

THE DEMOGRAPHIC ENVIRONMENT AND
CHURCH MEMBERSHIP CHANGE*

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper was to measure the overall impact of adaptive constraints forced on the local church by its demographic environment, and to determine the relative strengths of various contextual indicators. Four SMSAs were selected for study. In all of the cities membership data were collected for each church among the five largest, predominantly white, Protestant denominations. Churches were also located within their census tracts to obtain indicators of the surrounding demographic setting. The results of this study reveal that the demographic environment, especially population change, has a large impact on church membership change. Also, this impact differs greatly from city to city according to the range of demographic variation found in each location.

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The institutional survival of any organization is dependent on how well it functions. Churches are no different in this respect and some provide the primary functions of meaning and belonging (see Greeley, 1972; Roof, 1978) better than others. Since churches are voluntary organizations, presumably those churches which are able to maintain a plausible system of meaning and a warm sense of community would be more likely to prosper. To a great extent, however, the survival and success of a church may have little to do with its efforts to provide meaning and belonging. Instead, the adaptive constraints forced upon the church by the demographic environment may be much more important to institutional survival; and the purpose of this analysis is to measure the overall impact of the demographic setting on Protestant church membership change and the relative strength of various contextual indicators.

Recent studies in the area of church and denominational growth have tended to emphasize either goal-oriented mechanisms for achieving growth or the ability of the church to provide its primary functions. For instance, Stark (1965) suggests that conservative churches are able to maintain higher levels of commitment through the use of "well-organized and instrumental mechanisms for generating and channeling religious experience." Similarly, Bibby and Brinkerhoff (1970) found that evangelical churches were better able to retain the children of members and to insure that members who moved would remain within the denomination. Writers in the "church growth" tradition

stress a variety of institutional mechanisms which are believed to produce growth. Among these mechanisms are the following: (1) evangelism within homogenous units (or social categories); (2) effective pastoral leadership; (3) clearly defined goals; and (4) evangelism among "responsive populations," to name just a few. (See Wagner, 1976; McGavran, 1970). Finally, Dean Kelley's popular book, Why Conservative Churches Are Growing (1977), emphasizes the ability of churches and denominations to provide meaning for their constituents. Those who are able to do so have a certain "natural attractiveness" which leads to membership growth (Hadaway, 1980).

Despite the recent emphasis on institutional mechanisms for producing growth, there is a long-standing tradition of research in the sociology of religion which deals with adaptive constraints that impact the local church. In fact, the "father" of denominational research in America, H. Paul Douglass, put greater stress on the local context in producing membership change than any other factor. He saw this context as predominant because the typical local church draws its members primarily from surrounding neighborhoods. Douglass observed again and again that "as goes the neighborhood, so goes the church"; its influence was powerful, universal, and difficult to overcome. The following paragraph sums up Douglass's deterministic view:

The first (factor in church life) is the concrete social situation which immediately surrounds a local church as an individual unit of religious organization. The quality and changes of this environment are almost inevitably communicated to the church. Differences in human fortunes suffered by the church's immediate constituencies and changes in these fortunes due to changes in the environment largely control the institutional destinies of each particular church. Where the environment is prosperous and progressive the church can scarcely fail to "succeed." When it is miserable and deteriorating the church can scarcely avoid failure (Douglass and Brunner, 1935: 237).

In his research Douglass presented fairly conclusive evidence to support his statements; yet the methods available at that time did not allow him to establish the degree to which membership change could be explained by the demographic environment, nor the relative importance of various demographic indicators. We simply know that churches in "good areas," as defined by various measures, are more likely to grow than churches in "poor areas."

The tendency in much of the "church growth" literature to either ignore the adaptive constraints on the local church, or at least take them for granted, probably relates to the fact that such constraints are rarely subject to change through the influence of the local church. Accordingly, churches, and those who want to see them grow, have been somewhat more concerned with discovering institutional mechanisms that can produce growth in the face of a hostile demographic environment than in trying to understand its impact. Also, there is a tendency among churches and denominations to view the environment as somewhat irrelevant because of the "power of God to work in any setting."

Despite these pressures working against meaningful research into the influence of the demographic environment, a recent survey conducted by the United Presbyterian Church included a number of items dealing with neighborhood affluence and various types of demographic change. The purpose of this survey was to determine the factors which influence membership growth or decline among United Presbyterian churches; and in order to do so a wide variety of both institutional and contextual variables were included.

