



Experiences of Ministry 2013 Sub- Report: Ministerial Development Review

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Executive Summary

This sub-report, examining Ministerial Development Review (MDR) forms part of the Experiences of Ministry Project (EMP), which is a five-year programme of research exploring what sustains clergy during their ministry and seeking to identify factors that may contribute to growth. The main instrument of data collection is the Experiences of Ministry Survey (EMS), conducted on-line in three rounds between 2011 and 2015.

Participation in MDR has increased between 2011 and 2013. Effectiveness also appears to rise slightly but this is not statistically significant. MDR is the only form of CMD where participation is negatively associated with one of our 'effectiveness' measures, being found negatively related to reported levels of dedication. However, the positive effects of MDR are more common. There is some evidence of some effect of participation in MDR on positive growth, albeit a small, inconsistent and somewhat delayed effect.

The quality of MDR was found to have a stronger effect on outcomes than participation. This suggests that the quality of MDR varies and that 'effective MDR' has a particularly good chance of influencing key outcomes. If MDR is found effective then the following is likely to result:

- More positive perceptions of diocesan support and justice
- More engaged and less burnt out clergy
- Greater spiritual growth reported by both SM and SSMs
- Greater attendance growth for SMs

MDR that is seen as ineffective is likely to result in the opposite outcomes.

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1. Introduction to the Experiences of Ministry Project

The Experiences of Ministry Project (EMP) is a five-year process of research and consultation that aims to find out what sustains clergy for a ministry that for many will encompass many different settings over several decades. It also seeks to identify factors that may support growth. This project seeks to inform national strategies for supporting ministry and shape the future emphasis of continuing ministerial education and development. The EMP is an independent piece of research conducted by Dr Mike Clinton, a Lecturer in Work Psychology and HRM at King's College London. The project has been supported by Dr Tim Ling, National Adviser for Continuing Ministerial Development, and an Advisory Group of national clergy.

A major part of the EMP is the Experiences of Ministry Survey (EMS) that will ultimately be formed of three online surveys conducted in 2011, 2013 and 2015. The aim is to collect data on a nationally representative sample of clergy at each time-point, but also to follow a representative cohort of clergy across these three time-points to better understand how their experiences change and the effects these changes have. The survey covers attitudes and feelings relating to clergy's day-to-day role, their diocese, spiritual and numerical growth and their health and well-being. Ethical approval for EMS was granted by a KCL Ethics Panel.

Across 2014, a series of reports will be produced on a range of topics relating to continuing ministerial development and growth or comparing the experiences of particular groups of clergy. The aim of these reports is to provide a set of focused analyses of the EMS data collected to date and that that these may be used as evidence to inform particular policy issues.

2. Focus of the Current Report: Ministerial Development Review

2.1 The Ministerial Development Review Question

This report examines Ministerial Development Review (MDR). In particular, the aim of the present report is to consider how effective MDR has been over the past four years.

Within the EMS surveys was a section on Continuing Ministerial Development that contained the following question:

- “In relation to DIOCESAN PROVISION, please rate the following in terms of their contribution to your flourishing in role: “
One of the items that followed this question was “Ministerial Development Review” and participants could respond using one of the following:
 - Not participated

- Totally ineffective
- Not very effective
- Partially effective
- Largely effective
- Hugely effective

People's answers to this question were used in two ways:

1. A measure of **Participation in MDR** was constructed which essentially split the sample into two groups: one containing those who had participated in MDR (inferred from their ability to make an effectiveness rating) and those who reported to have not participated in MDR.
2. A measure of **Perceived Effectiveness of MDR** was constructed, using the five-point rating scale from Totally ineffective (1) to Hugely effective (5). It is important to note that this measure was not produced for everyone in the sample as people who did not participate in MDR are not included.

