Help Seeking Patterns of Black Women in Selected Black Churches

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Abstract

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This study explores help seeking patterns of Black women in Black churches. The intent of the study, is to examine use of a historically vital component of the Black community and to ascertain its role in the support system of a population. The theory of shared functions is used to look at the utilization of different support systems, and to understand the role of the church as a bureaucratic institution with primary characteristics and functions.

The data was collected over a six month period, at six Black churches in the Essex County area of New Jersey. The information is derived from a questionnaire administered to 196 women. In the analysis of the data, participants are grouped by socioeconomic status and size of church they attend. The hypotheses are:

(1) The lower the socioeconomic status of the church member, the more likely the minister will be selected for help. (2) Members of smaller churches are more likely to select the minister as a vehicle for help, than those in larger churches. (3) The minister is more likely to be selected for help with concerns classified as non-uniform. (4) The more
active a woman is in church life, the more likely she is to choose the minister as a help source.

The findings confirm, women classified as low income and those active in church life, utilize their pastor more than other women in the study. The findings do not confirm, hypothesis 2 and 3, but show that women from large churches utilize the minister more than women in smaller churches and that the minister is selected as a help source in a range of concerns. The data highlights, that women see the minister as the primary source for help and that for many, the pastor is as important, as the relative or professional counselor in seeking assistance.

The implications of this study suggest the profession of social work, seek avenues of collaboration with local ministers to offer support and information on the concerns members bring. The findings also suggest the profession find ways to accurately access client's church involvement and support from the religious community.
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Chapter 1
Statement of Problem

The church as an institution has a long history of involvement in the development and delivery of social services. Records of Egyptian civilization, contain writings from the Egyptian Holy book, "Book of the Dead". It lists seven acts of mercy, including, relief of hunger, nakedness, care for the sick and the prisoner (Morris, 1986). The roots of Judeo-Christian helping are traced to writings in the Old Testament of the Bible, where there is the assertion that individuals have a positive obligation to perform acts of helping and to do good works and care for those less fortunate (Deuteronomy 15:7-10; Matthew 25: 35-40, Holy Bible, King James Version).

In the Middle Ages, the monasteries were frequently places of refuge and care; priest were responsible for giving out alms and judging who was worthy of receipt. In 1727, the first residential institutions for the children and the elderly were established by the Catholic Church in America (Reid, 1987).

In more recent history, the Charity Organization Society, which represented the first American attempt at coordination of charitable services, was started by Rev. Stanly Gurteen in 1877. The earliest development of COS has been credited to Thomas Chalmers, a minister of the Church of Scotland. Chalmers was called to Glasgow in 1814, to minister to one of the most important churches in the area. He was
troubled by the extreme poverty and need among the families in the parish. He assigned deacons to members of the parish to individualize help giving from the church. Several churches today, including one in the study at hand, have care units presided over by deacons. Chalmers is credited with conceiving the individualized approach and person-centered philosophy that has become the core of social work practice (Popple and Leighniner, 1990).

In the 1850's the YM/YWCA programs, as well as the Salvation Army Corp, were begun in the United States. Both programs are built on religious foundations. These, as well as efforts by the church in child welfare, housing, labor and education, point to the church's concern regarding the welfare of individuals. Throughout the decades, the church as an institution, has also been active in voicing a collective concern for human dignity, ranging from the civil rights movement to international crises.

Religious institutions have provided the philosophical basis for most social work activities. As society became more secular, so did social welfare organizations, especially during the 1960's and early 1970's. This secularization can be attributed to the growth of government in the field of social welfare and possibly the development of the New Left and student movements in the 1960's and early 1970's. As a result, the link between social work and the religious community was not a particularly strong one during this time.

More recently, their seems to be a shift towards an
interest in religion and the connection between social work and the church (Johnstone, 1983; Princeton Religious Center 1988). Americans are returning to churches in greater numbers and reporting that religion is having a greater influence in their life. There is also the development and growth in professional social work organizations and literature that have a religious thrust. These aspects are discussed more fully in Chapter 6.

In spite of the cyclical nature of secularization, churches are still a presence in the community. The storefront church as well as the cathedral, serve as centers for Head Start, day care, tutoring, recreation and nutrition programs. The minister, in addition to being the spiritual leader, is often a key person in terms of pastoral counseling, support, advocacy and referral. Within the church, members seem to develop certain bonds with each other and help each other inside and outside the church. As a result, the church ministers to a variety of needs of its members, neighbors, those with some tangential relationship to the church, and also strangers. This help is formal as well as informal.

The church is a unique institution. On one hand it is a bureaucratic organization with rules, regulations, charters, and in some instances hierarchical structure, operating budget and paid staff, but it also has many characteristics of a primary group (Litwak, 1978; Craven, 1974; Wireman, 1984; Pancoast, 1976). The church is an organization made up
of essentially non-kin (although people may be kin) who often relate to each other in a primary group way. The minister becomes a key figure because s/he is the chief administrator as well as an important support person for individuals.

Focus and Rational of the Research

The study at hand focuses attention on the help seeking patterns of Black women who belong to Black churches. There is special emphasis on the role of the minister as a helping agent for the members. The Black church is defined as those churches established by and for Black folks, where the controlling power is vested entirely in the Black membership (Johnson, 1982).

The Black church is focused upon because it has long been referred to as an important historical as well as present day force within the African-American community. This church appears to offer its members much in the way of formal and informal support. The Black Baptist church is used in the study because it represents an institution that is an independent one within the Black community. Each Black Baptist church is independent and not subject or accountable to a hierarchial governing body. This is different than other churches that may be found within the Black community, such as the Methodist Church, Church of God in Christ or the Catholic Church. The minister in addition to being the administrator of the church, is also expected to be responsible for meeting the many concerns of the congregation. The minister is hired by and is directly
accountable to the members of the congregation.

The Black minister is the key figure within the Black church and often pointed to as a pivotal person within the community. Relatively little formal research has been conducted as to the role of the church in the helping process, ways in which members seek out assistance and especially how the minister is viewed and utilized as part of the helping support system.

Women are the focus of the data gathering, because in most organized religions, women traditionally account for the majority of formal membership (Gallup, 1987; Jacquet, 1988). If men had been included in the study it would have likely been a small number. Including only women in the study made the data base less confusing and subject to less misinterpretation. In addition to the above given reasons for the focus of the study, is the author's own interest and background as part of a Black Baptist church, and an interest in support systems and linkages that help African American women.

Statement of Problem

Exploration has revealed most Black churches have a formalized structure or guidelines for giving aid to its members. Aid is dispensed usually through a benevolent fund over which the Deacons or appointed persons have discretionary powers. But an aspect that has not received much attention, is the church's function of bringing together a group of people who develop their own network and primary
type group structure to meet a variety of needs. The study attempts to see what help sources a selected group of Black church members use, or might use, to meet needs that come up in daily life and how these supports are related to the church, especially as they relate to use of the minister.

The theory of shared functions is used to examine this phenomenon. Basically, the theory states that both primary and bureaucratic groups operate in most tasks of life and bring different attributes to the achievement of a goal. The theory encompasses the different roles of primary groups, especially as they relate to non-uniform tasks. Non-uniform tasks are life situations that are unpredictable, with many aspects that cannot always be planned for, taken care of, or best dealt with by the bureaucratic structure (Litwak, 1966).

Observations by the author among church members and administrators, revealed that the church, through its membership ties, seems to provide much in the way of support and services, especially in non-uniform situations. This role is not readily recognized or known by the outside community or formal agencies. Oftentimes, the churches themselves do not recognize the needs fulfilled through the formal and informal group structure it offers. Johnson (1982), in her look at contemporary relationships between Black females and the church, has bemoaned the fact that given the voluminous literature available about Black families and the Black church, the meager empirical research about the Black families/Black church relationship is
surprising.

The local church is comprised of a variety of groups including the nuclear family, extended kin groups, voluntary associations and the church staff. This study is a descriptive one which attempts to show some of the circumstances under which support systems such as the minister, church members, family, friends, neighbors, professionals and self are used as resources.

Implications of the Study for Social Work

Social work is a profession concerned with helping people overcome individual as well as collective problems. It is concerned with the systems and institutions people are involved in. The profession seeks to have a better understanding of what problems affect people and where they go for help. There is a need to be familiar with the formal and informal resources available to individuals, groups and institutions. It is hoped this research will be valuable in that it will: (1) be a beginning step in describing how a certain population uses a community institution such as the church as a help source (2) add to the knowledge of the role of the minister as a helping source within the church (3) create more knowledge of the Black church as a community resource, (4) lead to more effective use of the services the church renders by adding to the knowledge base of the church staff and social work professionals (5) aid in defining further the place for social work in consultation, education
and training of key people within churches (6) lead to the development of more effective referral systems to appropriate local agencies.

Members of the religious community express an interest in the study and its findings, because of the lack of definitive research on the Black church and the diverse role of the minister and the church as help agents.

Hypotheses

There are a great many possible variables affecting need, help seeking patterns and the use of help, but income of church members and church size are two important variables as demonstrated by the work of Cummings and Harrington (1963) and Biegel (1982). These variables are used and incorporated into the following hypotheses. For manageability in the study, the hypotheses focus on the minister. Information on the minister will yield details about the other helping systems.

1. The lower the socioeconomic status of the church member, the more likely the minister will be selected for help.

2. The members of the smaller church are more likely to select the minister as a vehicle for help, than those in the larger churches.

3. The minister is more likely to be selected for help with concerns that can be classified as non-uniform in nature.
4. The more active a woman is in church life, the more likely she is to choose the minister as a source for help.

Definition of Terms

Black church - those churches pastored and attended by persons of African-American descent.

Church members - women age 18 and up who come to church at least twice a month.

Support System - persons and institutions to whom individuals go to for assistance and services they cannot provide for themselves.

Network - the range of individuals a person is linked with through family, friends, acquaintances.

Theoretical Framework

The primary focus of the study is on the individual within the Black church and the person's differential use of primary groups and network members. Shared functions theory will be used as the framework for the research. This theory is most often used in examining organizational structure, but it has been developed to also encompass the types, roles, functions and differential use of primary group structure. In view of this, it seems to provide an appropriate model from which to conduct the research.
Shared Functions Theory

Shared functions, or balance theory as it is also called, states that both primary and bureaucratic groups operate in most major tasks of life and they bring different attributes to the achievement of a goal end.

While both groups are needed, their functions and methods of achieving stated goals are quite different and can be in conflict with each other. An example of this can be seen in traditional hospital rules that strictly limited visits by children or the interaction of parents with their premature infants. Hospitals in addition to patient care, are concerned about structure, order, schedules and sterile conditions. In recent years, visiting by children, and interaction with premature babies, has been encouraged, in an effort to link the bureaucracy and the primary group in a complimentary way. The goal then is to link bureaucratic and primary groups at a midpoint where they balance and compliment each other to be most effective. The theory also discusses mechanisms for coordination of bureaucratic and community primary groups (Litwak, 1966). As a result of researching and testing these stated aspects of shared function theory, Litwak et al, (Meyer, 1974; Szelenyi, 1969; Dono, 1978) have explored and documented the characteristics of primary group functioning and task as well as the concept of the non-uniform task. This aspect of uniform and non-uniform theory will play the more important part in the focus of the study at hand.
Primary Group Aspects of the Church

In primary group aspects of the church, personalized relationships are greatly valued; face to face contact is also important. Church members often refer to themselves as a family; relationships are diffuse and communication issues cover a broad spectrum. There is some sense of enduring relations that create linkage and last over time, as well as changes in status and role. While there is division of labor within the church, many of the tasks are non-uniform ones. These tasks can be done by a variety of persons and are often interchangeable.

Black churches, like other organizations and groups, reflect the style of their history, as well as the personality and style of the current leadership. Some churches are known in the community and among members as warm, outgoing, and relaxed. Others are "silk stocking", "400", prestigious, while others fall somewhere in between. It is recognized there is a wide range of church types within the Black community. The large, well-to-do formal church seems to be characterized more by loosely knit relationships and less visible primary groups, while the small storefront, with its seemingly close knit membership, provides almost family-like support for members.

Non-uniform Task

Shared function theory details that primary groups can encompass kin and neighbors and that the primary group is better equipped than the formal bureaucratic organization to
handle certain tasks, especially those that are categorized as non-uniform. Non-uniform does not refer to less important or less tangible tasks, but refers to the fact that training for, and implementation of these tasks cannot always be structured, programmed or administered in a precise way. There is a continuum in non-uniform tasks in terms of training and specialization. Some occupations such as social work, teaching, ministry, medicine, and trucking are prone to many contingencies. Each requires various degrees of education and training, but one cannot be specifically trained for all circumstances that might occur within the job.

Non-uniform tasks appear in every area of life and no matter how advanced technology becomes, it seems that non-uniform tasks will always be with us to some degree. As an example, a local rescue squad is trained to free people who are trapped in a car, but a passerby without special training who arrives before the rescue squad, may be able to extricate the motorist and save a life. By the same token, there are agencies designated to aid and relocate families displaced by fire, but a community church may be able to immediately open its doors for emergency shelter for fire victims, furnish clothing and household goods from appeals to the congregation, as well as find leads for housing through the congregation.

Organizations that have primary group characteristics seem better able to respond to non-uniform tasks because of their more flexible structure. In the Black church, the
minister is often the most visible person who is responding to many contingencies, but this response is often accomplished through assigning tasks to lay people or through groups set up within the church to handle emergencies or specific requests.

As a result of being exposed to many help giving situations within the church, the author believes many emergencies and day-to-day situations are handled by the individual member network and may not even come to the attention of the church staff. For example, an elderly member lost her glasses and had to schedule an emergency visit to the ophthalmologist. Unable to arrange transportation with the local Red Cross service, the woman got out the church directory and called the listed people until she contacted a member able to provide her with round trip car service.

Several types of groupings can be found within the church. In order to determine differential use of help sources, it is important to understand and differentiate the primary type groupings that are likely to be a part of the structure within the church.

1) Nuclear family household - husband, wife and dependent children.
2) Kinship system - relatives of members. These kin may not be members of the church.
3) Neighbors in the vicinity of church and neighbors of those who are members. These neighbors may or may not be members of the church.
4) Friends of church members who may or may not be members of the church.

5) Weak-tie or large primary groups are generally always part of the church group. This means that church members share some sense of identity and perhaps socialization that sets them off from any other group.

6) Voluntary associations: lay groups organized under the auspices of the church and consisting basically of non-paid members. Churches may or may not have such organizations but nearly all churches do.

According to balance theory, each type of group can handle particular types of tasks more effectively than others. The primary group of nuclear family is effective in tasks such as daily shopping, household tasks, budgeting, companionship, teaching basic information, providing simple home care when people are ill, child care and basic socialization. The primary family group does activities that require ongoing face to face contact of the group. The activities are long term and require great outputs of time, energy, ongoing commitment, and ongoing economic provisions commonly associated with family upkeep. The primary group is also important for tasks that require immediacy.

Primary Groups Outside of the Family

When one moves away from the nuclear family into the larger primary group, it is found that this group can provide information the immediate family cannot. The self help
literature shows family members will seek help outside of the family group often through their informal network (Katz, 1976; Granovetter, 1974; Taylor, 1986). Those seeking help, look to find others who have had a similar experience or know of someone who has sought similar services. The larger primary group can also help in conflict situations, such as those between spouse or other family members. Often, family members must seek formal and informal outside help, to aid in problem solving. Again, help sought may include seeking assistance in locating the resource needed to help allay this situation.

Summary Statement

In summary, studies related to shared functions have shown that the primary group is more effective than the bureaucratic organization in the following circumstances:

1) Where tasks are related to time emergencies and actions which must be taken quickly (e.g., short-term child care, borrowing small items, rescue tasks).
2) Where learning must take place through face to face, day to day observations.
3) Where the knowledge of the ordinary citizen is as great as that of the expert.
4) Where the knowledge base is not well developed and there is no expert.
5) Where situations are unpredictable and have many contingencies (Litwak, 1969).
The bureaucracy is usually most effective in situations where:

1) coordinating resources for cost and geographic efficiency is to be of benefit.
2) information and operations are standardized and must be translated in an orderly and structured way to many parties.
3) anonymity and impartiality are needed.

Differential Support System Functioning

It is felt that the most valuable virtue of the kin, neighborhood and friendship primary groups, are their ability to provide supplemental resources to the nuclear family. These groups, while all primary in nature, have specific areas where they are utilized. Neighbors have been shown to be especially valuable and appreciated for short-term tasks and situations where immediacy is important; also in situations where actions or needs are based on people living in the same geographic area, and in learning and socialization activities, where continuous observations and face-to-face contact is necessary. Friendship groups are most important in areas of socialization that revolve around common interest, fluctuating issues and values. The forming of, and continuation of friendships, is the choice of individuals and involves mutual affectivity and a persons' willingness to adjust to one another.

Family or kin groups have permanence as a major factor
and are used by members for long-term tasks that require considerable investment of time and/or other types of ongoing support. The high effectiveness of primary groups is attributed to the short lines of communication, ready availability of members to one another and the willingness of members to take risks for one another in times of uncertainty. Litwak and Szelenyi (1969), in a detailed national study, highlighted the structure and function of kin, neighbor and friend. The immediate family can handle such tasks as daily upkeep of the house, shopping, chauffeuring family members to appointments, supervision of children, provision of household money, home nursing when husband, wife and children are ill and companionship. These activities are the ones that require continuous face-to-face contact. They also require long-term, day in/day out commitment.

The larger kin system can assist if necessary with all of the above mentioned areas, but usually only on a short-term basis. If the bread winner is temporarily out of work for a week, a relative or close friend may be able to help the family economically for a short period, but if a long-term commitment of money is needed, other sources such as insurance, loans, welfare, social security, etc. must be found. A relative or close friend may help with nursing care or supervision of children for a few days while the primary person is unavailable. For anything long-term, other arrangements, usually involving payment, must be made.
Neighbors, unless they are close friends or kin, are used for very short-term situations or contingencies requiring close proximity.

The larger systems of friend is used to gain information on resources. Friends are also confidants when immediate family is involved or cannot be confided in or approached for help. The Granovetter (1974) and Horowitz (1977) studies point out the usefulness of the wider network in gaining information and contacts and obtaining the information more rapidly. People use the larger network to identify others who may have had a similar problem or concern in order to seek a solution. Often the friend, neighbor, or extended kin will refer to someone else they know about, thus connecting the person to the acquaintance or weak-tie group. As an example of this, an older woman complained to her cousin about arthritis in her knee. The cousin gave her the number of a co-worker who had excellent results from a certain doctor.

A gentleman at the lunch table at work asked other men at the table if they knew anything about the local "Y" and what kind of program it offered for men and boys. Someone at the table had participated in a "Y" program during the previous year and shared information.

The Church as Seen Through the Shared Functions Framework

Within the past several years, the prototype of reaching out to the larger network for information and help is seen in the formalized self-help groups discussed in the literature.
Self-help groups are likened to primary groups because they are composed of people with similar concerns willing to share with and support each other on a long-term basis. Usually, self-help groups focus primarily on one main issue and do not extend into all areas of a person's life. Voluntary associations, including those in the church, are usually task oriented, such as the Sunday School Association, Flower Club, Pastor's Advisory Council. They may, as a secondary role, provide socialization and resources for its members. Some voluntary groups within the church are modeled on the self help group: Young Mother's Club, Golden Agers, Widowers. Their aim is to offer ongoing support and socialization for the participants. They may also act as a part of the resource network, but they do not usually offer nuclear family type support.

Those who make up the human relations structure of the church usually act in conjunction, or as an adjunctive, to the nuclear family. Often the minister or his/her staff will be approached with a problem regarding economic help, housing or help for a lonely person. In some instances, the church will offer immediate short-term aid (food, money, clothing) but it will usually act as an information source to long-term care or try and marshall the family to provide the necessary support. The minister may also provide long-term support in the way of counseling for those whom he is skilled enough to help, or for those who only want the minister's counsel.
Differential Use of the Minister

It must be understood that the minister, because s/he is one person and may have hundreds of members, may not be easily accessible. Something which requires immediate action but is not so important that it can be classified as an emergency would generally not lead to a request of help from the minister. Thus, advice on whether one should permit one's child to attend an excursion sponsored by the church, may require information that a fellow church member could supply better than the minister; also the fellow church member might be more readily accessible. It may be the case that the minister may offend people and a member might not want his help with personal problems. There may also be areas where fellow members are more knowledgeable than the minister. For instance, those looking for a job might seek out fellow church members in similar lines of work who are more likely to have the information one needs.

A person might go to the minister if he/she is new and is seeking information on which fellow members have the non-technical information one seeks. One might also go to the pastor when the problem is personal and the member wants to speak to someone in church who had a similar experience.

The minister is also a key provider of help where the individual is so helpless they cannot ask for help. A person who is ill, may not be in a position to solicit help, however, s/he can reach the minister, who in turn can locate help. It is also the case that the minister can handle problems which are stigmatized by the larger primary group.
For instance, a wife who wants to deal with problems of an abusive husband, may not want friends to know about the situation, so she goes to the minister for information.

Influences on Choice of the Church for Help

Along with the discussion of differential use of people, shared function theory also implies there are factors that influence one's choice of help. From talking to those involved in the church, it is known that there are factors that influence whether people bring concerns to the church, and how the church handles the problem. These factors include:

(1) The nature of the task the church is asked to handle
(2) The feeling of confidentiality relating to the minister
(3) The minister's personality and past role in working with concerns

There are some concerns members will not bring to the minister, staff, or each other either because the church has made it clear the topic is off limits, or the member is embarrassed or feels a stigma around the topic. Examples from the author's interviews with ministers illustrating this are:

1) One minister said, "I could probably go an entire year around here and not hear the word sex. People just don't bring those things up with me."

2) Another minister - "I have told my congregation from the pulpit that homosexuality is against God's teachings. So no one comes to me asking me to condone their gayness. They
only come if they are seeking ways to be whole again in returning to their natural state of man or woman."

3) Pastor W - "I got divorced while a pastor here in this church. So there wouldn't be a lot of whispering and confusion, I addressed the situation openly with my members. Most people supported me and said it helped them relate to me better. As a result, my parishioners come to me with personal problems especially those centering around problematic marital relationships. I also know that a few of the younger women in the church who are divorced or separated, seem to be friends and appear to serve as supports for each other."

Summary

The Black Church has long been viewed as an important resource within the African American community, but little research has been done to demonstrate how this institution and especially the minister, is utilized as a support system. This study is designed to look at how a selected population of Black women utilize the resources of the church and minister in seeking help. The theory of shared functions, also known as balance theory, is used to provide the framework for the study. The theory states that both primary and bureaucratic groups operate in most major tasks of life and bring different attributes to the achievement of the goal end. The primary groups of neighbor, kin and friend are turned to for different needs and in different ways by those seeking help. The theory divides life tasks into uniform and
non-uniform categories. Uniform tasks are those that usually have a defined, formal method for their performance. Non-uniform tasks may be daily life tasks; they may be unanticipated and may not require special training. The present research seeks to demonstrate if persons in situations defined as uniform and non-uniform seek help from the expected systems. The variables of church size and respondent income, are utilized as a basis in the hypotheses for determining differential use of the minister and other support systems.

