on their experience as PKs. The researcher found that they were ready to help and eager to provide useful information.

Furthermore, the researcher's cultural background, experience in the ministry, theological position, and gender can influence the interviewing and interpretive processes. The researcher's bias seems to be an avoidable weakness in the naturalistic enquiry paradigm. An awareness of the potential influence of the researcher had helped to maintain a balance of objective interpretation and subjective influence.

Another weakness of the current research design is that it is dependent on the memory, perception, and interpretation of the PKs' experience in growing up. Older participants found it hard to remember details of their experience when they were growing up. If repeating this research, the researcher would limit the age of the participants to be under forty. Furthermore, a longitudinal study on the development of the PKs across their life span from childhood to adulthood seems to be able to provide more data of each developmental stage; however, it is outside the time frame allowed for a graduate dissertation.

In conclusion, the qualitative descriptive research design in the ethnographic tradition, informed by life story research, is an appropriate research design for the current exploratory study on PKs in terms of the social ecological factors shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter represents the conclusions drawn from the research findings. It consists of the research conclusions, implications, applications, and recommendations for further research. The research purpose and research questions in this study seek to help fill the void of limited research conducted in the area of ministers' children (PKs) from the perspective of the social ecological factors in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. Prior to conducting the research, the researcher reviewed precedent literature relevant to the study, including the study on the various aspects of ministry and family.

Research Purpose and Questions

The focus of the present study is to explore and analyze the social ecological factors involved in shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry. The study can add to the limited amount of research on PKs, broaden Christian leaders' understanding of the PK lives, and inform clergy parents who seek to raise PKs with a positive attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry.

In order to explore and analyze the social ecological factors involved in shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry, the following research questions were investigated.

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1. What are the social ecological factors that positively shape the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?

2. What are the social ecological factors that negatively shape the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?

3. Among the social ecological factors, which factors are predominant in shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?

4. What is the effect of the predominant social ecological factors on shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?

Research Conclusions

Conclusions were based on objective analysis and subjective interpretation of research findings related to the four research questions. Furthermore, conclusions were drawn in light of the research purpose and through the examination of findings of each research question presented in chapter 4.

Although an understanding of the minister's family and PKs is an important asset for the development of the church, precedent literature revealed that research of the social ecological factors in shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry could not be found. The interview results from this study has shown that the minister's family and its interactions with the church play an important role in shaping the attitudes and responses of the ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry. The dynamics of the microsystems of the family and the church were very important in shaping the PKs' attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry.

Most (n=30) of the PK participants in this study pointed out that their parents were an important influential social ecological factor in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. To be specific, nine PKs ranked their

fathers, and thirteen PKs ranked their parents as the number one influential factor in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry.

Many PKs stated negative church experience (n=15) and church conflicts (n=12) as having very negative impact on them. Some conflicts had escalated to the point of forced resignations (n=7), which seemed to have left permanent scars in their lives when they went through the painful experience together with their fathers. The overlap of the work system and the family system of the minister put the PKs in a unique social ecology. PKs have unique struggles because of their fathers' profession.

The results of this study have identified the positive social ecological factors, the negative social ecological factors, the predominant social ecological factors, and the effect of the predominant social ecological factors on shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry.

The researcher found that she had entered a "terribly complicated and mysterious area of reflection" (Fowler 1992, 338). Although the focus of the study was on the social ecological factors, themes such as God's call and transforming power came up again and again across the interviews. This explains why those who had experienced very negative social ecological factors in growing up as PKs were preparing themselves for full-time Christian ministry.

Furthermore, the researcher made no claim that the social ecological factors reported here as the only factors shaping the attitudes and responses of PKs toward full-time Christian ministry. Undoubtedly, other researchers may discover other factors. Nevertheless, the social ecological factors unearthed from the current research are in line with precedent literature as well as being representative across the reports of the

participants. As the research concern of this study is to find out from the perception of the adult PKs the social ecological factors involved in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry, an understanding of the phenomenological perspective as more important than the environment is helpful.

Research Question 1 Conclusions

The first research question was, "What are the social ecological factors that positively shape the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?" Most (n=30) of the PK participants in this study pointed out their families/parents, especially their fathers, as a very important influential social ecological factor in shaping their attitude and responses toward full-time Christian ministry. Across the interviews, the focal point was on the family, especially on the father as the minister.

Many positive factors were from the family microsystem. There were relatively fewer positive factors mentioned in the church microsystem, and finally, even fewer positive factors were identified from the school microsystem. Some factors, though not strictly social ecological in nature, were emphasized by the PKs as extremely important. They were God's call for them to go into full-time Christian ministry and God's transforming power in changing the negative factors into helpful experience.

