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A Comparison of Rural and Urban Churches and Ministers of Missouri

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INTRODUCTION

This series of reports include data on the rural churches of Missouri (Missouri A.E.S. Res. Bull. No. 984), the rural ministers of Missouri (Missouri A.E.S. Res. Bull. No. 995), and a comparison of rural churches and ministers for 1952 and 1967 (Missouri A.E.S. Res. Bull. No. 999). Another point of comparison is between rural and urban churches and their ministers. Lawrence Hepple and his associates followed this pattern of presentation in the earlier study of the rural church in Missouri (Missouri A.E.S. Res. Bull. No. 633E). In that case, rural churches were compared with those from a limited sample of small urban places (2,500-5,000 population). We have chosen to compare the rural churches and ministers with the churches of a single metropolitan center (Springfield, Missouri, population 120,096, 1970). Therefore, interviews were conducted in 1968 with a complete census of the churches of that city. We cannot claim that Springfield is representative of metropolitan areas in the state. It does provide us, however, with a point of comparison which is clearly urban in terms of population criteria. The rural sample consisted of all churches located in an 8 percent stratified random sample of rural townships selected for the original study in 1952 (See Missouri A.E.S. Res. Bull. No. 984:27 for details of the rural sample).

What differences did we expect to find on the basis of rural and urban locations? Broadly speaking, we thought that organizational patterns of churches and theological-social positions of ministers would conform to common assumptions about differences in rural and urban society. Specifically we were interested in examining the commonly held stereotype of the greater specialization, formalization, and professionalism in urban organizations and greater liberalism of urban ministers in theology and social and moral issues. While these considerations represent our general framework, we attempt to present a rather comprehensive rural-urban comparison of churches and ministers.

RURAL AND URBAN CONGREGATIONS

Size and organizational type. There is one difference in rural and urban congregations which tends to eclipse others; it is simply that the churches in the urban center were on the average considerably larger. Whereas about one-third of the rural churches had fewer than 50 members, only 13 percent of the urban churches were that small; on the other hand, about one-third of the rural churches compared with two-thirds of the urban churches had 100 or more members. The size differences extended into the upper extremes. For example, 13 percent of the urban congregations had 1,000 or more members compared with less than one percent of the rural congregations. Size differences

tend to be reflected directly in differences in resources and facilities and more indirectly in complexity of organization. Several of the largest urban congregations had annual budgets in excess of \$300,000 and sizable professional staffs. As an illustration of organizational complexity, several of the urban congregations had more than 100 Sunday School classes.

The difference in size of congregations in rural and urban areas presents a dilemma for comparison; size itself seems to be such an important organizational variable that any comparison between rural and urban churches should take it into account. However, controlling out the size factor in a rural-urban comparison in some ways tampers with a very important characteristic of rural social organizations—that is their relatively small scale. It has long been understood that rural and urban differences which exist can be related to differences in complexity of the social organization. Therefore, we are interested in looking at the rural-urban differences in religious groups with the realization that size of groups may be a critical characteristic, but at the same time, emphasizing that small scale is a fact of rural social organization just as larger scale is associated with urban society. Only after examining rural-urban differences in organizations as a whole are we willing to apply controls of size of congregation.

We have utilized the church-sect organization typology throughout our discussions of the rural church reported previously. It has proved to be useful in understanding behavior of congregations and clergy. Now, we are interested in determining if the church-sect distinction holds in urban areas and if it is related to other variables in the same manner in rural and urban areas. An initial observation is that the distributions of church and sect congregations are quite different in the rural and urban samples with a higher proportion of the urban congregations classified as sect-type. This is consistent with the literature which finds existence of sect-type groups to be associated with urban residence.

Religious Groups	Rural Sample (percent)	Urban Sample (percent)
Church-type	71	43
Sect-type	29	57

There is also a difference in the relationship of size of congregation and organizational type in the rural and urban areas which must be considered in making comparisons. In the urban area, almost all (20 of 21) of the very small congregations (under 50 members) were sect-type; while in the rural area, the smallest congregations were quite evenly divided between church and sect congregations (94 church-type congregations and 77 sect-type congregations). Even up to membership of 100, there were only 5 urban church-type congregations compared with 49 urban sect-type congregations. In the rural sample there were 197 church-type and 125 sect-type congregations of less than 100 members. A practical result of these differences in size of organizational type by residential areas is that we cannot make direct comparison of small (under 100) rural and urban church-type congregations because there are virtually no cases in the urban category. Thus in presenting the data, after making general rural-urban comparisons by total church and sect categories, we must confine our comparison to larger church-type congregations (100-299 and 300+). Sect-type groups do not present the same size distribution problem and rural-urban comparisons can be made for the full range of size categories.

Facilities of rural and urban churches. The physical manifestation of religious groups is the sanctuary and related structures and virtually all religious groups own and maintain such structures. These vary from the single room which serves as a sanctuary plus any other congregational activities to structures of more than 100 separate rooms. In addition to size of building, rural and urban churches were compared on possession of a piano, kitchen facilities, a minister's study, and a parsonage.

Church buildings in the metropolitan area tended to be quite sizeable compared with those in the rural sample. Eighty-three percent had four or more rooms in addition to entrances and other service areas and about one-half had 10 or more rooms. This contrasts with rural churches in which only about one-quarter had four or more rooms and a church with as many as 10 rooms was a rarity. With the exception of a piano, there were substantial differences in facilities between the rural and urban congregations in favor of urban congregations (Table 1). The rural-urban differences in churches having particular facilities tended to increase when church-type and sect-type congregations were considered separately. Possession of facilities was related to size of congregations in both

Table 1 . Rural-Urban Comparisons of Facilities of Congregations by Size of Church and Organizational Type

Description of Congregation	Selected Facilities				
	Organ	Piano	Kitchen**	Ministers' Study	Parsonage
All					
Rural (505)	28.9*	88.1	51.7*	23.0*	36.0*
Urban (161)	65.8	90.1	72.0	68.3	52.2
Church type					
Rural (359)	35.9*	93.6 ^a	60.4*	25.1*	39.6*
Urban (67)	79.1	94.0	89.6	80.6	65.7
Sect type					
Rural (146)	11.6*	74.6*	30.1*	17.8*	27.4*
Urban (94)	56.4	87.2	59.6	59.6	42.6
Church type					
100-299					
Rural (125)	55.2	92.8 ^a	83.2 ^a	36.0*	64.0
Urban (15)	73.3	100.0	93.3	80.0	73.3
300 +					
Rural (37)	89.2 ^a	86.5 ^a	91.9 ^a	70.3*	94.6*
Urban (47)	89.4	91.5	89.4	89.4	68.1
Sect type					
- 50					
Rural (77)	7.8 ^a	76.6 ^a	27.3	9.1 ^a	23.4
Urban (20)	40.0	90.0	35.0	25.0	35.0
50-99					
Rural (48)	10.4*	70.8 ^a	22.9*	22.9*	31.2
Urban (29)	48.3	96.6	51.7	62.1	37.9
100 +					
Rural (21)	28.6*	76.2 ^a	57.1	38.1*	33.3
Urban (45)	68.9	80.0	75.6	73.3	48.9

^a Not enough cases in one or more cells for chi-square test

* Difference between rural and urban congregations significant at 5 percent level by chi square test

** In our earlier presentation of rural facilities we presented data for both kitchen facilities and dining facilities but since the pattern was so similar only kitchen facilities are presented here

rural and urban setting but differences between rural and urban congregations were retained when size and organizational type were controlled.