The results of the Presbyterian Membership Trends Survey indicated that a cluster of nine contextual variables measuring affluence, demographic

change, and community type accounted for approximately 15 percent of the variance in church membership change (Roof, Hoge, Dyble, and Hadaway, 1979: 220). The impact of the demographic environment in this study turned out to be slightly more important than a set of institutional items, but there is reason to believe that the 15 percent estimate of the variance explained is low. The primary reason for this belief is that all of the indicators used were subjective observations by the pastor. Rather than obtaining more objective estimates of population growth from census documents, the survey asked the pastor if the neighborhood within one-half mile of his church was increasing or decreasing in the proportion of newcomers. Limiting such questions to two categories obviously eliminates any variation in the level of population growth or the extent to which various components of the population are increasing. Further, there is little reason to expect the pastor of a local church to be completely accurate in his evaluation of the demographic situation. Because of such problems the error component in the measurement of the local context would appear necessarily to be quite large.

DATA AND METHODS

Church data and census data are rarely matched, primarily because doing so is either very expensive or requires a great deal of tedious labor. Addresses of churches can be matched to census locations down to the block level through Census Dime Files, but this is expensive when done on a large scale and requires access to a Summary Tape Processing Center. The alternative is to plot churches by hand within their census tracts through the use of address lists, maps and street guides. Obviously, this is quite tedious,

time-consuming, and usually out of the question, except when done on a limited scale.

Despite the difficulties, the use of census data is the only way to obtain an accurate and objective picture of the demographic environment surrounding the church. It was necessary for this project to select one of the two methods discussed above, and because of cost limitations the second procedure was chosen. A large representative sample of churches would have been nearly impossible, so the alternative was to conduct intensive studies of several diverse metropolitan areas. This allowed a very complete picture of each city chosen and inclusion of all the churches in the major white Protestant denominations present.¹

The cities selected were Springfield, Massachusetts; Memphis, Tennessee; Columbus, Ohio; and Omaha, Nebraska; and the basic procedure was to code the membership change for each church (for the five largest denominations in each city)² over a ten year period, the denominational affiliation of the church, and the demographic characteristics of the census tract in which the church was located. When taken together the areas chosen are not viewed as representing urban America or even all American cities of similar size. Instead, the findings should be seen as a case study of how the demographic environment affects church membership change in different urban areas. There were, however, a number of loosely defined selection criteria.

First, we wanted cities in different regions of the country and cities in which the religious situation differed quite radically. Each city had to be an SMSA and large enough to have at least 5 churches in the fifth largest denomination.³ On the other hand, a city much over one million in population was judged too difficult to handle, given the problems of plotting each

church onto census maps and in making 1960 and 1970 tracts comparable. The final criteria was simply convenience. Isolated SMSAs located in only one or two counties, and cities which did not drastically alter census boundaries between 1960 and 1970 were judged easier to deal with; and cities with which the author was more familiar were preferable because of time saved in locating churches.

The result was four SMSAs of somewhat similar size (except for Springfield, which is smaller than the others), but which differ greatly in demographic make-up and in their Protestant religious heritage. Memphis is predominantly Southern Baptist,⁴ Columbus is largely Methodist,⁵ Omaha has a large Lutheran population,⁶ and Springfield, though largely Catholic, contains a mixture of Protestant groups including United Church of Christ, Episcopal, Methodist and American Baptist.⁷ A western city would have been helpful to round out the list of cities regionally, but the immense time necessary did not allow another city to be coded.

The dependent variable used in this analysis was percent membership change from 1965 to 1975. Percent membership change was judged preferable to net membership change because the latter measure is highly dependent on the size of the church. The drawback of this preference was that churches formed after 1965 had to be dropped from the analysis. Also, we decided to measure membership change between 1965 and 1975, rather than 1960 and 1970 (which would have matched the census data). This decision was made because of the problems created by denominational mergers, splits, and the difficulties in obtaining membership figures for earlier years and in determining the fate of churches that were listed in 1960 but not in 1970. In most areas the

demographic situation should not have changed greatly enough to make this a serious problem, and it may also be that a certain lag exists before contextual changes make a noticeable impact upon church membership. It should also be noted that church membership statistics are by no means totally accurate. However, the fact that some churches have inflated rolls and others may have recently cleaned their rolls should not produce a significant amount of correlated error. But it should produce enough "noise" to somewhat reduce the ability of our independent variables to predict church membership change.

