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The Effects of Church Size, Church Membership, Gender, and Having School Age

Children or Not upon the Demonstration of Personal Responsibility in

the Church of the Nazarene

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Abstract

Over the past few decades, some Nazarene Churches have become tremendously large in size, which has sparked an imperative question: Does the diffusion of responsibility occur in congregations as the size of churches increase? The present research was conducted to determine if individuals' acceptance of their personal responsibility to their churches is influenced by the size of their churches. A cross-sectional survey was constructed to examine individuals' personal responsibility. Four directional hypotheses were proposed, which consisted of: (1) individuals attending larger churches would exhibit lower levels of personal responsibility than individuals attending smaller churches; (2) individuals who are church members would show higher levels of personal responsibility than non-church members; (3) females would display higher levels of personal responsibility than males; and (4) individuals who do not have school age children would demonstrate higher levels of personal responsibility than individuals who have school age children. The surveys were distributed to three Nazarene Churches varying in size on the Chicago Central District, which included Westbrook ("small church"), Manteno ("medium church"), and Kankakee First ("large church"). There were 277 individuals who volunteered to fill out the surveys; however, 22 participants had to be eliminated, due to their surveys being incomplete. This resulted in a total of 255 individuals, which encompassed 55 participants from Westbrook, 110 participants from Manteno, and 90 participants from Kankakee First. Of the 255 participants, there were 174 members/ 81 non-members, 107 males/ 148 females, and 78 individuals with school age children/ 177 without. The four independent variables that were used to analyze the survey data were church size, church membership status, gender, and having school age children or not. The ratings on the 13 survey statements served as the dependent variables that were analyzed by utilizing three separate sets of 2x3 Between-Subjects Factorial Analyses of Variance, which generated a total of 39 different analyses. The results provided support for the second, third, and fourth hypotheses. However, the research yielded mixed results for the first hypothesis. The results that were obtained by the Tukey tests demonstrated that Westbrook ("small church") had the lowest ratings on personal responsibility, Manteno ("middle church") had the highest ratings on personal responsibility, and Kankakee First ("large church") had intermediate ratings on personal responsibility that were between Westbrook's and Manteno's ratings. When analyzing personal responsibility in terms of the percentage of participants who completed the surveys at each of the churches, the data revealed that Westbrook had the highest ratings on personal responsibility, Manteno had the middle ratings on personal responsibility, and Kankakee First had the lowest ratings on personal responsibility. The results led to interesting conclusions, as well as, shed light on the issue of church size and its effects upon individuals' acceptance of their personal responsibility to their churches.

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“In Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully” (Romans 12:5-8). God has called us, as followers of Jesus Christ, to come together and enhance the church community. God has empowered us by graciously giving each one of us unique spiritual gifts. God’s powerful gifts come to us with great responsibility. It is our responsibility as Christians to utilize our spiritual gifts in ways that will strengthen the church community, the Body of Christ. “Since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, try to excel in gifts that build up the church” (1 Corinthians 14:6). It is out of our loving obedience to God that we take on the personal responsibility for continuing the work of Jesus Christ through the church. The Nazarene Article of Faith XI states, “The mission of the Church in the world is to continue the redemptive work of Christ in the power of the Spirit through holy living, evangelism, discipleship, and service” (<http://www.nazarene.org>). The Church of the Nazarene lovingly accepts both saints and sinners, called “*corpus permixium*.” We believe in a “mixed-body ecclesiology;” therefore, the church must evangelize and preach to its members their “social and personal responsibilities as believers,” in order to fulfill the mission of the Church (McGrath, 2004, p. 113). Although God calls each of us to

uphold our personal responsibility for helping the church, He also grants us the freedom to choose how we will respond to His call.

There are many people who uphold their personal responsibility for being like Christ in their thoughts, words, and actions. However, there are some people who do not carry out their personal responsibility to their churches. The idea of personal responsibility has intrigued many researchers both inside and outside of the church. A great deal of research has been conducted to examine the numerous factors that underlie and influence people's personal responsibility to their group, specifically their church. An imperative question arises: What factors underlie and constitute one's personal responsibility to the church? Personal responsibility can be thought of in terms of commitment, participation, and contributions to the church. Commitment entails maintaining the church's traditional beliefs and having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Participation encompasses attending church services on Sunday, being involved in church groups, partaking in fellowship, and establishing relationships with both the pastors and church members. Contributions include three aspects: time, such as volunteering; effort, such as helping make church decisions, welcoming people in church, ministering to others outside of the church, and inviting people to attend church; and money, such as tithing. All of these aspects constitute one's personal responsibility to the church.

The idea of personal responsibility is an abstract concept that accounts for numerous thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of individuals. It is also a concept that is impacted by countless variables that are both known and unknown. However, research has been conducted on the notion of personal responsibility to shed light on this complex,

yet central issue. Dougherty (2004), Finke (1994), Iannaccone (1992, 1997), and Stonebraker (1993) have addressed factors that influence the degree to which people uphold their personal responsibility to their churches, which includes: one's sense of belonging, the amount of sacrifice that one is required to give, one's level of satisfaction, and the size of one's church.

Researchers have often referred to people's lack of personal responsibility to the church as the free-rider problem. Finke (1994) explains that free-riders are people who "draw upon collective benefits but withhold individual contributions." Stonebraker (1993) presents an economical definition of free-riders as "those who enjoy the benefits of a product or service, but who do not help pay for it." Iannaccone (1992) points out that religion is a personal choice that allows people to freely choose their level of contribution and participation within the church. Thus, people decide upon their own levels of personal responsibility to their churches, which can be analyzed by measuring their commitment, participation, and contributions of time, effort, and money to their churches. Dougherty (2004, p. 121) emphasizes, "Voluntary organizations live and die by the involvement of their members." The hope of churches is that their members will actively uphold their personal responsibility, instead of passively free-riding on the contributions of others.

The free-rider problem often occurs in churches because of their open, friendly, and loving atmosphere to all people. However, Dougherty (2004) found that when individuals feel a sense of belonging to their churches, it increases their participation; therefore, it reduces the free-rider problem. He explained the sense of belonging brings people together within the church, which creates an intimate and interdependent group. It

is this fellowship that motivates people to uphold their personal responsibility of commitment, participation, and contributions to their churches. Dougherty (2004) noted members' commitment and participation greatly affects the success of an organization, with the latter being the strongest predictor of growth. The free-rider problem greatly hinders the growth and success of churches because fewer resources are available to meet people's needs and spread God's Word to others. A study done by Kanter (1972) revealed that successful groups require "sacrifices of time, energy, and money" (cited in Iannaccone, 1992). It is essential that church members recognize their personal responsibility of contributing to their churches. Iannaccone (1992) asserts that sacrifices can be used as a way to reduce the problem of free-riders.

As Christians, we are given the personal responsibility of contributing our time, effort, and money to our churches; for it is when we give that we receive. However, we must also remember to love and welcome everyone into the Body of Christ, regardless of their levels of commitment, participation, and contributions. Instead of discouraging people from joining, we should encourage people to fulfill their personal responsibility to the church and to Jesus Christ. It is this loving embracement of people that will help others be filled with the Holy Spirit. It is when the Holy Spirit dwells within us that we become satisfied with our lives and our churches. We become motivated to spread our love to others through our commitments, participation, and contributions to our churches.

