

# RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

## 20-Year Audit

**2019**

Full Report



**Principal Researcher, David Sikkink Ph.D., Notre Dame University**  
**Statistical Analysis and Survey Support Laura Luchies, Ph.D., Calvin Center for Social Research**

## 2019 DVULI Alumni Survey Report

For over 20 years, the DeVos Urban Leadership Initiative (DVULI) has focused on growing the leadership capacity of men and women working in urban youth ministry. The purpose is to impact youth growing up in high-poverty areas of large cities by investing in caring adults offering faith, hope, and love for youth. DVULI exists to grow the leadership and organizational resources necessary to deliver sustainable youth programming for disadvantaged youth. Leadership development is approached holistically; the DVULI training focuses on key aspects of servant, altruistic, and authentic leadership. This includes transforming persons (leaders) and relationships within families, religious organizations, and communities. Is the DVULI mission and program bearing fruit? This report provides evidence to address this question using data from the 2019 Alumni Survey.

An earlier assessment of the DeVos Urban Leadership Initiative was conducted in 2006, consisting of a survey with several open-ended questions, as well as focus groups and personal interviews. That data laid the groundwork for a comprehensive report that relied heavily on the qualitative evidence. This new assessment builds on the 2006 assessment, focusing on the quantitative evidence from the Alumni Survey. It compares findings in the original report with patterns in the 2019 Alumni Survey, which replicates the 2006 Alumni Survey. Building on the assessment work of the original research team, we largely repeated the closed-ended survey questions from the 2006 Alumni Survey, which allows us to consider changes in the program and alumni responses to DVULI across 20 years. In addition, the 2019 Alumni Survey replicated many of the non-redundant questions on the Benchmark Survey, which is administered to DVULI participants before and after leadership training. That allows us to consider the development of alumni from the time they complete the 15-month DVULI program to their current position in youth ministry.

This report will not have the depth available from qualitative interviews and focus groups, but we will be able to use the quantitative data to compare with the findings and conclusions of the 2006 report. Although we are limited without qualitative data, the advantage is that the research burden for the alumni, in terms of time and effort, is much more reasonable in the 2019 study. In future studies, we can leverage the work put into the Benchmark survey data by assessing alumni directions well into their youth ministry career.

### Methods

In August 2019, email requests to participate in a DVULI survey went out to all alumni of the DVULI program. The survey consisted of the questions from the 2006 DVULI alumni survey as well as many of the (non-redundant) questions in the DVULI Benchmark survey, which is administered to DVULI program participants before and after completion of DVULI training. The survey was administered online and was closed after 4 weeks. The total number of alumni that started the survey was 311, and the total responses to questions asked of all respondents hovered between 270 and 290.

This report provides a summary and interpretation of findings based on several combinations of the data available.

1. We primarily focus on the 2019 survey responses.
2. We also compare the 2019 survey responses with the 2006 Alumni Survey data, since nearly all of the 2006 questions are included in the 2019 survey.
3. In some analyses, we combine 2006 and 2019 responses to identical questions and include controls for survey year and alumni cohort (i.e., the year the respondent enters the program, usually collapsed into three cohorts, early, middle and late years).
4. We look specifically at responses from alumni who did *both* the 2006 and 2019 surveys. This is a relatively small group but provides a look at how alumni see life and ministry differently 13 years later.
5. Lastly, we combine administrative data from liaisons' assessment of the collaboration efforts of the alumni and assess the correlates of a high collaboration rating.

We use several statistical methods in this report. We start with the descriptive findings, which focus on basic frequencies and average responses for each question for the entire sample as well as for specific subgroups, such as groups based on DVULI cohorts or survey year. Then we consider some basic regression models, which provide “adjusted averages” or adjusted probabilities after taking into account differences in age, gender, race and ethnicity, educational level, survey year, cohort, relation to youth ministry, etc. The regression findings help to better understand differences in the impact of DVULI depending on the alumni's demographic and organizational characteristics. For example, the regression results help to “net out,” or “control for,” age differences when assessing the impact of gender on average levels of ministry collaboration. In Chapter 1, we attempt to explain outcomes with the following variables: cohort (early, middle, most recent years), survey wave, gender, race, age, education, additional education since DVULI, relation to youth ministry (versus other types of ministry), type of organization, type of position in the organization, volunteer position, and years in professional ministry. Multiple imputation with 10 iterations is used to handle missing data, which was relatively low (less than 10 percent of cases across all variables).

Next, we use statistical methods commonly known as “factor analysis.” Essentially, this analysis provides an assessment of the relationships between the answers to separate survey questions. The attempt is to see what kinds of questions tend to “hang together.” That is, respondents—either in cognition or practice—see these survey questions as somehow similar, as tapping the same underlying dimension, and thus answer in similar ways. From a technical perspective, this analysis is helpful in reducing the measurement error that is common when relying on any particular, single question as a “perfect” measure of a concept or underlying dimension of life or ministry. Another benefit of this “factor analysis” is to see how alumni view the relationship between various dimensions of their life and work. Is there a clear separation of faith and work, or are they closely intertwined in the minds and practices of alumni? The kind of factor analysis we conduct provides insight into how alumni see connections between various aspects of their ministry and personal life. We will also use “latent variables,” which capture what is common in a set of variables, as better outcome measures (since they account for measurement error), and predict the resulting “scale” in regression models. The goal is to explain why some alumni are higher or lower on a given dimension of life or ministry.

Measures (i.e., variables constructed from responses to survey questions) are relatively straightforward. Note however that in some analyses we group annual cohorts or classes into multi-year cohorts. We define the multi-year cohorts to capture stages in the growth of DVULI training, and to provide sufficient sample size for reasonable analysis. Except where noted, we use the term “cohort” to refer to groupings of alumni

years of participation, such as 1998-2002 (“early years”), 2003-2011 (“middle” years), and 2012-2019 (“later” or most recent years).

### Organization of the 2019 Report

In the first chapter we provide basic descriptive analysis of the alumni responses to each of the 2019 Alumni Survey questions. For each question, we then consider sources of variation in responses, such as demographic characteristics (gender, age, race, education, etc.). We then rank the questions in terms of the extent of agreement among alumni, pointing out the aspects of DVULI that are particularly valued or salient in alumni life and ministry.

In Chapter 2, the analysis focuses on another source of variation among alumni: the career stage for each alumnus when they entered the DVULI program. This analysis includes an assessment of whether career stage effects have changed over the 20 plus years of the DVULI program.

Chapter 3 addresses the question of how alumni understand the relationships among the various aspects of the DVULI program. Here we uncover the coherent or dominant concepts or dimensions of alumni life and ministry. Then we explore variation by demographic and organizational characteristics on these key dimensions of DVULI.

In Chapter 4, we consider the associations between the underlying concepts or dimensions of DVULI experience, and develop a path model that explains the dimensions/outcomes of Income and Job Advancement, Career Impact, and Mission Accomplished. Again, we consider demographic variation in the extent of DVULI impact on job and career, and accomplishing one’s mission.

Chapter 5 address the specific recommendations of the 2006 Alumni Report as well as providing other general recommendations for the future of DVULI.

## **Chapter 1: Findings for Each 2019 Survey Question:**

### **Distribution of Responses and Differences among Alumni**

In this first look at the 2019 DVULI data, we summarize the “raw” responses to each question from the sample of DVULI graduates who completed the 2019 survey. In most cases, we consider the percentage of respondents who “agree” or “strongly agree” with a given statement, or the average of all responses on a given question. In some cases, we compare the 2019 raw or descriptive findings for each question with findings in the 2006 sample.

In addition, we explain variation in alumni responses for the full 2019 sample. We use the following variables to explain why alumni responded the way they did on each question:

- Cohort years (early, middle, most recent years)
- Demographic characteristics (gender, age, race)
- Education (BA or not; attained degree since DVULI)
- Relation to youth ministry (some involvement, but not directly; involvement in other ministry)
- Characteristics of job
  - Type of organization (church, school, nonprofit, “other”)
  - Position in organization (executive director or senior pastor; program director or youth/associate pastor; program coordinator or youth leader; and “other”)
  - Paid or volunteer position
- Number of years in professional ministry

We use these variables in a basic regression analysis that provides insight into the sources of variation in leadership orientations and practices among alumni.

In this chapter, we first summarize responses to questions in the 2019 Alumni Survey on demographic characteristics, and then consider ministry positions, leadership orientations and practices, evaluation of the DVULI program, and work/life balance. In what follows, we underline a phrase to indicate that we are discussing alumni responses to a particular survey question.

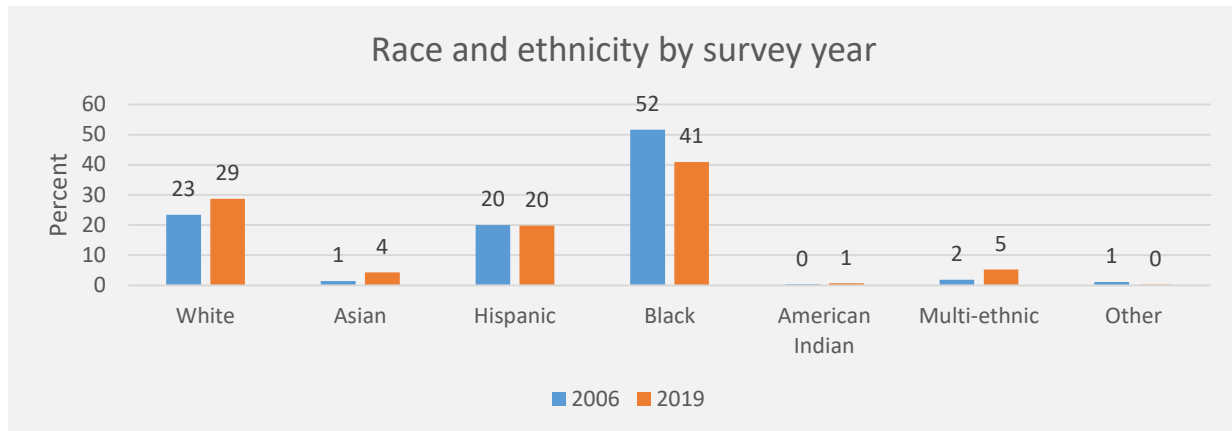
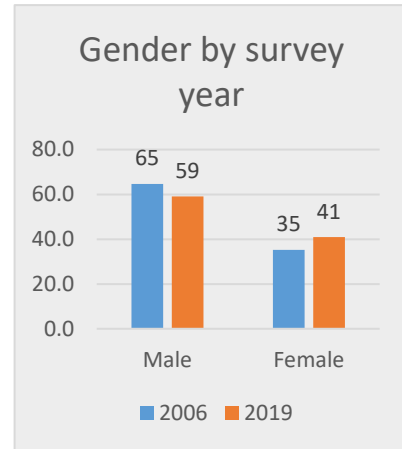
## Demographic Findings

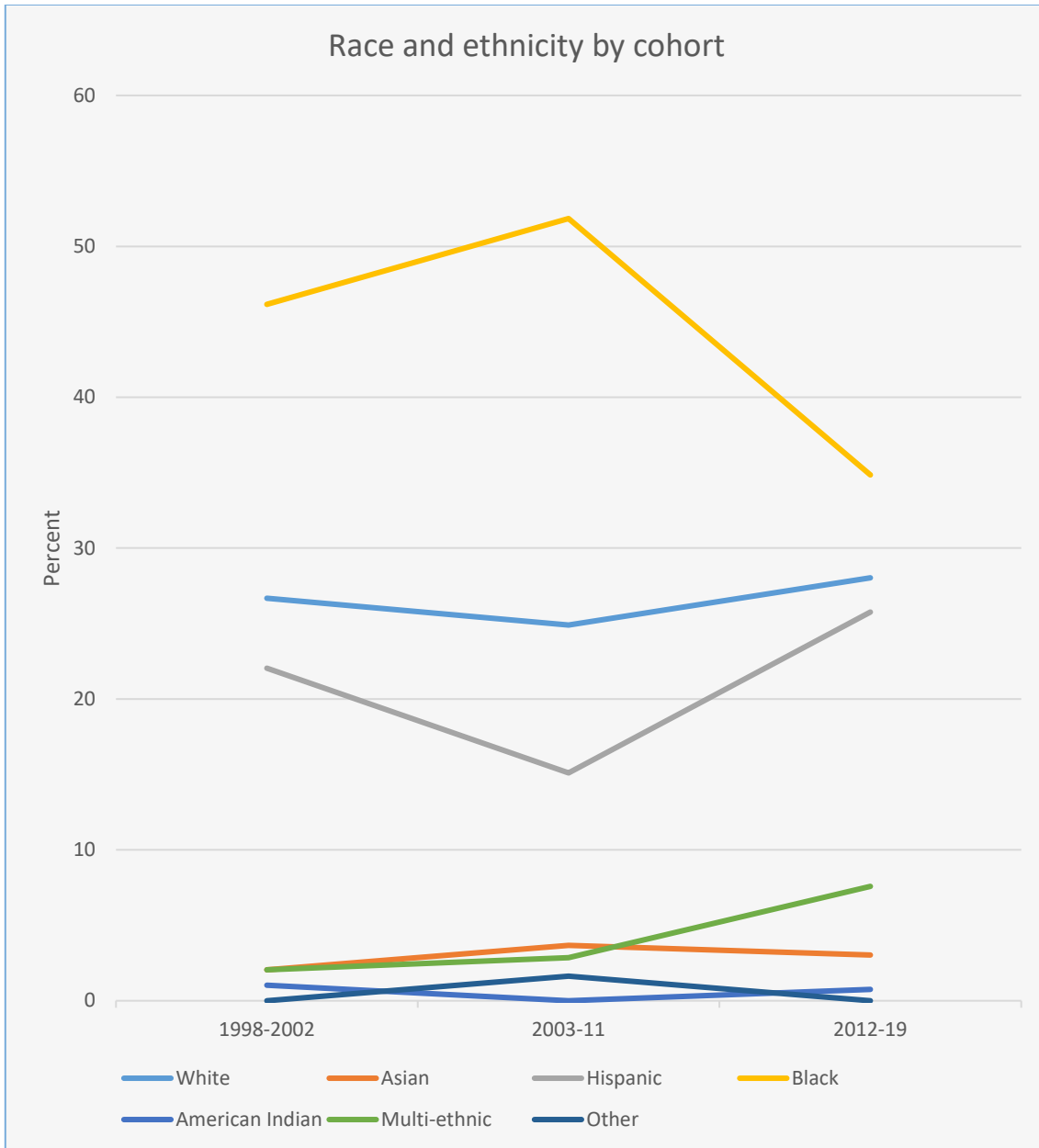
In the 2019 alumni sample, 59 percent of respondents is male, and 41 percent, female. That compares with 35 percent female in the 2006 alumni survey.

The average age of 2019 survey respondents is 29 years. About 74 percent is currently married, and 56 percent has at least one child. In general, then, marriage and family set the stage for issues of work/life balance for most alumni.

The latest survey wave has fewer blacks (41 percent versus 52 percent), and a higher percentage of whites, Asians, and multiethnic respondents. This change could result from changes in the alumni population or differences in cooperation rate by race and ethnicity.

Another take on racial and ethnic distribution accounts for year the alumnus entered DVULI training, revealing changes in early and later cohorts. After separating respondents into their respective cohorts, we find in our sample that the percentage African American has declined in recent cohorts, while the percentage Hispanic has increased. African Americans in more recent cohorts are on average older than in earlier cohorts. According to our samples, multi-ethnic alumni have also shown an increase across cohorts.





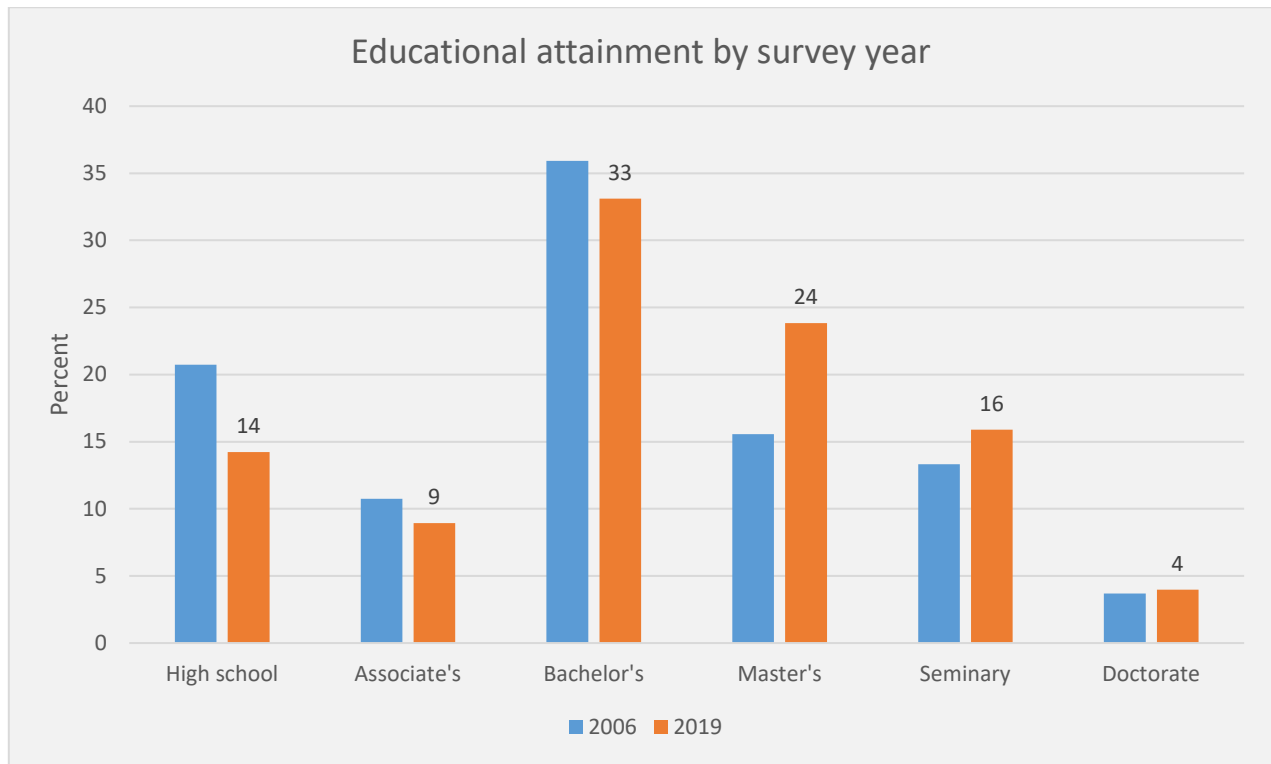
### Education

DVULI alumni are highly educated, and attaining further education has been encouraged through their participation in DVULI. The high level of education is not surprising, given the focus of the DVULI training on selecting leaders who are in positions that can bring about ministry changes.

About 67 percent of alumni had a BA/BS degree before they entered DVULI, and another 7.4 percent completed the Bachelor's since DVULI. (In the general population, approximately one-third of Americans have completed the college degree.) About 5 percent is in the process of getting the BA, and another 6 percent is planning to finish a BA. While 23 percent had a Master's degree before DVULI, another 14 percent have received a Master's degree since DVULI, and 8 percent is in the process of doing so. A



seminary degree was completed before DVULI training by 13 percent of participants, and another 8 percent achieved this degree since DVULI. About 10 percent are in the process of getting a seminary degree. Our analysis below will explore variation in DVULI impact on the more and less educated alumni.



Regression analysis shows that obtaining an educational degree after DVULI<sup>1</sup> is somewhat less likely among more recent cohorts. This result is not an age effect but could be interpreted in terms of fewer opportunities (i.e., fewer years since completion) to respond to DVULI by finishing a degree. Not surprisingly, older alumni are less likely to earn additional degrees after DVULI. Hispanics and African Americans are more likely to do this, and “other” races and ethnicities are more likely as well, though there is considerable variation among the “other race” group. Alumni in unpaid positions are more likely to obtain an educational degree after DVULI. *The results support the importance of DVULI training in encouraging educational success among disadvantaged minorities, and perhaps generating skills that are useful for succeeding in higher education. Note that this effect is particularly important for those in volunteer ministry positions, which could help these alums achieve a position of leadership in youth ministry.*

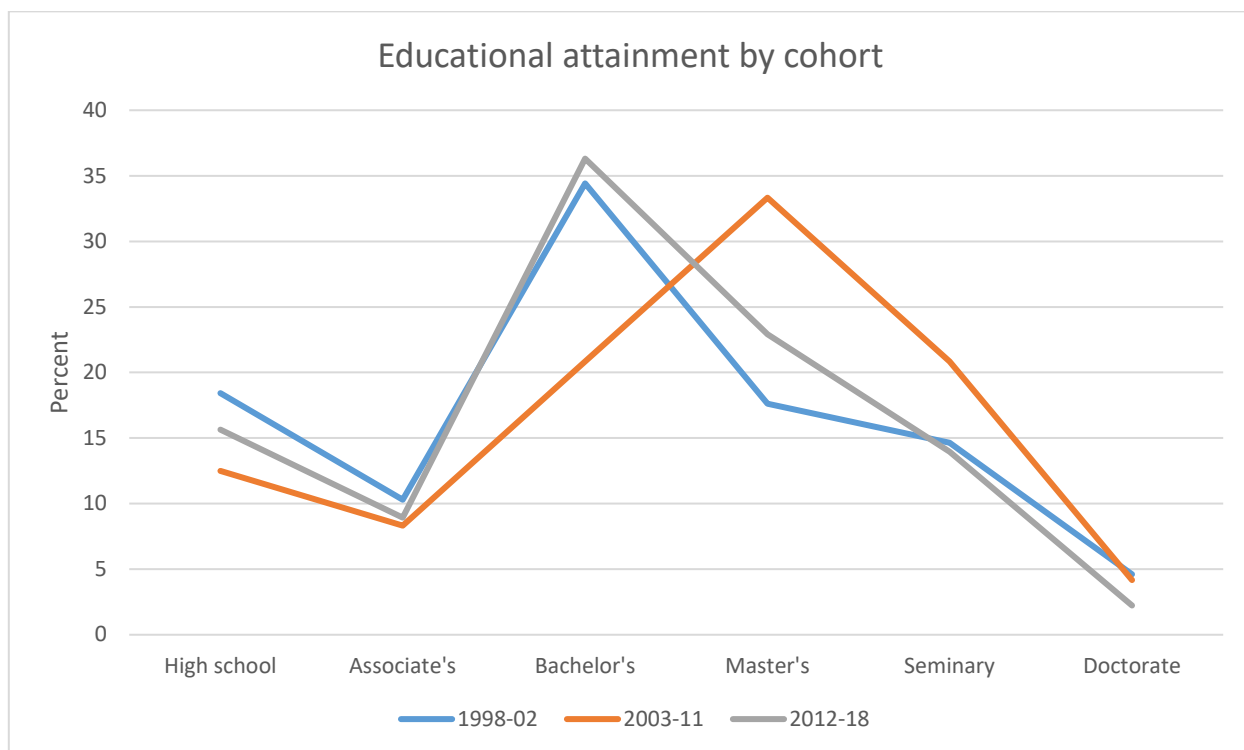
Those who reported that they decided to pursue an additional degree were asked if DVULI training influenced their decision. About 28 percent said that DVULI training greatly influenced their decision to pursue more education. Another 44 percent said that DVULI training somewhat influenced their decision to pursue a higher educational degree. *These are relatively high numbers; we expect that DVULI training and community provides the social and personal supports for pursuing and completing educational degrees. The synergy here between leadership training and educational growth is likely to have strong effects on disadvantaged organizations, communities, and youth. In part, this may result from the personal and*

<sup>1</sup> In this report, an underlined phrase refers to the analysis of data from a particular survey question in the Alumni Survey.

organizational networking made possible when pursuing a degree at a local institution of high education. In the analysis in this chapter, we will see numerous dimensions of youth ministry that are stronger among alumni who completed an additional degree since DVULI.

Interestingly, although education since DVULI is somewhat lower among recent cohorts, alumni in more recent cohorts are more likely to say that DVULI influenced them to obtain an educational degree after DVULI. *That finding could indicate stronger DVULI effects on educational advancement in more recent years.* Those who have a BA are less likely to report that DVULI influenced their decision to seek more education. *This finding is consistent with the claim that college completion is strongly influenced by DVULI training. That could result from the commitments and skills fostered at DVULI as well as the interaction with youth ministry peers, many of which have completed a college degree.*

The distribution of education by (multi-year) cohort is quite similar, with a somewhat more educated group in the middle DVULI cohort years. (Note that this descriptive analysis does not account for age, which could vary by cohort.) The 2003-11 cohort years have a higher percentage of Masters and Seminary graduates.



### Religion

This 2019 sample represents, not surprisingly, a very religiously observant group. About 86 percent attend religious services at least once a week, and 85 percent view the Bible as an infallible guide for personal faith and behavior. Most alumni hold very similar views of the Bible. Yet we do find some differences among alumni, since racial and ethnic minorities are more likely than whites to strongly agree in the infallibility of the Bible. Alumni in more senior leadership positions more strongly support biblical infallibility; specifically, program coordinators and youth leaders are less likely to completely agree with infallibility compared to executive directors and senior pastors.

The primary church that DVULI alumni attend or identify with is likely to be in the evangelical movement. Fully 38 percent describe their church as “evangelical,” and another 28 percent describe their church as Pentecostal or charismatic. Others have pointed out the influence of the Pentecostal and charismatic movement in the Hispanic community (Pew Research Center 2014), and of course there is a long Pentecostal tradition within the Black Protestant community (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990). This may have implications for DVULI since these movements have distinctive views of leadership and organization within religious communities and different orientations to community engagement (Wood 2002).

### Ministry Positions

DVULI seeks participants who are active in youth ministry and are in positions where they are able to set or influence youth ministry directions in their organizations or local community. Most youth leaders admitted to DVULI have had three years of experience in urban youth ministry. This is reflected in the 2019 sample in responses to a question about how long alumni have been in youth ministry and a question about the type of positions they hold. Most have been active in youth ministry for many years.

Even so, the long-term commitment of DVULI alumni to youth ministry is strikingly high, especially considering ministry constraints of pay and work conditions. About 65 percent of the sample has been active in ministry more than 15 years.

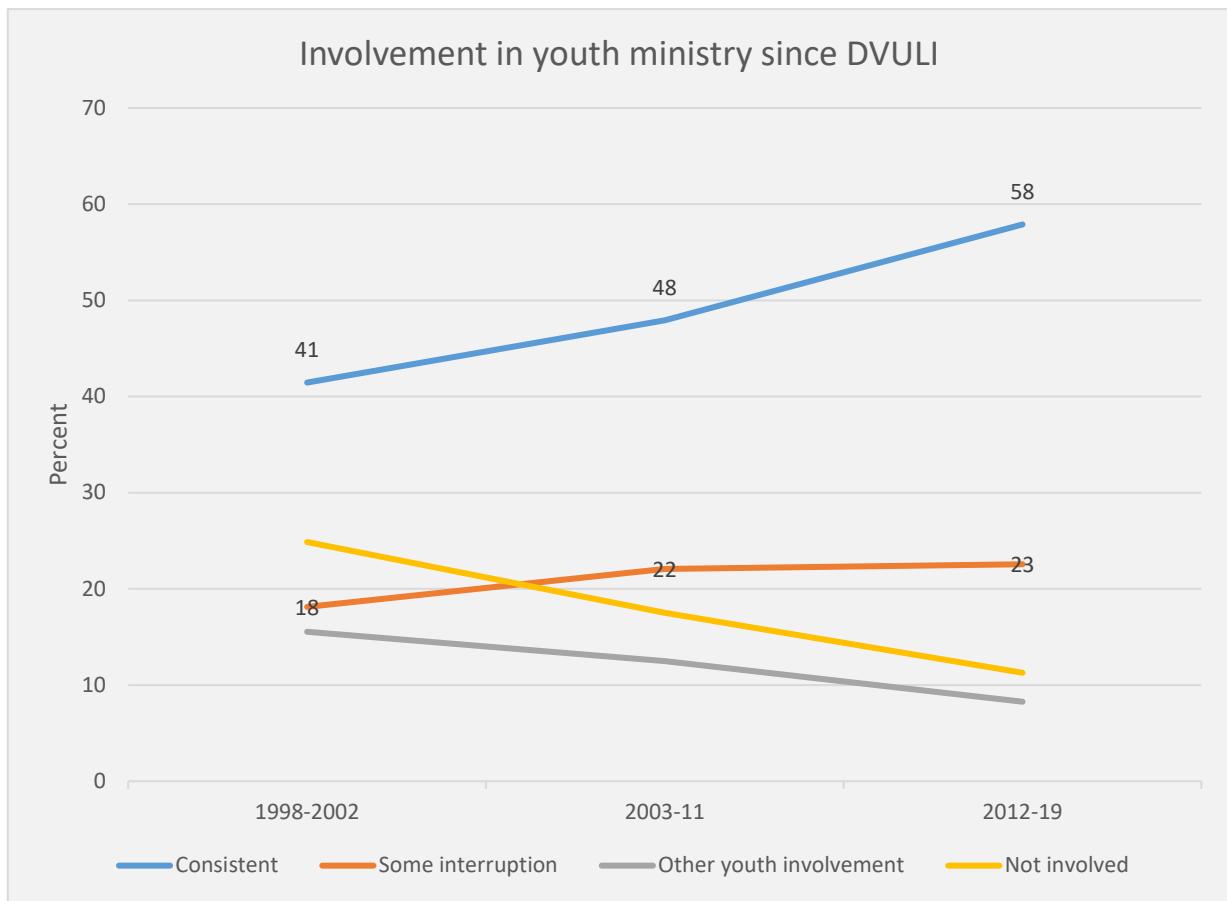
There is a good deal of diversity in the positions held by alumni. Of the 2019 respondents, over half report that they are currently in higher level ministry positions, such as executive or program director, or senior, associate, or youth pastor. About half is in a paid, full-time position. That figure does seem lower than would be ideal for intensive ministry, and perhaps signals some of the challenges and constraints faced by DVULI respondents in their daily ministry work. The lower percentage in full-time positions, of course, partly reflects the various career paths taken by graduates, though no doubt these decisions are a response to work and community conditions as well. Note, however, that DVULI has worked to include some participants who are in volunteer positions, which in part accounts for our findings here. The diversity of positions continues to raise the question of how leadership training is more or less effective—or how different aspects of the training vary in impact—for alumni in various roles within organizations. We investigate this question below.



Not surprisingly, the “higher” levels are more likely to be paid positions. About 71 percent of executive directors and senior pastors is paid full-time, and 62 percent of program directors and youth pastors. In contrast, 56 percent of program coordinators and youth leaders is in volunteer positions.

About 48 percent of alumni have remained in youth ministry consistently and without interruption since they finished DVULI training. That may seem low, but these disruptions may have been relatively short. Another 20 percent have remained in youth ministry with some interruption since they graduated from DVULI. About 12 percent has not remained in youth ministry, but is involved in youth ministry in other ways. Only 4 percent of the sample is not involved in religious ministry of any kind.

Consistent involvement in youth ministry is higher in more recent cohorts. About 41 percent of alumni in early cohorts remained consistently involved in youth ministry, while 58 percent of more recent cohorts have done so.<sup>2</sup>

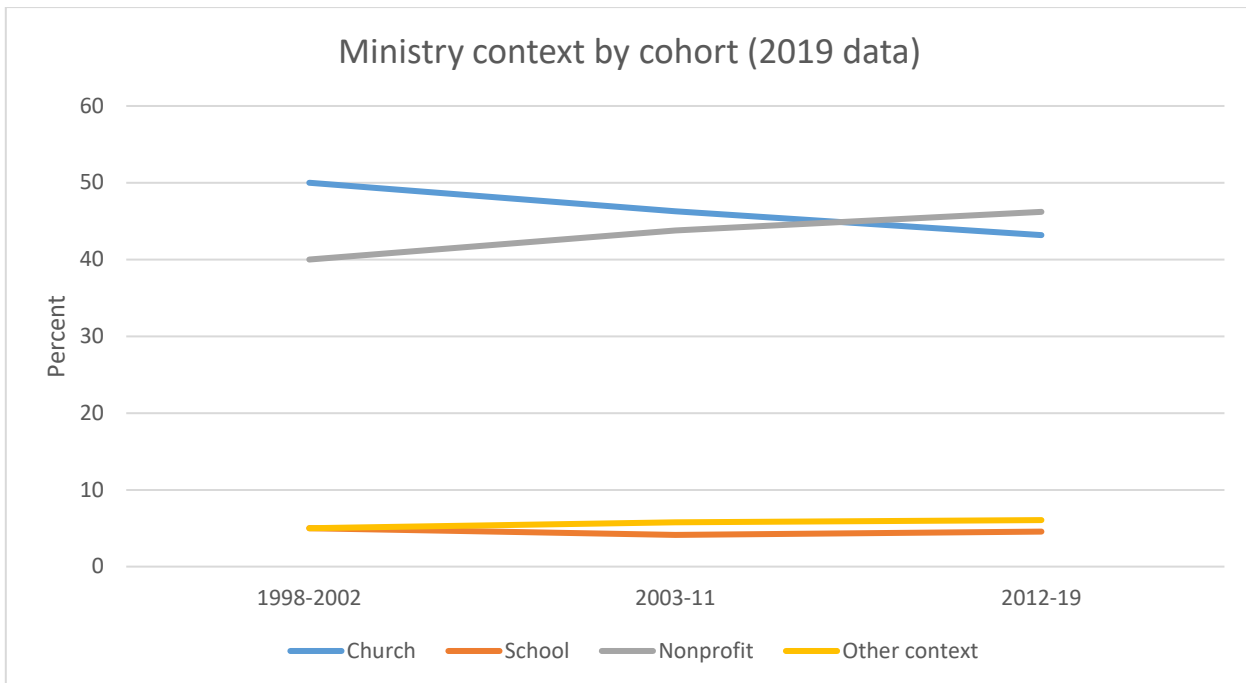


What is associated with consistently remaining in youth ministry? Our regression results confirm that more recent cohorts are more likely to remain in youth ministry consistently (or with brief interruptions) since DVULI. Women are less likely to remain in youth ministry consistently. Alumni with positions in the nonprofit sector, compared to those in churches, are more likely to remain in youth ministry. This may

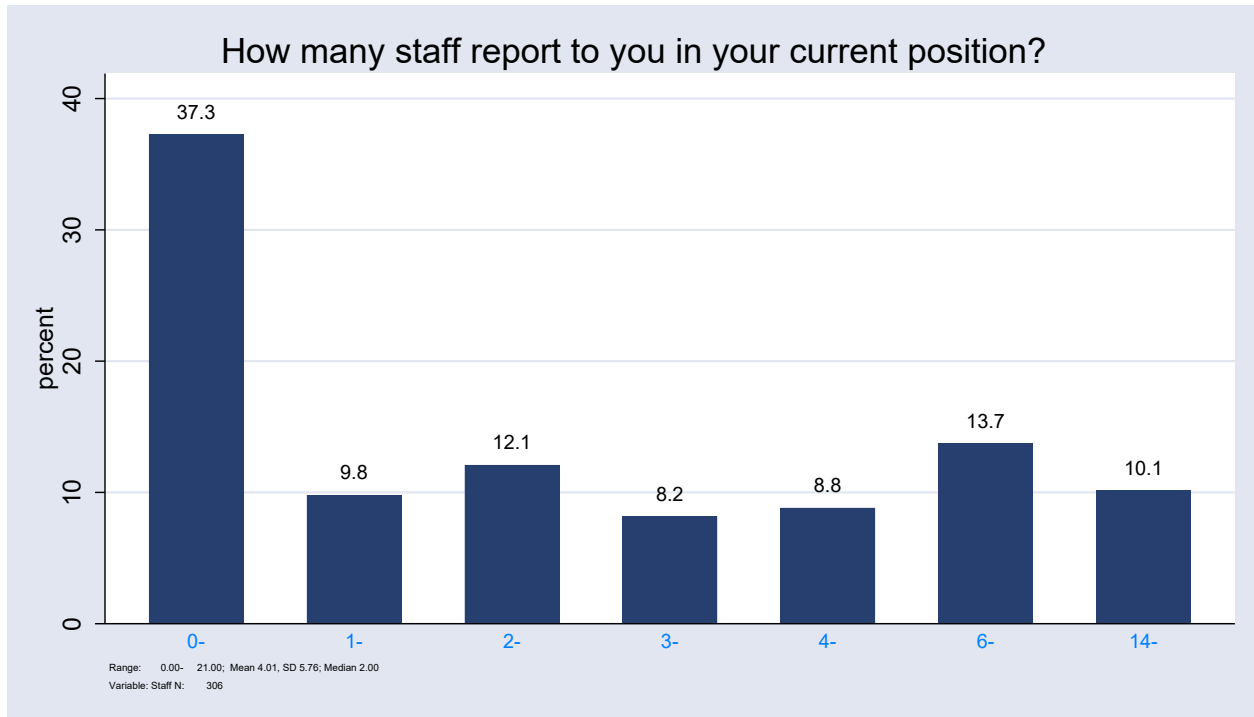
<sup>2</sup> The results are very similar when including 2006 survey data. The main difference is that the percentage consistently in youth ministry is about two percent higher for each cohort.

reflect ministry career paths in churches that lead out of youth ministry. Program directors or associate/youth pastors are more likely to remain in youth ministry, while those in volunteer positions are less likely. Note, however, that the 2019 survey asks alumni to report their current organization and position type, which are not necessarily the organizations or positions held by alumni when entering DVULI.

In terms of organization, about 45 percent of DVULI graduates are ministering in a church, but nearly the same percentage (44) are ministering in a nonprofit organization. Across cohorts, according to the 2019 survey results, it appears that the percentage in churches has declined in favor of other nonprofit organizations. As we will see, alumni in youth ministry in nonprofits report a very different set of outcomes than those working in churches. The percentage in schools or other contexts is relatively stable across cohorts.

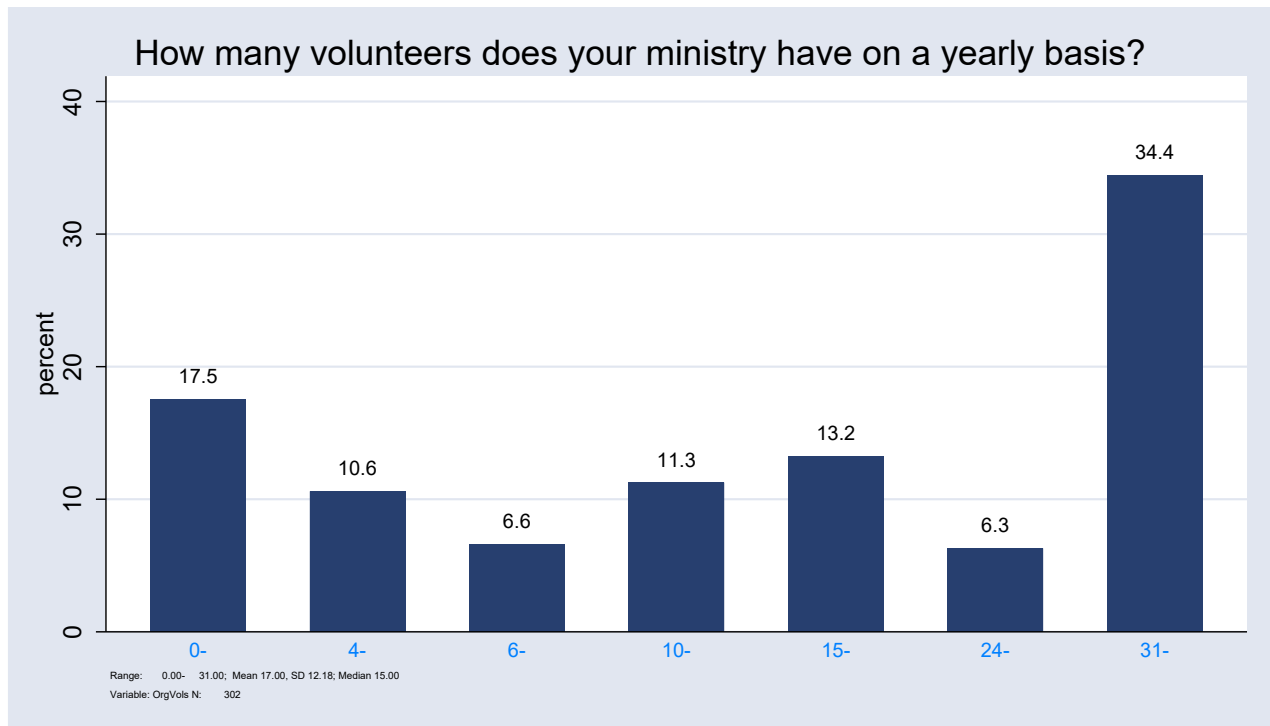


Most of these organizations are seemingly small or less formal, since about a third of respondents do not have people that they supervise in ministry. Still, about one-third of respondents are supervising 5 or more people. Specifically, about 24 percent has 6 or more staff, while about 37 percent do not have staff who report to them.



The number of staff is somewhat lower in more recent years compared to the 2000-06 cohort years. This is especially the case for the 2007-2011 years. After accounting for ministry organizations and positions, Hispanics have slightly more staff on average than whites. African Americans have significantly lower number of staff, a finding that is largely accounted for by the fact that African Americans tend to work in churches rather than in nonprofit organizations and that African Americans are more likely to work in unpaid ministry positions. Alumni working in schools report a lower number of staff than those working in churches, while those in nonprofits have a much higher number of staff reporting to them. Of course, executive directors and senior pastors have significantly more staff on average than other ministry positions. Alumni in unpaid positions have on average a much lower number of staff reporting to them.

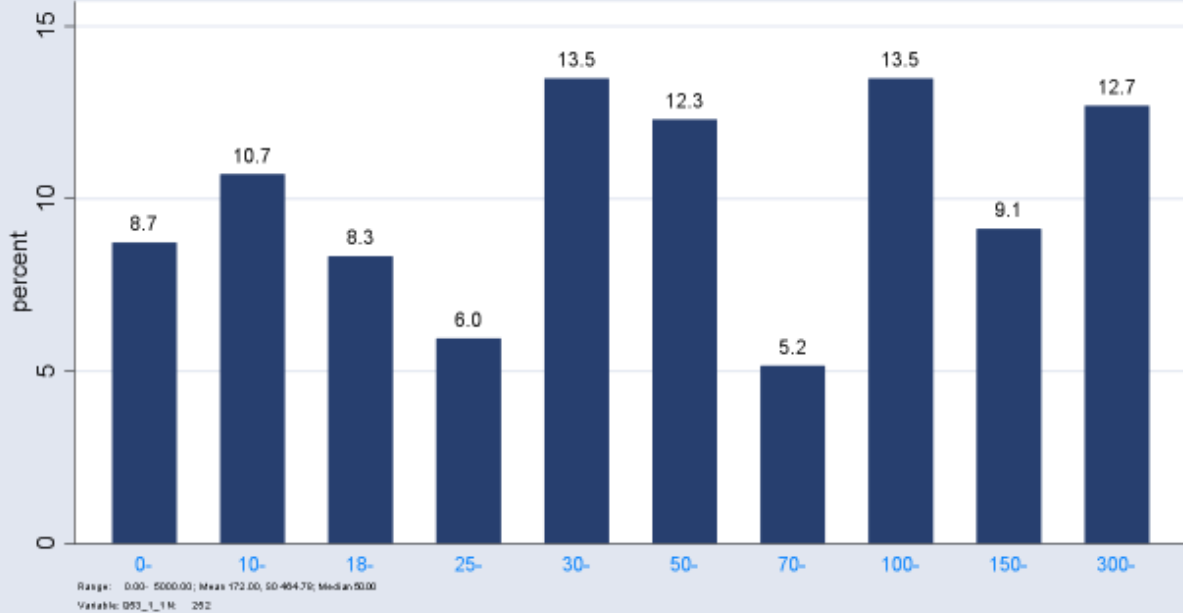
The number of volunteers available to alumni youth ministry varies widely as well. About 34 percent of alumni have over 30 volunteers available for their ministry, while about 18 percent do not have volunteers.



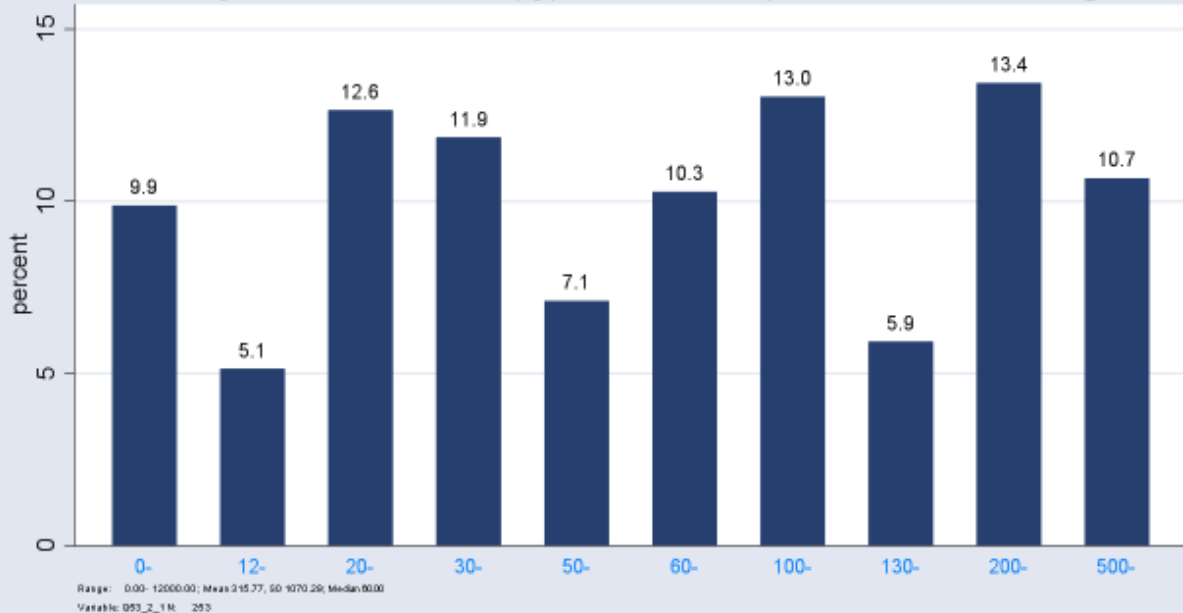
Women have fewer volunteers available for youth ministry, which is due to the kind of ministry positions that women hold. Women are less likely to be executive directors/senior pastors and more likely to be working in unpaid youth ministry positions. Older alums tend to have slightly fewer volunteers to work with. Hispanics tend to have fewer volunteers for their ministry, though this is due to the greater likelihood that Hispanics are working in unpaid positions. African Americans have considerably fewer volunteers available for youth ministry. Multiracial alumni have fewer volunteers as well, though this is due to the types of positions they tend to hold. Perhaps surprisingly, the more highly educated alumni have fewer volunteers available. It is not clear why the more educated work with fewer volunteers, but perhaps this is due to specific differences in ministry positions related to educational attainment. Perhaps also the more educated rely on their skills and abilities rather than seek volunteer help. Those working in schools have fewer volunteers compared to those working in churches. Working in a nonprofit is associated with a greater number of volunteers, which is due to the greater likelihood that nonprofit organizations have paid positions. “Higher” level positions tend to have more volunteers than “lower” level positions. Alumni in unpaid positions report fewer volunteers, while those with more years of ministry experience report a higher number of volunteers on average.

The number of youth that alumni minister to varies considerably. When entering the DVULI program, about 35 percent ministered to 100 or more youth over a typical six-month period. After DVULI about 43 percent of alumni minister to 100 or more youth.

Number of youth ministered to (typical 6 months)--Before DVULI training?



Number of youth ministered to (typical 6 months)--After DVULI training?



When considering alumni differences in youth served, we find that women are generally serving fewer youth after DVULI training, though this is explained by the kinds of positions that women hold. Those in nonprofit organizations minister to a higher number of youth, while those in unpaid positions serve fewer youth. Interestingly, when including data from 2006 and 2019, we find evidence that alumni that have obtained further education since DVULI are on average serving a slightly higher number of youth after DVULI. In addition, those working in churches tend to serve fewer youth than those in other organizations.



After accounting for differences in positions and experience, we find that African Americans are serving a slightly higher number of youth than whites.

When we consider change in the number of youth served before and after DVULI, we do not find sharp differences across alumni. There is evidence, again, that an increase in number of youth served is more likely for those who received an educational degree since DVULI. And we find some evidence that Hispanic compared to white alumni are associated with an increase in the number of youth served after DVULI.