A set of seven primary independent variables were included in the analysis. Our expectation was that churches would tend to grow best in predominantly white, relatively affluent areas of the city where the population was increasing and where young families with children were present. (See Douglass and Brunner, 1935; Nash and Burger, 1962; Roof, et al., 1979; and McKinney, 1979). Accordingly, variables were selected from census documents that would test this expectation. The following variables were chosen: percent change in population (1960-1970), change in percent Black (1960-1970), percent White, median income, median education, and percent in elementary school (all 1970).

The statistical methods of analysis involve zero order correlation (Pearson's r) and multiple regression. We will look first at all of the cities combined and attempt to determine the most powerful demographic predictors of church membership change and total variance to be explained. The same will be done with each of the cities separately.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Cities Combined

The first table of this section shows the intercorrelation of the contextual variables, percent membership change, and size of church. All of the cities are combined in this table, and the total N is 586 churches.

"Table 1 About Here"

Our greatest concern is with the last column, which gives the correlation of all the variables with percent church membership change. First of all, population change is the variable most highly correlated with membership change. Churches which draw members from surrounding neighborhoods are in a much better situation to grow if there is a stream of newcomers to their area. Unlike churches in stagnant or declining areas they do not have to rely on converting long residents, but many times can grow solely through the transfer of already committed members of their denomination. Further, people with no prior religious commitment who have moved tend to be more open to church involvement than are "nones" who have remained in the same town (see Hadaway and Roof, 1979: 197-199).

Also important is median income and to a lesser extent, median education. These measures of socio-economic status were included because the denominations represented in this analysis tend to be largely middle class. It is therefore no surprise that churches tend to do better in middle class areas than in less affluent census tracts. If groups with more of a sectarian emphasis were included this relationship probably would have been weakened.

Racial change (increase in percent Black) was quite highly correlated with membership change, but in a negative direction. White churches tend to suffer greatly when racial transition occurs, and especially so when it happens rapidly. When "white flight" develops through "block busting" techniques or through the natural expansion of a black community, there is typically not time for the church to make an orderly transition of membership from White to Black. Prejudice and the tendency of churches to be extremely homogeneous compound the problems, and the result is that many churches in transitional communities either die or merge with churches in another part of the city. Percent White is also important, but apparently not so much as racial transition. Predominantly white areas are best for growth, but the mere presence of Blacks in the same tract may not be a problem, unless Blacks are replacing Whites.

At a somewhat lower level of correlation is the percent of the population in elementary school. This measure was included to partially test the "child-rearing" theory of church growth (Nash and Berger, 1962; Hoge and Roozen, 1979: 53-54). This theory in its simplest form suggests that since childhood religious education is valued in American society (see The Unchurched American, the Gallup Organization, 1979), many parents begin attending church when their children reach school age. This research tends to support such a theory but without statistical controls it is impossible to determine if the effect of having young children acts independently of the other contextual variables.

Church size is related to percent membership change in the expected manner. It is simply much easier for a church of 100 to double in membership

than it is for a church of 1,000. This variable is included here for the reader's interest; since it is not a demographic indicator, it will not be used in subsequent analysis.

Of the "dummy" variables for our cities, Springfield is the strongest.⁸ Few areas in the Northeast are growing rapidly in population and Springfield is no exception. Population stagnation may well adversely affect our ability to predict membership change in such a city because of the lack of particularly good areas for growth.

The intercorrelations among demographic variables are fairly strong and logically consistent. Growing areas tend to be white, affluent, and with little increase in their black population. By far the strongest correlation is, of course, between income and education. The only inconsistency among the items is the relationship of percent in elementary school to three other variables: percent White, racial change and, to a lesser extent, education. Black areas tend to have a greater proportion of children, but are also less likely to have growing churches among the denominations included. At the same time, areas with more children are more likely to have growing churches. Partial correlation to remove the negative influence of Black areas having more children results in the association between percent of population in elementary school and church membership change increasing from .21 to .26.

"Table 2 About Here"

In order to determine the overall variance explained by our independent variables, we turn to multiple regression analysis in table two. Included in this table are a set of demographic indicators and the Springfield item,

which is coded as a dummy variable (Springfield churches = 1; Non-Springfield churches = 0).

Initial analysis included both median income and median education in the regression equation. However, the very high correlation of these two variables led to problems of multicollinearity. Analysis was then performed separately and a similar R^2 value was produced whether income or education was included. Since the results do not differ, only the regression analysis using income is presented in table two and in subsequent tables.

As can be seen at the bottom of table two, we are able to account for 22% of the variance in percent church membership change using this set of six predictors. This is substantially better than the R^2 value produced by the Presbyterian Membership Trends Survey and confirms our belief in the necessity of using objective measures of the demographic environment.