From the family microsystem, the positive factors identified were the following: family, family relationships, relationship with the earthly father, relationship with the heavenly Father, parents' role modeling, parents' consistency in the faith, parents' attitude toward the ministry, parents' focus on the positive side of ministry, parents' supportive spirit, ministers' time spent with PKs, ministers' balance of family and church, spiritual nourishment at home, and discipleship by the father for ministry.

From the interaction of the family and the church microsystems, the positive factors identified were the following: clear boundary between home and church, focusing on the positives of ministry, and shielding the PKs from church conflicts. The father was comparable to a filter through which negative factors from the church microsystem could be screened out for the PKs to interpret their church experience. Furthermore, a clear boundary enabled the PKs to have the space to be shielded from any potential negative experience at a young age. From the church microsystem, positive factors reported were good church relationship and experience, ministry involvement and exposure, mentors, and positive handling of expectations.

From the school microsystem, not much data were reported in terms of either positive or negative factors. Those who went to Christian schools reported a positive factor of solid Biblical foundations for their spiritual development. Some PKs, including those who attended public schools, reported the importance of positive peer influence at school for their faith development. Some PKs were home schooled, and some of them reported the positive experience in terms of being insulated from negative peer influence. A number of PKs reported their spiritual growth in their college years. It was through the interactions with Christian professors, college ministers, such as Baptist Student Union ministers, and reading missionary biographies and Christian books they were introduced to. A number of PKs reported the sense of ownership of the faith when they were away from home in college. They reflected stage four of Fowler's theory of faith development, Individualistic-Reflective faith (Fowler 1995, 182).

Other positive factors include short-term mission trips, where the reality of faith was witnessed outside the familiar family and church microsystems. Some PKs

described strong prayer support by loving people surrounding them such as parents,
extended family members, and church people as a positive factor.

Research Question 2 Conclusions

The second research question was, "What are the social ecological factors that
negatively shape the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time
Christian ministry?" Many PKs stated negative church experience (n=15) and church
conflicts (n=12) as having a very negative impact on them. Some conflicts escalated to
the point of forced terminations (n=7).

The overlap of the family and the church microsystems of the minister put the
PKs in a unique social ecology. They had unique struggles because of their fathers'
profession. Most of the negative social ecological factors reported by the PKs were from
the interactions of the family and the church microsystems. For some of the factors, it
was hard to delineate whether they belonged to the church microsystem or the interaction
of the family and the church microsystems. For example, the father's lack of time with
the family impacted the family microsystem, but it was the result of the interaction of the
minister and the church. The readers need to bear this in mind when reading the report of
findings and the conclusions.

From the family microsystem, the negative factors identified were the
following: negative ministry experience of the father, stress and frustrations brought
home by the ministers, father's lack of time with the family, lack of family devotion time,
lack of support from the father for going into the ministry, pressure from having many
ministers in the extended family, perfectionism, hypocrisy, too many responsibilities at
home, relocations, and financial stress.

From the church microsystem, the negative social ecological factors identified were the following: conflicts between the minister and the church, forced termination from the ministry, witnessing the negative side of ministry first hand, too many responsibilities at church, unrealistic expectations from church members, expectations on the PK to be a senior pastor like his father, expectations to be extra spiritual and mature, the family unfriendly nature of ministry, church and home boundary ambiguity, heavy workload of the ministry, stress and frustrations brought home by the ministers, and financial pressure.

From the school microsystem, negative factors identified were the following: expectations, stereotypes, and a sense of differentness; however, most PKs did not think they were really of significant impact in shaping their attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry.

Research Question 3 Conclusions

The third research question was, "Among the social ecological factors, which factors are predominant in shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?" The predominant positive factors were from the family microsystem, especially the parents. The father's role in setting the proper boundary between family and church, such as shielding the church conflicts from the PKs, is important as the source of positive impact. Other predominant positive factors identified were: youth ministers/other mentors, Christian college experience, sheltered from church conflicts, ministerial exposure and involvement, church experience, and missions experience.

The predominant negative factors identified were church related. They are negative church experience, church conflicts, expectations from church members, forced termination, financial stress, and lack of spiritual nourishment at home. When asked why they still wanted to be in full-time Christian ministry in spite of the negative experience, two predominant themes were mentioned across the cases. They were the PKs' sense of calling for full-time Christian ministry and the transforming power of God. Many PKs expressed that these had overridden the negative factors they had experienced.

Research Question 4 Conclusions

The final research question was, "What is the effect of the predominant social ecological factors on shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry?"

In the report of findings, the researcher used transcript extracts to illustrate the effects reported by the participants themselves. Some effects were very self-explanatory and obvious as they could be inferred and informed by precedent literature and logical deduction; however, the self-reported effects by the PKs themselves was important as it revealed their perception of the impact.