2.2 Other questions used in the analyses here

Later in this report, I link participation in and perceived effectiveness of MDR to other variables to look at their 'effect'. These other variables are measured by the following questions within EMS:

- Spiritual growth
 - To what extent have you OBSERVED CHANGES to the following amongst those you serve over the last 24 months?
 - *Items:* Relationships (with God, self, others); Discernment of what might in 'of God' in life; Faithfulness to the paschal mystery (combined into single measure as highly related)
 - *Response options:* Not possible to discern (0), A retrograde change (1), No change (2), A slight positive change (3), A moderate positive change (4), A significant positive change (5)
- Numerical growth
 - To what extent have the following CHANGED over the last 24 months?
 - *Items:* Weekly attendance patterns of your congregation(s); New vocations to licenced ministry; Disciples and discipleship
 - *Response options:* Significantly decreased (1), Slightly decreased (2), No change (3), Slightly increased (4), Significantly increased (5)
- Clergy engagement
 - 3 items each (combined) for vigour, absorption, dedication felt relating to ministry
 - *Items:* When engaged in ministry I feel bursting with energy (vigour); I feel a sense of privilege to serve in ministry (dedication); Time flies when I am engaged in ministry (absorption)

- *Response options:* Never (1) – Regularly (3) - Always (7)
- Clergy burnout
 - 3 items each (combined) emotional exhaustion and sense of depersonalisation
 - *Items:* I feel burned out from my role as a licensed minister (emotional exhaustion); I worry ministry is hardening me emotionally (depersonalisation)
 - *Response options:* Never (1) – Regularly (3) - Always (7)
- Perceived diocesan support and justice
 - 3 items each (combined) for diocesan support and justice
 - *Items:* My diocese cares about my opinion (diocesan support); Decisions in my diocese seem to be made in an unbiased manner (diocesan justice)
 - *Response options:* Strongly disagree (1) – Strongly agree (5)

2.3 Who takes part in EMS?

We invite a broad cross-section of clergy to complete the online EMS questionnaire. In total, 1774 useable responses were received to the 2013 survey. This included:

- 1188 responses from stipendiary ministers (SMs), 466 responses from self-supporting ministers (SSMs), and 120 responses from Active Retired clergy (ARs).
 - These included, incumbents (560), priests-in-charge (161), ordained local ministers (72), house-for-duty (24), chaplains (98), pioneers (49), ministers in secular employment (68), associate ministers (26) and clergy with diocesan roles (34), non-stipendiary roles (155) or dual roles (454).
- 37% women
- an average age of 56 years (SD=10yrs)
- an average time in role of 6 years (SD=6yrs)
- a range of team contexts: members of team ministry (25%), members of a lay team (23%), assistants of another licensed minister (19%), clergy assisted by another licensed minister (23%) and clergy who work alone (14%).
- a range of locations: urban including UPA/inner city (600), suburban/large town (514), rural town/village (656) and remote rural/coastal (86)

When compared to national statistics, the people who respond to EMS seem broadly representative of clergy across England. This was also the case for the 2402 clergy who responded to the EMS in 2011. In total, it was possible to match 603 respondents' 2011 and 2013 surveys using a series of identifying questions that allowed us to link the surveys, but not reveal who the individual was.

3. Findings on MDR

3.1 Are there differences in MDR experiences across roles and between 2011 and 2013?

- As shown in Table 1, stipendiary incumbents, priests-in-charge and dual role clergy have participated more in MDR than other clergy
- SSMs have participated in MDR less frequently than SMs overall, but more frequently than ARs
- Participation in MDR has increased between 2011 and 2013
- Ratings of MDR effectiveness are modest, being found just under ‘partially effective’ on average overall.
- Ratings of effectiveness vary, but not to such an extent as to produce clearly significant results. The only differences of note are that OLMs perceive MDR to be more effective than the average person and ARs report lower perceived effectiveness than either SMs or SSMs.
- Effectiveness appears to rise slightly from 2011 but this is not significant

Table 1. Levels of MDR participation and perceived effectiveness by role and year