Having minimized the problem of collinearity by deleting median education from our analysis, it is possible to use the beta coefficients as a guide to the relative importance of our independent variables. All of the betas in the table are significant at the .05 level except for percent White. There is, however, a great deal of variation in the size of the other values. As would be expected, population change is by far the largest. Even with other variables acting as statistical controls, it is the sheer increase of people in an area that is of primary importance in producing membership growth. Racial change is next in importance, but is fairly close in strength to percent in elementary school, income, and the Springfield item.

This table confirms our earlier expectations that population growth, lack of racial change, higher income and the presence of children are associated with growth. The use of controls reduces the level of correlation of

each variable, but underscores the primary importance of population change. It is interesting that only percent White is reduced to the level of nonsignificance. This finding underscores the probability that racial transition rather than the presence of Blacks is of greatest importance to churches in multi-racial areas.

Cities Separated

American cities differ quite drastically in their levels of growth or decline, their levels of racial and ethnic diversity, land use patterns, population homogeneity, and in the spatial location of churches. Some cities, for instance, have large non-white populations, the movement of which may have a dramatic impact on predominantly white churches that are in the path of this migration. In some cities population growth is neat and regular, following the concentric zone model, while in other cities older towns surrounding the central city disturb the regular patterns of growth.

Because of the great differences between cities, it is helpful to divide our analysis into its constituent urban areas with the expectation that fairly large differences will exist among Omaha, Memphis, Columbus, and Springfield. Table three shows the zero-order correlations between a set of seven independent variables and percent church membership change.

"Table 3 About Here"

In each of the cities, population change produces the strongest correlation with growth, although the difference between it and the next strongest correlate differs from city to city. In Omaha the difference is quite large (.21) while in Springfield it is much smaller (.01).

Median income is the second strongest correlate of membership change in Omaha and Springfield, as it is when the cities are combined. In Columbus percent White is slightly higher, but not significantly so. Memphis is the true exception. Here racial change is much stronger than in any other city, reflecting the importance of racial migration in a city with a very large non-white population. Unlike the other cities, Memphis is over 45% Black, and in the past two decades there has been extensive migration of the black community into what was once lower-middle class white housing. The result was that many of the churches in such areas either declined severely, moved or actually died. For this reason racial change is of unusual importance in Memphis.

There are few additional surprises to be found in the fluctuation of correlates within cities. However, between cities it is quite apparent that large differences exist in the overall strength of correlates. In Omaha, for instance, most of the correlation coefficients are stronger than for any other city, while in Springfield they tend to be quite a bit smaller. Our interpretation for this finding relates to the extent of variation among church locations within each city. If an urban area has few good locations for growth and few that are bad enough to produce serious membership decline, our ability to predict will suffer. On the other hand in a city where some areas are massively expanding and others are seriously declining in population, the level of correlation between demographic variables and membership change would tend to be higher. This is what we expect to have occurred among our cities.

"Table 4 About Here"

Table four shows the variance explained in three of our four cities and the corresponding beta coefficients for each of the variables included. The results for Springfield⁹ are not reported in this table because the R^2 value, which was .08, was not significant at the .05 level, nor were any of the beta coefficients. For this reason it would have been relatively meaningless to compare variation among the betas for Springfield.

Looking first at the R^2 values for each of the three cities, it can be seen that Omaha is by far the highest, followed by Memphis and Columbus. The very large value for Omaha was expected given the .67 correlation between population change and church membership change, but at the beginning of this study we did not expect to account for such a high level of variance in church membership change through the use of demographic variables. Given various sources of error that necessarily plague studies such as this, relatively little variance would apparently be left for institutional factors to explain.

In Omaha, population increase is by far the strongest predictor. Income is also quite strong and is the only other beta coefficient that is statistically significant. Percent White reverses in sign, which is somewhat hard to interpret, but since the relationship does not approach significance we will not deal with it further.

In Memphis the use of statistical controls points out even more clearly the importance of racial change in addition to population increase. The other variables do not produce significant beta coefficients.

In Columbus, the influence of population change is quite strong and is the only predictor which is statistically significant. For this reason the overall R^2 for Columbus is quite a bit smaller than it is for the other two cities included in table four.