In addition to possession of a piano which most of the congregations had regardless of size, organizational type or rural-urban location, rural-urban differences were least in providing a parsonage. The largest rural-urban differences were found in providing a ministers' study and having an organ. These facilities were substantially more common among urban sect-type congregations than among their size and organizational type counterpart in the rural sample.

Religious group services. Aside from regular worship services which is the principal criterion for identifying an active religious group, we often think of Sunday evening services, midweek services and revivals as being in the tradition of rural churches.

With only one exception, the churches of Springfield had weekly worship services. This was in sharp contrast with the 30 percent of the rural churches which did not have worship services as frequently as once a week. However, more unexpectedly, urban churches were also more likely to have Sunday evening and midweek services while the proportions of rural and urban churches having revivals was virtually equal (Table 2). In

Table 2 . Rural-Urban Comparisons of Services of Congregations by Size of Church and Organizational Type

Description of Congregations	Weekly Worship Services	Sunday Evening Services	Midweek Services	Revivals
All				
Rural (505)	70.3 [*]	52.1 [*]	42.0 [*]	64.4
Urban (161)	99.4	74.4	70.0	62.1
Church type (all)				
Rural (359)	64.6 [*]	42.3	33.7	59.6 [*]
Urban (67)	100.0	52.2	43.3	44.8
Sect type (all)				
Rural (146)	84.2 [*]	76.0 [*]	62.3 [*]	76.0
Urban (94)	99.0	90.3	89.2	74.5
Church type				
100-299				
Rural (125)	84.0 ^a	52.8	41.6	68.0 [*]
Urban (15)	100.0	66.7	33.3	33.3
300 +				
Rural (37)	91.9 ^a	56.8	56.8	64.9
Urban (47)	100.0	55.3	44.7	44.7
Sect type				
- 50				
Rural (77)	81.8 ^a	71.4 ^a	62.3	68.8
Urban (20)	95.0	94.7	84.2	70.0
50-99				
Rural (48)	83.3 ^a	75.0	54.2 [*]	79.2
Urban (29)	100.0	89.7	89.7	72.4
100 +				
Rural (21)	95.2 ^a	95.2 ^a	81.0	95.2 ^a
Urban (43)	100.0	88.9	91.1	77.8

^a Not enough cases in one or more cells for chi-square test

^{*} Difference between rural and urban congregations significant at 5 percent level by chi-square test

both the rural and urban setting, sect-type congregations were more likely than church-type congregations to have these services. Furthermore, the services were about as likely to be found in small as large sect-type churches. Revivals among church-type groups were more common in rural areas than in the urban areas.

The division between sect-type and church-type congregations appears to be quite useful in determining type of services especially Sunday evening and midweek services. The lack of difference between rural and urban congregations when organizational type and size are taken into account suggests that the church/sect distinction transcends residential categories.

Selected educational activities. In addition to Sunday school and various types of religious services which are considered under other topics, religious groups may provide activities designed to socialize members and prospective members into the religious group. The type of educational activities considered here are Daily Vacation Bible School, training for new members, and showing religious films. Daily Vacation Bible School is a concentrated period of religious instruction for young people usually lasting one week. Training for new members refers to an established program for instructing prospective members—either youth of the church or outsiders. Showing religious films indicates the use of modern communication technology for religious socializing purposes. Because of the “rational” characteristics of these educational activities, we expected urban churches to utilize them more extensively than rural churches.

When rural and urban churches were compared as a whole, there were substantial differences in favor of urban churches for all three educational activities (Table 3). The rural-urban differences were not diminished when church and sect-type congregations were considered separately. Among church-type groups, however, when size was controlled, the differences were not significant. Furthermore, in one category (DVBS church-type 100-299 members) a higher proportion of rural congregations reported having the activity. Rural-urban difference was maintained more clearly among sect-type congregations when size was controlled. For the largest sect-type groups, however, the differences were not large enough to be statistically significant for any of the activities.

Contributions to extra-local activities. Local congregations traditionally support “good works” of the larger society in the form of contributions to homes for the aged, hospitals, orphanages or childrens’ homes, and colleges or universities. Organizations supported are commonly administered under denominational auspices. The support of extra-local activities provides a clue to a congregation’s participation in the larger society and we might expect urban churches to engage in this type of activity more frequently than rural congregations.

All the activities were supported by substantial proportions of both rural and urban congregations ranging from a low of 44 percent of the rural congregations supporting hospitals to a high of 74 percent of the urban congregations supporting colleges. With the exception of greater urban support for colleges and universities, the proportions of rural and urban congregations providing support to extra-local institutions was quite close (Table 4). The similarity was not as great, however, when church and sect congregations were considered separately. Then a higher proportion of urban churches (both church- and sect-type) tended to offer support to extra-local activities. In addition, church and sect congregations maintain distinctive patterns of behavior which are not eliminated by controlling for urban-rural location.

Table 3 . Rural-Urban Comparison of Educational Activities of Congregations by Size of Church and Organizational Type

Description of Congregation	Daily Vacation Bible School	Training for New Members	Religious Films
All			
Rural (505)	52.1*	35.2*	46.7*
Urban (161)	70.2	61.9	81.4
Church type			
Rural (359)	60.4*	41.5*	53.5*
Urban (67)	82.1	81.8	92.5
Sect type			
Rural (146)	31.5*	19.9*	30.1*
Urban (94)	61.7	47.9	73.4
Church type			
100-299			
Rural (125)	81.6 ^a	57.6	68.0 ^a
Urban (15)	73.3	66.7	86.7
300 +			
Rural (37)	75.7	83.8 ^a	86.5 ^a
Urban (47)	89.4	91.3	95.7
Sect type			
- 50			
Rural (77)	20.8*	11.7	23.4
Urban (20)	45.0	20.0	40.0
50-99			
Rural (48)	37.5*	25.0*	27.1*
Urban (29)	62.1	48.3	82.8
100 +			
Rural (21)	57.1	38.1	61.9
Urban (45)	68.9	60.0	82.3

^a Not enough cases in one or more cells for chi-square test

* Difference between rural and urban congregations significant at 5 percent level by chi-square test

Suborganizations. It was expected that organizations in the urban area would be more complex. Number and type of suborganizations within congregations were used as indicators of organization complexity.

Information was obtained about the following suborganizations: Sunday school, women's organizations, youth organizations, choir, men's organizations, young adults' organizations, and older adults' organizations. A congregation might have more than one of any of the above suborganizations with the exception of a Sunday School.

The urban churches were far more likely than the rural churches to report five or more suborganizations. The large rural-urban difference persisted for size and church/sect type with the exception of the largest church-type groups, where the difference was fairly small.