This study is an effort to add to the knowledge of how a particular population uses the long standing community resource of the church and its leaders. The study has importance for the profession of social work, because it attempts to identify ways in which people seek help. The study should be helpful in providing direction for how social service agencies can outreach to congregations in their community. Agency personnel can assist the minister in identifying concerns of the members and in making expedient and appropriate referrals when necessary. Agencies may be able to specifically target resources and populations in need of specific services and support. This can be accomplished through the ministerial staff and the network of other clergy and professional associations most ministers are connected with.

While the research focuses on a specific population, it has implications for the larger population. The study seeks
to help the profession identify help seeking patterns of those connected to an institution that is an important and longstanding part of the community.
CHAPTER II:

Literature Review

The Role of the Church in Social Welfare

The role of the church in social welfare and the importance of the social worker in understanding the role of the church was put forth with great clarity and understanding by the philosopher, Reinhold Niebuhr. In 1930, Niebuhr delivered a series of lectures at the New York School of Social Work (now the Columbia University School of Social Work) on "The Contributions of Religion to Social Work." These lectures were later published as a book under this same title (Niebuhr, 1932). In this work, Niebuhr traces the history of religion in social welfare, discusses the basis of philanthropy and the common interests and goals of social work and religion. He felt the business of the church was to pioneer in the field of social welfare and discover obligations which society had not recognized, but to then yield to society as soon as there was a general recognition of society's responsibility and an active response.

Niebuhr is viewed by many as one of the great philosophical scholars and prophets, for much of what he expressed many years ago still holds true and is being seen as a valuable guide for individuals and institutions alike. Niebuhr felt knowledge of religion and the church important for social workers, because religion could have a positive effect on social health and extra-group relations. Religion was seen as a force that contributed to stabilizing and
ordering a person's life. It was also potent as a preventive measure.

Religion is vital in communal and family life because it attempts to transcend and to transmute nature by extending the attitudes which prevail in the kinship group so as to include more than one's immediate relatives. Niebuhr felt that while men were frequently enemies, there was the potential for brotherhood. The church created a type of family. With these aforementioned characteristics, Niebuhr has identified the church as having a primary group function. It was his feeling that social workers, other social scientists and religious idealist did not always agree upon the cause and approaches to problems, but stressed the two fields had much in common and could work together for the good of mankind.

Today, there seems to be some recognition of this commonality with some cooperation between those in the sacred and secular arena of helping. For many, involvement in religion and religious activity provides some way to assure human acceptance and adjustments to frustration, deprivation, discipline and situations beyond one's ability to change. O'Dea (1970), states that the inherent element of contingency in the human situation, brings men to a confrontation with situations in which human knowledge and social forms are insufficient for providing either solution or mechanisms for adjustment and acceptance. The referral to inherent life problems and unanticipated life occurrences, is important, for it is in these very areas that members seem to use the
resources of the Black church and the minister most. This reference also has relevance to shared functions theory and the concept of uniform and non-uniform tasks.

Institutional and Philosophical Aspects

In order to understand and view the functioning of the Black church and help seeking patterns of the individual within it, the literature review will follow a general to specific approach by looking at the historical role of the Black church and its role as a provider of mutual aid within the Black community. The review also looks at the role of the minister as a source of assistance in a variety of situations for the church member. Relevant material on organizations, mutual aid and use of networks is presented.

Organizations and primary groups serve as major mechanisms for achieving our goals and forming the social nature and ideas of the individuals. The church and other organizations are important parts of our society and are part of the mechanism that most individuals participate in as part of the socialization process. The early detailed and descriptive work of sociologist, Charles Cooley (1929), forms the basis of understanding the function of the primary group and provides much of the basis for current literature on the subject. Primary groups have the following characteristics: they are more likely to emerge spontaneously, emphasize enjoyment, are usually unnamed, the roles are interchangeable and they have a relatively simple structure. In addition, love, positive affect and feeling are important and face to
face contact is valued. To these aspects, Litwak and Wireman have added the dimensions of enduring relationships, i.e., linkages lasting over time, distance and change in status. Also, primary group persons are usually called upon to assume non-expert or non-uniform task, i.e., assignments that do not call for particular expertise or training and can be performed by a variety of persons in a short span of time (Litwak, 1974; Wireman, 1984).

The church is unique, for it is a voluntary organization that possesses characteristics of both the formal organization and primary group. By definition, the church is seen as a body of devotees, organized for religious purposes and developing as an agency for this with a hierarchy of officials and leaders. It also has a body of doctrine and philosophy that ties the whole together into a systematic unit. Blau (1974), refers to the voluntary organization as a formal group that is a mutual aid association. Members make commitments to service and activity in varying degrees.

Institutions are usually thought of as one of four basic types: (1) productive economic, (2) maintenance, (3) adaptive, (4) managerial or political (Katz, 1966). Churches and schools fall into the maintenance category as they are devoted to the socialization of people in their roles in other organizations and in the larger society. They perform the direct function of maintenance, i.e., education, indoctrination and training, as well as restorative functions such as health, welfare and reform activities. These types of activities keep a society from disintegrating and are
responsible for the normative integration of society.

Ethnic Influence on the Helping Network

The church as a body of devotees, is a community in many respects. Warren, known for his work on characteristics of communities, states that in a community, normative integration is achieved through the commonality of sentiment among the members through common values (Warren, 1978). In many instances one can see these functions occurring with members of particular churches. Within the church, people usually share common values of belief and traditions as well as the same ethnic background. Litwak and Dono (1979), state that ethnicity plays a major role in primary group affiliations. Persons have affinity for family members and will perform certain duties or task or give information just because of the familial relationship. Many times the same is true for ethnic identity. People will share a relationship because they share the same ethnicity, the same cultural background. Glazer (1975), in his work on ethnicity, states that groups organized around ethnicity have a better chance of gaining and finding out about resources. He deduces this from the fact that people often look out for their "own". They feel a sense of brother/sisterhood based on country of origin.

The Black church's primary foundation is religion and not ethnicity. But in most churches, including the Black church, the majority of people are of the same ethnic background. Persons within such organizations form what is
referred to as acquaintances, or weak-tie groups (Granovetter, 1974). Does the combination of ethnicity, common religion, common church membership, influence use of the church network? It appears to be so. Those who share the same ethnic background often share information about jobs, political information and use power or influence based primarily on common ethnic strand. In sharing information or referring people for different services, it has been observed by the author, that people of the same ethnic group will often give additional information or pick up on subtle nuances that directly relate to the ethnic factor. An example would be a conversation overheard between two Black church members discussing an apartment for rent:

Member A: There is an apartment for rent in my building. It's three rooms and very nice.

Member B: Who do I go see about it?

Member A: Call the superintendent. His name is Jimmy. He's white but he's a good guy. There are both black and white families in the building. Make sure you tell him I'm your friend.

The writer discussed this interchange with A, a short time later. It was found that A approached B with the information because sometime ago B had requested notification of any vacancies in A's building. A stated that the tenants were trying to keep their building in good condition and wanted only "nice" people to move in. She knew B as a quiet, hard working woman who had been active in the church for the past five years. A told B the super was White so she wouldn't be surprised and would know with whom she was
"dealing with." When A was asked by the writer if she would have said the super was White or Black if the person she was referring had been White, A said, "Of course not." The illustration shows how obtaining information about a need was influenced by friendship with one who was a member of the church, as well as the quality of the interchange being influenced by the ethnic factor. Networks that have ethnicity as a common base tend to offer information that is more explicit to one's need. If one's purpose in seeking someone out is to merely get information, then contacts do not have to be as tailor made, but to create a better "fit" between persons and resources, other factors reflecting commonality must come into play.

Ethnic theorists, Gordon (1980,) and Schermerhorn, (1979) address the "we-ness" or sense of peoplehood among members of an ethnic group. It is likely that most contact links are influenced by ethnicity factors that further meld people together in a primary group, "we," relationship. Hamilton (1972), gathered interviews from over forty ministers and concluded that pastor and pew seek their kind. Congregation and pastor will find a fit. He also stresses that the Black minister's greatest value in part, is in the role as cultural leader.

Pastoral Care

The role of the church in social welfare and its importance as a refuge, a place for renewal, a place for socialization, as well as a place to receive help is known to
many. Traditionally, many people have gone to their pastor or another minister, priest, or rabbi for counseling or help in time of trouble. The minister is seen as a special person who, as a representative of God, has the power of forgiveness, and the answer to questions and problems. While the minister is the dominant figure in a church, most churches have a group of selected lay people, (Deacons, Stewards, Elders) who assist the minister. There are a variety of clubs and groups designed to offer help and keep the church operating. Many mental health professions believe the role of regular religious observance is important in preserving mental health; religion helps to impose order and structure. Regular activity in the church is also seen as important in renewing community contact, for people need a constant flow of physical, social support, and stimulation to maintain their well-being. Like O'Dea (1970), Caplan (1972), states that the church provides emotional inoculation in that it helps prepare people for the different things that happen in life.

There are several works that support and recognize the role of the church and minister as a part of the helping network. The writings of Caplan (1972) and Mitchell (1976), are a description of clergy consultation projects that each worked with over a period of time. As a result of his research, Caplan found distinct reasons why the clergy is approached for aid and why there needs to be recognition, support and collaboration of the minister and church family.
with the mental health professional.

1) The minister knows the population. He/she sees the members continuously.

2) The person who approaches the minister does not see himself as a "case" and usually approaches with less fear.

3) Clergy see people at earlier stages of disturbances because people come to the minister earlier. The minister is often present at crisis points.

4) The minister is able to reach people sooner in crisis and is able to spend concentrated amounts of time with them. This helps the person return to healthier levels of functioning, within shorter periods of time.

5) The minister is able to assess the situation quickly because of knowledge of the population.

6) The clergy is often involved in prevention. The minister is not paid for counseling the "ill," so it is more cost effective in terms of time, to keep people well.

7) The minister has a license to intervene in the lives of the congregation. He is not seen as an intruder and does not have to wait to be invited into the situation. He is able to mobilize persons involved and keep in touch with relatives and friends.

8) The minister is able to offer intermittent care over long periods of time. He/she does not have to deal with separation issues as much as other professionals.

9) The minister is able to maintain many people by prayer, short visits, mobilizing family, friends and church groups.

Another study designed to look at the linking of clergy, agency, professionals and community was sponsored by NIMH in the late 1970's and was reported by Biegel and Nabarstek (1982). The purpose of the study, conducted in working class neighborhoods in Baltimore, Maryland was threefold: (1) mobilization of neighborhoods around mental health issues;
(2) development of model programs to overcome identified obstacles to effective service delivery; and (3) development of policy initiatives on the national, state and local level in support of neighborhood community based mental health services.

Clergy were a large part of a group of the three hundred community leaders interviewed. The findings were similar to the earlier findings of Caplan and Mitchell. Clergy were key persons in providing community well being because, they were geographically well located and distributed. In addition, they did not charge fees, had a personal relationship with the members and served as gate keepers to other resources. The study also found there was tension between clergy and mental health professionals. The clergy was found to have conflict over their role as referer rather than direct helper. An issue for them was, how to refer out those who had come to them, without jeopardizing their role as minister, counselor / problem solver. The research also uncovered that many clergy and helping professionals were unaware of helping networks utilized by specific population groups. Clergy and agency professionals viewed their own service as most beneficial and saw the services of others as less helpful than their own. The conclusion of the research is, clergy and other helping professionals are not linked to each other, and are unaware of the scope of available services that the other could offer and interacted infrequently.
In order to address these feelings and concerns, seminars were held with the identified population of clergy and other helpers to encourage interaction. Speakers were invited from both areas, and a series of case studies were worked on jointly by the group in order to increase skills in assessment, planning, resource finding and utilization. The results were positive and resulted in greater understanding of clergy and professional agency persons as to the needs and resources each group had.

The clergy's role in controlling deviance is looked at by Cummings and Harrington (1963). This research is based upon the following hypothesis: Because clergy differ from other agents of social control in being normatively involved with his congregation, his behavior including interaction with other agents (agencies) should be influenced by the characteristics of that congregation. The clergy is unique in that they are an integral member of the group they have been called upon or appointed to serve. In this particular study, fifty-nine (59), ministers in the Syracuse, N.Y. area, representing several different denominations, were contacted and asked to describe their congregation and the types of problems the congregation brought to them. From the problems presented, the researchers developed the following problem typology:

(1) transition states - inherent life problems (loneliness, bereavement, adolescent concerns)

(2) Deviant behavior - infidelity, mental conflict, emotional
disturbances, quasi-criminal behavior
(3) exigencies - environmental, unemployment, lack of money, cultural conflicts, adjustment to physical illness.

A Guttman type scale was used to determine if clergy participated with other professionals by way of collaboration and referrals. Results show the clergy's role in working with the deviant controlling system is not related to denomination, but to size and socioeconomic status of the church. There was a correlation between education, socioeconomic status of congregation and the instances of clergy collaborating with outside agencies. The Cummings and Harrington study, in part helps form the rationale for using size and income as two important variables for the study presented here. Clergy with low incidents of going outside their immediate system for help are associated with lower socioeconomic, fundamental congregations. Clergy also reported some tension between themselves and other professional groups. These reports of tension and lack of referrals, replicate the findings of Caplan, Mitchell and Beigel and corroborate interviews the author had with several ministers of different churches.

Cummings and Harrington interpret their findings to show there are strains between reference groups and membership as it relates to the pastor and congregation. The referral of parishioners by clergy of middle class churches will be facilitated by shared values and personal friendship on the part of the clergy and members. This mirrors the concept of
"fit" as it applies to referring people with the best sense of their needs, based on personal, social, cultural likeness (Litwak and Dono, 1979). The clergy in the lower socioeconomic church are found to have less formal education than those in higher socioeconomic churches. These ministers referred less to outside sources and had fewer ties to outside resources. The researchers interpreted these findings to mean that the less educated minister had less contact with middle class professionals and thus did not have as many outside referral targets. The findings could also mean that members of such congregations are less accepting of help from outside resources, and the minister knows this.

All clergy must make decisions whether to refer or not, because they are often asked for advice and presented with problems. The study also found clergy may be reluctant to label or diagnose persons by referring them out. They must make decisions about those who come, and refer those they cannot help to others, often after a period of trial and error in working with the parishioner. The authors found the perception of other professionals is, pastoral counseling requires less training than that of the social worker. But clergy were seen as willing to deal with the total person and their moral well being. The study also indicates a role strain for the pastor. The relationship of pastor and congregation is a unique one, almost akin to a primary group. The authors point out the very real possibility of strain and conflict when pastors counsel their members. They liken it to the fact that physicians usually do not treat members of their
own family.

This conflict of interest extends into other areas of pastoral counseling. Bentz (1968), concludes in a study of ministers, that there is a difference between the actual behavior of the minister and what they thought they should be doing with regard to prevention, counseling and referrals. It is important that the minister be able to maintain his/her own identity as a pastor in order to be effective. As a result, there is often a discomfort with labeling, diagnosing and making judgments. This article suggests clergy may benefit from consultation and education regarding resolution or diminution of the role strain.

A study conducted by Harris (1987), looks at Black ministers and the urban church and concludes that minister and laity are inextricably tied. There is a mutual relationship such that each group needs the other in order to function as an effective group. Harris writes that, although there is a mutuality, there is also a chasm between the two as implied by the perceived dichotomy of classification.

Mutual Aid and Networks

People individually and in groups are constantly in the process of being and becoming, therefore, caring involves making sure people are adequately clothed, housed, fed and have access to facilities that will keep them healthier for purposes of spiritual, as well as other, fulfillment. The care of the souls in the Black church then, is the sustaining and curative treatment consciously done and more often
unconsciously accomplished in the context of the extended family style in the Black religious tradition (Felton, 1981, p.22).

This statement captures in essence what this writer feels many Black churches are carrying out. It also has relevance in light of the interest in networks and linkages among people for the provision of mutual aid. There has always been an informal, yet sometimes complex, support system within the Black community. Until the past few years the word network, was most widely used in the field of anthropology. The term was generally used to describe kin and social relations of various cultures. The interdependence and ties of family and friends has in anthropological and sociological literature been called by a variety of names including, webs, sets, primary groups and social networks.

According to McIntyre (1986), the heart of network is the theme of connectedness. A social network is defined as a set of people all of whom are linked together but not all of whom know each other. The network is different than the group because indirect links are included in the configuration. In her research, McIntyre, views the social network as a potent determinant of an individual's ability to obtain information, assistance social support, opportunity to gain competence and to influence decisions that affect ones well being. Networks are visualized as bridges. There is an ecological perspective in the aspects of linking and
connectedness. This relates well to Bartlett's (1970), person-in-situation configuration and Germain's life model structure (1980).

The term social network, refers to important figures in the environment, including relatives, friends neighbors and peers. Such a network often meets the needs of human beings for relatedness. It also provides recognition, affirmation and protection from social isolation. This vehicle offers the means for identification and for socialization to the norms, values, knowledge and belief system of that particular culture. It serves as a mutual aid system essential for adaptation and coping with stress (Germain, 1976). This definition signals an awakening and concern of the profession to an important phenomenon that has long been recognized as existing, but neither studied nor utilized to its full potential in the practical sense.

A network is the total relational field of a person. It is characterized as having a low degree of visibility, a high degree of information-exchange properties and few formal rules. Some members of the network are known to many others, while some merely form a linkage between two persons linked by a third (Attneave, 1973). Craven and Wellman (1973), describe the study of networks as an analytical approach to a social phenomenon. They see network analysis as focusing on the links between units, rather than the nature of the units themselves. Their studies indicate, large loosely knit networks appear to expedite access to tangible resources, while dense networks with strong ties expedite
access to intangible, emotional resources. But loosely knit networks sometimes supply more intangible resources in an emergency or crisis situation.

Horowitz (1977), utilized network exploration to examine when mentally ill patients first got into treatment. His study of outpatients in a psychiatric clinic compare the power of cultural variables and structural variables in order to predict their entry into psychiatric treatment. Findings demonstrate that persons with cohesive and extensive interaction with kin and family have a later entry into treatment. Kin and friends provided insulation from contact with the professional mental health workers. On the other hand, patients with loose ties to the informal social network got into treatment sooner, because there was no one to protect or hide the individual.

Several finding of the study concerning strengths and resources of networks are:

1) The kin network, because it has members who know one another intimately, can provide extensive mutual aid, maximizing internal support and thereby lessen reliance on help-giving agencies.

2) Networks are important for their ability to provide connections to social institutions. When persons are tied to a number of other people who are not tied to each other, there are more channels of information and influence available. In contrast, when members of the social network
know one another, the information to each person overlaps and the total feedback available is less than in more open networks. The role and operation of networks is researched in *Getting a Job* (Granovetter, 1974). The author examines how persons became aware of employment opportunities.

Social work from its inception as a profession has been most concerned with environmental aspects and the interaction of people with each other and with institutions. The issues of networking and connecting people with resources and supports, developing and utilizing links in order to aid those we work with, is at the cornerstone of the profession. At times, this subject of connectedness was given less attention and almost lost by some components of the profession. But as the concept of network has been discovered by other professionals, it has been rediscovered by social workers, with renewed, respect and attention.

An NASW *Social Work* editorial (1986), suggests the renewed interest has come about because of drastic cuts in funds for public programs and general public retrenchment from social responsibility. The article calls for a renewed and indepth look at the phenomenon of network and social support. Natural support networks have gotten much positive attention, but such things as withdrawal of resources, demographic changes, urban renewal changes, plant closings and divorce all contribute to changes in the natural networks. In many instances the natural networks are unavailable, overburdened and just not up to the tremendous task of support necessary for many. In some instances, the
support of family and friends if available, may not be adequate and could have a negative effect on efforts. The article calls for the profession of social work to try and ascertain, under what circumstances and for whom, levels of support are effective and needed.

Study and understanding of social networks is seen as having great potential for social work practice. The different settings of networks i.e. workplace, neighborhood and voluntary organizations can be studied as part of the key aspect of an individual's environment. McIntyre (1986), raises the issue of studying the client's network in order to understand the properties thereof, and plan change in the network in order to help bring about desired goals. The importance of helping the client to understand the configuration of their network is stressed as valuable in the change effort. An area that beckons to be addressed is an understanding of network norms and constraints. Most studies to date look at the role of kin, neighbors and friends in the functioning of the social network.

Social networks is researched on a large and intense scale by Wireman (1984), in a study of the planned community, Columbia, Maryland and the community board of its community association. In the findings, the author points out there are psychological and social costs of being isolated. Those at higher risk include those in ill health, the physically handicapped, those without an auto or access to one, children, the poor, and minority groups.
There are also populations of households at risk. According to 1988 U.S. Census Bureau statistics, Black households are most at risk to fall victims to social ills. Approximately, 25% of all one person households are Black; 28% of Black families are female headed with children under 18; 35% of all Black households are below the poverty level. Of persons over 65 years of age living alone in America, 33% are Black. 28% of Black Americans live below the poverty line as compared to 12% for the same population of White elderly. Available statistics continue to show minority groups, especially the Black population, are more at risk of a variety of physical and emotional ills.

Hodgson (1981), in a study of support to parents in high risk communities, found the adequacy of a person's network to meet coping needs depends upon the availability of specialized types of information and support. The quality of the relationships is more important than their quantity. Also important is the type of assistance the contact could provide and the individual’s perception of need.

Wireman in her research, found that within neighborhoods, institutions have an effect on the well being of residents. The issue of long term commitment and willingness of institutions to invest both financially and emotionally is raised. She gives examples of churches that stayed in changing neighborhoods and devoted space and staff to operating programs for new residents, as opposed to many local banks that either moved altogether or greatly curtailed their lending practices, services and support of the newer
residents. Committed institutions such as the church are likely to contribute money, time, advisory staff and advocacy to the neighborhood. Contact with many churches for this research, has shown several examples of Wireman's finding about committed institutions remaining as part of the community support system.

According to Wireman, there are two main types of information flow important for the support of households and community involvement. (1) The type that provides information to individual groups about potential resources (2) Information that provides knowledge about events that affect the neighborhood. Communities vary in their ability and methods to keep the neighborhood informed, but often the informal channels are important and effective. Among these informal vehicles are grocery stores, barber shops, laundromats, community bulletin boards and churches. The latter functions as both formal and informal conduit for information and support.

Warren (1981), in looking at how people cope with problems in an urban community, cites the church as one institution in the community that is likely to have strong psychological identification, autonomy, coincidence of boundaries and horizontal integration in the neighborhood. The latter term refers to the extent to which an institution has strong bonds to other institutions in the neighborhood or community.
Expressive and Instrumental Role of the Church In Caregiving

The role that the church plays in the life of its members can be categorized as an expressive activity as opposed to instrumental. Expressive functions are designed to maintain and enhance the socio-emotional relationship and feelings among family members and individuals. Expressive functions seek to create psychic security and positive mental health by providing the kind of atmosphere that creates a sense of belonging, self-worth, self-awareness, dignity and the provision of companionship. Instrumental task are largely economic in nature and have to do with the provision of such things as shelter, health care, clothing and food (Billingsly, 1968). In discussing the instrumental and expressive function of the church, it is important to be aware that the caring mission of the church is interpreted differently by individual churches and, therefore carried out in various ways. There are some churches where there are programs to provide concrete services to the members of the congregation and/or the neighborhood. Some churches encourage and set up situations that facilitate member interaction with each other and the community.