Research conducted by Hoge and Roozen (1979) revealed that members who had high levels of satisfaction with the church also had higher levels of participation (cited in Dougherty, 2004). Dougherty (2004, p. 121) contends that church members who are satisfied can be thought of as "satisfied customers," who act as advertisers for spreading

their religions and allowing their churches to grow. From a similar point of view, the description of church members as customers implies that they have the personal responsibility to contribute money to their churches, in order to help pay for various needs and ministries. Iannaccone (1997) states, "Of all the behaviors that sustain formal religious institutions, none is more critical than financial giving." He explained religious giving as a rational behavior that is based on one's level of personal responsibility to his or her religion. He noted that church members' financial contributions are greatly skewed; approximately 20% of the members give about 80% of the financial donations. However, all church members must uphold the personal responsibility of contributing resources to their churches, in order to successfully help their churches grow.

In recent years, an increasing amount of research has been conducted to investigate the variables affecting church growth, due to the apparent trends of churches growing tremendously large. McIntosh (1999) points out in his book, *One Size Doesn't Fit All*, that there are now three size categories of churches which are: small churches that have about 15 to 200 members, medium churches that encompass 201 to 400 members, and large churches that include 401 members or more. Finke (1994) examined how the size of the church affects members' Sunday school enrollment and attendance. The results demonstrated that small churches had the highest ratio of Sunday school enrollment in relation to their total church membership and the highest attendance rate, which was 63%. In contrast, large churches had a lower ratio of enrollment and a lower attendance rate of only 42%. Schaller describes this finding by stating, "as a general rule, the larger the congregation, the smaller the proportion of members who are present at worship on any given Sunday" (cited in Stonebraker, 1993). Finke's (1994) research in

Southern Baptist Churches demonstrated that “increasing the size of the organization reduces the level of commitment and conformity an organization generates from its membership.” Dougherty (2004) contends that it is church members’ high levels of commitment that yield greater contributions of time and money. In contrast, as church members’ levels of commitment, participation, and contributions of time, effort, and money are decreased, the problem of free-riding is increased. Although all churches face the problem of free-riders, it is large churches that are the most detrimentally affected (Stonebraker, 1993). Iannaccone (1992) suggests that the free-rider problem occurs more often in larger groups, because it is more difficult to monitor and enforce rules for appropriate behaviors. Finke (1994) states that as organizations become larger, it is harder to hold members personally accountable for their participation and contributions. It is also more challenging in larger groups to recognize and commend members who participate and contribute their resources. However, we must remember that our commitment, participation, and contributions to our churches is not to boast to others, but rather it is our personal responsibility given to us by God.

As the size of churches increase, it is essential that we listen to God and uphold our personal responsibility to our churches. Within the church, researchers have examined many aspects of personal responsibility and how it is influenced by different factors, especially by the size of the church. Research has also been performed outside of the church on the issue of personal responsibility and how it is influenced by the size of the group. There is substantial evidence that shows when individuals are in a group they contribute less than if the individual was alone. This phenomenon is termed “social loafing,” which is formally defined as the “group-induced reduction, in individual output

when performers' efforts are pooled" (Franzoi, 2006, p. 367). Guerin (2003) points out that social loafing is influenced by the degree to which an individual's effort can be identified within the group. As the size of the group increases, the ability to recognize an individual's effort decreases, which often results in social loafing. Latané (1979) demonstrated the occurrence of social loafing by setting up an experiment in which individuals were instructed to shout as loud as they could. The research results revealed that when individuals were alone their average level of shouting intensity was 82%. However, when individuals were in groups with five other people, their average level of shouting intensity was only 75% (cited in Franzoi, 2006). Guerin (2003) contends that people's efforts decrease when they are in groups, because there is "less individual evaluation, less accountability, [and] less assignment of responsibility." Individual members feel less personally responsible for the outcomes of their groups.

The "diffusion of responsibility" is the "belief that the presence of other people in a situation makes one less personally responsible for the events that occur in that situation" (Franzoi, 2006, p. 368). Many researchers have provided evidence for the diffusion of responsibility in a variety of emergency and non-emergency helping situations. Darley and Latané (1968) tested the concept of the diffusion of responsibility by devising an experiment that investigated the degree to which individuals' helping behaviors are influenced by how many people they believe are present. In the experiment, a confederate said that he or she was experiencing a seizure, which resulted in 85% of the participants helping when they believed that they were alone, 62% of the participants helping when they believed there was one other person present, and only 31% of the participants helping when they believed there were four other people present

(cited in Franzoi, 2006). Darley's and Latané's experiment on individuals' helping behaviors in emergency situations paved the way for countless other experiments to be conducted on the diffusion of responsibility. These experiments comprehensively reveal that individuals feel less personally responsible for rendering assistance as the size of the group increases. Although the diffusion of responsibility was originally tested in emergency helping situations, Latané later performed experiments in non-emergency helping situations.

Latané and Dabbs (1975) conducted an experiment to examine the diffusion of responsibility in non-emergency helping situations. In this experiment, a confederate dropped either coins or pencils on an elevator and recorded the number of people who helped pick up the items. The results of the study demonstrated that "as the number of bystanders increased, their individual willingness to help decreased, and in remarkably regular fashion," which provided support for the diffusion of responsibility. Latané proposed a mathematical formula for the diffusion of responsibility that numerically represented the idea that the more people present in a situation; the more individuals will psychologically divide their own personal responsibility. The diffusion of responsibility has been examined in a variety of different contexts, by other researchers. Wiesenhal, Austrom, and Silverman (1983) conducted two experiments on the diffusion of responsibility by measuring donations given to charities. In the first experiment, the researcher asked people at a college campus to donate money for the Guatemalan victims in the 1976 earthquake. The results demonstrated that the contributions decreased as the size of the group increased. In the second experiment, the researcher asked classes with different numbers of students to donate money. Similarly, the results revealed that the

contributions decreased as the size of the class increased. These experiments showed that the diffusion of responsibility occurs in various types of helping situations.

As Christians, we must remember that it is our personal responsibility to help our churches through our commitments, participation, and contributions of time, effort, and money. However, with the recent trends of churches growing tremendously large in size, questions begin to arise. Does the diffusion of responsibility occur in church congregations as the size of the church increases? Does individuals' demonstration of their personal responsibility decrease as the size of their church increases? The purpose of the present research is to determine if the acceptance of personal responsibility is influenced by the size of one's church. In order to examine the issue of personal responsibility, I constructed a cross-sectional survey with items designed to assess the respondents' commitment, participation, and contributions of time, effort, and money, which constituted their personal responsibility to their churches.

After carefully reviewing the research literature, I formulated four hypotheses. First, I hypothesized that the size of the church would have an effect upon the level of personal responsibility presented by the respondents, which was measured by their level of agreement with the survey statements. Specifically, my directional hypothesis was that individuals attending larger churches would exhibit lower levels of personal responsibility than individuals attending smaller churches, due to the diffusion of responsibility. Secondly, I hypothesized that individuals who are church members would show higher levels of personal responsibility to their churches than individuals who are non-members, because church members have explicitly stated their sense of belonging to their churches. Next, I hypothesized that females would display higher levels of personal

responsibility to their churches than males, due to traditional gender roles that view females as helping more than males. Lastly, I hypothesized that individuals who do not have school age children would demonstrate higher levels of personal responsibility to their churches than individuals who have school age children, due to those individuals without school age children having fewer family obligations.

## **Method**

### Participants

The participants for the present study were people who attended Kankakee Westbrook Church of the Nazarene, Manteno Church of the Nazarene, and Kankakee First Church of the Nazarene on Sunday, December 3, 2006. These three churches are part of the Chicago Central District. I was granted permission by the pastors at all three churches to administer my surveys to their congregations. There were 277 people who volunteered to fill out the surveys. Unfortunately, 22 participants overall, which included four participants from Westbrook, ten participants from Manteno, and eight participants from Kankakee First, had to be eliminated from the research project because of their incomplete survey responses. These 22 participants were excluded prior to carrying out the data analyses, in order to not have any missing values. After the 22 participants were eliminated, there were 255 participants whose data were analyzed, which included 55 people from Westbrook, 110 people from Manteno, and 90 people from Kankakee First. The demographics of the 255 people revealed that 174 were members and 81 were non-members, 107 were males and 148 were females, and finally, 78 had school age children and 177 did not have school age children. In addition, all of the participants were 15

years of age or older, which is considered the voting age within the Church of the Nazarene.