Alumni personal income is moderate, with 30 percent in the \$30-49,000 range, and another 26 percent in the \$50-74,000 range. About 18 percent report total personal income greater than \$74,000, and 20 percent report less than \$30,000 in personal income. Total household income is concentrated in the \$50-74,000 range (20 percent), with another 19 percent in the \$75-99,000 range and 18 percent reporting household income of \$30-49,000. Personal income is lower in more recent cohorts, lower for women, higher for those with a BA, and generally higher among executive directors and senior pastors.

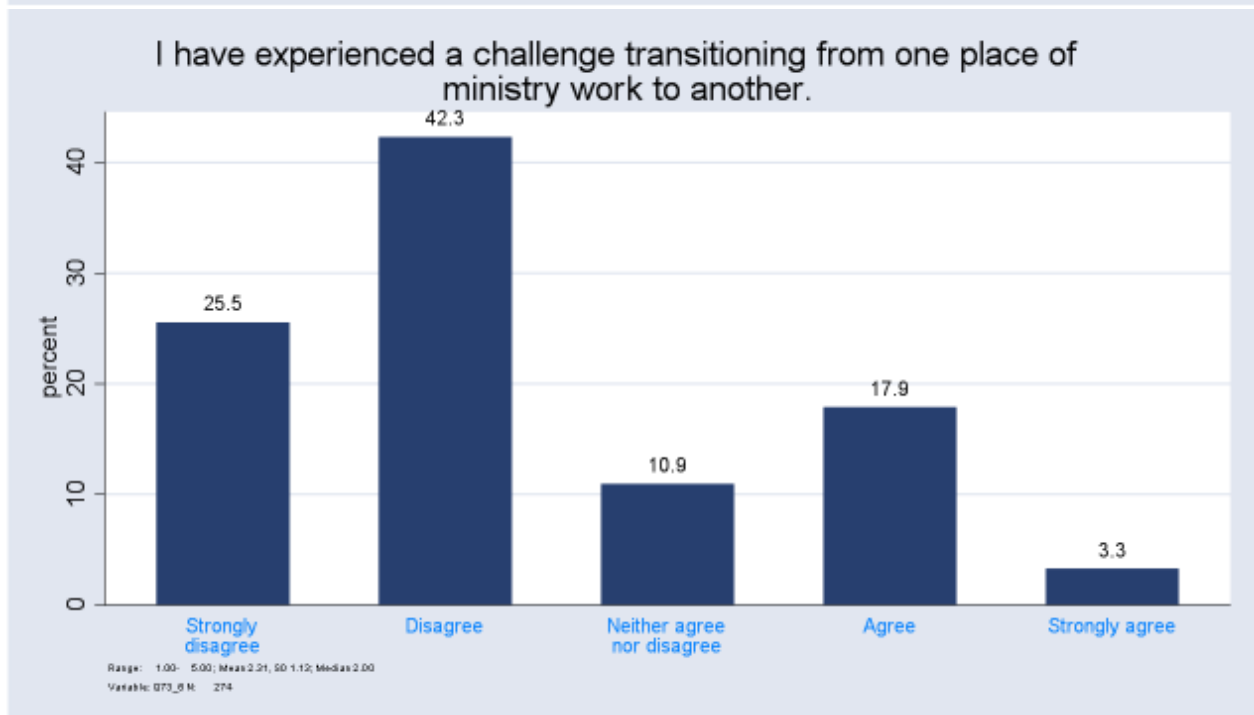
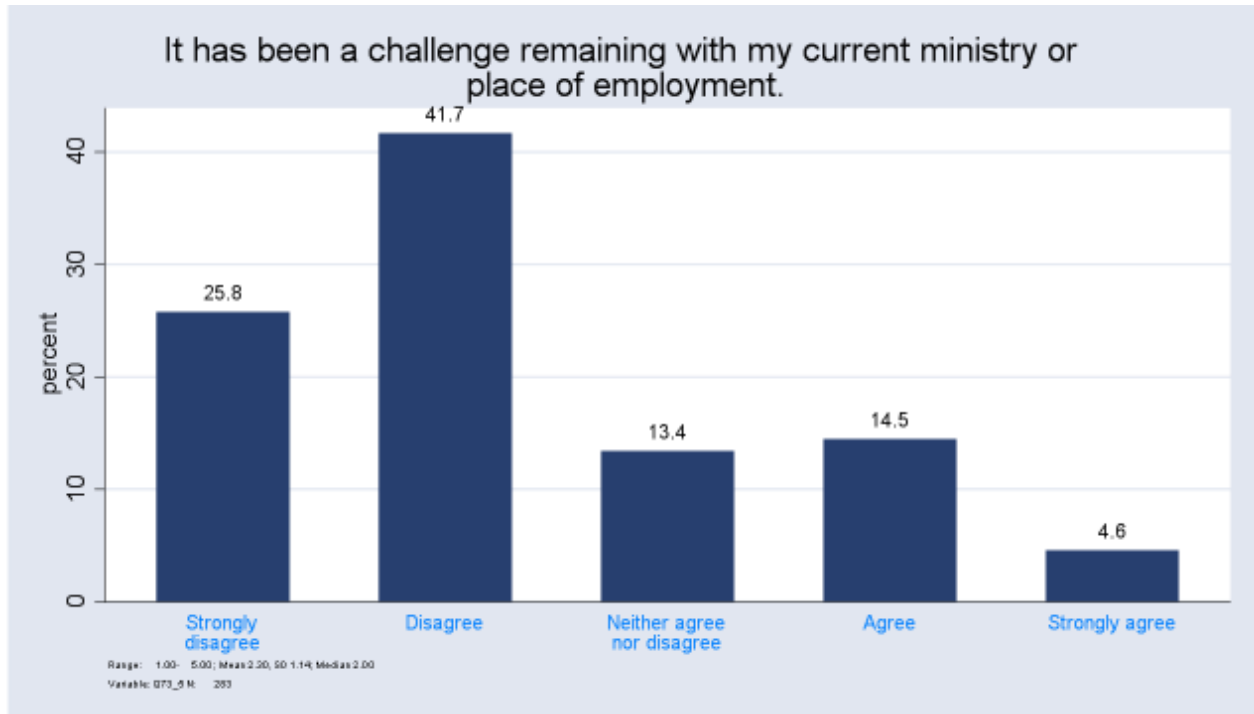


### Work Challenges and Opportunities

The challenges within youth ministry positions are quite high, not surprisingly, yet experiences vary considerably. The percentage is not large that report substantial challenges to remaining in their current ministry or place of employment. About 66 percent disagree or strongly disagree that this has been a challenge. That does leave 44 percent of the sample, however, who apparently have experienced some challenge in this regard. About 20 percent agree or strongly agree that remaining in their current ministry has been a challenge. Given the community and resource challenges to youth ministry, this percentage seems relatively low and likely reflects positively on DVULI participation. Still, we must keep in mind that

DVULI selects youth leaders who are established and influential in their ministries, and even among this group we find some challenges to remaining in youth ministry.

The transition from one place of ministry to another can be a challenge as well. About 20 percent agree or strongly agree that they have experienced a transitioning challenge. Still, 64 percent do not report this kind of challenge.



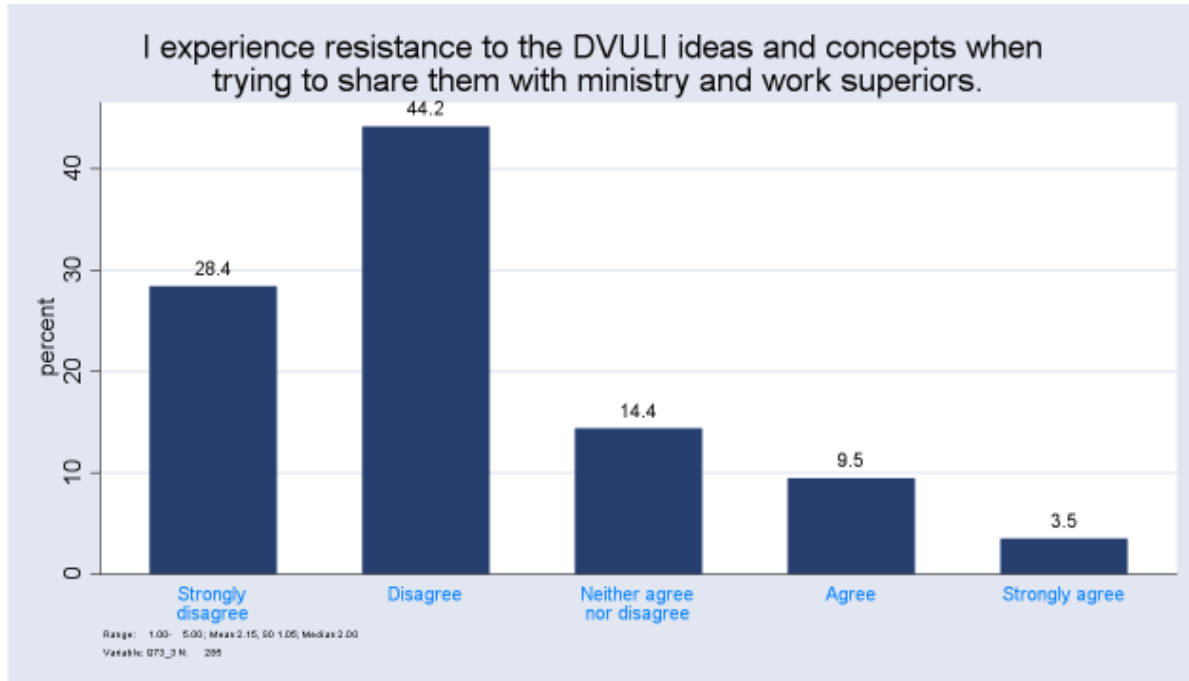
The natural question is, which alumni are more likely to experience challenges to staying in ministry? The regression analysis using the 2019 sample reveals that the middle cohort years are much less likely to say they have experienced a challenge staying in their current ministry, and the most recent cohort is trending lower on this challenge as well. Younger alumni report greater difficulties on this score, which may reflect not only age effects but also the kinds of positions that older participants had before entering DVULI. Females face higher challenges staying in ministry, though the effect is not strong when focusing only on the 2019 survey sample. The reason women have a more difficult time staying in ministry, according to our findings, is that they tend to have positions as “program coordinator or youth leader,” or “other positions,” rather the director or pastor roles. In the full sample, “other” race alumni have a greater challenge staying in ministry, which is due to the kinds of “entry level” positions that they hold.

The strongest explanation of challenges, not surprisingly, is the type of position held. Executive Directors, Associate or Senior Pastors, and Program Directors have lower challenges. The “program coordinator or youth leader” position, and those in “other” positions, report much higher levels of difficulty in staying in their position. Those who are not paid also report greater challenges staying in ministry. Those working in churches, and especially those in nonprofits, are less likely to report challenges. Alumni in schools and “other” ministry organizations are more likely to report challenges, though these results are not definitive. We find a great deal of variation in level of challenge by type of organization.

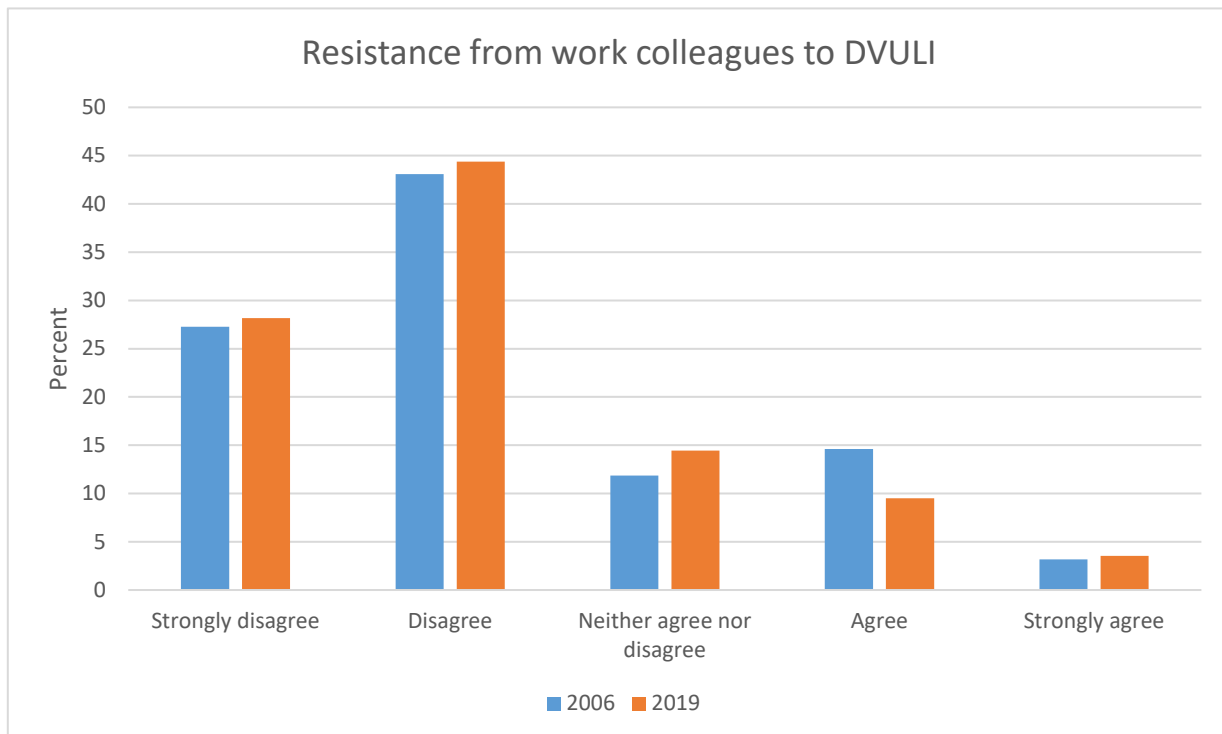
Regarding the challenges of transitioning from one place of work to another, we find that the 2019 compared to 2006 survey respondents report a much lower degree of challenge. Again, younger alumni face a greater challenge, as do those who are in “program coordinator or youth leader” positions. Alumni who have continued their education after DVULI report fewer challenges transitioning from one job to another, though this is less consistent after accounting for type of organization and position. Those in more consistent youth ministry careers face fewer transitioning challenges than those not centrally involved in youth ministry.

### *Resistance to DVULI*

Alumni do not consistently encounter resistance to DVULI ideas and concepts when trying to share them with ministry and work superiors. About 71 percent disagree to some extent with the statement that they experience resistance, and a relatively high percentage, 28 percent, *strongly* disagree. The 29 percent who apparently encounter some resistance is substantial, perhaps an indication that DVULI generates some challenges to existing organizations—a finding that was highlighted in the 2006 alumni study.



Comparing the 2006 and 2019 results side-by-side, we see a slight tendency toward lower resistance in 2019. These comparisons could be misleading without accounting for demographic differences across waves, so we turn to regression results to estimate change over time. We expect a decline in resistance, since, in response to the 2006 report, DVULI expanded efforts to train alumni to overcome resistance, to create understanding with co-workers, and to use cooperative efforts to incorporate new approaches.

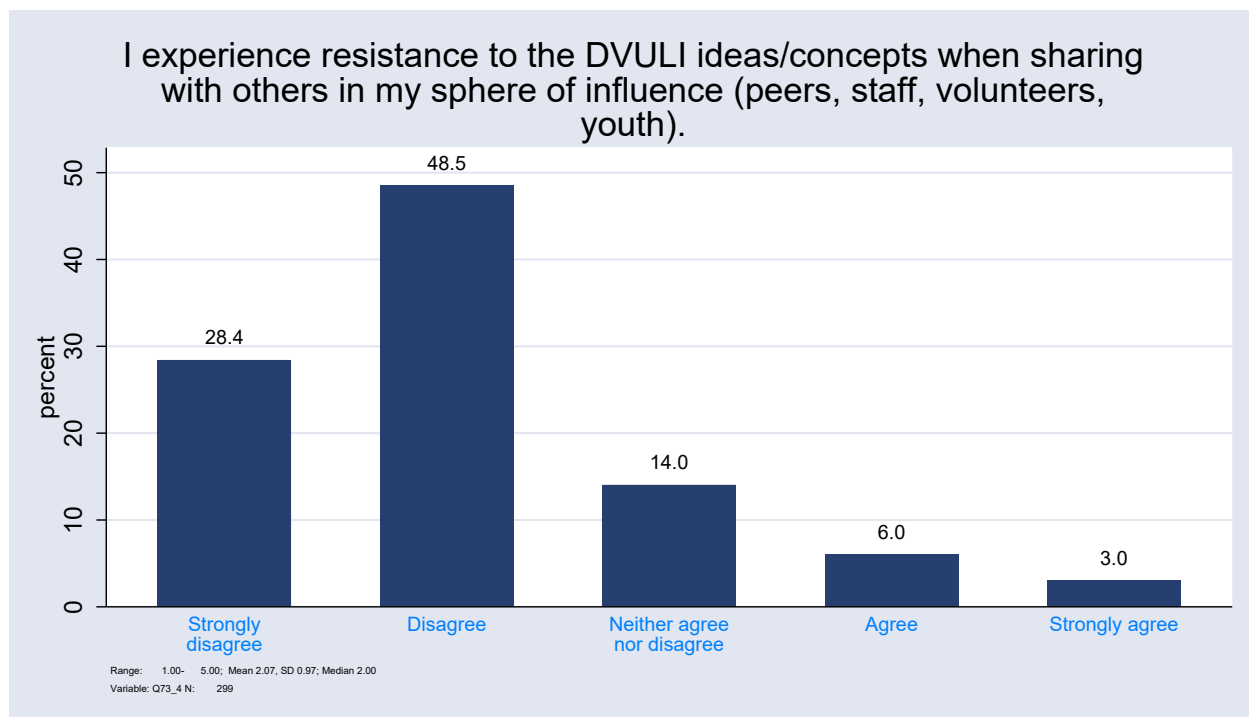


The regression results show a strong decline in resistance reported for the 2007-2012 cohorts compared to the 2000-2006 cohort, and a slight decline for the most recent years. Interestingly, females are not more or less likely to report resistance, though younger alumni experience more resistance. African Americans report slightly higher levels of resistance, but these findings are not significant. “Program coordinators and youth leaders” experience higher levels of resistance, compared to those in director or pastor positions, though this finding varies considerably within this group. *We do find in the full sample that those in “other ministries” (i.e., did not report serving in a church, school, or nonprofit) experience much higher levels of resistance to DVULI. This could reflect a more natural fit between DVULI training and youth ministry in churches, schools, and nonprofits.* In the 2019 sample, those with more years in professional ministry experience less resistance when working with ministry and work supervisors.

When explaining DVULI concepts and ideas with others in the respondent’s sphere of influence, such as peers, staff, volunteers, and youth, overall resistance is lower. About 28 percent strongly disagree that they experience resistance in these relationships, and another 47 percent disagree (if not strongly). Likely the closer relationships with these co-workers lessens conflict.

Most alumni do not consistently experience challenges when explaining DVULI training to colleagues, friends, and family. Sixty-five percent say they disagree with the statement that they do experience challenges in this regard. Those strongly disagreeing is lower (19 percent). Forty-five percent apparently have experienced some challenges in communicating about the DVULI training.

There are not many differences in peer, family, and youth resistance by demographic variables, though “other” race does show inconsistent evidence of experiencing higher resistance in the 2019 sample. Alumni working in schools, compared to churches or nonprofits, are more likely to experience resistance from peers, staff, and youth. Fitting youth ministry into schooling structures likely generates a higher sense of resistance to DVULI, and it is possible that (public?) school personnel are more skeptical of DVULI.



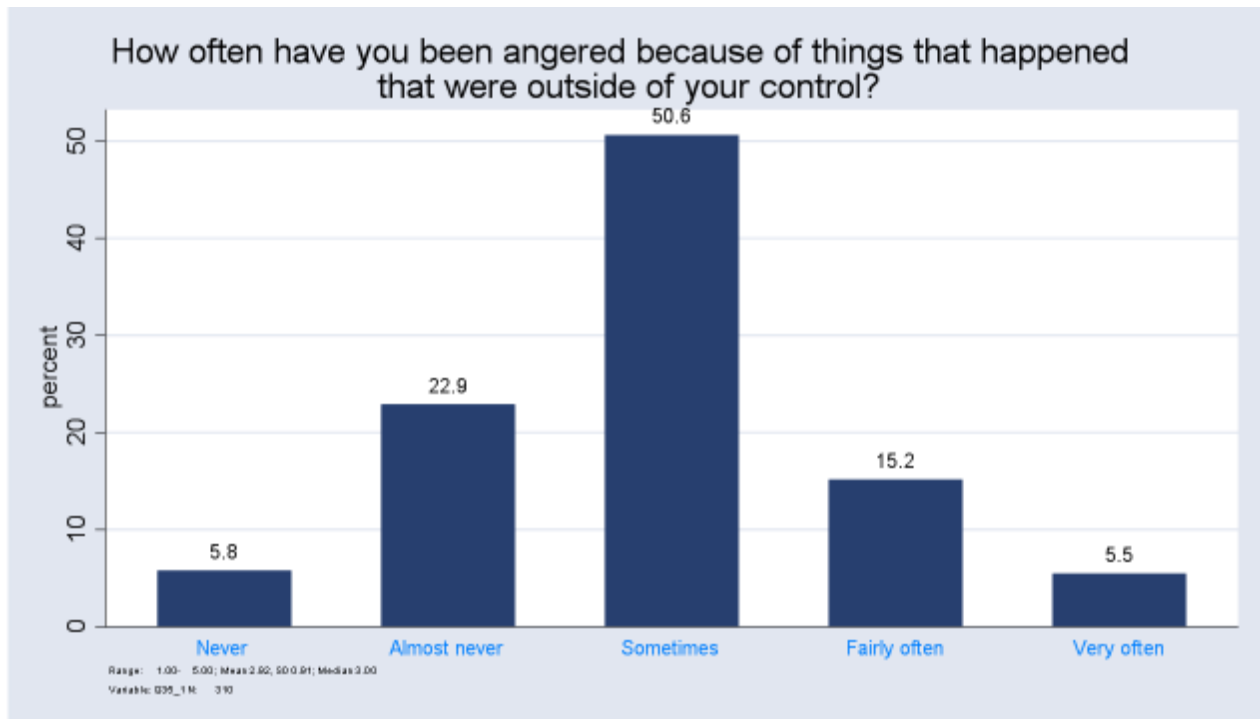
*In sum, the difficulties of bringing DVULI to local organizations and communities is not a widespread problem. The differences across cohorts for resistance at work appear to have declined especially in the middle years, and is slightly less in the most recent cohorts. The negative impact of resistance in the field, however, could be high, in which case DVULI may want to continue to work to move resistance to “zero.”*

### **Leadership Skills and Orientations**

The first set of questions on leadership orientations straddle the boundary between ministry context, and personal approaches to youth ministry challenges. Transformational leadership depends on meeting these challenges proactively, embodying hope rather than fatalism. DVULI alumni have a high challenge threshold, but report mostly productive approaches to adversity.

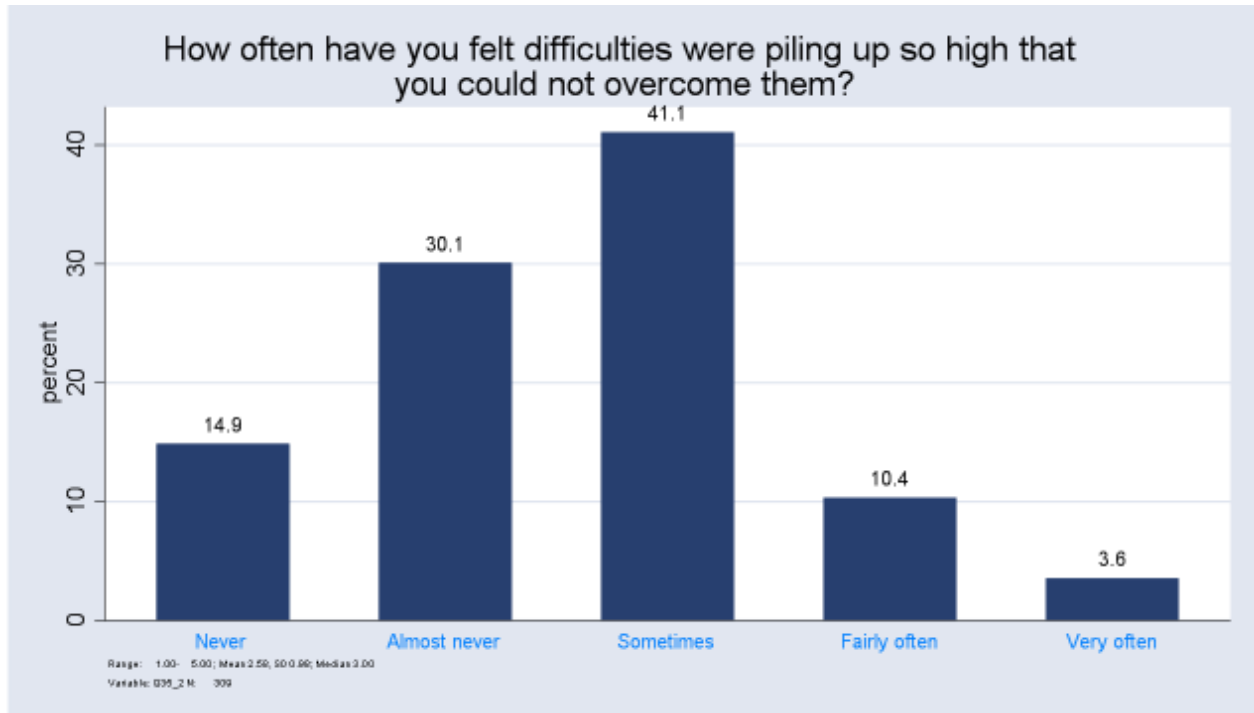
That respondents feel angry because things in their ministry seem to happen outside of their control is quite common, but 29 percent do not have this experience at all. Still, 21 percent experience anger “fairly often” or more frequently, and another 50 percent report that they experience anger because things happen outside their control “sometimes.”

We do not find much difference in reported anger across cohorts, but we do find that older alumni report lower levels of anger because things feel out of control than younger alumni. One of the strong effects is among Hispanic alumni, who report much lower levels of anger than whites. This may result from the integration of family, ministry, and community for Hispanics, which provides social support for doing youth ministry (Avalos 2004; Crane 2003; Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000; Matovina 2012; Mulder, Ramos and Marti 2017; Warner and Wittner 1998; Warner 2005). Alumni with positions in nonprofits compared to churches experience higher levels of anger because of things outside of their control. And alumni who are program coordinators or youth leaders, rather than directors and pastors, express higher levels of anger. This finding may be due to the “lower” level of responsibility or leadership given to coordinators and youth leaders compared to pastor and youth pastors. Overall, these findings seem to reflect the difficulties of having “control” in some settings and positions.



When asked how often difficulties seem to pile up so high that they cannot be overcome, only 15 percent say “never” and 31 percent say “almost never.” That leaves a substantial number that have been overwhelmed by difficulties in their ministry. About 14 percent say that they experience this “fairly often.” These findings may reflect the challenges of youth ministry in urban, high poverty areas.

Younger alumni have higher levels of seemingly insurmountable obstacles, and Hispanics have lower levels. Interestingly, those with higher levels of education perceive fewer obstacles. We do not find strong differences across cohorts, nor by type of organization or position. Positions in the nonprofit sector seem to have higher levels of difficulties, though this is not consistent across alumni. Surprisingly, we do not find differences across types of positions, which may reflect the greater challenges and expectations for the higher-level positions (leading to no difference across positions).

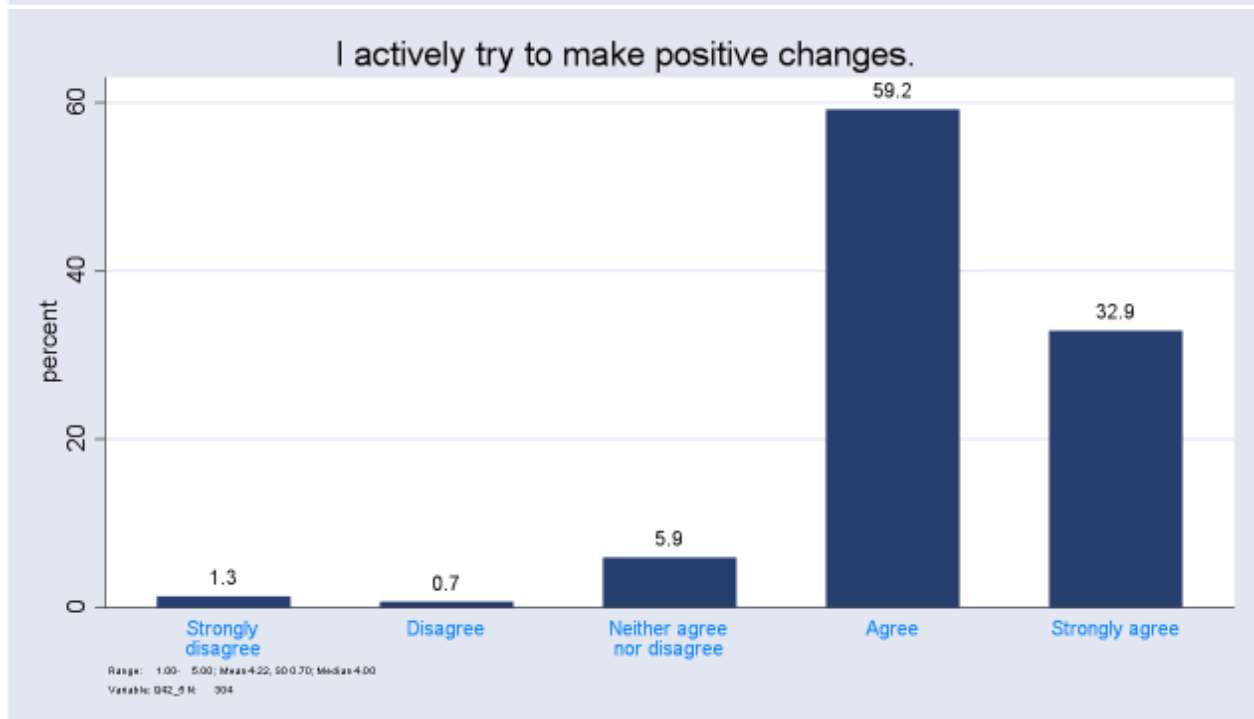
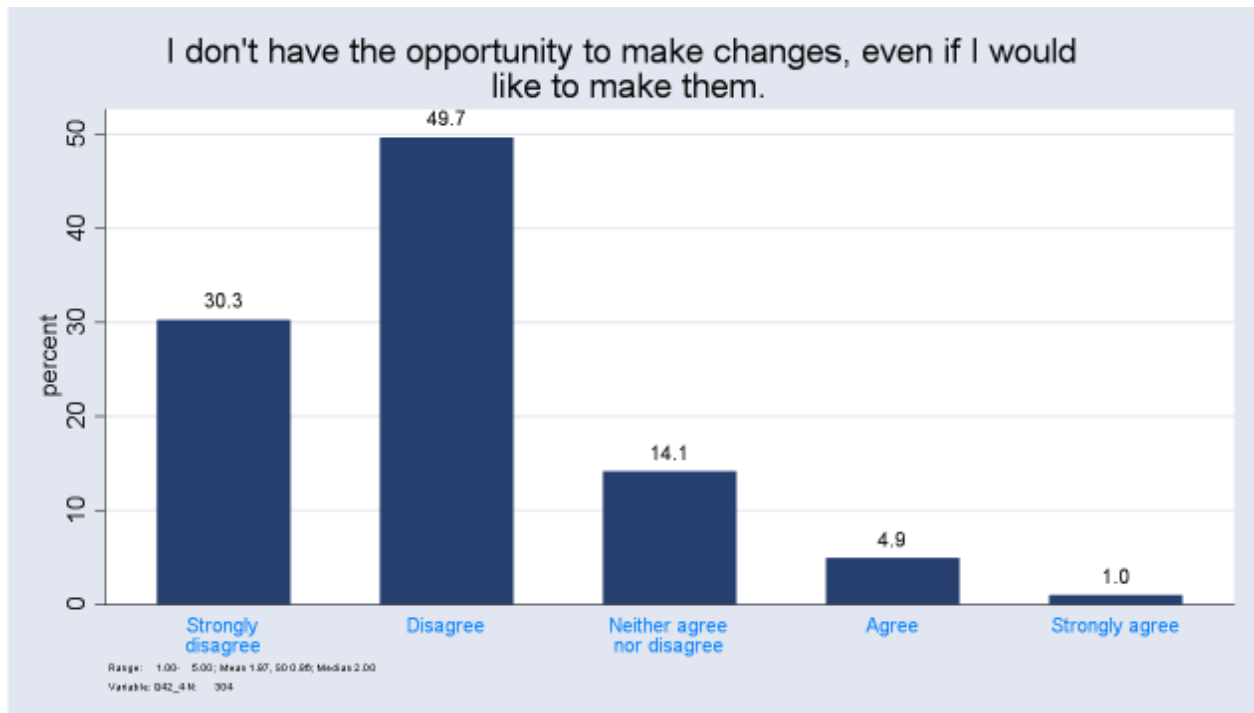


The ministry struggles do not lead to fatalism: most alumni feel resilient despite challenges. About 20 percent strongly agree that they tend to bounce back quickly after hard times, and 54 percent agree. A small percentage, about 16 percent, agree or strongly agree that they tend to take a long time to get over setbacks in their life. About 15 percent strongly disagree that they need a long time to get over setbacks, and an additional 47 percent disagree with this statement.

Interestingly, we do not find that bouncing back varies much by individual characteristics, including gender and age. However, we do find that Hispanic alums tend to bounce back more quickly, which may reflect the social supports available in the Hispanic community. Alumni in “other” ministry positions, compared to executive directors and senior pastors, are less likely to agree that they bounce back quickly. In contrast, those who have had a higher number of years in professional ministry tend to bounce back more quickly.

DVULI participants are selected because they are in influential youth ministry positions, which explains in part why respondents remain hopeful that they can make a difference despite challenges. Most alumni believe they have the opportunity to make changes in their ministry. About 30 percent strongly disagree that they do not have an opportunity to make changes, and 50 percent disagree (but not strongly) with this statement. We conclude that most alumni have considerable discretion in the direction of their ministry, and take a positive approach to what they can accomplish in ministry. About 33 percent strongly agree with the statement that they actively try to make positive changes in their ministry, while another 60 percent agree (but not strongly).





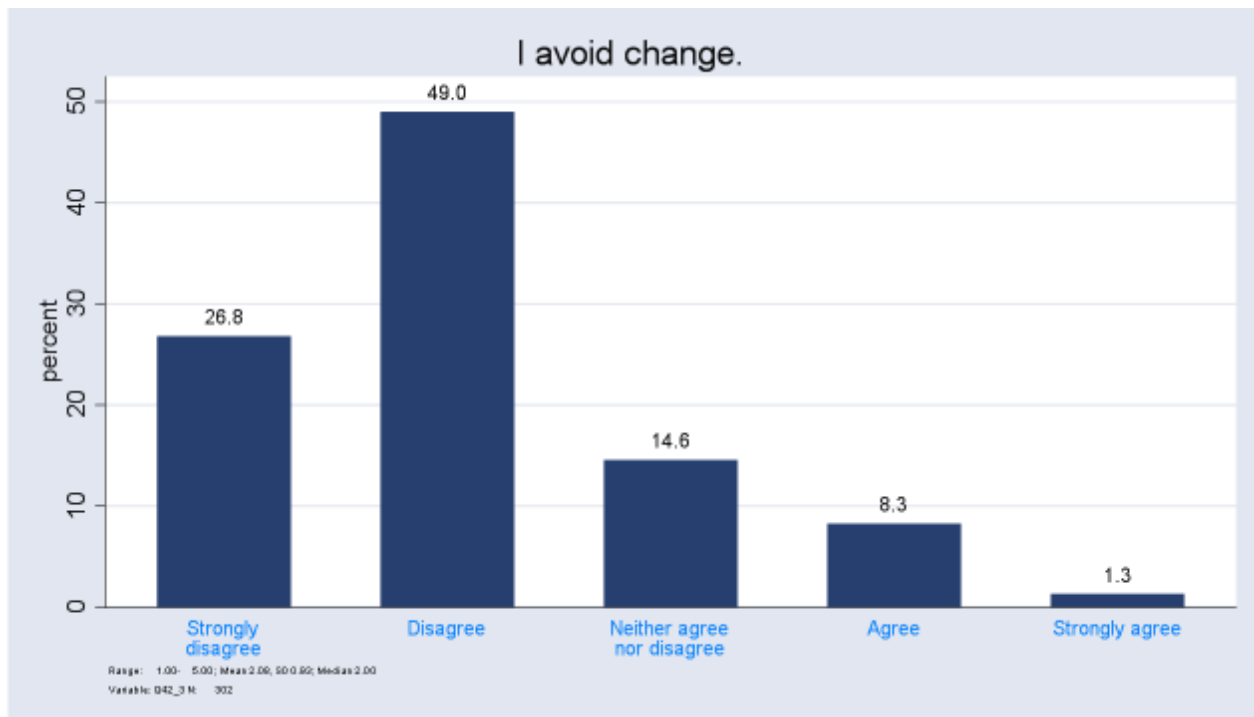
There are striking differences in who reports that they do not have opportunities to make changes. After controlling for type of positions, which tend to vary by gender, we find that women are less likely to say they do not have an opportunity to make changes. Similarly, Hispanics are much less likely to believe they cannot make changes. For reasons that are difficult to discern, those who have received further education since DVULI report more constrained opportunities to make changes. Perhaps the pursuit of more education is motivated by perceived constraints in one's current job. Those directly involved in youth ministry compared with those who are only tangentially related to youth ministry report more

opportunities to make changes. Some of the strongest differences on this outcome, not surprisingly, emerge from type of ministry position. “Program coordinators and youth leaders” as well as those in “other” ministry positions experience much greater constraint in their opportunities for change. Also expected is the lack of opportunities for change among those who are ministry volunteers. Alumni with more years of professional ministry experience report more opportunities to initiate changes.

In terms of actively trying to make positive changes, older respondents are more likely to do so, though the explanation for this effect is that older alumni tend to have higher-level ministry positions. African American alumni are less likely to initiate change, which seems to be due in part to the kind of ministry positions they hold. Those who have achieved an educational degree since DVULI are more likely to be active in making changes, which seems consistent with the general effect of years of education on proactive approaches to work tasks. Program coordinators and youth leaders are less likely to actively try to make positive changes.

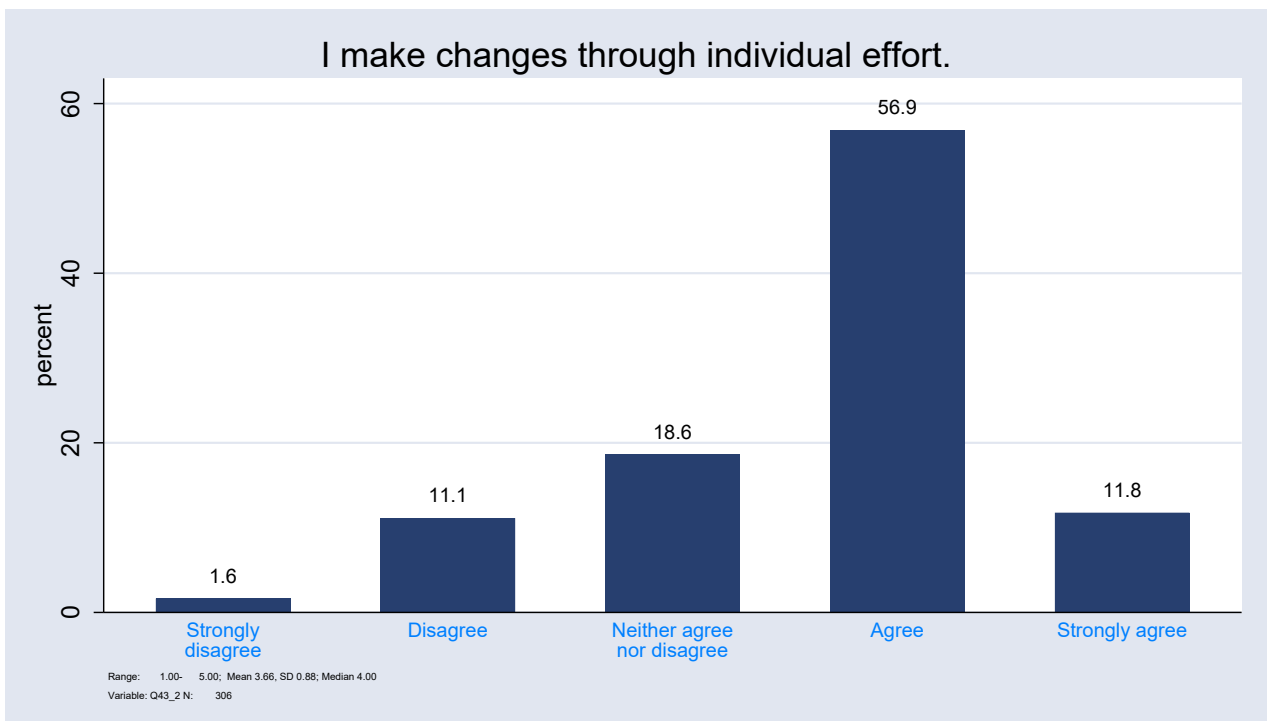
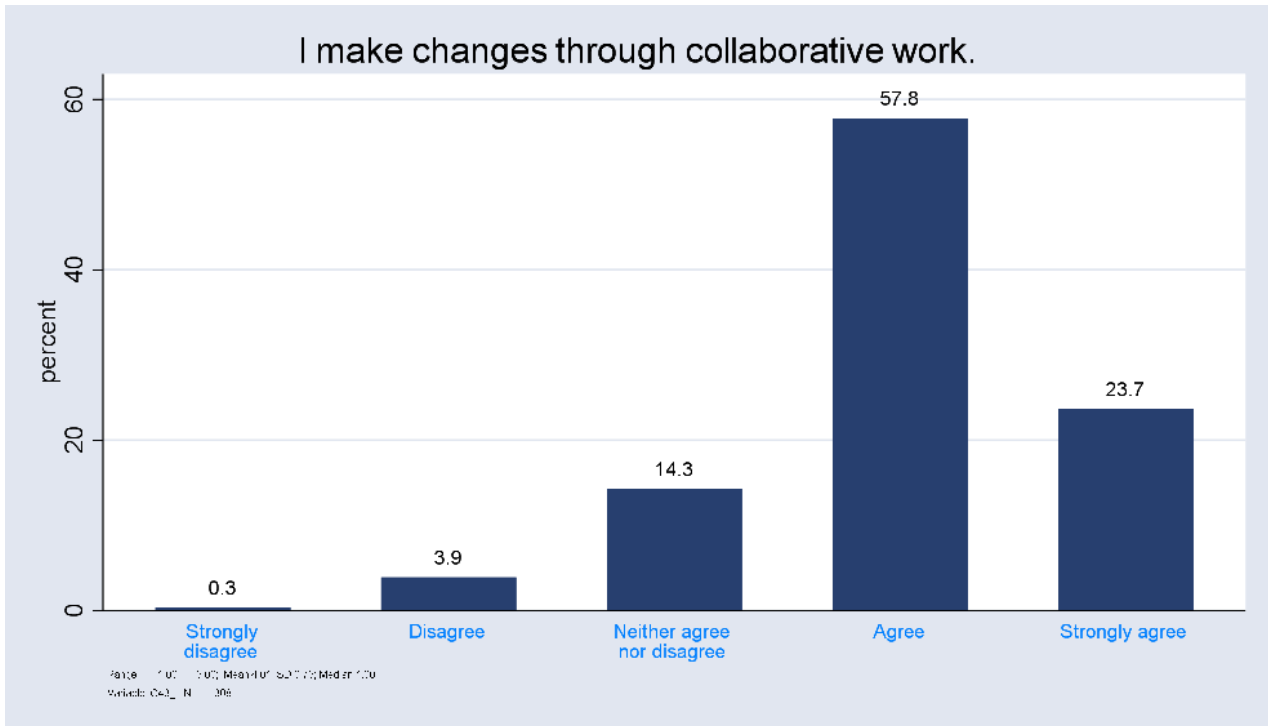
DVULI alumni are ready to take up transformational leadership. Only 10 percent of alumni report that they avoid change. About 27 percent strongly disagree with the statement, “I avoid change,” and 49 percent disagree (but not strongly).

The middle and more recent cohorts are much less likely to say they avoid change compared to the 2000-06 years. Older alumni are less likely to avoid change, but this is due to their greater number of years in professional ministry. Alumni working in schools compared to those working in churches are more likely to avoid change. Finally, the longer an alum works in professional ministry, the less likely they are to avoid change.



### Collaborative Change

Follow-up questions asked how the respondents attempt to bring about ministry changes. Do these changes tend to come through collaboration? About 24 percent strongly agree that they do, while another 58 percent agree (but not strongly) that the changes they initiate are accomplished through collaborative work. Do changes come about through individual effort? About 12 percent strongly agree that they take this approach, and another 57 percent agree. Note, however, that alumni may not see collaboration and individual effort as mutually exclusive in their ministry efforts.



Bringing change through collaboration appears to be less likely among recent cohorts, though the difference between 2000-06 and 2012-19 is largely due to differences in years of professional youth ministry experience among these two groups. Older alumni are slightly less likely to bring change through collaborative efforts. “Other” races are lower on collaboration, though this is largely due to fewer years in professional ministry. Education since DVULI is positively associated with collaborative change. Educational experiences combined with DVULI training may enhance not only the motivation but also the skills and networks for collaboration in ministry. Nonprofit positions are more likely to pursue change through collaboration, though this is partly because these tend to be in paid rather than volunteer positions. Program coordinators and youth leaders are lower on this outcome, though this is accounted for by the higher likelihood that these positions are unpaid and occupied by less experienced youth ministers. Volunteer positions are associated with lower likelihood of collaborative change. But years in professional ministry is positively related to attempts to bring change through collaboration.

Interestingly, bringing change through individual effort is nearly randomly distributed across alumni. The only significant effect is years of professional ministry, which reduces an emphasis on bringing change through individual effort—once again proving there is wisdom in youth ministry experience.