Historically, the Black church, as a family of believers, has played an important expressive and instrumental function for the people it serves. This point has not been given much attention by those who study the Black experience. In an interesting observation, Billingsley notes that studies of the White American family tradition, usually focus on the expressive function rather than
instrumental. But when it comes to studying the Black family, the focus is almost exclusively on the instrumental function. The literature usually dwells on the ability or inability to provide members with basic necessities of life. While instrumental functions are a precondition for the proper execution of expressive ones, the literature on Blacks usually takes an either/or focus. The terms "expressive" and "instrumental" are probably rarely, if ever, used in most congregations, but both the church's formal and informal activities seem to carry out these functions quite clearly.

In talking with various church members over time, several illustrations have been shared with the writer that point to a member's use of church networks to obtain instrumental, as well as expressive needs.

1.5 Child Care

A mother of a new born was looking for a babysitter to keep her infant when she returned to work. The mother inquired and spread the word among family, co-workers and neighbors. After a month and no response, she put a small ad in the church's Sunday bulletin. Within two days, three people had called. Two were teenagers seeking part-time work. Although the mother could not use them for the full-time care she needed, these two girls became regular sitters for short-term child care. The third call was from a member who told the mother of a friend who was retired on disability, but still able to do child care work. The mother contacted the woman and subsequently hired her.
Employment

Ms. V, a member of the choir, was talking to Ms. O, another member, at choir rehearsal. Ms. V mentioned that her daughter had recently graduated from college with a degree in engineering and had been offered a job in Virginia. The family and the daughter wanted a job in New Jersey or New York. Ms. O said her cousin was in management with a large company that made precision instruments and perhaps he could help the daughter make contacts, especially since the daughter was a mechanical engineer. Ms. O followed through and contacted her cousin who contacted the young woman. Within a month, the daughter had a position with the company.

Mental Health

Ms. E was a long-standing friend of Ms. B; they had met in church. At one point Ms. B was concerned over her daughter's emotional status. The daughter had been depressed, broken up with her boyfriend and dropped out of college all within a short period of time. Ms. B wanted a referral for her daughter to a mental health specialist who was Black and in the general area where they lived. Ms. E found the sought after information and shared it with Ms. B. Two weeks later, B confided to E, that her daughter was resisting going to the agency and requested E talk to the daughter. E. and the daughter talked and E offered to accompany the daughter on the first visit. The daughter at
first declined, but then contacted E and said she was afraid and needed help to get started. Ms E. accompanied the daughter on the first visit and was able to be an informal support system to the daughter through several months of therapy.

Economic Aid
The church deacons, through a home visit and outreach program, found one member to be in need of a large sum of money for home improvements. The member was afraid the bank would not loan him the necessary amount. The member was considering going to the local bank with which the church had its business dealings. The pastor and a member of the Trustee Board went with the member to help him make the loan application and to assure the bank of the man's "worthiness". The church representatives also reminded the bank of the volume of business the church had with it over the past decades. The member received the loan without difficulty.

These illustrations point out situations where members were helped directly and indirectly through their involvement with the church. One of the illustrations as did an earlier one, points to the importance of the ethnic tie factor in obtaining aid. The illustrations also give a sense of uniform and non-uniform tasks. In the illustration about the loan, the uniform task is going to the bank and securing the loan. The non-uniform aspects are: how the problem of the need for money was discovered and how the man eventually got
to the bank, and the presence of the church officers and their influence on the banker's decision.

In the child care illustration, the uniform task is seeking a child care worker through an ad in the church bulletin. The non-uniform task involves the linking of the mother, with the baby sitter, through a mutual acquaintance and the securing of short term sitters. The mental health referral has the uniform aspect of the young woman being referred to a mental health specialist. The non-uniform aspects have to do with the concept of "fit", the ethnic influence and the daughter's resistance. In addition, the church member used her contacts at the mental health agency to see if the young woman was keeping her appointments and getting as much support as possible from the agency.

The Black Church and Mutual Aid

Much of the past literature on the role of the Black church as an institution within the Black community, focused on what was felt to be the negative or nonprogressive role of the church in the lives of Black people. The Black church was looked at and compared to the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant ideal of church. The school of thought that saw the Black church as negative and having outgrown its usefulness, is seen in the work of E. Franklin Frazier (1945). Known for his sociological studies on the Negro in the United States, Frazier saw the church as an agent of social control, one which tried to build strong families through strict moral codes and guidelines. He felt the "Negro Church"
historically had formed a basis of economic cooperation and was the basis of beneficial and mutual aid groups. But by the time of his later writings, Frazier, felt the Black church of his day had lost most of its social control, was no longer a refuge and had ceased to be a means of economic cooperation. Frazier felt Blacks should be moving towards assimilation in the larger society and that the Black church as an institution, hindered this progress because it was negative in many ways. In his writings, Frazier did not discuss strengths or positive contributions regarding the Black church of his day, or membership therein.

Frazier, as well as many others researching Black family life and associations, took a "blaming the victim" perspective and did not consider the many other factors affecting the economic, emotional and institutional life of those studied. A study by Babchuck and Thomas cites that Negroes were more likely to be affiliated with formal voluntary associations than Whites. In their view, this was negative. They felt that voluntary associations functioned in the same way as the Black church, to provide the opportunity for self-expression, status recognition, power and control, applause and acclaim (Babchuck and Thomas, 1962). This is almost verbatim to what Drake and Cayton (1962) wrote, describing their study of Black church life in Chicago several years before Babchuck. These writings give no creedence to the need and positivism of such characteristics as status, power and acclaim, socialization and contacts
between members that voluntary associations provide. These writers did not see the voluntary association as the mutual aid association that Blau and Scott (1962) described.

Another view of the role of the church as a force in the lives of its members is captured in the early work of two scholars on the Black church, Mays and Nicholson. During the 1930's they published The Negro's Church (1933), in which they discussed the church as a place of strength, learning and a potential force to greatly influence the life of the country. The church was seen as a cooperative for business and community.

More recent writing have highlighted ways in which the Black church draws on its African heritage. This heritage includes tribal leadership, extended kin and mutual aid. There is focus on how this background translates itself into the day to day operation of the church as a vital, healthy part of the African-American's environment. This recent focus has also discussed the characteristics of the Black church that have enabled its people to adapt, cope and "be propped up on every leaning side." (common phrase used in prayer and refers to being supported in all areas where one is weak and help is needed).

In some ways, the attitudes and feelings about the Black church have gone full circle, from the Mays and Nicholson model to the Frazier model and now back to shades of Mays and Nicholson. In recent years, a number of Black scholars have written about the Black church as an institution that fills a variety of needs for its members and the nation.
Holistic Perspective of The Black Church

The Black Church's role as a caring and supportive, mutual aid institution for its members, is rooted in many generations of tradition. The main source from which Blacks have drawn their tradition of care is based on African cultural and religious heritage. In African culture, the caring network, at least theoretically, is based on kinship going back to the ninth generation. Of course, the African system was adapted to America and to this was added the overlay of Euro-American Christianity, including its patterns of care (Felton, 1980).

Henry Mitchell (1975), Black church scholar and preacher, describes Western religion as individualistic and escapist, producing hermits, fierce, strict, ascetic holy men and revival preachers. The Black tradition of involvement with the Holy Spirit on the other hand, is gregarious, collective and celebrative. It is built on group solidarity. Mitchell goes on to say that Blacks will see the African roots of their instinctive sense of the extended family of "soul brothers," on both sides of the Atlantic. The tradition of intimate community is so deeply embedded in the Black psyche that it tends to structure all relations. This applies not only to the serious use of titles like "Brother", "Sister" and "Mother", in a Black ghetto church, it also appears in the street culture of large cities as well (Mitchell, 1975).

Part of this early brotherhood is seen in the Free
African Society of Philadelphia, started in 1787. It was one of the first established mutual aid societies started by and for Blacks and was developed through the church by Richard Allen, the Father of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. As a proponent of self-help, he assisted members in organizing to provide support for each other in sickness and death (Payne, 1969).

The Black church, especially the early rural Black church, was very much aware of the difficulties its members faced in the community outside of the church. As a result, the church performed tasks beyond those of preaching and burying. While not intentionally designed to be such, it became a multipurpose center. Education was fostered and supplemented through Sunday Schools, founding of colleges and seminaries. Travel opportunities were granted through conference and program attendance. Democratic process, planning and leadership skills were acquired through business meetings and committee participation. Music was learned, and performance opportunities given, through the choirs and special programs. Culinary talents and etiquette were sharpened through preparation of meals for special occasions. Socialization, recreation and friendships were fostered through clubs, activities and church-wide outings. Status and self esteem were obtained through occupying positions within the local church and on regional and national church boards. Credit unions assisted in saving and borrowing. The Black church also developed its own literature, music and
publishing houses. Members helped each other find jobs, obtain recommendations and assisted in emergency situations. In addition, aid was given to members through rummage sales, dinners, and employment at the church. Such assistance gave help in a manner that allowed recipients to have a better quality of life as well as maintain and foster dignity.

Clarke (1967), describes the Black Church as an instrument of escape, a protective fortress and a vehicle of protest. In addition it was the only vehicle through which Black people were allowed authority and freedom from domination and had the opportunity to develop organization. A look at most Black churches today will reveal many of these same activities which provide the same overt and latent functions.

The Black church has for generations been concerned about the total person and attempted to fulfill concrete, as well as emotional needs. While the focus of this study is to look at how members use the church and the minister as support systems, it is not possible to discuss the Black church without including some reference to the important emotional aspects of the religious experience and the worship service. O'Dea (1970), states that religion provides some way to assure human acceptance and adjustments to frustration deprivation, discipline and situations beyond one's ability to change. In his discussion on the operation and role of the Black church, Wimberly outlines four main functions of care described as functions of the Black church:

1) healing - binding wounds; repairing damage, restoring
lost condition.

2) reconciliation - reestablishing broken relationship between person and God, person and person.

3) guiding - helping person in trouble make confident choices between alternatives and courses of action.

4) sustaining - helping persons courageously and creatively transcend difficult situations while preventing or lessening the impact of the situation (Wimberly, 1979, p.18).

Wimberly feels the two main roles in the Black church are sustaining and guiding. Sustaining as a function emerged as a corporate task of the Black community, because of the societal oppression faced by those in the Black community. Guiding developed as a natural role for the religious leader in caring for the flock.

Studies Focusing on Mutual Aid and the Black Community

The strengths and stresses of the African American social service client, and the importance of understanding Black clients from a non-European framework in the social work relationship, is stressed by Jones (1979), Devore and Schlesinger (1987) and Logan (1990). Vignettes taken from Jones' clinical work, support and illustrate use of the religious foundations with Black clients. In one instance, the author had established a trusting professional relationship with a depressed client, who was suffering from the loss of a loved one. The author had the client listen to gospel music records at home as part of helping the client work through
her grief. In another instance, the clinician was seeing a Muslim woman who recently lost a child to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. The worker contacted a local Black Muslim temple to provide ongoing emotional support for the woman.

Another article by a social worker practitioner and educator, looks at Christianity and the Black family and intervention techniques (McDonald, 1981). In working with clinically depressed Black clients, the worker often asks them to relate their experiences in church when they were young. Generally, the client begins to talk about family and friends, hard benches, long and special days. Such recall often brings into focus a forgotten part of self and an unrecognized need for relationship and fellowship. It oftentimes brings a solace that helps create a positive emotional milieu during a despairing time. The author believes that social workers can communicate awareness of the spiritual lives of Black clients and by utilizing this, can help bring release from the apathy, disdain and rejection clients are often facing.

The use of the church as the setting where the interaction between client and worker takes place is put forth by Logan (1990). She discusses the conceptual framework and the physical and emotional setting for effective assessment with Black families. In a case illustration she states:

Moreover, they were more comfortable meeting in their church including, individuals they identified as relevant to family life (Logan, 1990. p.70).
In a detailed work looking at Black families and the church, Johnson (1983), has positive and negative things to say about the church. She takes the premise that the positive development of Blacks throughout their life span is fostered when their families and churches are effectively involved in the socializing process.

The demographics of the church have changed. Today there are more single parents, female headed households and elderly. Some churches are responding to these changes, but the author stresses more needs to be done to address the needs of these growing, often needy, populations. Issues of sexuality, pre and extra marital sex, abortion, out of wedlock births, teen pregnancy, sex roles and divorce are all serious life situations that the church needs to help its members address.

In the area of divorce, Jackson makes the point that historically, most Black churches have opposed divorce. It was thought of as sinful. While some Black couples would seek counseling from the pastor, her conclusion is that most Black couples do not seek counseling from the minister. In her work, Johnson questions the current role of the Black church and calls for empirical research on two areas she feels may now be myths: 1) the church represents gravitational centers of Black communities and 2) the church is in the avant garde for fighting for Black equality. There is a challenge for research that looks at the advocacy and support roles the Black church of today plays. Johnson's conclusion is, that greater access to other physical
structures has lessened the need to rely on the Black church for use of its facilities. Additionally, the growth in the pool of educated Blacks has lessened the need to rely on the minister as a source of help and support.

Johnson also states, the church offers a variety of support, but in many instances one must be a member, or people think one must be a member, to receive some types of help. Therefore, needy persons who are not members of the church or who attend infrequently, are more likely to seek assistance from outside of the church.

Statistical data available on church attendance (Jacquet, 1988) and observation of congregations, clearly indicate women are the largest population of church congregations. This is one of the reasons this current research focuses on women church members. Aldons (1983), makes the point that women are most caught up in domestic roles and are most involved in organized religion. Women, having less power and status than men are most affected by events over which they have little or no control. Psychologically, actively carrying out religious beliefs, provides a source of power, control, protection and ability to understand, if not overcome life situations. Women in their role as mothers have been the prime factor in socializing their children into a religious belief system.

A historical look at Black self help is put forth by William Pollard in, A Study of Black Self Help (1978). While this work looks at self help efforts from 1890 to 1915 in Georgia, Virginia and the Carolinas, the work attempts to
look at what general social, economic, and political conditions contribute to the development of Black welfare organizations. The author concludes that the nature and dynamics of social conflict brought Blacks together in a common sense of purpose. Self help and mutual aid became a way to survive the hostility of the South. The work of Martin and Martin *The Black Extended Family* (1980), is an anthropological work that studied thirty extended families comprising over a thousand persons. The families are located in two small town areas in central Missouri and northern Florida and two urban areas in Cleveland and Kansas. The interviews and observances were gathered over an eight-year period. In their work, the authors look at the composition of the Black extended family, along with its major goal and functions. Relations between young and old, male and female, problems of urban life and the mutual aid system which include economic, moral, and emotional support, are explored. The work also deals with strains on the network through overextension and overexpectation by its members. The strain of everyday crises and demands is also analyzed. The study shows there is a viable network among the families studied. There is also a dominant figure that most families identify with and who keeps things together.

Reference to mutual aid in the church is an important aspect included in a book on the Pentecostal church. In this case study, Williams (1981) noted that the members had patterned their approach to living and church life as a
primary group within which one could expose personal inadequacies and problems; financial emergencies were freely admitted and in response, a special offering was usually lifted for the member during the church service. The studies of both Williams and Felton find definite patterns of communication and trust among members, as well as defined patterns of hierarchial organizational structure among members. Relationships and obligation are defined, recognized and predicted.

These more recent works on the Black church echo sentiments of some early church and African-American scholars. They called for a formal harnessing and recognition of the natural networks and extended family strengths of the congregation. Practical suggestions culled from the various writings include:

1) Enriching family structure of the congregation with other fatherly/motherly caring figures.

2) Letting members know the church is willing to assist in providing for them when they take risks. Emphasizing celebration days, i.e., weddings, baptisms and communion services, to stress unity and ties among family and church members.

3) Developing congregational care units based on neighborhood (geographical groupings). This involves helping members who live in the same general areas to know each other better. Each care group would have a leader who has received special training. One of the churches studied for the research at hand, has such care groups.

4) Building church networks and developing contacts with other churches and alliances.

5) Establishing small groups within the church in which there is sharing of problems of mutual concern. Such groups can be focused around life cycle events or
can be task-oriented.

Sociologist, Robert Hill in his seminal work, *Strength of Black Families* (1971), identifies several strengths of the Black family, included among them: strong kinship bonds, work orientation, adaptability of family roles, achievement orientation and religious orientation. Several years later, Royse and Turner (1980), conducted a follow up research survey on this study, to see if among a selected Black community, these strengths were still evident. The study confirmed that Blacks perceive their families as oriented towards the strengths first identified by Hill. A Likert type instrument was used to question 128 families in Dayton, Ohio. The income levels of the respondents ranged from less than $5,000 to those with incomes over $15,000. Approximately 79% of the respondents agree that Black families still emphasize religion in their homes. A total of 75% believe Black children are taught respect; 84% stated cooperation and strong kinship bonds are important.
Studies on the Church as Part of the Social Support System

A research project entitled, "Exploring the Role of the Black Church in the Community", was conducted in Washington D.C. This was an attempt to fill some of the void in the literature on the secular role of the Black church as a provider of social services to the Black community. Twenty-one representative churches were studied. Interviews were administered to pastors, neighborhood residents and members of the congregation. A profile of pastor and church members was obtained, as well as the social service activities of the church (Brown, 1978). The study goes into detail about its findings on church activities, congregation and neighborhood attitudes towards the church in the community. Some of the basic conclusions are:

1) Nearly all Black churches studied were involved to some extent in secular or community related activities.

2) Churches played a spiritual and secular role for its members. Church members were supportive of those services related to providing care to the needy, the ill, the elderly or recreational activities for the youth.

3) Neighborhood residents were generally supportive of the church's involvement in social services and community activities, but did not believe the church should be involved in politics.

The study recommended more follow up work on the role of the church as a means for coping with crises and daily problems.

These findings corroborate the findings of Hamilton (1972), who in interviews with over forty ministers, found the role of minister to be complex and vital. Key roles of the minister are teacher and mobilizer of the masses. The
area where ministers are likely to receive negative feedback from the congregation is if they become involved with controversial civic issues.

A study by Logan focuses on the coping and adaptive strategies that the Black church provides. She employed Maslow's hierarchy of need scale, to assess what benefits members derive from active church participation. The Personnel Orientation Inventory was used to determine if active church members were more self-actualized than non-active members. Her findings indicate the church does seem to play a role in growth and adaptation and that active members seemed to evidence a greater degree of self-actualization than non-members (Logan, 1980).

As part of the massive study entitled, National Survey of Black Americans, University of Michigan Institute for Social Research (1982). A study was done on patterns of informal support among elderly blacks (Taylor, 1986). A national cross section of Black households was sampled, resulting in 2,107 interviews being completed. This particular aspect of the study was based on 581 respondents over fifty-five years of age. The study of the respondents revolved around analysis of family friends and church members as a source of support among elderly Blacks. The study looked at the degree to which persons received assistance from these groups. A profile of the type of support received was developed and an exploration of duplication of types of support was done. The hypothesis of the study was: families
provided material goods and friends provided companionship and confidence.

The types of support indicated are advice/encouragement, companionship, goods and services, financial assistance, transportation, help during sickness, prayer, and total support. By and large, total support, goods/services, financial assistance is given by the family. This latter finding supports the work of Litwak in his description of differential use of networks (1969). Encouragement, help when sick, prayer, and companionship are services offered by friends. The study found some duplication of services between family and church members but not much. These patterns of support emerged from the study: (1) elderly persons who received levels of support from both groups (2) persons who received no assistance from either group (3) persons who received help from church members or family, but not both.

Persons who obtain support from family members and church members, are not likely to receive the same type of support from each group. A total of 27 out of 168 who received help from family and church, reported duplication in types of support. The areas most duplicated are companionship and financial support. Those who receive aid from family members and friends do not report much duplication of services. Respondents who received support from church, friends and family are not likely to have received the same type of support from each.
Overall statistics indicate:
80% of the group received support from church members
80% received support from a close friend
56% received help from extended family
10% indicated social isolation, no best or close friend
and no support from family or church members.

Among the elderly, a majority responded they had more frequent contact with friends than with their own children. This last fact seems due most likely to selective aspects of friendship as well as the issue of proximity, and the fact that the friendship network decreases with age. Resources from kin are reported as less extensive in old age. The findings of the study are consistent with the findings of Litwak (1960, 1969). Instrumental needs are received more from family and socioemotional needs from friends. Friends and family play different, yet complimentary roles in support of the elderly.

The findings of the study support the important aspect of religious institutions in the life of elderly Blacks. These findings uphold similar research conducted by Faulkner and Heisel (1982), which looked at religiosity of elderly Black urban residents. Church members proved to play an important role in the life of the members surveyed for the study. For a small group of the respondents, 5.4%, the church is the primary supporter. The authors felt the results of the research clearly indicates both governmental and nongovernmental agencies and institutions should be encouraged to support the elderly. Specifically, it is felt the church could encourage and promote involvement by elderly members in church related programs as well as facilitating
access to such programs. Continued socioemotional assistance as indicated by respondents, should be provided by church members during illness and times of difficulty. In addition, social workers who work in the Black community should be aware of the importance of religious institutions in the lives of its members. The study also calls for the role of the minister as a contact, liaison, provider of services and advocate to be more fully appreciated by social service providers.

Further implications of the research suggests the Federal government develop new and support existing programs, that provide companionship and develop relational links. Also, continued support and expansion of homecare services to reduce institutionalization; development of more respite care to help families of the elderly stay in the community as long as possible, are suggested. The suggestions of this report go beyond the focus of looking at the family, friendship and church network. The findings make a positive case for the role these supports play in the lives of elderly Black Americans. The research also provides information to support its plea for private and public recognition of the importance of church and other networks in the support, sustenance and well being of the elderly.

Church Size as a Factor of Support

There have been several studies exploring the church as part of the member support system. According to Hargrove (1983), the church's role in modernization is usually
accompanied by a growing secularization of the consciousness. Church, settlement houses, and home missions in particular, have always been paired with emphasis on public education as a way to improve life for the lower socioeconomic ranks. In larger cities, political and social service activities complimented the church and settlement houses and eventually came to have public as well as church sponsorship (Antonio and Aldons, 1983).