The effect of the positive predominant factors included learning from good parental role models at a young age, imitating positive parental attitudes toward the ministry, strong spiritual foundations, having a good relationship with the father, being able to focus on the positive of the ministry, and wanting to be in the ministry. Most PKs reported that their relationship with their earthly fathers influenced their perception of the heavenly Father. The impact of youth ministers and other mentors also served as role models for the PKs. The Christian college experience gave the PKs potential

opportunities to meet other godly people to impact them. It also gave them space away from their homes and churches to process their faith. The ministerial exposure and involvement were valuable learning experience. The positive church experience influenced the PKs' perception of ministry as positive. Finally, the short-term missions experience opened the PKs' eyes to the reality of their faith outside their microsystems, and strengthened their spiritual growth. Many of them were motivated to be involved in the ministry from their missions experience. The positive factors motivated the PKs to want to be in ministry. The positive factors prepared the PKs for the ministry and enhanced their response to the call.

The effect of the negative predominant factors included negative attitudes and emotions toward full-time Christian ministry such as resentment, fear, a sense of insecurity, financial insecurity, struggling for the certainty of the call so as to distinguish it from "family business," being critical and realistic about the ministry, feeling hurt by the church when the father was forced to terminate the ministry, and feeling overwhelmed by the negative side of ministry when father failed to screen out the negatives. The lack of spiritual nourishment at home, such as family devotions, affected the spiritual foundation of the PKs for Christian ministry. Some PKs, however, reported that the negative factors helped them to be empathetic toward other pastors and PKs, and they were motivated to make a difference. The negative factors were obstacles and hurdles that many PKs had to work through in responding to the call.

Research Applications and Recommendations

Based on this current research, the following recommendations are offered for consideration concerning the social ecological factors in shaping the attitudes and

responses of minister's children toward full-time Christian ministry. Two areas of

applications and recommendations are offered. The first consideration is application of

the findings, and the second is further research. This study ends with an appeal for more

research on PKs and ministers' families.

Application of the Findings

The findings of this study have value and particular applications for ministers,

ministers' families, adult PKs, churches, seminaries, and denominational headquarters.

Research Implications for Christian
Education and Leadership

The findings serve to inform Christian educators, church leaders, and clergy

parents of the primary importance of the ministers' family in shaping the attitudes and

responses of PKs toward full-time Christian ministries. Based on the research findings

and analysis, the following implications for Christian education and leadership are stated

as part of the applications. The implications of the findings on ministers' families can be

very close to home with many of the readers of this dissertation. The researcher is

confident that many other implications can be explored.

1. Christian educators and leaders need to be informed and educated in the primary importance of leaders' families for the development of the members of the family as well as for the ministry.

2. Christian educators and leaders need to search for administrative procedures to enable the ministry to be family friendly toward the minister's family. For example, changes can be implemented on the time and number of meetings the minister needs to attend. Church and denominational governance can assess the church's demands on the ministers and make recommendations accordingly to improve the quality of life of the ministers.

3. Church leadership needs to employ more ministerial staff to share the workload of the senior pastor when the church develops and can afford to do so. It enables the pastor to have time to spend with his family, which is crucial for the development of the PKs.

4. Denominational support is called for repeatedly by the PKs in the current study. Support systems for pastors and their family members are needed. Many PKs reported that they did not know about the availability of denominational support. Only two PKs reported that their families had used denominational resources in terms of financial support and training courses when they were in crisis after their fathers' forced terminations. In neither case had any counseling support from the denomination been received.

5. Since church conflicts were also reported by many PKs in this study, church conflict management can be incorporated as a core course in the curriculum of seminary training. Experienced pastors in this area can be employed to teach the young pastors in terms of conflict management in the church setting.

6. Along a similar line, family life education is very important for the minister as well as the ministry. Seminaries need to design courses to empower the students to function as a parent in the family as well as a minister in the church. Besides the essentials of Christian family life education, specific trainings need to be provided to equip the minister to function in between the two microsystems: the minister's family and the church.

7. Spiritual nourishment at home is seen as an essential part by the PKs for their spiritual formation. Christian education classes need to be included in the core courses of pastors' training to equip the pastors in terms of providing spiritual nourishment and leadership for their children at home, which is stated clearly as the domestic qualifications for pastors in 1 Timothy 3:4-5.

8. A theology of suffering can be a preventive antidote for pastors and their family when they face the inexplicable difficulties in ministry even though they had poured their life on people.

9. A ministry for the healing of hurt pastors and their family members can restore some back to the ministry.

10. A number of PKs reported financial stress. Church governance can work toward reasonable payment scale to ministers, especially for those with large families. For small churches, or churches with financial problems, denominational support can be provided to alleviate the negative impact on the pastors' families. Furthermore, denominations can also provide the church with a suggested payment scale for the pastor.