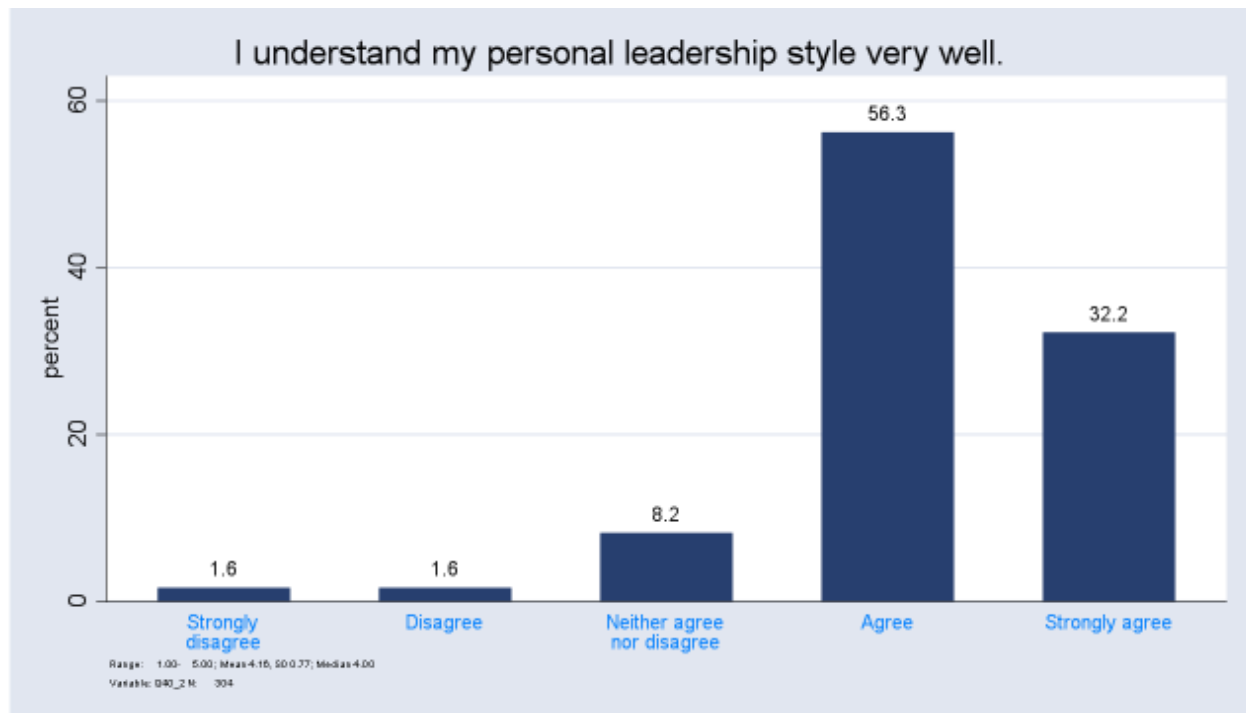
Overall, we find that alumni seem to embody transformational leadership, despite the challenges of their ministry context. The youth ministry context increases the likelihood that things feel out of control, and difficulties can seem to pile up. *Yet high percentages of alumni report being able to deal effectively with these challenges, and are committed to being change-agents in youth ministry.* Younger alumni and those with less youth ministry experience, as we would expect, tend to have more difficulty in providing transformational leadership at this point in their ministry. Analysis of panel data will show whether this improves with time. *Though one might expect women would be disadvantaged as transformational agents due to historical gender roles and power dynamics within religious organizations (Konieczny and Chaves 2000; Wessinger 1996; Wessinger 2020), we do not find evidence of that here.* Lastly, a couple of themes emerge that will carry forward in our analysis. *First, more educated respondents appear to be more effective transformational leaders, which seems to support the view of an important synergy between DVULI training and forms of high education. Second, Hispanics appear to be more settled into the tasks of transformational leadership, perhaps because of the integration of family, religious organization, and local community in Hispanic contexts (Ebaugh and Curry 2000; Ebaugh, O'Brien and Chafetz 2000; Ebaugh and Pipes 2001; Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000; Warner and Wittner 1998).*

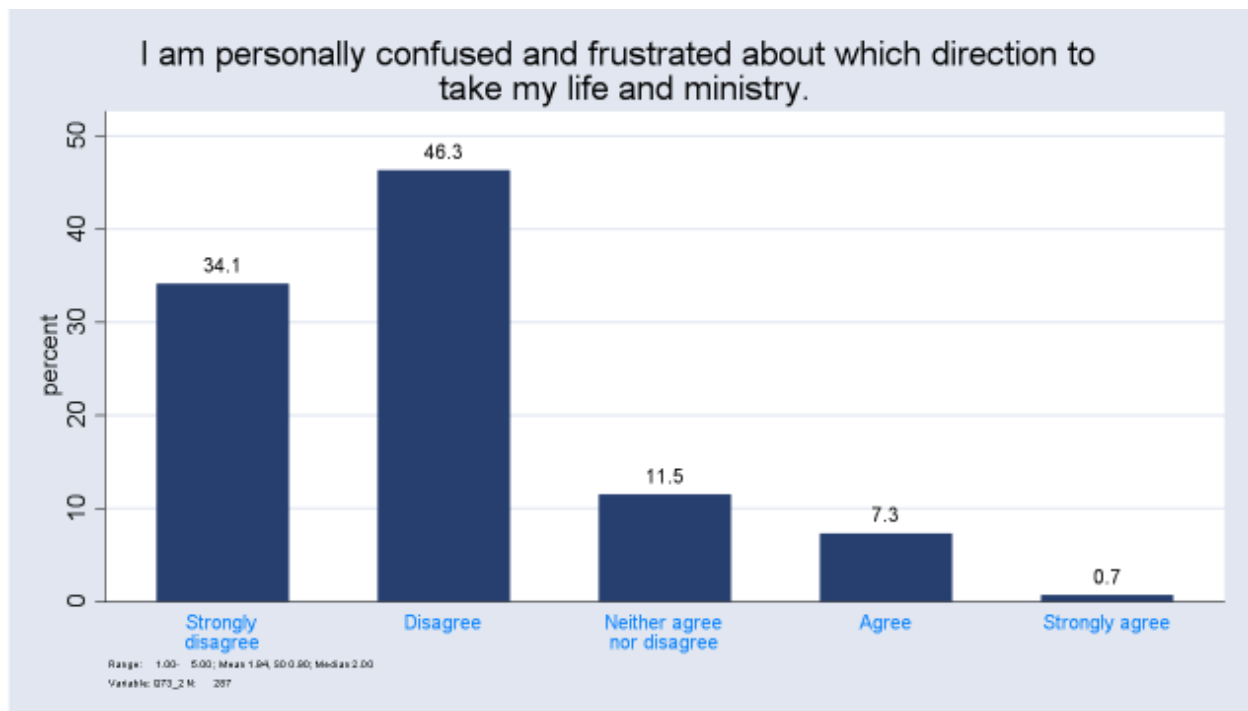
*In terms of how alumni attempt to transform ministry, we find that alumni report high levels of collaborative approaches to change, though there remain many situations in which alumni, perhaps because of lack of resources or structural constraints, end up going it alone.* It may be that many alumni are finding that youth ministry leadership benefits from collaboration, but at times depends on the committed and often heroic leader to make change happen. Given the challenges of collaborative change, especially in disadvantaged contexts with low social and organizational capital (Small, Jacobs and Massengill 2008).

## Leadership Orientations

Key to effective leadership is a clear assessment of personal strengths and weaknesses, and DVULI has placed a strong emphasis on preparing leaders through personal assessment.

Most alumni are confident that they understand their leadership style. About 32 percent strongly agree, and another 56 percent agree, that they understand their leadership style very well. That extends to understanding their calling in their life and ministry. A challenging question in the survey is whether alumni feel personally confused and frustrated about what direction to take in life and ministry. Again, we find a high percentage that disagree that they are confused and frustrated (80 percent). Of these, a relatively high percentage strongly disagree with this statement (34 percent). The 20 percent of alumni who are less confident on life and ministry direction is substantial, but likely quite low when compared to national rates for people in similar positions and contexts. This finding is consistent with the claim that DVULI training builds strong leaders in part through self-understanding.

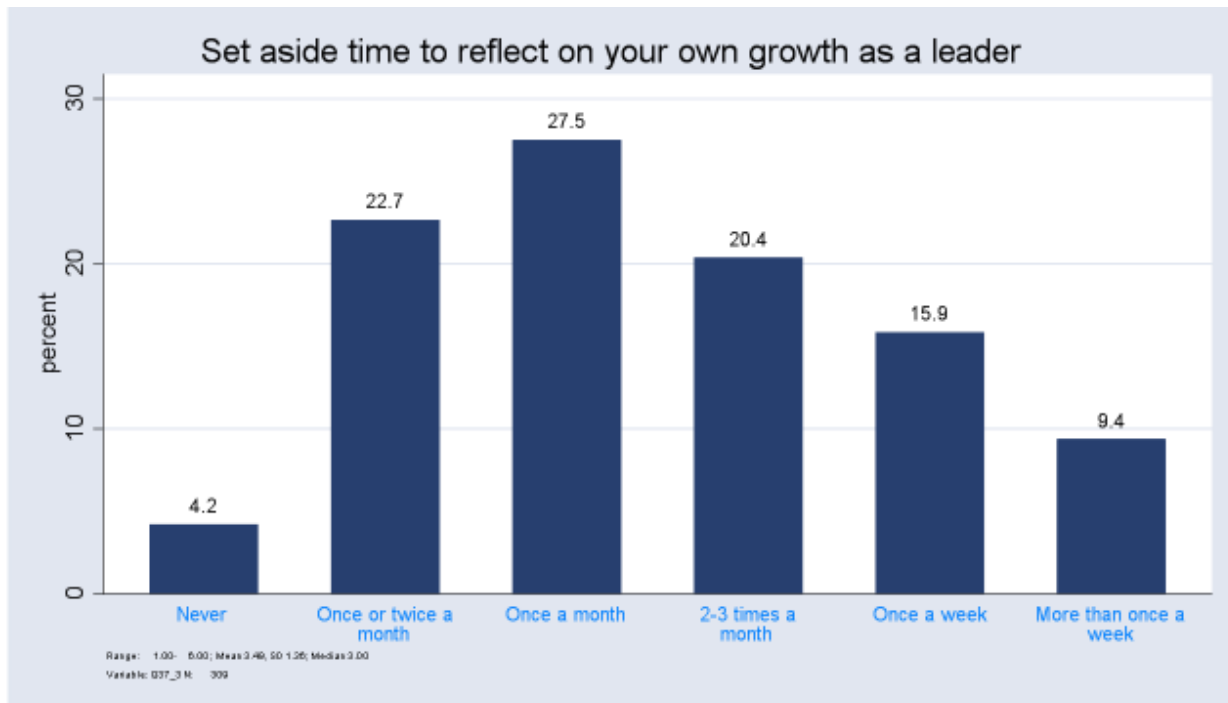




Older alumni are more likely to understand their leadership style, though, according to our results, this can be chalked up to years in professional ministry. Hispanics are more confident that they understand their leadership style than whites. After accounting for characteristics of organization and ministry positions, we find that African Americans also express higher levels of understanding of their leadership style. Alumni working in schools are more likely to report that they understand their leadership style than those working in churches. Those who have been in ministry longer are more confident that they know their leadership style.

Older alums are less likely to be confused and frustrated about their ministry direction. “Other” races are much more likely to have difficulty with ministry direction than whites. Alumni working in nonprofit organizations report a much lower sense of confusion over ministry direction than those working in churches, which are trying to fit youth ministry together with other ministry goals. A lack of ministry direction is higher among those in lower level positions, including program coordinator and youth leaders and “other” ministry positions.

DVULI alumni spend considerable time reflecting on their growth as a leader. About 25 percent set aside time once a week or more to reflect on their growth as a leader. And another 48 percent do this at least once a month. Actually seeking feedback from others about their leadership is less common but still significant. About 14 percent seek feedback on their leadership once a week or more, and strong 49 percent do this once a month or more (but not once a week or more).



Reflection on growth as a leader for the 2019 sample is much more likely among the most recent cohorts. *This finding seems unlikely but for changes in the program emphasis and structure that encouraged and facilitated reflection.* And this cohort effect is even stronger after we account for the effect of being female and age as well as the effect of race and ethnicity and education since DVULI—each of which has a strong relationship to the difference between earlier cohorts and the most recent cohorts (e.g., the most recent

cohorts are significantly younger than earlier cohorts). *The impact of the most recent cohorts on leadership reflection is one of the strongest cohort effects we have seen so far.*

Females tend to be lower on leadership reflection, but this effect is not significantly different from males in this sample. Younger alumni are much less likely to reflect on their growth as a leader than are older alumni. The “other” race group is much more likely to reflect on their leadership. Interestingly, those who received further education after DVULI spend more time in reflection as well.

In terms of ministry organization, alumni in “other” ministries report greater leadership reflection than those in churches. Reflection is higher among alumni who have spent more years in professional ministry, and this does not obviate the additional boost to reflection provided by age.

Seeking feedback on leadership is driven by very different factors. In terms of cohort, the very earliest years (1998-1999) are negatively related to this outcome, and the most recent cohorts are higher on feedback, though there is considerable variation in recent years. Again, education since DVULI is positively related to seeking feedback. A volunteer position is much less likely to lead to seeking feedback on leadership. Interestingly, none of the other demographic or organizational factors substantially affect seeking feedback.

*Knowing one’s leadership style, having direction for ministry, reflecting on leadership growth, and seeking feedback on leadership are important emphases in DVULI that are highly valued and expressed by alumni. Interestingly, DVULI appears to have improved in leadership prep in more recent cohorts. Again, we see evidence of differences in preparation for leadership among older and younger alums. Older and more experienced youth ministers express a leadership prep advantage. We would expect, however, that younger alumni will grow into these leadership orientations through the life course. Future analysis, tracking individual alumni over time, is needed to confirm the longer-term effects of DVULI across the ministry career. Encouragingly, the effect of DVULI on leadership assessment and direction is stronger among racial minorities. Leadership skill development seems to respond to higher education, supporting the claim of a synergy between DVULI and educational advancement. It also depends on the ministry position, since the “lower level” and volunteer positions place greater hurdles to leadership prep.*

### **Leadership Skills and Practices**

DVULI places a strong emphasis on systematic planning for youth ministry. Each participant writes a formal ministry plan, a Breakthrough Plan, during the 15-month training, and receives feedback on this plan. This exercise asks participants to develop concrete plans for life and ministry. The Breakthrough Plan focuses on strategic change to the way one lives and does ministry, and empowerment of others for youth ministry.

We do not know which participants did formal ministry planning before coming to the program, but we expect that most respondents to the planning questions in the survey would be referring to DVULI ministry planning during and after their DVULI training. Future surveys should account for planning before and after DVULI training, but the context of most of the questions reviewed in this section likely would cue the respondent to consider planning exercises since beginning the DVULI program. Moreover, most planning questions are interpreted more naturally as referring to actions taken after completing the 15-month intensive training program.

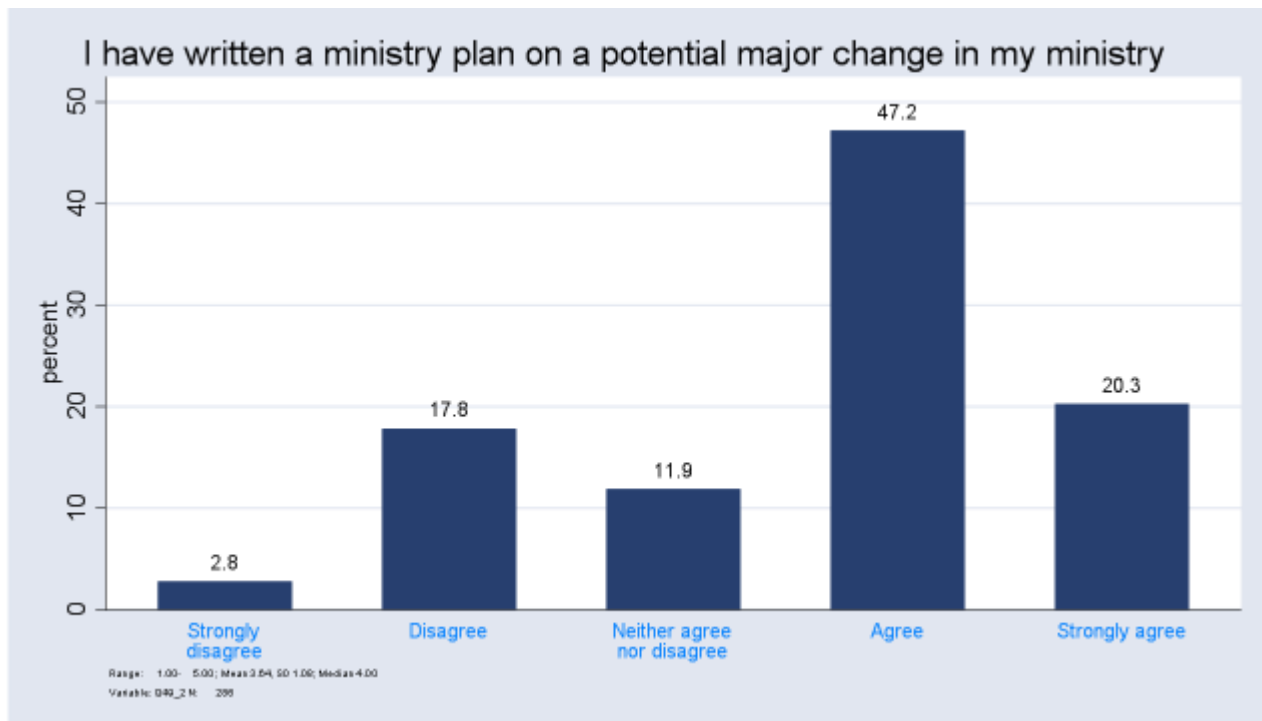


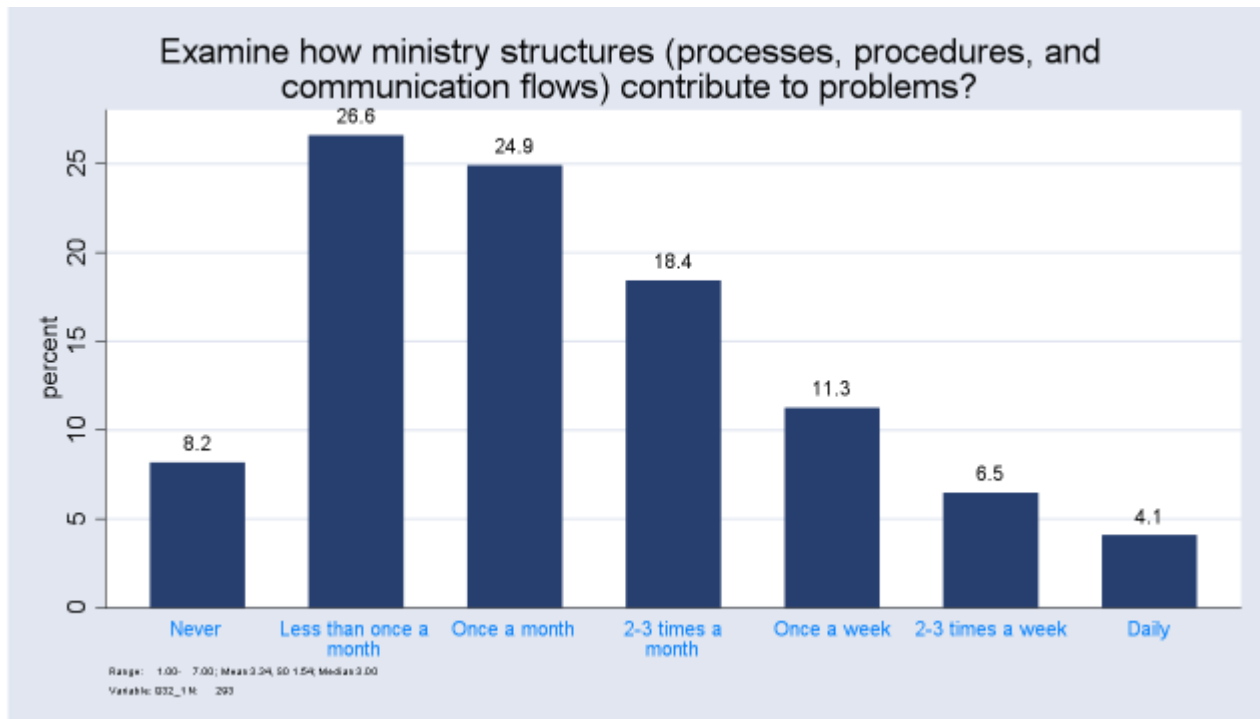
### Planning and Foresight

We would expect that transformational leaders are more effective to the extent that they consider longer-term ministry directions. Ministry planning is a first step. About 71 percent of alumni have written a plan regarding a potential major ministry change. Given the effort involved in writing a ministry plan regarding a major change in their ministry, it is striking that a high percentage have done so. Of course, we cannot be sure if some respondents were thinking of their Breakthrough Plan, but that may not have been widespread since 29 percent, which did not write a ministry plan, did not consider the Breakthrough exercise as a plan for a *major ministry change*.

The survey also asked the ministry planning question from the Benchmark Survey. This question about writing “I have written at least one ministry plan that focuses on a potential major change in my ministry's future” has a different response set, strongly agree to strongly disagree. About 20 percent of alumni strongly agree that they have done this kind of ministry planning, and 47 percent agree (but not strongly). That leaves 33 percent that do not agree they have written a ministry plan about a major ministry change.

Moreover, DVULI alumni are generally reflective about their ministry. For example, 39 percent examine ministry structures and their contribution to ministry problems two to three times a week.





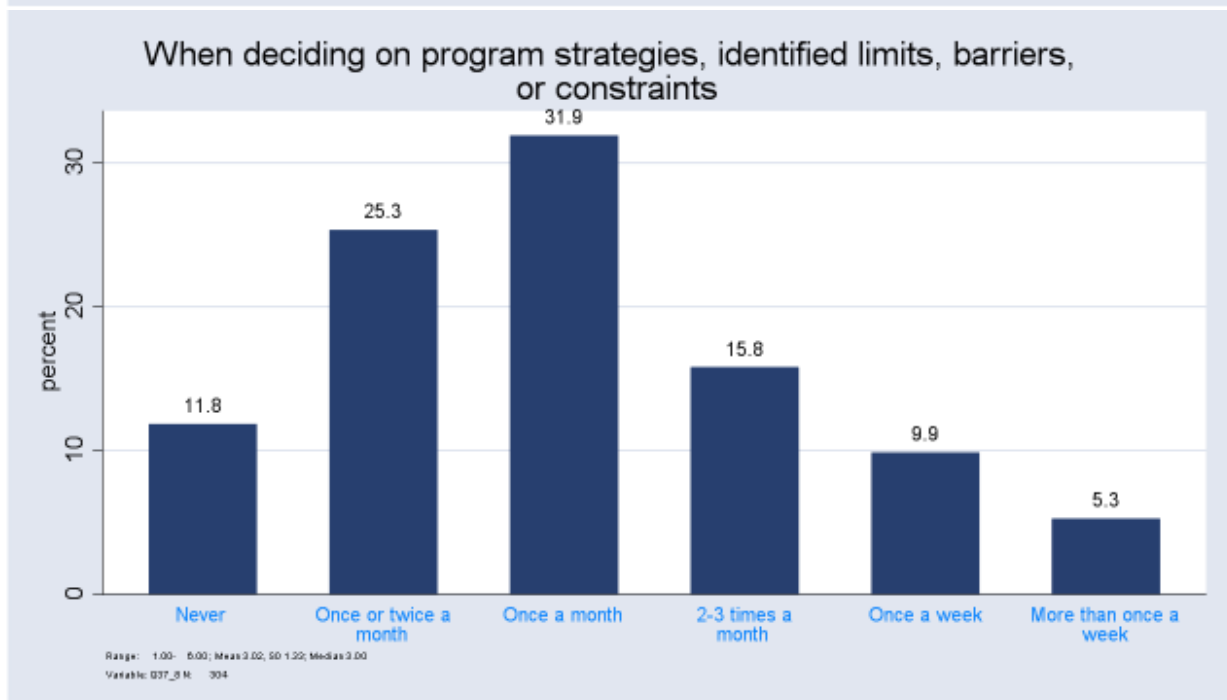
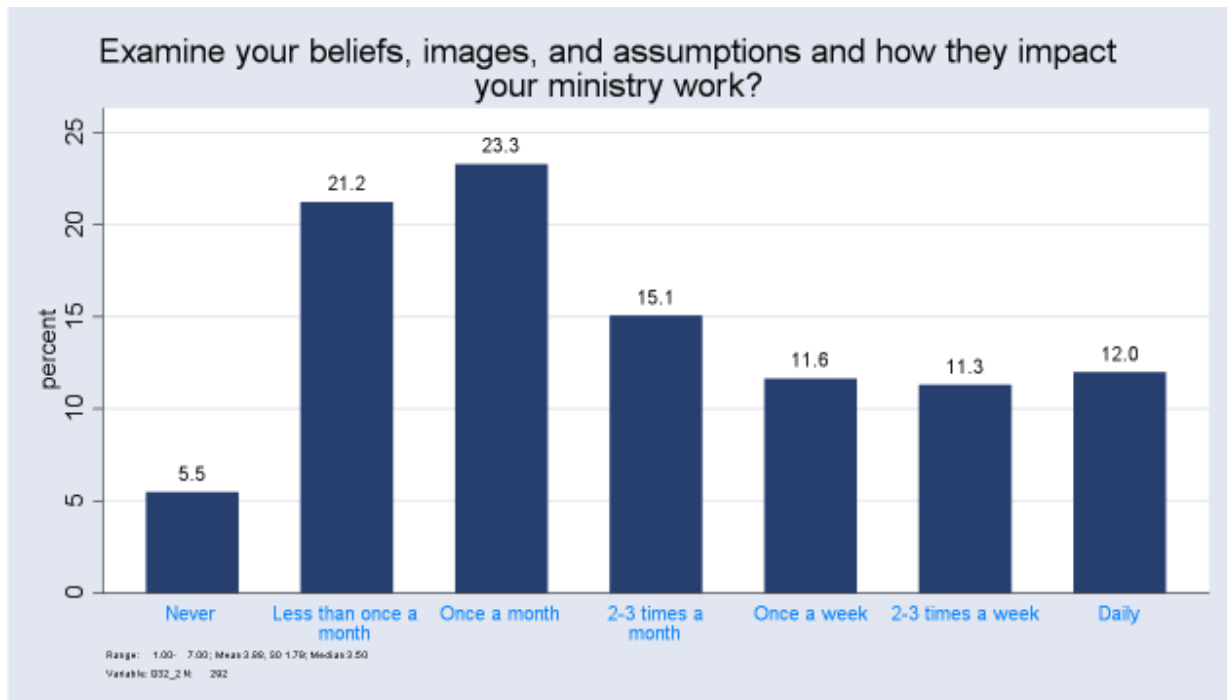
When using the full sample, we find that writing one ministry plan is much more likely among more recent cohorts, which reflects stronger DVULI support for planning in recent program years. Older alumni are more likely to have completed a major plan, though this is due to more years in professional ministry. A higher likelihood is also found among those who have completed an educational degree since DVULI. Alumni more directly and consistently in youth ministry are more likely to write a plan. Moreover, it appears that alumni in executive director and senior pastor roles are more likely to do a plan. Less likely are program coordinators and youth leaders, along with those in “other” positions. Volunteers are less likely to create a plan for a major ministry change, while those with more years of professional ministry are more likely to do so.

Examining ministry structures is only related to a couple of the independent variables. Hispanics and African Americans appear less likely than whites to do this, but there is wide variation within racial and ethnic groups. Those who are in volunteer positions are much lower on this measure of ministry planning.

### *Assessment and Reflection*

In addition, DVULI alumni regularly examine their beliefs, images, and assumptions, and how they impact their ministry. Over the past month, 27 percent of DVULI alumni reflect on their beliefs, images, and assumptions five times a month or more. Another 28 percent do this 3-4 times a month. Adding up the detailed categories available in the question, we can define the actively reflective as the 49 percent who consider how their beliefs, images, and assumptions impact ministry work two to three times a month or more.

Many of the alumni were active in reflection and planning in other ways, such as identifying limits, barriers and constraints when deciding on program strategies. About 15 percent identified such obstacles once a week or more, and another 48 percent did this once a month or more (but not once a week or more).

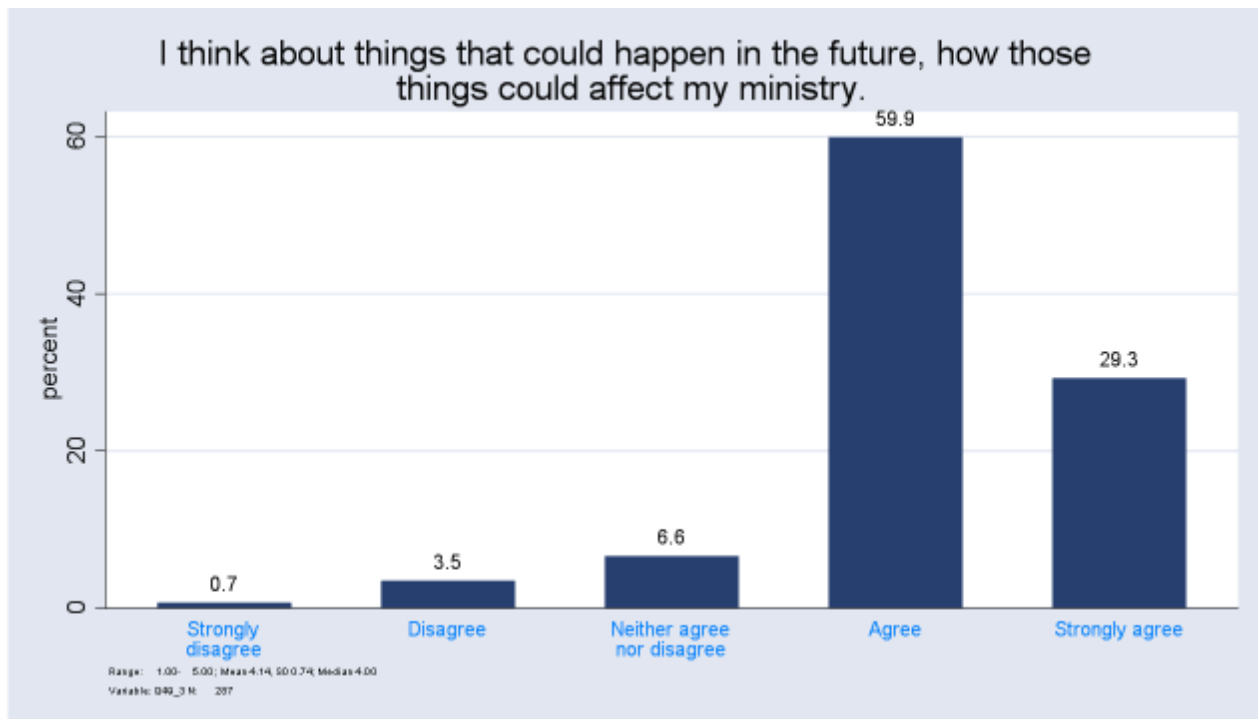


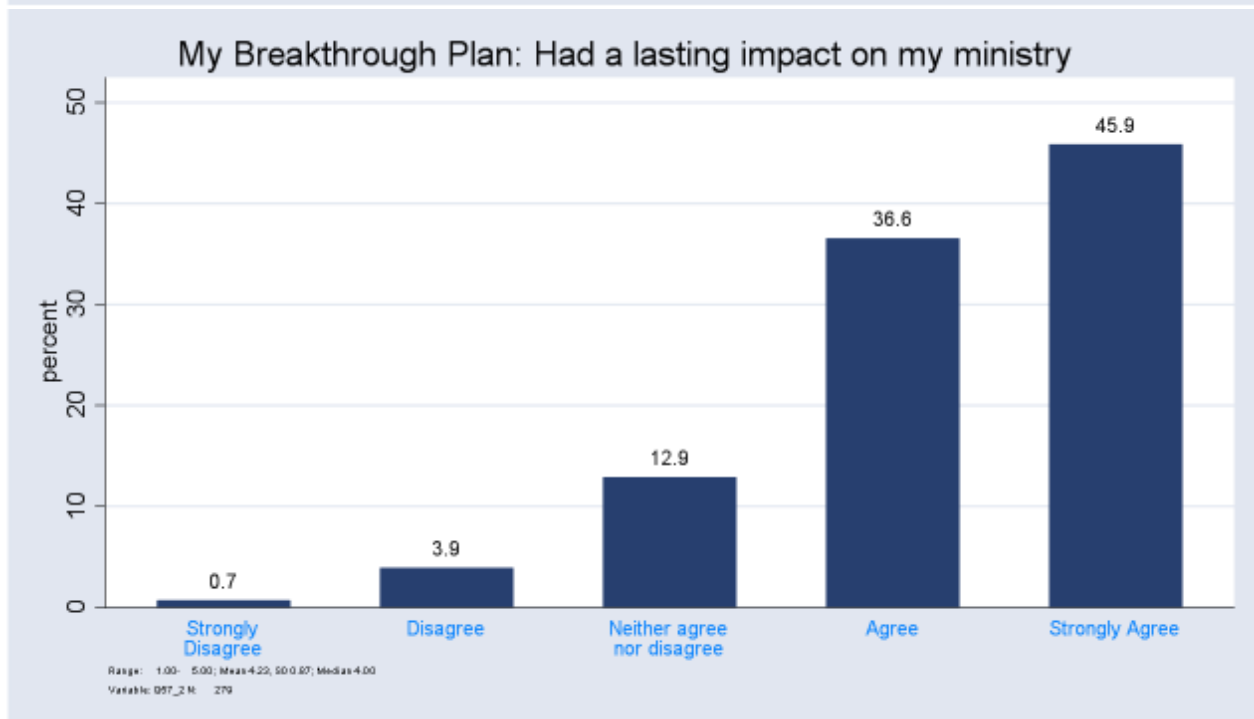
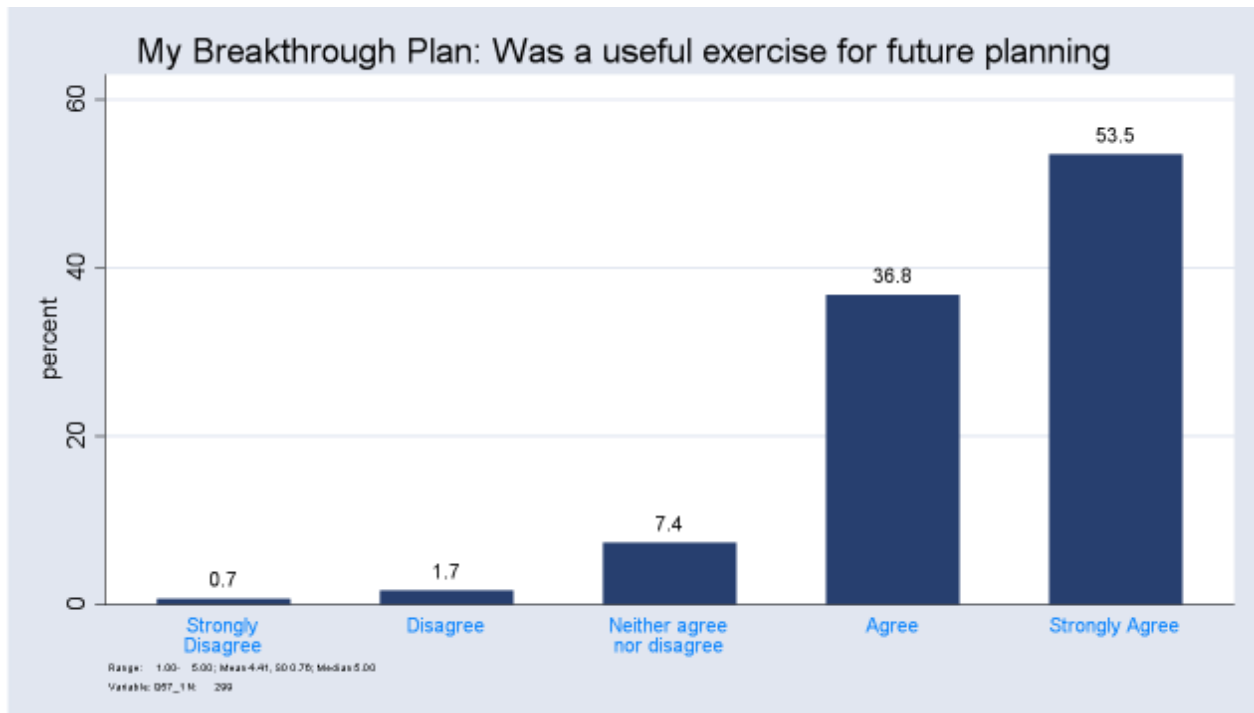
Interestingly, African Americans examine beliefs and assumptions to a greater degree than whites, though this is not statistically significant. But “other” races and ethnicities are strongly positive on examining beliefs and assumptions that impact ministry work. The only other variable that matters for this outcome is years in professional ministry, which has a positive effect.

Identifying limits when working on program strategies is more likely among recent cohorts. The evaluation of limits is particularly frequent among those with a BA, and those who have continued their education since DVULI. Education has a strong effect on this outcome. Evaluation of limits is much higher among alumni who are directly involved in youth ministry as well. Alumni working in nonprofit organizations have higher scores on this outcome, as well as those working in “other” ministry organizations. Volunteer workers are much less likely to spend time evaluating limits that affect program strategies.

Most alums spend considerable time thinking about things that could happen in the future and how these could affect their ministry. About 29 percent strongly agree that they think about future challenges, and 60 percent agree. African Americans are somewhat less likely to plan for the future, though this is due to their greater likelihood of having an unpaid ministry position. Ministry volunteers do not as strongly agree that they plan for the future, while alumni with more years in professional ministry agree more strongly.

As noted earlier, DVULI training asks each participant to write a Breakthrough Plan, which lays out a concrete set of steps to reach specific life and ministry goals, including empowering others. Whatever the success of the particular breakthrough plan, nearly every alum believes the breakthrough plan was a useful exercise for future planning, which is its primary purpose in DVULI training. Fully 52 percent strongly agree that the breakthrough plan was useful, and another 36 percent agree. About 44 percent strongly agree that their breakthrough plan had a lasting impact on their ministry, and another 35 percent agree (but not strongly) with this statement.





Women find the Breakthrough Plan more useful than men. More educated alumni also find the exercise very useful. Those working in schools and nonprofits more strongly agree that the Breakthrough Plan was useful for future planning.

The regression findings for the lasting impact of the Breakthrough Plan are few but striking. Older alumni are confident that the Breakthrough Plan had a lasting impact. Hispanics are more likely than whites to strongly agree, which would make sense if the Hispanic ministry community both needed and responded positively to the Breakthrough Plan. And those who are ministry volunteers are less likely to find that the Breakthrough Plan had a lasting impact on their ministry.

### **Leadership Practices: Core Values**

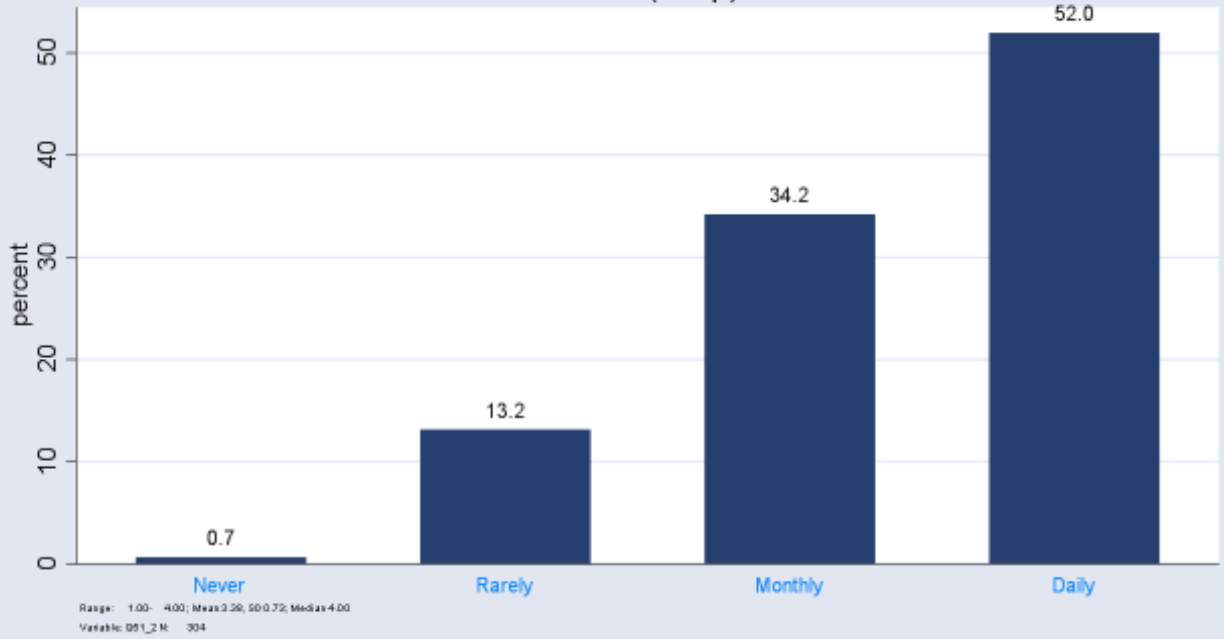
How is leadership practiced among alumni? Core leadership values provide important evidence on leadership orientations, especially the importance of creating healthy and productive relationships with other people and organizations. The survey results show important sources of variation in practice across specific core values in ministry leadership, which are an essential piece of DVULI training. Many of the core values of DVULI involve relationships to co-workers, work/life balance, and using resources effectively.

The value of Accountability is practiced daily by 42 percent of DVULI alumni, and another 47 percent practice this core value monthly. A higher percentage of alumni practice the core value of Balance: about 51 percent practice Balance daily, and 34 percent practice this monthly. The core value of Empowerment is less regularly practiced, perhaps because some positions and smaller organizations do not have ample opportunities to empower co-workers. Only 3 percent practice empowerment daily, though a sizeable 50 percent do so monthly.

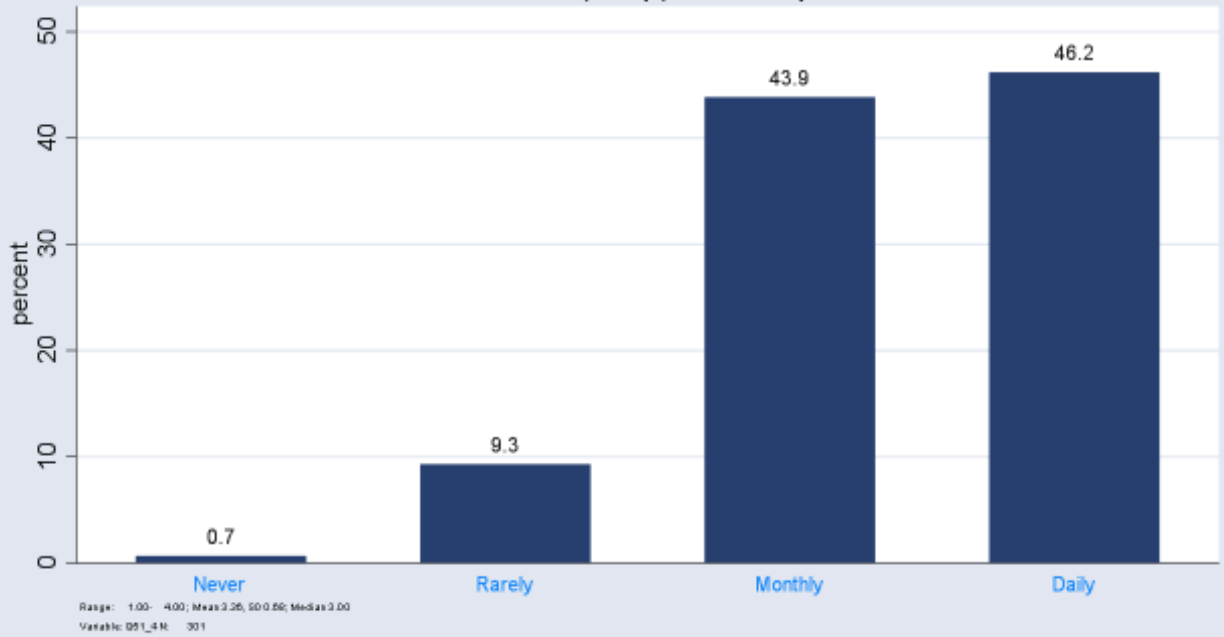
Interdependence is a more frequently practiced core value. About 45 percent practice Interdependence daily, while 43 percent report practicing this core value monthly. The core value of Leverage is practiced frequently. About 36 percent practice this core value daily, and 42 percent do so monthly. About 18 percent only rarely or never practice this core value.

Thus far, the practices of alumni point to the importance to alumni ministry of the values of Balance, Interdependence, and Accountability—core competencies for effective leaders.

Practice core values (freq.): Balance



Practice core values (freq.): Interdependence





The practice of Accountability is higher among recent cohorts. Women are more likely to practice this core value than men. And older alumni are higher on this outcome than younger alumni. Interestingly, all racial and ethnic minorities are more likely to practice Accountability than whites. This may reflect the importance of local communities in the lives and ministries of Hispanics and African Americans. Nothing about organizations or positions is related to practicing Accountability.

Balance is practiced less frequently in middle and more recent cohorts than in earlier cohorts. And is less likely to be practiced by females. African Americans are less able to practice Balance, a finding that may reflect more challenging ministry contexts. Education since DVULI is negatively related to this outcome, and those in “other” ministry organizations are more likely to practice balance.

Interdependence is lower among African Americans, but this is explained by their ministry organizations and positions. Nonprofits and “other” ministry organizations are higher on interdependence, as are directors and pastors. Program coordinators and youth leaders are lower on interdependence. Those in “other” ministry positions are also lower, but this is explained by their higher likelihood of being in volunteer positions. Volunteers in youth ministry are less likely to practice interdependence, perhaps due to structural differences characteristic of these positions.

The rankings that DVULI alumni assign to these core values reinforce these findings. When ranking core values, about 28 percent see Accountability as the top priority in their ministry, 55 percent rank this value in the top 2, and 14 percent see this value as the lowest priority. In comparison, 30 percent rank Balance as their top priority, 52 percent rank balance as their first or second priority, and, again, 14 percent see balance as their lowest priority.

Note that the core value of Empowerment has a unique meaning in youth ministry. Empowering co-workers and community partners is important, as is empowering youth through mentorship and other ministry activities. In the DVULI program, youth empowerment includes discipleship. Since 2011,

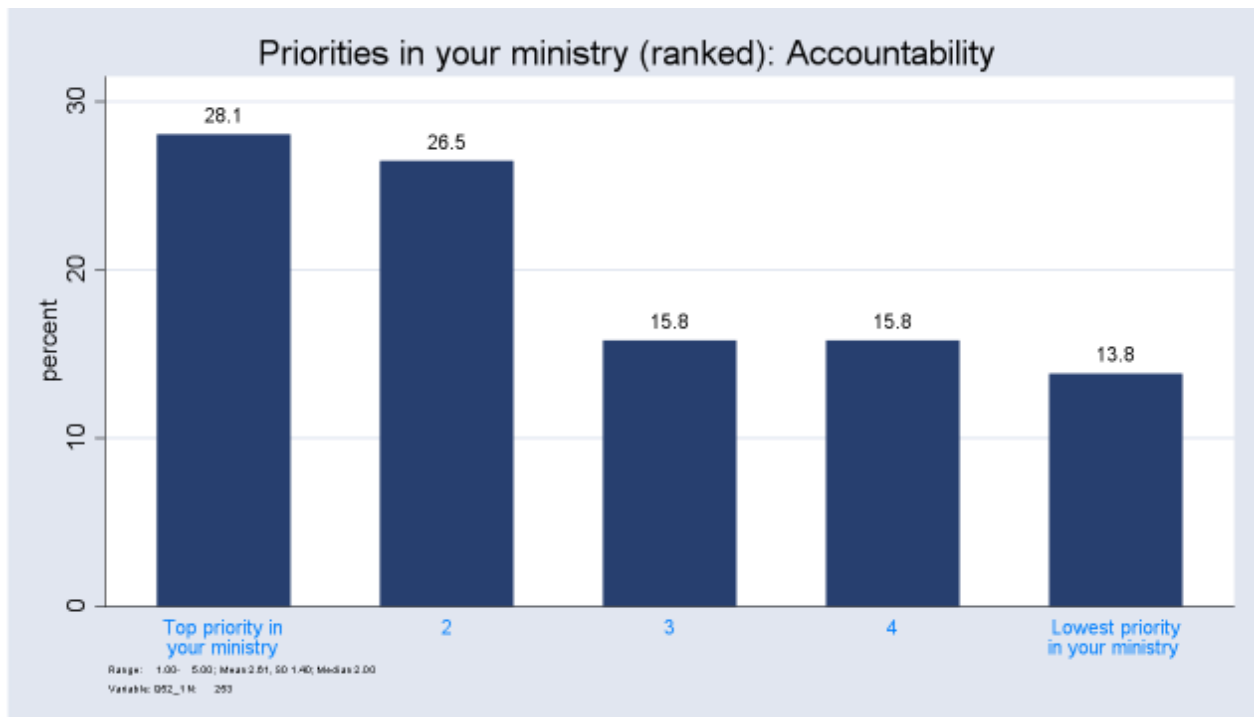


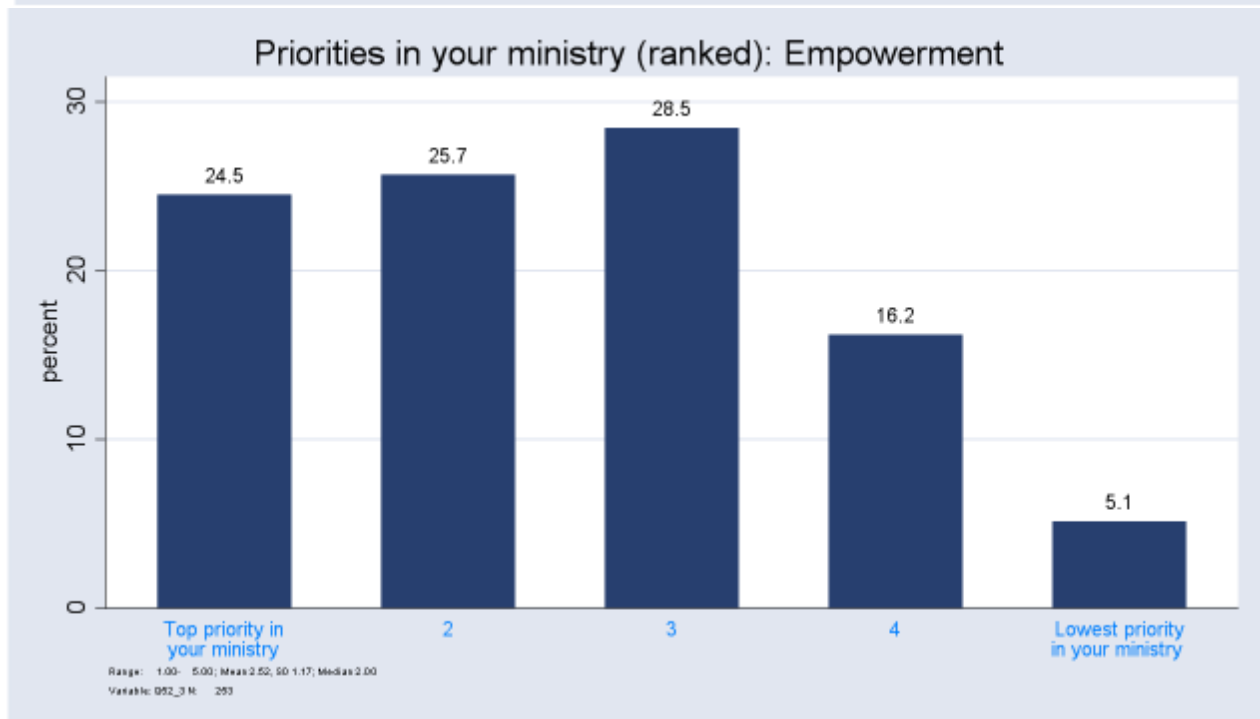
empowerment of youth has been a specific focus of DVULI, including a two-day workshop for all participants.