The work of the church and clergy in regard to individual and group well being, has been explored by many. For thousands of years priest, shamans, witch doctors, ministers and oracles have been singled out to help people with life problems. Clinebel (1970), characterizes the churches and temples as sleeping giants; a huge potential of barely tapped resources for fostering positive mental health. A study by Gurin (1960), found 42% of individuals who had personal problems sought help from a clergyperson. Several studies have been conducted showing the church as a vehicle to help people adjust to geographical changes. Wicker and Mehler (1971), looked at a church with 338 members and a larger church of 1600 members to measure assimilation of new members. A questionnaire was administered to ascertain participation in church activities, felt obligation to participate and church attendance. The data indicated greater support for church activities by members of the small church. New members assimilated more rapidly in smaller churches where activities were relatively undermanned. The
study raised the issue of whether persons choose membership in smaller churches, because of the demands the smaller church will put on them. There is the issue of willingness and need to participate in such activities, thereby contributing to more rapid assimilation. The study further indicates that between large and small churches, members of small churches were more friendly, spent more time in church activities, had more regular attendance, worked harder on church goals and had a closer relationship with the pastor. In large churches, there tended to be better church schools and more formality. Interestingly, new members responded that size of the church had little to do with their decision to join. Areas such as church goals, location, friendliness, worship service, church school and youth program all ranked high in importance. The pastor was ranked as number one in reason why persons joined the particular church. Churches also served as a way to help people adjust to the larger culture of cities. Because of ideological and cultural similarities of the church congregation, the process of inclusion was speeded up. This is another reference to ethnic ties and "we-ness."

In another study relating to size, Gurintal (1960), concluded people from small cities, used the clergy as a resource for help with personal problems more often then persons from larger or distinctly rural areas. A study of four hundred Black couples married at least five years was conducted in Indianapolis, Indiana (Scanzoni, 1971). The majority of couples felt strongly that the church helped them
in their marital selection process and success. In addition, these respondents felt the church helped them to acquire dominant American values. Most of the respondents reported benefiting through the use of church resources. They saw this as helping them in performance of adult roles and thereby enhanced their marital stability.

The Church as a Social Work Setting

A study by Mercer (1980), draws from Niebuhr and outlines the biblical and historical view of the church's social mission. She suggests that the church has not fulfilled its mission and recommends placement of a social worker on the church staff. This person would serve to "develop the ministry of helps." This person would act as an advocate for the poor and exhort a complacent, myopic church which cannot or does not want to see beyond the stained glass windows to the hurts of those less fortunate (Mercer, 1980). This exhortation is based upon biblical reference, James 2:16, "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled, not withstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit, and James 1:22 " But be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves (Holy Bible King James Version).

In spite of the potential conflict of values, especially in the area of self determination, between traditional social work and religious institutions, it is felt that Social work in the church opens up avenues for people to deal with emotional as well as the spiritual issues if they chose to.
In addition, social work professionals have the skills and tools to carry out advocacy, and community organization roles so needed in many communities. (Brackney and Watkins, 1983).

Hamilton (1972) advocates, the minister needs more than biblical training, but social work skills as well. He historically traces the multi-role development of the clergy, especially within the Black community.

In the literature, the church is continuously called upon to address the ills of the urban condition as it relates to the urban family. The family of past generations was home centered. Families, often worked together and shared recreation. The education process was more of a partnership between home and school. Today, working parents, single parent families, lack of extended family, negative literature and media can be viewed as possible contributors to conflict and weakening of the family unit. One perception and suggestion put forth by Dubos (1981), is that children become less important than the parents' peers and that the public self family and the private-self family are often in great conflict. Dubos calls for the church to provide the atmosphere and conditions of growth for families. Small group meetings and family nights with a focus on sharing, caring, nurturing and support are needed. Dividing the congregation into smaller groups under the specific care of the Deacons of the church is put forth as a way for needs to be known and ministered to more effectively. Dubos, a theologian, stresses that each congregation under Divine guidance must discuss the specific needs of the urban family
it serves and marshall its resources to meet these needs. In addition, members who are helped, must be encouraged to use their strength, knowledge and stability to assist and serve others. The church is viewed by many of the above studies as a primary care unit.

**Literature Review Summary**

The literature review follows a general to specific approach in looking at information that addresses issues of voluntary organization, support systems, the Black church and the minister as part of the support system.

**Role of the Church in Social Welfare**

The classic work and philosophy of Rheinhild Niebuhr and his interpretation of the role of the church as a pioneer in the field of social work, is detailed in, *The Contributions of Religion to Social Work* (1932). He felt the business of the church was to discover and advocate obligations society has towards its citizens. He also felt strongly that the church created a type of family group.

**Institutional and Philosophical Aspects:**

This section reviews the characteristics of organizations including bureaucratic and primary group. The role of the church as a voluntary, maintenance institution of society, is defined. Ethnic Influence on the Helping Network. The influences and importance of ethnic ties, the sense of "we-ness" and the ecological concept of fit related to ethnic ties is reviewed. The Black church is an example of a unique voluntary organization, with characteristics of a primary
It is made up of persons primarily from the same ethnic group. Litwak, 1966; Hamilton, 1972; Granovetter, 1974; Glazer, 1975).

Pastoral Care

The role of the pastor and several studies related to the supportive, counseling aspect of the ministry are reviewed. Major studies discussed are: Caplan (1972), detailing the need for collaborative efforts between clergy and social service professionals; factors that contribute to the clergy's role as a mental health resource; Cummings and Harrington (1963), discuss the role of the minister in controlling deviance, the relationship of the minister's education and the socioeconomic status of the church to the help and referral role; Bentz (1968), role strain and pastoral counseling; The Black ministers and the urban church, is presented by Hamilton, 1972; Wimberly, 1979; Felton, 1980 and Harris, 1987.

Mutual Aid Networks

This area explores the concepts of social networks, support systems and mutual aid. Studies relating to different types of networks and systems are looked at: Horowitz (1977), support systems and the mentally ill; Craven and Wellman (1973), the analytical approach to network development; Granovetter (1974), the support systems involved in finding employment. A discussion on articles presented in a special issue of Social Work (1986) on understanding the concepts of mutual aid in social services is detailed by

Expressive and Instrumental Role of the Church in Caregiving

A framework for exploring the caregiving roles of the church in terms of concrete and emotional needs is presented using the classic work of Billingsly (1968). Illustrations of how expressive and instrumental needs are routinely carried out in the church are presented.

The Black Church and Mutual Aid:

Historical information on the African-American's roots in mutual aid and the role of the Black church and other voluntary organizations are presented in works by Mays and Nicholson (1933). A discussion of the Black church as a negative institution is presented in works by Frazier (1945), Babchuck and Thomas (1962), Drake and Cayton (1962), Mitchell (1975), present discussion of the family heritage and the evidences of African primary group culture in the current African American church and community. Wimberly (1979), outlines the major functions of care and support of the Black church and pastor.

Studies Focusing on Mutual Aid and the Black Community

Specific articles and studies are discussed as they relate to formal and informal Black support systems. Works looking specifically at Black women and mental health, Black extended families and mutual aid are presented. Studies by Martin (1980), Williams (1981), Hill (1971), Jones (1979),
Logan (1990), highlight documentation of mutual aid, self help, networking and support systems by a variety of community resources.

Studies on the Church as Part of the Social Support System

There have been several studies exploring and documenting the church as part of the support system and its specific use by its members. Among them, a research project in Washington, D.C., Exploring the Role of the Black Church in the Community Brown (1978); coping and adaptive strategies of church members, Logan (1980), National Survey of Black Americans (1982). A look at the religiosity of older, Black, urban dwellers was studied by Faulkner and Heisel (1982). Other studies by Clinebell (1970), Wicker and Mehler (1971), look at the relationship between members and the pastor, socioeconomic factors and church size as factors in the support offered by the church.

The concepts of resources, mutual aid, the role of the church and the minister in the helping process have evoked interest, discussion, study and research over many years. The literature review and summary, is an attempt to look at the breadth of what has been written as it relates to the study at hand.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The study was originally to be made up of several Black churches (those pastored, populated and controlled by Black members), representing upper and lower income members from the Essex County area. The study churches were to be obtained randomly from the directory of the New Jersey Council of Churches. This cold canvassing approach proved to be difficult. Many of the ministers contacted were unwilling to involve themselves and their members in a study with someone they did not know. After several unsuccessful and time consuming attempts to enlist churches in this method, the network approach was used. Ministers whom the researcher knows, were asked to give the researcher a personal referral to churches they were familiar with, where the minister might be willing to engage the congregation in a research study. This approach proved successful and a total of six churches were used.

After gaining preliminary information on factors of size of the membership, the physical aspects of the church building and church budget, the author choose churches in two categories. (1) churches with memberships of three hundred or more, with physically large church structures, where the membership was identified by the pastor as being a primarily working congregation with incomes above $15,000 per annum. Middle and upper level income was defined for the study as
$15,000 or more a year. (2) Secondly, churches with memberships of 100 persons or less, with physically small buildings, where the pastor identified the majority of members as working poor, nonworking or living on fixed incomes. Lower income was defined as less than $15,000 per year.

An interview was held with each minister to obtain background information on the minister, data on the church, i.e. size of membership, programs the church offered, types of request for help the minister received, educational background of the minister and the pastoral counseling role. The churches selected for the study were all of Baptist denomination, primarily because the network of referring pastors were Baptist. In the churches studied, the minister had to have had some formal education for the ministry i.e. course work, certificate or degree in theology, from an accredited institution. All of the churches involved in this study were pastored by men.

Overview of Churches

The larger churches in the study have commonalities, one of them being the ministers all have earned doctorate degrees in the ministry. Each church has a variety of organizations and activities within the church, geared to different age groups and interests. The churches are involved in at least one ongoing activity that serves the neighborhood. Among the activities is an after school program, hot meal program for the neighborhood needy, a food pantry and a clothing room.
Each church also offers a summer neighborhood program that encompasses vacation Bible school. One church is in the heart of a large city, in a neighborhood that has been greatly impacted by urban renewal. Until recently, vacant lots were a major part of the landscape. Building of subsidized housing has recently begun. The population in the area went from predominately Italian, to predominantly Hispanic, with a few Black families in the neighborhood. The majority of the membership of the church come from outside of the community. The church has been in existence for over a hundred years and in its present location for forty five years. The church has a membership of 500, with an average Sunday attendance of 250. The budget of the church is approximately $250,000. The minister feels his average work week is sixty-four hours. This pastor averages about 24 requests a month for personal counseling having to do with marital concerns, depression and family issues. The pastor attends to about 90% of the requests himself and refers 10% to family service and mental health agencies. The pastor also periodically teaches a course at a Bible Institute or Seminary.

Another of the large churches in the study has been in existence for ninety years and in its present location for twenty-seven. The church is located in a semi-residential area in a suburban town. The population of the area has been relatively stable and is described as Black lower middle class. There is a membership of 800 with an average Sunday attendance of 400. The yearly budget is approximately $300,000. The minister averages sixty hours a week in his
work and usually teaches one course at a Seminary in the area. The pastor estimates he receives thirty requests a month for counseling and help requests. Of these, he counsels about 50% of those requesting his services and refers the other 50% out to such sources as legal services, health care and mental health facilities.

The third church is also located in a semi-residential area in a middle to lower middle class neighborhood. It was founded eighty-five years ago and has been at its present location seventy years. The immediate area of its location is predominately Black in population. The area has been a relatively stable one in terms of growth and population changes. The church has a membership of 500 with an average attendance of 350 per Sunday. Its budget is $200,000 a year. The pastor averages an eight hour work day and pointed out ministers are on call twenty-four hours a day. He often teaches at a local Divinity School. This pastor reports receiving requests for help about four times a month. He takes care of the majority of concerns and refers approximately 5% to agencies such as health care and mental health agencies.

Smaller Churches

The smaller churches presented a diverse picture in terms of membership and age of church. Each church does offer programs for different age groups within the church. At this time these churches do not have much in the way of ongoing community services. In one of the churches, this is due to
the area around the church being vacant or occupied by abandoned buildings. One church does have a prison ministry, but is also in an area of urban renewal. The congregation has plans for outreach work and community programs once building in the area occurs. The third church does not have an ongoing community program, but does offer occasional activities in which they try to involve the locals.

One small church has been established for forty years and at its present location for eight. The membership is 105 persons, with an average attendance of 70 members. The budget is $150,000 a year. The church recently built a new edifice and is located in an urban area where building and development is occurring. The minister is a high school graduate with a certificate from a Bible institute. He takes course work from a local Bible college periodically. He holds a fulltime job in the insurance industry, which allows him flexibility in hours. The pastor averages thirty hours a week at the church. He reports an average of one request a month for counseling and he handles most of these himself.

The second small church has been in existence for seventy-eight years and at its present location for seventy-six years. It is located in a semi-residential area. The membership is 100 members with an average attendance of 65 persons each Sunday. The yearly budget is $66,000.

The pastor of the second church has a degree from a seminary. He works full time as an accountant and averages about forty hours a week at the church. The minister reports about ten requests a month around issues that require
counseling. He generally takes care of 80% of the requests and refers 20% to outside agencies. He often refers to Christian psychiatrists or psychologists.

The third church is forty-one years old and has been at its present inner city location for 33 years. The area has many vacant lots and substandard housing. There are 97 people on roll, with an average Sunday presence of 50 members. The yearly budget is $55,000. The minister is a college graduate with a certificate from a Bible institute. He puts in about forty hours a week at the church and does not hold outside employment. The clergyman reports about five requests a month for counseling. He takes care of 95% of the concerns and refers 5% out. He often refers to other ministers who have more expertise than he.

The author went to each church at least three times; once to speak to the minister, gather information on the church and obtain permission to do the survey. The second visit to the church was on a Sunday morning to explain the study to the congregation and ask for volunteers. The third visit was to make one last appeal and administer the survey. Information about the project was also put into the church bulletin. Since the respondents were those who volunteered, it is likely these persons are interested or involved with the church. Those who volunteered, met with the researcher after the church service in a designated room to fill out the questionnaire. It is recognized that the context in which the interviews took place may have had some bearing on the
responses, i.e. members being asked to answer questions that in part had to do with their church, while sitting in a room in the church after Sunday morning service.

Women for the survey had to be at least 18 years old, a member of that particular church for at least a year and attend service at least twice a month. These stipulations were to help insure the volunteer had some ongoing experience with that church and its membership. Participants were seated in a group, given instructions and asked to fill out the questionnaire in its entirety.

The questionnaire was lengthy and covered a variety of information. After the data was collected and a preliminary analysis was done, it was decided to mainly focus on the responses to the vignettes. This was done for managability and focus. The questionnaire completion time ranged from twenty minutes to forty-five minutes. The researcher stayed unobtrusively in the room to be available to clarify questions; completed forms were put by respondents into a box as they left.

Vignettes

Respondents were asked to read a series of vignettes that are part of the questionnaire and indicate their choice of help sources from the choices listed. There was a choice of other, but this was discarded in the analysis of data because it was unclear what respondents meant.

Help choices for each vignette are:

Minister
Deacon or other church official
Church member
Friends who are not church members
Relative
Neighbor
Family doctor
Professional counselor
Take care of it myself

The vignettes are classified into categories of uniform and non-uniform as discussed in Chapter One. About half of the vignettes are designed to be uniformed and the other half non-uniformed. There will be further discussion of this, as well as which choices are over and under selected by the respondents.

Vignettes presented in the questionnaire

Divorce

Suppose you and your husband argued more frequently and your husband hit you during these arguments. You are very unhappy and feel your marriage is heading for divorce. Who would you seek advice from?

Marital Argument

Suppose you and your husband argue frequently over family matters and just don't seem to be getting along as well as you used to; you are worried about the situation. Who would you seek advice from?

Son and grade problem

Suppose your 16 year old son suddenly became very
interested in girls and was spending more time socializing than studying causing his grades to slip. Who would you seek advice from?

Son and dropout problem

Suppose your 16 year old son had dropped out of school, was hanging out with a bad crowd and stealing things from the house. You suspect he is on drugs. Who would you seek advice from?

Unhappy on the job

Suppose you were new on the job, feeling unsure of yourself and unhappy because coworkers seem to be unfriendly. Who would you seek advice from?

Job retraining

Suppose you had been on your job for ten years and had to seek training in a different field because of lack of future with your current field. Who would you seek advice from?

Sick child

Suppose your child awoke on a school day with a temperature, runny nose and an upset stomach. S/he is too sick to go to school. You have a job to go to. Who would you ask for help?

Broken Leg

You work and your child was in an accident. S/he has a broken leg and has to have someone stay home with him/her for two weeks. You work and cannot stay home. Who would you ask for help?
Description of Population

There are 101 respondents from the small churches and 96 respondents from the large churches for a total N of 197. The following discussion and tables seek to give a description of the group, using collected socioeconomic data.

The descriptive charts use the categories of low and high income because much of the analysis in the document is around income. Low income is under $15,000 per year while high income is $15,000 and above.

Children

The majority of the respondents are parents, with the mean number of children being 2.3 per respondent. A quarter of the women, n = 49, reported having no children. Seventeen percent have one child; 15% have two; 16% had 3; 1% have 8 and .5 reported having 11 children.
TABLE # 3.1  
TITLE: Group Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Lower Income (N)</th>
<th>Lower Income (%)</th>
<th>Higher Income (N)</th>
<th>Higher Income (%)</th>
<th>Total (N)</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60.00%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40.00%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>45.00%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>55.00%</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-50</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>31.34%</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>68.66%</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>34.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-62</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>41.86%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>58.14%</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>22.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-75</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>85.71%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76+</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>58.82%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>41.18%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8.81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total     | 88               | 45.60%           | 105               | 54.40%           | 193       | 100.00%         |

Age

The age span of the women in the survey ranges from 18 to 79; with the average age of respondents being 45. The ages at both extremes of the range represent the smallest numbers. A percentage of 2.5%, being represented in the 18-21 year age span and 8.8% for those over 76; 20.7% of the women are between 22-35 years old; 34.72% between 36-50; 22.2% fall between 51-62 years of age; 10.8 are age range, 63-75.
### TABLE # 3.2
#### TITLE : MARITAL STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LOWER INCOME</th>
<th>HIGHER INCOME</th>
<th>TOTAL PERCENT OF TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N)</td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEVER MARRIED</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>47.50%</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARRIED LIVING WITH SPOUSE</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23.08%</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIVORCED</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44.00%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEPARATED</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>68.18%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIDOWED</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>88.46%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>86</strong></td>
<td><strong>45.03%</strong></td>
<td><strong>105</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Marital Status**

The women in the study represent a range of marital statuses. 20.9% of them have never married, n=40; 40.8%, are married and living with their spouses, n=78. This latter group represents the largest number in the study. Of the population, 13.1% are divorced, n=25; 11.5% are separated from their spouse, n=22 and 13.6% are widowed, n=26.
TABLE # 3.3
TITLE: Educational Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LOWER INCOME</th>
<th>HIGHER INCOME</th>
<th>TOTAL OF TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N)</td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOME ELEMENTARY</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>85.71%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELEMENTARY COMPLETED</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOME HIGH SCHOOL</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>71.43%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>45.28%</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOME COLLEGE</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44.00%</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLLEGE GRADUATE</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32.00%</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOME GRADUATE WORK</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.22%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAD SCHOOL GRADUATE</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

87 45.55% 104 54.45% 191 100.00%

Education

In the area of education completed, the largest number of women are high school graduates, 27.8%, n=53. They are followed closely by 26.1% of the women who have taken some college courses, n=50. 18.3% of the women have completed some high school, n=35; 13% of the group have completed college n=25. A smaller number have some credits for graduate work, 4.7, n= 9. Those who have graduate degrees account for 5.2% of the group, n=10.
### TABLE 3.4
**TITLE: CURRENT WORK STATUS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LOWER INCOME</th>
<th>HIGHER INCOME</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>PERCENT OF TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N)</td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(N)</td>
<td>(%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOUSEWIFE</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>41.18%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>58.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAID FULL-TIME</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>30.19%</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>69.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAID PART-TIME</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>58.33%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>41.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RETIRED</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>77.27%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNEMPLOYED</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>70.00%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WELFARE</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|              | 85           | 45.45%        | 102   | 54.55%           | 187   | 100.00% |

**Current Work Status**

The majority of the women questioned are paid full-time workers, 53.8%, n=106. Those who are paid part-time workers and retired reflected the same percentage of 12.6%. Twenty-four (24) of the women are part-time employees and twenty-two (22) are retirees. A small number, 5.3% are unemployed, n=10; a smaller number, 4.2%, n=8, list themselves as welfare recipients.
### Table 3.5
**Title: Job Title of Those Working Outside of Home**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Lower Income (N)</th>
<th>Higher Income (N)</th>
<th>Total (N)</th>
<th>Total Percent of Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical/Secretary</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Worker</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Worker</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13.94%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Job Title**

The largest percentage of women are in clerical-secretarial jobs; 19.4%, n=32. A total of 13.9%, n=23, describe their positions as service workers, with another 13.9%, n=23, stating the business area as their job description. Health care services account for 12.1%, n=20, of the jobs. This was followed by 9.7%, n=16, who work in education. A smaller...
number of women, 9.1%, n=15 work in retail. The skilled worker category accounts for 8.5%, n=14 of the group. 5.5%, n=10, describe themselves as housewives. At the time of the study a small number of women, 4.2%, n=7, worked in higher education.

The number of job titles in Table 3.5, is higher than the number of employees in Table 3.4, because some employees have more than one job.
### TABLE # 3.6
**Title: Income Level**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>(N)</th>
<th>Percent of Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 4,000</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,000 - 6,000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,001 - 10,000</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,001 - 15,000</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>20.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,001 - 25,000</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>27.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,001 - 40,000</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40,001 - 60,000</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60,001 and Over</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>193</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Income**

Family income of the respondents is divided into eight groups: under $4,000, $4,000-6000, 6001-10,000, 10,001-15,000, 15,001-25,000, 25,001-40,000, 40,001-60,000, 60,001 and over. The bulk of the population, 73.1%, n=141, are at 25,000 or below. In a further breakdown, 6.2%, n=12, report income of under $4,000 per year; 7.8%, n=15, report earning between, 4000-6000. In the 6001-10,000 range, 11.4%, n=22 responded. 20.2%, n=39, report income between, 10,001-15000.
The largest group is reflected in the income group of 15001-25,000, 26.9%, n=53. As the income goes up the numbers become smaller, as evidenced in the 25,001-40,000 level, 18.1%, n=35; 40,001-60,000, 7.3%, n=14. The last grouping, 60,001 and over reflect the small numbers of 1.67%, n=3.

In later analysis of this study, the population is divided in income groups of below $15,000 and above $15,000. Of those who responded, 44.7%, n=88, are in the below $15,000 group. 53.3%, n=105, are in the higher income group of over $15,000.
Tables #3.7- 3.10, represent questions to ascertain if respondents are in need of basic necessities for survival or had to seek out help to fulfill such needs.