In Table 6 the proportion of congregations having a given type of suborganization is shown; Sunday school was almost universal in all size, organizational type, and residence categories. The other suborganizations were, without exception, more commonly present in urban churches. Dividing organizations on the basis of the church/sect distinction tended to highlight the rural-urban differences. Rural-urban differences in sect-type

Table 4 . Rural-Urban Comparison of Congregations Contributing to Extra-Local Institutions by Size of Church and Organizational Type

Description of Congregation	Extra-local institutions			
	Home for Aged	Hospital	Orphanage	College or University
All				
Rural (503)	57.0	43.8	64.4	57.0*
Urban (161)	59.6	51.6	63.4	73.9
Church type				
Rural (358)	69.0*	55.4*	74.3	67.9*
Urban (67)	83.6	85.1	80.6	88.1
Sect type				
Rural (145)	27.6*	15.1*	39.6	29.9*
Urban (94)	42.6	27.7	51.1	63.8
Church type				
100-299				
Rural (125)	80.0 ^a	67.2	87.2 ^a	78.4 ^a
Urban (15)	66.7	66.7	73.3	73.3
300 +				
Rural (37)	78.4	73.0	83.8	86.5 ^a
Urban (47)	87.2	89.4	80.9	91.5
Sect type				
- 50				
Rural (76)	22.4	10.5 ^a	29.3	23.7
Urban (20)	25.0	15.0	35.0	40.0
50-99				
Rural (48)	27.1	16.7	43.8	29.2*
Urban (29)	48.3	31.0	55.2	65.5
100 +				
Rural (21)	47.6	28.6	66.7	55.0
Urban (45)	46.7	31.1	55.6	73.3

^a Not enough cases in one or more cells for chi-square test

* Difference between rural and urban congregations significant at 5 percent level by chi-square test

Table 5 Rural-Urban Comparison of Number of Sub-organizations of Congregations by Size of Congregation and Organizational type

Description of Congregation	Five or more suborganizations
All types	
Rural (505)	14.1*
Urban (161)	55.3
Church type	
Rural (359)	19.2*
Urban (67)	74.6
Sect type	
Rural (146)	1.4*
Urban (94)	41.5
Church type	
100-299	
Rural (125)	26.4 ^a
Urban (15)	66.7
300 +	
Rural (37)	73.0
Urban (47)	83.0
Sect type	
- 50	
Rural (77)	0.0 ^a
Urban (20)	20.0
50-99	
Rural (48)	2.1 ^a
Urban (29)	31.0
100 +	
Rural (21)	4.8*
Urban (45)	57.8

^a Not enough cases in one or more cells for chi-square test

* Difference between rural and urban congregations significant at 5 percent level by chi-square test

Table 6. Rural-Urban Comparison of Suborganizations of Congregations by Size of Church and Organizational Type

Description of Congregation	Suborganizations						
	S.S.	W.O.	Y.O.	Choir	M.O.	Y.A.O.	O.A.O.
All							
Rural (505)	91.5	56.2*	39.4*	33.7*	15.8*	7.3*	5.0*
Urban (161)	95.0	76.4	78.9	67.7	42.9	24.2	14.3
Church type							
Rural (359)	92.2	66.6*	43.2*	40.7*	21.2*	8.6*	5.9*
Urban (67)	97.0	94.0	89.6	88.1	58.2	26.9	20.8
Sect type							
Rural (146)	89.7	30.8*	30.1*	16.4*	2.7*	4.1*	2.7 ^a
Urban (94)	93.5	63.8	71.3	53.2	31.9	22.3	9.6
Church type							
100-299							
Rural (125)	92.0 ^a	85.6 ^a	38.4*	58.4	28.8 ^a	12.8 ^a	8.0 ^a
Urban (15)	100.0	93.3	93.3	80.0	40.0	13.3	0.0
300 +							
Rural (37)	89.2 ^a	94.6 ^a	94.6 ^a	75.7 ^a	73.0*	18.9	16.2
Urban (47)	95.7	95.7	95.7	95.7	95.7	34.0	27.7
Sect type							
- 50							
Rural (77)	85.7 ^a	23.4	23.4*	10.4 ^a	1.3 ^a	5.2	1.3 ^a
Urban (20)	94.7	45.0	55.0	30.0	10.0	10.0	0.0
50-99							
Rural (48)	91.7 ^a	29.2*	29.2*	18.8*	2.1 ^a	0.0	4.2 ^a
Urban (29)	96.6	62.1	79.3	51.7	24.1	10.3	6.9
100 +							
Rural (21)	100.0 ^a	61.9	42.9*	33.3*	9.5*	9.5*	4.8 ^a
Urban (45)	91.1	73.3	73.3	64.4	46.7	35.6	15.6

^aNot enough cases in one or more cells for chi-square test

*Difference between rural and urban congregations significant at 5 percent level by chi-square test

S.S.= Sunday school

W.O.= Women's organization

Y.O.= Youth organization

M.O.= Men's organization

Y.A.O.= Young adult's organization

O.A.O.= Older adult's organization

congregations seemed to survive size controls to a greater extent than in church-type congregations.

It is also of interest to consider the entire pattern of suborganizations as an index of organizational complexity. As Coughenour and Hepple demonstrated, the suborganizations form a cumulative pattern, (Missouri A.E.S. Res. Bull. No. 633B, P. 93). It can be observed in Table 6 that a majority of the urban congregations had the first four suborganizations (through choir) while a majority of the rural congregations had only the first two suborganizations (through women's organizations). Divided by church and sect, we find that a majority of urban church-type congregations had the first five suborganizations compared with the first two sub-organizations for the rural church-type congregations. Similarly, a majority of urban sect-type congregations had the first four suborganizations compared with only the first suborganization for rural sect-type congregations. The general patterning also showed a higher level of suborganizations in urban congregations when size of congregation was controlled. Thus, suborganizations as patterned here demonstrate the greater complexity of urban congregations as well as the greater complexity of church-type congregations when compared with sect-type congregations.

Formalization of activities. Differences in rural and urban society suggest more formalization of organization among urban churches. This should be manifested in having formal contracts with ministers, having regularly scheduled church-board meetings and having paid employees other than the senior ministers (Table 7). Generally, such rural-urban differences were observed. About one-third of the rural churches had formal contracts with their minister compared with about 85 percent of the urban congregations. The contrast is even sharper when sect-type congregations are considered separately in which case 10 percent of the rural compared with 81 percent of the urban sect-type churches had formal ministerial contracts. No size or organizational-type control eliminated the rural-urban differences.