The survey results show that 25 percent see Empowerment as a top priority, 51 percent as first or second priority, and only 5 percent as their lowest priority. It is possible that the importance of Empowerment would vary depending on the ministry context, particularly the number of people supervised. Interestingly, Interdependence is not as likely to be considered a top priority. Only 9 percent place Interdependence as a top priority value, 24 percent as first or second, and a fairly substantial 19 percent place this value as lowest priority. Only 17 percent place Leverage as their first or second choice, while 48 percent place this core value as lowest priority.

Note that higher rankings are more likely for core values that involve relationships with others, rather than those that are more directly related to organizational direction and strategy. Thus, the lower ranking may not entirely reflect a lack of importance placed on organizational core values per se, but a prioritizing of people and relationships, which is not surprising in youth ministry.

*Summing up, this assessment of core value practices points to Accountability, Balance, Empowerment, and Interdependence as highly salient to the youth ministry practices of alumni.*





Correlates for core value rankings are somewhat similar to those for the raw importance of each core value, but add to the picture. The Accountability ranking is slightly higher for more recent cohorts, though there is considerable variation in this group. Hispanics trend higher in their ranking of Accountability, but this finding is not statistically significant. What is striking is that African Americans rank Accountability much higher than whites, and “other” races and ethnicities do as well. Alumni with more education rank Accountability lower, perhaps indicative of the independence expected with educational expertise.

Balance ranks lower among African Americans, and is somewhat lower, but not statistically significant, among Hispanics. Those working in churches rank Balance much more highly. Alumni in nonprofits and “other” ministry organizations, in particular, rank Balance much lower than churches. The value of Balance does not vary by ministry position, however.

Empowerment tends to be ranked lower among recent cohorts, but this effect is small and not statistically significant. *Women rank empowerment much more highly than men—a striking finding that links gender and ministry in powerful ways.*

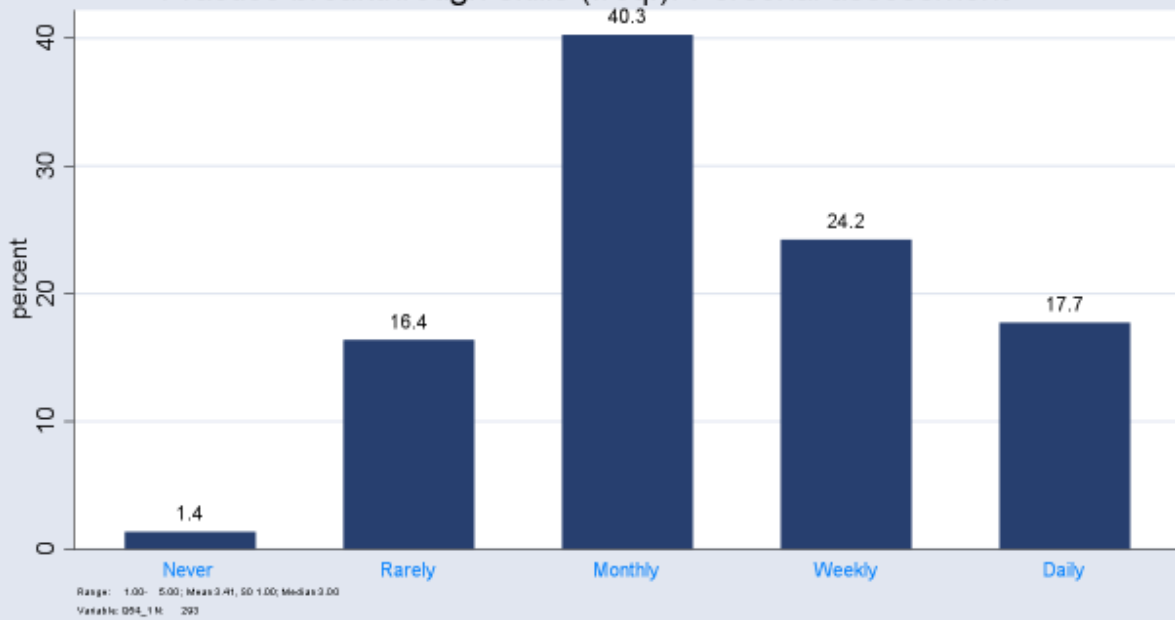
### *Leadership Practices: The Value of Breakthrough Skills*

Before considering findings on the practice of breakthrough skills, we briefly note differences in the nature of these skills. One skill is Personal Assessment, which raises the question of relative difficulty of practicing skills regularly. Depending on what respondents define as “personal assessment,” it is reasonable to assume that many short reflections on personal strengths and weaknesses would make sense, perhaps every day, or at least weekly. In contrast, Asset Mapping involves walking through one’s community, systematically noting features of the environment, such as housing conditions, businesses, common spaces, and assessing contextual resources for youth ministry. Asset Mapping is both a more intensive and time-consuming task, and not likely to benefit from frequent re-assessment, since the neighborhood conditions are not likely to change every week, or even every month. These differences in the nature of these tasks likely will be reflected in the frequency of practicing and the priority of each breakthrough skill.

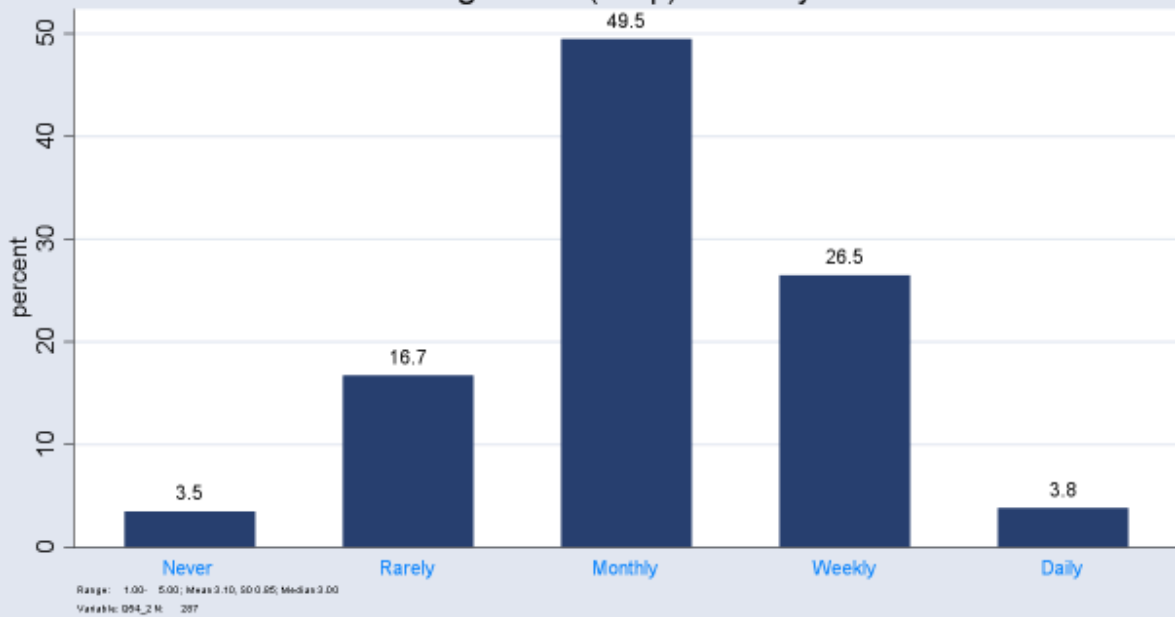
The findings for DVULI alumni practice of breakthrough skills show important variation. Personal Assessment is frequently practiced: 18 percent practice this breakthrough skill daily while 23 percent do this weekly. About 16 percent practice this skill rarely or never. The Ministry Assessment breakthrough skill is not as frequently practiced, though it should be noted that ministry assessment is a more formal and “technical” skill, related directly to organizations. About 30 percent practice this skill at least weekly (only 3.5 percent daily), which is high given the nature of the task, while 18 percent rarely or never practice this skill. Asset Mapping is more difficult—and perhaps unnecessary—to practice frequently. Only 8 percent do this at least weekly, while fully 49 percent rarely do this and another 11 percent never do. One of the most important statistics for Asset Mapping, arguably, is the fact that a very high percent (89) has completed the map. Scenario Planning is slightly more frequently practiced. About 17 percent practice this breakthrough skill at least weekly, while 36 percent rarely do scenario planning and 8 percent never do.

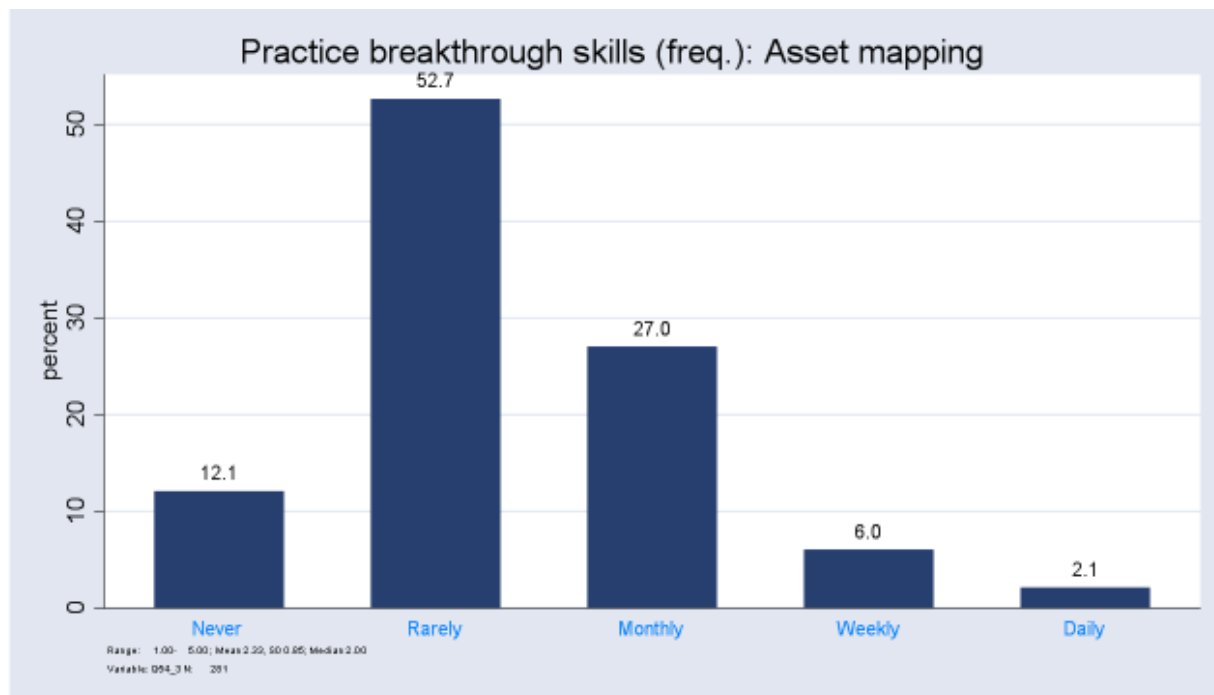
Systems Thinking is a relatively popular practice, despite its formal and abstract nature. About 40 percent practice Systems Thinking each week or more, and 22 percent rarely or never practice this breakthrough skill. Resource Networking is frequently practiced, though alumni are quite divided on this skill. About 36 percent practice Resource Networking weekly or more frequently. Only 4 percent never practice networking, while 22 percent rarely practice this skill. Collaboration is more common. About 49 percent practice collaboration at least weekly, and only 10 percent practice this skill only rarely or never. The breakthrough skill of Youth Development is well-practiced. About 47 percent practice this weekly or more (20 percent daily).

Practice breakthrough skills (freq.): Personal assessment



Practice breakthrough skills (freq.): Ministry assessment





Who practices the breakthrough skills more frequently? Personal Assessment is more frequently practiced among the most recent cohorts. Hispanics are positive on personal assessment, but not significantly, while African Americans and “other” races practice personal assessment more frequently than whites. Alumni working in schools appear to have less use for personal assessment, but there is considerable variation among this group.

Ministry Assessment is more frequently practiced in recent cohorts. And it is more frequently practiced by older alumni. More educated alums are less likely to practice Ministry Assessment. This is surprising; a generous reading is that the college educated hold a more rigorous definition of what Ministry Assessment entails or are working in organizations where ministry plans are in place. In contrast, net of educational level, those who have attained an educational degree since DVULI are more likely to practice Ministry Assessment. Alumni working as program coordinators and youth leaders practice Ministry Assessment less frequently.

Asset Mapping practices offer a number of surprises—mostly because there are few differences. Those who took the survey in 2019 are on average lower in practicing Asset Mapping than in 2006. Though it is difficult to know whether this is due to something about the survey, about the time period, or about changes in DVULI, the more recent DVULI focus on Youth Development over Asset Mapping could explain this outcome. The only other difference is that alumni who have more years of professional ministry are more likely to practice Asset Mapping. It appears that Asset Mapping is generally applicable to the ministries of alumni, and that all alumni receive and take advantage of DVULI scaffolding to carry out this practice.

Scenario Planning shows exactly the same patterns. The lack of findings for position or organization type are interesting, since we might expect those in senior leadership positions to use this skill more frequently. There is a tendency for those in “other” ministry organizations to practice these skills more frequently, but there is considerable variation in practice among this group.

In the practice of Systems Thinking, we see cohort differences. Frequency of practice is higher for more recent cohorts. And Systems Thinking varies widely by organization type. Alumni in nonprofits and “other” ministry organizations practice Systems Thinking more frequently than those in churches or schools. One possible explanation is that formal organizational skills are more difficult to adapt to or gain acceptance in churches. Perhaps surprisingly, Systems Thinking is higher among volunteers, and is more frequently practiced among alumni with more years in professional ministry.

Resource Networking is higher among younger alumni. It is higher among more educated alumni as well, which is due to the kinds of positions they hold, such as directors and senior or associate pastors. Those in nonprofits and “other” ministry organizations are much more likely to practice Resource Networking than those in churches, which may reflect the different relationships to civic life of these organizations or differences in funding and resource sources. Program coordinators and youth leaders as well as those in “other” ministry positions are less likely to practice resource networking. Volunteer ministers are also less likely to practice this breakthrough skill.

The breakthrough skill of Collaboration is somewhat less likely to be practiced by older alumni. It is less frequently practiced by each racial and ethnic minority, compared to whites, though this is explained by the kinds of organizations and positions that minority alum tend to hold. Collaboration is higher among the more educated, a somewhat anomalous finding given the independent streak we noted earlier. But we would otherwise expect that education contributes to the kind of civic skills that facilitate collaborative activities. Alumni in nonprofits practice Collaboration more frequently. Those in “other” ministry organizations are also higher, but this effect is not statistically significant. Predictably, executive directors and senior pastors practice Collaboration much more frequently. Collaboration is lower for those in volunteer positions.

Youth development is practiced more frequently by recent cohorts. The more educated practice this skill frequently as well. Alumni in nonprofit and especially those in “other” organizations are more likely to practice youth development than alumni in churches, which may reflect the singular focus of these organizations. Years in professional ministry is positively related to youth development practice.

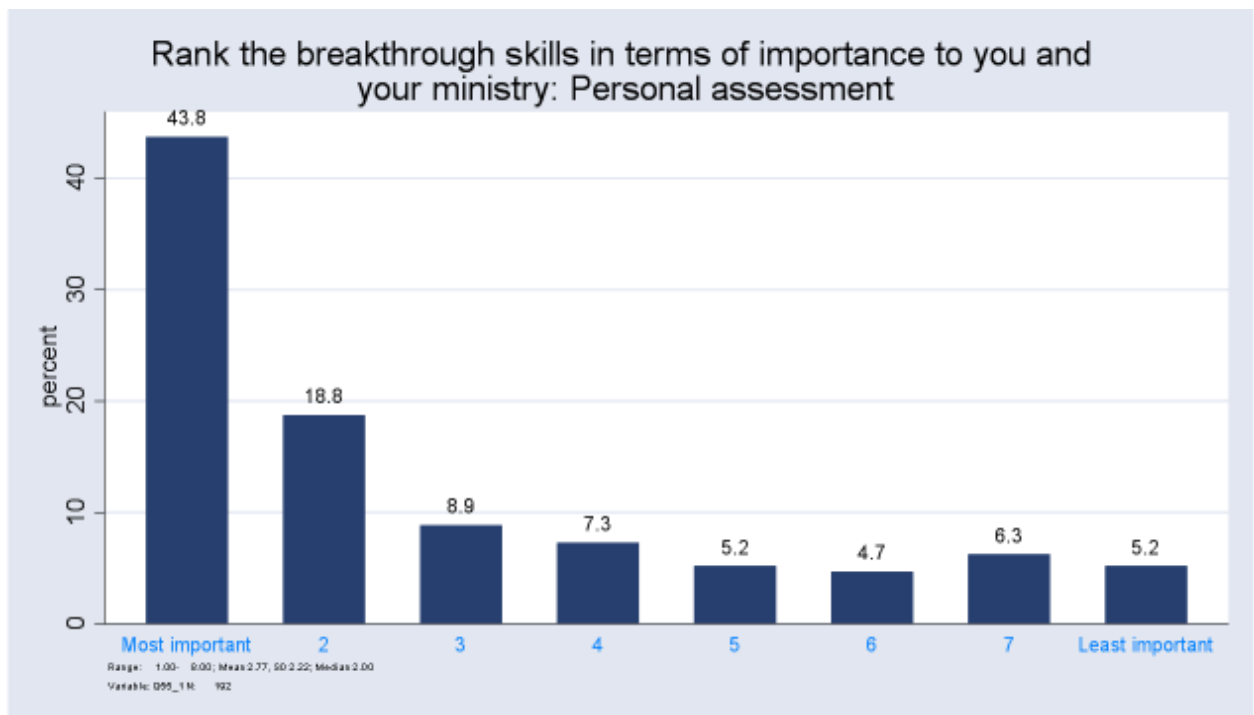
## Ranking

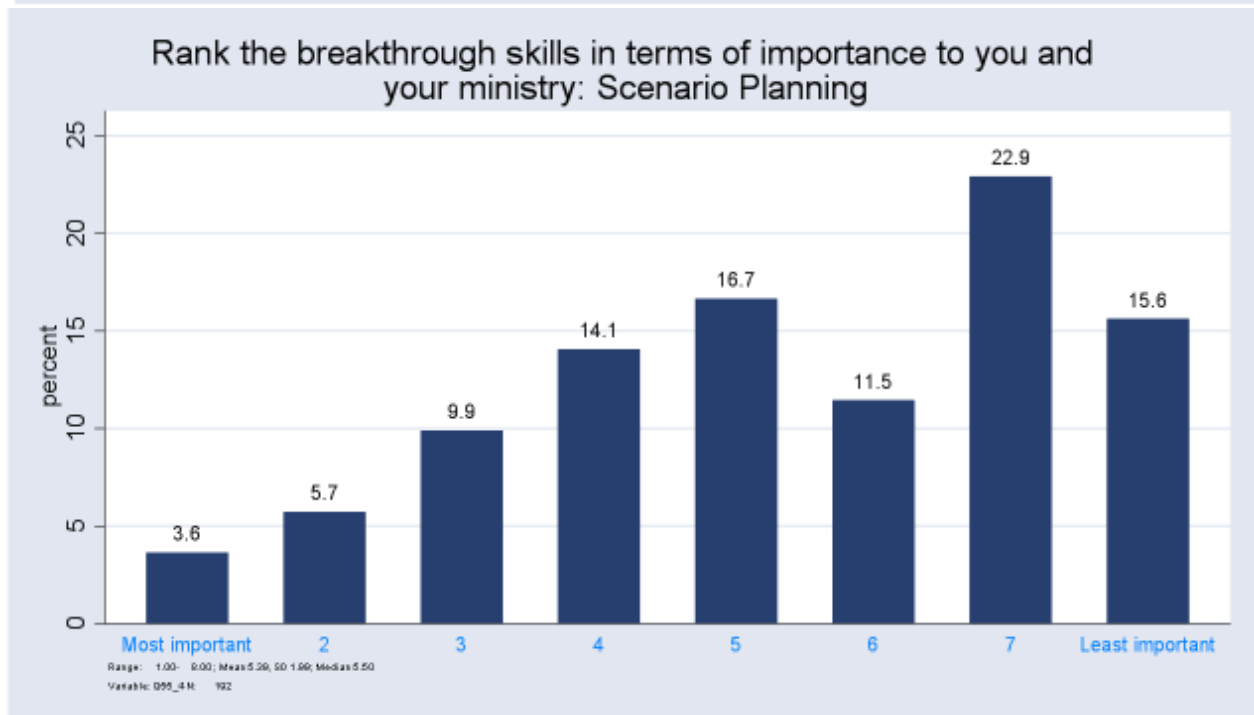
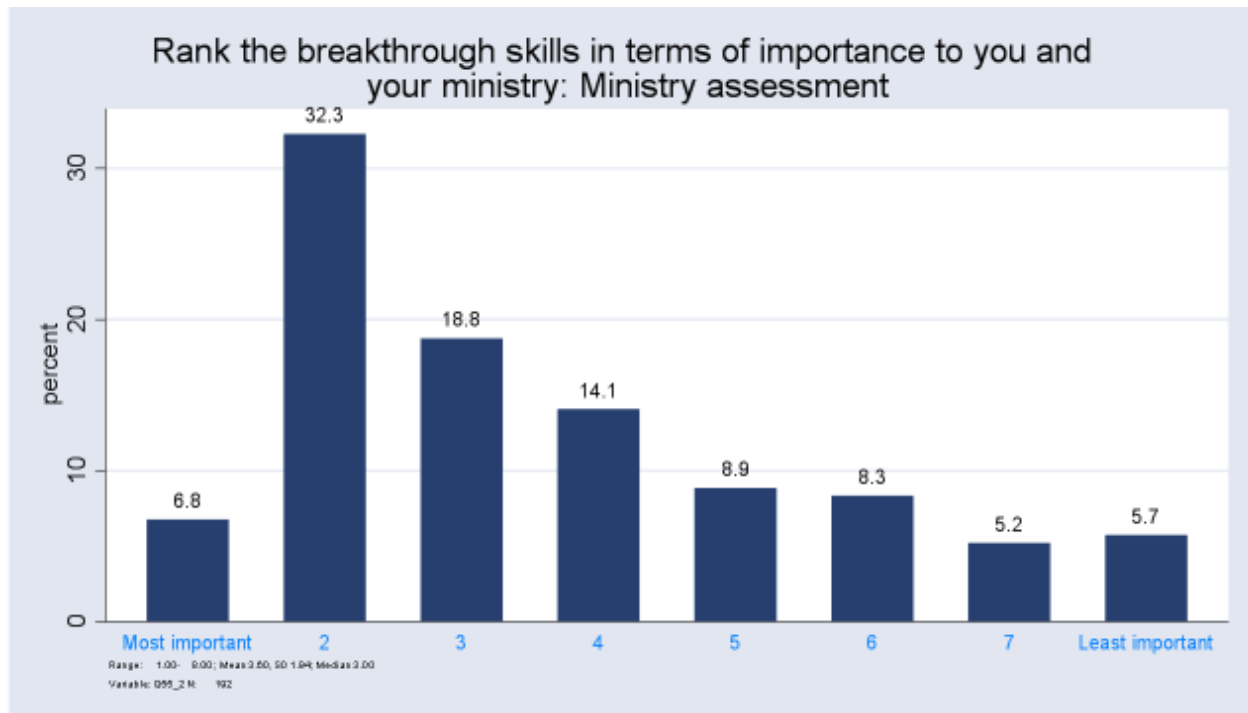
The DVULI alumni ranking of the importance of each breakthrough skill is revealing. We should keep in mind, however, that alumni are asked to choose between several very good alternatives, and rankings may reflect frequency of practice based on the nature of the breakthrough skill and ultimate ministry values. We have to be careful not to assume that lower ranked skills are necessarily superfluous to their ministry, even if not the everyday focus of ministry.

Fully 44 percent see Personal Assessment as the most important breakthrough skill. This is not surprising perhaps because skills related to personal life are likely to be more salient and easier to practice regularly than those focused on organizations and strategies. Ministry Assessment is highly ranked as well, though second to personal assessment. Only 7 percent of alumni place this as highest priority, while over 32 percent rank Ministry Assessment as the second most important. Asset Mapping is not nearly as likely to be seen as a top priority. In fact, 32 percent see Asset Mapping as lowest priority of the breakthrough skills, and only 6 percent see this skill as first or second priority. Scenario Planning is similarly not a high priority among the breakthrough skills, though somewhat higher than Asset Mapping. About 23 percent see this skill as next to last in priority, while 9 percent place this breakthrough skill as first or second priority. There

is a good deal of disagreement about the priority of Systems Thinking. While 18 percent place this skill as one or two, 20 percent place Systems Thinking in the bottom two. The disagreement may reflect changes across cohorts in the DVULI approach to Systems Thinking, which, as we show below, is more valued among recent cohorts.

The breakthrough skill of Resource Networking is middling to lower priority. About 31 percent place Resource Networking in the bottom two, but only 12 percent place Resource Networking as first or second priority. Collaboration is valued in the top half of the continuum, though only 22 percent place Collaboration as first or second in importance. Only 3 percent place Collaboration as least important. The importance of Youth Development as a breakthrough skill is highly varied, and nearly equally distributed across the spectrum. About 31 percent see Youth Development as of first or second importance among the breakthrough skills. Note that DVULI training added Youth Development as an explicit skill emphasis in 2011, which may be reflected in the variation in ranking across alumni.





Variation in the ranking of skills should follow the same patterns as the practice of the skills. Note, however, that the 2019 survey included an additional skill, Youth Development, which then shifts the relative ranking of the other skills. The models control for survey year to account for this.

Personal Assessment is much more highly ranked by females than males. Higher rankings for Personal Assessment are also found among Hispanics, African Americans, and, less consistently, “other” races. This likely reflects the DVULI emphasis on personal assessment to help alumni see that God uses all different



kinds of people as leaders in His kingdom—an emphasis that is particularly valued for racial and ethnic minorities. A college graduate is less likely to favor Personal Assessment, though this appears to be due to the types of organizations and positions of the more educated. Alumni in “other” ministry positions are much more likely to rank Personal Assessment highly.

Ministry Assessment is more highly valued by older alumni as well as women. Again, the more educated rank this skill lower, but this seems to be due to type of organization and position they occupy. Those working in churches are much more likely to rank Ministry Assessment highly, especially in relation to those in schools. Type of position does not matter here, but years in professional ministry is negatively related to the rank of ministry assessment skills.

Asset Mapping rank tends to be very high in the earliest cohorts. This declines in later cohorts, though this cohort difference is overwhelmed by the lower average ranking of Asset Mapping among 2019 survey respondents. Education since DVULI negatively affects Asset Mapping rank, while more indirect relationships to youth ministry leads to higher rankings.

The ranking of Systems Thinking seems to be higher in more recent cohorts, which likely reflects a stronger emphasis in DVULI, but the variation within this group is considerable. Women rank Systems Thinking much lower than men.

Resource Networking is on average ranked lower by the 2019 survey respondents. It is negatively related to education since DVULI, and strongly positively associated with working in a nonprofit organization. Those in “other” ministry positions tend to rank this skill much lower.

Collaboration is ranked much lower by African Americans. Hispanics and other races seem to rank this lower, but there is wide variation among these groups. The more educated rank Collaboration more highly.

Youth Development is ranked highly by recent cohorts, which is explained by the higher proportion of recent cohorts directly involved in youth ministry. Alumni working in schools are much more likely to rank Youth Development highly compared to those in churches. Those working in unpaid positions and those with more years in professional youth ministry are much more likely to rank Youth Development highly.

The findings for practice and ranking of Breakthrough Skills lead to a number of conclusions. As we have seen, personal assessment skills are widely practiced and valued by alumni. *Consistent with other emphases within evangelicalism* (Emerson and Smith 2000), *the personal has to be set right before social structures and organizations*. Second, those working in different types of ministry organizations respond differently to the Breakthrough Skills. Not surprisingly, those working in churches strongly value and practice Ministry Assessment, which alumni see as directly relevant to and valued by church leadership and the church body. *Alumni adapt DVULI training to the organizational context*. Alumni in nonprofit youth ministry organizations are interesting in this regard. These alumni are much more attuned to networking and collaboration, which is likely highly valued by organizations more directly rooted in the civic sphere of the local community. *The nonprofit organization unites a singular focus on youth development, which is supported by the value and practices of resource networking, collaboration, and systems thinking*. These emphases may be essential for garnering ministry resources as well as for doing youth ministry within the local community.

*The Breakthrough Skill differences among men and women to some extent follow common gender differences in orientations to relationships and organizational thriving*. Women are more attuned to

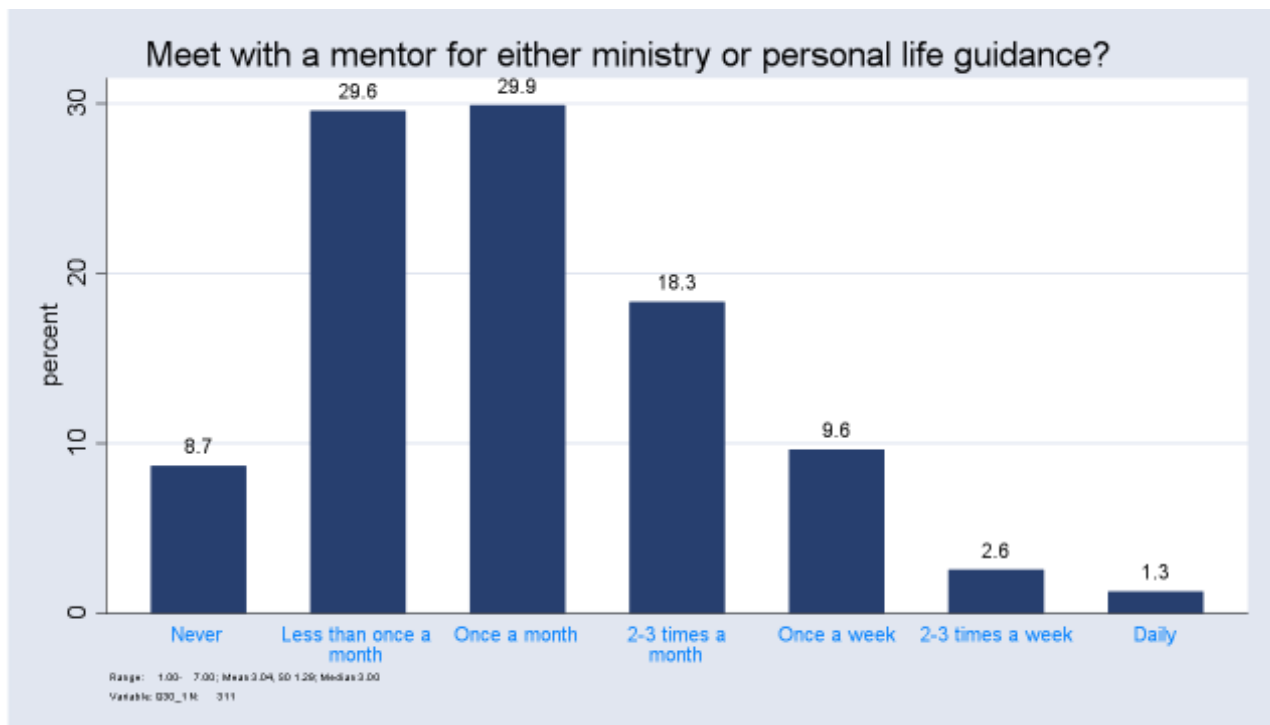
Personal Assessment and Ministry Assessment but find less value in Systems Thinking. The findings raise interesting questions about how DVULI could be tailored for men and women.

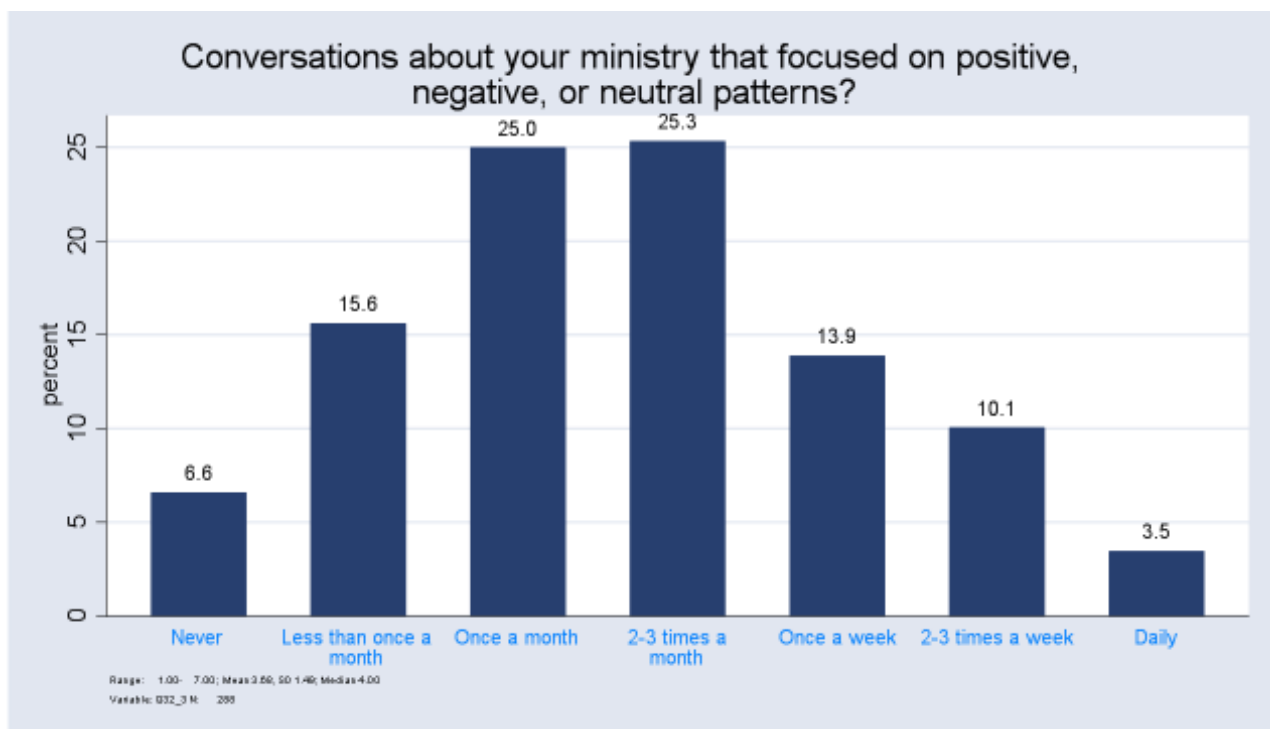
Finally, differences by race and ethnicity are important. African Americans strongly value Personal Assessment but find Collaboration less salient or more difficult. Other racial and ethnic minorities also strongly value and practice Personal Assessment. It seems likely that racial and ethnic minorities value the emphasis in DVULI training on the varied personal strengths that are important and used by God to do youth ministry well.

### *Collaboration and Mentoring for Alumni*

Are alumni benefiting from personal support networks for their ministry? There is some evidence that they are. For example, about 61 percent of alumni meet with a mentor for ministry or personal life guidance. About 56 percent share details of ministry with trusted others as frequently as two to three times a week or more. Only 18 percent share ministry concerns with trusted others less than once a month.

Alumni spend a good deal of time in conversations about their ministry that focus on positive, negative, or neutral ministry patterns. About 28 percent engage in these conversations once a week or more, and another 50 percent do this once a month or more.





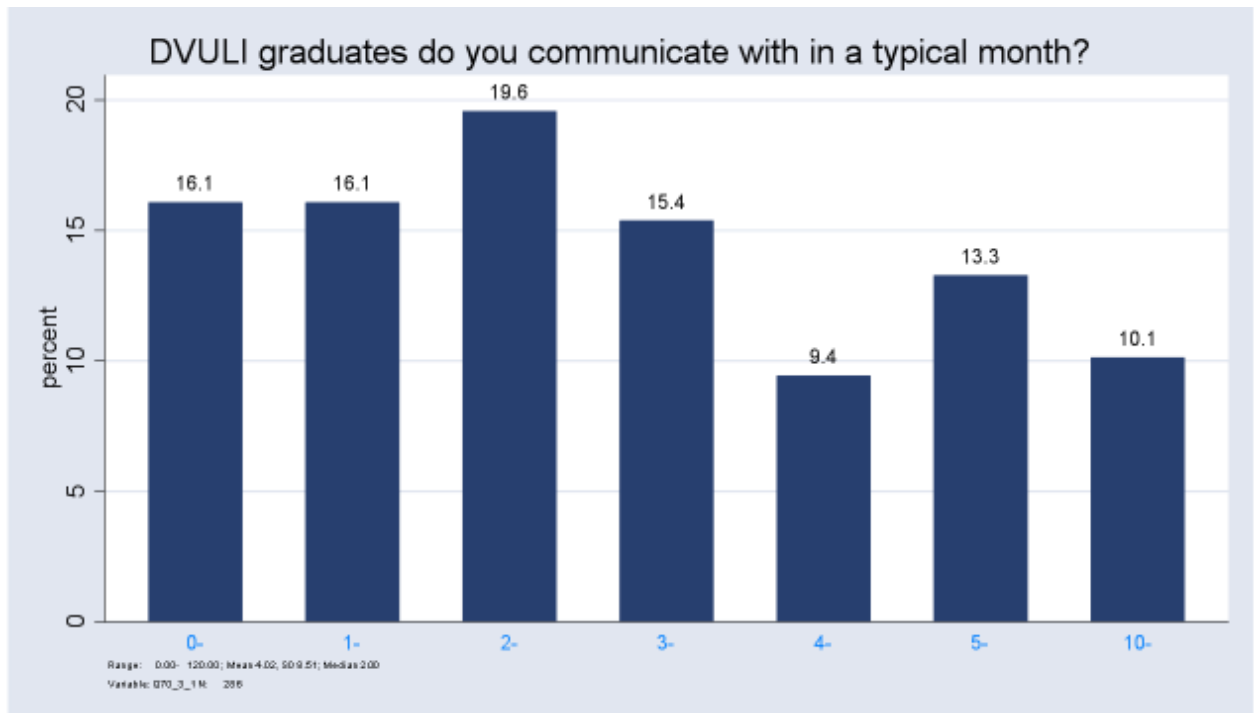
More recent cohorts are more likely to meet with a mentor, though this is explained by variation in demographic characteristics across cohorts. Older alumni are less likely to meet with a mentor. Those who are more directly involved in youth ministry are more likely to do so. Interestingly, meeting with a mentor is

less frequent for those working in nonprofits, but more frequent for those working in “other” ministry organizations.

Sharing vital ministry details with mentors is more likely among recent cohorts, though this is accounted for by demographic differences. African Americans are less likely to share ministry details, and this is due to their higher likelihood of being in volunteer ministry positions. Volunteers are much less likely to share ministry details with mentors.

Conversations about ministry positives and negatives are much more likely among more recent cohorts. Volunteer ministers are less likely to have these conversations, while conversations are more likely among those with more years in professional ministry.

DVULI has worked to support collaborative relationships among alumni, which is reflected in the number of fellow DVULI graduates that alumni communicate with in a typical month. Only 16 percent report no communication with DVULI graduates, while 48 percent of alumni communicate with four or more alumni.



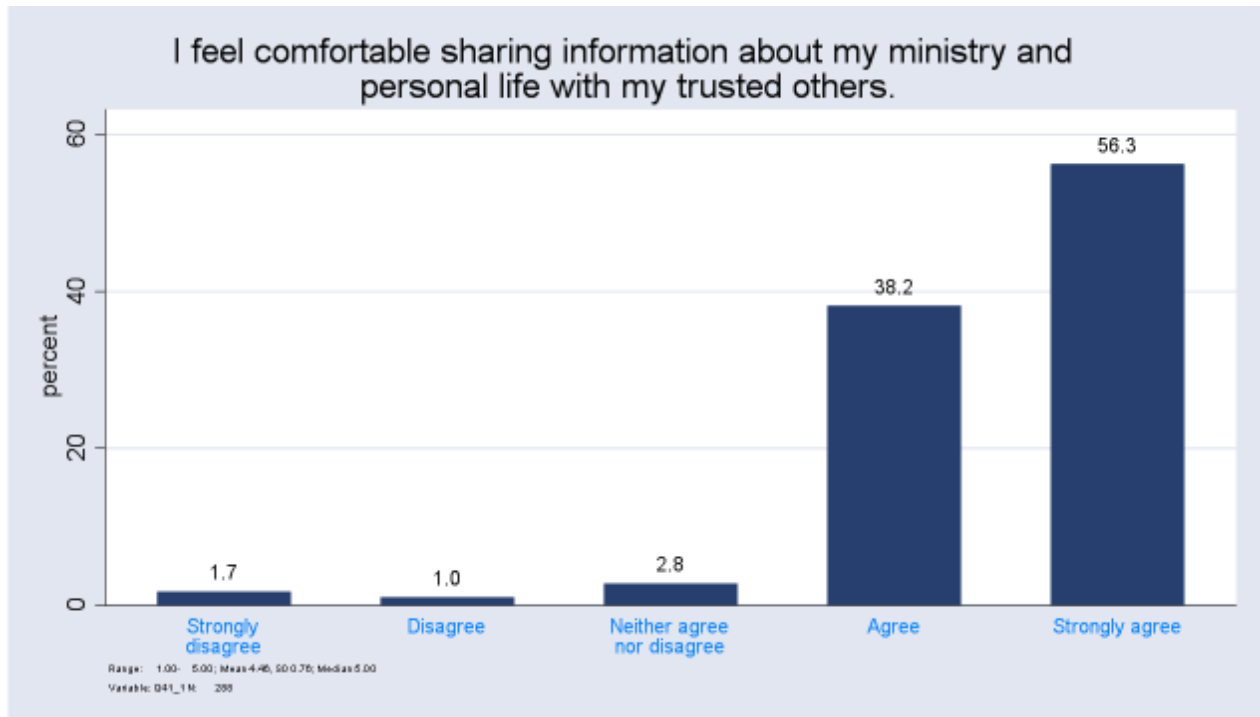
Communication with alumni is fairly evenly distributed across alumni. We do find that those who have received further education since DVULI tend to collaborate with more alumni on average. And there is a slightly lower number of DVULI ties among those who work for “other” organizations. When including the 2006 sample, we find that more highly educated alumni are meeting with slightly fewer fellow alumni. Executive directors and senior pastors tend to communicate with a higher number of DVULI graduates each month, though program coordinators and youth leaders communicate with a very similar number of alumni. Those in unpaid positions meet with fewer, and those with more ministry experience communicate with a greater number of alumni.

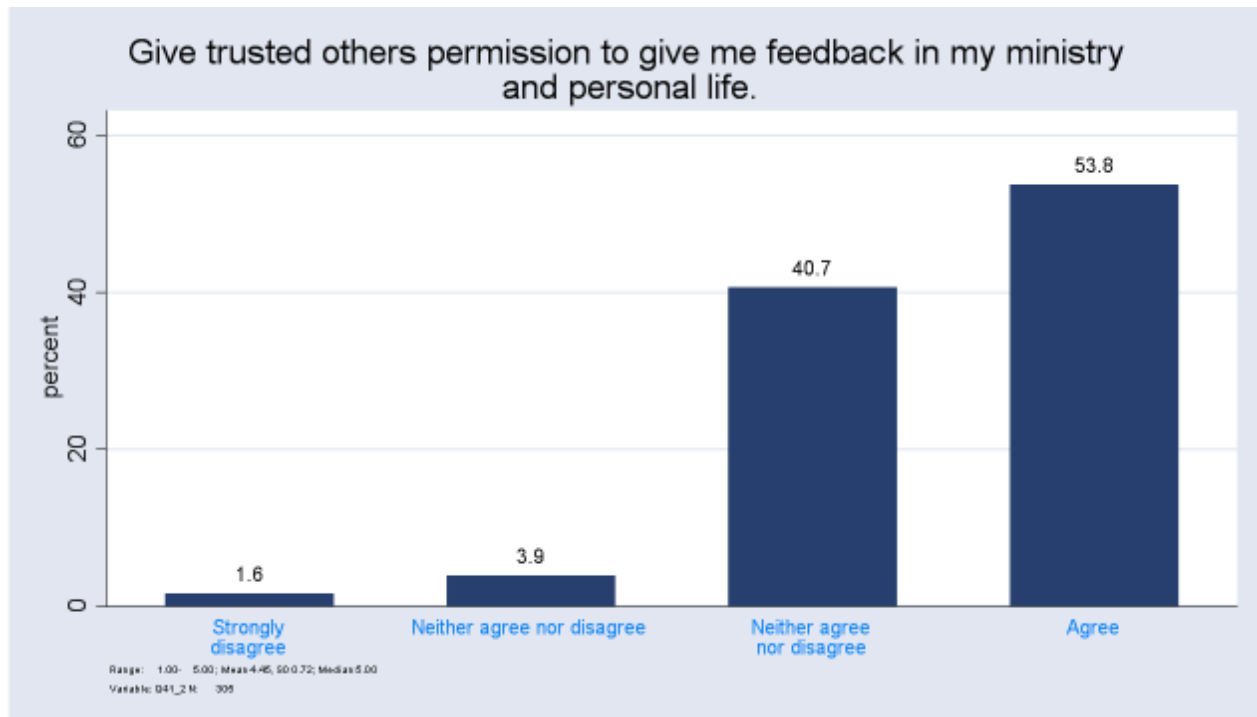
Building networks of social support for ministry is one of the key contributions of the DVULI program. A strong proportion of alumni are taking advantage of this DVULI strength, and more recent cohorts seem to

*be particularly engaged.* The capacity of alumni to build the social supports crucial for their ministry does vary by characteristics of their ministry positions. Collaboration is high among those who have continued their education since DVULI and lower among those in unpaid or “lower” level positions.

### Trusted Others

Most alumni are comfortable sharing information about their ministry and personal life with trusted others. About 56 percent strongly agree and 38 percent agree that they are comfortable with this kind of sharing. Do alumni give trusted others permission to give feedback about their ministry and personal life? Interestingly, about 54 percent strongly agree that they do this, and another 41 percent agree. The strong emphasis on collaboration and mentoring in DVULI comes through in these findings.





Sharing information with trusted others is less likely in the middle cohort years. Alumni in “other” ministry positions are less likely to share information, though this effect is eclipsed by the negative effect of volunteer positions, which “other” ministry positions are more likely to be.

The middle year cohorts are less likely to take feedback. African Americans are less likely to take ministry feedback from trusted others. Interestingly, program coordinators or youth leaders are more open to taking feedback than those in other positions. Volunteers are less likely to give trusted others permission to give them ministry feedback. This “volunteer” effect may be chalked up to fewer opportunities to get feedback.

Overall, recent cohorts are very active in seeking out mentoring and ministry feedback. African Americans tend to be lower on collaboration and input from mentors, perhaps because of lower opportunities. Collaboration and mentoring feedback is difficult for volunteers, which may reflect the nature of their positions, including intermittent work and fewer longer-term relationships in which intensive investment is more likely. Interestingly, mentoring of alumni is more common in churches, especially compared with nonprofit organizations. That may result from variation in opportunities, which may in turn reflect the emphasis in church life on discipleship and mutual accountability. Lastly, it is encouraging that alumni in “lower” level positions, program coordinators and youth leaders, are much more likely to seek out and receive feedback about their ministry.