**TABLE # 3.7:**
**TITLE : NEED OF FINANCIAL HELP IN LAST SIX MONTHS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCOME</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>TOTAL PERCENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N)</td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDER 15000</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>60.71%</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVER 15000</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39.29%</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16.37%</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of women, 83.6%, who responded to the question, n=143, did not have recent need of financial help. Of those who did respond yes N=28, the low income showed more of a need n=17 (60.7%) as compared to the high income n=11 (39.3%).
The question seeks to find if respondents were ever in need of food and unable to provide for themselves. The vast majority responded "no", to this question, 95.8%, n=159. Of those who responded yes, 8.2%, n=6, are from the low income group and 1.08%, n=1, are from the higher income group.
TABLE # 3.9  
TITLE: IN NEED OF CLOTHING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCOME</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>TOTAL PERCENT OF TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N)</td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDER 15000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8.22%</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVER 15000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLUMN TOTAL</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.51%</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents do not show a need for help in this area. Only 3.51%, N=6 for the low income women responded "yes". None of the higher income women report this concern.
Most of the respondents are either homeowners or rent apartments. Three persons in the lower income group rent a room. Over 40% of the higher income women are homeowners. A total of 26% of lower income women are homeowners. Close to 40% of the high income women rent apartments, whereas over 50% of the lower income women do so.
TABLE # 3.11
TITLE: Membership Length

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LENGTH OF MEMBERSHIP</th>
<th>PERCENT OF TOTAL (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 YEAR TO 5 YEARS</td>
<td>45 24.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 YEARS TO 10 YEARS</td>
<td>25 13.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 YEARS TO 15 YEARS</td>
<td>25 13.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 YEARS TO 20 YEARS</td>
<td>21 11.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 YEARS TO 25 YEARS</td>
<td>17 9.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 YEARS AND ABOVE</td>
<td>51 27.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>184 100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Membership Length

Respondents were asked to participate in the survey only if they have been a member of the church in which the study was being conducted for at least one year. Membership length ranged from 11 persons, 5.6%, belonging for one year, to one person each belonging, 60 and 69 years. There are clusters of persons around the three year mark, 7.1%, n=14; five years, 5.1%, n=10; eighteen years, 7.4%, n=14. 51.6% of the total respondents had memberships of 15 years or less. The average length of membership is nineteen years.
### TABLE # 3.12
#### TITLE: Levels of Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTENDANCE</th>
<th>(N)</th>
<th>PERCENT OF TOTAL (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LESS THAN ONCE A MONTH</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 TIMES A MONTH</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>18.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABOUT EVERY SUNDAY</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>75.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>195</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attendance Patterns**

Church attendance by the respondents is quite high, with 75.9% n=148, indicating they attend almost every Sunday. The next largest group, 18.5%, n=36, indicated attendance of two to three times a month.
### TABLE # 3.13
**TITLE**: Level of Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION</th>
<th>PERCENT OF TOTAL (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPECIAL OCCASION</td>
<td>15  8.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCERN OPERATION</td>
<td>113 62.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFLUENCE POLICIES</td>
<td>19   10.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPERATIONS-POLICIES</td>
<td>32   17.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPECIAL OCCASIONS OPERATION</td>
<td>1    0.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL OF THE ABOVE</td>
<td>1    0.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>181  100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Level of Participation**

Respondents were asked to indicate how often they participated in different aspects of the church. The categories are: participate in special occasions only; concerned about the general operation of the church; felt they influence church policy; participate in the operation and policy making of the church; concerned about special occasions and church operation. A large number, 62.4%, n=113, indicate they are concerned about the operation of the church. A smaller number, 7.6%, n=15, indicate they only participate in special occasions. A moderate number of women indicate they are concerned about the operation and policies of their church, 17.7, n=32. One category that may have indication for further study is the one on influencing church operation. While 62.4% of the women report concern about the
operation of the church, only 10.5%, n=19, feel they influence policies of the church. This seems to indicate that while women make up the bulk of Black church membership, their role as policy makers and influencers of the church is not commensurate with their numbers or their indicated concern and interest.

Summary

The group as a whole presents the following profile:
The average woman is 45 years old, married and living with her spouse. She is a high school graduate with some college credits. This woman works full time and is likely to be employed in the clerical/secretarial field. She has an average church membership in her current church of nineteen years and attends church just about every Sunday.

As a group the women have the basic needs of income, food, shelter and clothing met.

Lower Income Women Profile:
This woman is most likely to be between the age of 51-75. She is a widow, has some high school, and is retired. Those who work are employed in the clerical/secretarial area. This woman reports she attends just about every Sunday.

Higher Income Women Profile:
This woman is likely to be between the ages of 36-50. She is married and living with her spouse. She is a high school graduate with college credits. She is a paid full time worker, either in the business or clerical/secretarial area. In addition, she attends church almost every Sunday.
Chapter IV

Data Analysis: Vignettes

Shortly after the analysis began, it became apparent that the concept of network as a framework would prove to be a difficult one upon which to base the analysis. In part, this was due to the way respondents answered the questions. They were asked to fill out the questionnaire indicating persons they would choose as help sources in the vignettes. They were instructed to prioritize their choices, by numbering 1, 2, and 3. Often respondents simply checked several spaces to indicate their choice of persons. This made the concept of looking at the choices in terms of indicated preferred networks impossible to do.

In addition, the concept of network did not allow for the preferential choice of the respondents to be reflected accurately. Some people were overpicked in the responses and some people were rarely chosen. A different format for presenting the choices in the questionnaire and then ranking them during the initial collection of data, would have possibly enabled the network approach to be carried out.

A review of the literature, see for example the work of Pancoast and Collins (1976), Royse and Turner (1980), Martin and Martin (1986), Stack (1974), also makes it apparent that when social workers and other social scientists discuss networking, they are often referring to the loose associations that connect individuals to different types of support. In order to actually examine, describe, and
understand true network functioning, it is often necessary to apply mathematical concepts, and develop ways to ascertain and track the range of individuals to whom the person(s) are connected, as in the work of Craven and Wellman (1973). Most writings as it pertains to social work and networking, is not on the tracking, connecting and mathematical analysis of network systems. The focus is more on the description of important people and sources of help that individuals or groups seek out, or are connected to in a variety of ways. Linehardt (1983) refers to these sources as participants in the network.

Another way to focus on avenues of support and aid is to examine individuals and the roles they play in help seeking patterns. With this in mind and the concerns raised because the respondents did not always make numerically ranked choices, the present study, while still interested in the concept and related literature on networks, was refocused. The individuals selected as part of the helping process and the variables that seem to influence the choices become the objects of importance and discussion.

The early analysis of data also revealed, that in a study focusing on the role of the church, the prevalent role of the minister was sometimes lost. When individuals were subsumed under categories of church related networks, relative network, friend and neighbor network, the importance of the minister or other individuals was not revealed, although statistical analysis showed these persons were
important and utilized as choices.

The current analysis will focus on developing profiles and scores for persons in each of the vignettes. An overall view and score of persons selected for help will be given. A focus and primary point of discussion will be on the place and role of the minister as the choice for help. Attention will be placed on the situations in which the minister is selected, and whether selection has relevance to the income and/or church size of the respondent. Each vignette is labeled as uniform or non-uniform, and categorized as a serious or less serious situation.
Minister Can be Talked With About Anything

There is an item in the questionnaire that asks the respondent to indicate if they see their minister as one with whom they can discuss only things involving religion or the church, some things other than church or religion, or as one with whom they can discuss just about anything. (Table 4.1)

A crosstabulation analysis was run on this variable against each of the vignettes, to see if there is a statistical relation between the range of things that can be discussed with the minister and the selection of the minister as a choice in the vignettes. The findings show there is a statistically significant relationship between being able to discuss just about anything with the minister and selecting the minister in six of the eight vignettes. There is a statistically significant relationship with the following vignettes: divorce, dropout, argument, poor grades, unhappy on the job and the sick child.
Table 4.1 Chi-square Relationship Between Ability to Discuss Anything with Minister and Minister as a Choice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette</th>
<th>Minister Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>0.0032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argue</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropout</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>0.0002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unhappy on Job</td>
<td>0.0045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sick child</td>
<td>0.0876</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the number of those who would actually go to the minister when the child is sick is low, as would be expected for this situation, the statistics indicate that the more comfortable the women are with the minister, the more likely they are to seek the minister out in a situation such as this.

There is no statistical significance between the describe the minister variable and the vignettes of child with a broken leg and in being in need of new career training.

There is also a statistically significant relationship between relying on self as a source and seeing the minister as one with whom anything could be discussed. Perhaps this
feeling of being able to talk to the minister about anything also helped the women to be able to risk and attempt to work the situation out themselves. They may feel they can go to the minister if they are not successful in their attempts.

In looking at help seeking patterns of women in the study, it becomes apparent that utilization of the church, seems to mean contact with the minister. Thus, it becomes important to look at situations in which the minister is viewed as a viable contact in a variety of situations. If just the general category of the church or church support system is used, the key role of the minister might not be successfully culled out.
People Respondents Turned To For Help in Particular Vignettes

The persons selected by the respondents as those from whom they would seek help, are ranked according to the percentages of those respondents who indicate this choice. The category of "other", is not included in this analysis because it is unclear what respondents meant by this choice. The percentages are the choice score for the person selected.

Each table includes a column that designates persons who were statistically underpicked and overpicked by the respondents. A mean choice score is calculated for each vignette. Those choice scores that are more than one standard deviation above the mean are deemed overchosen, while those that are more than one standard deviation below the mean are deemed underchosen. Overpicked is indicated by (+), and underpicked by (-).

Divorce Vignette: Serious / Uniform

Suppose you and your husband argued more frequently and your husband hit you during these arguments. You are very unhappy and feel your marriage is heading for divorce. Who would you seek advice from?

Choice selections for the vignette:

Minister
Deacon
Church member
Friends
Relative
Neighbor
Doctor
Professional counselor
Self
Table 4.2 People respondents Turned to for Help in a Divorce Situation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>% Score</th>
<th>Choice Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative</td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Member</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deacon</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \bar{x} = 29.7 \quad \text{s.d.} = 23.71 \]

This vignette is classified as serious and uniform in nature. While there are options as to what one would do, serious marital situations usually point to the need for outside intervention in the way of counseling, legal intervention or both. There is a recognized body of professionals who work in the area of marriage counseling, divorce mediation and family counseling. Thus, the situation is considered uniform in nature. As such, it could be thought that the marriage counselor would be the most frequent source of help.

The most often selected choice for help with this problem is the minister. Fully 65% of those responding choose him as a person to seek out in such a marital situation. The least chosen is neighbor, with 4.1%. Relative and minister rank relatively high among the choice of respondents, while deacon and neighbor rank low. If the minister is seen as one, or has represented him/herself as one with pastoral
counseling skills, then it may not be surprising that many respondents would turn to this office as a source for help.

**Argument Vignette: Non-uniform / Less Serious**

Suppose you and your husband argue more frequently over family matters and just don't seem to be getting along as well as you use to; you are worried about the situation. Who would you seek advice from?

Choice selections for the vignette:

Minister
Deacon
Church member
Friends
Relative
Neighbor
Family doctor
Professional counselor
Self

Table 4.3 People Respondents Turned to for Help in a Marital Argument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>% Score</th>
<th>Choice Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relative</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Member</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deacon</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \bar{x} = 30.5 \quad \text{s.d.}=21.32 \]

This vignette is classified as less serious and non-uniform in nature. There are several ways in which one could go about trying to work out the concern. These options range
from doing nothing, to discussing the situation with a
variety of people. The most frequent choice is relative, with
60.8% indicating this as a choice. The least often chosen
source is the neighbor, with 6.3%, indicating this group as a
choice.

Relatives and minister, rank relatively high among
choices of the respondents; while deacon and neighbor rank
relatively low. It is noteworthy that this is essentially the
same ranking as for the previous situation, an impending
divorce. The fact that relatives rank high among the choices,
indicate a trust and willingness of the respondents to go to
these people in time of relational difficulties. Also
relevant, is that many of the women say they would handle the
situation themselves. This seems to indicate a felt ability
to work things out on their own. The professional counselor
is not overly chosen as might be expected of one seen as
having expertise in this area. It may be that respondents do
not see the problems as having reached the stage where
professional help is needed. A possible social work
intervention or pastoral intervention could be, to help
people recognize a problematic situation and seek help before
it gets to a more serious stage.

The argument issue is basically a non-uniform
situation. It is a situation revolving around relationship
and socialization issues. It is also an issue revolving
around conflict. Those seeking help, look to find others who
have had a similar experience or know of someone who has. The
larger systems of friends is also used to gain information or
resources, or as a confidant when the immediate family is involved or cannot be confided in or approached for help. (Katz, 1976; Granovetter 1974; Taylor, 1986.) The fact that neighbors are listed last, may indicate an unwillingness to share a conflict situation with a source that because of proximity, may begin to pay more attention to the situation or share with others in close proximity what is going on. In urban areas, perhaps neighborliness and sharing ones business only goes so far.
Son and Dropout Problem: Serious / Uniform

Suppose your sixteen year old son dropped out of school. He is hanging out with a bad crowd and stealing things from the house. You suspect he is on drugs. Who would you seek advice from?

Choice selections for the vignette:

Minister
Deacon
Church member
Friends
Relative
Neighbor
Family doctor
School Professional
Self

This vignette is more uniform in nature. While several things could be done, it seems evident that some counseling and legal intervention beyond the parent, is necessary. The most often selected choice is the minister, with 65.1% indicating him/her as a choice. The least often selected person is the deacon with .5 responding.

Table 4.4: People Respondents Turned to for Help

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>% Score</th>
<th>Choice Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Professional</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church member</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deacon</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \bar{x} = 29.1 \]

s.d. = 22.62
The minister and school professional, rank as high choices by the respondents, while the neighbor and church deacon are seldom chosen.

Since a large part of the problem is school related, it is not unusual that the school professional is seen as a person from whom to seek help. This person is likely to have knowledge and advice about the problems confronting the teen and the behavior evidenced. The minister is also seen as one who can be called upon to intervene and offer advice in a difficult situation such as this.

Individuals also see themselves as a major resource, indicating they feel some ability to work on the concern.
Son and Grade problem: Less Serious/ Non-uniform

Suppose your 16 year old son suddenly became very interested in girls and was spending more time socializing than studying, causing his grades to slip. Who would you seek advice from?

Choice selections for the vignette:

Minister
Deacon
Church member
Friends
Relative
Neighbor
Family doctor
School Professional
Self

This illustration is classified as less serious in nature and non-uniform. A problem such as grades may be dealt with through many avenues. These include, doing nothing, consulting with the son, talking with school personnel.

The most frequent choice is a professional in the school, 66.3%. The least often chosen is Deacon with 5.7%.

Table 4.5: People Respondents Turned to for Help in Grade Problem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>% Score</th>
<th>Choice Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Professional</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minister</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>friend</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Member</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deacon</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \bar{x} = 28.00, \quad \text{s.d} = 22.86 \]
In this vignette, respondents see going to a professional who has some expertise in this area, as the most appropriate thing to do. In this case, the professional is the someone in the school. Over half of the women feel capable of working out the problem themselves. Over a third of the women indicate the minister as a source for advice and help. Neighbors and the church deacon, are not seen as sources to seek out in such a category. It is important to note that while two thirds of the group indicate they would turn to a professional, over half say they would take care of it themselves. These women may feel that intervention, in the way of a parental discussion, a stern warning or conditions set for improvement, is what is needed. The women may not see this situation as serious enough to warrant seeking outside assistance.
In Need of New Career Training Vignette: Serious/Uniform

Suppose you had been on a job for ten years and had to seek training in a different field because of a lack of future in your current field. Who would you seek advice from?

Choice selections for the vignette:

Minister
Deacon
Church member
Friends
Relative
Neighbor
Family doctor
Training counselor
Co-worker
Self

Such a situation is uniform in nature. There are specific sources associated with, and experts in the area of career consultation and vocational training. The most often chosen person is the training counselor the least chosen is the doctor.

Table 4.6 People Respondents Turn to for Help:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>% Score</th>
<th>Choice Status</th>
<th>Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counselor</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-worker</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church member</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deacon</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\bar{x} = 27.8$  s.d. = 20.22
In this situation, the person most likely to have some expertise in areas such as career counseling and vocational training, is selected by the majority of women as their source of help. Women see themselves as a major source of working out new career options for themselves. Other sources of support, such as the minister and relative are also chosen by a fair number of women. One's physician, deacon, and neighbor on the other hand, are not seen as viable selections in this situation. All three are probably perceived as lacking the expertise necessary to provide appropriate guidance in this situation.
Unhappy on the Job Vignette: Less Serious /Non-Uniform

Suppose you were new on the job, feeling unsure of yourself and unhappy because coworkers seem to be unfriendly. Who would you seek advice from?

Choice selections for the vignette:

Minister
Deacon
Church member
Friends
Relative
Co-worker
Neighbor
Family doctor
Professional counselor
Self

Table 4.7: People who Respondents Turn to for Help:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Choice Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-worker</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church member</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deacon</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \bar{x} = 26.8 \quad \text{s.d.} = 22.02 \]

This example is non-uniform in nature. There are many routes the individual employee might take in attempting to get along better with people on the job. These might include, waiting a while to see if the situation resolves itself; talking to a supervisor; talking to persons directly involved
in the uncomfortable situation. The person might also, share this concern with family, friends or other acquaintances.

The most often chosen person is a co-worker and the least often is the doctor. In this situation, the majority of the women feel they would seek out someone on the job to discuss the situation with, or feel they would consider the situation and work it out themselves, at least as a first step. Both of these choices seem to be appropriate steps to take in such a non-uniform situation. There are no formal guidelines as to what one should do in such a situation. Relative, also ranks fairly high in the choice selection. Neighbors and family physician are not seen as persons to go to for help in an unhappy employment situation.
Broken Leg Vignette: Serious/ Non-Uniform

You work and your child was in an accident. S/he has a broken leg and has to have someone stay home with him/her for two weeks. You work and cannot stay home. Who would you ask for help?

Choice selections for the vignette:

Minister
Deacon
Other
Friends
Relative
Neighbor
Family doctor
Nurse
Sitter
Self

Table 4.8: People Respondents Turn to for Help for Broken Leg

N = 190

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>% Score</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Choice Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relative</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>+</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitter</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Member</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deacon</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ x = 28.9 \quad \text{s.d.=22.32} \]

This vignette is non-uniform in nature. A broken leg initially requires expert medical attention, but as the child mends and returns home, the situation becomes a non-uniform one. At this point, there are options and decisions as to who
stays with the child, if the primary caretaker must be away. The most often overselected choice is relative and the least chosen choice is deacon.

These findings corroborate research that indicates relatives are used for tasks that require long term commitments and large amounts of time. The selection of neighbor as a distant second choice, probably indicates that because of proximity, the neighbor may be able to help on a somewhat regular basis. This may be for short periods of the day, or several neighbors may take turns watching the child. Hiring someone who is not a nurse seems feasible for many. If the child does not need special care, then a responsible, non professional could meet the need.
Sick Child Vignette: Less Serious/Non-uniform

Suppose your child awoke on a school day with a temperature, runny nose and upset stomach. S/he is too sick to go to school. You have a job to go to. Who would you ask for help?

Choice selections for the vignette:

Minister
Deacon
Church member
Friends
Relative
Neighbor
Family doctor
Nurse
Sitter
Self

Table 4.9 People Respondents Turned to for Help With a Sick Child:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>% Score</th>
<th>Choice Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitter</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Member</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deacon</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \bar{x} = 30.8 \quad \text{s.d.} = 28.68 \]

This vignette is classified as non-uniform in nature. There are several options available, most of which do not require expert help. These options range from taking a day off work, to sending the child to stay with someone for the day. There is also the option of having someone come in and
stay with the youngster.
The most often chosen person is self, indicated by 79.3% opting to take the day off from work. The least chosen was the deacon. A large number of respondents feel the most expedient way to work out the problem is to take care of it themselves, probably by staying home. Relatives are seen as the next best choice. The doctor is indicated, but it is not clear if this means consulting with the doctor or taking the child to the doctor; this would mean the mother, or someone else, would have to take time to do this. Over a third of the women indicate neighbor as a choice. This indicates proximity and last minute arrangements that a person such as a neighbor might be able to help with. The minister is not seen as a resource in such a situation; neither are other church related possibilities, especially the deacon. These latter indications are not surprising, since the minister and deacon are not normally thought of as choices for the short term assistance such a situation would require.
Summary Discussion of Over and Underselected Choices

The summary table of help choices illustrates the persons over picked and underpicked for specific tasks and vignettes. A brief discussion on all who were over and under selected will be given. A more detailed explanation on the selection of the minister is also presented.

The minister is over selected in three areas. The divorce, argue and dropout situations. The minister may be seen as a part of ones family and as such one to share family and child concerns with. In addition, the three areas overselected, focus on areas that are relational and family oriented. It is also noted that the areas of marital concern, a child dropping out of school and getting into trouble, have moral and ethical implications. Although these areas have professionals that are knowledgeable, the women feel the minister is an appropriate source to turn to, most likely because of societal, moral and value concerns these areas present.

Relatives are over picked in the areas of divorce and argument, as well as the two situations that have to do with a sick child. These illustrations are in the categories of uniform and non uniform. Marital problems are family problems, so it does seem appropriate that women seek out family if they are experiencing minor or major difficulty in their married life. Caring for a sick child is something a relative could be called upon to do on short notice and is part of the expectations in many families. Relatives that are
selected, are most likely in fairly close proximity. Also, a mother would not usually have to worry about formally paying a family member to watch a sick child especially, on short notice. This long term care and the use of relative fits into the selective utilization of relatives as put forth by Litwak (1969).

Self is over selected in the area of grades, being unhappy on the job and taking care of a sick child. All of these vignettes are non-uniform. A woman may feel able to deal with arguments and solve what she may consider "normal" concerns within a relationship. In terms of the sick child, the easiest route to take, may be to stay home; respondents may feel taking care of it themselves also means making other suitable arrangements.

Co-worker is overpicked in the area of being unhappy on ones job. For this non-uniform situation, this is a likely choice, considering that people usually have some friends or colleagues on the job. If a women is having difficulty with other people on the job, she would possibly seek out someone she has a positive relationship with and obtain advice.

The counselor is over selected for help in the areas that require some expertise. The vignettes indicated are dropout, grades and job training situations. The dropout and problems with grades, are areas that would avail themselves to professional advice. The school counselor or perhaps the teacher are persons the women could seek out formally or informally. An appointment could be set up to discuss reasons
for poor performance and possible solutions. In addition, the school might outreach to parents to offer support and help in these areas. The scenario of the dropout is also a serious one that has legal and long term implications for the individual student as well as the family. The parent may be aware of special programs or interventions that are available for dropouts and seek these out through the counselor.

Role of the Minister

In the vignettes highlighted earlier, the minister is clearly seen as an important person. In many ways, he is part of the extended primary group. The minister is in a unique position to be seen as a professional but also as one with whom to share the same kinds of concerns that would be shared with the primary group. This relates to the uniqueness of the church and its place as a human relations model within the bureaucratic structure. The church by way of the minister is seen as bridging the gap between formal and informal institutions and formal and primary group roles.

Divorce and Argument

Concerns such as marital problems can be categorized as a transition state, as put forth by Cummings and Harrington, (1963). Transition states refer to inherent life problems, among them marital issues. Their study found ministers much involved in transition state concerns of their congregations. While the divorce situation is uniform and the argument seen as non-uniform, they are both situations that are relational in nature and have implications of moral issues.
Dropout and Grades Situation

The minister is selected by respondents as the top choice in terms of percentage response. The minister is seen as one who can be called upon to intervene and offer advice in difficult situations. While there are many factors likely to be involved in a situation such as this, perhaps the minister's key role is to help the parent sort out the issues and help the parent embark upon the best course of action. The minister could also talk to the son. In addition, the minister could offer ongoing prayer and support. These latter are important aspects of pastoral counseling and are highlighted in the works of Wimberly (1979) and Harris (1987).

