This study investigates a relatively new area of research, namely, the relationship between attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1980, 1988) and leadership theory. Attachment theory posits that human beings unconsciously establish mental models of how relationships work. Depending on the kind and quality of early relational experiences, humans can associate feelings of security, anxiety, or avoidance with relationships. According to attachment theory, these associations are transferable and inform future relationships. Much of leadership theory suggests that relationships are a key component of effective leadership and may very well be the most important factor (Gardner et al., 2005). Recent quantitative studies align attachment behaviors with transformational and transactional leadership behaviors (Berson, 2006; Boatwright et. al., 2010; Bresnahan, 2008). This study uses population surveying to investigate the clergy of a
small, bi-national, Protestant denomination with a total of 995 full-time, parish-based pastors. Moreover, this study explores potential relationships between attachment behaviors using the Attachment Style Questionnaire (ASQ) (Feeney, et al., 1994), and leadership characteristics using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Avolio & Bass, 2004), while controlling for demographic variables. The study confirmed the relationship between attachment security and transformational leadership. The clergy in this study (n=348) scored highest in transformational leadership yet lower than the average benchmarks established by Avolio & Bass (2004). Participants' work satisfaction levels were consistent with the normative mean establish by Avolio & Bass, but both extra effort and effectiveness means were lower than the norm for other leaders. Surprisingly, this study also revealed that clergy professional longevity reduces with transformational leadership and increases with a more passive style of leadership.