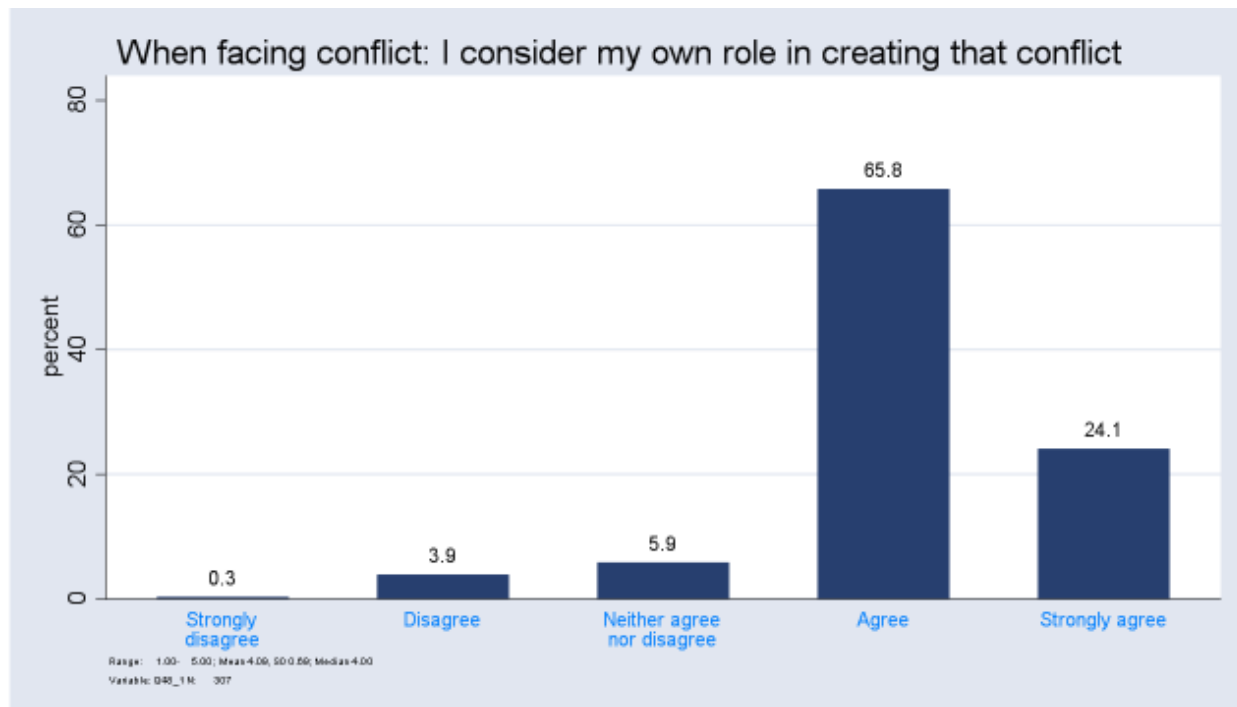
### **Servant Leadership**

Good leadership depends on relationships of trust, and specific orientations to followers. A focus on the empowerment of others is a key aspect of servant leadership and remains a focus of DVULI. In this section, we assess alumni on various dimensions of servant leadership, including handling conflict at work, other-orientation, empowerment of youth, and collaboration.

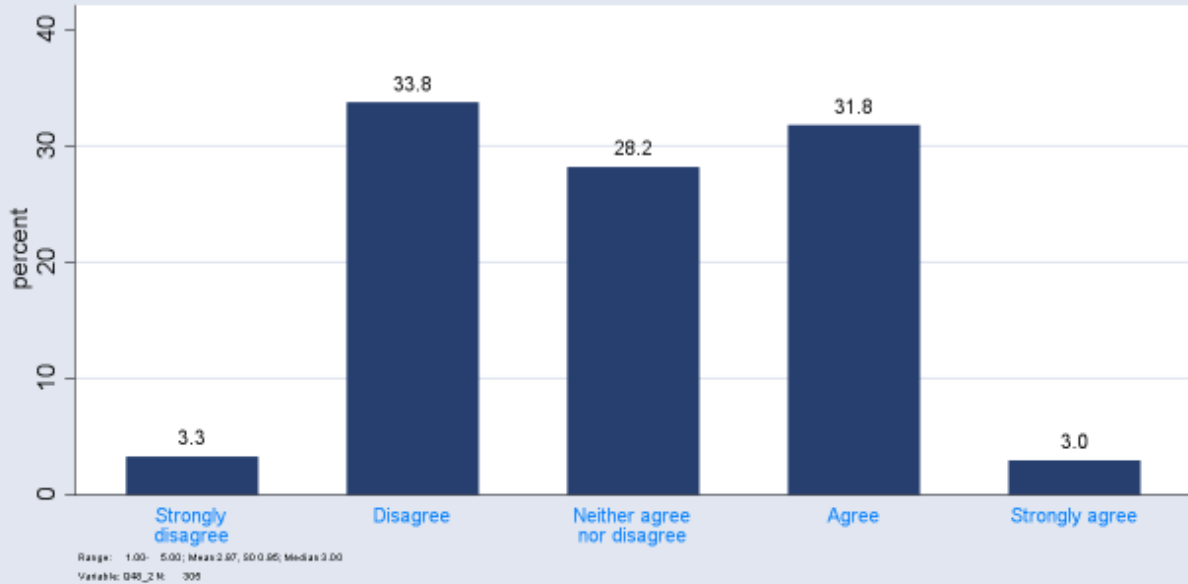
## Leadership and Conflict

One of the key tests of servant leadership is how leaders deal with others when conflicts arise, such as considering the perspectives of others and one's role in the conflict.

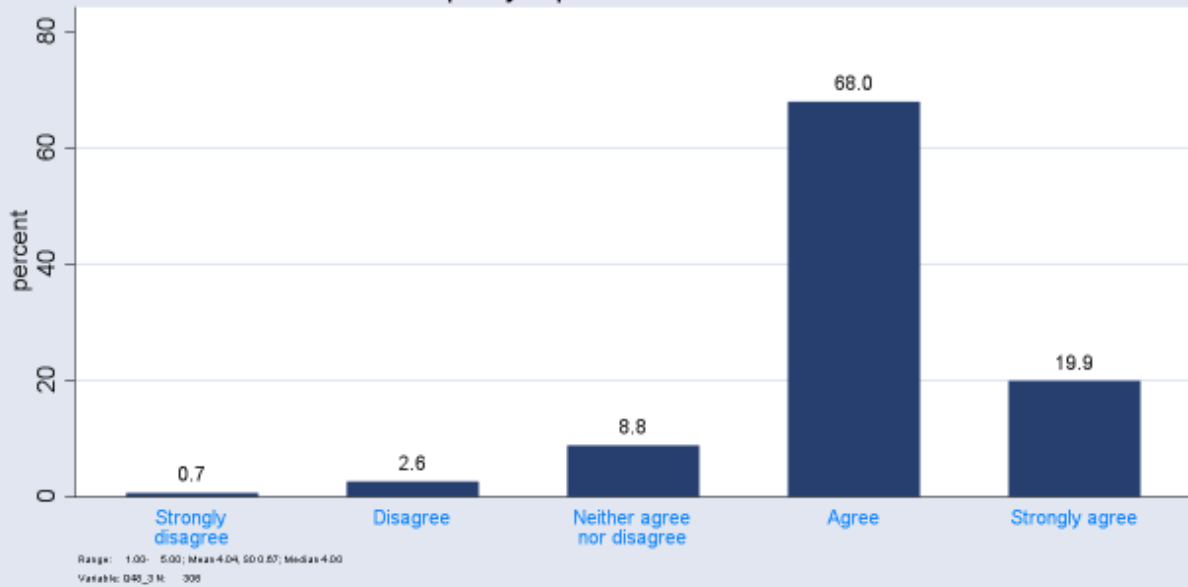
When facing conflict in their ministry, most alumni take an active role in helping to resolve that conflict. About 30 percent strongly agree that they take an active role, and another 61 percent agree that they do this. Alumni are willing to consider their own shortcomings in ministry. When facing conflict, about 24 percent strongly agree that they consider their own role in creating that conflict. About 66 percent agree (but not strongly) that they consider their culpability. And many are willing to admit—perhaps reluctantly—that they tend to focus on what others may have done to create the conflict. Nor do alumni ignore their role in causing conflict. Only 12 percent say that they feel that they are not responsible for causing conflict. About 49 percent disagree or strongly disagree that they are not responsible for causing conflict. A full 37 percent report that they do not focus on what others may have done to create the conflict. Another strength in dealing with conflict is that most alumni are sensitive to others involved in the conflict. About 88 percent agree or strongly agree that when facing conflict they try to see conflict from the other party's points of view. How do alumni respond to the conflict behind the scenes? There is not surprisingly some venting about the situation with others. About 44 percent agree or strongly agree that they do this, though 30 percent report that they do not do this.



When facing conflict: I tend to focus on what others may have done to create the conflict

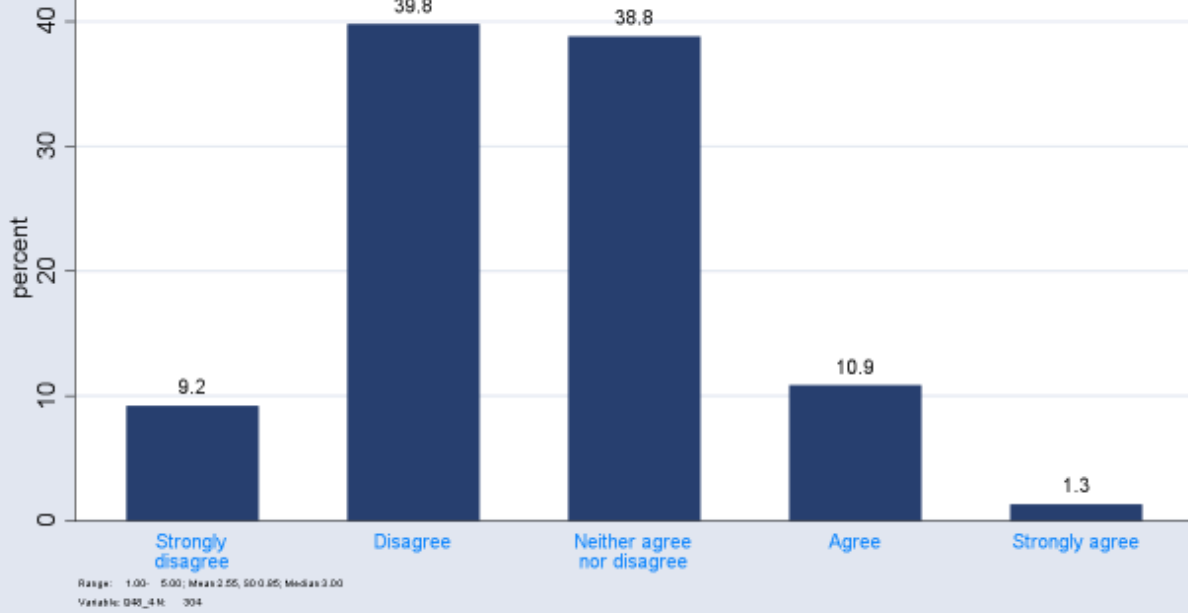


When facing conflict: I try to see the conflict from the other party's point of view

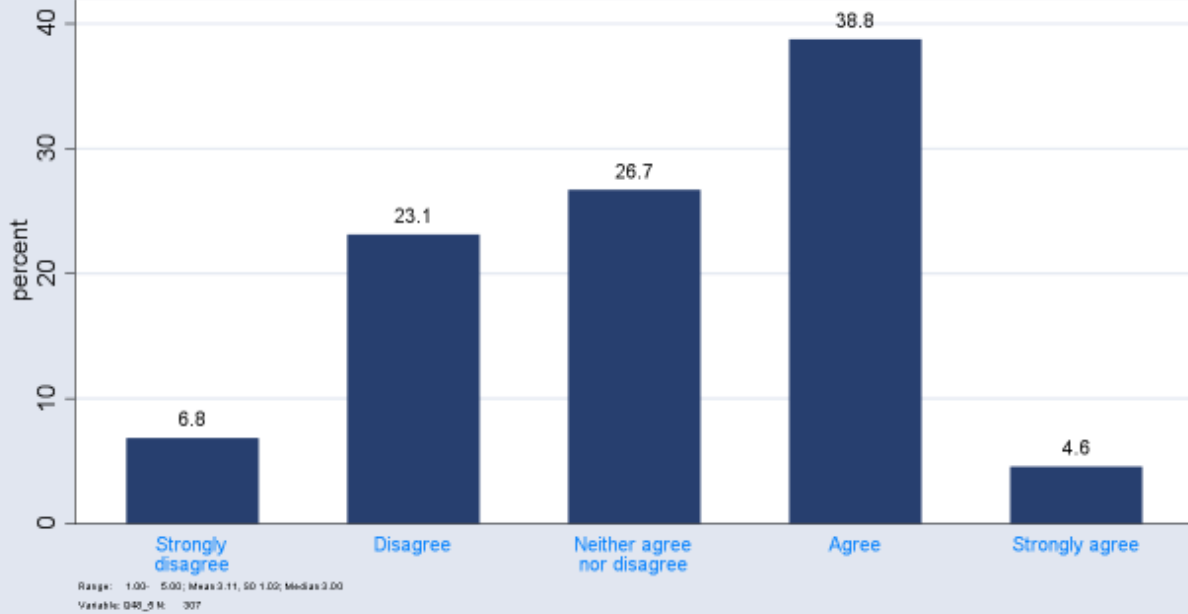


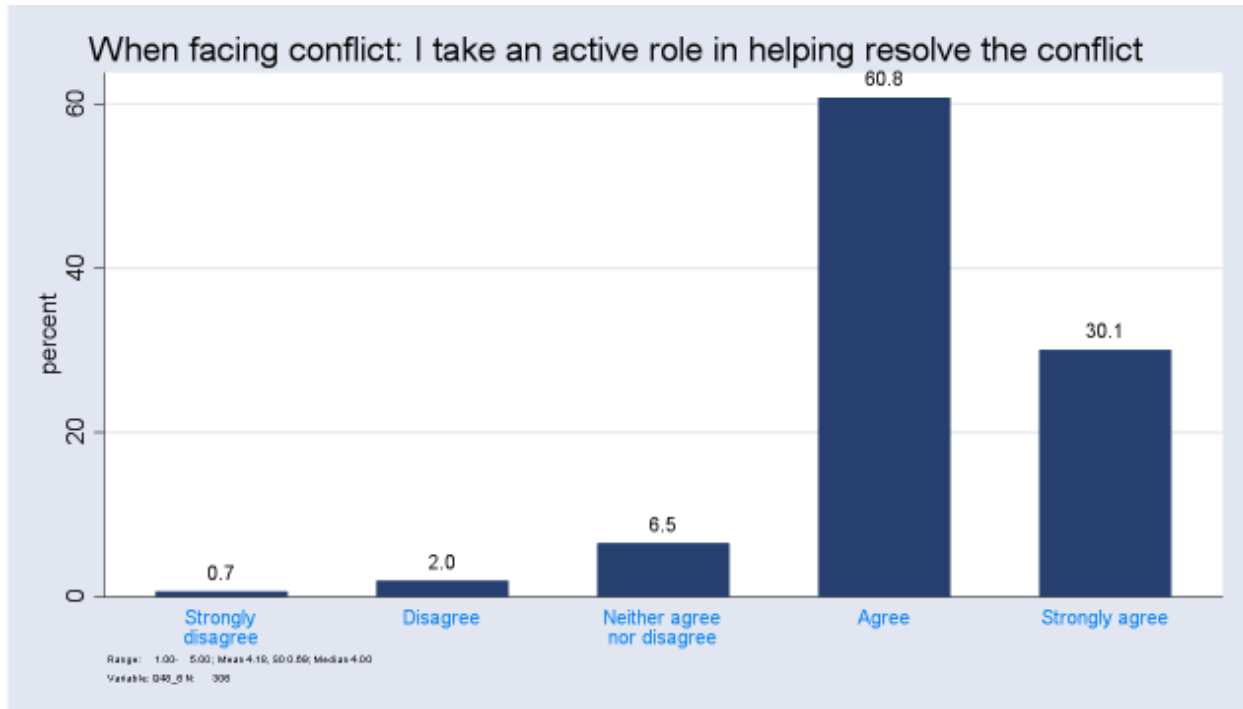


When facing conflict: I typically feel that I am not responsible for causing it



When facing conflict: I vent about the situation to others





Women are more likely to take an active role in dealing with conflict than men. African Americans are more likely to take an active role than whites. Alumni working in nonprofits are less likely to report that they take an active role in handling conflict. Those in “other” ministry positions are also less likely to take an active role.

A willingness to admit one’s own role in the conflict is lower among Hispanics and African Americans, but these differences with whites seem to be due to differences in position and experience. Ironically, all ministry positions are more likely to consider their culpability in comparison with executive directors and senior pastors. Volunteers are less likely to consider their role in conflict, but this is due to their relative inexperience. More seasoned youth ministers are more likely to consider their role in conflict.

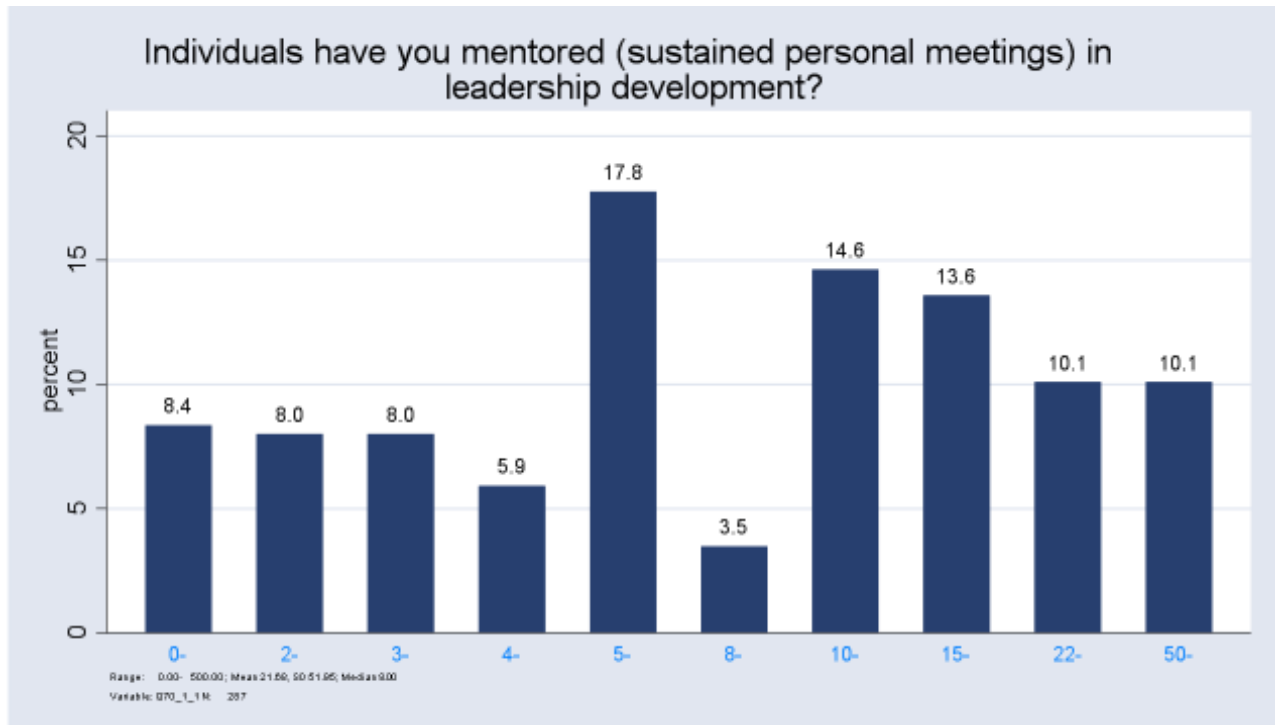
*In sum, we find strengths in handling conflict among women, African Americans, and those with more youth ministry experience, while higher-level, nonprofit organization, and “other” ministry positions create some challenges to expressing servant leadership skills when handling conflict with others at work.*

### *Supportive Interaction with Followers*

Servant leadership strongly emphasizes self-giving relationships to others at work, including sacrificial commitments to growing and empowering subordinates.

DVULI alumni are strongly invested in leadership development through personal mentoring. When considering the number of people mentored for leadership development as a result of DVULI training, we find that about 49 percent of alumni mentor at least 10 individuals. Only 8 percent mentor less than two people.

As a result of DVULI, a high percentage of alumni are very active in training persons through workshops and other events. About 42 percent of alumni have trained 100 or more individuals as a result of DVULI.



The alumni differences we find in mentoring for leadership development are relatively few. Working in nonprofits increases the number of mentees, which is due to the higher number of paid positions for alumni in nonprofit organizations. Those working in “other” organizations mentor a greater number of

individuals. Those in unpaid positions tend to mentor a smaller number of leaders. Not surprisingly, executive directors and senior pastors report a higher number of mentees for leadership development.

Regarding the number of individuals trained, we find some evidence that this is lower in more recent cohorts. Hispanics and blacks train fewer persons, but this is accounted for by the kinds of organizations they work for. Those working in churches report fewer individuals trained through workshops and events. Alumni in senior positions tend to train more, and those in unpaid positions train fewer individuals. Training individuals through workshops and events is higher among those with greater years of ministry experience.

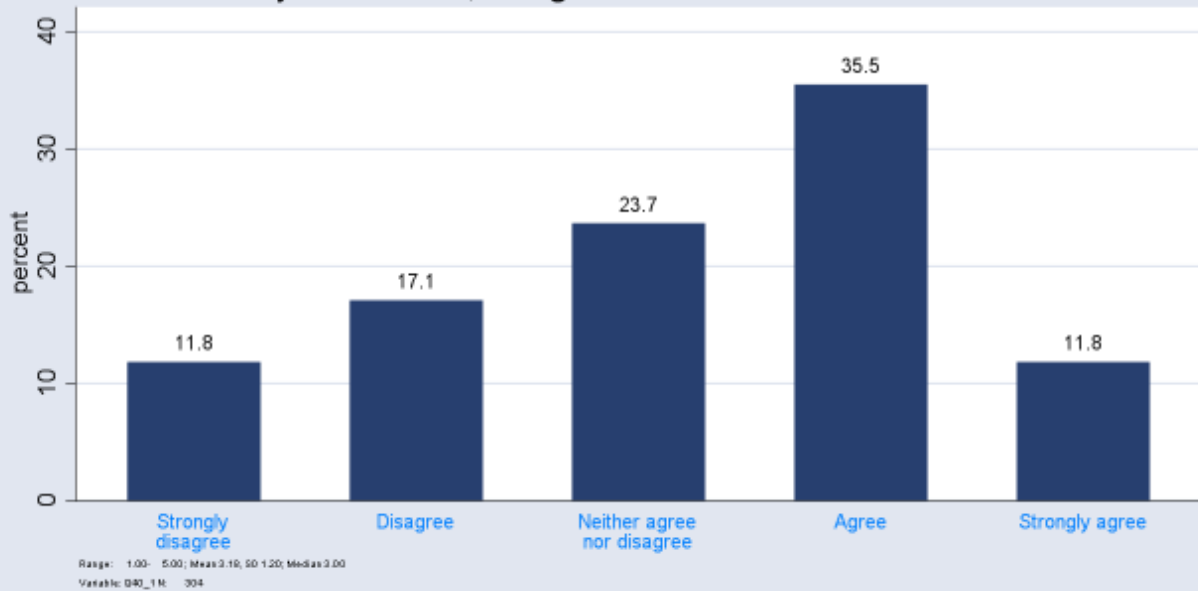
DVULI alumni answered several questions on empowering co-workers. About 44 percent work with leaders within their own ministry setting once a week or more. According to the results, about 56 percent work with subordinate leaders to identify leadership styles and skills using formal assessment tools. Given that not every position offers opportunities for this type of leadership, the percentage committed to this aspect of servant leadership appears very high. About 24 percent mentor key subordinate leaders once a week, and another 15 percent do this more than once a week. About 28 percent direct subordinates to participate in leadership skill building opportunities 2-3 times a month or more, and another 24 percent do this once a month. That sums to 52 percent of alumni who are actively building leadership skills among co-workers. Intentionally investing in the development of leaders is quite common among alumni: 26 percent invest in this development once a week or more, and only 7 percent never do this.



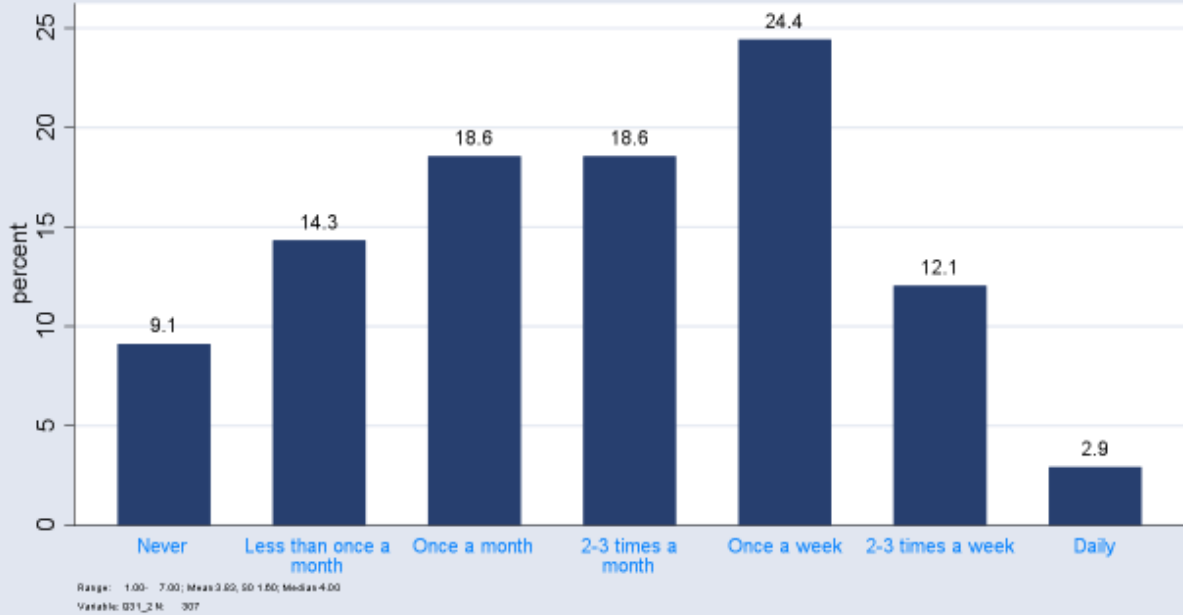
### Worked with subordinate leaders to identify their leadership styles and skills using formal assessment tools



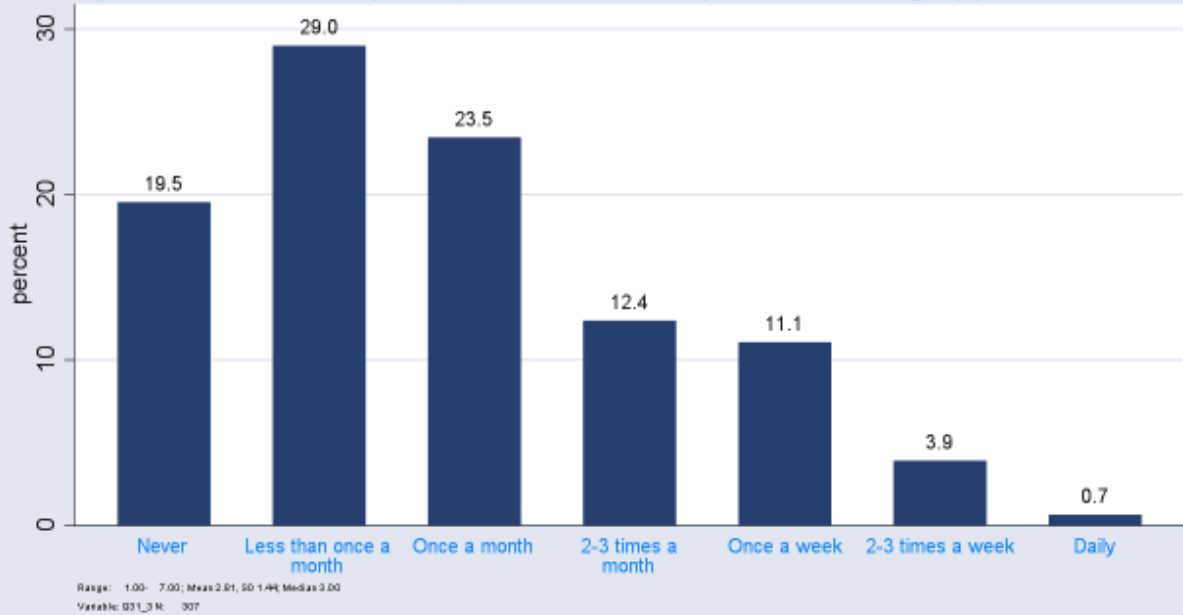
### Worked with subordinate leaders to identify their leadership style and skills, using formal assessment tools



### Mentor your key subordinate leaders?



### Have your subordinates participate in leadership skills building opportunities?





The frequency of working with leaders in one’s ministry setting is higher among more recent cohorts. It is lower among racial and ethnic minorities, especially among blacks and “other” races, than among whites. Surprisingly, there is little difference across ministry position and organization type. Older respondents more frequently work with leaders in their ministry setting, and volunteers do this less frequently.

Identifying leadership styles and skills through assessment is less likely among older alumni. It is much higher among those who have received an educational degree since DVULI, and those who are directly involved in youth ministry. Executive directors and senior pastors are more likely to identify leadership styles and skills—substantially more than program directors and youth/associate pastors. Not surprisingly, volunteers are less likely, and those with more years in professional youth ministry are more likely to identify leadership styles and skills through formal assessment.

Mentoring subordinates is less likely among African Americans than whites, though a high percentage of this difference is due to differences in positions and organizations. “Other” races and ethnicities are also much lower on mentoring of subordinates, though this difference is due to positions, organizations, and, especially, a lower number of years in professional ministry. Program coordinators and youth leaders along with those in “other” ministry positions are much less likely to mentor subordinates. Volunteer ministers are less likely, but those with more years in professional ministry are more likely, to mentor subordinates.

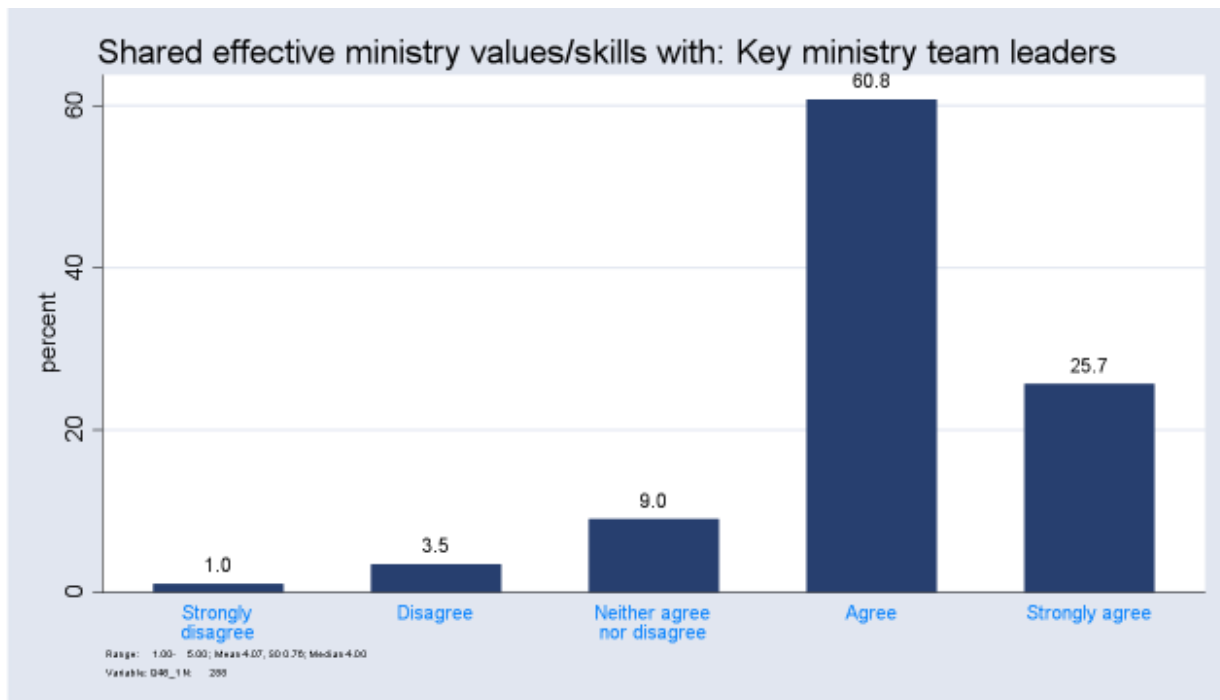
Directing subordinates to work on leadership skill building is more likely among older alumni. It is also higher for Hispanic alumni compared to whites. Education since DVULI is higher, and school ministry leaders are lower on this outcome, but these effects are not statistically significant. Volunteer workers are less likely to do this, but this is accounted for by their lower years of professional ministry. Years in youth ministry is positively associated with encouraging subordinates to build leadership skills.

Intentionally investing in the development of leaders is more likely among males than females, though this difference is accounted for by differences in positions and years in professional ministry. African Americans

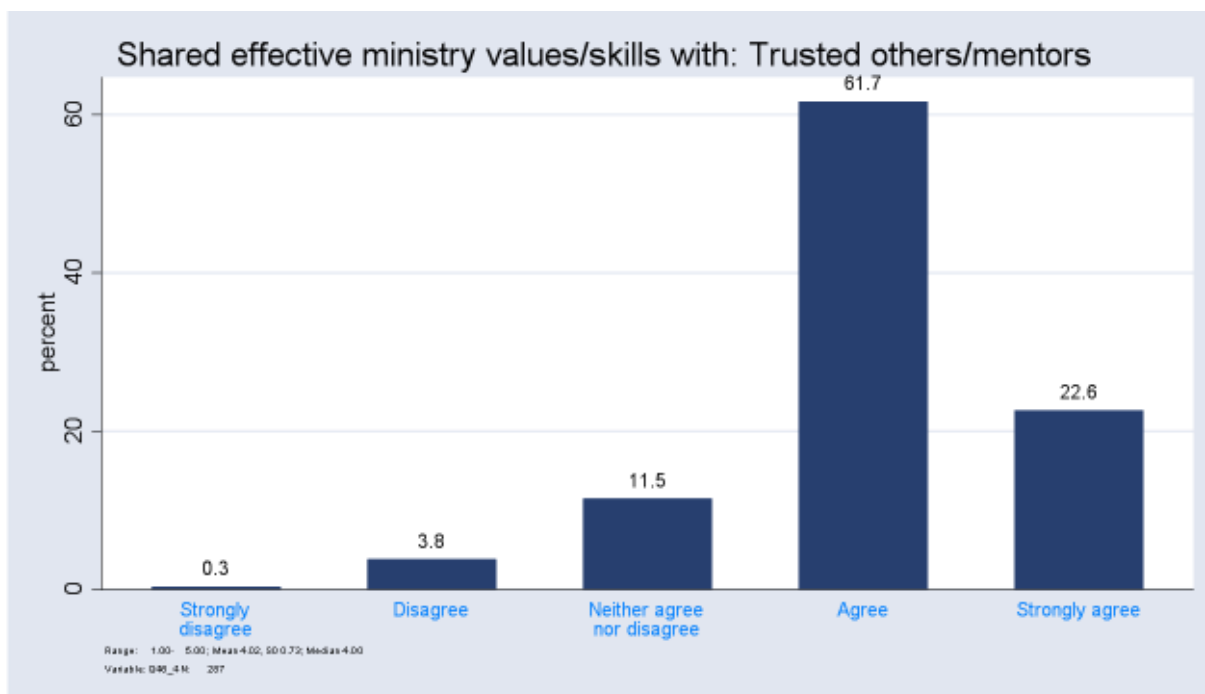
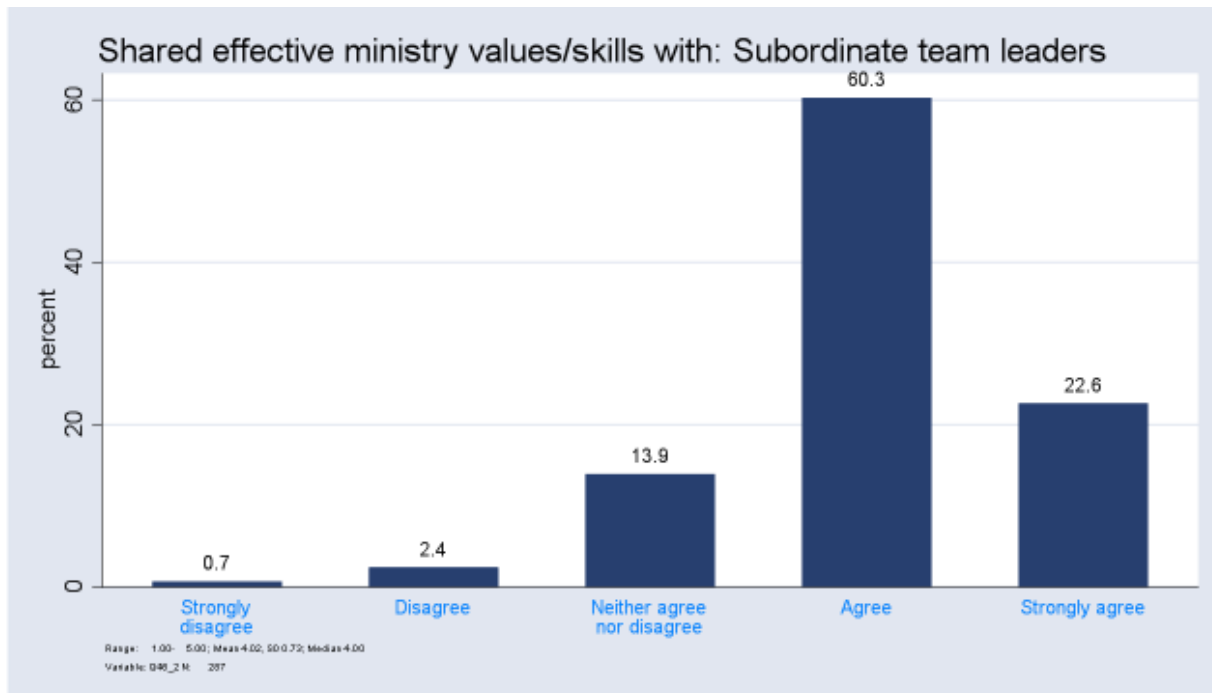
and “other” races are less likely to invest in leadership development, but this is due to differences in positions and organizational roles. Alumni in schools appear to be less likely to intentionally invest in leadership, while those in nonprofits are significantly more likely to do so. Those in unpaid positions are less likely, and those with greater years in professional ministry are more likely to intentionally invest in the development of leaders.

### Share Ministry Values and Skills

A high percentage of alumni report sharing effective ministry values and skills with key ministry team leaders. About 26 percent strongly agree that they do this, and another 61 percent agree (for a total of 87 percent that agree or strongly agree). A slightly lower percentage strongly agree (23 percent) or agree (60 percent) that they share effective ministry values and skills with subordinate team leaders. A high percentage share ministry values and skills with trusted others (23 percent strongly agree; 62 percent agree).







Sharing with key leaders is less likely for African Americans and “other” races, though this is due to differences in positions, organizations, and experience. Program coordinators and youth leaders are less likely to share with key leaders. Those in “other” ministry positions are also less likely to do so, but this is due to the fact that many of these are volunteer positions. Volunteer positions are negatively related to sharing with key leaders.

Sharing key ministry skills and values with subordinate leaders is less likely among African Americans and “other” races and ethnicities. This difference holds after accounting for positions, organizations, and

experience. Again, program coordinators and youth leaders as well as volunteer ministers are less likely to share key skills and values with subordinate leaders.

Sharing key ministry skills and values with trusted others and mentors is less likely among females, though this is accounted for by types of positions held by men and women. Alumni in volunteer positions are less likely to share skills and values with trusted others and mentors.

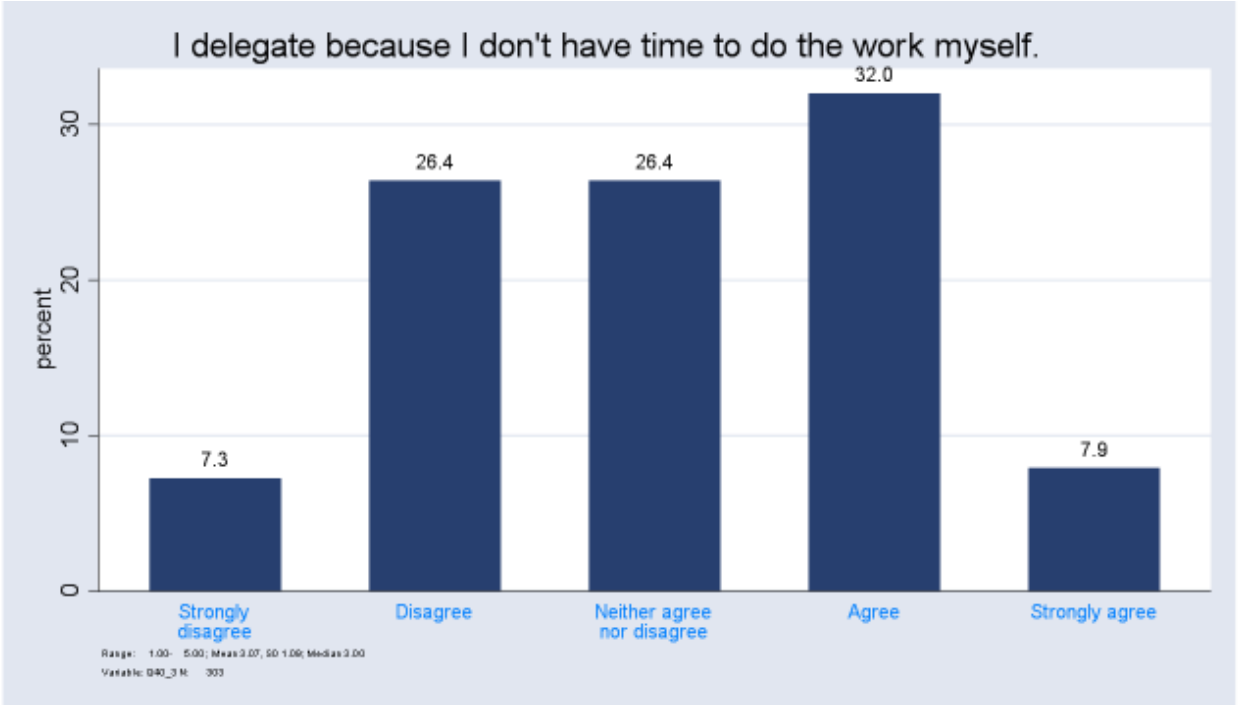
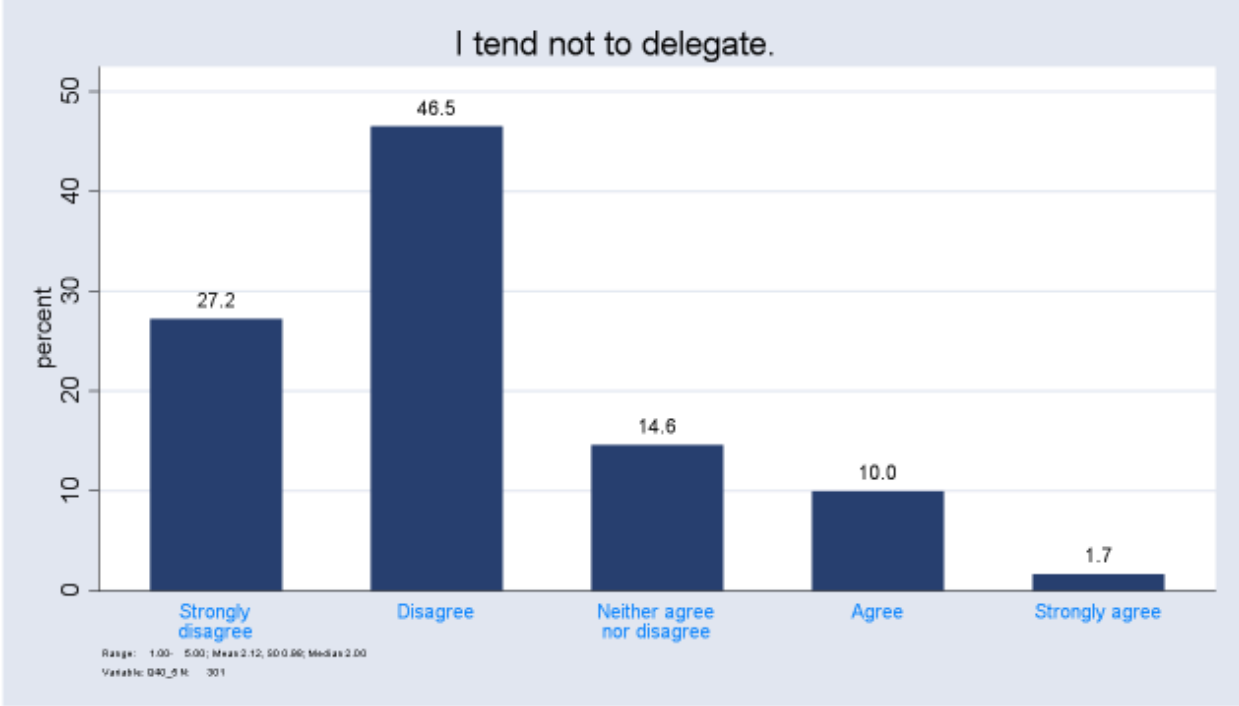
*Regarding sharing ministry skills and values, which is one avenue for empowering others, we find tendencies for lower sharing among African Americans, which could be worrisome if it reflects dynamics of a racialized society in which sharing across race is more difficult. Alternatively, this finding could be explained by jobs in smaller organizations, which may have fewer mentorship opportunities. Most strongly, however, we find that sharing is affected by ministry position; sharing is less in “lower” level positions and among volunteers.*

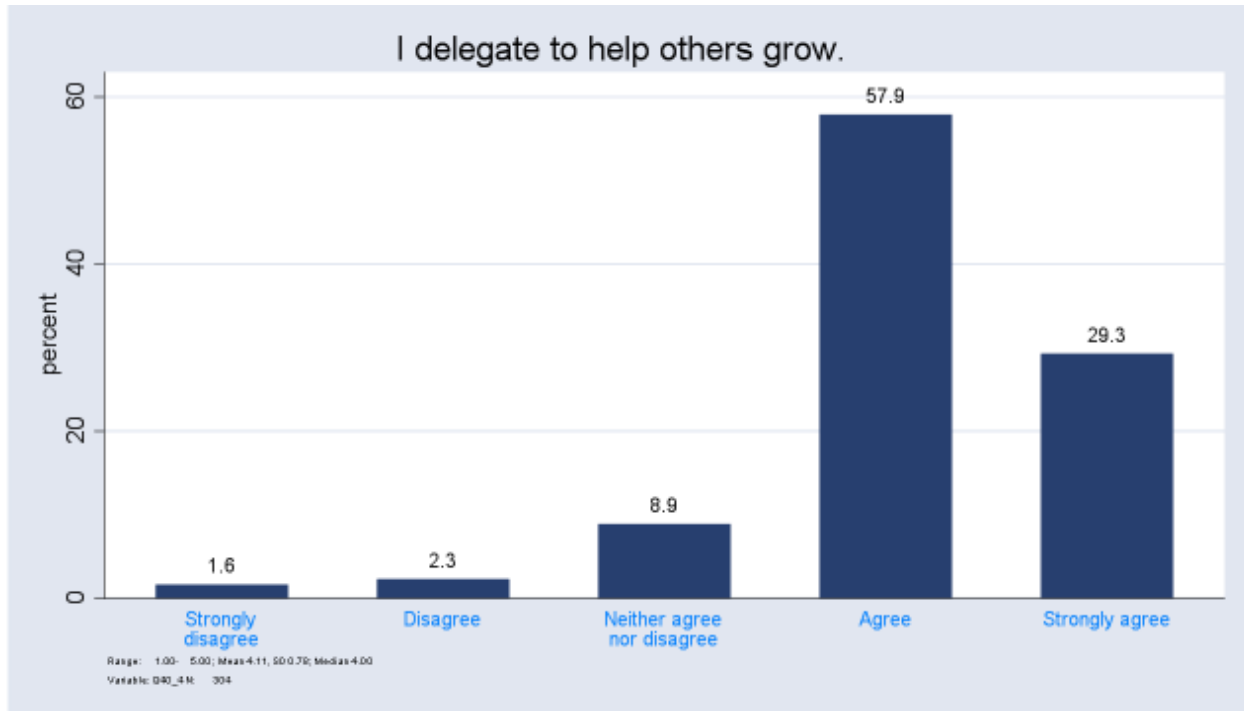
### *Empowerment through Delegation*

The ability to delegate is an important aspect of transformational leadership and is central to empowering others through servant leadership as well.