Since in all of our cities the major portion of the variance explained is due to the influence of population change, the level of correlation between this variable and percent church membership change is critical. As we have seen, this level varies from a high of .67 in Omaha to a low of .24 in Springfield. This rather large difference is due, we suspect, to the extent to which churches are located in a broad range of environments. Minute changes in population would not produce much, if any, change in church membership (especially as measured by percent membership change). Thus, cities where many areas are growing rapidly and others are declining severely would tend to produce a large correlation between population change and percent church membership change--as long as the churches being studied are located along the entire range of tracts.

We have found that Omaha has by far the greatest variation in population change among those tracts with churches. Memphis is second, followed by Columbus, and Springfield. As the level of variation in population change among census tracts decreases, so does the relationship between population change and church membership change. This is true because even when a pattern of correlation exists, its magnitude will be reduced if the range is restricted. In cities like Omaha there are very good areas for growth and very bad areas, but in Springfield, most of the areas are neither good nor bad, just slightly bad.

CONCLUSIONS

The focus of this paper has been on a relatively neglected aspect in the organizational development of the local church. Like organizations, churches must deal with the adaptive constraints forced upon them if they are to achieve their goals and function normally. This is perhaps more critical to churches than to many other organizations because of their voluntary nature. Simply being present in a neighborhood does not insure that new residents will attend the church, because a great deal depends on who the newcomers are and how their social characteristics fit the core members who are already present. For reasons such as this the social context of a church should have a great impact on whether it grows or declines and we have sought to measure this influence through a set of objective demographic indicators.

The specific findings of this analysis, of course, only relate to largely mainline, predominantly white Protestant denominations. It is expected, however, that a similar impact would be seen for black denominations, sectarian groups, and Catholics; but in each case the indicators and the direction of some of the relationships would undoubtedly be different.

One of the most important findings of this research is the predominant impact of population change on church membership. To be sure, the relationship varies from city to city, but where significant growth or significant decline is present, the churches will definitely be affected. Of course, it is no surprise that suburban churches tend to grow, but it is critical to understand that this growth can only be expected to continue so long as new housing is being built within easy access of the churches.

It is also important to consider that certain cities may have somewhat atypical features that make a certain demographic indicator much more important than it is in other urban environments. Memphis is a case in point with its large black population. Rapid migration of this population has had a tremendous impact on many predominantly white churches in several geographical corridors in the city. In fact, some of these areas went from White to Black in as little as three or four years. Severe membership declines in such areas act to greatly increase the size of the correlation between increase in percent Black and percent church membership change. And as we have seen in Memphis, the relationship was largely maintained, even with statistical controls.

Perhaps the most significant result of this research was the variation between cities in the magnitude of variance explained. The overall impact of the demographic environment tends to vary from city to city according to the level of population variation that exists among the tracts in which the churches are located. This is not to say that the demographic environment is not important in areas where the differences are small. Rather, demographic indicators simply cannot account for variation in the growth of churches which are in nearly identical situations. So in cities like Springfield the overall population stagnation and the high proportion of Catholics makes growth difficult for all the Protestant churches in that city. However, this knowledge does not help account for the difference in growth rates between churches within Springfield. But in Omaha and cities like it, the demographic setting as measured by census data is so massively important that an analysis of why any church in the city was either growing or declining would

be hopelessly flawed unless the characteristics of its demographic environment relative to other churches were considered.

This research is only a first step of a larger investigation into factors which influence the organizational development and survival of local churches. Census data measured at the tract level many times provide too gross a measurement, especially in suburban areas. So in some cases more detailed information about the neighborhood around the church may be necessary to get an accurate picture of its demographic setting. Additional variables also need to be added, such as community size (See McKinney, 1979), distance to the central city, distance to other churches, location near major traffic arteries, visibility, ease of access from the streets the church borders, and other contextual influences, most of which would not be available through census documents.

After a baseline is established which largely defines the impact of a church's local context, much additional research is necessary into various institutional sources of growth and decline. Here the Presbyterian Membership Trends Survey (Roof, et al., 1979) and McKinney's (1979) work among United Church of Christ churches provides a starting point, but a great deal of refinement needs to be done.

As a final note, this analysis into the impact of the demographic environment will hopefully be replicated sometime in 1982 when the 1980 census data and 1980 church membership data should be available for public use.