### Design

The research project was conducted by using a cross-sectional survey that was administered to three different Nazarene Churches of various sizes. Specifically, Kankakee Westbrook Church of the Nazarene is a small church with 105 members, Manteno Church of the Nazarene is a medium sized church with 314 members, and Kankakee First Church of the Nazarene is a large church with 1,076 members. All of the surveys were distributed to the congregations at the church services at the three Nazarene Churches on Sunday, December 3, 2006. Every survey included three demographic items regarding the respondents' church membership status, gender, and whether or not they had school age children. These three demographic items, as well as the size of the church, were used as the independent variables. On the surveys, there were also 13 statements pertaining to the demonstration of individuals' personal responsibility to their churches, with 11 point rating scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (11), which enabled the participants to circle their levels of agreement with each of the statements. The ratings given by the respondents on these 13 survey statements served as the dependent variables to measure the participants' degree of acceptance of their personal responsibility to their churches. The first five statements pertained to the participation of the respondents, the next six statements dealt with participants' contributions, and the last two statements addressed the commitment of the respondents to their churches.

## Materials

The cross-sectional survey included an introductory note for all of the participants that explained the purpose of the survey and provided the participants with assurance that everyone who volunteered to complete the survey would be kept anonymous. This note made it clear that participants were volunteering. As stated above, following the introductory note there was a demographic section consisting of three items asking if the participant was a member of the church, male or female, and if the participant had school age children. The section composed of the 13 statements requiring ratings included directions that told the participants to circle the number that corresponded with their level of agreement or disagreement with each of the statements. There was also a reminder stating that higher numbers equaled stronger agreement with the statement. Each of the 13 statements on the survey pertained to specific aspects of personal responsibility. Specifically, the first five statements regarded one's level of participation. These five participation statements inquired about the respondent's church attendance on Sundays, involvement in Bible studies, participation in fellowship, strength of relationships with the entire pastoral staff, and the strength of relationships with other members in the church. The next six statements dealt with the participant's contributions of time, effort, and money to the church. These six contribution statements asked about the frequency of volunteering, involvement in church decisions, welcoming visitors, ministering to people who are not members, inviting people who are not members to church, and always tithing at least 10% of one's annual income. Finally, the last two statements pertained to the respondent's level of commitment to the church. These two commitment statements were used to discover if respondents upheld all of the beliefs that are stated in the Church

of the Nazarene's manual and to assess the strength of their personal relationships with Jesus Christ. Prior to the administration of this survey, I was granted permission by the pastors at Kankakee Westbrook Church of the Nazarene, Manteno Church of the Nazarene, and Kankakee First Church of the Nazarene. The pastors at these three churches were given specific instructions on how to administer the surveys to their congregations, in order to hold all of the conditions as constant as possible. A replication of the exact survey that was administered to the three Nazarene Churches is provided in Appendix A.

#### Procedure

Once the survey was constructed, I obtained the 102<sup>nd</sup> Annual Assembly Journal of the Chicago Central District Church of the Nazarene for 2006 from the Benner Library at Olivet Nazarene University. This journal revealed the size of various Nazarene Churches in the area, as well as, the exact location, contact information, and pastors at each of the churches on the list. This wealth of information allowed me to find three churches that met McIntosh's (1999) criteria for small churches (15 to 200 members), medium churches (201 to 400 members), and large churches (401 members and above). Kankakee Westbrook Church of the Nazarene ("small church"), Manteno Church of the Nazarene ("medium church"), and Kankakee First Church of the Nazarene ("large church") were the three churches that were selected for the research study, since they met McIntosh's criteria and were located in Kankakee County. I contacted the pastors, Pastor Peeler at Westbrook, Pastor McCormick at Manteno, and Pastor Heck at Kankakee First, in order to explain the purpose of my research project and ask them for their permission to administer my survey to their congregations. The three pastors gave me their consent

over the phone and by e-mail. The three pastors agreed that Sunday, December 3, 2006 would be the day that the surveys should be administered to their church congregations. Specific instructions were given on how to administer the surveys, as well as, instructions on who should fill out the surveys. It was decided that the surveys would be administered during the church services and that everyone 15 years of age or older could fill out the surveys. There were a total of 1,300 surveys brought to the three Nazarene Churches, 100 surveys to Westbrook, 400 surveys to Manteno, and 800 surveys to Kankakee First, on Thursday, November 30, 2006, in order to make sure that the surveys were ready to distribute on Sunday, December 3, 2006. The surveys were picked up the following week.

### **Results**

Out of the 1,300 surveys that were distributed to the three Nazarene churches, a total of 277 surveys were returned, which encompassed 59 from Westbrook, 120 from Manteno, and 98 from Kankakee First. However, 22 surveys had to be eliminated due to statements being left unanswered. This left 255 surveys, which consisted of 55 participants from Westbrook, 110 participants from Manteno, and 90 participants from Kankakee First. The data from the 255 surveys were analyzed by reading them as three separate 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Designs. The first 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Design used the two independent variables of church size and church membership status. The second 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Design consisted of the two independent variables of church size and gender. The third 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Design explored the effects of church size and having school age children or not. All 13 dependent variables, which were the 13 survey statements pertaining to

personal responsibility, were analyzed as a function of each of the three separate 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Designs. This created 13 Between-Subjects Factorial Analyses of Variance (ANOVA's) for each design, which yielded a total of 39 different analyses. All of the analyses used the .05 level of significance.

The first 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Design, for the two independent variables of church size and church membership status, was investigated using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Table 1 depicts the descriptive statistics for the first 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Design on church size and church membership status for all 13 dependent variables.

**Table 1**

**Mean Strength of Agreement Ratings for Survey Statements 1-13 as a Function of Church Size and Church Membership Status**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Membership</b>	<b>Westbrook (small)</b>	<b>Manteno (medium)</b>	<b>Kankakee First (large)</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>1. Sunday attendance</b>	Yes	9.676	10.615	10.597	10.296
	No	9.714	10.469	9.821	10.001
	<b>Overall</b>	9.695	10.542	10.209	
<b>2. Sunday school</b>	Yes	8.000	6.821	8.565	7.795
	No	6.810	6.594	7.500	6.968
	<b>Overall</b>	7.405	6.707	8.032	
<b>3. Fellowship</b>	Yes	8.441	8.987	8.419	8.616
	No	7.571	8.844	7.929	8.115
	<b>Overall</b>	8.006	8.915	8.174	
<b>4. Pastoral relationships</b>	Yes	8.265	8.897	6.984	8.049
	No	6.952	7.219	5.393	6.521
	<b>Overall</b>	7.609	8.058	6.188	
<b>5. Member relationships</b>	Yes	7.853	8.846	8.306	8.335
	No	7.095	7.844	7.321	7.420
	<b>Overall</b>	7.474	8.345	7.814	