Alumni seem to do well delegating to others when appropriate, though a minority may be having difficulty with this. Delegation is quite high: 27 percent strongly disagree, and 47 percent disagree with the statement, “I tend not to delegate.” Still, 12 percent agree or strongly agree that they avoid delegation of tasks, and another 15 percent are not sure about their ability to delegate.

Delegation because of work overload is less common. About 40 percent agree or strongly agree that they delegate because they do not have time to do the work themselves, but only 8 percent fall in the “strongly agree” category. That leaves 26 percent who are neutral and 34 percent who disagree or strongly disagree. Of course, some portion of the distribution could reflect situations in which there is not a work overload to deal with, or there is no one available to help. More consistent is the view that alumni delegate to help others grow. About 29 percent strongly agree that they delegate in order to help others grow, and another 58 percent agree with this statement. Servant leadership depends on these orientations to building up others in ministry.





When considering which alumni do what kinds of delegating, we find that delegation is higher among women than men. Older alumni are also more likely to delegate. Consistent with earlier findings, Hispanics are more likely to delegate. Alumni in “other” ministry positions delegate well, as do those with more years of ministry experience.

Interestingly, delegation to deal with a lack of time is not associated with any alumni differences. The one exception is therefore striking: alumni in program coordinator or youth leader roles are more likely to delegate because of work overload than alumni in other positions. It is difficult to say whether this is due to the greater likelihood that these positions experience work overload, or these alumni are in a better position from which to make delegation work. Alumni in “lower” level positions may be more comfortable or “free” to involve others and are in close relationships with potential volunteers.

Delegation to help others grow is higher among Hispanics. It is also solidly higher among alumni who have obtained further education since DVULI. Alumni with more professional experience are likely to delegate for the development of others as well.

*In sum, servant leadership that includes empowerment of others through delegation is high among DVULI alumni. Empowerment comes easier for women and Hispanics, as well as those who have (perhaps) enhanced their collaborative skills and commitments by combining DVULI with further education. Program coordinators and youth leaders are more likely to delegate due to work overload or links to potential volunteers.*

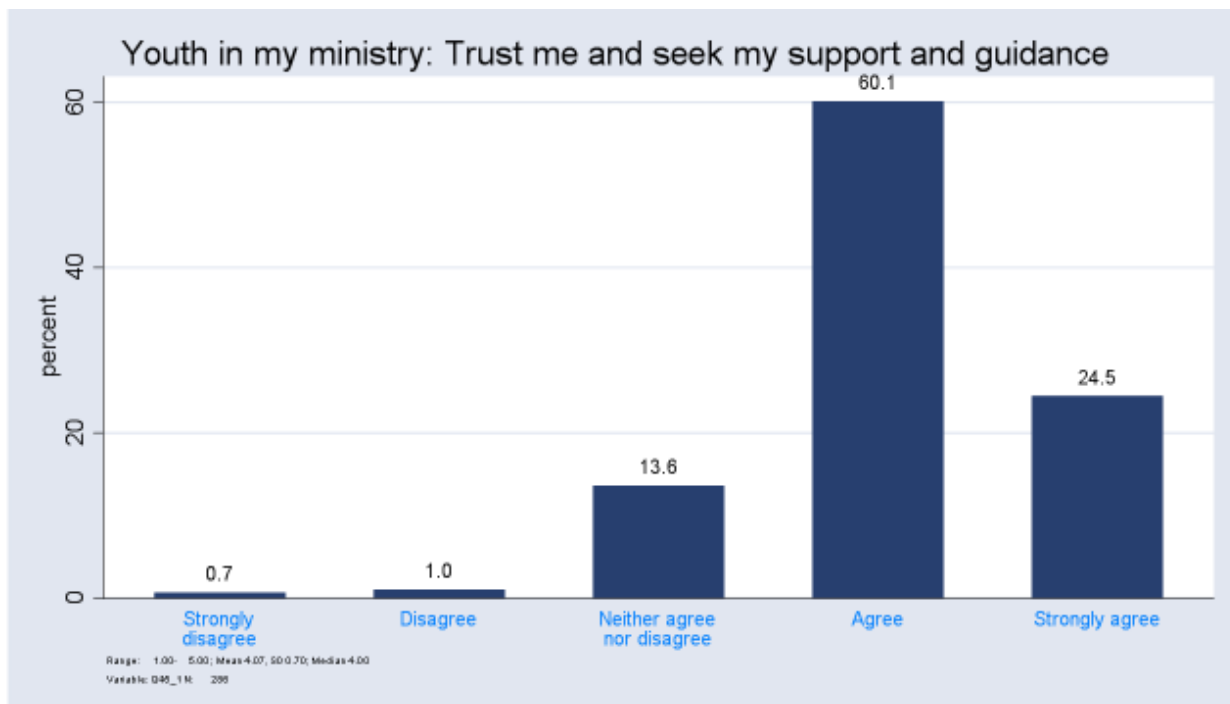
## Servant Leadership and Youth

Servant leadership through empowerment and sacrificial commitments to others has a unique dimension in youth ministry, since most leadership positions depend on good relationships not only with co-laborers but also with youth. Do alumni relationships support and empower youth?

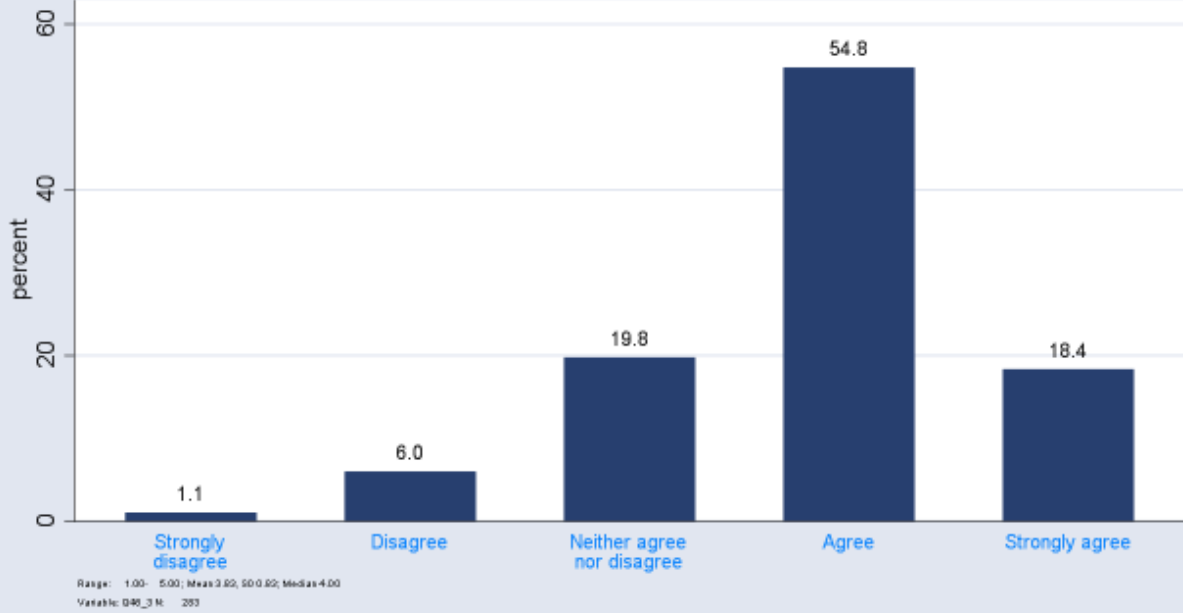
Generally, we find that alumni have good relationships with youth in their ministries. A substantial percent of alumni say that youth in their ministry trust them and seek their support and guidance. About 25 percent strongly agree that youth look to them for support and guidance, and another 60 percent agree.

Most alumni share effective ministry values and skills with the youth in their ministry. About 18 percent of alums strongly agree that they do this, and another 55 percent agree. In terms of raw percent agreeing, the sharing of values and skills is not quite at the high level we have seen for other measures, but it is possible that sharing opportunities vary by ministry type and position.

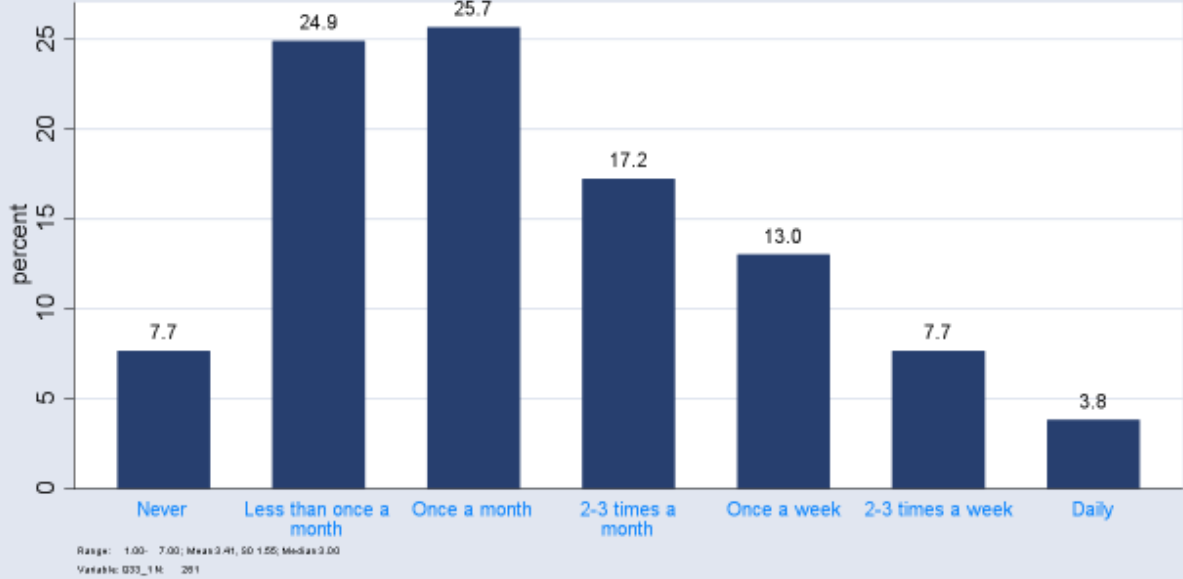
The empowerment aspect of servant leadership is particularly evident in encouraging active involvement of youth. DVULI alumni provide youth with many opportunities to take up leadership roles. About 42 percent of alumni provide youth opportunities to take leadership roles 2-3 times a month or more. Another 26 percent provide this at least once a month. Alumni are very likely to ask youth to take an active role in planning and implementing ministry activities. About 13 percent reported that they do this once a week or more. While 27 percent never did ask youth to take an active role, 37 percent did this once a month or more (but not as often as once a week or more). These percentages are somewhat lower, but are likely partially constrained by youth schedules.

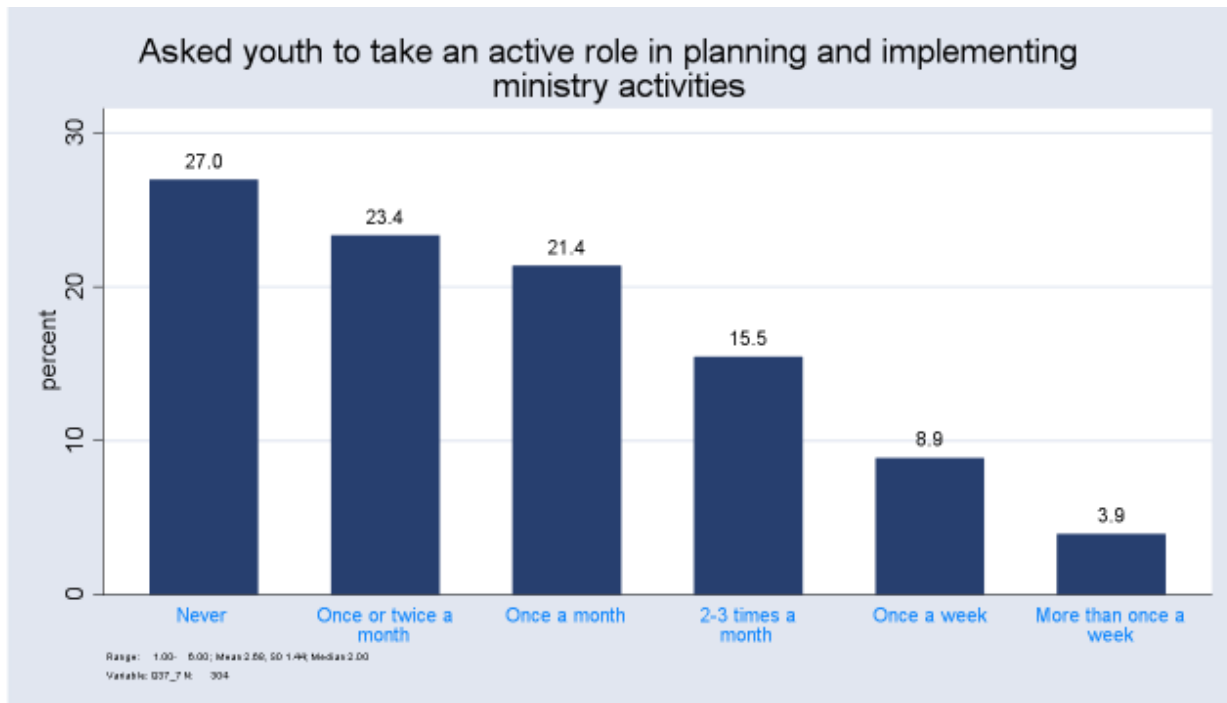


### Shared effective ministry values/skills with: Youth



### Provide your youth opportunities to take on leadership roles in your ministry activities?





Which alumni report higher values on these youth relationship variables? Regarding trust, support, and guidance, we find higher average scores for the most recent cohorts, though this is accounted for by the greater likelihood that recent cohorts are directly involved in youth ministry. Education since DVULI has a solid positive effect on reports of youth trust and guidance. Higher levels of trust and guidance are associated with jobs in the school setting compared to the churches, which perhaps reflects the more intensive interaction with youth in school settings and intentional mission to provide support and guidance for struggling youth.

Sharing effective ministry skills and values with youth is more likely among the most recent cohorts. Hispanics report higher levels on this outcome as well. More educated alumni and those who have finished an educational degree share effective ministry skills and values at higher levels. Alumni with more years in professional ministry are more likely to share ministry skills and values with youth.

More recent cohorts are more likely to offer youth leadership opportunities, though this effect is considerably lower when accounting for the higher number of more recent alumni who are directly involved in youth ministry. Hispanic youth ministers are more likely to provide youth with leadership opportunities. More educated alumni are more likely to provide leadership roles for youth. Alumni working in “other” ministry organizations are more likely than those in churches to facilitate youth leadership. Program coordinators and youth leaders, and those in “other” ministry positions, are less likely to provide leadership roles for youth. Alumni who are volunteers provide fewer leadership roles for youth. But higher opportunities for youth leadership are provided by those with more years of professional ministry experience.

*Servant leadership and youth is higher among more recent cohorts, likely reflecting positive changes in the DVULI program emphasis. Again, we find that Hispanics are particularly likely to have positive relationships with youth, including sharing values and skills and leadership, which may reflect the relationship of ministry, organization, and community for most Hispanic youth ministers. Another key finding is the interaction of*

educational level, and pursuit of additional education, on servant leadership. Consistent with many findings, we see a positive interaction between experiences in DVULI and educational institutions. Lastly, school contexts seem to provide a focus on servant leadership in terms of providing guidance and support for youth. This is likely a particular emphasis of youth ministry for students.

### *Relationships, Faith, and Service*

We expect that a servant leader cares for youth by working to embed youth in a web of supportive relationships. Youth ministry adds an extra dimension to empowerment as well, which includes helping youth articulate faith and understand their abilities and direction in life.

Compared with direct support for youth, we find a slightly lower percentage agreeing that youth in their ministry have relationships with strong adult believers, which may reflect contextual factors. About 21 percent of alumni, however, strongly agree that youth do have strong adult relationships, and 54 percent agree. Given the nature of the task, that level of adult-youth engagement seems quite high.

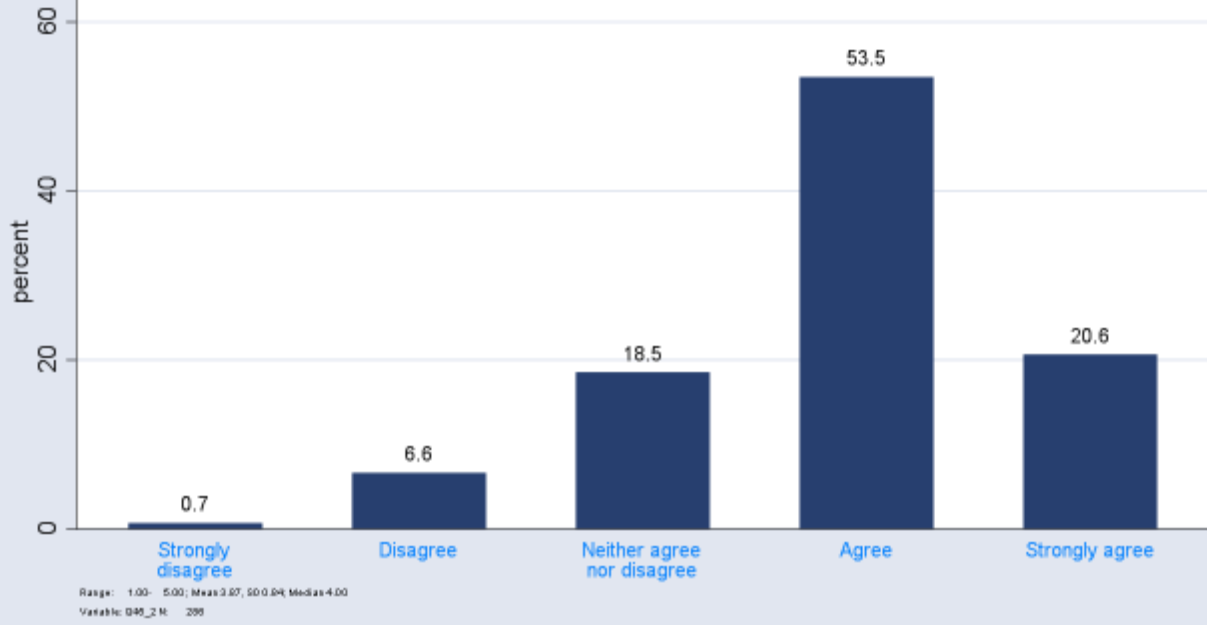
Are youth in their ministry able to articulate their faith? There is less agreement among alumni that they can. About 7 percent strongly agree, while 44 percent agree (but not strongly). That leaves a fairly high percentage that do not believe the youth in their ministry are able to articulate their faith. Of course, responses to this question reflect in part the particular type of ministry the alumni are involved in. And evidence on the religious views and practices of American teens reveal a good deal of uncertainty or flexibility about core Christian beliefs, including fairly widespread moral therapeutic deism (Smith and Denton 2005). In the National Survey of Youth and Religion, about 60 percent of teens have doubts about their religion or spirituality, about half of teens believe it is okay to practice two religions, and about 53 percent believe that people should not try to convert others to their religion. Only 31 percent say that being a truly religious or spiritual Christian requires attending a church. We could multiply examples, but the point is that American teens in an age of increasing secularization, especially among younger generations (Voas and Chaves 2016), face significant challenges to a clear articulation of faith.

Similarly, on the question of whether youth in their ministry understand their gifts, abilities, and strengths, only 4 percent of alumni strongly agree while 40 percent agree. This speaks to the challenges faced in the ministries of many alumni and perhaps also the high standards that youth ministers hold for the spiritual formation of youth.

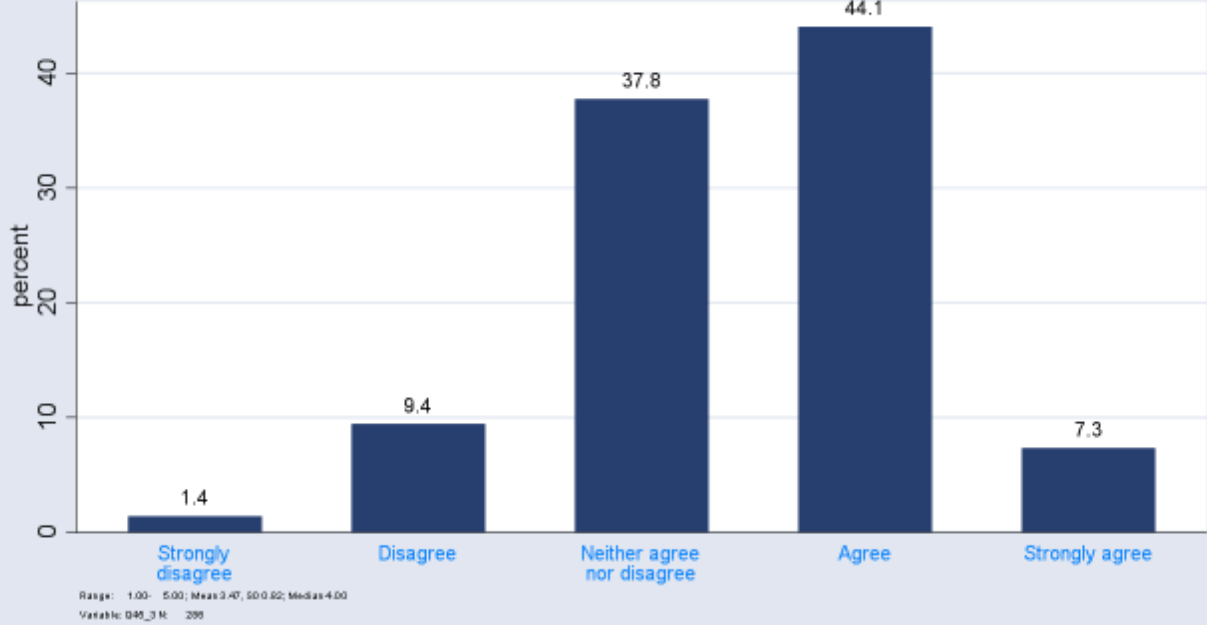
Another aspect of youth ministry is facilitating self-giving activities among youth. About 10 percent strongly agree that youth are involved in community service to others, and another 56 percent agree. That appears to reflect a high level of youth involvement in community service, given the challenges in motivating youth volunteering.

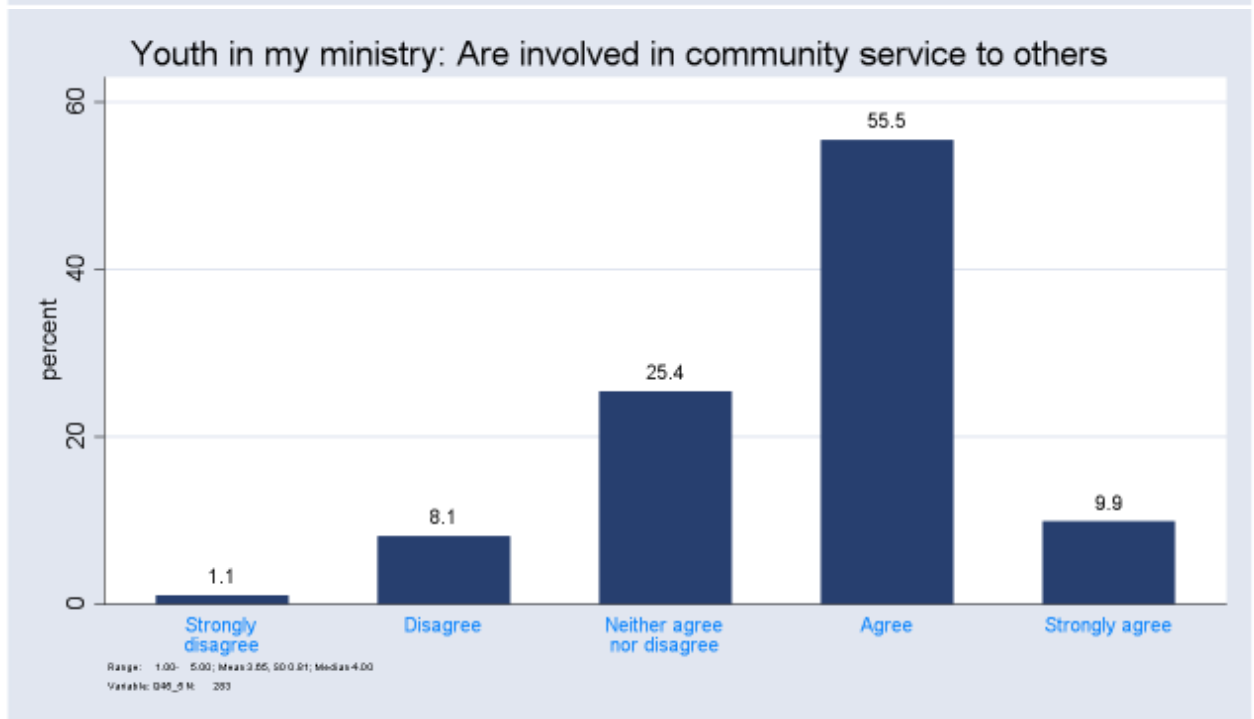
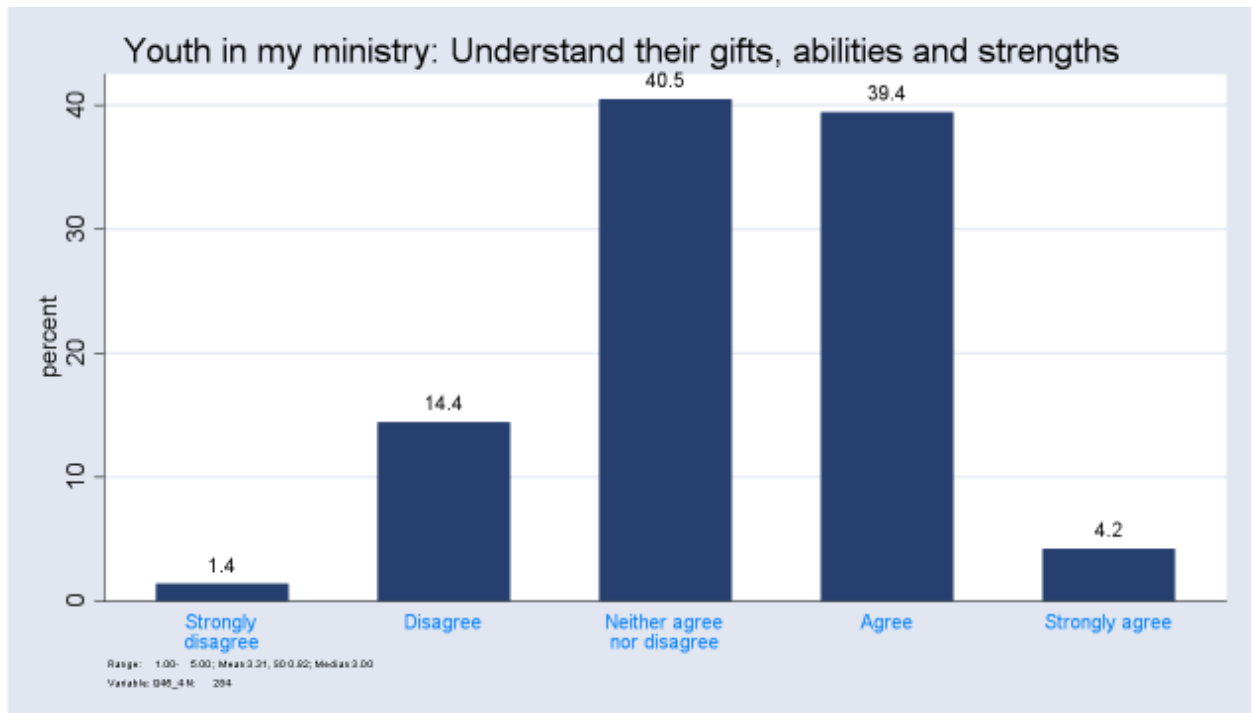


Youth in my ministry: Have relationships with strong adult believers



Youth in my ministry: Are able to articulate their faith





Women compared to men report that their youth are less likely to have strong relationships with adult believers. This may reflect the higher expectations for adult-youth relationships for women alumni. Alumni who have received additional education since DVULI report that their youth do have strong adult relationships. Surprisingly, we do not find differences by type of organization. But we do find that those with more professional ministry years report that their youth have strong relationships with adult believers.

Hispanic alumni report that their youth are able to articulate their faith. Interestingly, besides Hispanic alumni, there are no differences across alumni on this outcome, which likely reflects the pervasive and general challenges to clear religious expression among American youth in the present societal context.

Are there any alumni differences in whether their youth understand their gifts, abilities, and strengths? None whatsoever. It is possible that the forces that influence youth self-understanding are personal or idiosyncratic, and that alumni have very similar understandings of success or failure on this score.

Community service of youth is reported to be lower among alumni in the middle cohorts. That this does not extend to recent cohorts may indicate that more recent DVULI cohorts have been better equipped to promote youth community service. Hispanic alumni are more likely to report that their youth are involved in community service. Education since DVULI is associated with higher levels of youth community service. Alumni with more years of professional ministry report greater community service of their youth.

*Findings of note in servant leadership and empowerment of youth include the stronger Hispanic effects, and the apparent synergy between pursuing additional education after DVULI and empowering youth through ministry. In addition, a general conclusion is that strong secular trends among younger generations generates imposing challenges for youth ministry to foster spiritual formation, including the clear articulation of faith among youth.*

### **Community and Youth Ministry**

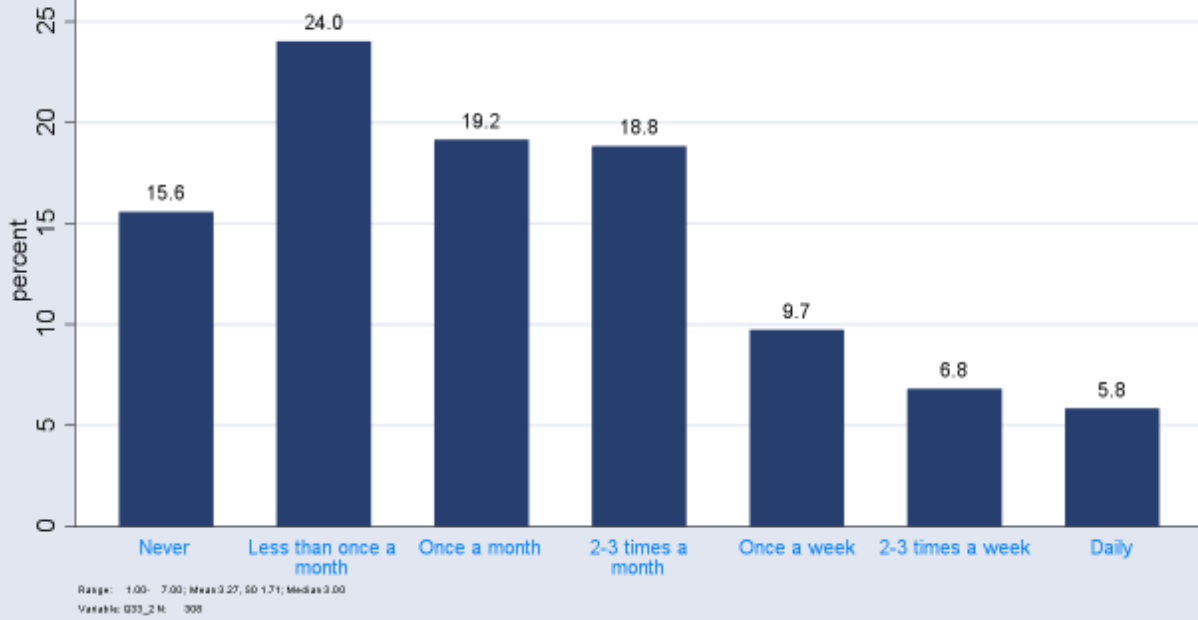
Servant leadership in youth ministry requires attention to the community context. That is not only because lives of youth and community are closely intertwined, but also because this kind of leadership involves self-giving beyond the boundaries of one's organization.

Youth ministries have a natural fit with this aspect of servant leadership since their mission usually includes outreach efforts to youth in the local community. Despite community challenges, we find that alumni spend considerable time reaching out to youth not currently in their ministry. About 23 percent reach out to youth not currently in their ministry once a week or more, and another 19 percent do this 2-3 times a month.

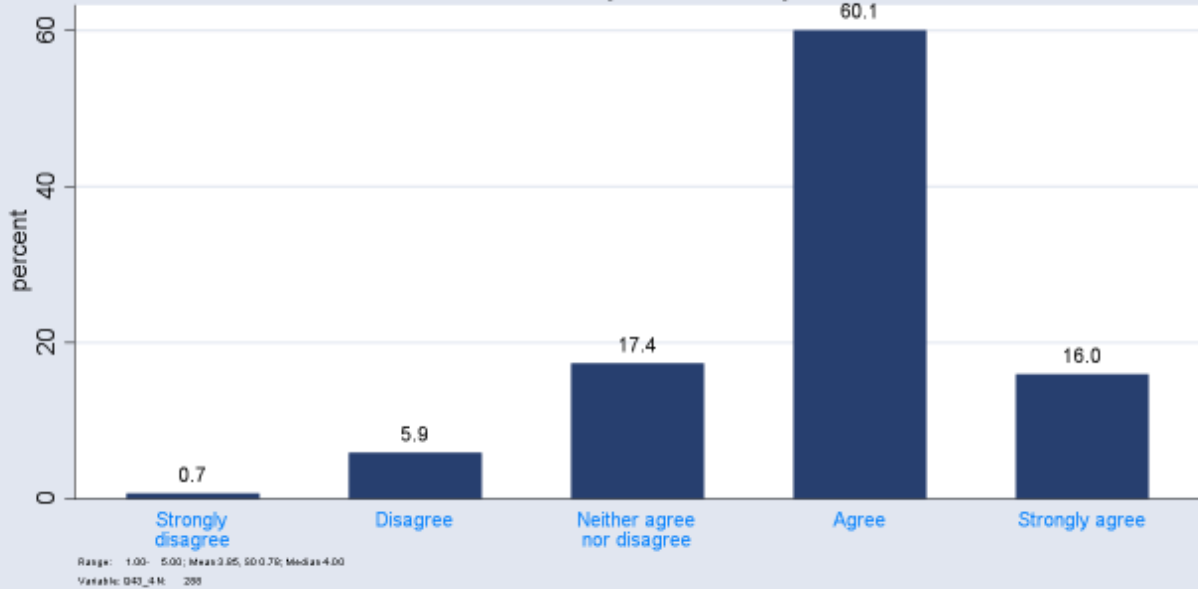
For unknown reasons, youth outreach is highest in 2000-06, and lower in other cohorts. Also surprising is that more educated alumni are less likely to reach out to youth beyond their ministry. Those in nonprofit organizations are very likely to do youth outreach. Alumni in "other" organizations are strongly positive on youth outreach, though there is considerable variation within this group. Those in "other" ministry positions, compared to executive directors and senior pastors, are much less likely to reach out to youth beyond their ministry.

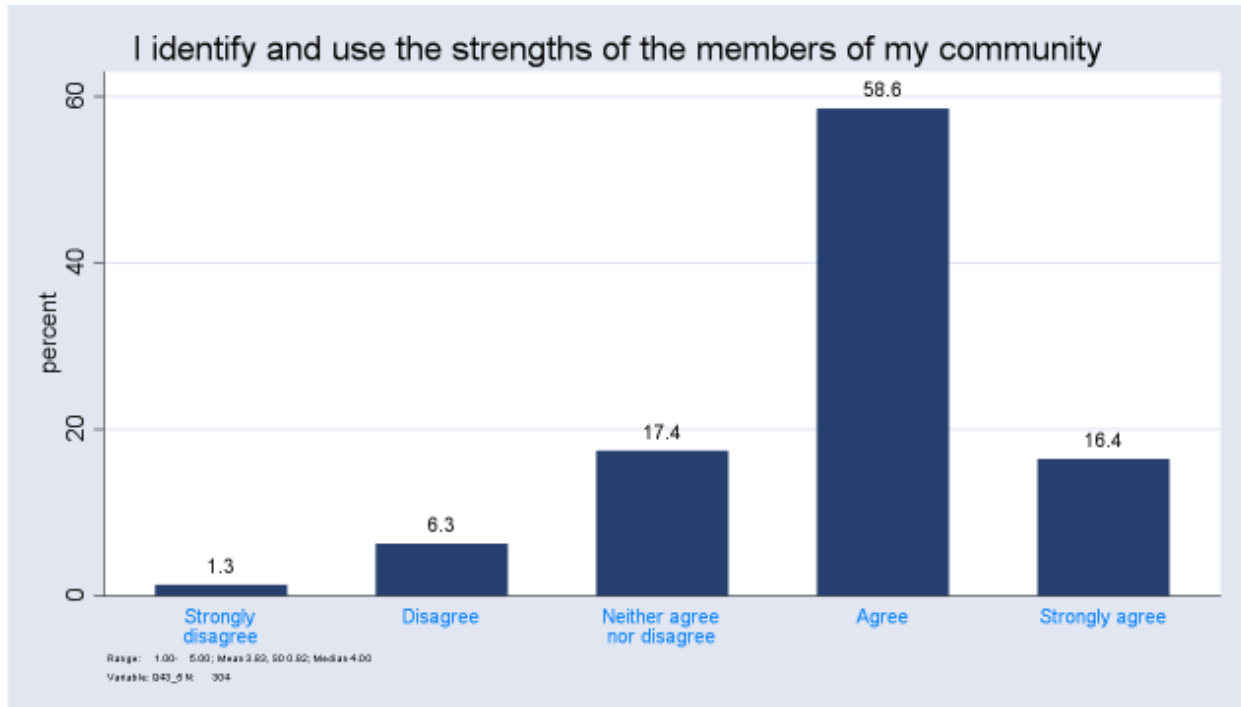
Many alumni think deeply about the relation between their ministry and the local community. When making ministry plans, most alumni consider the strengths of members in their community. About 16 percent are very confident of this ("strongly agree"), while another 60 percent agree. About 16 percent strongly agree that they identify and use the strengths of the members of their community, while another 59 percent agree with this statement.

### Reach out to youth not currently involved in your ministry?



### When making ministry plans, I consider the strengths of the members in my community.



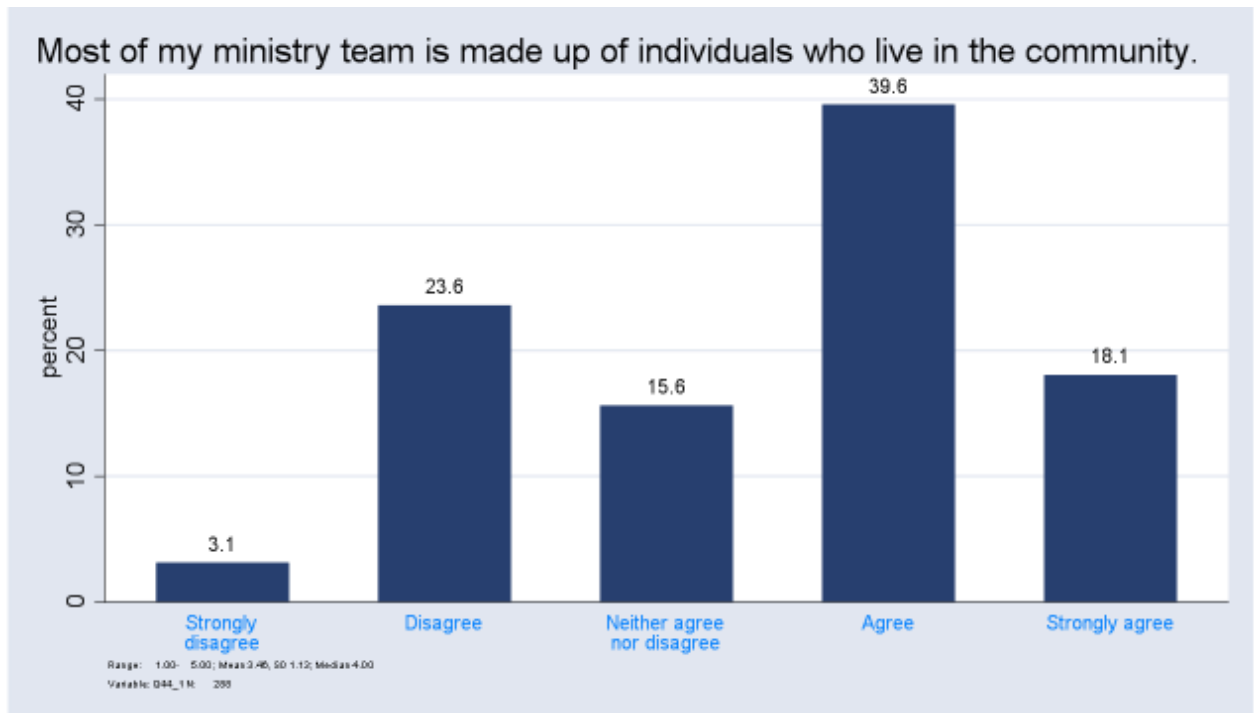


Women are more likely to consider the strengths of members of their community when making ministry plans, as are those who received an educational degree since DVULI. Alumni in “other” ministry organizations are also likely to consider community strengths. Years in professional ministry is positively associated with considering community strengths when making ministry plans.

About 35 percent strongly agree that they consider the bigger picture—including what is occurring outside their organization—when planning their ministry programs, and another 53 percent agree (but not strongly) that they do this. Though the percent “strongly agree” could be higher, alumni may be striking a healthy balance of internal and external concerns.

Women are less likely to consider the bigger picture, though this is less certain after controlling for organization, position, and experience. Alumni working in nonprofit organizations are more likely to consider what is occurring outside their organization when planning ministry programs.

In terms of ministry context, most of the alumni’s ministry team is made up of individuals who live in the community. About 18 percent strongly agree with this statement about their ministry team, and another 40 percent agree. That does leave 42 percent of alumni who are likely trying to coordinate a ministry team that includes individuals from outside the community. About 27 percent strongly disagree or disagree that the ministry team consists of individuals who live in the community. The results point to a good deal of coordination of ministry teams across metro areas. These differing ministry contexts, more or less neighborhood-based, may have an important influence on how DVULI training is applied.



Hispanics compared to whites are more likely to have team members from the community—a finding that could help to explain many of the Hispanic effects mentioned earlier. In stark contrast, African Americans are much less likely to have community team members. This finding is more difficult to interpret, but may reflect the lack of a vibrant civic life or of functional institutions in communities in which African Americans work. Alumni in volunteer positions are lower on this outcome.

*We conclude, then, that alumni are working hard to orient their ministry to the local community context. Alumni in nonprofit organizations are making herculean efforts to unite youth ministry with local communities. Education since DVULI encourages the youth-community link, perhaps because educational experiences pull alumni into wider networks and encourage broader horizons. More experienced youth ministers seem more connected to their communities, which may reflect the time necessary to build social networks with organizations and people in the local community.*

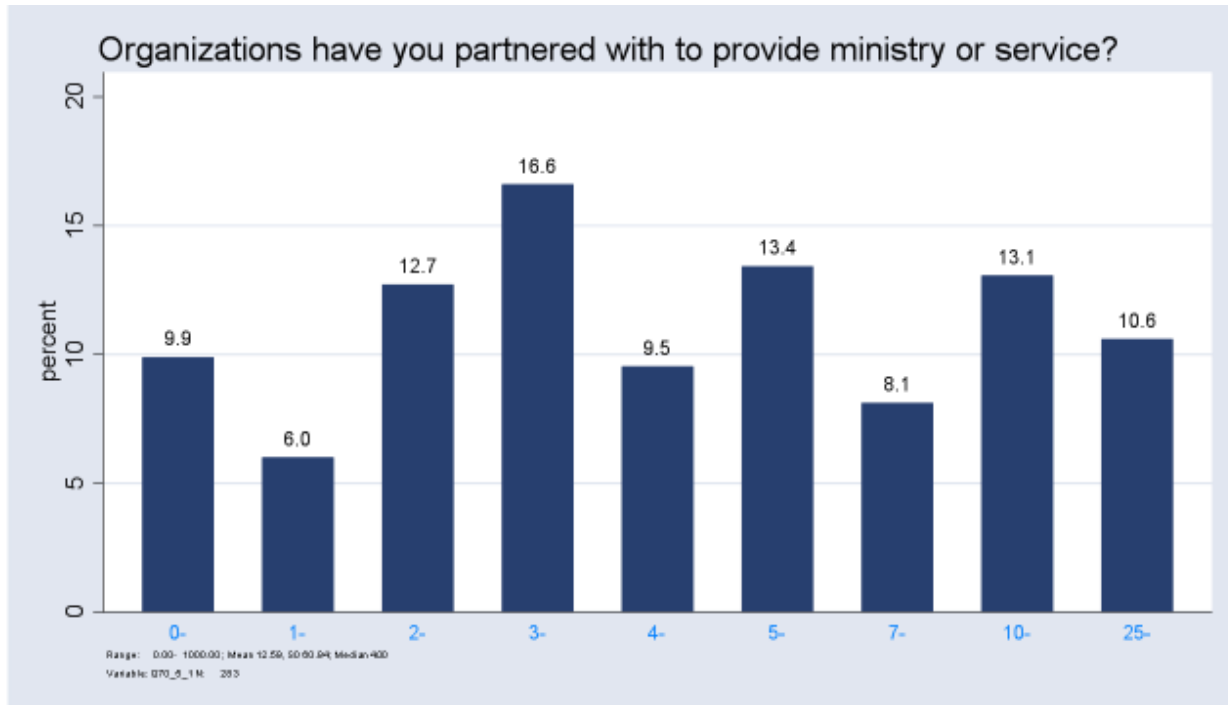
*Finally, the source of the ministry team is likely to have strong effects on the youth ministries of alumni. We have seen several strengths of Hispanic alumni in bringing DVULI training to bear on their ministries, and the strong overlap between ministry co-workers and community likely explains these findings in part. In contrast, African Americans likely operate in community contexts that are particularly challenging, and that may include difficulties in finding ministry co-workers in their local community.*

### **Relationships with Outside Organizations, Local Communities**

Servant leadership requires attention not only to relationships internal to an organization, but to relationships with other youth ministry leaders, and to other organizations and persons in local communities. The goal for DVULI and servant leaders is to develop synergies between alumni ministries and

other organizations, people, and resources in the local community, and to build webs of support for youth and youth ministries.