Regularly scheduled church board meetings were more common among urban congregations by 69 percent to 41 percent. The division by church and sect-type congregations retained the rural-urban difference at a somewhat higher level. Control by

Table 7 . Rural-Urban Comparison of Regularly Scheduled Board Meetings, Formal Contract with Minister and Employed Person (other than senior minister) of Congregations by Size of Church and Organizational Type

Description of Congregation	Employed Person ^b		Have Regularly Scheduled Board Meetings	Have Formal Contract with Minister ^c
	one or more paid employees	two or more paid employees		
All				
Rural (505)	50.3*	16.2*	41.0*	(453) 32.9*
Urban (160)	74.6	51.6	69.4	(153) 85.0
Church type				
Rural (359)	57.1*	20.1*	49.0*	(323) 42.1
Urban (67)	94.0	79.1	88.1	(64) 90.6
Sect type				
Rural (146)	33.5*	6.8*	21.2*	(130) 10.0*
Urban (94)	60.6	31.9	55.9	(89) 80.9
Church type				
100-299				
Rural (125)	74.4 ^a	25.6 ^a	63.2	(115) 40.9*
Urban (15)	86.7	60.0	80.0	(13) 92.3
300 +				
Rural (37)	94.5 ^a	64.9*	83.8 ^a	(34) 52.9*
Urban (47)	100.0	93.6	93.6	(46) 89.1
Sect type				
- 50				
Rural (77)	23.4 ^a	2.6 ^a	10.4 ^a	(64) 7.8 ^a
Urban (19)	25.0	10.0	26.3	(19) 63.2
50-99				
Rural (48)	41.7	10.4 ^a	25.0*	(47) 12.8*
Urban (29)	55.1	24.1	65.5	(28) 78.6
100 +				
Rural (21)	52.4*	14.3*	52.4	(19) 10.5*
Urban (45)	80.0	46.7	62.2	(42) 90.5

^a Not enough cases in one or more cells for chi-square test

* Difference between rural and urban congregations significant at 5 percent level by chi-square test

^b In addition to the senior minister

^c Number reduced because no information

size reduced the rural-urban percentage differences substantially for church-type congregations and for the largest category of sect-type congregations but the medium size sect-type congregations retained a clear rural-urban percentage difference.

The employment of persons other than the minister to carry on the activities of the church was more common among urban congregations. The most common type of employment in both rural and urban congregations was custodian followed by employment of a church secretary. Urban congregations employed relatively more professional type workers such as associate or youth ministers, education and music directors. The employment of two or more people showed greater rural-urban differences than the employment of one or more especially among the church-type congregations.

Income of the congregation and related topics. Differences in income of rural and urban churches is in part a reflection of size of congregations but the considerable income differences cannot be attributed to that alone. Among rural congregations, fewer than one in five had annual incomes as high as \$10,000, while almost two-thirds of the urban congregations had this level of income (Table 8). The large percentage differences between rural and urban congregations persisted when church and sect-type congregations were considered separately. The only control category in which the rural-urban difference was not substantial was the largest church-type category; and that case is probably due to the low income cut-off point. These findings suggest that in rural areas the maintenance of the church plant and the provision of services are accomplished to a great extent by nonmonetary means. There are fewer paid employees and, therefore, possibly greater work contributions by congregation members.

The pattern of ministerial expenses is quite close to that of total income. Only slightly more than one-fourth of the rural churches provided as much as \$3,000 for ministerial expenses, while more than two-thirds of the urban churches did so (Table 8).

Rural-urban differences were substantial in the means of raising money which probably can be interpreted in the context of general urban-rural differences more satisfactorily than level of income. The use of pledges to raise money is a rational means consistent with urbanized patterns. Only 15 percent of the rural churches compared with 51 percent of the urban utilized pledges to raise any part of their income (Table 9). The rural-urban difference among church-type congregations was even greater. Generally speaking, control by size of congregation when church and sect-type congregations were considered separately did not greatly affect the magnitude of rural-urban differences.

The data on use of free will offerings as the principal means of raising money was almost the obverse of pledges and the patterning by size and organizational type remained essentially the same.

Summary of rural-urban differences among churches. When rural and urban congregations were compared on organization size and complexity, consistent and substantial differences were found. Fewer and less prominent differences were observed in selected programs and activities. Organizational and program differences on the basis of the church and sect distinction persisted across the rural and urban division. Size of congregation was a major distinction between rural and urban congregations and when it was controlled many of the organizational differences were reduced substantially but others persisted. To return to a point made earlier, there is great rural-urban difference in scale with attendant differences in organizational characteristics. Controlling for size does

not alter the reality of the difference. What it does suggest is that some rural-urban differences can be best explained by scale not by cultural or ideological differences between rural and urban societies.

Table 8 . Rural-Urban Comparison of Annual Income of Churches and Ministerial Expenses for Congregations by Size of Church and Organizational Type

Description of Congregation	Annual income \$10,000 or more	Ministers expenses \$3,000 or more
All		
Rural (505)	17.1*	26.6*
Urban (160)	64.6	67.7
Church type		
Rural (359)	21.5*	30.4*
Urban (67)	80.6	83.6
Sect type		
Rural (146)	5.7*	17.3*
Urban (94)	53.2	56.4
Church type		
100-299		
Rural (125)	29.6*	47.6
Urban (15)	66.7	70.0
300 +		
Rural (37)	94.6	97.3 ^a
Urban (47)	93.6	91.5
Sect type		
- 50		
Rural (77)	1.4 ^a	5.8 ^a
Urban (19)	20.0	20.0
50-99		
Rural (48)	2.1 ^a	27.1*
Urban (29)	44.8	58.6
100 +		
Rural (21)	28.6*	33.3*
Urban (45)	73.3	71.1

^a Not enough cases in one or more cells for chi-square test

* Difference between rural and urban congregations significant at 5 percent level by chi-square test

Table 9 . Rural-Urban Comparison of Use of Pledges and Free Will Offerings as a Means of Raising Money for Congregations by Size of Church and Organizational Type

Description of Congregation	Churches with any percent of income from pledges	Churches with most (95% or more) of income from free will offerings
All		
Rural (478)	15.1*	(499) 68.5*
Urban (157)	51.0	(157) 38.2
Church type		
Rural (351)	20.2*	(358) 63.7*
Urban (67)	68.7	(67) 20.9
Sect type		
Rural (137)	8.0*	(141) 80.9*
Urban (90)	37.8	(90) 51.1
Church type		
100-299		
Rural (123)	22.8 ^a	(124) 61.3*
Urban (15)	73.3	(15) 13.3
300 +		
Rural (37)	37.8*	(37) 48.6*
Urban (47)	68.1	(47) 23.4
Sect type		
- 50		
Rural (69)	7.2 ^a	(72) 75.0
Urban (19)	36.8	(19) 52.6
50-99		
Rural (47)	6.4*	(48) 91.7*
Urban (27)	44.4	(27) 40.7
100 +		
Rural (21)	14.3*	(21) 76.2
Urban (44)	34.1	(44) 56.8

^aNot enough cases in one or more cells for chi-square test

*Difference between rural and urban congregations significant at 5 percent level using chi-square test

RURAL AND URBAN MINISTERS COMPARED

In the comparison of rural and urban ministers, we examine the possibility that rural ministers are less cosmopolitan and professionally oriented and more likely to be theologically, morally, socially and politically conservative. As in our comparison of rural-urban congregations, we attempt to present a rather comprehensive comparison of rural and urban ministers as they relate to their work situations.

Background and characteristics of rural and urban ministers. Local congregations offer career sites of varying appeal which are not equally available to all ministers. Denominations, of course, are a constraint on location, but such considerations as social background, education, and personal preferences are also matters to be taken into account in career placement and mobility. Rural-urban location is a career site distinction of potential importance. We expected rural churches to attract ministers with rural youth experiences and less cosmopolitan backgrounds and those with less professional credentials, largely manifested by level of education.

Social origins. Both rural and urban ministers were likely to have been born in Missouri or adjacent states, but there was a somewhat greater tendency for rural ministers to be native born Missourians (56.5 of the rural ministers and 45.3 percent of the urban ministers). The rural-urban differences in state of birth, although not large, were present for both church and sect-type ministers.