11. Denominational or joint denominational effort can be utilized to promote the welfare of the ministers' families, such as sponsoring affordable annual or biannual conferences and camps for ministers' families to gather for support, relaxation, and family time.

12. Since PKs grow up in their unique social ecology, denominations can provide conferences and camps for PKs to meet together for support and encouragement. They may be facing similar issues in their life, so preventive education in areas such as handling expectations, peer pressure from school, facing church conflicts, and even preparing for forced terminations can be beneficial in equipping them to face difficulties in life.

13. For the PKs who are struggling with the calling for ministry, proper counseling can be provided by the denominations in these camps and conferences for them. It is an important step in church leadership.

14. Many PKs reported the positive impact of a healthy church relationship. Seminars for the church leaders as well as the congregation are recommended in order to educate the church in terms of relating to the pastor's family. Denominational headquarters or the church leadership can organize such seminars.

15. Many PKs reported significant adults, such as youth ministers, interns, Sunday school teachers as well as Christian school teachers that impacted their spiritual journey. Support and training can be provided for these significant people to enhance their influence for young people in the church as well as for the PKs.

16. Seminaries and denominations need to conduct research on forced terminations to find out how some could be prevented through seminary education, church leadership training, or denominational interventions.

17. Church leadership and governance need to assess the employment procedures and their role in major church conflicts and forced terminations to find out if the potentials for forced terminations or major church conflicts could be detected earlier in the conflict stage for restoration and interventions to be implemented.

18. Seminaries can seek to influence church and denominational leadership by providing educational and leadership training for them since they can contribute to the well-being of the minister as a servant of the Lord and as a father.

19. On the average, a seminarian may stay in the seminary for about three to four years; therefore, the seminary becomes the logical place for the seminarians and their family members to network with one another. Seminaries can facilitate and cultivate the atmosphere for networking among seminarians.

20. Since the mother's attitude toward ministry is an important factor, equipping the wives for the ministry is an important task for the seminary. For example, in The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, there is a Seminary Wives Institute for the wives of the seminarians to prepare them to minister alongside their husbands and to network with one another.

21. Some PKs reported peer pressure in public schools because of the differences of values. Church leadership and denominational leadership need to consider providing affordable Christian education for the PKs to go to Christian schools, where the values are Christian. In cases where Christian schools are not available, it is recommended that the church can support the pastor's family financially so the pastor's wife does not have to go out to work, and be able to home school the PKs when needed.

22. Many of the PKs interviewed had to work part-time or full-time jobs to provide for their seminary education. It is recommended that the church leadership, denominational leadership, and seminary leadership raise more support for full scholarships so that they can concentrate on preparing themselves to be quality servants of the Lord. When the seminarians are spending so much time at work to support themselves through school, they may not have enough time for their children even at this stage.

23. The lack of time with children can be a serious problem because of the demand of ministry. Therefore, it is recommended that church leadership and denominations have guidelines on the working hours of the pastor in order to educate the congregation about the time expectations and boundaries.

24. A biblically sound culture on the proper treatment of pastors needs to be introduced to the church in order to minimize the sufferings of pastors' families from immature church leadership and members.

25. On the other hand, a biblically sound culture of servant leadership needs to be nurtured among the young pastors of the twenty first century where the secular view of leadership is contaminating that of biblical leadership, especially in the area of domestic qualifications.

26. Finally, a biblical-theological foundation of ministry and family can equip the pastors to function well as the spiritual leader of the church as well as the leader of their families.

In short, the Christian education and leadership implications of the findings discussed above fall on the church leadership, denominational leadership as well as seminary leadership in terms of preventive teaching as well as remedial support systems. It is the researcher's hope that some of the readers will be influenced by the findings and discussions provided in this study to make a difference for the ministers' families and the PKs. The impact will be far more than we can imagine because there is great potential for ministers' families to raise future leaders that would support the ministry.

It is time for the church governance to reflect on their role in making ministry family friendly for the ministers. Otherwise, the experience of growing up in ministers' families will be the biggest obstacle for PKs to respond to full-time Christian ministry with a positive attitude. All the leadership that has a potential impact on ministers' families are accountable for the ministers' families' well-being physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings from this study, the conclusions, and the applications presented above, here are some suggestions for further research:

1. Since the current study is exploratory and qualitative descriptive in nature, another researcher may build upon the work of this research to further research the factors reported in the findings for causal relationships, looking perhaps at the relationship between the minister's family, the local church, and the PK's religious commitment.

2. Further research can be conducted on the father's involvement in the PK's life and the PK's attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry.

3. Further research can be conducted on the father's leadership at church and at home to explore if there is any correlation with the PK's attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry.

4. The population and sample of the current study are on PKs who are preparing for or in full-time Christian ministry already. A comparable study with a population and sample of PKs who are not in any Christian ministry can yield further insights into the impact of the social ecological factors in shaping PKs' attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry.