		Ministerial Development Review			
		<i>Participation</i>	<i>Significant difference?</i>	<i>Effectiveness</i>	<i>Significant difference?</i>
Stipendiary	Incumbent	83.5%	Higher than most	2.85	
	PiC	86.6%	Higher than most	2.94	
	Chaplain	78.0%		3.22	
	Diocesan role	76.7%		3.17	
	Dual role	85.8%	Higher than most	3.00	
	Pioneer	61.9%		2.73	
	Associate minister	52.0%		2.54	
Self-supporting	OLM	63.5%		3.20	OLMs higher than group mean
	Chaplain	57.1%		3.04	
	NS role	71.5%		2.93	
	MinSE	68.2%		3.13	
	Dual role	75.0%	SSMs lower than SMs	2.85	
Active retired		35.8%	ARs lower than SMs/SSMs	2.65	ARs lower than SSMs/SMs
Total		76.2%		2.92	
	2011 Sample	68.5%		2.89	
	2013 Sample	76.2%	2013 higher than 2011	2.92	
	2011 Cohort	69.7%		2.89	
	2013 Cohort	78.3%	2013 higher than 2011	2.91	

3.2 Does participating in MDR make a difference?

To evaluate this question, we essentially compared answers to a number of questions in the survey of clergy who had participated in MDR with clergy who had not. These other questions measured perceptions of the diocese (support and justice), clergy burnout (emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation), clergy engagement (vigour, absorption, dedication) and perceived growth (spiritual and numerical).

For each outcome, the test was conducted twice. The first was a correlation that examines the simple relationship between participating in MDR and the outcome. The second test is a (standardised) 'beta' from a regression in which variables representing age, gender, time in role, team context, location of role and role type were all controlled for. This means that the 'beta' represents the association between MDR and the outcome once each of these other factors has been taken into account and might be considered a more reliable estimate of the association than the correlation.

These analyses were conducted separately for stipendiary ministers and for self-supporting ministers. In addition to data collected from the full 2013 sample (1774), reports of participation in MDR from the 2011 survey were linked to the outcomes reported in 2013 using the 603 clergy in the cohort. This allows for a comparison of findings and also may give an indication of the immediacy (or lag) of any effects.

Findings are presented in Table 2 and 3 and are summarised below:

- Overall, the picture suggests a modest effect of participating in MDR on the outcomes.
- Participating in MDR has no effect on clergy burnout.
- Participating in MDR has a limited effect on perceptions of the diocese; the only significant effect was for stipendiary ministers on diocesan support, which was positive and significant looking at the beta for the 2013 data.
- Participating in MDR has rather mixed effects on clergy engagement, being found negatively related to dedication in the 2013 data and unrelated for all other tests.
- Participating in MDR has its largest effects on perceptions of growth and all significant effects were found to be positive.
 - Participating in MDR was found to be modestly linked to enhanced attendance growth among SSMs.
 - Participating in MDR was found to be linked to enhanced growth in new vocations among SMs.
 - Positive links were also found for SMs on spiritual growth and discipleship, but only using the 2011 data and the beta, which perhaps suggests a more lagged effect for MDR participation on these outcomes.

3.3 Does participating in 'effective' MDR make a difference?

The question then turns to whether effectiveness makes a difference? It may be that, if the effectiveness of MDR varies, participation alone may not be sufficient to observe an effect on outcomes. In other words, it might be that the MDR needs to be effective to influence some outcomes.

Exactly the same procedure was followed as above but focusing on effectiveness of MDR rather than participation. Note that this analysis was conducted only on clergy who had experience an MDR and therefore gave an effectiveness rating. Findings are presented in Table 2 and 3 and are summarised below:

- Overall, the picture suggests a much larger effect for the effectiveness of MDR than for participation in MDR alone. This can be interpreted as indicating MDR has much more influence when it is perceived as being effective in helping clergy flourish in their roles and a more limited or even negative influence when it is seen as ineffective.
- For both SMs and SSMs, the associations were stronger for the 2013 MDR rating than the 2011 MDR question. This suggests that an effective MDR translates into more immediate consequences rather than lagged.
- Particularly strong and sustained associations were noted for perceptions of the diocese. One may infer from this that effectiveness of MDR is interpreted by clergy as a powerful indication for the diocese's attitude towards themselves and their treatment clergy in the diocese more generally.
- Perceiving MDR to be effective enhances clergy engagement.
- Perceiving MDR to be effective reduces clergy burnout.
- Effective MDR appears to enhance spiritual and attendance growth for SMs, the latter with a more lagged effect. There is a modest effect for SSMs on spiritual growth.