There was a clear difference in youth residence of rural and urban ministers. About one-half of the urban ministers had spent most of their youth in urban places (2,500 population or more) while about one-fourth of the rural ministers were reared in urban settings. The difference was maintained for both church and sect-type ministers although both rural and urban sect-type ministers were more likely to have been reared in a rural area than was true for their church-type counterparts (Table 10).

As part of the background of ministers we considered the occupations of their fathers. Rural ministers were somewhat more likely to have fathers in blue-collar occupations. Overall, about 80 percent of the rural ministers and 70 percent of the urban ministers were from blue-collar families (Table 11). The rural-urban distinction increased for church-type ministers but diminished to almost nothing for sect-type ministers. Among sect-type groups, about 90 percent of the ministers were from blue-collar families.

Table 10 . Rural-Urban Comparison of Size of Place of Youth Location of Ministers by Organizational type of Congregation

Size of Place where most of youth spent	Total		Church type		Sect type	
	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent
	(N=382)	(N=150)	(N=240)	(N=67)	(N=142)	(N=83)
- 200	57.3	38.7	49.6	28.4	70.4	47.0
200-2499	14.9	10.7	15.4	9.0	14.1	12.0
2500	27.7	50.6*	35.0	62.7*	15.5	41.0*

* Difference between rural and urban ministers significant at the 5 percent level by chi-square test

Table 11 . Rural-Urban Comparison of Occupation of Ministers' Fathers by Organizational Type of Congregation

Father's Occupation	Total		Church type		Sect type	
	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent
	(N=378)	(N=148)	(N=238)	(N=67)	(N=140)	(N=81)
White collar	19.6	30.4	25.2	50.7	10.0	13.6
Blue collar	80.4	69.6*	74.8	49.3*	90.0	86.4

* Difference between rural and urban ministers significant at the 5 percent level by chi-square test

Sex, age and education. Both rural and urban ministers were predominantly men. Only 4 percent of the rural ministers and 3 percent of the urban ministers were women.

There was some tendency for rural ministers to be younger. A higher proportion of rural ministers were under 35 years of age, urban ministers were relatively more likely to be in the 35-49 year age category, and the proportions of rural and urban ministers over 50 years were quite similar. The rural-urban age difference was more pronounced for church-type than sect-type ministers. It was quite unusual to find ministers of urban church-type congregations under 35 years of age giving credence to the hypothesis of rural churches as a training ground for larger urban congregations. The parallel age distributions of rural and urban sect-type ministers do not suggest such career mobility.

Overall, urban ministers had a higher level of education than rural ministers. However, a rural-urban difference was even more pronounced when church and sect-type congregations were considered separately. Then the pattern was for the preponderance of the urban church-type ministers to have post-college work compared with less than a majority of rural church-type ministers. On the other hand, a preponderance of rural sect-type ministers had not gone beyond high school with the possible exception of Bible School.

Table 12 . Rural-Urban Comparisons of Age of Ministers by Organizational Type of Congregation

Age of Minister	Total		Church type		Sect type	
	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent
	(N=380)	(N=150)	(N=239)	(N=67)	(N=141)	(N=83)
under 35 years	26.1	14.0	29.7	10.4	19.8	16.9
35-49 years	34.2	50.7	32.6	53.7	36.9	48.2
50 years and over	39.7	35.3*	37.7	35.8*	43.3	34.9

* Difference between rural and urban ministers significant at the 5 percent level by chi-square test

Table 13. Rural-Urban Comparison of Education of Ministers by Organizational Type of Congregation

Years of Education **	Total		Church type		Sect type	
	Rural percent (N=482)	Urban percent (N=149)	Rural percent (N=240)	Urban percent (N=67)	Rural percent (N=142)	Urban percent (N=82)
High school or less	32.2	26.9	20.0	4.5	75.4	45.8
Some college	21.2	32.2	32.1	20.9	17.6	41.0
Post college	46.6	40.9*	47.9	74.6*	7.0	13.3*

* Difference between rural and urban ministers significant at the 5 percent level by chi-square test

** Excludes Bible college

To summarize, rural ministers were more likely than urban ministers to come from a rural background but only slightly more likely to come from families in which the father was a blue-collar worker. The difference between rural and urban ministers in white-collar, blue-collar family background was accounted for almost entirely by church-type ministers. The age of rural and urban ministers differed in that rural ministers were relatively more numerous in the youngest (under 35 years) and oldest (50 years and over) age category and urban ministers concentrated in the middle age category (35-49). This tends to support the contention that rural churches serve as a stepping stone for younger ministers and a place of partial retirement for older ones. Finally, educational levels of rural and urban ministers were substantially different in the direction which suggested lower professional credentials for rural ministers. Rural-urban educational differences were larger when church-type and sect-type ministers were considered separately.

The Work Situation of Rural and Urban Ministers

The work and careers of ministers are centered on individual congregations. Even among highly structured denominations, the minister as pastor is principally engaged in congregational activities. The minister-congregation relationship is even more pervasive among less structured mainline religious groups (e. g., Baptist and Disciples of Christ) and among most of the sect groups. In this section we shall make comparisons of rural and urban ministers on some relationships with their congregations as well as their income and professional mobility aspirations.

The minister and his church. Several items are presented together in Table 14 which pertain to the minister and his congregation. Among those considered are: number of congregations in the charge, roll membership of the charge, tenure of the minister in the present charge, number of separate charges ever served, number of years since the minister's first pastorate, whether or not the minister had remained in the pastoral ministry since first entering (or whether he had interrupted it for other vocational activities either religious or secular) and whether the minister has regular secular employment in addition to his ministerial duties.

As can be seen in Table 14, generally there were statistically significant differences between rural and urban ministers in their work settings. Furthermore, there was a tendency for greater rural-urban differences among ministers of church-type congregations than among ministers of sect-type congregations. As we examine the individual items in Table 14, it is seen that almost all (98 percent) of the urban ministers served only one congregation; this compared with 63 percent of rural ministers who served a single congregation. The biggest difference however, was among church-type groups in which case 98 percent of the urban compared with 54 percent of the rural ministers served only one congregation. While among sect-type congregations, 78 percent in the rural sample

Table 14 . Rural-Urban Comparisons of the Minister and His Church-- Selected Relationships by Organizational Type of Congregations

	Total		Church type		Sect type	
	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent
	(N=382)	(N=150)	(N=240)	(N=67)	(N=142)	(N=83)
1. Only one congregation in charge	63.3	98.0*	54.4	98.5*	78.2	97.6*
2. Total roll membership in charge						
- 70	34.0	25.3	17.1	4.5	62.7	42.2
70-179	32.2	19.3*	32.9	10.4*	31.0	26.5*
180 +	38.8	55.3*	50.0	85.1	6.3	31.2
3. Tenure in present location						
first 2 years	45.7	34.0	44.2	32.8	47.9	34.9
2-3.9 years	26.5	23.3*	30.4	23.9*	23.2	22.9
4 years and over	27.8	42.7*	25.4	43.3*	28.9	42.2
4. Total number of charges ever served						
1	20.2	13.3	15.9	3.0	27.5	21.7
2 or 3	32.0	32.0	34.3	22.4*	28.2	39.8
4 or more	47.8	54.7	49.8	74.6*	44.4	38.6
5. Number of years since first pastorate						
0-2 years	15.4	6.0	13.7	0.0	18.3	10.8
3-10 years	34.6	25.3	37.5	13.4	29.6	34.9
11-20 years	22.8	38.7*	22.1	49.3*	23.9	30.1
21 + years	27.2	30.0*	26.7	37.3*	28.2	24.1
6. Continuous service as a pastor since entering ministry						
% yes	74.6	67.3	77.5	68.7	69.7	66.3
7. Full-time ministry (no regular secular employment)	51.8	73.3*	61.3	92.5*	35.9	57.8*