5. The participants' experience reflected that ministry can be very family unfriendly. Research can be conducted to explore specific improvements in making ministry family friendly to the ministers' families.

6. Many PK participants called for better support systems for ministers' families, especially when they were in crisis. It is recommended that further research on denominational support and the well being of ministers' families be conducted.

7.   Many PK participants recalled the pain of their fathers' forced terminations by the church, so further research can be conducted on the impact of forced terminations on the ministers' families as well as on PKs.

8.   Further research can be conducted on ministers' families with the mother as the minister and the father as a layperson. The dynamics of the family, church, and community with the mother as a minister can be different from the dynamics with the father as a minister.

9.   For similar reasons, further research can be conducted on dual clergy families, where both the father and the mother are ministers. The impact on the PKs may be significantly different from that of a single clergy family.

10. A comparable research can be conducted on the social ecological factors in shaping the attitudes and responses of missionaries' children toward full-time Christian ministry.

11. Further research can be conducted on PKs with multiple generations of ministers in their lineage. Factors leading to the multiple generations of ministers can be explored.

12. Further research can be conducted on the differences of the impact of social ecological factors with regard to the gender of the PK. For example, does the gender play a difference in terms of the influences of the social ecological factors in shaping the PKs in terms of the attitudes and responses toward full-time Christian ministry?

13. In light of macrosystemic differences, further research can be conducted on PKs from other cultural and subcultural groups. For example, a Chinese PK's experience in China can be very different from that of an American PK in the U.S.A. at various levels of the social ecological systems.

14. Since the sample of this study was drawn from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, the majority of the participants grew up in the Southern Baptist churches. It is also recommended that this study be modified at another denominational seminary outside the Southern Baptist denomination to explore macrosystemic differences in terms of different denominational culture and church governance.

15. Further research can be conducted on the seminary curriculum, student life, and student ministry education in terms of their effectiveness in preparing the seminarians to face real life challenges in terms of ministry and family.

Call for More PK Research

After the interviews, many PKs affirmed the need for more PK research. There

seemed to be a hunger for learning from empirical experience about how to parent PKs.

A PK described the need vividly in the following.

> I am pleased somebody is finally doing something about this because I know I've struggled growing up, and I have questioned at times, "Do I really want to go into the ministry?" But it's never been for very long. This will be very good for those parents who are already in the ministry or preparing to go into the ministry to get some answers how they should parent or how they should deal with situations in the church. I know already from being here in Christian Formation classes, students come to me and they find out I am a PK, and they say, "I got two children at home, or we're getting ready to go to this church. What are some positive things, or how should we treat our children? What did you experience? How did your parents do it?" So they are hungry. People like me or people who had children already are hungry to know. . . . Before they actually get into [the ministry with their families], they want to feel a little prepared.

Ministers need to be prepared to be effective servants of the Lord in the church and to be godly parents for raising potential leaders in their families. The researcher believes that the study of social ecological factors in shaping the PKs is promising for an understanding of the dynamics between the local church and the ministers' families. It is the researcher's hope that further research will be undertaken in this area of social ecological factors and their importance in the life of the church and the PKs.

APPENDIX 1

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
FOR ADULT CHILDREN OF MINISTERS

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
FOR ADULT CHILDREN OF MINISTERS

This is a semi-structured interview, and the purpose is for the interviewer to explore the social ecological factors that have shaped your attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry, including both positive and negative factors.

I would like to know more about you. Would you tell me about your life as a PK and how it has affected your attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry? The following questions serve to facilitate the flow of the interview. You can begin wherever you like and include or leave out whatever you choose. Take as much time as you need (Chua 2001).

Key Questions to Facilitate the Flow of the Interview

1. Describe your family relationships while growing up.

2. Describe in what ways, if any, your relationship with your father has influenced your perception of the heavenly Father.

3. Describe in what ways, if any, your family relationships have influenced your attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry.

4. Describe the church relationships while growing up.

5. Describe in what ways, if any, your church relationships have influenced your attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry.

6. Describe your schooling and the relationships in the school while growing up.

7. Describe in what ways, if any, your schooling and the relationships in school have influenced your attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry.

8. Are there any other people, life experiences, or factors that have influenced your attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry? If yes, please describe in what ways they have influenced you.

9. Among all the factors mentioned, which ones are most important in shaping your attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry?

10. If you were asked to use a sequence of book chapters to describe your life as a PK, what chapter titles would you use? (Chua 2001; Fowler 1995)

APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE ADULT
CHILDREN OF MINISTERS

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE ADULT CHILDREN OF MINISTERS

Please complete the following by either writing in, checking, or *circling* your answer. When the Likert response scale is used: 1= strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, 4 = strongly disagree. The past tense is used, when appropriate, to indicate the experience when you were growing up as a PK. If you need more space, please write on the back.

I. DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

1. Participant number and pseudonym: _____ (To be filled in by the researcher).

2. Age: 21-25 _____ 26-30 _____ 31-35 _____ 36-40 _____
   41-45 _____ 46-50 _____ 51-60 _____ 61-70 _____

3. Gender: Male _____ Female _____

4. Marital Status: Married ____ Single ____ Divorced ____ Separated ____

5. Occupation of spouse: _____

6. Number of children: _____

7. Age of children: _____

8. Program at SBTS: _____

9. Intended full-time Christian ministry after graduation if applicable _____

10. Present ministerial position _____

11. Previous ministerial position/occupation _____

12. Ethnic background: _____

13. Home state: _____

14. Denomination: _____ (when growing up), present denomination _____

15. My father became a minister when I was _____ (age).

16. I lived with my parents until I was _____ (age).

17. Besides your father, list all relatives, including those from previous generations, who are ministers. _____

    _____

18. How many siblings are in your family of origin? _____ sisters, _____ brothers.

19. List those who are in full-time Christian ministry _____

20. List the sizes of the churches your father worked in when you were growing up, and put your age in the parenthesis: _____ ( ), _____ ( ),
    _____ ( ), _____ ( ), _____ ( ).

21. As a PK growing up, I moved _____times during my father's ministry.

22. My feelings toward the relocations are: _____

_____

23. I grew up in the following state/states, please include the age too:

_____ ( ), _____ ( ), _____ ( ), _____ ( ).

24. I lived in a parsonage. All the time (age:), part of the time (age:), never __

25. Your mother's occupation was _____ (when you were growing up).

26. How would you rate your financial status in growing up as a PK?

Not Enough ____ Just Enough ____ Enough ____ More than Enough ____

27. If there were one thing that you could change about growing up as a PK, what would you change?

_____

Likert response scale: 1= strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, 4 = strongly disagree.

II. My Experience of Growing Up in a Minister's Family

28. My parents have a happy marriage.   1 2 3 4

29. My parents' behavior at home and at church is consistent.   1 2 3 4

30. My parents are positive spiritual models for me.   1 2 3 4

31. The quality of the relationship with my parents is good.   1 2 3 4

32. We had regular time together as a family when I was growing up.   1 2 3 4

33. The relationship with my father has influenced my relationship
    with God, my heavenly Father.   1 2 3 4

34. My family has provided me with a strong biblical foundation.   1 2 3 4

35. I learned leadership and ministry skills by watching my father   1 2 3 4
    function as a minister.

36. My parents' expectations on me were unrealistic.   1 2 3 4

37. My parents criticized the church members in front of me.   1 2 3 4

38. My parents encourage me to enter full-time Christian ministry.   1 2 3 4

39. Being a PK, I had met a variety of people; such as missionaries.   1 2 3 4

40. My family admits to and seeks help with problems.   1 2 3 4

41. I think my experience of growing up as a PK has positively
influenced me in terms of my attitude and response toward
full-time Christian ministry.   1 2 3 4

III. My Experience with the Church

42. I could feel that the church members respected my parents.   1 2 3 4

43. My family's relationship with the church was good.   1 2 3 4

44. Church members expected me to be extra spiritual and mature.   1 2 3 4

45. Church members expected me to go into full-time ministry.   1 2 3 4

46. My family did not have other friends besides those at church.   1 2 3 4

47. My relationship with the church members was positive.   1 2 3 4

48. I felt that I lived in a "glass house" with little privacy.   1 2 3 4

IV. My Experience at School

49. I felt a sense of "differentness" at school because my father   1 2 3 4
was a minister.

50. The teachers expected me to be more mature because I was a PK.   1 2 3 4

51. The peers at school did not include me in their activities because I   1 2 3 4
was a PK.

52. My overall experience of schooling was a positive one.   1 2 3 4

**V. Please tell me any other things that will help me to understand the effect of your
life experience as a PK and your attitude and response toward full-time
Christian ministry.**

_____

_____

THANK YOU! I LOOK FORWARD TO THE INTERVIEW TO HEAR MORE
ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE IN GROWING UP AS A PK.