This vignette is classified as uniform in nature, in view of the fact there are formal recognized sources to whom people can turn to for assistance. Among these choices is the school professional. While the professional in table 4.4 is picked more frequently than would be expected on a random basis and ranks highly among the choices, the minister is still the first choice.

The nature of this situation is that the youngster is involved in self destructive behavior; a crime against the family is being committed (stealing), and the youngster is suspected of engaging in other socially unacceptable behavior. There are moral issues of concern here. Much of pastoral counseling has to do with moral issues, crisis and discomfort and saving people from destructive behaviors. With these factors in mind the minister would be a likely choice.
to seek help from. (Caplan 1972; Wimberly, 1979).

The minister is chosen by a little over a third of the respondents for the less serious grade situation. This problem is a common one, related to life cycle of the teen and a transition state between child and teenager. This is a matter that would be of concern, and could be discussed generally with one's clergy for support and advice.

Career training

This vignette is uniform in nature. The minister, while not the leading choice, is chosen significantly more than some of the other choices. The responses appear to indicate that in this situation, there is the tendency to turn to a person who is considered a recognized expert in the field of job training/career counseling.

This could be considered a uniform task situation, where persons have a clear common notion of where to turn, and as in this case, indicates a reliance upon the career counselor. A substantial percentage of the women indicate they would rely on the minister and themselves in working on the problem. Again, the issue is raised as to what does this mean, and can the church be of some help in assisting such an individual.

Unhappy on the job

The minister is selected by 25% of the respondents (Table 4.7). This rate of choice is within the range of what would be expected. But it is still important and somewhat surprising that some members see the minister as a choice for
advice and support regarding unhappiness on the job. While this is a relational problem and others choices rank higher than the minister, it is unexpected that a quarter of the women select the minister as someone to seek out.

Sick Child and Broken Leg

In the situations dealing with the sick child and broken leg, the minister as expected is not highly indicated. This is due to the fact that other sources of help are more suitable for this more long term, non-relational concern. Sources that are primary in nature, relatives, neighbor and self are relied upon more.

Conclusion

The chapter has shown that the minister along with family and the professional helper, is an important source in the help seeking process. Caplan and Mitchell (1972), Biegel and Nabarstek (1982), indicate the ability of the minister to move into people's problems easily, because of their position and geographic accessibility. Other categories such as friend, neighbor, church member and deacon are not utilized often in the illustrations given. In light of the findings, it is important for the minister to be aware of the part families of church members play in difficult family situations, as well as the role of the pastor. The church may be able to have an increased role in helping families work with such problem situations. In view of the study findings, the church may be able to have a more effective problem solving role and may be able to encourage families to see and utilize the
minister as a source of help.

The fact that a goodly number of persons indicate they would handle the situation themselves raises many questions. What course of action do the respondents see themselves as taking? Is the course of action feasible and expeditious?

The church can be used as an enabler and an educator in helping people to know about resources, options and warning signs of relationships breaking down.
### Table 4.10 Help Choices: Over/Under Selected by Vignette

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Help Sources</th>
<th>Divorce</th>
<th>Dropout</th>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Leg</th>
<th>Argue</th>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Unhappy</th>
<th>Sick</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Church Member</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deacon</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coworker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Legend:**
- + = Over selected equals more than one standard deviation above the mean
- = Under selected more than one standard deviation below the mean
Chapter V
Data Analysis: Support for Hypotheses

This chapter will present and analyze the findings in relation to the presented hypotheses. The vignettes and findings related to the hypotheses will be presented in discussion and by use of tables. There will be particular focus on the role of the minister, in order to follow up on the findings presented in chapter four.

The following tables will be presented in the chapter.

5.1: Friedman Analysis: Selection of the Minister by Respondent Income
5.2: Friedman Analysis: Selection of the Minister by Church Size
5.3: Chi-Square Significance of Selection of Deacon and Income
5.4: Crosstabulation of Group Income and Church Membership by Size
5.5: Crosstabulation of Income and Size
5.6: Selection of Minister Based on Uniform/ Non-Uniform Distinction
5.7: Chi-Square Relationship Between Attendance and Choice of the Minister.
5.8: Chi-Square Relationship Between Participation and Choice of the Minister

The hypotheses are presented here for reference.

Hypothesis 1: The lower the socioeconomic status of the church member, the more likely the minister will be selected
for help.

Hypothesis 2: The members of the smaller church are more likely to select the minister as a vehicle for help, than those in the larger churches.

Hypothesis 3: The minister is more likely to be selected for help with concerns that can be classified as non uniform in nature.

Hypothesis 4: The more active a woman is in church life, the more likely she is to choose the minister as a source for help.

Each hypothesis will be presented along with support materials from the vignettes and discussion.
Hypothesis 1: The lower the socioeconomic status of the church member, the more likely the minister will be selected for help.

Table 5.1 Friedman Two Way Analysis of Variances: Selection of Minister for Help by Income (Numbers in Percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette</th>
<th>Low Income</th>
<th>High Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>57.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argue</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>57.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropout</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>60.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Training</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unhappy on Job</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken Leg</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sick Child</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Friedman Test Statistic = 8.00 Level of significance = 0.0047

The statistics for all the vignettes indicate low income women would rely on the minister for assistance in a variety of life situations more than the higher income women, hypothesis 1 is confirmed. The percentages based on all women reporting, demonstrate for all eight vignettes, that low income women select the minister more often than do higher income women. The data was tested using Friedman's Two Way Analysis of Variance. There is a statistically significant relationship between income and selection of minister for assistance relating to the vignettes.
Cummings and Harrington (1963), document that clergy in the lower socioeconomic church are found to have less formal education than those in the higher socioeconomic churches. These ministers referred less to outside sources. The lower economic status women, having less in the way of financial resources, may go to the minister as a support. An important part of connecting with the minister may be that s/he also represents a source of no cost help.

In the area of job training, lower income women also seek the minister out more often than higher income women. This could be due to the fact that their options or informational network regarding job/career opportunities, are more limited than higher income women. If the woman is particularly upset about having to change jobs or seek out new training, she may be seeking the minister for supportive counseling, encouragement or general advice giving.

In the situation where lower income women seek the minister as it relates to being unhappy on the job, this may be due to the fact that lower income women may feel a real need to work this problem through. The job may be extremely important and an economic necessity to them. They may not have many options in terms of changing jobs. The minister may be seen as a source to discuss the issue and help them remedy the situation or make the best of it.

In the vignettes where the child is confined at home with a broken leg and the vignette where the child is ill, the minister is seldom chosen. The minister is not one to whom one who would ordinarily turn to in a situation where a
child is temporarily sick with a common illness.

Income has been proven to be a factor in individuals seeking help from the minister. Those with less money indicate potential use of the minister more so than those categorized as having a higher income. The minister is the indicated choice of lower income women in the diverse scenarios. It is important that the minister be consciously aware and prepared, to respond to low income members who may utilize the clergy as a primary source of help.

There is statistical significance in selection of self to take care of the problem relating to mild marital problems, by women in the higher income levels. These women as evidenced in the demographic data, have more education and tend to work full time. They most likely feel they have the ability to handle such a situation themselves, at least initially.

Hypothesis 2. The members of the smaller church are more likely to select the minister as a vehicle for help, than those in the larger churches.

A statistical analysis using Friedman's Two Way Analysis of Variance, indicates no statistical significance based on the size of the church and selection of the minister in the situations the hypotheses presented. Hypothesis 2 is not confirmed.

Looking at the percentage numbers of responses in six out of eight vignettes, members of the larger churches did
Table 5.2  Friedman Two Way Analysis of Variances:
Church Size and Selection of Minister for Help
(Numbers in Percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette</th>
<th>Low Income</th>
<th>High Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>59.8</td>
<td>71.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argue</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>65.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropout</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>75.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>43.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Training</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>41.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unhappy on Job</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken Leg</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sick Child</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Friedman Test Statistic = 2.00  Level of significance = 0.1573
pick the minister for help. The exceptions are job training and broken leg; even with these two, the numbers are close, indicating large and small churches would pick the minister about the same. It was thought members of the small churches would seek the minister out more often than those of larger congregations. This did not turn out to be so and and will be discussed.

Divorce

The area of a divorce problem is part of the transition category as defined by Cummings and Harrington (1963). The fact that ministers within the larger churches would be utilized more by women than those in the smaller churches, may relate to the fact that ministers of larger churches tend to be better educated than those of smaller churches. Data obtained on the ministers in the study also bore this fact out. Pastors of larger churches are more likely to have had formal training in pastoral counseling and may make it known to their members they are available for help with personal issues. Women of the larger churches knowing this, may avail themselves of the pastor's advice in a marital situation.

In regard to size being an influence on contact with the minister, members select membership in churches for a variety of reasons. The concept of "fit" as put forth by Litwak and Dono (1979) and "we-ness", Gordon (1980) and Schermerhorn (1979), referring to a sense of peoplehood and belonging, may certainly be a factor in the types of churches that people belong to. In a study relating to size. Wicker and Mehler
found that new members seemed to assimilate into the smaller churches more rapidly than members of larger churches. Members of small churches are found to be more friendly and have a closer relationship with the pastor. Larger churches tend to have better Christian education programs and more formality. Based on this, it would seem that members of the smaller churches would more often seek out the minister for help.

The aforementioned study also finds that members from large and small churches felt size had little to do with their decision to join. Areas such as church goals, location, friendliness, worship service and youth programs, all rank high as reasons to join. The number one reason why persons join a church, as reflected in the Wicker study is the pastor. Hamilton also expresses that a key factor for members is feeling comfortable with the pastor (Hamilton, 1972). If this is indeed the case, then this would explain why there was no significance found between church size and utilization of the minister as a vehicle for help.

Dropout Concern

The area of school problems and dropping out is a serious concern for most parents. In many areas, especially urban, these are common concerns. The fact that the ministers within the larger churches are utilized more by members than those in the smaller churches, may relate to the fact that ministers of the larger churches tend to be better educated than those in the smaller churches. (Jacquet, 1988).
In addition, this situation has a crisis component, a social unacceptability and legal aspects. It may be members of the larger church have a desire to try the minister/church as a source of help before going to a more public source in view of the possible legal ramifications as well as embarrassment.

Unhappy on the Job

In the situation of being unhappy on the job, members of the larger church seek out the minister more often than the low income women. It was expected that the members of smaller churches would seek the minister more because of close knit ties, but this does not prove to be so. It is possible that in the larger church, the ministerial staff is more readily available. This could be formal availability by way of appointment or informally by way of telephone, dropping in to see the minister or chatting with him/her at some church function.

Chi-Square Significance for Persons Other Than the Minister

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Training</td>
<td>0.0307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unhappy on the Job</td>
<td>0.0281</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a statistically significant relationship between church size and use of the deacon as a source of help
in two of the vignettes. The vignettes are, in need of job training and being unhappy on the job. Members of the large church indicate the deacon as a significant choice for help in these two employment related situations. This is one of the few instances where the deacon is seen as significant for member concerns. Women from large churches are more likely to reach out to the deacon for help than those women in the smaller churches. The deacon often visits people when they are ill or in need. A deacon may be assigned to a person as a care partner, or as "their" Deacon. It is feasible that a woman could have a special relation with her deacon and would speak to him/her about this concern. In the larger churches, there tend to be Deacon Boards of large number. It is possible that individual members of the Board may be seen as appropriate persons to talk with about being unhappy on the job, because they are perceived as good listeners or may be known to have some counseling expertise. The deacon may also be viewed as a strong spiritual person who may be helpful in praying about concerns. It might also be, the deacon is knowledgeable about employment possibilities or career opportunities through their own contacts or particular work specialty.

Relationship of Group Income and Church Size

Hypotheses 1, the lower the socioeconomic status of the church member, the more likely the minister will be selected for help has been confirmed. Hypothesis 2, the members of the
smaller churches are more likely to select the minister as a vehicle for help, than those in the larger churches has not been confirmed. There is however, a statistical relationship between church size and income.

Table §5.4 Chi-Square Analysis :Group Income and Church Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Large</th>
<th>Small</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-Square 2.91629  Significance 0.0877

Consequently, it was decided to examine the joint impact of income and church size on the selection of the minister.

Table §5.5 Friedman Two Analysis Variances :
Crosstabulations Based on Income and Size
(Numbers in Percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette</th>
<th>Large Church/</th>
<th>Large Church/</th>
<th>Small Church/</th>
<th>Small Church/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Income</td>
<td>High Income</td>
<td>Low Income</td>
<td>High Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Arg</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropout</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Training</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken Leg</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sick Child</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Friedman Test Statistics = 12.71 Level of Significance = 0.0053
The findings indicate, women who are in the lower income category and belong to the larger churches, go to the minister more often than their other church sisters. In four out of the eight vignettes, these women are more likely to use the minister than other groups of women. The vignettes where this is so are: divorce, argument, dropout and unhappy on the job. In a fifth vignette, grades, this group is tied with small church/low income women.

Those persons least likely to use the minister are the high income women in small churches. This low selection of the minister occurs in seven out of the eight vignettes, with the argue situation being the only exception to the pattern.

The fact that the larger churches seem to be utilized more often, may be related to several factors. Cummings and Harrington (1963) found the clergy in the lower socioeconomic churches likely to have less education than those in the higher socioeconomic churches. These ministers also had less contact to outside sources. Lower income women may also have less contacts with outside sources, but see their minister as one who is more knowledgeable than they and who might be able to help solve the problem. Higher income women who belong to the larger church may also see their minister as knowledgeable and having experience with issues in the area of interpersonal concerns and may approach him/her with a variety of personal issues.

The area of grades and unhappiness on the job, indicate large church/low income women and small church/low income, seek out the minister the same amount. Small church/high
income, seek out the minister for this problem at the lowest rate. Ministers within the large churches may be available more so than the other clergy.

In the concern of the broken leg, women from small churches with low incomes would contact the minister the most with this type of concern. This is most likely due to lack of resources to cover the needs of an extended time. The women in larger churches with low incomes, utilizing the minister the most in the dropout vignette, could be related to the likely possibility of the larger church offering more in the way of counseling. In addition, the lower income woman may see the minister as the first line of resource for such a concern. Funds may be more of a problem for this woman than her higher income counterpart.

For the dropout vignette, there is no difference between large church / high income and small church / low income women using the minister. Women from small churches with high incomes, are the group that utilizes the minister less in the dropout situation. It can be surmised that such women may because of the income differential, use other sources outside of the church and have greater knowledge of resources.

The study by Wicker on small churches (1971), indicates that new members in smaller churches are assimilated more rapidly than those in the larger congregations. This study also indicates members of the smaller church are friendlier to each other as compared to the larger settings. The responses also indicate, members of the smaller churches have
a closer relationship with their pastor. This latter fact is not born out by the findings reported in the several vignettes under discussion. It is not clear what Wicker means when reporting, members of the smaller church have a closer relationship with their pastor. How this relationship manifests itself is not delineated. For the small churches under discussion here, a special bond to the minister is not demonstrated when it comes to relating the concerns presented in the vignettes.

Hypothesis 3: The minister is more likely to be selected for help with concerns that can be classified as non uniform in nature.

Table # 5.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette</th>
<th>Uniform</th>
<th>Non-Uniform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>59.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Argument</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropout</td>
<td></td>
<td>37.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Training</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unhappy</td>
<td></td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken Leg</td>
<td></td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sick Child</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mann-Whitney: U = 1  
P = .036

The focus of this hypothesis is to prove the minister
will not be selected as a help source in situations that are
thought to be uniform; i.e. situations that have
formal/professional help sources connected to them. These
situations include, the divorce vignette, child dropping out
of school and job training. As it turns out, the minister is
chosen significantly in these three vignettes, as well as a
help source of some significance in the marital argument and
the poor grades situation, therefore, hypothesis 3 is not
confirmed.

A Mann-Whitney U Test, to look at the two groups and
their significance was employed. The finding demonstrates the
minister being selected for the uniform as well as non-
uniform vignettes is significant at the .036 level.

In the vignettes highlighted in the preceding
paragraph, the minister is clearly seen as an important
person. The clergy is often thought to be part of the
extended primary group. The minister is in a unique position
to be seen as a professional, but also as one with whom to
share the same kinds of concerns that would be shared with
the primary group. This relates to the uniqueness of the
church and its place as a human relations model within the
bureaucratic structure. The church, and in these vignettes
the minister, is seen as bridging the gap between formal and
informal institutions and formal and primary group roles. The
pastor is highlighted in literature as the link between
people and services (Hamilton, 1972).

A concern such as a marital problem can be categorized
as a transition state. Transition states refer to inherent
life problems, which includes marital issues. Caplan and Mitchell (1972,1976), indicate the minister as one for whom the role of counselor in a crisis is one that fits easily. In another view, Johnson (1983), indicates that historically, most Black churches have been opposed to divorce and that most couples would not seek counseling from the minister. The indications of respondents to the study at hand refute Johnson's projections. Respondents in this study indicate the minister as one they would seek out in a possible divorce situation.

In the dropout situation, the minister is selected by respondents as the top choice to seek help from. While there are many factors likely to be involved in a situation such as this, perhaps the minister's key role is to help the parent sort out the issues and embark upon the best course of action. The minister can also talk to the son. In addition, the minister can offer ongoing prayer and support. These latter are important aspects of pastoral counseling and are highlighted in the works of Wimberly (1979) and Harris (1987).

The dropout vignette is classified as uniform in nature, in view of the fact there are formal recognized sources to whom people can turn to for assistance. Among these choices is the counselor. While the counselor in table 4.4 is picked more frequently than would be expected on a random basis and ranks highly among the choices, the minister is still the first choice.
The nature of this situation is that the youngster is involved in self destructive behavior, a crime against the family is being committed (stealing), and the youngster is suspected of engaging in other socially unacceptable behavior. There are moral issues of concern. Much of pastoral counseling has to do with moral issues, crisis and discomfort and sometimes saving people from destructive behaviors. In light of these roles, the minister is a likely person to call upon in a dropout scenario. (Caplan, 1972, Wimberly, 1979).

In the vignettes representing problems with grades and job training, the minister is chosen by a little over a third of the respondents. The grade problem is a common one, related to life cycle of the teen and a transition state between child and teenager. This is a matter that would be of concern, and could be discussed generally with one's clergy for support and advice. In another non-uniform situation, being unhappy on the job, the minister is selected by 25% of the respondents. Some members see the minister as a choice for advice and support regarding unhappiness on the job. While this is a relational problem and other choices rank higher than the minister, it is important to note that a quarter of the women select the minister as someone to seek out for this concern.

In the area of new career training, classified as uniform, the minister, while not the leading choice, is chosen significantly more than some of the other choices. The response appears to indicate that in this situation, there is
the tendency to turn to a person who is considered a recognized expert in the field of job training/career counseling. There is a clear common notion of where to turn, and as in this case, the response indicates a reliance upon the career counselor. A substantial percentage of the women indicate they would rely on the minister and themselves in working on the problem. Again, the issue is raised as to what does this mean, and can the church be of some help in assisting such an individual.

In situations dealing with a sick child and broken leg, the minister as expected is not highly indicated. This is due to the fact that other sources of help are more suitable for this more long term, non relational concern. Sources that are primary in nature, relatives, neighbor and self are most likely relied upon more.
Hypothesis 4. The more active a woman is in church life, the more likely she is to choose the minister as a source for help.

Attendance as a Factor in Selecting the Minister as a Help Source

Table # 5.7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette</th>
<th>Less Than One Time</th>
<th>2-3 Times A Month</th>
<th>About Every Month</th>
<th>About Every Sunday</th>
<th>Chi Square</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>102</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0168</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(N=190)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Argument</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0168</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(N=185)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropout</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>102</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0019</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(N=185)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.1815</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(N=185)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Training</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0142</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(N=192)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unhappy on Job</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0452</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(N=189)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken Leg</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.5407</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(N=188)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sick Child</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.6473</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(N=186)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attendance is part of being active in the church and plays an important role in a woman's decision to seek the minister as a help source. The majority of women in the study indicate they attend church about every Sunday. Hypothesis 4 is confirmed. Half of the vignettes show statistical
significance for the correlation between attendance and seeking help from the minister. The vignettes where this is significant are: divorce, argument, dropout and unhappy on the job. The first three of the vignettes, have to do with issues that have relational and moral implications. The one on unhappiness, has to do with relationships. Members seem to indicate their active presence on an every Sunday basis, is enough to give them the right to seek out the minister. Just as likely, is that members who attend almost every Sunday, have a positive regard for the minister, and see the pastor as someone they would reach out to in a variety of situations. They may feel that as long as they support the church by their presence, they are entitled to, or feel comfortable in reaching out to their minister.
Another way to look at member involvement is by looking at involvement in church life.

Table # 5.8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette</th>
<th>Concerned with Influences</th>
<th>Chi Square</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Occasion Operations Policies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Argument</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dropout</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Training</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unhappy on Job</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken Leg</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sick Child</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each respondent's participation in church life is categorized as to participating only on special occasions; being concerned with operations; and being active in influencing church policy. In three of the vignettes, divorce, marital argument and dropout, the minister is selected by over 60% of
issues pertaining to relational concerns. The findings indicate that women with low incomes, see the church as a source of help and support for a variety of situations more so than women with higher incomes. The church, as represented by the minister, becomes an available and no cost source of help. The size of the church does have bearing on help seeking patterns. It was thought that the smaller church setting would make it easier or more likely that a woman from such a setting would seek out the minister more. It was thought because of the size, there would be less layers of bureaucracy (although minimal in the Black Baptist church) for the woman to go through. It was also thought that the smaller church would offer a more intimate, close knit environment in which to seek help from the pastor. The study indicates the opposite. Women from the larger churches indicate more of a willingness to solicit the pastor's help on most of the vignettes. This may be attributed to several reasons. The larger churches usually employ their clergy full time. He/she is available. Smaller churches because of small budgets and fewer persons, often have ministers who hold full time jobs outside of the church. These ministers are not readily available for conferences or calls during the day or at night if they work full or parttime in the evening. Smaller churches are more likely to employ pastors who have less formal education. If this is the case, they are less likely to have well developed pastoral counseling skills. In addition, studies cited earlier, indicate pastors of smaller
issues pertaining to relational concerns. The findings indicate that women with low incomes, see the church as a source of help and support for a variety of situations more so than women with higher incomes. The church, as represented by the minister, becomes an available and no cost source of help. The size of the church does have bearing on help seeking patterns. It was thought that the smaller church setting would make it easier or more likely that a woman from such a setting would seek out the minister more. It was thought because of the size, there would be less layers of bureaucracy (although minimal in the Black Baptist church) for the woman to go through. It was also thought that the smaller church would offer a more intimate, close knit environment in which to seek help from the pastor. The study indicates the opposite. Women from the larger churches indicate more of a willingness to solicit the pastor's help on most of the vignettes. This may be attributed to several reasons. The larger churches usually employ their clergy full time. He/she is available. Smaller churches because of small budgets and fewer persons, often have ministers who hold full time jobs outside of the church. These ministers are not readily available for conferences or calls during the day or at night if they work full or parttime in the evening. Smaller churches are more likely to employ pastors who have less formal education. If this is the case, they are less likely to have well developed pastoral counseling skills. In addition, studies cited earlier, indicate pastors of smaller
churches tend to refer less to outside sources because they have a smaller network of resources and contacts. All of these factors can mitigate against help seeking.