* Difference between rural and urban ministers significant at the 5 percent level by chi-square test

and 98 percent in the urban area served a single congregation. Rural-urban differences in size of charges were substantial in favor of urban ministers even though they were less likely to have more than one congregation. Among church-type charges, of urban ministers, 85 percent had 180 or more members compared with 50 percent of their rural counterpart. Almost no rural sect-type charges (6 percent) were in the largest size category compared with 31 percent of the charges of urban sect-type ministers.

On the whole, rural ministers had shorter tenure in their present location than was the case for urban ministers. Whereas, 28 percent of the rural ministers had been in their present location 4 or more years, 43 percent of the urban ministers had tenure that long. Ministers of church-type and sect-type congregations showed similar rural-urban differences in tenure.

Overall, urban ministers had served more separate charges in their careers than rural ministers, but the difference was not large enough to be significant. Ministers of sect-type congregations did not show a significant rural-urban difference. However, there was a substantial difference between rural and urban ministers of church type congregations. One-half the rural church-type ministers had served four or more separate charges, compared with three-quarters of the urban church-type ministers.

More of the urban than rural clergymen had been in the ministry 10 or more years. The difference was accounted for largely by church-type ministers among whom 49 percent in rural locations and 87 percent in urban locations had been in the ministry more than 10 years.

There was little rural-urban difference in the percentages that had remained continuously in the pastoral ministry since first entering it. A substantial majority in all control categories had served without interruption since first entry. On the other hand, substantial numbers were engaged in secular occupations concurrently with their pastoral work. This pattern was most common among ministers of rural and sect-type congregations. Concurrent secular employment was rare among urban church-type ministers (Table 14).

Total hours worked. Ministers were asked to indicate how many hours they spent per week in each of the following 12 activities: sermon preparation, meditation and study, conducting services, visiting the sick, calling on prospective members, other pastoral calling, counseling, administration, church committee meetings, denominational meetings, inter-denominational meetings and community meetings. The summation of hours reported is presented in Table 15. This procedure may omit some activities in which the ministers engaged, and it may at the same time over-estimate the time spent in professional activities. The data should be interpreted as the comparative responses given by ministers to the same stimulus questions rather than a statement of absolute hours spent in the activities enumerated.

Rural ministers, when compared with urban ministers, tended to report fewer hours per week devoted to professional activities. Fifty-four percent of the rural ministers compared with 27 percent of the urban ministers accumulated fewer than 40 hours a week in the 12 activities. At the other extreme, 19 percent of the rural compared with 34 percent of the urban ministers reported devoting 60 or more hours to professional activities. The rural-urban differences in time devoted to professional activities were greater for ministers of church-type than sect-type congregations. The greater involvement in secular occupations of rural and sect-type ministers contributes directly to their fewer hours in professional ministerial activities.

Income. There was a decided difference in total family income from all sources for rural

Table 15. Rural-Urban Comparisons of Hours per Week Devoted to Twelve Professional Ministerial Activities by Organizational Type of Congregation

Hours per week	Total		Church type		Sect type	
	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent
	(N=382)	(N=150)	(N=240)	(N=67)	(N=142)	(N=83)
0-19	19.1	8.7	14.2	0.0	27.5	15.7
20-39	34.8	18.0	33.7	9.0	36.6	25.3
40-59	26.7	34.0	29.6	37.3	21.8	31.3
60+	19.4	34.3*	22.5	53.7*	14.1	27.7*

* Difference between rural and urban ministers significant at the 5 percent level by chi-square test.

and urban ministers (Table 16). At \$7,800, the median family income of urban ministers was about \$2,000 above that of rural ministers. A higher proportion of the family income comes from ministers' salaries in urban than in rural areas. In the rural sample, ministers' salaries accounted for one-half or more of family income in 41 percent of the cases compared with 58 percent of the cases in the urban setting.

Rural-urban differences in income prevailed for both church and sect-type ministers and family incomes of church and sect-type ministers was quite similar. Sect-type ministers, however, derived a smaller proportion of their incomes from ministerial salary and a larger proportion from secular occupations than church-type ministers did.

Professional mobility aspirations of rural and urban ministers. In terms of work situation, ministers were asked if their present church presented an adequate challenge and for their

Table 16. Rural-Urban Comparisons of Family Income of Ministers by Organizational Type of Congregation

Income	Total		Church type		Sect type	
	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent
	(N=370)	(N=148)	(N=235)	(N=67)	(N=135)	(N=81)
- \$4,000	29.7	10.1	26.0	6.0	36.3	13.6
4,000-5,799	27.0	13.5	26.8	11.9	27.4	14.8
5,800-7,799	27.0	25.7	29.8	29.9	22.2	22.2
\$7,800 +	16.2	50.7*	17.4	52.2*	14.1	49.4*

* Difference between rural and urban ministers significant at the 5 percent level by chi-square test

preference of size of congregation and town relative to their present location.

Most ministers felt that their present charge presented a situation which was sufficiently challenging. However, there was a difference in this between rural ministers (74 percent) and urban ministers (94 percent) which was statistically significant. Also, rural church-type ministers were more likely than ministers of any of the other control categories to regard their present charge as not sufficiently challenging their professional skills (Table 17).

About equal proportions of rural (50 percent) and urban (47 percent) ministers would like to have larger congregations while 4 percent of the rural and 14 percent of the urban ministers would prefer smaller congregations. In a break in parallel urban-rural differences for church-type and sect-type congregations, it was the rural church-type and urban sect-type ministers which tended to be most desirous of larger congregations.

About 2 in 5 of the rural ministers would prefer a larger town while about 1 in 6 of the urban ministers were so inclined. It is of interest that almost one quarter of the urban ministers stated that they would prefer a smaller town.

When considering the three questions related to mobility aspirations, rural church-type ministers were most consistent of any of the categories in expressing mobility aspirations while their urban counterparts were least likely to express such aspirations. There was relatively little difference between rural and urban sect-type ministers. This indicates greater concern of church-type ministers about professional mobility and also suggests that, among church-type ministers, mobility is to some extent associated with movements from rural to urban settings.