<b>6. Volunteers</b>	Yes	7.676	7.628	7.323	7.542
	No	6.524	6.344	5.536	6.134
	<b>Overall</b>	7.100	6.986	6.429	
<b>7 Involved Decisions</b>	Yes	6.706	5.974	5.290	5.990
	No	3.000	3.813	2.750	3.188
	<b>Overall</b>	4.853	4.893	4.020	
<b>8. Welcomes Visitors</b>	Yes	8.529	8.590	7.871	8.330
	No	5.952	7.813	6.714	6.826
	<b>Overall</b>	7.241	8.201	7.293	
<b>9. Ministers non-member</b>	Yes	6.794	8.179	7.516	7.497
	No	6.810	8.375	7.679	7.621
	<b>Overall</b>	6.802	8.277	7.597	
<b>10. Invites non-member</b>	Yes	6.382	6.782	7.371	6.845
	No	5.095	8.000	6.393	6.496
	<b>Overall</b>	5.739	7.391	6.882	
<b>11. Tithes 10% income</b>	Yes	7.912	8.590	9.000	8.501
	No	6.524	8.500	8.000	7.675
	<b>Overall</b>	7.218	8.545	8.500	
<b>12. Uphold beliefs</b>	Yes	8.500	9.115	9.484	9.033
	No	9.048	8.750	8.393	8.730
	<b>Overall</b>	8.774	8.933	8.938	
<b>13. Relation with Christ</b>	Yes	8.882	10.179	9.839	9.634
	No	9.667	10.375	10.143	10.062
	<b>Overall</b>	9.275	10.277	9.991	

After studying the overall means for church size displayed in Table 1, it appears that Westbrook (“small church”) had the lowest ratings on personal responsibility for nine of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13. Manteno (“medium church”) only had the lowest rating on personal responsibility for one of the 13 survey statements, which was Statement 2. Kankakee First (“large church”) had the lowest ratings on personal responsibility for three of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 4, 6, and 7. In addition, Westbrook (“small church”) only had the highest rating on personal responsibility for one of the 13 survey statements, which was Statement 6. Manteno (“medium church”) had the highest ratings on personal responsibility for ten of the 13 statements, which were Statements 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10,

11, and 13. Kankakee First (“large church”) only had the highest ratings on personal responsibility for two of the thirteen survey statements, which were Statements 2 and 12. The overall means for church membership status showed that church members had higher ratings on personal responsibility than non-members for eleven of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12. Non-members only had higher ratings on personal responsibility than church members for two of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 9 and 13.

Table 2 illustrates the results of the inferential statistical analyses for the first 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Design on the independent variables of church size and church membership status for all 13 dependent variables.

**Table 2**

**ANOVA Summary for 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Analyses of  
Strength of Agreement Ratings for Survey Statements 1-13 as a Function of  
Church Size and Church Membership Status**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>F-observed</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>MSE</b>	<b>Probability</b>
<b>1. Sunday attendance</b>	Church Size	5.578	2	2.125	<b>.004*</b>
	Membership	2.127	1	2.125	.146
	Church Size by Membership Interaction	1.492	2	2.125	.227
<b>2. Sunday school</b>	Church Size	2.105	2	17.465	.124
	Membership	2.039	1	17.465	.155
	Church Size by Membership Interaction	.305	2	17.465	.738

<b>3. Fellowship</b>	Church Size	2.304	2	7.758	.102
	Membership	1.686	1	7.758	.195
	Church Size by Membership Interaction	.286	2	7.758	.751
<b>4. Pastoral relationships</b>	Church Size	9.684	2	7.871	<b>.000*</b>
	Membership	15.423	1	7.871	<b>.000*</b>
	Church Size by Membership Interaction	.072	2	7.871	.930
<b>5. Member relationships</b>	Church Size	1.964	2	6.963	.143
	Membership	6.258	1	6.963	<b>.013*</b>
	Church Size by Membership Interaction	.040	2	6.963	.961
<b>6. Volunteers</b>	Church Size	.846	2	10.854	.430
	Membership	9.505	1	10.854	<b>.002*</b>
	Church Size by Membership Interaction	.181	2	10.854	.834
<b>7. Involved Decisions</b>	Church Size	1.822	2	10.144	.164
	Membership	40.296	1	10.144	<b>.000*</b>
	Church Size by Membership Interaction	.991	2	10.144	.373
<b>8. Welcomes visitors</b>	Church Size	3.123	2	7.381	<b>.046*</b>
	Membership	15.941	1	7.381	<b>.000*</b>
	Church Size by Membership Interaction	1.876	2	7.381	.155
<b>9. Ministers non-member</b>	Church Size	5.012	2	7.275	<b>.007*</b>
	Membership	.111	1	7.275	.740
	Church Size	.019	2	7.275	.981

	by Membership Interaction				
<b>10. Invites non-member</b>	Church Size	4.874	2	9.294	<b>.008*</b>
	Membership	.682	1	9.294	.410
	Church Size by Membership Interaction	3.899	2	9.294	<b>.022*</b>
<b>11. Tithes 10% income</b>	Church Size	2.752	2	12.317	.066
	Membership	2.882	1	12.317	.091
	Church Size by Membership Interaction	.662	2	12.317	.517
<b>12. Uphold beliefs</b>	Church Size	.089	2	5.822	.915
	Membership	.820	1	5.822	.366
	Church Size by Membership Interaction	1.795	2	5.822	.168
<b>13. Relation with Christ</b>	Church Size	6.128	2	2.735	<b>.003*</b>
	Membership	3.485	1	2.735	.063
	Church Size by Membership Interaction	.549	2	2.735	.578

The inferential statistics from Table 2 revealed that the independent variable of church size was statistically significant for six of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 1, 4, 8, 9, 10, and 13. Planned Tukey tests, set at the .05 level of significance, were used to discover where these significant differences occurred. The analyses of Statements 1, 10, and 13 revealed that Westbrook (“small church”) had significantly lower ratings than Kankakee First (“large church”) and Manteno (“medium church”). The analysis of Statement 4 demonstrated that Kankakee First (“large church”) had

significantly lower ratings than Westbrook (“small church”) and Manteno (“medium church”). On Statement 8, Kankakee First (“large church”) and Westbrook (“small church”) had significantly lower ratings than Manteno (“medium church”). Finally, the analysis of Statement 9 revealed that Westbrook (“small church”) had significantly lower ratings than Manteno (“medium church”). The ANOVA’s also showed that the independent variable of church membership status was statistically significant for five of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. The overall means for all five of the survey statements showed that church members had significantly higher ratings on personal responsibility than non-members. Additionally, the ANOVA’s revealed that there was an interaction between church size and church membership status for Statement 10. The interaction showed that at Westbrook (“small church”) and at Kankakee First (“large church”) church members had higher ratings than non-members, while at Manteno (“medium church”) church members had lower ratings than non-members.

The second 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Design, consisting of the two independent variables of church size and gender, was also analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics for this design on church size and gender for all 13 dependent variables.