Table 2. Associations between MDR participation and effectiveness and outcomes for stipendiary ministers

Stipendiary Ministers	Perceptions of Diocese		Clergy Burnout		Clergy Engagement			Perceptions of growth			
	Diocesan Support	Diocesan Justice	Emotional exhaustion	Depersonalisation	Vigour	Absorption	Dedication	Spiritual growth	Attendance growth	New vocations growth	Disciples & discipleship growth
Participation 2013											
Correlation	.04	.04	.00	.02	-.03	-.03	-.09*	.02	-.01	.11**	.04
Beta	.06*	.04	.04	.02	-.04	-.05	-.08*	.03	.01	.12**	.05
Participation 2011											
Correlation	-.03	-.02	.02	.02	.00	-.03	-.03	.07	-.06	.06	.06
Beta	.05	.04	.05	.04	.03	.00	.00	.12*	-.01	.12*	.10*
Effectiveness 2013											
Correlation	.48**	.38**	-.16**	-.16**	.20**	.13**	.19**	.11**	.10**	.00	-.01
Beta	.45**	.36**	-.15**	-.13**	.18**	.13**	.18**	.11**	.07**	-.01	-.01
Effectiveness 2011											
Correlation	.34**	.21**	-.02	.03	.14*	.13*	.11	.09	.18**	.02	.01
Beta	.34**	.22**	-.02	.03	.11+	.08	.07	.09	.18**	.02	.01

Notes: Correlation represents the basic association between the two variables; Beta represents the association between the variables after age, gender, time in role, team context, location and role type are taken into account; Considering the smaller size of the cohort, the beta for 2011 represents the association between the variables after just age, gender and time in role are taken into account; p<.01**, p<.05*, p<.10

Table 3. Associations between MDR participation and effectiveness and outcomes for self-supporting ministers

Self-supporting Ministers	Perceptions of Diocese		Clergy Burnout		Clergy Engagement			Perceptions of growth			
	Diocesan Support	Diocesan Justice	Emotional exhaustion	Depersonalisation	Vigour	Absorption	Dedication	Spiritual growth	Attendance growth	New vocations growth	Disciples & discipleship growth
Participation 2013											
Correlation	.06	.01	.00	.01	.02	.04	.03	.08	.10*	.07	.05
Beta	.05	-.03	-.05	-.03	.05	.04	.05	.06	.07	.09	.03
Participation 2011											
Correlation	.00	-.09	.13	.10	-.02	.00	.01	.01	.14+	-.10	-.05
Beta	-.02	-.10	.11	.03	-.03	-.05	.01	.01	.07	-.14	-.08
Effectiveness 2013											
Correlation	.50**	.42**	-.09	-.15**	.22**	.15**	.27**	.08	.03	-.03	.05
Beta	.50**	.41**	-.09	-.14**	.21**	.13**	.25**	.11+	.06	-.05	.05
Effectiveness 2011											
Correlation	.36**	.17+	-.12	-.10	.10	-.01	.14	.04	-.07	.09	.05
Beta	.39**	.21*	-.09	-.06	.11	-.01	.12	.07	-.08	.09	.06

Notes: Correlation represents the basic association between the two variables; Beta represents the association between the variables after age, gender, time in role, team context, location and role type are taken into account; Considering the smaller size of the cohort, the beta for 2011 represents the association between the variables after just age, gender, and time in role are taken into account; p<.01**, p<.05*, p<.10

Conclusions on MDR

The findings from EMS demonstrate that MDR is an important and influential continuing ministerial development activity in the lives of the clergy. The large majority of clergy participate in MDR and this number has risen between 2011 and 2013. The findings of the tests of association reveal that participating in MDR can have an important influence on outcomes and growth most of all. However, the main finding here is of the importance of the perceived effectiveness of MDR. MDR is rated as being just below 'partially effective' in helping clergy flourish in role. Yet when clergy report that their MDR is more than just 'partially effective' it is very clear that they begin to feel much more positive about their diocese and feel more engaged in ministry and less burned out. There also appear additional benefits for spiritual and attendance growth. The simple conclusion to draw from this analysis therefore is that more attention should be given to enhancing the effectiveness of MDR.

**Perceived Effectiveness of Ministerial Development Review by
Diocese: Ranked Average Scores and 95% Confidence Interval Bars**