Table 17 . Rural-Urban Comparisons of Mobility Aspirations of Ministers by Organizational Type of Congregation

	Total		Church type		Sect type	
	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent
	(N=382)	(N=150)	(N=240)	(N=67)	(N=142)	(N=83)
1. Does congregation represent adequate demands on professional skills						
% saying yes	78.1	92.7*	68.3	97.0*	83.8	91.6
2. Desired size of congregation relative to present one						
larger	50.3	46.6	55.9	37.3	40.4	54.4
same size	46.2	39.7*	40.7	43.3	55.9	36.7*
smaller	3.5	13.7	3.4	19.4	3.7	8.9
3. Desired size of town relative to present one						
larger	43.0	17.1	48.1	16.4	34.3	17.7
same size	52.7	60.3*	46.4	61.2*	63.5	59.5*
smaller	4.3	22.6*	5.5	22.4	2.2	22.8

* Difference between rural and urban ministers significant at the 5 percent level by chi-square test

In summary, the work situation and career patterns of ministers show differences which can be partially accounted for in terms of urban-rural location. However, our understanding is increased by considering ministers of church-type and sect-type congregations separately. It appears that in many respects urban-rural location had more effect upon the work patterns of church-type than sect-type ministers. Specifically, the percentage differences were greater between rural and urban church-type ministers than between rural and urban sect-type ministers on number of congregations in the charge, roll membership of 180 members or more, tenure of 4 or more years, total number of charges ever served, being in the ministry 21 or more years, continuous service in the ministry, and engaging in secular occupations. These differences together with rural ministers' greater aspirations for larger congregations, larger towns, and the more common feeling that their present congregation did not present sufficient challenge to them (when compared with any of the other organizational residential types of ministers) suggests that rural settings represent a less desirable career site for many church-type ministers and that career mobility includes movement from rural to urban areas. The younger ages of rural church-type ministers provides further support for this interpretation.

Theological Position, Stand on Social and Moral Issues, and Political Position of Rural and Urban Ministers.

In this section we consider the theological, social-moral, and political positions of ministers. It was expected that differences between rural and urban ministers would be found reflecting the more liberal view of urban society.

Theological position. In the interviews, ministers were asked to identify themselves theologically as neo-orthodox, liberal, conservative, or fundamentalist. Neo-orthodox and liberal categories were combined and labeled liberal. There was some difference in theological position between rural and urban ministers, but contrary to expectations urban ministers were somewhat less likely than rural ministers to regard themselves as theologically liberal and more likely to say they were fundamentalist (Table 18). The difference in theological position between rural and urban ministers is accounted for almost entirely by sect-type ministers. The slight (not statistically significant) rural-urban differences in theological position for church-type ministers was in the expected direction (that is urban ministers were more liberal and less fundamentalist).

Table 18 Rural-Urban Comparisons of Theological Position of Ministers by Organizational Type of Congregation

Theological Position	Total		Church type		Sect type	
	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent
	(N=378)	(N=149)	(N=238)	(N=67)	(N=140)	(N=82)
Liberal	30.7	23.5	35.7	41.8	22.1	8.5
Conservative	37.8	34.2	43.3	44.8	28.6	25.6
Fundamentalist	31.5	42.3*	21.0	13.4	49.3	65.9*

* Difference between rural and urban ministers significant at the 5 percent level by chi-square test

However, the greater rural-urban difference among sect-type ministers placed urban ministers in a less liberal and more fundamentalist position. Put another way, there was not as much theological difference between church and sect-type ministers in rural areas as in the urban locations. An interpretation of this finding suggests that in rural areas both church and sect-type ministers reflect general community norms. Thus theological distinctions between church and sect-type ministers are muted. In the urban locations, a finer match is made between theological position and organizational type.

Social and moral issues. A set of twelve statements concerning social and moral issues were posed to the ministers for their support or opposition (provision was also made for a neutral response). On an *a priori* basis, the items were divided as social issues and moral issues. Subsequently, a factor analysis indicated that the *a priori* division was the most appropriate two factor solution. The same factor analysis showed that the item on racial integration did not fit well into either set of items. In the presentation which follows, however, we include racial integration as a social issue.

Social issues. We had expected urban ministers to be more liberal in their approach to social issues. Thus we expected them to show greater support than rural ministers for federal aid to education, racial integration, the poverty program and foreign aid, and more opposition to capital punishment and the Vietnam war. The data (Table 19) show that response patterns for rural and urban ministers are quite similar for both the comparisons of total samples and when divided on the basis of church/sect congregations. The one rural-urban significant difference was for sect-type ministers in response to the item on the poverty program. In that case the direction of the difference was not as expected. In fact, contrary to our expectations among ministers of sect-type congregations, there was a general tendency for urban ministers to respond in a less liberal manner than rural ministers. It is also of interest that clear church-sect differences did not appear on the social issue items.

Moral issues. In a similar manner we thought that rural ministers would be more conservative or more "moralistic" on the moral issue items. Thus, we expected a larger proportion of rural than urban ministers to support Sunday closing laws and oppose sale of alcoholic beverages, smoking, social dancing, mixed swimming, and social drinking. Overall responses of rural and urban ministers were not very different (Table 19). For the total sample, only two significant differences occurred. Unlike the pattern for social issues, a clear church-sect difference was apparent on moral issues. Also, sect-type ministers seemed to account for most of the rural-urban difference that occurred; and contrary to expectations, urban sect-type ministers tended to be more moralistic than rural sect-type ministers.

Political position. An effort was made to determine the ministers' political position. They were asked to identify themselves as politically liberal or conservative with the expectation that urban ministers would be more likely than rural ministers to be liberal. The overall difference between rural and urban ministers was significant; but, again contrary to expectation, urban ministers tended to be more conservative (Table 20). When division was made on the basis of church-sect types, rural ministers of both types were more likely to identify themselves as politically liberal, although, the difference was statistically significant for only sect-type ministers.

Table 19. Rural-Urban Comparisons of Responses to Selected Social and Moral Issues of Ministers by Organizational Type of Congregation

Issue	Total		Church type		Sect type	
	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent
	(N=382)	(N=150)	(N=240)	(N=67)	(N=142)	(N=83)
SOCIAL ISSUES						
Federal aid to education						
support	68.6	64.7	67.5	61.2	70.4	67.5
oppose	24.1	25.3	27.5	28.4	18.3	22.9
neutral	7.3	10.0	5.0	10.4	11.3	9.6
Capital Punishment						
support	38.0	44.0	37.6	35.8	38.7	50.6
oppose	42.4	34.7	46.9	40.3	35.2	30.1
neutral	19.4	21.3	15.5	23.9	26.1	19.3
Racial Integration						
support	77.2	72.0	86.7	91.0	61.3	56.6
oppose	9.7	10.7	4.2	3.0	19.0	16.9
neutral	13.1	17.3	9.2	6.0	19.7	26.5
Poverty Program						
support	54.7	48.7	55.8	62.7	52.8	37.3
oppose	18.1	26.7	18.3	19.4	17.6	32.5*
neutral	27.2	25.7	25.8	17.9	29.6	30.1
Vietnam War						
support	45.1	48.7	48.5	52.2	39.4	45.8
oppose	28.6	25.3	30.1	26.9	26.1	24.1
neutral	26.2	26.0	21.3	20.9	34.5	30.1
Foreign Aid						
support	59.3	53.3	64.2	61.2	51.1	47.0
oppose	18.1	20.0	16.7	14.9	20.6	24.1
neutral	22.6	26.7	19.2	23.9	28.3	28.9

Summary and interpretation of rural-urban differences.