Table 3

**Mean Strength of Agreement Ratings for Survey Statements 1-13 as a Function of  
Church Size and Gender**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Westbrook (small)</b>	<b>Manteno (medium)</b>	<b>Kankakee First (large)</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>1. Sunday attendance</b>	Male	9.864	10.423	9.970	10.085
	Female	9.576	10.707	10.579	10.287
	<b>Overall</b>	9.720	10.565	10.274	
<b>2. Sunday school</b>	Male	7.545	6.577	7.364	7.162
	Female	7.545	6.914	8.737	7.732
	<b>Overall</b>	7.545	6.745	8.050	
<b>3. Fellowship</b>	Male	7.909	8.846	7.515	8.090
	Female	8.242	9.034	8.702	8.660
	<b>Overall</b>	8.076	8.940	8.108	
<b>4. Pastoral relationships</b>	Male	7.045	8.442	5.909	7.132
	Female	8.242	8.379	6.823	7.815
	<b>Overall</b>	7.644	8.411	6.367	
<b>5. Member relationships</b>	Male	6.909	8.481	7.121	7.504
	Female	8.000	8.621	8.509	8.376
	<b>Overall</b>	7.455	8.551	7.815	
<b>6. Volunteers</b>	Male	6.864	7.154	5.606	6.541
	Female	7.485	7.345	7.439	7.423
	<b>Overall</b>	7.174	7.249	6.522	
<b>7 Involved Decisions</b>	Male	5.227	5.827	3.970	5.008
	Female	5.333	4.914	4.807	5.018
	<b>Overall</b>	5.280	5.370	4.388	
<b>8. Welcomes Visitors</b>	Male	7.045	8.750	7.242	7.679
	Female	7.879	8.017	7.667	7.854
	<b>Overall</b>	7.462	8.384	7.455	
<b>9. Ministers non-member</b>	Male	5.455	7.827	7.000	6.760
	Female	7.697	8.603	7.895	8.065
	<b>Overall</b>	6.576	8.215	7.447	
<b>10. Invites non-member</b>	Male	5.091	6.962	6.545	6.199
	Female	6.424	7.293	7.368	7.029
	<b>Overall</b>	5.758	7.127	6.957	
<b>11. Tithes 10% income</b>	Male	8.045	8.346	8.909	8.434
	Female	6.939	8.759	8.561	8.086
	<b>Overall</b>	7.492	8.552	8.735	
<b>12. Uphold beliefs</b>	Male	9.091	9.000	8.939	9.010
	Female	8.455	9.017	9.263	8.912
	<b>Overall</b>	8.773	9.009	9.101	

<b>13. Relation with Christ</b>	Male	9.273	10.115	9.576	9.655
	Female	9.121	10.345	10.140	9.869
	<b>Overall</b>	9.197	10.230	9.858	

The overall means for church size, illustrated in Table 3, showed that Westbrook (“small church”) had the lowest ratings on personal responsibility for eight of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 1, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13. Manteno (“medium”) only had the lowest rating on personal responsibility for one statement, which was Statement 2. Kankakee First (“large church”) had the lowest ratings on personal responsibility for four of the 13 statements, which were Statements 4, 6, 7, and 8. The overall means for church size also demonstrated that Westbrook (“small church”) did not have the highest ratings on personal responsibility for any of the 13 survey statements. However, Manteno (“medium church”) had the highest ratings on personal responsibility for ten of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 13. Kankakee First (“large church”) had the highest ratings on personal responsibility for only three of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 2, 11, and 12. The overall means for gender revealed that females had higher ratings on personal responsibility than males for eleven of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 13. Males only had higher ratings on personal responsibility for two of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 11 and 12.

Table 4 depicts the results of the inferential statistical analyses for the second 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Design on the independent variables of church size and gender for all 13 dependent variables.

Table 4

**ANOVA Summary for 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Analyses of  
Strength of Agreement Ratings for Survey Statements 1-13 as a Function of  
Church Size and Gender**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>F-observed</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>MSE</b>	<b>Probability</b>
<b>1. Sunday attendance</b>	Church Size	5.983	2	2.129	<b>.003*</b>
	Gender	1.074	1	2.129	.301
	Church Size by Gender Interaction	1.531	2	2.129	.218
<b>2. Sunday school</b>	Church Size	2.379	2	17.460	.095
	Gender	1.046	1	17.460	.307
	Church Size by Gender Interaction	.548	2	17.460	.579
<b>3. Fellowship</b>	Church Size	2.821	2	7.690	.061
	Gender	2.371	1	7.690	.125
	Church Size by Gender Interaction	.824	2	7.690	.440
<b>4. Pastoral relationships</b>	Church Size	12.022	2	8.267	<b>.000*</b>
	Gender	3.174	1	8.267	.076
	Church Size by Gender Interaction	1.126	2	8.267	.326
<b>5. Member relationships</b>	Church Size	3.662	2	6.933	<b>.027*</b>
	Gender	6.178	1	6.933	<b>.014*</b>
	Church Size by Gender Interaction	1.458	2	6.933	.235

<b>6. Volunteers</b>	Church Size	1.246	2	11.015	.289
	Gender	3.967	1	11.015	<b>.047*</b>
	Church Size by Gender Interaction	1.488	2	11.015	.228
<b>7. Involved Decisions</b>	Church Size	2.166	2	11.635	.117
	Gender	.000	1	11.635	.982
	Church Size by Gender Interaction	1.592	2	11.635	.206
<b>8. Welcomes visitors</b>	Church Size	3.354	2	7.775	<b>.037*</b>
	Gender	.221	1	7.775	.638
	Church Size by Gender Interaction	1.775	2	7.775	.171
<b>9. Ministers non-member</b>	Church Size	7.183	2	6.880	<b>.001*</b>
	Gender	13.908	1	6.880	<b>.000*</b>
	Church Size by Gender Interaction	1.520	2	6.880	.221
<b>10. Invites non-member</b>	Church Size	3.768	2	9.427	<b>.024*</b>
	Gender	4.102	1	9.427	<b>.044*</b>
	Church Size by Gender Interaction	.494	2	9.427	.611
<b>11. Tithes 10% income</b>	Church Size	2.233	2	12.402	.109
	Gender	.546	1	12.402	.461
	Church Size by Gender Interaction	.868	2	12.402	.421
<b>12. Uphold beliefs</b>	Church Size	.302	2	5.911	.740
	Gender	.092	1	5.911	.762
	Church Size	.636	2	5.911	.530

	by Gender Interaction				
<b>13. Relation with Christ</b>	Church Size	6.945	2	2.744	<b>.001*</b>
	Gender	.940	1	2.744	.333
	Church Size by Gender Interaction	.765	2	2.744	.466

The ANOVA results from Table 4 showed that the independent variable of church size was statistically significant for seven of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 13. In order to determine where the significant differences occurred, planned Tukey tests were conducted. The analyses of Statements 1, 10, and 13 showed that Westbrook (“small church”) had significantly lower ratings than Kankakee First (“large church”) and Manteno (“medium church”). The analysis of Statement 4 revealed that Kankakee First (“large church”) had significantly lower ratings than Westbrook (“small church”) and Manteno (“medium church”). On Statements 5 and 9 Westbrook (“small church”) had significantly lower ratings than Manteno (“medium church”). For Statement 8, the Tukey test showed that Kankakee First (“large church”) and Westbrook (“small church”) had significantly lower ratings than Manteno (“medium church”). The ANOVA results displayed in Table 4 also revealed that the independent variable of gender was statistically significant for four of the survey statements, which were Statements 5, 6, 9, and 10. The overall means for all four of the survey statements showed that females had significantly higher ratings than males. The ANOVA results from Table 4 demonstrated that there were no interactions between the independent variables of church size and gender for any of the 13 survey statements.

The third 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Design, for the two independent variables of church size and having school age children or not, was examined using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Table 5 displays the descriptive statistics resulting from this analysis for all 13 dependent variables.