Pastors of larger churches because of having more skill in pastoral counseling, being more available for conferences with members and having more knowledge and contacts as it relates to available resources, are more likely to reach out and be reached to by members for help in many different instances.

The study brought to light that, the situations pastors likely be sought out for are uniform as well as non-uniform in nature. It was thought that the minister would not be readily selected for situations where there are identified professionals in the field. Such is not the case. The minister is selected for likely and unlikely situations. In several instances, the minister is selected for situations that are relational in nature or ones that have moral overtones or implications. Among these are the marital problems and the problems with the son dropping out of school.

The ministers is also selected by members for not so serious academic problems a child is having, as well as help with needing advice on training for a different career. While not overly selected, some members indicated the minister as a choice for when the child is laid up with a broken leg and even sidelined with a minor illness. The minister is seen as one who can be approached with concerns that fall into many different categories.
Member participation is a significant factor in members seeking out the minister. The major influencer as to members reaching out seems to be attendance. Most women in the study indicate they are in church just about every Sunday. A question is asked about participation and influence in the church. A goodly number indicate they are concerned about operations of the church. A smaller number report feeling they influence church policy. From the response of the women, it is evident they feel their active presence on an every Sunday basis, is enough to give them the right to seek out the minister. Just as likely, is that members who attend almost every Sunday, have a positive regard for the minister and see the pastor as someone they would reach out to in a variety of situations. Members may feel as long as they support the church by their presence, they are entitled to and/or feel comfortable in seeking the minister for help and support.

Shared Functions Theory and the Findings

Shared functions theory has often been used in studies looking at the differential use of primary groups and institutions. It has also been employed when exploring the relationship and configurations of networks. The theory was chosen for the research at hand, because of the unique characteristics of the Black church. The church is a formal institution, but one that has primary group and informal group characteristics. The literature supports the fact that the minister, while a professional in the church, is often a
key primary figure Bent (1968), Hamilton (1972) and Harris (1987). The minister has permission to enter into members' lives when there are problems or suspicion of problems.

The study at hand does not fit completely into the shared functions framework, but there are areas where there is compatibility and where it proves useful for looking at the primary function role of the minister within the bureaucratic structure of the church.

The theory speaks of linking bureaucratic and primary groups at a mid point where they balance and compliment each other to be most effective. It seems the role of the minister within the church as s/he outreaches and serves members in need, responds to this linking at midpoint concept.

The theory examines differential use of networks. The study at hand seeks information as to the support systems members would turn to. Evidence is found to support Litwak's findings that there is differential use of helping networks. Relatives are used for long term needs and relationship issues. Other participants within a persons field of contacts are not used in the same manner. The minister is often selected as a help choice for the same situations that the relative is selected for. Thus, the minister plays a role not duplicated by many other professionals.

The concepts of uniform and non-uniform tasks put forth by the theoretical framework, holds the most revealing information. There is little current research in the area of what types of problems are brought to the clergy and what category they fall into, vis a vis, uniform/non-uniform
tasks. It was hypothesized that the problems brought to the clergy would be non-uniform. It was thought the uniform concerns would be brought to persons who are professionals in the particular area of concern. This did not prove to be correct when the women responded to the hypothetical situations. Clergy is chosen for uniform as well as non-uniform situations. This is likely because of the diverse needs of those who responded and because of the clergy's role as a professional in an organized institution that has ties to people in a primary way. The clergy is seen as a caring, trusted person, within an historically caring institution.
Chapter VI
Overview, Implications and Conclusions

The primary focus of this study is to reveal help seeking patterns of Black church women and the role the church plays as part of their support system. The Black church has long been referred to as an important factor and resource of the African American community. This study is an effort, in part, to see how it serves as a resource, how this role is carried out, and its relevance to the social work community. As discussed in Chapter One, the role of the church, the minister, the deacon and the profession of social work were in early history, deeply intertwined. As society became more secularized, so did many aspects of social work. The early 1980's seem to signal a beginning reversal of this trend and a renewed interest in the interrelatedness of religion and social work. Surveys conducted by Johnstone (1983) and the Gallup Reports (1987), indicate Americans felt religion increasing its influence on them and becoming a more important part of their lives. In recent years, there has been the founding and growth of professional organizations devoted to specific religious groups and professional social work. Among them are the North American Association of Christian Social Workers. This group publishes a journal, *Social Work and Christianity*. There is the Catholic representation through the publication, *Social Thought*; also among these journals is one focused on the interests of the Jewish population, *Journal of Jewish Communal Services*. 
There have been recent articles in nonsectarian journals that focus on issues of morality, research and religion and the relationship of secular and sectarian services. Another indication of a renewed interest in the church and social welfare, is cooperative educational programs between seminaries and schools of social work. The University of Texas and Southwestern Baptist Seminary are two schools that offer programs with students earning a joint masters degree in religion and social work.

The study at hand, seems timely with its look at the church and the particular role of the minister for a selected population of women. If the church as an institution and religion in general are thought to be increasing in societal importance, then the role of the church and particularly the role of the minister, will have implications for social work practice. The role of the minister as an agent for help, and suggestions for utilization of the minister, will again need to be put forth before the professional social work community.

Overview of Study Findings

Part of the research revolves around the women responding to the hypothetical vignette situations presented. The analysis and discussion focus on responses to these possible life scenarios. The types of vignettes selected for use, limit what can be said about the help seeking behavior of Black women church members. The research findings indicate the church has an important role in the help selecting process of the respondents. This help is primarily by way of
the minister. Respondents in this study did not see other aspects of the church, deacons or church members, as choices they would select in the situations presented.

Of the four hypotheses presented, the study confirms two of them. It is found that income does have an influence on help seeking patterns. Women from the lower socioeconomic group seek help more so than those from the higher socioeconomic group. Participation in the church, reflected in part by attendance, also influences members seeking help from the minister. Those who reflect high participation levels are more likely to seek help from the minister than those who are not as active. The findings also show the pastor's role is not limited by the classification of uniform and non-uniform events. It was thought the pastor would be selected for vignettes that are non-uniform. Respondents indicate the pastor will be chosen for assistance in situations that are uniform as well as non-uniform. In illustrations looking at marital concerns as well as problems relating to a child dropping out of school and being on drugs, the minister is selected as a first line of help, even though there are professional counselors who work in these areas. The study hypothesized that, members of smaller churches will seek the minister more often than women in the larger congregations. In fact, the findings prove opposite. Women in the larger churches seek out the minister more so than members belonging to smaller congregations. This can be attributed to several possibilities, among them accessibility
of the minister and pastoral counseling skills.

The response to the vignettes indicates a statistically significant reliance on relatives, self and counselor for some of the vignettes. Relatives are over selected in the areas of divorce, argue, broken leg and sick child. Self is over selected in the vignettes representing grades, unhappy on the job and sick child. The professional person is over selected for dropout, grades and job training (Table 4.10).

The study also demonstrates that within a given church, there are a wide variety of member profiles. There are low income women in large churches and small churches with high income persons. These women are in a variety of job titles and have a range of education, from less than high school to graduate degrees. Most of the respondents were not in need of concrete services such as food, clothing shelter or funds. As evidenced by the descriptive tables in Chapter 3. The needs of this particular group seem to be more relational in nature.

Implications of the Study for Ministers

Pastors need to be continually aware that many in their their congregations rely on them for help in a wide variety of situations. Some of the strengths of the pastor/member relationship is the pastor's availability; in addition, the pastor is always on call and this office is also a no cost source of help.
The Minister as a Key Referral Source

The study reveals that women approach the minister for a wide variety of concerns. When people approach the minister they are looking for help. This help may be in the way of listening, prayer, advice, referral, guidance, sustaining (Wimberly, 1978), or a combination of the aforementioned. As stated by Caplan (1972) and Mitchell (1976), when people come to the minister they are usually ready for help. Social service agencies need to make sure that churches within the purview of their agencies, know about the services that are offered. Agencies can be helpful to local churches in several ways:

(1) Training and Information

An agency person can meet with the minister to offer education and consultation on the issues their agency works with. Periodic training on intervention could also be offered to the minister.

The minister needs to keep current with counseling and support techniques and be knowledgeable in a variety of areas and concerns. For example, counseling and giving support to persons who have or suspect they have Aids. Ministers can be given factual information, as well as specific skills and techniques for at least initially speaking to persons or family members with this concern.

Many persons will not go to an agency, but will go to the minister. The minister needs to be equipped to deal with specific problems. For another example, a local alcohol
rehabilitation agency can offer education to ministers in working with individuals or families who have a problem with alcohol or substance abuse. Information as to the nature and symptoms of the condition, basic guidelines of working with such a person and resources available for the problem can be offered. This same type of information can be given in such areas as teen pregnancy, Alzheimer's disease, nursing home placement for the elderly, battered women and the emotionally disturbed homeless population. Most ministers, even with expertise in pastoral counseling, are not experts in specific areas of concern.

The social worker can play an invaluable role by educating the minister and giving information regarding referrals. Many people need to be referred to specific services and often will not go. If someone comes to the minister and the minister determines a referral is needed, the person seeking help may be more willing to follow through with the referral, especially if the minister gives the agency an endorsement. The person who comes to the agency this way, may be more accepting of help and willing to participate in the therapeutic process. This often assures a better match and a more productive helping relationship.

The study reveals that in several instances, a woman sees herself as the first line of defense for handling the situation. Making information available to the members in order to better equip the member to handle it themselves, would be an additional benefit of making information available to the minister and the church.
Two examples of agencies developing a relationship with a church, were related by church and agency personnel during the course of research for this study.

A social worker in the youth division of a local Planned Parenthood, met the youth minister of a church at a community meeting. She gave him her card and shared with him that the agency had outreach programs, and a socio-drama group that would be glad to present at a youth meeting. The worker carefully explained that the presentation could be tailored to the needs of the group and the guidelines of the church. After a few months, the minister contacted the woman. Members of her staff came to the church and presented a program that explored the development of healthy, growth producing relationships for adolescents. After the presentation and discussion, information on the variety of services the agency provided was given. It is known that some of the young people and their parents have gone to the agency to seek out other services and supports.

In another example, a local youth center was beginning a special education program aimed at youngsters in grades K-3, from a certain geographic area. A representative of the agency, with the permission of the minister, made an announcement during a morning service and left literature and applications. Several members of the church took materials for themselves and others they knew. In addition, members found out about other services the agency offered, such as sports programs, summer camps and youth employment
opportunities.

(2) Group Presentations

Agency personnel can share information with individual ministers, but can maximize contacts and impact by finding out about local organizations of ministers and presenting at one of their meetings. Information sessions can be developed for the ministers at the agency or at an off-site location convenient to the group. This connecting to local ministers groups can be done through referral and entree gained by positive contacts with one or two ministers.

(3) Resource Knowledge

Based on the findings of this study, knowledge of resources for concerns such as marital issues, school problems, teen drug use and career counseling, would be helpful for the minister in terms of appropriate referrals.

Local Churches and Agency Collaboration

Local churches can help agencies in several ways:

(1) Ministers and members of the local church can be asked to serve on the agency board or special committees. This creates the opportunity for ongoing contact, dialogue and input, between the church and the agency. It helps both groups to be aware of the needs of the population they serve.

(2) The minister can also come to the agency to share ways in which the church is serving the congregation and local community. An agency might invite a minister or a group of local ministers, to present what their churches or denominations are doing, that might be of interest to the
agency.

(3) Ministers can be put on agency mailing lists and invited to agency open houses and special programs. The minister might come him/herself, or ask other members to come in order to be aware of what is going on in the agency and to represent their church.

(4) Literature can be left periodically at the church or targeted to specific organizations and individuals within the church. This is helpful in terms of making best use of scarce advertising resources. Leaving a packet of flyers or mailing in bulk to a local church, is more economical than individual mailing. The agency can also target information about specific programs to special populations. For example, information about a conference on the elderly can be sent specifically to the chairperson of the church seniors group; information about a career conference can be sent to the youth director or young adult group.

The Church and Support Groups

It would be helpful for the social service community to fully understand that churches still offer many informal groupings within the church that serve as support groups, although they are not labeled as such. For instance, youth fellowship groups usually offer a time for socialization, conversation, fun and games. There may be topics of interest such as peer pressure, staying away from drugs, career planning and responsible parenthood. There are noontime
luncheons and service projects for senior citizens. There may be a men's breakfast group. There are also prayer and religious study units. These groups while not labeled as therapy groups, do provide socialization, information, support and contacts for people within the group. Such groups help in the process of belonging and offering recognition. They provide emotional support, fellowship and sustenance for its members. Such belonging and support can curtail or prevent the need for ever having to become involved in the formal social service system. As such, knowledge of the particular groups that operate in a local church would be beneficial to social service agencies. Having a listing of the leaders of these groups can also prove helpful. Information about special events and agency services as detailed earlier, can be made available to these groups.

Importance of Fit in the Outreach Effort

Agency personnel who contact the minister should be carefully selected. Some thought should be given to the concept of "fit". If possible, someone from the same ethnic group, with some church affiliation or at least church background, should be chosen as the agency liason with the church. This person should have respect and some positive regard for the beliefs and work of the church as an institution. A pastor is less likely to trust and refer to the agency, if the representative has never been affiliated with a church. It will make for a better relationship builder, if the agency person can speak with some knowledge
about the denomination or of some history of that particular church. It is also positive if the agency person can say that s/he belongs to a church. It does not necessarily have to be the same denomination. The agency would not want to send an agnostic, atheist or someone whose religious beliefs were totally different than the outreach target.

Possible Conflicts:

While the broad rubric of the church is sometimes used in discussion, this research looks at women in churches with specific emphasis on the minister as a helping link for the members studied. Since part of the discussion relates to collaborative efforts with social service agencies and the church, it is necessary to raise the issue about possible conflicts related to values and beliefs.

Popple (1990), Siporin (1979), and Imre (1982), are among those who have brought forth and highlighted the concerns about real and potential conflict that collaboration between social work and religion can bring. Most of the writing in this area refers to agencies that are under church and more specifically, Christian auspices, and the possible conflict between church and State. The writings also focus on the conflict that workers with specific religious values and beliefs may encounter when presented with a practice situation that goes against their beliefs.

While these issues cannot be ignored, it seems the concerns as related to the focus and recommendations of this study, have to do with the minister feeling comfortable with
a particular agency's functioning and focus. In addition, there is the issue of the agency and worker feeling comfortable and knowledgeable about the belief system, doctrines and practices of the church a client is related to. Again, this has to do with the concept of "fit" and the values of self determination and being nonjudgemental. For the purpose of positive collaboration, it is important for the agency to be aware of diversity issues related to religion that might hinder or enhance intervention.

There are agencies a minister might be able to refer members to, but the minister may feel uncomfortable doing so if the agency is under religious auspices different than his/her own. For example, Catholic Community services or Jewish Vocational services or a Lutheran hospice. If an agency is reaching out or seeking a collaborative relationship with a church, it should certainly find out about the belief system and practices of the church. Devore and Schlesinger (1987), observe that each ethnic group has a unique history with respect to oppression and discrimination, and different emphases and values attached to academic pursuits, to family, to respective roles of men and women, and to the ways in which religious teachings are translated into dictums for daily living.

An agency can also share with the minister, what the philosophy of the agency is. Most agencies under church auspices do not proselytize, and usually have employees and clients from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds. The
services of the agency tend to be based on social work tenets and not upon a particular religious doctrine. The minister and members of the congregation need to know this.

**Asking About Religious Affiliation**

Social work seeks to be aware of the person's environment and social system, in order to carry out its mandate of removing obstacles that prevent the unit of attention from reaching its potential. Germain (1980), reminds us that the client's social environment is complex and composed of many kinds of systems and networks, bureaucratic institutions, dyadic relations, community and neighborhood. This study points out the church related aspect, in the person of the minister, as a part of the complex environment.

**The Assessment Process**

In social work, finding out about the person in need of intervention is done through assessments, social histories, formal and informal interviewing. Finding out about a person's religious beliefs and affiliations can be an important part of this assessment and later the intervention plan. In a chapter entitled, "The Way People Live", Meyer (1976), speaks of the need for individualization as part of social intervention. Getting information about religion or the connection a person or family has to a church can be important in the individuation process. Earlier references uphold this in terms of supporting the client through a variety of community services, including the church. (Jones, 1979; McDonald, 1981).
On most social history forms there is some place on the document where information about religion is requested. Usually this is filled in with a word relating a specific denomination the client has given the worker. While some practitioners do, it may be important to routinely go beyond just asking about affiliation with an organized religious group. Questions need to be asked that will get to the client's connection or potential source of support from the church or minister. At times, it is difficult to decide what to ask in an interview. Brill (1990), suggests the "principle of parsimony", where the worker collects information which has relevance to the situation at hand. She also makes the point that even in the provision of specialized services, the totality of the individual must be considered.

Some thought should be given to making questions about religious life a routine part of the information obtained. This raises the issue of how to ask such a question. An informal survey was done with twenty-five undergraduate seniors and junior student that the author teaches. In routine class situations where the students were practicing taking social histories, the students were told by the instructor to make sure they asked a question about religious affiliation and activities. It was explained to the students that sometimes a client will have resources or strengths connected to religion or a church affiliation and the worker should know about these. The majority of the students had difficulty asking the question about religious affiliation in
a way that elicited meaningful information. A representative sample of how the question was asked is shown:

"Are you religious?"

"What are you in terms of religion?"

"Are you religious or anything?"

"Do you go to church?"

"What religion is your family?"

"Do you believe in God?"

While these responses were from students, an informal survey of professional social workers revealed an uncomfortableness, reluctance and unclarity in asking questions relating to religious affiliation and activity. One implication of the study at hand is that workers might focus on situations where it would be helpful to ascertain if clients had ties in the church or had a positive relation with a minister.

Some suggested ways to ask the question about church/minister connections are:

Are you currently active in any church?
Would you describe yourself as a religious person? If so in what way?
Have you ever received help from a church or minister?

If a person indicates they do have religious or church affiliations the worker can ask:

Have you discussed this with your minister or someone from your church?

Do you think your minister or church could be helpful in a
situation like this?

Of course asking questions about church involvement or religiosity, must be done with the same care and nonjudgemental attitude that is present when asking any other question of a client. Such questions should be asked by the worker in an effort to seek information, probe, clarify and investigate supports the client has within their social system. The reason for asking questions about religious beliefs and activities should be explained to the client. The same attention to confidentiality should be taken with and assured to the client with this set of questions, as when exploring any other options and support systems. The client may not want the minister to know about the help seeking or the problem. If the client was referred by the church, they may or may not want the minister to know if they came to the agency or what transpired between client and worker. As with all good social work practice, the assurance of confidentiality and adhering to the client's request regarding feedback to others should be guaranteed.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

A major strength of this study is that its subjects are one of an understudied group. There has not been a systematic study to look at how a group of African-American women utilize the church as a resource. In addition, information has been collected on an important resource within the Black community. The church is often referred to as a strength in the African-American community, but little quantitative
research has been done on the key roles it plays in terms of meeting specific member needs. Another strength is, the sample represents women with diversity in terms of socioeconomic characteristics.

Limitations include those imposed by the choice of vignettes the women had to respond to. Findings were based on the responses to the eight situations presented, therefore the question of generalizability to other situations is raised. In addition, since the research was exploratory in nature and sought to gain information about help seeking patterns of a specific group, there was no control group; another limitation could be that respondents volunteered for the study and were not part of a random selection. Lastly, the responses have the possibility of being influenced by such factors as the personality of the minister and the experience of the particular member with a particular pastor. While the study elicits the responses of almost two hundred women, when responding to questions about the pastor, the women are essentially responding to their experience or perception as related to one of the six pastors.

Future Research

Additional research with women reporting situations in which they have actually gone to the minister or other church related sources for help, will give a clearer picture as to types of problems brought to the minister. In addition, further research relating to how problems brought to the minister are dealt with as well as types of follow up, has
potential for being valuable to the social work and pastoral community. As part of further understanding the helping process and activities of other helpers in the problem solving process, there is a need to determine how problems are resolved when brought to the minister or other persons indicated as help sources. An additional area for future study can be developing a model for a cooperative relationship between local agencies and churches to see if members will use the services and if ministers can be helped to use existing social service agencies in an appropriate manner for their congregations. Another area for research is in response to Table 3.13. This refers to the level of participation and the finding that a majority of the women are concerned about the operation of the church, but do not see themselves as influencing policy within the church. Since women make up the majority of church membership, it would be worthwhile to explore what their influence in terms of decision making and church operation is.

Conclusion

The role of the church and especially the pastor, has emerged as an important one within the Black church community for a selected population. Theologians, social service professionals and philosophers have advocated strong ties and support between social work and the church over many years. Faced with the problems and issues of today, this professional and caring relationship between the church and the social service community is still needed and as we have
seen, can be a strong and dynamic force in empowering and bettering the lives of those that both seek to serve.
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Dear Reverend

I am currently a doctoral student at Columbia University School of Social Work, working on my dissertation thesis to complete degree requirements.

The area in which I plan to do my research is the role of the Black Church as a resource network for its members. The major hypothesis of the study is that the Black Church provides many formal and informal services that help its members survive and that members establish networks or connections with each other that aid them in meeting their needs. Very little research has been done in this area or in documenting ways that illustrate how the church has helped its people survive. This study would be an attempt to fill some of the void.

In order to conduct this study, it will be necessary to interview members of different churches in order to ascertain in what ways they go about seeking help in different life situations. It is towards this end that I wish to solicit your help.

After talking with a number of pastors and persons involved in ministry in Essex County, your church was suggested as one that should be considered for the study. I would like to discuss this possibility with you. I wish to stress that the study would not involve any expense or large amounts of time to your church. Members of the congregation would be randomly selected and asked to volunteer for a one-time confidential interview.

An interview with the minister and certain lay leaders in order to gather factual information about the church, and data on the types of problems people bring to the church would also be conducted.

Attached is a brief summary of the purpose of the study and the implications for the field of social work and the church. I will call your office within a week to see if you would be willing to discuss the project further, after which you might better determine your willingness to be involved. I look forward to speaking with you.

In His Service,

Phylis J. Peterman, ACSW

/vm
Attachment:
Appendix B
Dear

Some time ago you volunteered to fill out a questionnaire for a research project I am doing on the Black church. I will be at your church on [date] to have you and the other volunteers fill out the questionnaire in a group after morning service. It will take approximately one half hour. If you cannot meet with me at this time, please contact me so we may arrange a time for you to receive your questionnaire. I must get 200 questionnaires filled out so yours is very important to me.

The questionnaire has to do with your involvement in your church and in what way you interact with your family, friends and neighbors. You will not put your name on the questionnaire so all answers are confidential.

Thank you so much,

Phylis Peterman
Appendix C
MINISTER INFORMATION SHEET

To be administered by interviewer for ministers of churches involved in the study.