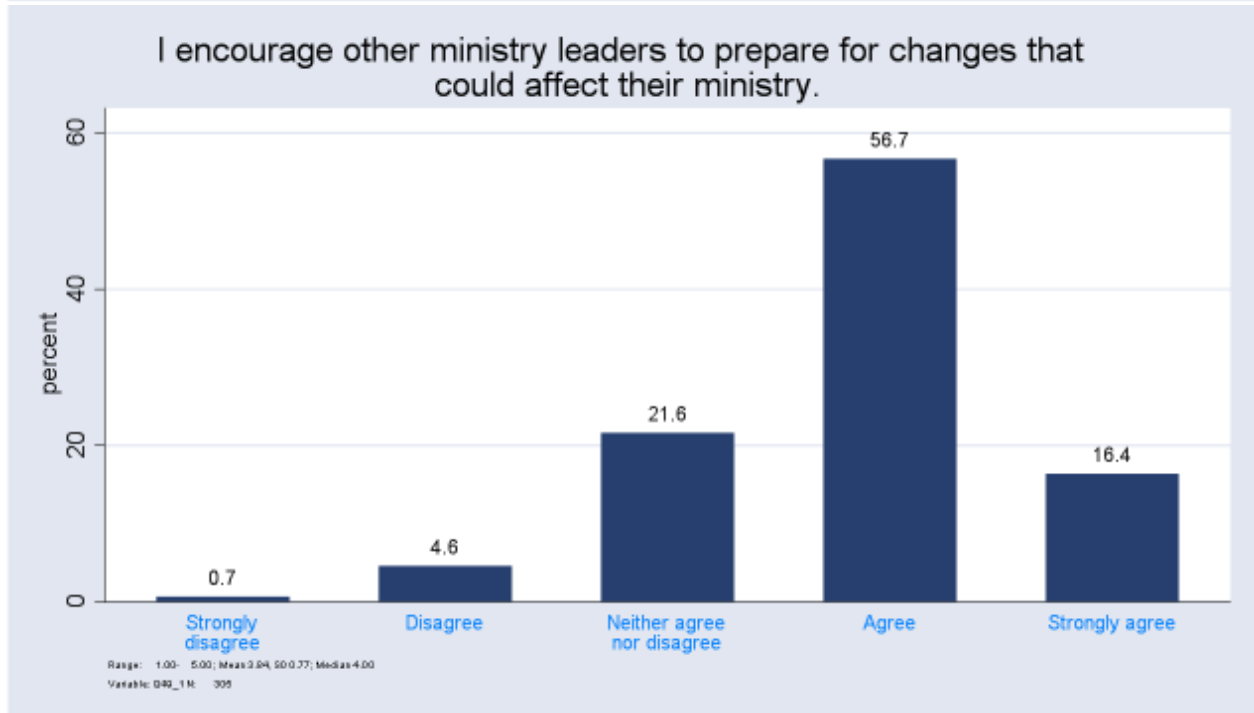
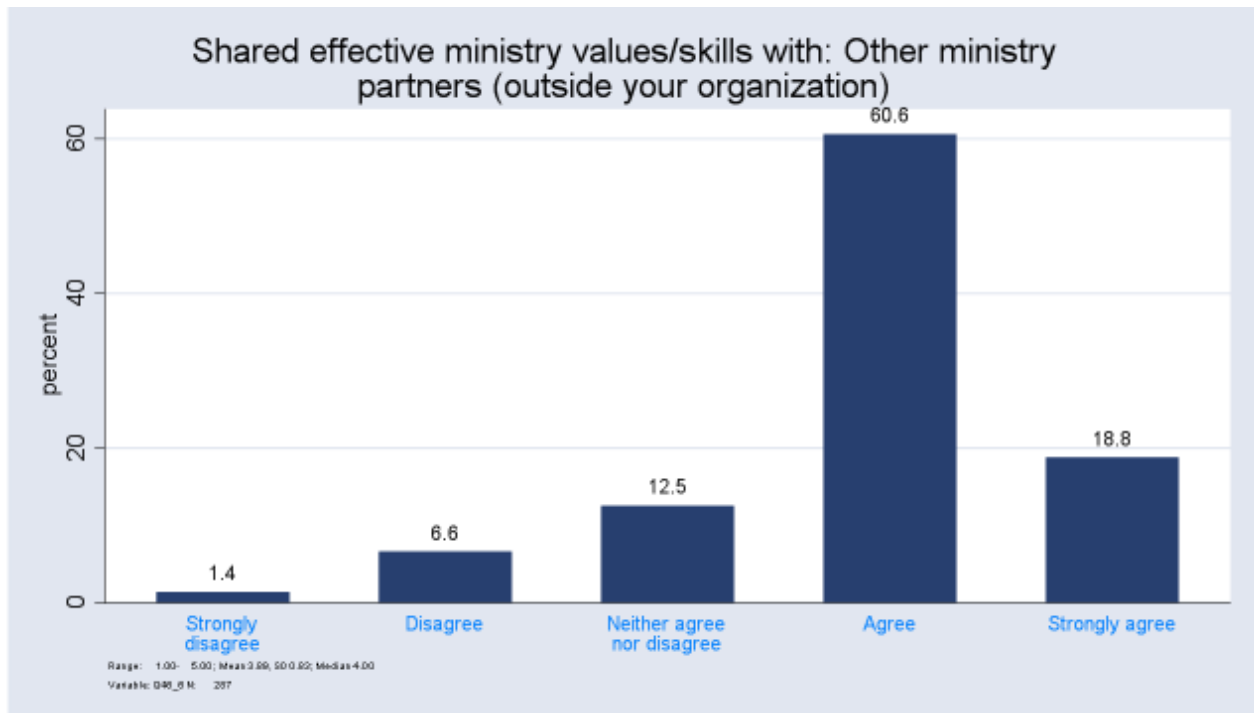
When alumni were asked the number of organizations partnered with to provide ministry or service, the responses revealed a high level of organizational partnership. About 45 percent of alumni report partnerships with five or more organizations, while only 10 percent do not partner with organizations to provide ministry or service.



African Americans report a lower number of organizational partnerships, though this is explained by the types of organizations they work for. African Americans are more likely to work in churches, for example, which tends to dampen organizational partnerships. Hispanics also report a lower number of partnerships, but this is due to the higher likelihood that Hispanics are in unpaid ministry positions. Alumni in nonprofit organizations have a higher average number of organizational partnerships compared to those working in churches. This finding is accounted for by the higher likelihood that nonprofit positions are paid. Alumni in more senior positions have a higher number of partnerships, while those in unpaid positions have fewer organizational partnerships.

### *Empowering Ministry Leaders and Partners*

DVULI alumni report that they spread effective ministry skills and values to other ministry partners. Despite the greater degree of difficulty when moving outside one's organization, about 19 percent strongly agree and 61 percent agree that they have been able to instill ministry skills and values to ministry partners. A high percentage of respondents agree that they encourage other ministry leaders to prepare for changes that could affect their ministry. About 16 percent strongly agree that they do this, and another 57 percent agree. These results exemplify the self-giving investment in others that is a key part of servant leadership.



Sharing ministry skills and values with other ministry partners is more likely among alumni who have completed additional education since DVULI. Those working in nonprofits are more likely to impart effective ministry skills and values to partners than those working in churches. Other contexts are higher than churches on this score as well, though these differences are not statistically significant. All ministry positions appear to be lower on sharing ministry skills and values with partners than executive directors and senior pastors, though the difference with program coordinators and youth leaders is not significantly different. Volunteers, not surprisingly, are lower on this outcome.



Preparing ministry leaders for change is more likely among older alumni, though this is accounted for by their greater years in professional ministry. Those who received more education after DVULI are higher on this outcome. Years in professional ministry is positively related to preparing ministry leaders for change.

*Consistent with other research on educational effects, we find that engagement with a broader network of youth leaders is higher among those with more education since DVULI.* Not surprisingly, ministry position affects the importance and opportunities for engaging with leaders outside one's ministry.

### *Webs of Youth Ministry*

Empowerment includes bringing leadership orientations important for youth ministry to the local community, and engaging with other youth ministry organizations in the community.

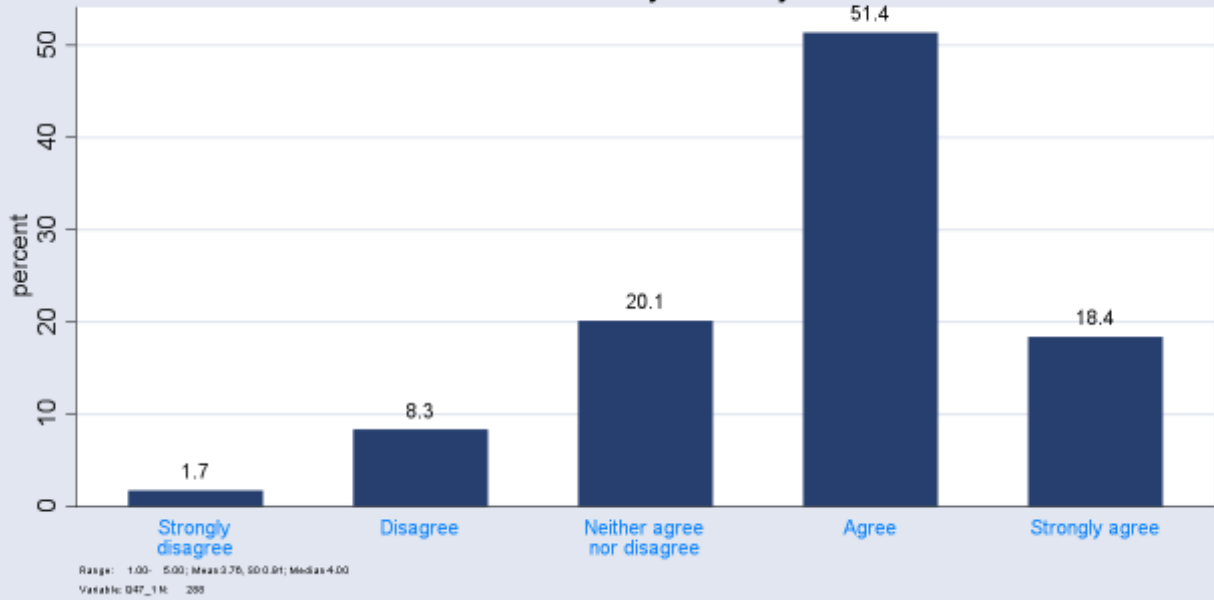
About 18 percent of alumni strongly agree that they have identified people in the neighborhood or local community who are potential resources for their ministry. Another 51 percent agree that they have identified these individuals.

The identification of people in the neighborhood or community who are ministry resources is related to race. African Americans are more likely to accomplish this, as are "other" races and ethnicities. Education since DVULI is also positively associated with identifying local persons for ministry. Volunteers are less likely to identify human resources for ministry, while those with more years of professional experience are more likely to identify people who can serve as ministry resources.

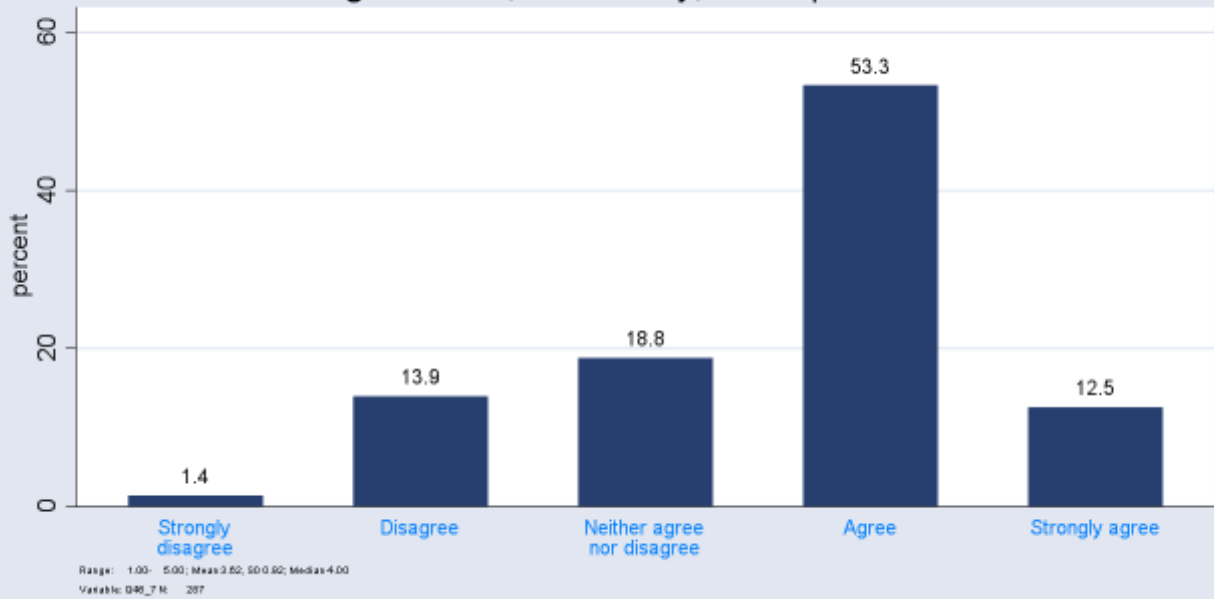
How often do DVULI alumni work with local leaders and interested community members in youth ministry? A relatively high percentage of alumni were able to share effective ministry values and skills with people from the neighborhood or community. About 13 percent strongly agree that they were able to do this, and 53 percent agree. Given obstacles to outside relationships, including time constraints and available ministry partners, this level of neighborhood and community engagement seems strong.

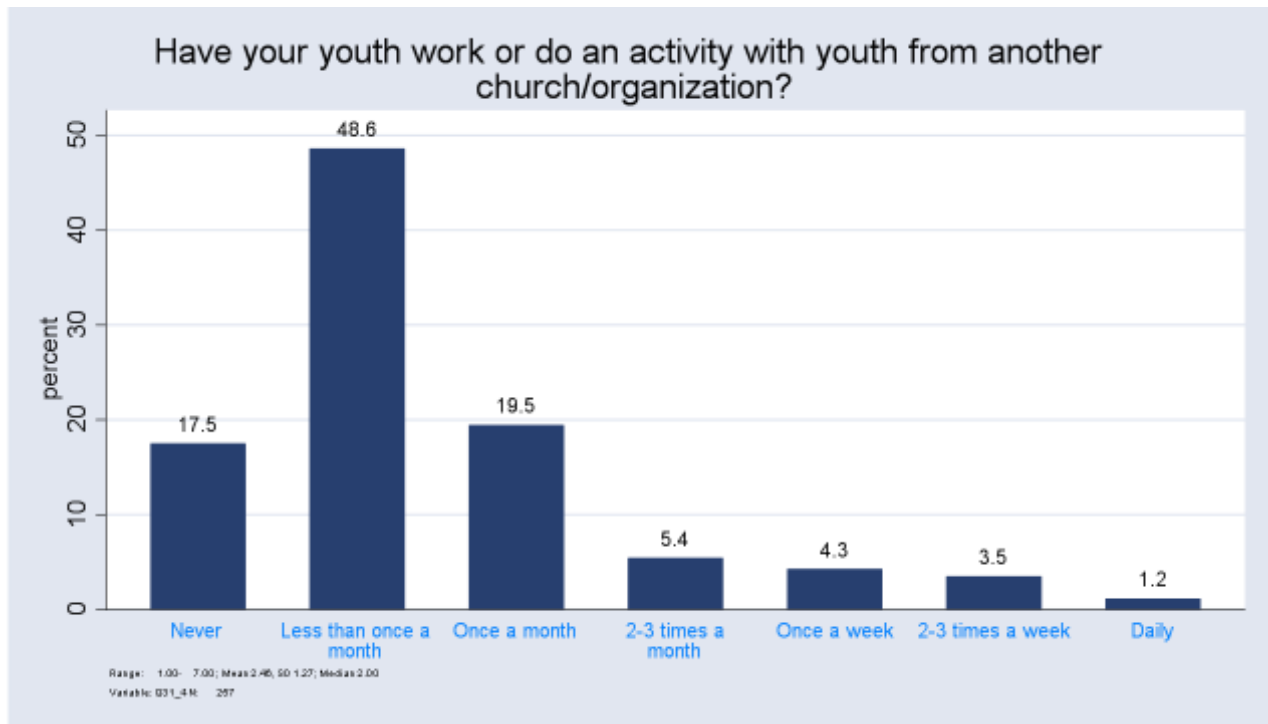
Organizing youth work or activities with other churches or organizations is significant. About 66 percent of alumni work with other organizations on youth activities once a month or less. Yet 20 percent work with other organizations once a month, and 15 percent do this more often. The level of cooperation with other organizations is somewhat lower than other forms of collaboration, though it seems likely that organizational cooperation is more difficult to coordinate. Most youth ministry organizations would need to reach a balance between joint and individual organizational activities.

### Identified neighborhood/community individuals as potential resources to my ministry



### Shared effective ministry values/skills with: People from the neighborhood, community, or the public





The more recent cohorts are less likely to share ministry values and skills with people from the neighborhood or community, though this effect is less certain after accounting for years in professional ministry. Alumni in nonprofits and “other” ministry organizations are higher on this score than those working in churches. Volunteer positions are less likely to share ministry values and skills with neighborhood and community individuals.

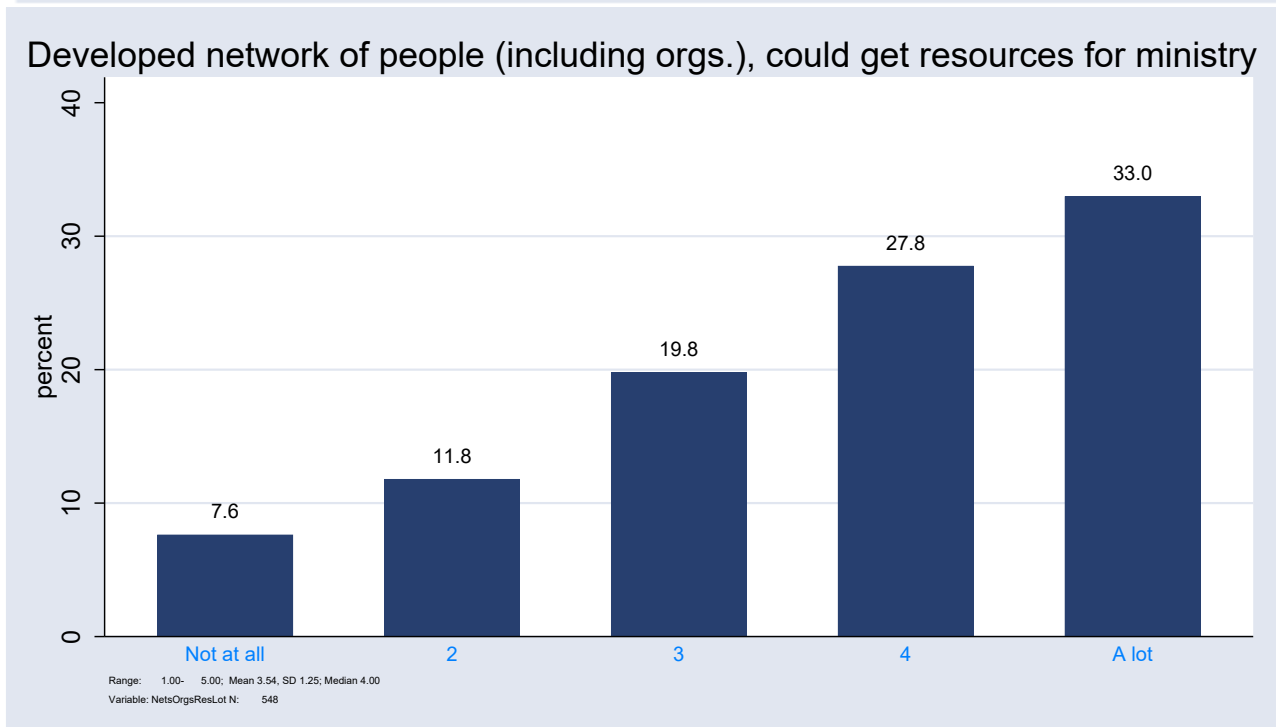
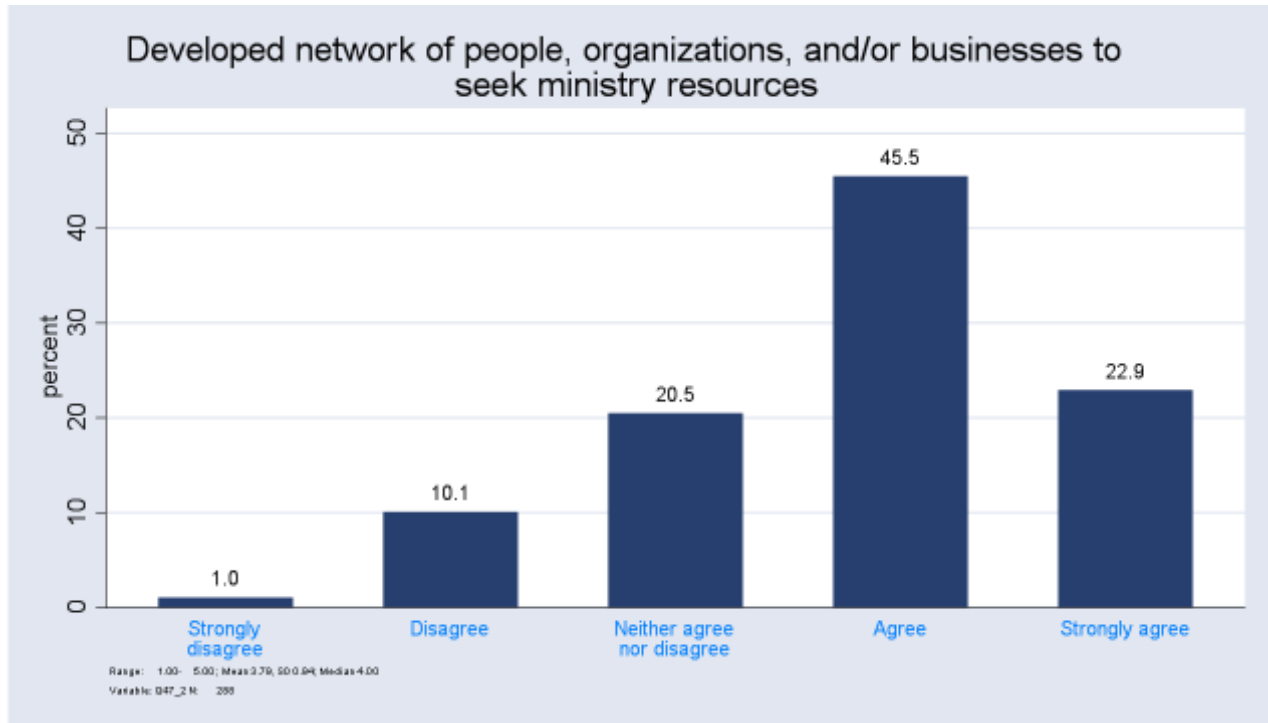
Organizing youth work or activities with other organizations is more likely for alumni working in nonprofits or working in “other” ministry organizations. Alumni with more years of ministry experience are more likely to work with other churches or organizations.

We know that Hispanics and African Americans face very different community contexts, which likely affects their ability to involve the community in youth ministry effectively. The kinds of positions available for Hispanics and African Americans increase the difficulty of forming organizational partnerships. *We do find, however, that African Americans are active in identifying people in their local communities who can serve as resources for youth ministry. In addition, nonprofit youth ministry organizations are particularly oriented to a web of relationships outside their organization, especially in comparison to the church setting of youth ministry.* Likely, this reflects the multi-faceted mission and specific practices of many evangelical churches in relation to community and to outside organizations.

### *Organizational Resources*

In terms of cultivating potential ministry resources, about 23 percent of alumni strongly agree that they have successfully developed a network of people, organizations, and businesses from which they could seek ministry resources. Another 46 percent agree that they have done this. That does leave room for improvement, since 31 percent do not agree that they have cultivated potential ministry resources. When

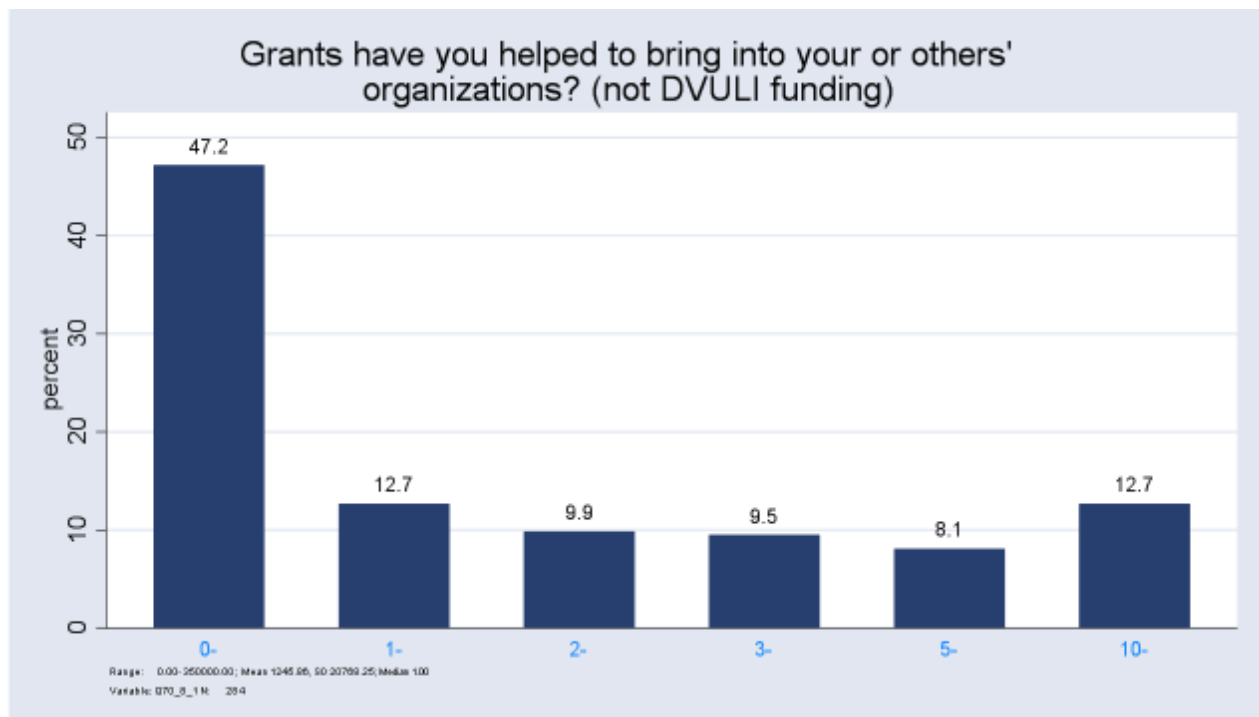
asking about the extent of these efforts, we find that about 33 percent of alumni has done a lot to develop a network of people (including organization and businesses) from which they could receive resources for their ministry. Only about 7 percent has not done this at all. This likely reflects the time intensive nature of building effective resource networks.



Consistent with the time needed to build trust in resource networking, we find that the most recent cohorts are less likely to have developed a network of people, businesses, and organizations from which to seek ministry resources successfully. African Americans have lower outcomes on this measure, but this is due to the types of organizations in which they work. Education since DVULI leads to stronger resource networks. Much higher levels of resource networking are found among alumni working in nonprofit and “other” ministry organizations compared to churches. In part this may reflect the work of congregational giving, which may reduce the extent of “external” fund-raising. Executive directors and senior pastors, not surprisingly, are more likely to do this; the other ministry positions tend to be lower, especially program directors and associate/youth pastors. The lower scores for “other” ministry positions is due to the likelihood that these positions are not paid, which is negatively associated with networking to seek ministry resources.

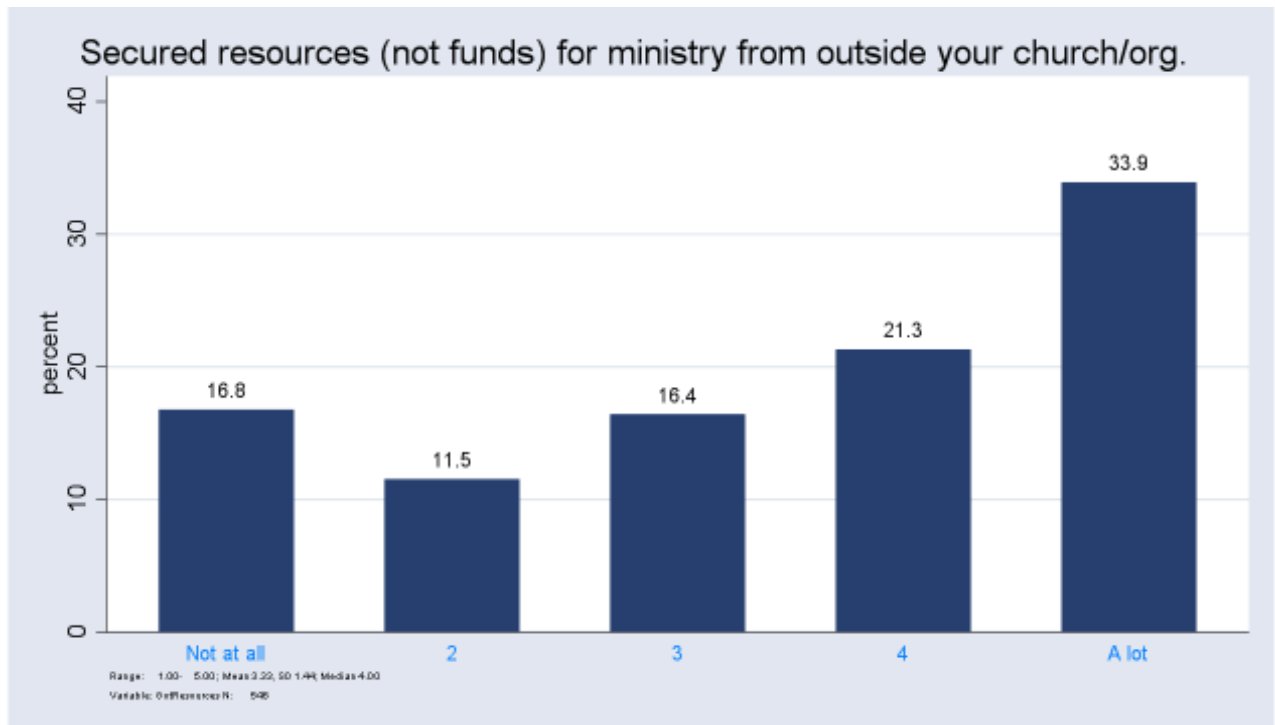
Most of these findings are confirmed when using the measure of whether alumni developed a network of people (including organization and businesses) from which they could receive resources for their ministry. The strongest findings include: alumni in nonprofits and “other” ministry organizations are much more likely to do this than alumni in churches, and executive directors and senior pastors are much more active than those in other ministry positions. Older respondents and volunteers are less likely, while those with greater experience in youth ministry are more likely to have cultivated this kind of resource network.

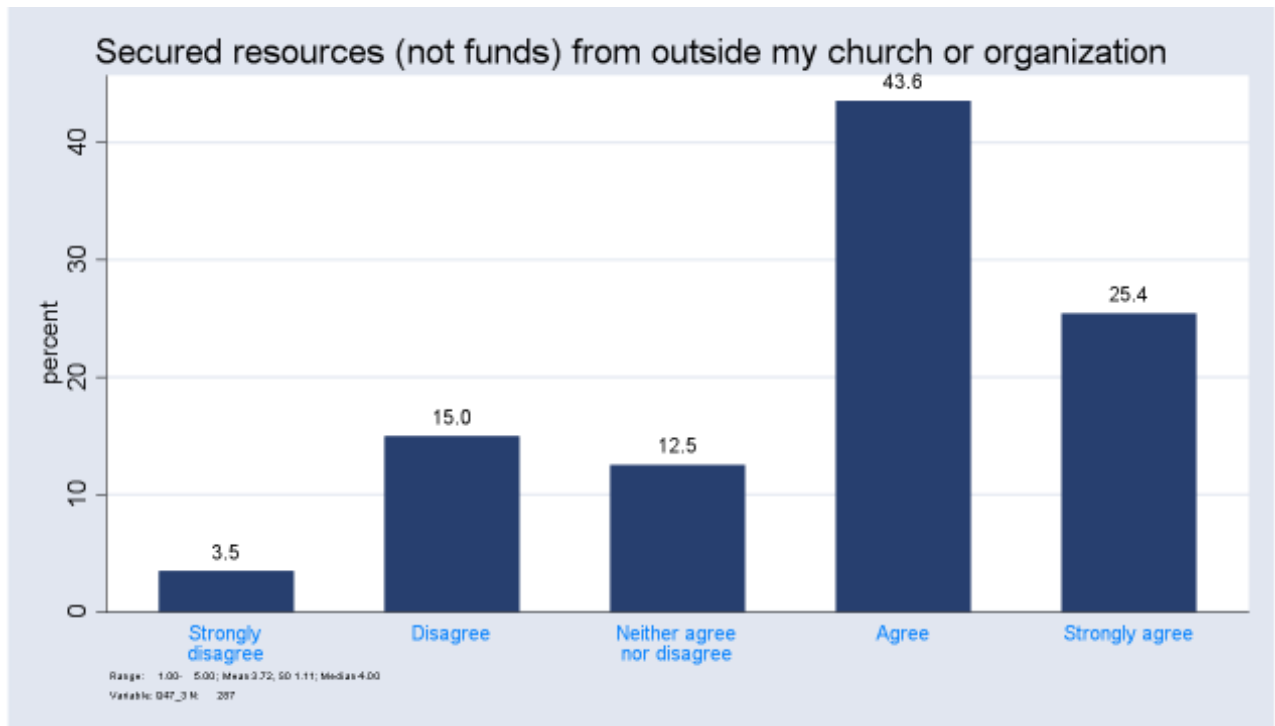
Alumni have grown ministry resources through grant-funding. The survey asked alumni how many, “grants have you helped to bring into your or others' organizations? Do not include DVULI funding.” About 53 percent of alumni has worked to get at least one grant—a number that seems very high. About 21 percent has helped to secure 5 or more grants. While we do not have directly comparable numbers from outside DVULI, this level of grant activity is not only very impressive but is likely boosted through the kinds of skills and networks fostered through DVULI training.



Grant-getting is lower among more recent cohorts, which could reflect to some extent a more difficult environment for grant funding. Alumni in nonprofits compared to churches are more involved in securing grants. Youth ministry in nonprofits likely depends more heavily on obtaining grants. Executive directors and senior pastors are more involved in getting grants. Those in unpaid positions secure fewer grants.

Many alumni are actively involved in securing non-financial involvement and commitments from other organizations. For example, about 54 percent have done a great deal to secure resources for their ministry outside their church or organization. How successful are alumni in securing non-financial resources from outside of their church or ministry organization? About 25 percent strongly agree that they have been able secure non-financial, outside resources successfully, and another 44 percent agree.





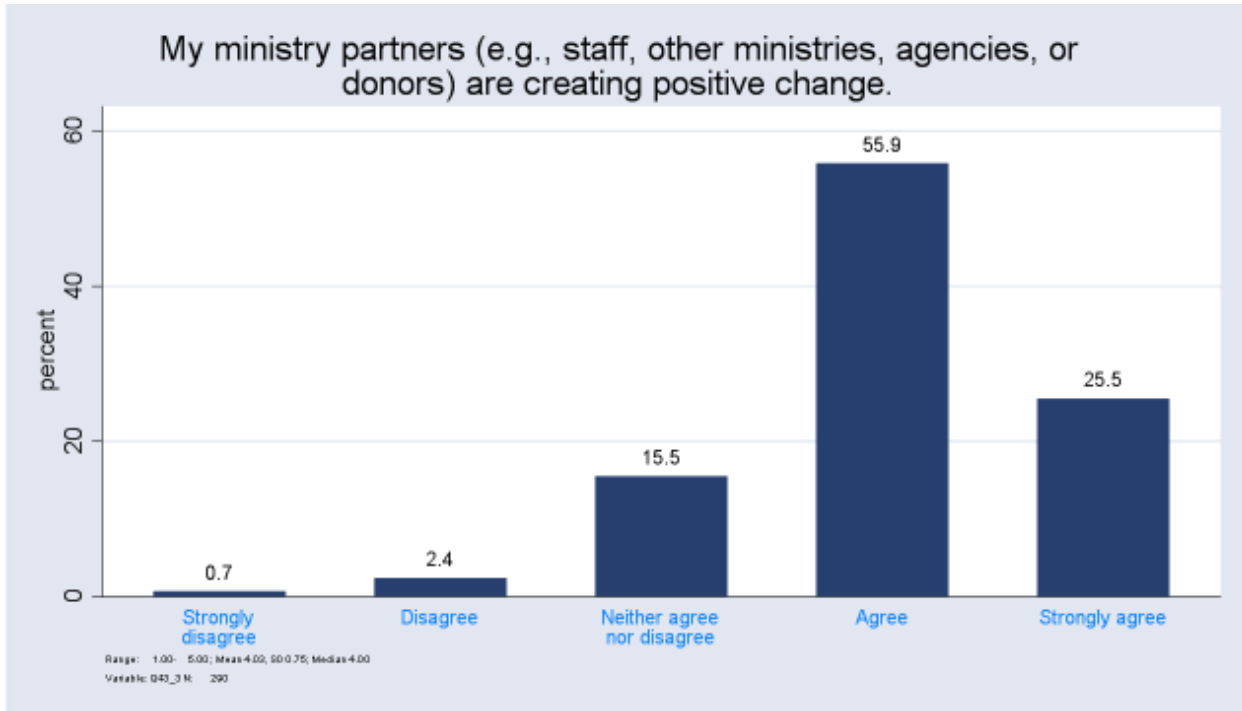
The earliest cohorts were less likely to secure nonfinancial resources from outside of their church or organization. Interestingly, we do not find differences between Hispanics and whites until we account for the differing organizations and positions of the two groups. Then it is clear that Hispanics are more successful in securing nonfinancial resources from outside of their organization. “Other” races are less likely to secure outside resources, though this disappears when accounting for the type of organizations they work in. African Americans are similar to “other” races on this outcome. One finding is very clear: the more educated alumni are much more likely to secure nonfinancial resources from outside their organization. Alumni working in nonprofits and “other” ministry organizations are much more likely to secure outside resources. Program coordinators and youth leaders, and especially those in “other” ministry positions, are not likely to secure nonfinancial resources from the outside. Not surprisingly, alumni working as volunteers are far less likely to secure nonfinancial resources. Securing outside resources is positively related to years in professional youth ministry.

*We find that educational levels interact with DVULI training to increase the ability of alumni to develop networks of support outside their organization. While Hispanics operate in a context in which nonfinancial commitments from outside organizations are strong, African Americans and “other” races tend to be lower mainly because of the ministry positions they occupy. Interestingly, alumni in nonprofits are very likely to cultivate resource networks outside their organization. Senior leaders and experienced leaders are also more active in securing outside resources.*

#### *Effect on Alumni Ministries*

Overall, outside relationships have a positive effect on the ministries of alumni. About 26 percent strongly agree that ministry partners have positively affected change in their ministry, and another 56 percent

agree. A small but perhaps significant 13 percent say the positive role of ministry partners is very low or close to very low.



Older alumni are more likely to report that ministry partners have positive effects on ministry change. Less confidence in partners is found among African Americans and “other” races, but these effects are accounted for by differences in types of organizations. Higher education is positively related to positive effects of partners, but this is due to the kinds of organizations and positions of the more educated. Alumni who work at nonprofits have strong positive views of partners’ effect on change. The effect of partners on change is more negatively viewed by volunteers.

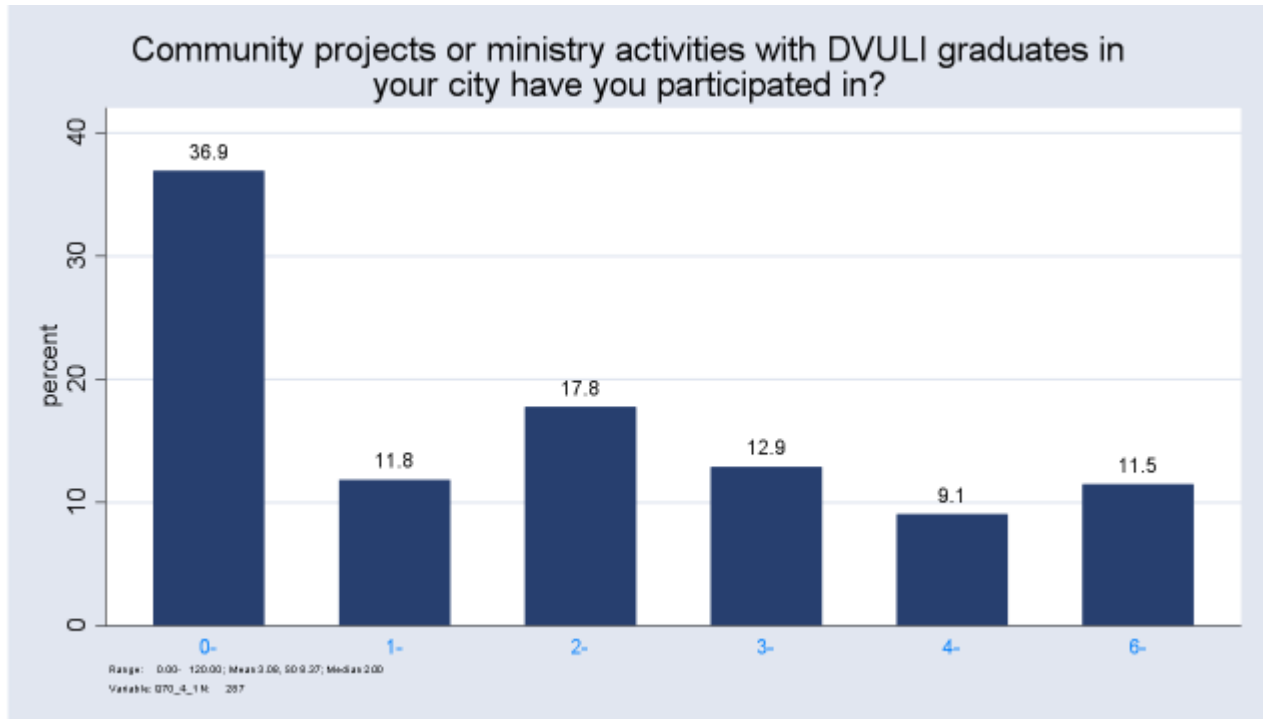
*We again find evidence that African Americans face difficult contexts in which to pursue successful youth ministry partnerships. Alumni working in nonprofit organizations are strongly oriented to outside organizational and community resources for youth ministry, perhaps because of the particular needs and mission of nonprofit youth ministry organizations.*

### Community Engagement

We find that alumni are strongly oriented to their local communities, which is a central aspect of the kind of servant leadership that includes accounting for the broader ecology of organizational ministries.

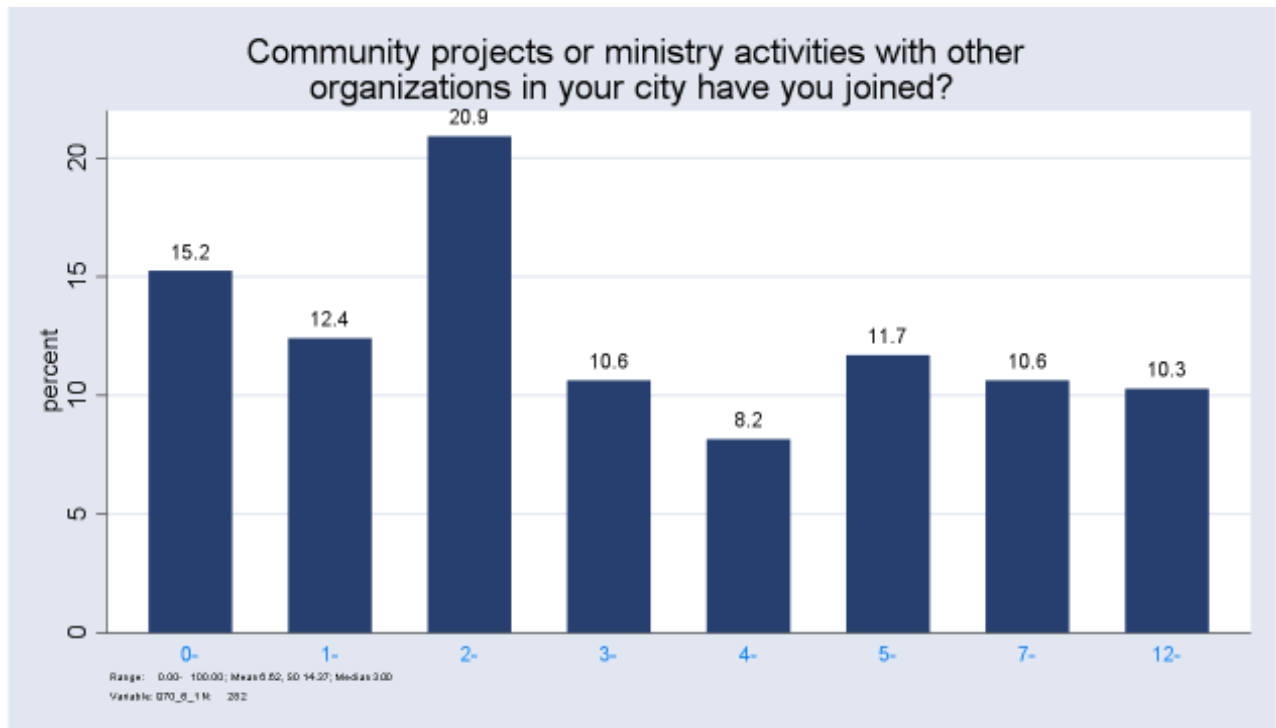
Most alumni are involved in community projects or ministry activities with fellow DVULI graduates in their city. About 63 percent of alumni is involved in community projects or ministry activities with DVULI graduates, and 34 percent participated in three or more of these projects.





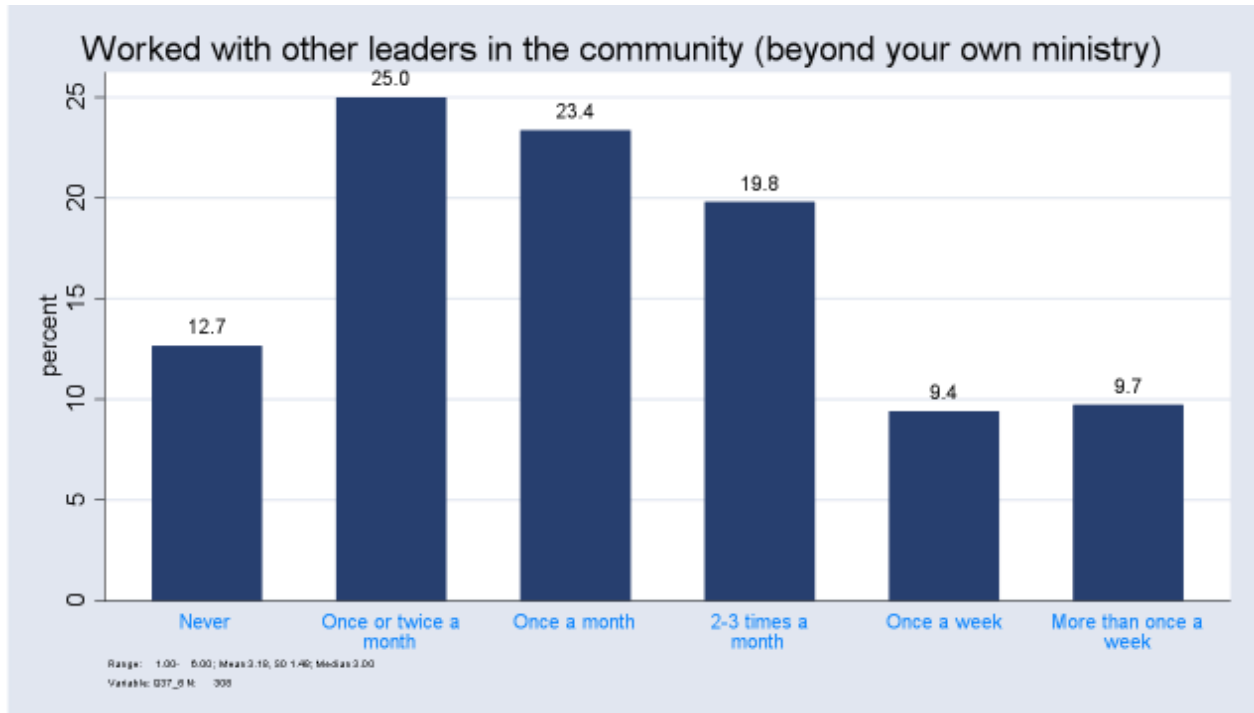
Participation is fairly well-distributed across alumni, though we find some evidence that more recent cohorts are involved in slightly fewer joint community projects and ministry activities. Those who obtained more education since DVULI are more involved in these cooperative projects. Those in “other” organizations are involved in slightly more projects, while those in “other” ministry positions participate in somewhat fewer projects. If we include 2006 data, we find a negative relationship to community projects among more educated alumni and among those in unpaid positions. Note that these negative relationships do not persist in more recent years.

When asked how many “community projects or ministry activities with other organizations in your city have you joined?” about 85 percent of alumni mention at least one. And 33 percent are involved in five or more organizational partnerships to support community projects or ministry activities.