NOTES

1. Only predominantly white Protestant denominations were chosen because the correlates of church growth among black Protestant, white Protestant, and Catholic churches would presumably be quite different. One obvious example is the variable percent increase in the black population. We would expect a positive relationship between it and growth among black denominations and a negative relationship among white denominations.
2. It was only possible to include denominations for which church membership statistics are readily available. In Memphis, Churches of Christ were not included even though there are many of them in the city, because there is no centralized source of membership records. It would have been necessary to contact each church separately.
3. In Springfield two Lutheran denominations were combined as our fifth largest denomination in this city.
4. In Memphis the following denominations were included: Southern Baptist Convention, United Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church, U.S., Disciples of Christ, and Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod.
5. In Columbus the following denominations were included: United Methodist Church, Southern Baptist Convention, United Presbyterian Church, American Lutheran Church, and United Church of Christ.
6. In Omaha the following denominations were included: Lutheran Church in America, American Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, United Presbyterian Church, and United Methodist Church.
7. In Springfield the following denominations were included: United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church, Episcopal Church, American Baptist Church, Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, and Lutheran Church in America.
8. This variable was constructed by coding all Springfield churches with a "0" and all non-Springfield churches with a "1". The other three dummy variables are constructed in a similar fashion.
9. It is interesting that McKinney (1979) was able to produce a relatively large R^2 value (.22) using a sample of United Church of Christ Churches drawn from the state of Massachusetts. His strongest correlate of percent church membership change was community size, which was not included in this analysis. This may account for the differences in our findings or it may be that including Boston in his analysis resulted in more true suburban areas being included. That the latter may be true is suggested by his findings in table 10.4 which divide the analysis by community type.

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TABLE 1
INTERCORRELATION^a OF CHURCH GROWTH, CHURCH SIZE
AND DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS^b

Independent Variables	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Population Change	-.26	.20	.37	.33	.38	.05 ^c	.16	.04	-.07	-.14	.42
2. Racial Change		-.54	-.30	-.24	.06	-.14	.03	-.17	.13	.03	-.25
3. Percent White			.52	.57	-.22	.20	.12	.18	.03	.08	.18
4. Median Income				.82	.20	.21	.04	-.08	.05	.01	.26
5. Median Education					-.01	.27	.07	-.10	.06	-.03	.21
6. Percent in Elementary School						-.16	.03	.04	-.02	-.07	.21
7. Church Size							-.02	.15	-.04	-.12	.13
8. Omaha								-.36	-.32	-.18	-.01
9. Memphis									-.53	-.29	.02
10. Columbus										-.26	.08
11. Springfield											-.13
12. Percent Church Membership Change											

^aPearson's r

^b $N = 586$

^cCorrelations of .06 or more are significant at the .05 level.

TABLE 2
MULTIPLE REGRESSION: DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS
ON PERCENT MEMBERSHIP CHANGE^a

Independent Variables ^b	Pearson r	Slope	Standard Error	Beta
Population Change	.42	.29	.04	.31
Racial Change	-.25	-.76	.26	-.13
Percent White	.18	.11	.19	.03 ^c
Median Income	.26	.002	.001	.08
Percent in Elementary School	.21	1.56	.81	.09
Springfield ^d	-.13	-21.15	10.03	-.08

^a $R = .47$, $R^2 = .22$

^b $N = 586$

^cNon-significant at .05

^dCoded as a dummy variable, Springfield churches = 1,
Other cities = 0.

TABLE 3
CORRELATION^a OF DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS WITH
PERCENT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP CHANGE
IN FOUR CITIES

Independent Variables	Omaha (N=106)	Memphis (N=216)	Columbus (N=189)	Springfield (N=75)
Population Change	.67	.47	.39	.24
Racial Change	-.21	-.39	-.18	-.20
Percent White	.21	.19	.22	.18 ^b
Median Income	.46	.30	.20	.23
Median Education	.38	.25	.15	.12 ^b
Percent in Elementary School	.29	.23	.18	.12 ^b
Percent Spanish	-.09 ^b	c	c	-.14 ^b

^aPearson's r

^bNon-significant at .05

^cPercent Spanish was not included for Memphis and Columbus because of the minute number of Spanish persons in these cities.

TABLE 4
MULTIPLE REGRESSION: DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS ON
PERCENT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP CHANGE
IN THREE CITIES

Independent Variables ^a	Omaha (N=106)	Memphis (N=216)	Columbus (N=189)
Population Change	.57 ^b	.30 ^b	.34 ^b
Racial Change	-.10	-.22 ^b	-.10
Percent White	-.09	.01	.08
Median Income	.28 ^b	.08	-.06
Percent in Elementary School	.01	.08	.12
R ²	.50 ^c	.27	.18

^aAll coefficients are betas (standardized).

^bSignificant at .05.

^cAll R² values are significant at the .01 level.