Name of Church: __________________________
Address: ____________________________ Telephone: _________
Minister: ____________________________

How long has this church been in existence? ____________
How long at present location? ____________
How long have you been in the ministry? ____________
How long at this present church? ____________
Number on roll: ____________________________
Average number in attendance each Sunday: ____________________________
Yearly budget: ____________________________

Minister's education: Years completed in school: ____________________________
Type of training for ministry:
  Degree from seminary: ____________ College degree: ____________
  Diploma or certificate from Bible Institute: ____________________________
  Some course work in religion from Bible Institute: ____________________________

Do you have employment outside of the church? Yes ____________ No ____________
If yes, what type of job? ____________________________

How many hours per week are you employed in this job? ____________________________
Approximately how many hours a week do you work in the church? ____________________________
What is the basic religious doctrine of your church?

On a scale of one to ten, with ten being the most liberal and one being the most conservative, how would you characterize yourself as a minister?

How would you describe the congregation during the morning service?

Quiet but interested
Quiet and disinterested
Interested with a lot of verbal participation and interaction between minister and congregation (lots of Amen's, clapping, shouting)
Interested with a moderate amount of verbal participation and interaction throughout

Approximately what percentage of members have:

- College degrees
- High school diplomas
- Are employed in professional occupations
- Employed in blue collar jobs
- Laborers/domestic work
- On welfare
- Social security

What type of programs/activities do you have regularly for:

- Children 2 - 10 years
- Teenagers 10 - 18 years
- Young adults 18 - 20 years
- Middle age 20 - 60 years
- Senior citizens 60 years and above
Are there any self-help groups or clubs in the church? Yes _______ No _______

What are their activities? ______________________________________________________

Are there any groups whose purpose is to aid members in need? _______________________

What are they? ________________________________________________________________

Does your church have regularly scheduled activities that help members know one
another and promote closeness, such as:

- new members' class
- new members' reception
- women's retreat
- men's retreat
- youth retreat
- church-wide retreat
- coffee hour
- after church receptions
- church picnics
- bus rides
- church suppers
- family night
- other

Is your church active in the community? Yes _______ No _______

If yes, how so ________________________________________________________________
How does the church find out when members are in need?

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<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
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How do personal problems and needs of members become known to the minister?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequent</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>member tells minister</td>
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<td>member tells deacon</td>
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<td>family member brings concern about another family member to deacon</td>
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<td>family member brings concern about another family member to minister</td>
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<td>church member brings concern about another member (non-relative) to deacon</td>
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<td>church member brings concern about another member (non-relative) to minister</td>
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</table>

Each month about how many requests come to the church for help with concrete needs (money, food, shelter): 

In all of last year, about how many requests did your church receive?

How are the requests handled?

Each month about how many requests came to the minister for help that requires personal counseling (non-concrete needs)?

About how many requests were there last year?
What were the main areas people needed counseling in? 

Do you usually counsel members yourself?  Yes ________  No ________
Do you usually refer them to someone else?  Yes ________  No ________
Do you both counsel and refer out?  Yes ________  No ________
What percentage do you counsel? _______________________________________
What percentage do you refer out? _______________________________________
What community agencies do you refer to or have frequent contact with? ________

Are you aware of situations where members help each other with concrete needs?
Give examples. ________________________________________________________

Are you aware of situations where members have counseled and been supportive of each other?
Give examples. ________________________________________________________
Would you characterize your church as:

- closeknit where most all of the members know each other ___________
- closeknit where members socialize with each other outside of church ___________
- scattered with certain groups being closeknit and sharing ___________
- scattered with members only interacting around church duties and not outside the church ___________

In your opinion:

**Frequently** | **Sometimes** | **Rarely** | **Never** | **Don't Know**
---|---|---|---|---

- do you think members use the church and the minister/deacons of the churches as a resource when they need help? ____________ ____________ ____________ ____________ ____________

- do you think members use other members of the church as a resource when they need help? ____________ ____________ ____________ ____________ ____________

Do you feel the church members can use each other as resources more than they currently do? Yes ____________ No ____________
INSTRUCTIONS

DEAR PARTICIPANT:

Please read each question carefully. Some of the questions sound alike but they are different because similar questions are asked about you and other members of your family, friends and church members.

If you have any questions or something is not clear, just raise your hand and someone will help you. Please answer each question. While some questions may be a little more time consuming than others, "Please be Patient with me, God is Not through with me Yet!!"

Thanks for helping me with my education.

Phyllis Peterman
Name of Church__________________________________________

1. How long have you been a member of this Church? 
   ____________ years

2. On the average how often do you attend Sunday services at 
   this church? (please check) 
   1. Less than once a month
   2. Two or three times a month
   3. About every Sunday

3. Would you say you are a church member who: (Please check 
   all that apply) 
   1. Comes only on special occasions
   2. Is concerned with the operation 
      of the church and attends 
      Church meetings
   3. Influences policies, attitudes 
      and decisions in the church

4. Please list the church clubs and organizations you 
currently belong to:
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

5. How do you feel about being a member of this Church? (Please check) 
   1. Very satisfied with my church
   2. Somewhat satisfied
   3. Somewhat dissatisfied
   4. Very dissatisfied

6. How many of your children attend your same church? _________

7. Is there any member(s) of the Church you talk to or 
socialize with outside of Church activities? 
   1. Yes________  2. No________
7a. How many of your relatives not counting your children live in this general geographic area (within 20 miles of you)?

7b. Of these relatives how many attend your same church?

8. (Please read across and check all that apply)
In question 8:

8a. If you were referred by the minister or other church official but did not follow through on the referral, please check why not:

1. I did not like where I was referred
2. I solved the problem another way
3. I decided I did not need the help
4. Other (please specify)

9. If you did not need help in the last six months, have you at any time in the past asked a Church member to help you obtain something you needed or give you advice on something that did not have anything to do with church matters?

1. Yes
2. No

(If yes, to question number 9 please check all categories in which help was needed)

1. Finding a job
2. Finding housing
3. Child care
4. Help for someone in your family who was sick
5. Help at home when you were ill or injured
6. Financial help
7. Obtaining food
8. Obtaining clothing
9. Getting work/repairs done at your home or apartment
10. Transportation
11. Meeting new people
12. Help with a personal problem
13. Other (please specify)
10. As a Church member, have you ever helped another Church member in any of the areas listed below?

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Finding a job</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Finding housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Child Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Help for someone in their family who was sick</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Help at home when they were ill or injured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Financial help</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Obtaining food</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Obtaining clothing</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Getting work/repairs done at your home or apartment</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Meeting new people</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Help with a problem</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Other problem (please specify)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

11. Do you feel your church could offer more help/support to its members than it currently does?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>No</td>
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</table>

If yes, answer A & B below:

11a. If yes, do you feel this help should be in the area of questions of faith/personal problems?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>No</td>
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</table>

11b. Should this help be in the area of meeting everyday needs? (such as food, clothing, financial problems etc.)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>No</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
12. Do you think your church members have knowledge and skills that could be used to help each other?
   1. Yes              2. No

13. How would a member find out about the knowledge and skills of other Church members? (Check the one you would use most often)
   1. Through a church resource directory
   2. Ask another member in the Church
   3. Ask the minister
   4. Ask a Church official
   5. Would not find out
   6. Other (please specify)

14. Would you say that members of the same Church should help each other? (Check one answer)
   1. Yes              2. No              3. No strong feelings

15. Is there any group of people you get together with from time to time just to talk, go shopping, go out to eat, go to the theater or movies?
   1. Yes              2. No

16. If yes, how often do you get together?
   1. A few times a year
   2. Once to three times a month
   3. Once a week
   4. More than once a week

17. Are these people that you get together with? (Please check all that apply)
   1. Relatives
   2. Friends from your job
   3. Friends from your church
   4. Other friends

18. In general, do the people you go out with socially live:
   1. In your neighborhood
   2. Same city
   3. Nearby city (please name city)
   4. Distant city (please name city)
19. Think of your four closest friends. Where did you meet each one?

I know: Job Neighborhood School Church Club (Others)

| 1st best friend from: | —— | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| 2nd best friend from: | —— | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| 3rd best friend from: | —— | —— | —— | —— | —— |
| 4th best friend from: | —— | —— | —— | —— | —— |

20. Where do these four friends live? (Please check)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Friend #1</th>
<th>Same Neighborhood</th>
<th>Same City</th>
<th>Nearby City/Name</th>
<th>Distant City/Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friend #2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Friend #3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friend #4</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. Do any of these four friends presently attend your same Church?

1. Yes ___ 2. No ___ If yes, how many? ___

22. IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS HAVE YOU DONE A FAVOR FOR OR HELPED THESE FRIENDS IN ANY WAY?

1. Yes ___ 2. No ___

(If no - go on to question 22a)

If yes, how did you help? (Please check all that apply)

1. Financially (loaned money)
2. Helped them find a job
3. Helped them find housing
4. Transportation (gave them a ride)
5. Loaned them something they needed (besides money)
6. Helped when they were sick or injured
7. Helped with Child Care
8. Helped take care of someone in their family who was ill
9. Listened and gave advice on a problem they had
10. Helped with household chores
11. Helped with shopping
12. Helped them meet new people
13. Other (please specify)

22a. If you have not done a favor or helped these friends in the last six months, have you helped them at anytime in the past?
1. Yes __________ 2. No __________

22b. If yes, please check all the areas which you helped your friend(s).
1. Financially (loaned money)
2. Helped them find a job
3. Helped them find housing
4. Transportation (gave them a ride)
5. Loaned them something they needed besides money
6. Helped when they were sick or injured
7. Helped take care of someone in their family who was ill
8. Helped with Child Care
9. Listened and gave advice on a problem they had
10. Helped with household chores
11. Helped with shopping
12. Helped them meet new people
13. Other (please specify)

23. In question number 22, were any of the friends you helped also church members?
1. Yes __________ 2. No __________

24. In the last six months have you received help or a favor from a friend?
1. Yes __________ 2. No __________
24a. If yes, in what way were you helped? (Please check all that apply)
1. Financial (borrowed money) __________
2. Help in finding a job __________
3. Help in finding housing __________
4. Transportation (received a ride) __________
5. Borrowed something I needed other than money __________
6. Help with my children __________
7. Help when I was sick __________
8. Help in taking care of someone else in my family __________
9. A friend listened to a problem I had and gave advice __________
10. Helped me with household chores __________
11. Helped me with shopping __________
12. Helped me meet people __________
13. Other (please specify) __________

24b. If you did not need any help in the last six months, have you at any time in the past received help from a friend?
1. Yes __________
2. No __________

(if no to question 24b go on to question 25)

24c. If yes, please indicate all areas you received help from your friend.
1. Financially (loaned money) __________
2. Helped me find a job __________
3. Helped me find housing __________
4. Transportation (gave me a ride) __________
5. Loaned me something I needed besides money __________
6. Helped when I was sick or injured __________
7. Helped with Child Care __________
8. Helped take care of someone in my family who was sick __________
9. Listened and gave advice on a problem I had __________
10. Helped with household chores __________
11. Helped with shopping __________
12. Helped me meet new people __________
13. Other (please specify) __________
25. What would you say you depend on your friends most for? (Please check the 3 areas you feel are most important to you)

1. Loans of money
2. Loans of household items or other things
3. Child Care
4. Helping care for other family members
5. Helping when I am sick
6. Companionship/having fun
7. Transportation
8. Helping with household chores/yardwork
9. Listening to you/helping solve your problems
10. Help in finding housing
11. Helping you meet other people
12. Helping with shopping
13. Helping in finding a job
14. Other (please specify)

THESE QUESTIONS ARE ABOUT YOUR NEIGHBORS.

26. Are you friendly with any of your neighbors? I am friendly with: (Please check one answer)

None of my neighbors
A few of my neighbors
Most of my neighbors

27. Are any of your neighbors members of your church?

1. Yes
2. No
28. **In the last six months**, have you done a favor or helped a neighbor in any way?

1. Yes ____________ 2. No ____________

28a. If you did not help a neighbor in the last six months, have you at any time in the past helped a neighbor?

1. Yes ____________ 2. No ____________

(If no, go to question §29)

28b. If yes, please indicate the areas in which you helped your neighbor.

1. Financially (loaned money) ____________
2. Helped them find a job ____________
3. Helped them find housing ____________
4. Transportation (gave them a ride) ____________
5. Loaned them something they needed (besides money) ____________
6. Helped with their children ____________
7. Helped take care of someone else in their home ____________
8. Listened and gave advice on a problem they had ____________
9. Helped take care of them when they were sick or injured ____________
10. Helped with household chores ____________
11. Helped with shopping ____________
12. Helped them meet new people ____________
13. Other (please specify) ____________

29. **In the last six months**, have you received help or a favor from a neighbor?

1. Yes ____________ 2. No ____________
29a. If yes, what kind of help did you receive? (Please check all that apply)

1. Financially (borrowed money)
2. Help in finding a job
3. Help in finding housing
4. Transportation
5. Loan of something other than money
6. Help with my children
7. Help when I was sick or injured
8. Help in taking care of someone else in my family
9. A neighbor listened to a problem I had and gave advice
10. Helped with household chores
11. Helped with shopping
12. Helped me meet new people
13. Other (please specify)

29b. If you did not receive any help from a neighbor in the last six months, have you at any time in the past received help or a favor from a neighbor?

1. Yes_________ 2. No_________

29c. If yes, please indicate the areas in which you received help from a neighbor.

1. Financially (borrowed money)
2. Help in finding a job
3. Help in finding housing
4. Transportation
5. Loan of something other than money
6. Help with my children
7. Help when I was sick or injured
8. Help in taking care of someone else in my family
9. A neighbor listened to a problem I had and gave advice
10. Helped with household chores
11. Helped with shopping
12. Helped me meet new people
13. Other (please specify)
30. What would you say you depend on your neighbors most for? (Please check the three that are most important.)

1. Small loans of money
2. Small loans of household items or other goods
3. Child Care
4. Help with care for another person in your family
5. Helping when I am sick or injured
6. Keeping an eye on your property while you're away
7. Running errands for you
8. Shopping
9. Companionship
10. Going out socially
11. Helping with household chores/repairs/yardwork
12. Meeting new people
13. Other (please specify)

THESE QUESTIONS ARE ABOUT YOUR RELATIVES.

31. Do any of your relatives live in your same neighborhood?
1. Yes__________ 2. No__________

32. About how many live in your same neighborhood?

33. Do most of your relatives live within two (2) hours travel distance from you?
1. Yes__________ 2. No__________
34. During the last month, have you received any help from a relative in any of the categories in question 34a?

1. Yes_________ 2. No_________

If no, go on to #35.

34a. If yes, please indicate areas in which you received help and which relative helped you.

RELATIVE WHO HELPED YOU
(Ex. uncle, sister, mother, etc.)

1. Financial
   (borrowed money)
2. Help in finding a job
3. Transportation
4. Loan of something other than money
5. Help with my children
6. Help in taking care of someone else in my family
7. Help when I was sick
8. Listened to a problem I had and gave advice
9. Help with household chores
10. Help with shopping
11. Help meet new people
12. Other (please specify)

35. During the last six months, have you received any help or a favor from a relative in any of the categories in question 35a?

1. Yes_________ 2. No_________
35a. If yes, what kind of help did you receive and from whom?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NAME THE RELATIVE WHO HELPED YOU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Financial (borrowed money)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Help in finding a job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Transportation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Loan of something other than money</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Help with Child Care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Help in taking care of someone else in my family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Help when I was sick or injured</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Listened to a problem I had and gave advice</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Help with household chores</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Help with shopping</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Help meet new people</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Other (please specify)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

35b. If you have not received any help from a relative in the last six months, have you at any time during the past received help?  

1. Yes  
2. No  

35c. If yes, please indicate areas in which your relatives helped you.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NAME THE RELATIVE WHO HELPED YOU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Financial (borrowed money)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Help in finding job</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Transportation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Loan of something other than money</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Help with Child Care</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Help in taking care of someone else in my family</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
35d. In the last six months, have you provided any help to your relatives?

1. Yes
2. No

35e. If yes, in what areas did you help and who did you help.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RELATIVE YOU HELPED</th>
<th>NAME OF RELATIVE WHO HELPED YOU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Financial</td>
<td>(Ex. uncle, sister, mother, son, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(loaned money)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Help in finding a job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Transportation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Loan of something other than money</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Help with Child Care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Help in taking care of someone else in their family when they were sick</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Help when they were sick</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Listened to a problem they had and gave advice</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Help with household chores</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Help with shopping</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Help meet new people</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Other (please specify)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
35f. If you have not helped a relative in the last six months, have you at any time in the past helped a relative?

1. Yes_______  2. No__________

35g. If yes, please check which areas you helped your relative.

RELATIVE YOU HELPED
(Ex. uncle, sister, mother, son, etc.)

1. Financial (loaned money) 
2. Help in finding a job 
3. Transportation 
4. Loan of something other than money 
5. Help with Child Care 
6. Help in taking care of someone else in their family who was sick 
7. Help when they were sick 
8. Listened to a problem they had and gave advice 
9. Help with household chores 
10. Help with shopping 
11. Help meet new people 
12. Other (please specify) 

36. Check 3 areas in which your relatives are most important to you.

1. Loaning/giving you money 
2. Loaning/giving you household items or other things 
3. Helping you with your children 
4. Helping you care for another member of your family 
5. Keeping an eye on your property while you are away 
6. Running errands 
7. Helping out with household chores/repairs/yardwork 
8. Socializing on holidays
(36 continued)

9. Socializing in general

10. Meeting new people

11. Other (please specify)

Following are some different situations that people may face in life. They may not be ones you have been faced with, but try and put yourself into the situation. (Number the 3 people you would go to for help. Put 1 by your first choice; 2 by second choice and 3 by third choice)

37a. Suppose you and your husband argued more frequently over family matters and just don't seem to be getting along as well as you used to, and you are worried about the situation. Who would you seek advice from? (Please choose 1st, 2nd, and 3rd)

_____ 1. The Minister
_____ 2. Deacon or other Church official
_____ 3. Other Church members
_____ 4. Friends who are not Church members
_____ 5. Relative
_____ 6. Neighbor
_____ 7. Family doctor
_____ 8. Professional counselor
_____ 9. I would take care of it myself
_____ 10. Other (please specify)
37 b. Suppose you and your husband argued frequently and your husband hit you during these arguments. You are very unhappy and feel your marriage is heading for divorce. Who would you seek advice from? (Please choose 1st, 2nd, and 3rd)

1. The Minister
2. Deacon or other Church official
3. Other Church members
4. Friends who are not Church members
5. Relative
6. Neighbor
7. Family doctor
8. Professional counselor
9. I would take care of it myself
10. Other (please specify)

38a. Suppose your 16 year old son suddenly became very interested in girls and was spending more time socializing than studying causing his grades to slip. Who would you seek advice from? (Please choose 1st, 2nd and 3rd)

1. The Minister
2. Deacon or other Church official
3. Other Church member
4. Friends who are not Church members
5. Relative
6. Neighbor
7. Family doctor
8. Professional in your son's school
9. I would take care of it myself
10. Other (please specify)
38 b. Suppose your 16 year old son had dropped out of school, was hanging out with a bad crowd, stealing things from the house and you suspect he is on drugs. Who would you seek advice from? (Please choose 1st, 2nd and 3rd)

1. The Minister
2. Deacon or other Church official
3. Other Church members
4. Friends who are not Church members
5. Relative
6. Neighbor
7. Family doctor
8. Professional in your son's school
9. I would take care of it myself
10. Other (please specify)

39a. Suppose you were new on the job, feeling unsure of yourself and unhappy because co-workers seem to be unfriendly. Who would you seek advice from? (Please choose 1st, 2nd and 3rd)

1. The Minister
2. Deacon or other Church official
3. Other Church members
4. Friends who are not Church members
5. Relative
6. Neighbor
7. Family doctor
8. A fellow worker
9. Professional counselor in that area
10. I would take care of it myself
11. Other (please specify)
39b. Suppose you had been on your job for ten years and had to seek training in a different field because of lack of future with your current field. Who would you seek advice from? (Please choose 1st, 2nd and 3rd)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The Minister</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Deacon or other Church official</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Other Church members</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Friends who are not Church members</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Relative</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Neighbor</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>A fellow worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Professional counselor in that area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Family doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I would take care of it myself</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
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</table>

40a. Suppose your child awoke on a school day with a temperature, runny nose, upset stomach. He/she is too sick to go to school. You have a job to go to. Who would you ask for help or what choice would you make? (Please choose 1st, 2nd and 3rd)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The Minister</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Deacon or other Church official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Other Church member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Friend who is not a Church member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Relative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Neighbor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Family doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Take the day off</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Have someone come in to babysit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Hire a professional nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
40b. You work and your child was in an accident, has a broken leg and has to have someone stay home with him/her for two weeks. You work and cannot stay home. Who would you ask to help you? (Please choose 1st, 2nd and 3rd)

1. The Minister  
2. Deacon or other Church official  
3. Other Church member  
4. Friend who is not a Church member  
5. Relative  
6. Neighbor  
7. Family doctor  
8. Take time off from job  
9. Have someone to come in who is not a nurse  
10. Hire professional nursing care  
11. Other (please specify)

41. Would you describe your minister as one with whom you would discuss:

1. Only things involving religion or the church  
2. Some things other than church or religion  
3. Just about anything

42. What is your age?

43. Your place of birth?
   a) City__
   b) State__

44. Current marital status:

1. Never married  
2. Married and living with spouse  
3. Divorced  
4. Separated  
5. Widowed
45. **Please check highest level of education completed:**

1. Some elementary school
2. Completed elementary school
3. Some high school
4. Completed high school
5. Some college
6. Completed college
7. Some graduate school
8. Completed graduate work or professional degree

46a. **Please indicate your current work status.**  
(Please check one)

1. Paid full-time employment
2. Paid part-time employment
3. Housewife
4. Retired
5. Unemployed

**b. What was or is your job title?**

47. **Please indicate your household income.**  
(Include social security, pension, welfare, etc.)

1. Under $4,000
2. $4,001 - $6,000
3. $6,001 - $10,000
4. $10,001 - $15,000
5. $15,001 - $25,000
6. $25,001 - $40,000
7. $40,001 - $60,000
8. $60,000 and over

How many people contribute to this amount: __________________
48. In what type of housing do you live? (Check appropriate answer)
   1. Rent a room in a boarding home or private home
   2. Rent an apartment in a private home
   3. Rent an apartment in an apartment building
   4. Own your own home
   5. Share a home or apartment with other family members
   6. Other (please specify)

49. Who lives in your house or apartment with you? (Please check all that apply)
   1. Family member(s)
   2. Friend(s)
   3. Boarders
   4. Live alone

50. How many children do you have?
    How many are 12 years old or younger?
    How many are over 18 years old?
These questions are about organizations and clubs that you may belong to:

51. Do you belong to any of the following organizations? (Please check the one(s) to which you belong, also check the one(s) in which you are an officer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Officer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Labor organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Educational, PTA, alumni association</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Tenants council or neighborhood association, Block Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Political Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Business or professional associations</td>
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<td>6. Fraternal or benevolent associations</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Social, hobby or athletic clubs</td>
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<td>8. Civil rights organizations</td>
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<td>9. Community service</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Fraternity or sorority</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you very much for your time, patience and help.