In some respects, rural and urban churches were quite different with regard to organization. Urban churches tended to have larger membership, more elaborate facilities, more complex organization, more specialized and larger numbers of auxiliary personnel, and more available resources. In some programs and activities, rural and urban churches also showed differences. Urban churches were more likely to have worship services every week, vacation Bible schools, training programs for new members, and perhaps somewhat surprisingly, were more likely to have such traditional programs as Sunday evening and midweek services. There was little overall difference between proportions of rural and urban congregations that had revival services and those that gave at least some support to extra-local benevolence programs (homes for the aged, hospitals, orphanages) with the exception that more urban churches supported institutions of higher education.

Table 19 (continued)

Issue	Total		Church type		Sect type	
	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent
	(N=382)	(N=150)	(N=240)	(N=67)	(N=142)	(N=83)
MORAL ISSUES						
Sunday Closing						
Laws						
support	67.8	64.7	62.5	56.7	76.8	71.1
oppose	14.4	18.7	17.5	25.4	9.1	13.3
neutral	17.8	16.7	20.0	17.9	14.1	15.7
Sale of Alcoholic Beverages						
support	9.4	10.0	13.3	14.9	2.8	6.0
oppose	80.1	80.0	73.3	67.2	91.5	90.4
neutral	10.5	10.0	13.3	17.9	5.6	3.6
Smoking						
support	11.8	6.0	15.9	11.9	4.9	1.2
oppose	65.1	79.3*	59.8	61.2	73.9	94.0*
neutral	23.1	14.7*	24.3	26.9	21.1	4.8*
Social Dancing						
support	24.1	24.0	35.1	46.3	5.6	6.0
oppose	61.7	66.7	47.3	35.8	85.9	91.6
neutral	14.2	9.3	17.6	17.9	8.5	2.4
Mixed Swimming						
support	45.5	38.7	56.9	59.7	26.2	21.7
oppose	25.8	40.0*	12.6	9.0	48.2	65.1*
neutral	28.7	21.3*	30.5	31.3	25.5	13.3*
Social Drinking						
support	8.7	7.3	12.6	13.4	2.1	2.4
oppose	84.0	84.7	78.2	73.1	93.7	94.0
neutral	7.3	8.0	9.2	13.4	4.2	3.6

* Difference between rural and urban ministers significant at the 5 percent level by chi-square test

We examined the organization and programs of rural and urban churches while controlling for church-sect type of congregation and for size of congregation. The church-sect distinction transcended rural and urban locations. Thus, almost without exception, the direction of church-sect differences in organization and programs of rural churches was repeated in urban churches. However, the magnitude of difference on the basis of church-sect distinction was often quite different in rural and urban locations.

Size of congregation was related to organizational characteristics and programs of congregations in both rural and urban locations. At the same time, size of congregation was very unevenly distributed in rural and urban locations; especially, when church-type and sect-type congregations were considered separately. Many of the rural church-type congregations were so small that they hardly had an urban size match. The effect of controlling for size and church-sect type while comparing rural and urban congregations

Table 20 . Rural-Urban Comparisons of Political Position of Ministers
by Organizational Type of Organization

Political Position	Total		Church type		Sect type	
	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent	Rural percent	Urban percent
	(N=368)	(N=145)	(N=232)	(N=67)	(N=136)	(N=78)
Liberal	43.8	30.3	45.7	34.3	40.4	26.9
Conservative	56.2	69.7*	54.3	65.7	59.6	73.1*

* Difference between rural and urban ministers significant at 5 percent level by chi-square test

can be seen in the traditional services (Sunday evening services, midweek services, and revival services). As stated above, an unexpected finding was that urban congregations compared with rural congregations were as likely or more so to have these services. With but one exception, controlling for church-sect congregations did not change this finding. Only when congregation size controls were introduced did the pattern change substantially. Then the traditional services were as likely or more likely to be present in rural church-type congregations. With the exception of revival services, however, the introduction of size controls did not alter the direction of the pattern of more traditional type services among urban sect-type congregations. In this and other examinations of the data, the effects of difference in size of congregations in rural and urban locations accounted for part of the differences in organizational characteristics and program.

In interpreting the relationship of size to organization and program, it should be remembered that relatively small size is a distinguishing feature of rural social groups (in this case churches). From this standpoint, differences in scale of rural and urban churches should not be controlled out, but as part of the reality of the respective settings, size differences should be incorporated into the interpretation of rural-urban differences. This kind of interpretation would account for rural-urban differences on the basis of characteristics (in this case size) of the groups rather than cultural differences. The data, in fact, provide support for both kinds of interpretations since controlling size of congregations tends to reduce, but does not eliminate organization and program differences between rural and urban congregations.

Turning to a consideration of ministers of rural and urban congregations, it was found that rural ministers were more likely than urban ministers to have rural youth backgrounds. On a number of factors, rural-urban differences were greater among church-type than sect-type ministers. Thus, rural church-type ministers were more likely than urban church-type ministers to come from blue-collar families, to be in the youngest age category, and to have less than seminary training. Differences of the same magnitude on these factors did not occur between rural and urban sect-type ministers.

This same pattern tended to be present in the minister's work situation. Rural-urban differences were greater for church-type than sect-type ministers in the number of parishes in their charge, size of congregation, tenure in present church, total number of churches ever served, length of time in the ministry, and engaging in secular occupations. In addition, rural church-type ministers, when compared with rural sect-type ministers and urban ministers (both church-type and sect-type), had greater mobility aspirations with regard to location, size of congregation, and perception than their present charge did

not offer sufficient challenge. The accumulated evidence suggests that the rural-urban division represents a more important basis for distinction between church-type ministers than between sect-type ministers. It also suggests that among church-type ministers, rural location may be an early career location which serves as a stepping stone that potentially leads to urban locations. The difference in super-structure of church-type and sect-type congregations lends support to this interpretation. A characteristic of church-type congregations is more centralized denominational structure. For church-type groups the local congregation is more likely to be a unit in a larger organizational complex while for sect-type groups the local congregation is more likely to be autonomous. Thus, ministers of church-type congregations may be more likely to move through a series of congregations in an upward (or downward) mobility pattern. For sect-type ministers, the organizational structure for mobility is not so readily available. There is also a suggestion from the data that lower status of family origin and education is a greater restraint on mobility of church-type ministers than it is on sect-type ministers.

Finally, we examined differences in rural and urban ministers with regard to theological position, response to questions on social and moral issues, and political position. For these factors, rural-urban differences were greater among sect-type than church-type ministers. Furthermore, somewhat unexpectedly, urban sect-type ministers tended to be more theologically and politically conservative and to take a more "moralistic" stand than their rural counterparts. On these matters in rural areas, church-type and sect-type ministers tend to converge, while in urban areas they tend to polarize. It suggests that both church-type and sect-type ministers tend to conform to the norms of more homogeneous rural communities while the urban setting consists of more heterogeneous populations and specialized groups (churches among them) are more finely tuned to different points of view.

Other Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletins from this Study

The Church in Rural Missouri, 1967. Missouri A.E.S. Res. Bull. No. 984, December 1971.

Ministers in Rural Churches of Missouri. Missouri A.E.S. Res. Bull. No. 995, February 1973.

A Comparison of Rural Churches and Ministers in Missouri Over a 15 Year Period. Missouri A.E.S. Res. Bull. No. 999, November 1973.