**Table 5**

**Mean Strength of Agreement Ratings for Survey Statements 1-13 as a Function of Church Size and Having School Age Children or Not**

<b>Item</b>	<b>School age children</b>	<b>Westbrook (small)</b>	<b>Manteno (medium)</b>	<b>Kankakee First (large)</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>1. Sunday attendance</b>	Yes	9.643	10.886	9.931	10.153
	No	9.707	10.427	10.557	10.230
	<b>Overall</b>	9.675	10.656	10.244	
<b>2. Sunday school</b>	Yes	7.500	6.286	8.103	7.296
	No	7.561	6.973	8.295	7.610
	<b>Overall</b>	7.530	6.630	8.199	
<b>3. Fellowship</b>	Yes	7.429	9.600	7.793	8.274
	No	8.341	8.640	8.492	8.491
	<b>Overall</b>	7.885	9.120	8.142	
<b>4. Pastoral relationships</b>	Yes	6.857	9.371	6.034	7.421
	No	8.073	7.960	6.705	7.579
	<b>Overall</b>	7.465	8.666	6.370	
<b>5. Member relationships</b>	Yes	6.786	9.543	7.207	7.845
	No	7.829	8.093	8.377	8.100
	<b>Overall</b>	7.307	8.818	7.792	
<b>6. Volunteers</b>	Yes	6.571	8.743	6.483	7.266
	No	7.463	6.560	6.902	6.975
	<b>Overall</b>	7.017	7.651	6.692	
<b>7 Involved Decisions</b>	Yes	5.786	6.429	4.483	5.566
	No	5.122	4.840	4.508	4.823
	<b>Overall</b>	5.454	5.634	4.495	
<b>8. Welcomes Visitors</b>	Yes	7.857	9.000	7.241	8.033
	No	7.439	8.067	7.639	7.715
	<b>Overall</b>	7.648	8.533	7.440	

<b>9. Ministers non-member</b>	Yes	6.500	8.086	6.862	7.149
	No	6.902	8.307	7.902	7.704
	<b>Overall</b>	6.701	8.196	7.382	
<b>10. Invites non-member</b>	Yes	4.714	6.686	6.414	5.938
	No	6.293	7.347	7.377	7.005
	<b>Overall</b>	5.503	7.016	6.895	
<b>11. Tithes 10% income</b>	Yes	7.429	8.686	9.034	8.383
	No	7.366	8.507	8.525	8.132
	<b>Overall</b>	7.397	8.596	8.780	
<b>12. Uphold beliefs</b>	Yes	7.714	9.171	8.621	8.502
	No	9.049	8.933	9.393	9.125
	<b>Overall</b>	8.382	9.052	9.007	
<b>13. Relation with Christ</b>	Yes	8.500	10.314	9.793	9.536
	No	9.415	10.200	10.000	9.872
	<b>Overall</b>	8.957	10.257	9.897	

The overall means for church size, shown in Table 5, revealed that Westbrook (“small church”) had the lowest ratings on personal responsibility for eight of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 1, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13. Manteno (“medium church”) only had the lowest rating on personal responsibility for one of the 13 survey statements, which was Statement 2. Kankakee First (“large church”) had the lowest ratings on personal responsibility for four of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 4, 6, 7, and 8. Also, the overall means for church size demonstrated that Westbrook (“small church”) did not have the highest ratings on personal responsibility for any of the 13 survey statements. However, Manteno (“medium church”) had the highest ratings on personal responsibility for eleven of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, and 13. Kankakee First (“large”) only had the highest ratings on personal responsibility for two of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 2 and 11. The overall means for the independent variable of having school age children or not showed that individuals who do not have school age children had significantly higher ratings on personal responsibility than individuals who do have

school age children for nine of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, and 12. Individuals who had school age children only had higher ratings on personal responsibility for four of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 6, 7, 8, and 11.

Table 6 portrays the results of the inferential statistical analyses for the third 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Design for the independent variables of church size and having school age children or not for all 13 dependent variables.

**Table 6**

**ANOVA Summary for 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Analyses of  
Strength of Agreement Ratings for Survey Statements 1-13 as a Function of  
Church Size and Having School Age Children or Not**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>F-observed</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>MSE</b>	<b>Probability</b>
<b>1. Sunday attendance</b>	Church Size	6.737	2	2.123	<b>.001*</b>
	Children	.134	1	2.123	.714
	Church Size by Children Interaction	2.993	2	2.123	.052
<b>2. Sunday school</b>	Church Size	3.056	2	17.583	<b>.049*</b>
	Children	.267	1	17.583	.606
	Church Size by Children Interaction	.114	2	17.583	.892
<b>3. Fellowship</b>	Church Size	4.075	2	7.656	<b>.018*</b>
	Children	.294	1	7.656	.588
	Church Size by	2.631	2	7.656	.074

	Children Interaction				
<b>4. Pastoral relationships</b>	Church Size	14.041	2	8.125	<b>.000*</b>
	Children	.147	1	8.125	.702
	Church Size by Children Interaction	4.349	2	8.125	<b>.014*</b>
<b>5. Member relationships</b>	Church Size	6.049	2	6.804	<b>.003*</b>
	Children	.455	1	6.804	.501
	Church Size by Children Interaction	6.497	2	6.804	<b>.002*</b>
<b>6. Volunteers</b>	Church Size	1.896	2	10.817	.152
	Children	.373	1	10.817	.542
	Church Size by Children Interaction	4.777	2	10.817	<b>.009*</b>
<b>7. Involved Decisions</b>	Church Size	2.588	2	11.526	.077
	Children	2.281	1	11.526	.132
	Church Size by Children Interaction	1.232	2	11.526	.293
<b>8. Welcomes visitors</b>	Church Size	3.641	2	7.783	<b>.028*</b>
	Children	.619	1	7.783	.432
	Church Size by Children Interaction	1.231	2	7.783	.294
<b>9. Ministers non-member</b>	Church Size	4.968	2	7.183	<b>.008*</b>
	Children	2.041	1	7.183	.154
	Church Size by Children Interaction	.524	2	7.183	.593

<b>10. Invites non-member</b>	Church Size	3.854	2	9.370	<b>.022*</b>
	Children	5.804	1	9.370	<b>.017*</b>
	Church Size by Children Interaction	.326	2	9.370	.722
<b>11. Tithes 10% income</b>	Church Size	2.276	2	12.472	.105
	Children	.240	1	12.472	.624
	Church Size by Children Interaction	.071	2	12.472	.931
<b>12. Uphold beliefs</b>	Church Size	1.232	2	5.814	.293
	Children	3.186	1	5.814	.075
	Church Size by Children Interaction	1.849	2	5.814	.160
<b>13. Relation with Christ</b>	Church Size	8.972	2	2.738	<b>.000*</b>
	Children	1.965	1	2.738	.162
	Church Size by Children Interaction	1.404	2	2.738	.248

The information presented in Table 6 demonstrates that the independent variable of church size was statistically significant for nine of the 13 survey statements, which were Statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 13. There were planned Tukey tests conducted to reveal where these differences occurred. For Statements 1, 10, and 13, the tests showed that Westbrook (“small church”) had significantly lower ratings than Kankakee First (“large church”) and Manteno (“medium church”). On Statement 2, Manteno (“medium church”) had significantly lower ratings than Kankakee First (“large church”). The analyses of Statements 3, 5, and 9 showed that Westbrook (“small church”) had

significantly lower ratings than Manteno (“medium church”). On Statement 4 the analyses revealed that Kankakee First (“large church”) had significantly lower ratings than Westbrook (“small church”) and Manteno (“medium church”). The Tukey test for Statement 8 showed that Kankakee First (“large church”) and Westbrook (“small church”) had significantly lower ratings than Manteno (“medium church”). The results from the analyses displayed in Table 6 also showed that the independent variable of having school age children or not was statistically significant for only one of the 13 survey statements, which was Statement 10. The analysis of this statement showed that individuals who did not have school age children had significantly higher ratings than individuals who had school age children. The values in Table 6 also reveal that there were three significant interactions between church size and having school age children or not. These interactions occurred on Statements 4, 5, and 6. The nature of the interactions for all three of these statements demonstrated that individuals at Westbrook (“small church”) and Kankakee First (“large church”) who had school age children had significantly lower ratings on personal responsibility, while individuals at Manteno (“medium church”) who had school age children had significantly higher ratings.