APPENDIX 3

STATISTICS OF THE LIKERT SCALE RESPONSE
QUESTIONS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR
THE ADULT CHILDREN OF MINISTERS

Table A1. Questions 28 – 52 of the *Questionnaire for the Adult Children of Ministers*

Question (*n*=34)	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	*mode*	*m*	*sd*
My Experience of Growing Up in a Minister's Family							
28. My parents have a happy marriage.	73.53	20.59	5.88	0.00	1	1.32	0.59
29. My parents' behavior at home and at church is consistent.	55.88	35.29	8.82	0.00	1	1.53	0.66
30. My parents are positive spiritual models for me.	67.65	23.53	8.82	0.00	1	1.41	0.66
31. The quality of the relationship with my parents is good.	70.59	29.41	0.00	0.00	1	1.29	0.46
32. We had regular time together as a family when I was growing up.	58.82	38.24	2.94	0.00	1	1.44	0.56
33. The relationship with my father has influenced my relationship with God, my heavenly Father.	58.82	35.29	5.88	0.00	1	1.47	0.61
34. My family has provided me with a strong biblical foundation.	70.59	23.53	5.88	0.00	1	1.35	0.60
35. I learned leadership and ministry skills by watching my father function as a minister.	67.65	26.47	5.88	0.00	1	1.38	0.60
36. My parents' expectations on me were unrealistic.	2.94	2.94	41.18	52.94	4	3.44	0.70
37. My parents criticized the church members in front of me.	8.82	38.24	29.41	23.53	2	2.68	0.94
38. My parents encourage me to enter full-time Christian ministry.	32.35	41.18	23.53	2.94	2	1.97	0.83
39. Being a PK, I had met a variety of people; such as missionaries.	64.71	29.41	5.88	0.00	1	1.41	0.61

Note: The participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each statement; they could choose from the following options: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Disagree, 4 = Strongly Disagree. Questions 49 – 51, 3 PKs (8.82%) put down N/A for not applicable for these questions because they were home-schooled.

Table A1—*Continued.* Questions 28 – 52 of the *Questionnaire*
for the Adult Children of Ministers

Question (*n*=34)	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	mode	m	sd
40. My family admits to and seeks help with problems.	20.59	41.18	29.41	8.82	2	2.26	0.90
41. I think my experience of growing up as a PK has positively influenced me in terms of my attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry.	58.82	29.41	11.76	0.00	1	1.53	0.71
My Experience with the Church							
42. I could feel that the church members respected my parents.	35.29	58.82	5.88	0.00	2	1.71	0.58
43. My family's relationship with the church was good.	55.88	41.18	2.94	0.00	1	1.47	0.56
44. Church members expected me to be extra spiritual and mature.	26.47	50.00	23.53	0.00	2	1.97	0.72
45. Church members expected me to go into full-time ministry.	11.76	29.41	50.00	8.82	3	2.56	0.82
46. My family did not have other friends besides those at church.	8.82	41.18	41.18	8.82	3	2.50	0.79
47. My relationship with the church members was positive.	61.76	32.35	2.94	2.94	1	1.47	0.71
48. I felt that I lived in a "glass house" with little privacy.	17.65	41.18	23.53	17.65	2	2.41	0.99
My Experience at School							
49. I felt a sense of "differentness" at school because my father was a minister.	23.53	38.24	20.59	8.82	2	2.16	0.93

Note: The participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each statement; they could choose from the following options: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Disagree, 4 = Strongly Disagree. Questions 49 – 51, 3 PKs (8.82%) put down N/A for not applicable for these questions because they were home-schooled.

Table A1—*Continued*. Questions 28 – 52 of the *Questionnaire*
for the Adult Children of Ministers

Question (*n*=34)	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	*mode*	*m*	*sd*
50. The teachers expected me to be more mature because I was a PK.	11.76	32.35	32.35	14.71	3	2.55	0.93
51. The peers at school did not include me in their activities because I was a PK.	2.94	11.76	44.12	32.35	3	3.16	0.78
52. My overall experience of schooling was a positive one.	32.35	47.06	17.65	2.94	2	1.91	0.79

Note: The participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each statement; they could choose from the following options: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Disagree, 4 = Strongly Disagree. Questions 49 – 51, 3 PKs (8.82%) put down N/A for not applicable for these questions because they were home-schooled.

APPENDIX 4

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to explore the factors in shaping the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry. This research is being conducted by Kam See C. Fung for purposes of dissertation research for the Ed.D. program. In this research, you will participate in an interview as well as fill in a questionnaire. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

By your completion of this *Questionnaire for the Adult Children of Ministers* and the interview, and checking the appropriate box below, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

[ ] I agree to participate
[ ] I do not agree to participate

APPENDIX 5

FLYER FOR RECRUITMENT
OF ADULT PKS

Attention, Students and Professors at SBTS! Recruitment of Adult PKs (Ministers' Children)

If you grew up as a child of a minister (PK) in North America, and
- you are in full-time Christian ministry/preparing for full-time Christian ministry,
- you are a student or professor on the campus of SBTS,
- your father had been a full-time minister for at least 10 years before you turned 18,
- you are over 21 now,

would you please help my dissertation research on adult PKs by participating in an interview?

My dissertation supervisor is Dr. Dennis E. Williams. The title of the research is: *Social Ecological Factors in Shaping the Attitudes and Responses of Ministers' Children toward Full-Time Christian Ministry.* The findings will serve as a voice for PKs to inform clergy parents who want to raise PKs with a positive attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry, and to broaden Christian leaders' understanding of PKs. It will also add to the limited research on PKs.