### **Discussion**

The current research project was conducted in order to determine if the acceptance of one’s personal responsibility to his or her church is influenced by the size of the church. In addition, church membership status, gender, and having school age children or not was analyzed to discover if those factors affected the fulfillment of one’s personal responsibility to his or her church. Prior to the administration of the surveys, I hypothesized: (1) individuals who attend larger churches would exhibit lower levels of

personal responsibility than individuals who attend smaller churches; (2) individuals who are church members would show higher levels of personal responsibility to their churches than non-members; (3) females would display higher levels of personal responsibility to their churches than males; and (4) individuals who do not have school age children would demonstrate higher levels of personal responsibility to their churches than individuals who have school age children. The findings showed that three of the four hypotheses were supported by the results of the present research. Specifically, church membership (second hypothesis), gender (third hypothesis), and having school age children or not having school age children (fourth hypothesis) significantly affected individuals' acceptance of personal responsibility to their churches.

The overall pattern of the means from the research results provided support for the second hypothesis by demonstrating that church members had higher ratings on personal responsibility than non-members for eleven of the 13 survey statements. Specifically, church members had higher ratings on personal responsibility than non-church members for (1) church attendance on Sunday, (2) involvement in Sunday school, (3) participating in fellowship, (4) establishing pastoral relationships, (5) establishing relationships with other church members, (6) volunteering, (7) involvement in making church decisions, (8) welcoming visitors, (10) inviting non-members, (11) tithing at least 10% of one's annual income, and (12) upholding the beliefs of the Church of the Nazarene. The inferential statistical analyses revealed that the differences on five of these statements, Statements 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, reached statistical significance showing that church members had significantly higher ratings on the acceptance of their personal responsibility than non-church members, which was consistent with the second

hypothesis. I believe that the second hypothesis was supported due to church members having a stronger sense of belonging and identity to their churches than non-church members. Dougherty (2004) had explained this occurrence by stating that when individuals feel a sense of belonging to their churches, it increases their participation. On the contrary, non-church members had higher ratings on personal responsibility for Statement 9, which pertained to ministering to non-members, and Statement 13, which addressed one's personal relationship with Jesus Christ. However, neither of these differences reached statistical significance, and thus, the results could have been due simply to error.

The overall means from the research findings provided evidence that coincided with the third hypothesis by revealing that females had higher ratings on personal responsibility than males for eleven of the 13 survey statements. These statements demonstrated that females had higher ratings on personal responsibility than males for (1) church attendance on Sunday, (2) involvement in Sunday school, (3) participation in fellowship, (4) establishing pastoral relationships, (5) establishing relationships with other church members, (6) volunteering, (7) involvement in church decisions, (8) welcoming visitors, (9) ministering to non-members, (10) inviting non-members to church, and (13) having strong personal relationships with Jesus Christ. The inferential statistical analyses showed that Statements 5, 6, 9, and 10 were statistically significant. These research results provided support for the third hypothesis stating that females have higher acceptance of personal responsibility to their churches than males. I believe that these results pertaining to males and females were partially obtained as an outcome of traditional gender roles. Specifically, these statements addressed issues such as

establishing relationships, helping others, and reaching out to others, which has typically been regarded as the female gender role. Conversely, Statement 11, which pertained to tithing at least 10% of one's annual income, had a higher rating for males. However, the differences did not come close to statistical significance, and thus, they were probably the result of sampling error.

The overall pattern of the means from the research results coincided with the fourth hypothesis by demonstrating that individuals who did not have school age children had higher ratings on displaying their personal responsibility to their churches than individuals who had school age children for nine of the 13 survey statements. This meant that individuals who did not have school age children had higher ratings than individuals who had school age children for statements (1) church attendance on Sunday, (2) involvement in Sunday school, (3) participation in fellowship, (4) establishing pastoral relationships, (5) establishing relationships with other church members, (9) ministering to non-members, (10) inviting non-members to church, (11) tithing at least 10% of one's annual income, and (12) upholding all of the beliefs of the Church of the Nazarene. The inferential statistical analyses revealed that the differences between the means on Statement 10 reached statistical significance, which demonstrated that individuals who did not have school age children had significantly higher ratings on their acceptance of personal responsibility than individuals who had school age children. These results provided support for the fourth hypothesis. I believe that these results mainly occurred because individuals who do not have school age children have fewer family obligations. Individuals without school age children may have more time available so that they can be more involved in their churches by going to church more often, being involved in various

Sunday school classes, and participating in fellowship more. This high level of involvement would make it easier for individuals without school age children to establish relationships with both the pastors and the other church members. Also, individuals who do not have school age children may have more free time than individuals with school age children to minister to non-members and invite non-members to their churches. In contrast, individuals who had school age children had higher ratings on Statement 6, which addressed volunteering, and Statement 11, which dealt with tithing at least 10% of one's annual income than individuals who did not have school age children. However, these statements did not reach statistical significance, which showed that the results may be due to sampling error.

Interestingly, the present research revealed mixed findings pertaining to the first hypothesis regarding the size of the church and one's personal responsibility to the church. The overall pattern of the means from the research findings did not support the first hypothesis. In fact, Westbrook ("small church") had the lowest ratings on their acceptance of personal responsibility, Manteno ("medium church") had the highest ratings, and the ratings from Kankakee First ("large church") fell in between the ratings from Westbrook and Manteno. All of the research findings combined revealed that Westbrook ("small church") had significantly lower ratings for Statements 1, 3, 8, 9, 10, and 13 for the first 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Design, Statements 1, 5, 9, 10, and 13 for the second 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Design, and Statements 1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 13 for the third 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Design. Manteno ("medium church") only had significantly lower ratings for Statement 2 on all three of the 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Designs. Kankakee First ("large church") had significantly

lower ratings on Statement 4 for the first 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Design and Statements 4 and 8 for the second and third 2×3 Between-Subjects Factorial Designs.

These research findings contradicted my first hypothesis stating that individuals attending larger churches would display lower levels of personal responsibility than individuals who attend smaller churches. However, these results may have less to do with the actual size of the church than to other factors. For instance, Westbrook (“small church”) does not have as many services on Sunday as Manteno (“medium church”) and Kankakee First (“large church”), which could possibly lower the rating for church attendance on Sunday. Also, individuals who attend Westbrook (“small church”) may want to keep their church small, so they may be less eager to welcome visitors, minister to non-members, and invite non-members to their church than individuals at Manteno (“medium church”). Finally, I believe that individuals at Westbrook (“small church”) had lower ratings on their personal relationships with Jesus Christ than Manteno (“medium church”) and Kankakee First (“large church”), due to numerous variables that were not taken into account, instead of the variable of church size. For instance, how long one has been a Christian may affect his or her current personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Next, the research findings showed that Manteno (“medium church”) had significantly lower ratings than Kankakee First (“large church”) on individuals’ involvement in a Bible study, small group, or Sunday school class. This result demonstrated that Manteno (“medium church”) had lower acceptance of personal responsibility than Kankakee First (“large church”), which again was in opposition to my first hypothesis. I believe that this finding may be partially due to Manteno (“medium

church”) offering fewer Bible studies, small groups, or Sunday school classes than Kankakee First (“large church”) offers.

Lastly, the research showed that Kankakee First (“large church”) had significantly lower ratings on establishing relationships with the entire pastoral staff than both Westbrook (“small church”) and Manteno (“medium church”). I believe that the size of Kankakee First and other large churches makes it impossible for the pastors to have strong relationships with everyone who attends their church. Similarly, large churches tend to have more pastors than small and medium size churches, which makes it more difficult for church attendees to establish strong relationships with the entire pastoral staff.

The present research results for the first hypothesis went against some of the past research findings. Finke (1994), Stonebraker (1993), Dougherty (2004), and Iannaccone (1992) all explained that as the size of the church increased, the free-rider problem also increased. However, Manteno (“medium church”) had the highest display of personal responsibility or the lowest level of free-riders; whereas, Westbrook (“small church”) had the lowest demonstration of personal responsibility or the highest level of free-riders. Also, Finke (1994) found that small churches had the highest Sunday school attendance at 63%; while, large churches had the lowest Sunday school attendance at 42%. Conversely, I found that large churches had the highest Sunday school involvement; whereas, medium churches had the lowest Sunday school involvement.

Finally, my research results did not support prior research conducted on the diffusion of responsibility by Latané and Dabbs (1975), as well as, Wiesenhal, Austrom, and Silverman (1983). The diffusion of responsibility states that as the size of the group

increases, the acceptance of personal responsibility decreases. In contrast, my research revealed that individuals at small churches exhibited the lowest levels of personal responsibility, individuals at medium churches displayed the highest level of personal responsibility, and individuals at large churches fell in between small and medium churches in their acceptance of personal responsibility.

I believe that the results of my research can be explained in many different ways. For instance, individuals at a small church may be trying to keep their church small or they may not have the financial resources to minister to large groups of people, which would explain why Westbrook (“small church”) was less likely to encourage non-members to come to their church. Also, individuals at a medium church might be trying to grow, so they are more likely to evangelize and invite non-members to their church. In addition, medium churches are still small enough that church attendees can establish close relationships with the entire pastoral staff and other church members. These conclusions would explain why Manteno (“medium church”) had the highest ratings overall on personal responsibility. Finally, individuals who attend large churches may have more difficulty establishing close relationships with the entire pastoral staff and other church members, due to the substantial number of people that attend large churches. Large churches typically have more resources than small churches and medium churches, which would allow large churches to offer more services on Sunday and more Bible studies, small groups, and Sunday school classes.

When all of these factors are taken into consideration, it offers an explanation of why the present research resulted in the individuals at Manteno (“medium church”) having the highest level of personal responsibility, the individuals at Kankakee First

(“large church”) having a middle level of personal responsibility, and the individuals at Westbrook (“small church”) having the lowest level of personal responsibility. Another explanation I had regarding the results that I obtained is that the opposite of the diffusion of responsibility occurs in churches, which I believe can be termed the infusion of personal responsibility. The infusion of personal responsibility occurs when individuals attend churches with many people. The more people attending the individual’s church, the more that individual realizes that he or she has a personal responsibility to serve everyone and help strengthen the church. However, when churches grow extremely large, individuals realize that they have human limitations and cannot possibly serve everyone within substantially large congregations. My concept of the infusion of responsibility in churches would help explain why individuals who attended Manteno (“medium church”) demonstrated higher levels of personal responsibility than Westbrook (“small church”). The idea that humans have limitations would explain why individuals at Kankakee First (“large church”) exhibited lower levels of personal responsibility than Manteno (“medium church”).

Although the present research eliminated as many confounds as possible to increase the internal validity, there were still a few limitations that may have altered the results of the study. First, there were only three Nazarene Churches that were surveyed, which decreased the external validity. Westbrook (“small church”), Manteno (“medium church”), and Kankakee First (“large church”) may not have been representative of other Nazarene Churches in that particular size category, which makes it very difficult to generalize the research findings. Similarly, the surveys that were received from each of the three Nazarene churches may not be representative of that particular church. To

explain, Westbrook (“small church”) only has 105 church members, but a total of 59 people filled out the surveys that allowed for 55 of those surveys to be analyzed. The data from Westbrook (“small church”) represented about 52% of that church. Manteno (“medium church”) has 314 members, but only 120 people filled out the surveys and 110 of those surveys were used for the analyses. The data from Manteno characterized only 34% of that church. Finally, Kankakee First (“large church”) has 1,076 members, but only a mere 98 people filled out the surveys and only 90 of those surveys were analyzed. The data from Kankakee First only represented a low 8% of the entire church. I strongly believe that the extremely low representation of Kankakee First provides support for my first hypothesis. My first hypothesis states that individuals attending larger churches will display lower levels of personal responsibility than individuals attending smaller churches. When examining the percentage of people who felt personally responsible to complete the surveys at each of the churches, it reveals that 52% of the individuals at Westbrook (“small church”), 35% of the individuals at Manteno (“medium church”), and only 8% of the individuals at Kankakee First (“large church”) completed the entire survey. This tremendous difference in the percentage of people who were represented at each of the churches could have greatly skewed the results of the present research. To explain, 92% of the people at Kankakee First, 65% of the people at Manteno, and 48% of the people at Westbrook did not respond to their church’s request to fill out the survey. I believe that many of the people from both Kankakee First and Manteno, who did not comply with their church’s request, would have provided data that would have changed the outcome of the study by having lower ratings on their acceptance of personal responsibility to their churches.

Taking into consideration the findings and limitations of the present research, I believe that while a great deal of information was discovered about the effects of church size on individuals' personal responsibility, further research should be conducted on this subject matter using larger and more **representative** samples of the various church sizes. This would greatly increase the external validity, and thus, allow the results to be generalized. Also, further research should be conducted specifically on the acceptance of personal responsibility at medium size churches. From the present research, it seemed that Manteno ("medium church") had higher ratings for almost every aspect of personal responsibility. Future research should try to answer the question: What is the ideal size for churches?

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## Appendix A

**This survey is being conducted as part of a research project for the Association of Nazarene Sociologists and Researchers. The information collected will be used to better understand the functioning of the Church of the Nazarene. Please do not write your name on the survey, in order to ensure that all information is obtained anonymously. The completion of this survey is voluntary. Thank you for your participation.**

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**Directions: Please answer each of the following demographic questions/items by checking the appropriate response.**

1. Are you currently a member of this church? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
  2. Gender: Male \_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_
  3. Do you have children of school age? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_
- 

**Directions: Please carefully read each of the following statements. Answer by circling the number that corresponds to your own personal level of agreement/disagreement with the statement. Note: Higher numbers equal stronger agreement with the statement.**

1. I attend my church almost every Sunday.

(Strongly **Disagree**) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 (Strongly **Agree**)

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2. I am involved in a Bible study, small group, or Sunday school class at my church.

(Strongly **Disagree**) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 (Strongly **Agree**)

---

3. I participate in fellowship at my church.

(Strongly **Disagree**) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 (Strongly **Agree**)

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4. I establish strong relationships with the entire pastoral staff at my church.

(Strongly **Disagree**) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 (Strongly **Agree**)

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**Please turn the survey over and complete the following statements.**

5. I establish strong relationships with other members in my church.

(Strongly **Disagree**) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 (Strongly **Agree**)

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6. I frequently volunteer at my church.

(Strongly **Disagree**) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 (Strongly **Agree**)

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7. I am involved in the decisions that are made at my church.

(Strongly **Disagree**) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 (Strongly **Agree**)

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8. I welcome visitors to my church.

(Strongly **Disagree**) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 (Strongly **Agree**)

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9. I minister to others outside of my church.

(Strongly **Disagree**) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 (Strongly **Agree**)

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10. I invite people, who are not members, to my church.

(Strongly **Disagree**) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 (Strongly **Agree**)

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11. I always tithe at least 10% of my annual income.

(Strongly **Disagree**) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 (Strongly **Agree**)

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12. I uphold all of the beliefs that are stated in the Church of the Nazarene's manual.

(Strongly **Disagree**) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 (Strongly **Agree**)

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13. I have a very strong personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

(Strongly **Disagree**) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 (Strongly **Agree**)

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