Let me introduce myself. I am Kam See C. Fung. My husband, Bill Fung, and I are doctoral students at SBTS. We are currently writing our dissertations. Some of you might know us: a Chinese couple from Hong Kong. I really need your help for an interview. Please ask your PK friends on campus to participate too.

Please fill in the information below and return the bottom of this flyer to Kam See C. Fung at box 80-245. I can also be reached at <u>kamseefung@hotmail.com</u>, or at 895-2194, 396-9831. I will contact you for an hour-long interview at your convenience.

Your participation will be very much appreciated! Thank you!
****

I am an adult PK, and I would be glad to participate in an interview for the research.

Name: _____   Email address: _____

Phone number: _____   (Best time to reach me: _____)

Campus Box number: _____

Comments: _____

Return to: Mrs. Kam See C. Fung
Box 80-245

APPENDIX 6

FLYER FOR MORE RECRUITMENT
OF ADULT PKS

More Adult PKs (Ministers' Children) Needed for a Dissertation Study

If you grew up as a child of a minister (PK) in North America, and
- you are in full-time Christian ministry/preparing for full-time Christian ministry,
- you are a student (including SBTS, Boyce, and SWI), a professor, or a staff member on the campus of SBTS,
- your father had been a full-time minister for at least 10 years before you turned 18,
- you are over 21,

would you please help my dissertation study on adult PKs by participating in an interview?

The title of the research is: *Social Ecological Factors in Shaping the Attitudes and Responses of Ministers' Children toward Full-Time Christian Ministry.* The dissertation supervisor is Dr. Dennis E. Williams.

The findings will serve as a voice for PKs to inform clergy parents who want to raise PKs with a positive attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry, and to broaden Christian leaders' understanding of PKs. It will also add to the limited research on PKs.

Please fill in the information below and return the bottom of this flyer to Kam See C. Fung at box 80-245. I can also be reached at kamseefung@hotmail.com, or at 895-2194, 396-9831 (cell). I will contact you for an hour-long interview at your convenience.

Your participation will be very much appreciated! Thank you for those who have participated already! Your kindness and support will make a difference.
****

I am an adult PK, and I meet the inclusion criteria listed above. I would be glad to participate in an interview for the research.

Name: _____   Email address: _____

Phone number: _____   Campus Box number: _____

Best time and day of the week for an interview: _____

Comments: _____

Return to: Mrs. Kam See C. Fung
Box 80-245

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ABSTRACT

SOCIAL ECOLOGICAL FACTORS IN SHAPING THE ATTITUDES
AND RESPONSES OF MINISTERS' CHILDREN TOWARD
FULL-TIME CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

Kam See Cheung Fung, Ed.D.
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004
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This dissertation examines the social ecological factors in shaping the attitudes

and responses of ministers' children (PKs) toward full-time Christian ministry. Data

emerging from the descriptive qualitative research methodology of this study broaden

Christian leaders' understanding of PKs, and inform clergy parents who seek to raise PKs

with a positive attitude and response toward full-time Christian ministry.

The research consisted of thirty-four semi-structured interviews and

questionnaires. Each provided rich descriptive data for analysis. The targeted population

for this study was ministers' children who are adults in full-time Christian ministry or

those preparing for full-time Christian ministry in North America. In this study, the

sample included adult PKs who are students, staff, and faculty at The Southern Baptist

Theological Seminary.

The findings have shown that the minister's family and its interactions with the

church play an important role in shaping the attitudes and responses of the ministers'

children toward full-time Christian ministry.

The predominant positive factors identified were the following: parents/family, youth ministers/other mentors, Christian college experience, sheltered from church conflicts, ministerial exposure and involvement, positive church experience, and missions experience. The number one positive factor is from the family microsystem, especially the parents. The father's role in setting a proper boundary between family and church, such as shielding the church conflicts from the PKs, is important.

The predominant negative factors identified were the following: negative church experience, church conflicts, expectations from church members, forced termination, financial stress, and lack of spiritual nourishment at home. A predominant theme mentioned across the cases, although not strictly social ecological, was the calling for full-time Christian ministry and the transforming power of God. Many PKs expressed that these had overridden the negative factors they had experienced.

Further research is encouraged to examine the specific ways in which each pattern/theme influences the attitudes and responses of ministers' children toward full-time Christian ministry. It is the present researcher's goal that the findings will inform the clergy parents as well as the church in their effort of raising the next generation of men and women who would support the Christian ministry.

Key words: social ecological factors, ministers' children, pastors' children, Christian ministry, full-time Christian ministry, ministers' families, pastors' families, clergy families, attitudes and responses, clergy parents.

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