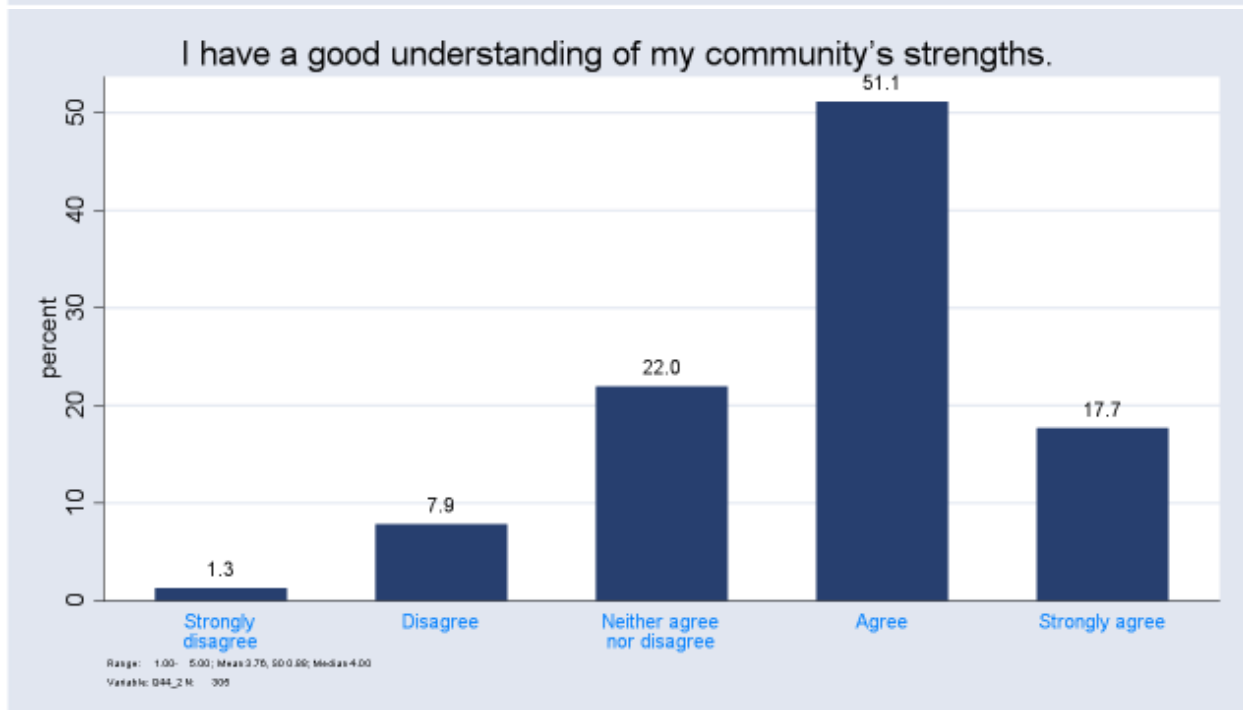
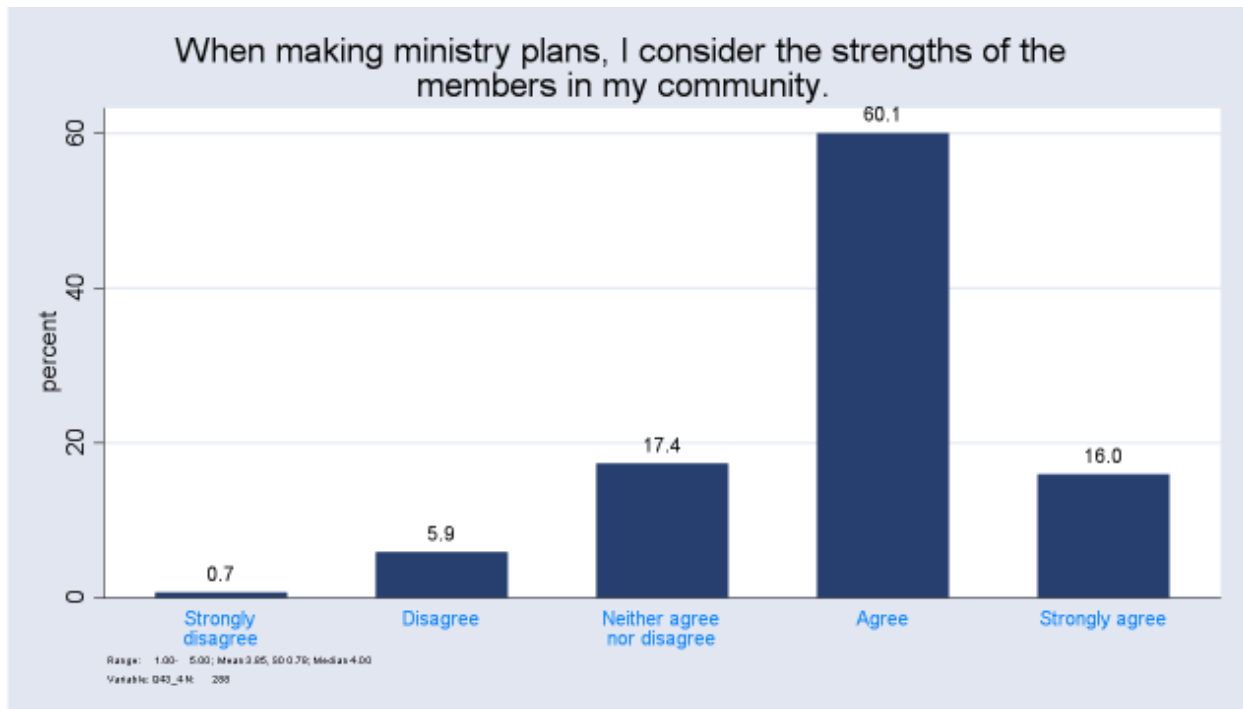
The number of these organizational partnerships for community engagement is slightly less among recent DVULI cohorts. Women report fewer partnerships, but this is due to the lower likelihood that women hold senior ministry positions. Alumni working in nonprofit and “other” organizations report higher numbers of community engagement partnerships. Not surprisingly, executive directors and senior pastors are involved in more organizational partnerships, while those in unpaid positions are involved in less. There are three interesting differences when included the full sample, 2006 and 2019. Here, blacks and Hispanics report more community engagement partnerships, while older respondents report fewer.

Working with community leaders is somewhat less common than working with other youth ministry leaders in the area. About 19 percent work with community leaders once a week or more, and 43 percent do this once a month or more (but not as often as once a week). Still, this represents a strong commitment to reaching out to community leaders.



Women are less likely than men to work closely with community leaders, though this is due to gender differences in organizations and positions. Similarly, African Americans and “other” races are negatively related to this outcome, but this effect disappears when controlling for organization type. Alumni working in nonprofits are more connected to community leaders, as are those in “other” ministry organizations. Executive directors and senior pastors are much higher than all other ministry positions in working with community leaders. Volunteers are less likely to do so. But years of professional ministry leads to a greater likelihood of working with community leaders.

A central DVULI emphasis, Asset Mapping, includes a systematic approach to identifying people and resources in the local neighborhood and community. As a result, we find that most alumni feel they have a good understanding of the strengths of their community. About 18 percent strongly agree that they understand their community, and another 51 percent agree. About the same percentages agree that they have a good understanding of community needs. About 19 percent strongly agree with this view, and another 56 percent agree. Perhaps the somewhat smaller percentage in the “strongly agree” category reflects some uncertainty, but that seems reasonable given the complexities involved.

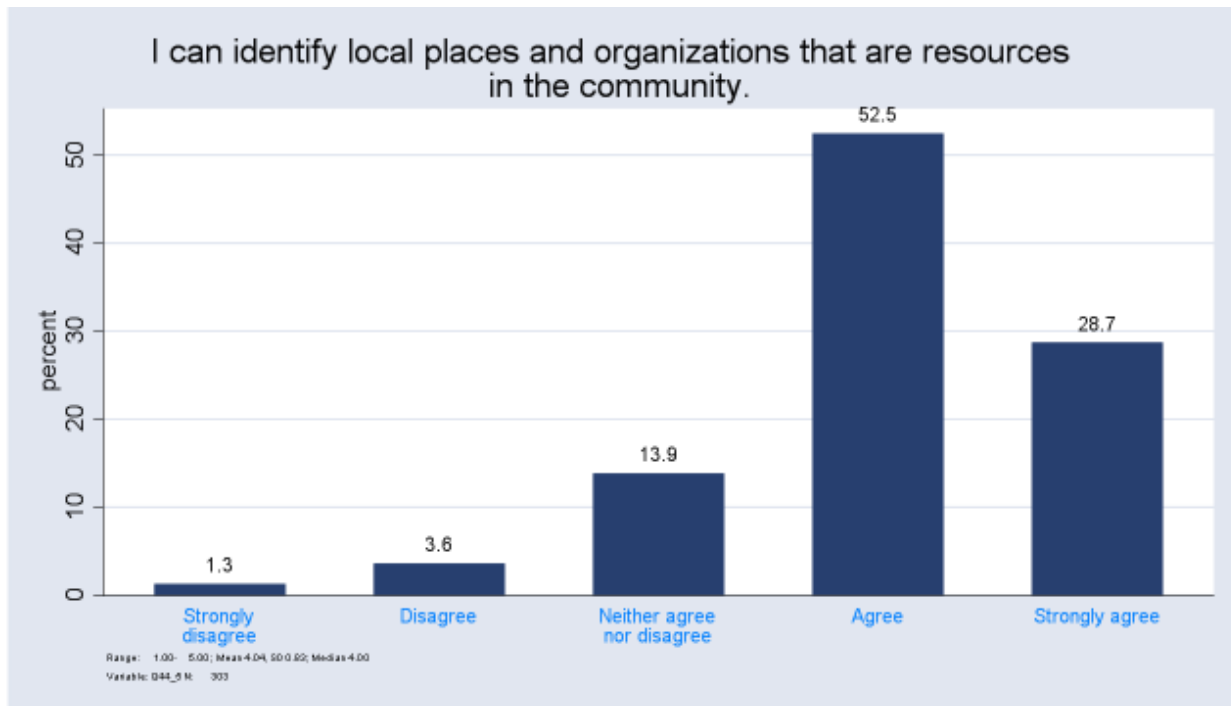


Understanding community strengths is lower in the middle cohorts. Women are somewhat lower than men, though this effect is not consistent. Hispanics are more likely to understand community strengths than whites. More educated alumni are higher on this outcome as well. Alumni working in schools are more likely to say they understand community strengths, and those in nonprofit organizations are much more likely to understand their community. Interestingly, program coordinators and youth leaders, after including all controls, are more likely to understand community strengths. Perhaps this reflects the close

relation between the “frontline” youth leaders and their community. Again, volunteers are negatively, and professional ministry years are positively, related to understanding community strengths.

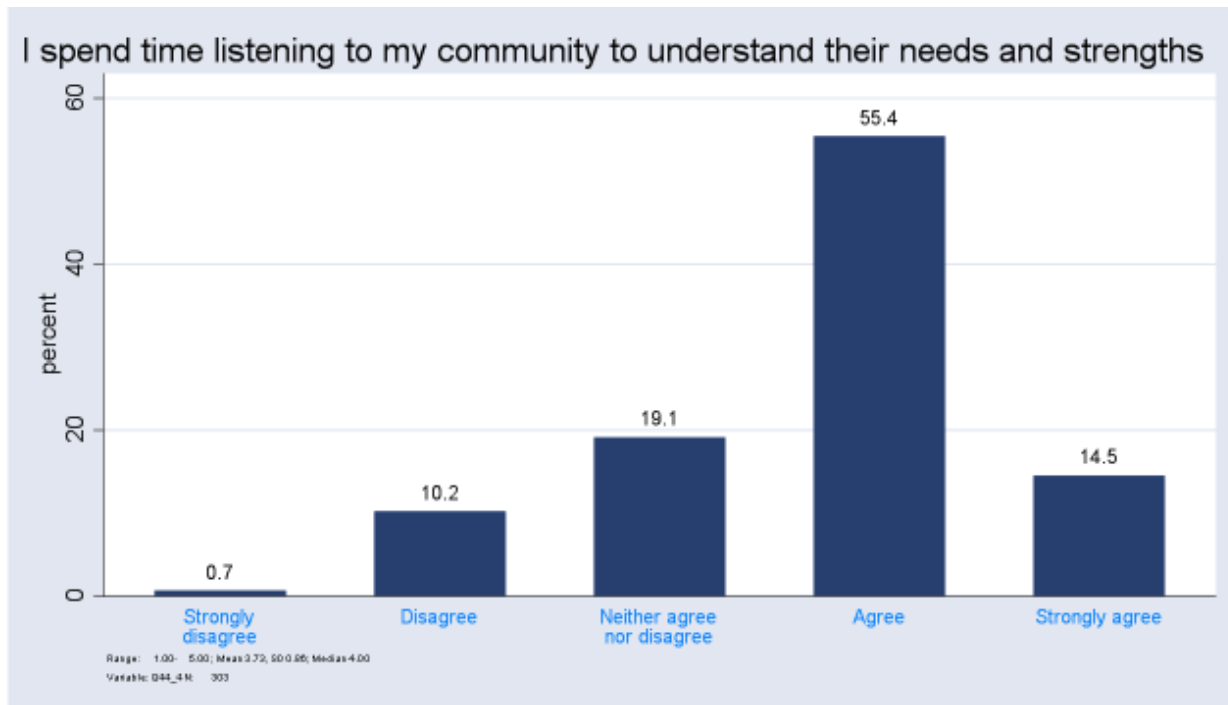
Understanding community *needs* is associated with higher educational attainment. Working at a school appears to increase alumni understandings of community needs, and working at a nonprofit is strongly associated with understanding community needs. Those in “other” ministry positions and unpaid ministers are less likely to report understanding community needs. More experience in professional ministry is positively related to understanding community needs.

Many alumni can identify local places and organizations in the community that are resources for their ministry. About 29 percent of alumni strongly agree that they can do this, and another 54 percent agree (but not strongly).



More recent cohorts, along with the middle cohorts, are less likely to identify local places and organizations in their community as ministry resources. Women are also less likely, but this is due to organization and position differences. Alumni working in nonprofit organizations are very likely to identify ministry resources in the community. Program coordinators and youth leaders, as well as “other” ministry positions, are less likely to do this.

A slightly lower percentage report that they spend time listening to their community in order to understand their needs and strengths. About 15 percent strongly agree that they do this, and another 55 percent agree. Again, the overall percent percentage reporting that they do listen to the community (70 percent) is impressive.



Listening to the community is the forte of “other” races and ethnicities. Hispanics are positive on this measure, but not significant. Those working in nonprofit organizations compared to churches are strongly related to listening to the community. Volunteers are lower on listening to their community to understand its needs and strengths.

*What is most striking in community engagement is the high levels reported by alumni who do not work in churches, especially those in nonprofit organizations and, on some dimensions, including those working in schools and “other” ministry organizations. Second, we see differences by position, such that executives and senior leaders work closely with community leaders, while program coordinators and youth leaders, perhaps more strongly embedded in the community in which they minister, are well-tuned to community strengths. Third, consistent with other findings, volunteers have a more difficult time with community engagement, while more experienced youth ministers are active in the community. Finally, Hispanics again appear to be more engaged in local communities than whites, while African Americans are in ministry positions and organizations, especially churches, that make this more difficult.*

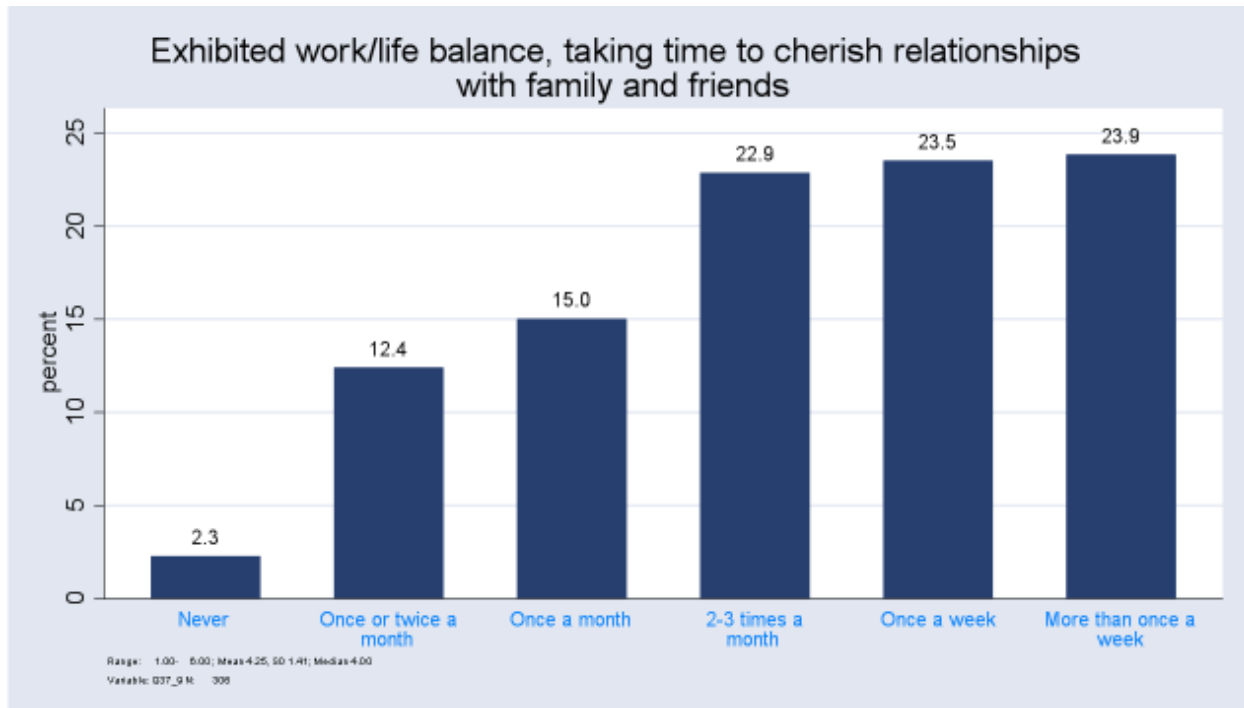
### Work/Life Balance

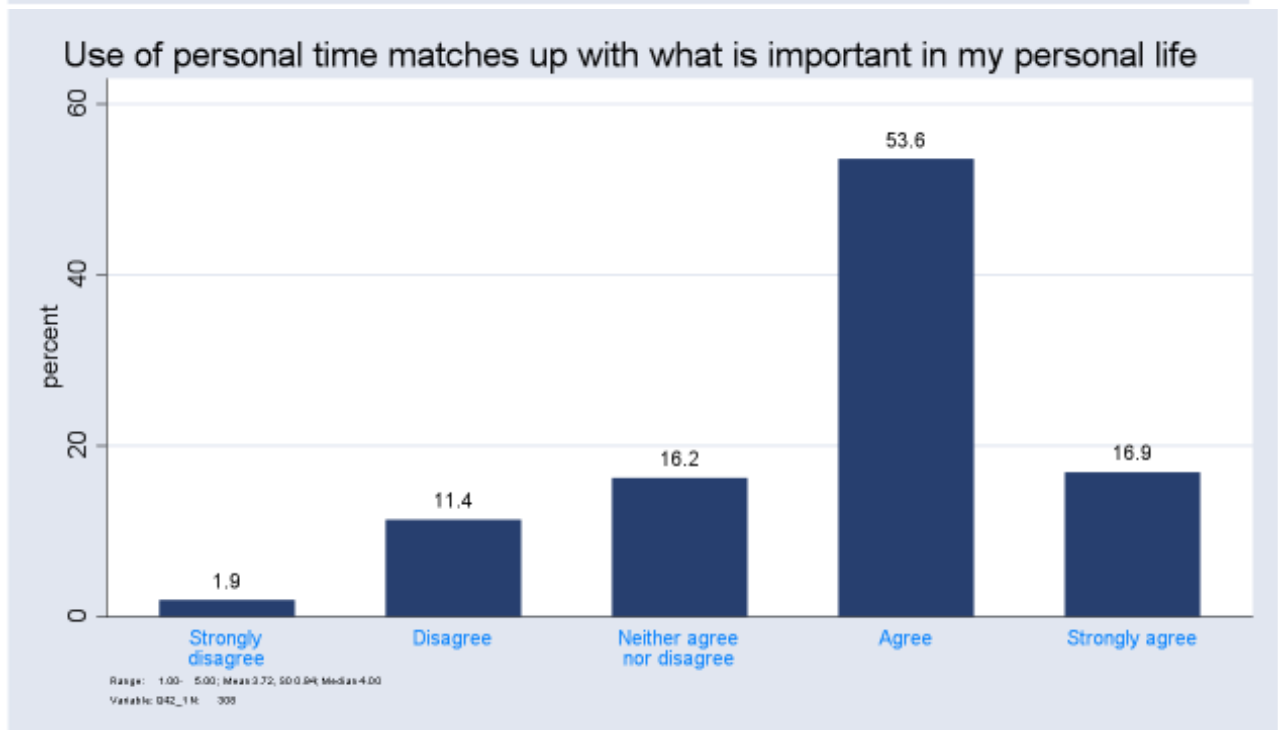
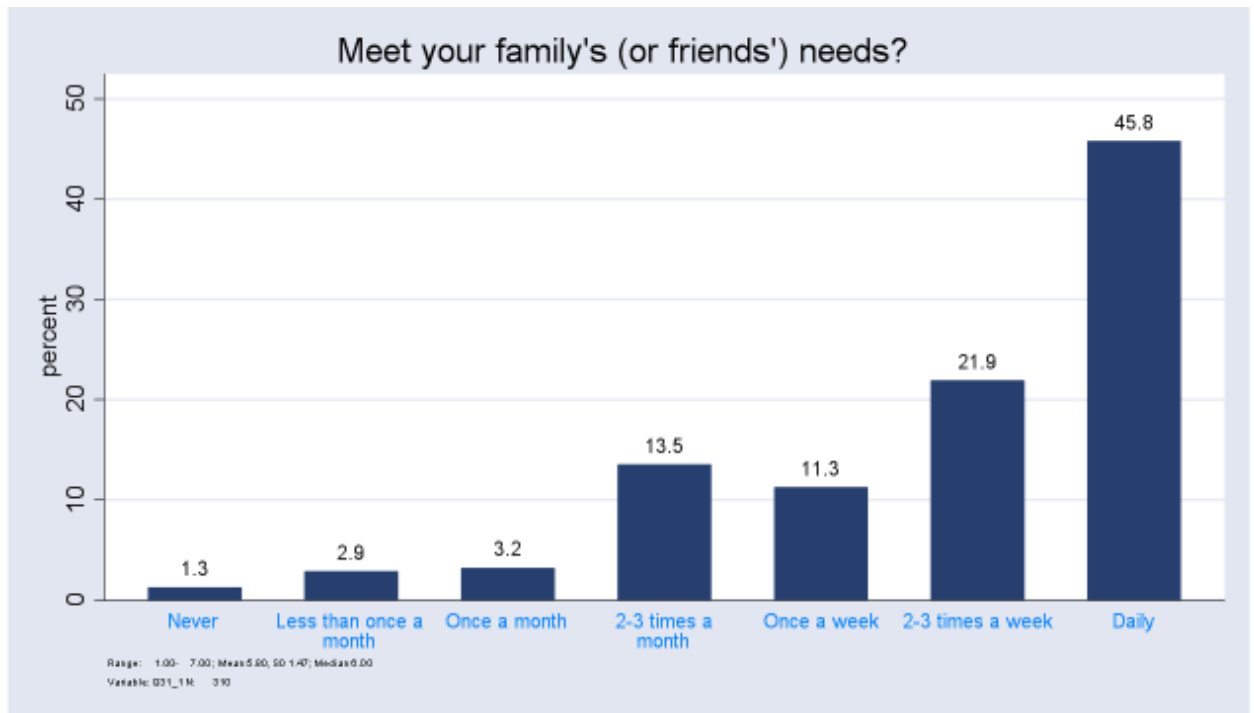
Servant leadership does not neglect the relationship between home and work life. Growing out of the servant leadership model, DVULI training takes a holistic approach to the relation of ministry and personal and family life. How do alumni view the balance between work and the rest of their lives?

About 48 percent of alumni are confident that they have been able to maintain an appropriate work/life balance, taking time to cherish relationships with family and friends once a week or more. Another 23 percent say they do this at least 2 to 3 times a month.

Alumni report strong involvement in their family life. About 46 percent say they meet the needs of family or friends daily, and another 22 percent meet these needs 2-3 times a week.

About 17 percent of alumni strongly agree that their use of personal time matches up with what is important in their personal life. Another 54 percent agree with this statement, leaving only 19 percent that are concerned about not achieving this goal. Still, the percent strongly agreeing is somewhat lower on this measure compared to other measures. The pressures of youth ministry in disadvantaged contexts likely generates challenges for balancing personal and work life. Despite this, we find some evidence that Hispanics and African Americans are highly involved in organizational partnerships for ministry or service in their community.





The most recent cohorts are more confident that they can maintain a good work/life balance. Older alumni do better on this score, but this effect seems to be due to the kinds of positions older alumni hold. Hispanics are negative, but this is due to the types of organizations they tend to work for. African Americans are lower than whites on work/life balance. The more educated are better able to balance work and life. Program directors, associate pastors and youth pastors, as well as program coordinators and youth leaders, have a more difficult time balancing work and life than do executive directors and senior pastors.



Perhaps this reflects the more intensive relationships with youth and other community members of program coordinators and youth leaders, which lead to less structured and at times overwhelming demands on leader's time and energy.

Meeting family and friend needs is more difficult for African Americans than whites. Higher levels of education are positively related to meeting family needs. Working in a nonprofit organization or working as a volunteer reduces the ability of alumni to meet the needs of family or friends.

Matching personal time with what is important is higher among Hispanics. Again, a college education is associated with using personal time in important ways. Alumni working in schools and nonprofits have a more difficult time matching personal time with what is important in life.

*Work/life balance is generally stronger for more educated alumni. African Americans in particular experience challenges in balancing work and personal life, which might reflect their more difficult contexts of youth ministry. Hispanics show some positive effects on balance. Interestingly, the organizations that are more strongly linked to local community also make it more difficult for alumni to maintain work/life balance. Those in "lower" level positions, including those who are volunteers, have greater challenges balancing work and personal life.*

### *Ministry Time*

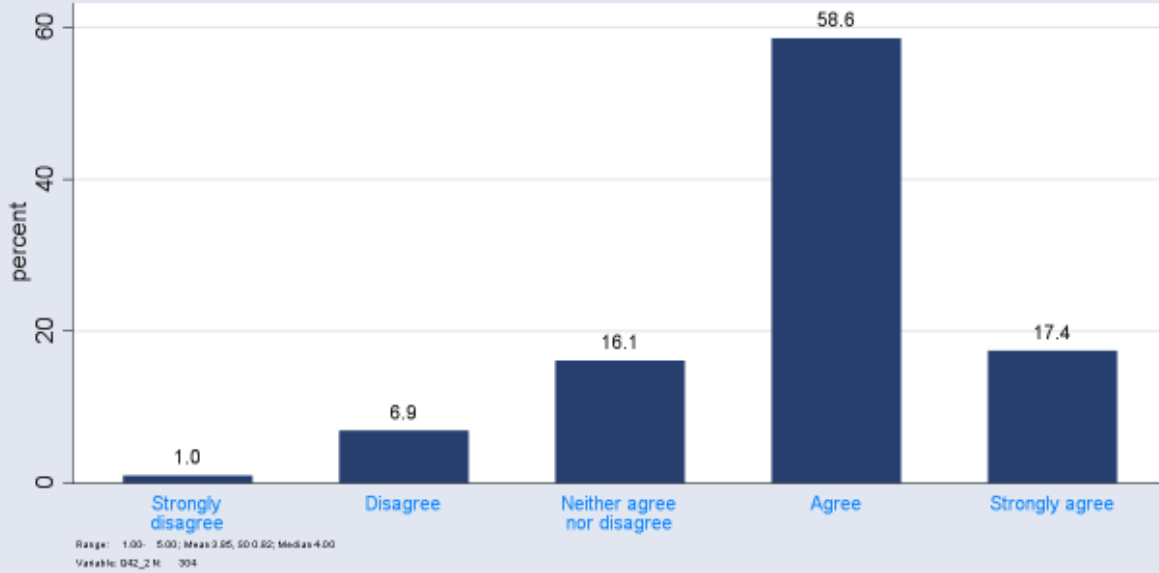
The flipside is the percentage using ministry and professional time in a way that matches what they deem as important in their ministry and professional life. About 17 percent strongly agree with this, and 59 percent agree.

Doing ministry time consistent with ministry values is higher among females than males. Older alumni are also more likely to match ministry time with ministry values. Those working in "other" ministry organizations are more likely to have consistency in use of ministry time, while volunteers have more difficulty matching ministry time with what is important in ministry and professional life.

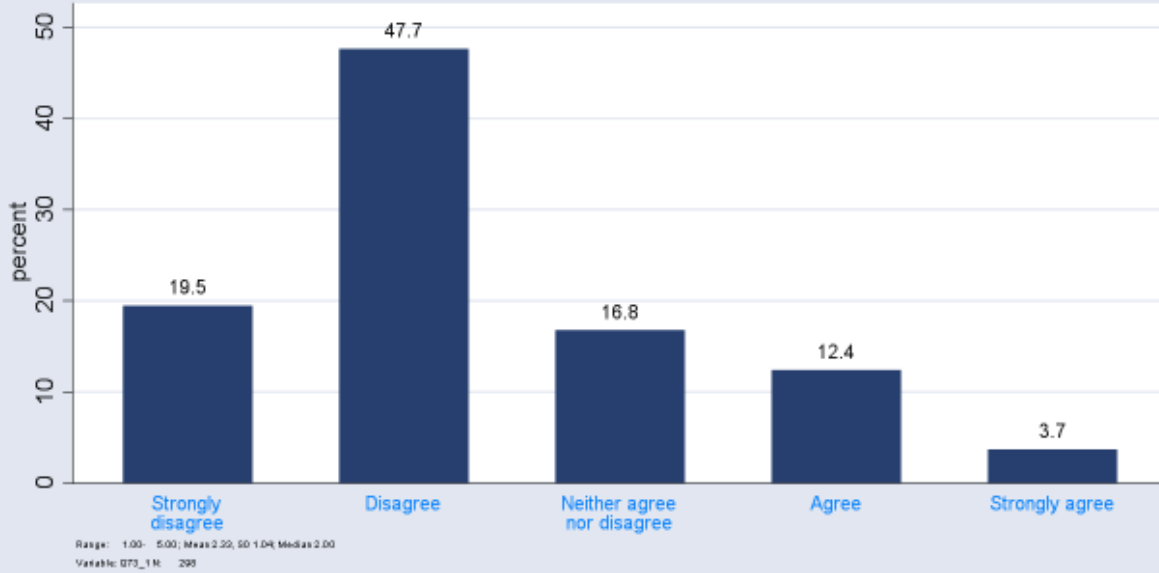
As noted above, challenges when explaining DVULI training to colleagues, friends, and family is relatively low (65 percent say they disagree with the statement). And success in explaining DVULI to family and friends is nearly randomly distributed among alumni. The only characteristic that matters is age, which is positively related to the ability to explain DVULI to colleagues, friends and family.

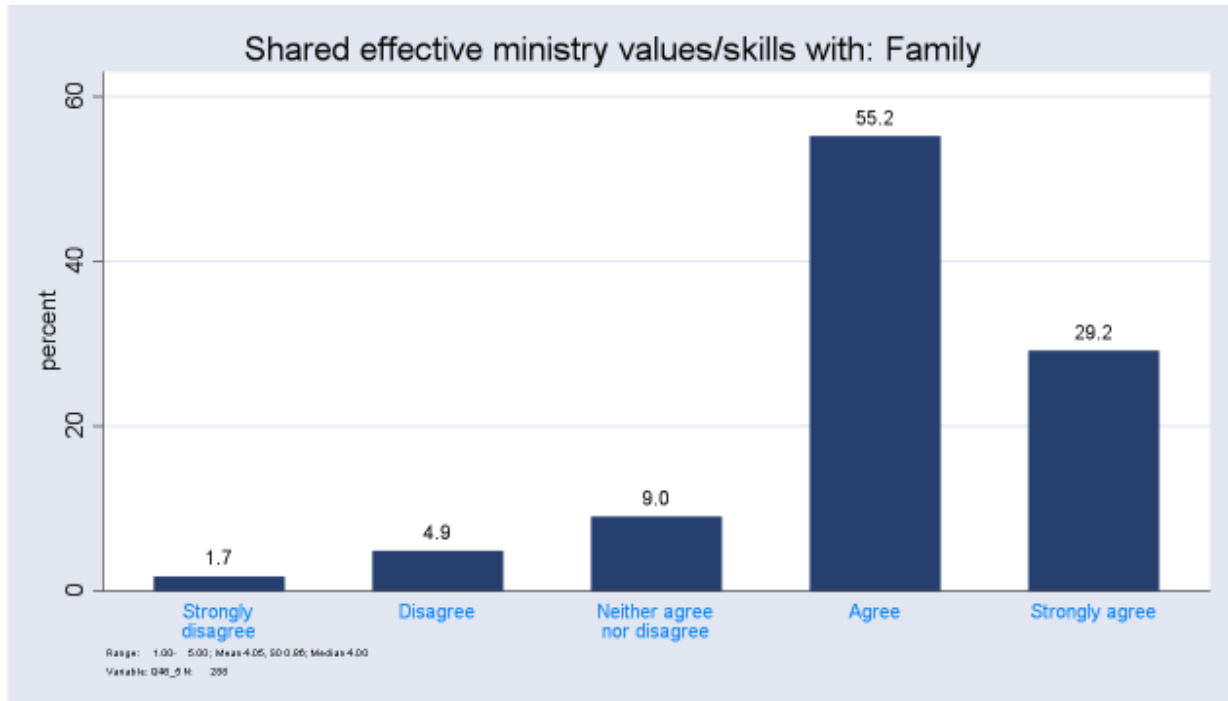
Sharing effective ministry values and skills has a family dimension. About 29 percent of alumni strongly agree that they share effective ministry values with family, and 55 percent agree (but not strongly) that they do this.

Use of ministry and professional time matches what is important in my ministry and professional life



I experience challenges when explaining to colleagues, friends and family what the DVULI training was/is.





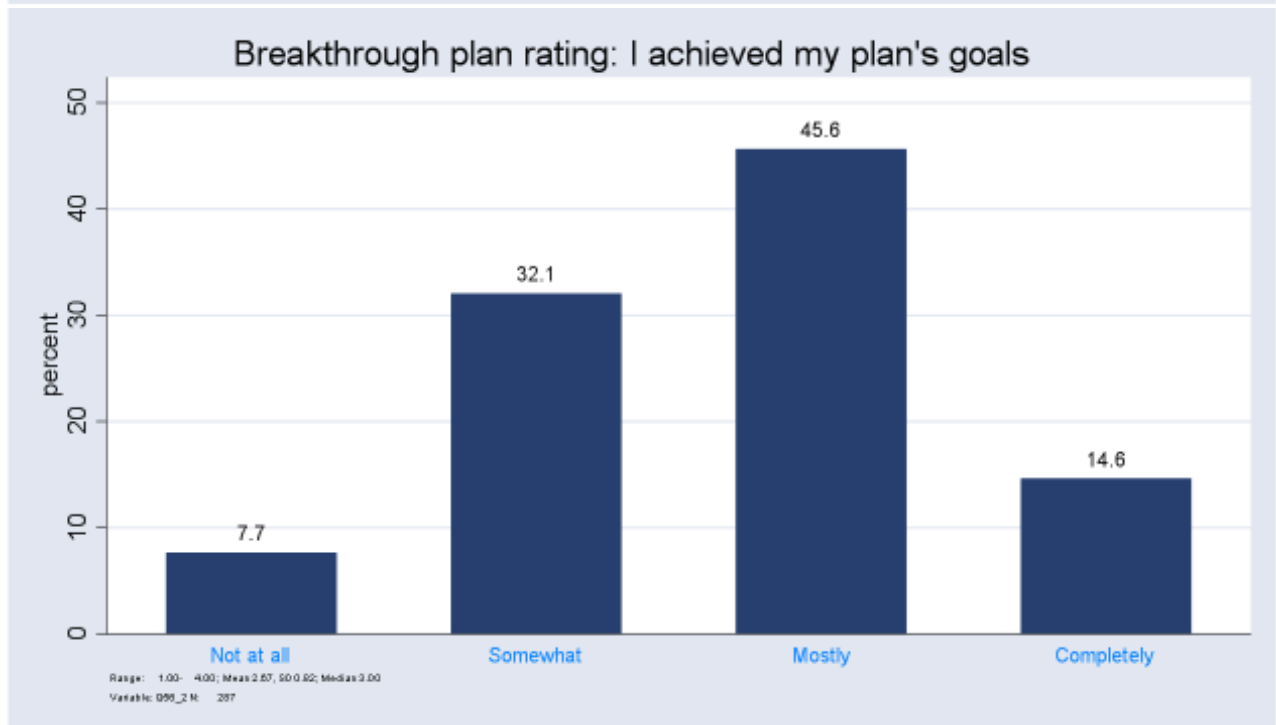
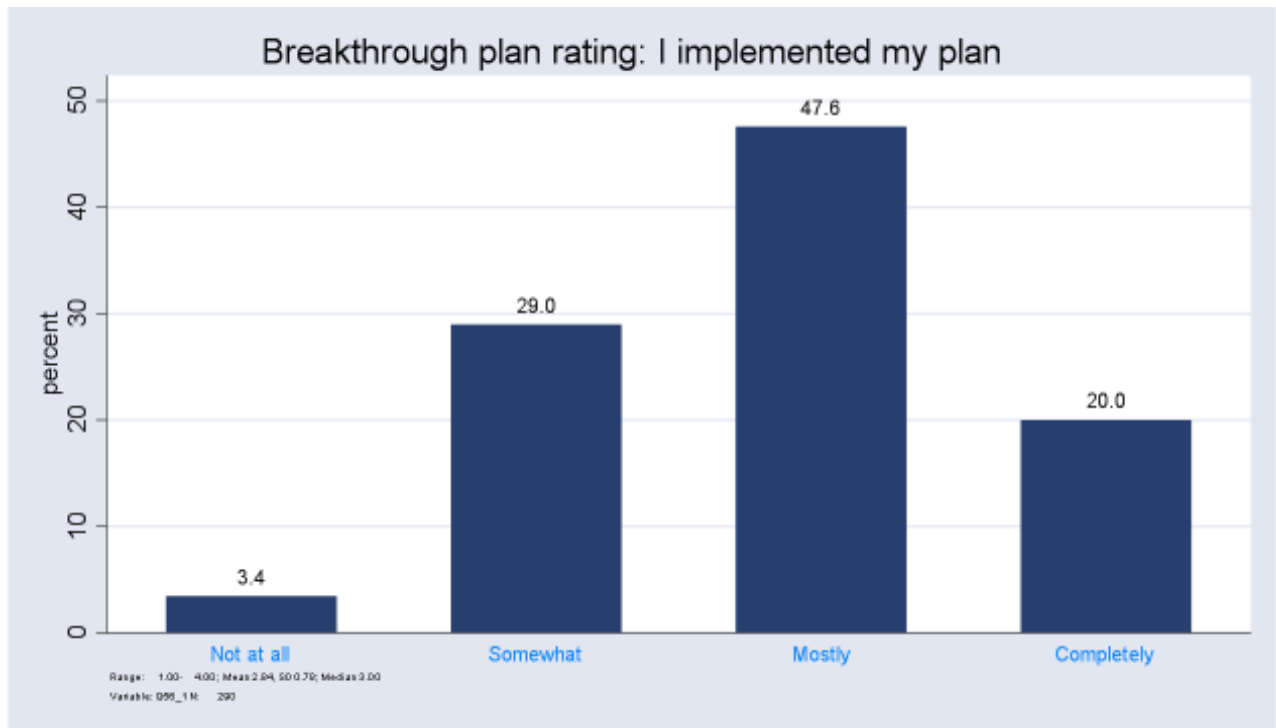
Sharing ministry values and skills with family is similar across alumni, though those who have received additional education since DVULI and those who work in “other” ministry organizations have an easier time sharing DVULI values and skills with family.

*We have some evidence that women as well as older alumni do a better job of bringing life and work together. Education since DVULI contributes positively to the ability of alumni to share ministry values with family.*

### Leadership Outcomes

Where do these leadership orientations and practices lead? How do alumni conceive of their youth ministry successes?

Working up and implementing a Breakthrough Plan appears to be challenging, though many alums have been quite successful with it. About 19 percent completely implemented their Breakthrough Plan, and another 45 percent mostly implemented it. Only 3 percent did not implement their Breakthrough Plan at all. The difficult task is achieving the plan’s goals. About 14 percent completely achieved the Breakthrough Plan’s goals, while 43 percent mostly achieved them. About 7 percent did not achieve the plan’s goals at all.

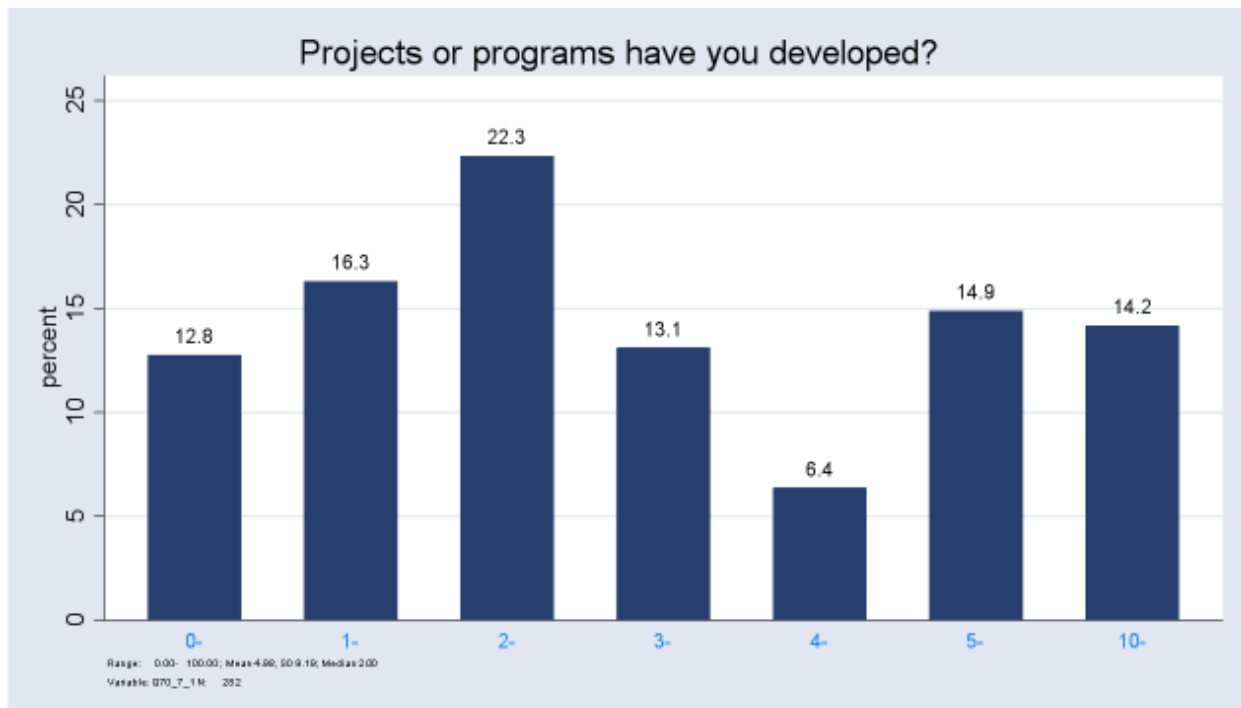


Implementing the Breakthrough Plan is more likely for Hispanics than for whites. And it is less likely for volunteers. Interestingly, no other alumni characteristics matters, which likely reflects the strength of the DVULI program and community for alumni regardless of background.

More recent cohorts are less likely to say that they have achieved the goals of their Breakthrough Plan. (The 2019 survey respondents as a whole are positive on breakthrough achievement, but it is difficult to

interpret this result.) Hispanics are more likely to report that they achieved their plan goals; African Americans are less likely to achieve, but this is not statistically significant; and “other” races and ethnicities are less likely to report achieving their Breakthrough Plan goals. Alumni working in a school are less likely to achieve their plan goals than alumni working in a church. In contrast, those working in “other” ministry organizations are more likely to achieve their Breakthrough Plan.

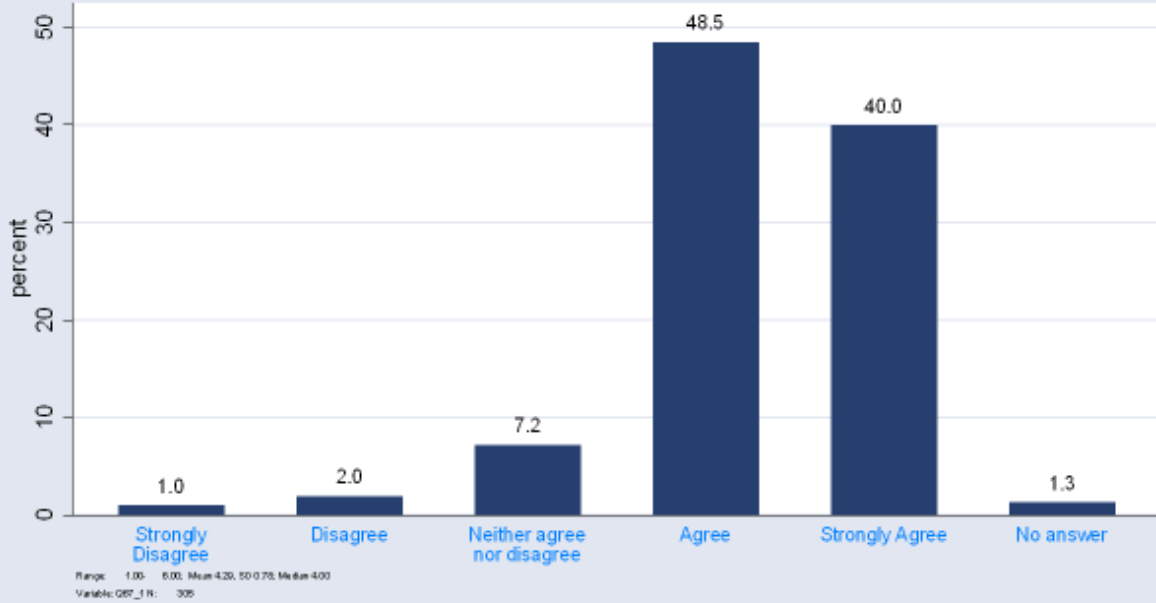
The systematic approach of DVULI to youth ministry seems to support the growth of ministry projects. When asked how many projects or programs they have developed, 48 percent of alumni report three or more projects. Twenty-nine percent points to five or more. Only 13 percent does not mention a project they have developed.



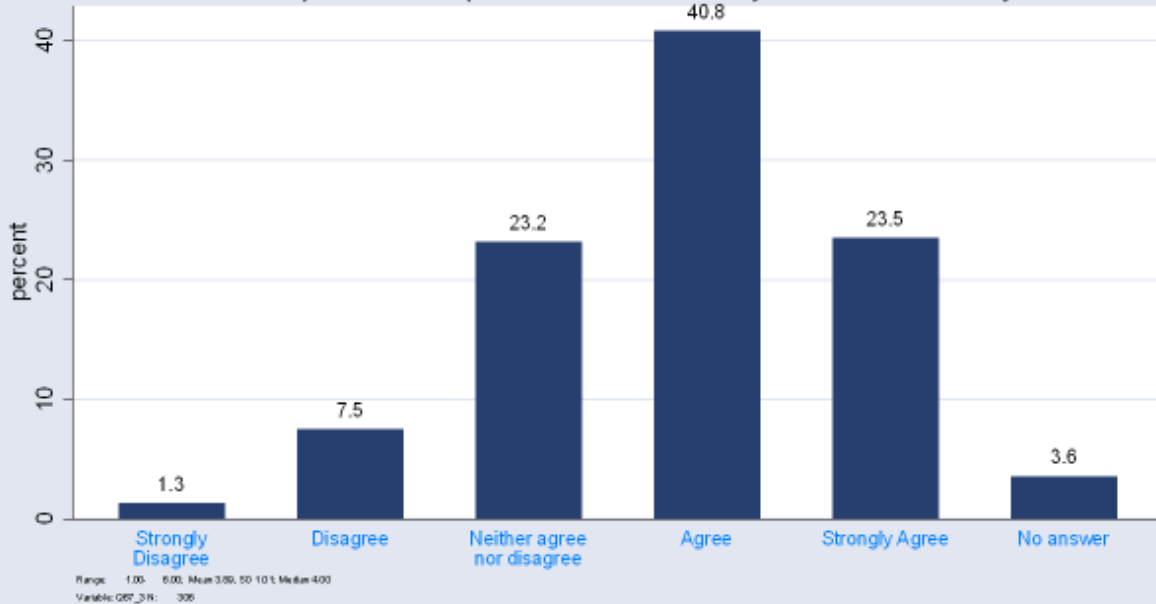
Recent cohorts report fewer projects or programs developed. Those working in nonprofits report more than those working in churches. Not surprisingly, executive directors and senior pastors on the whole develop a higher number of projects or programs, though some of this is due to the higher number of years of experience among senior ministers. Those in unpaid positions report a lower number of projects developed, while years of experience is associated with a greater number of projects.

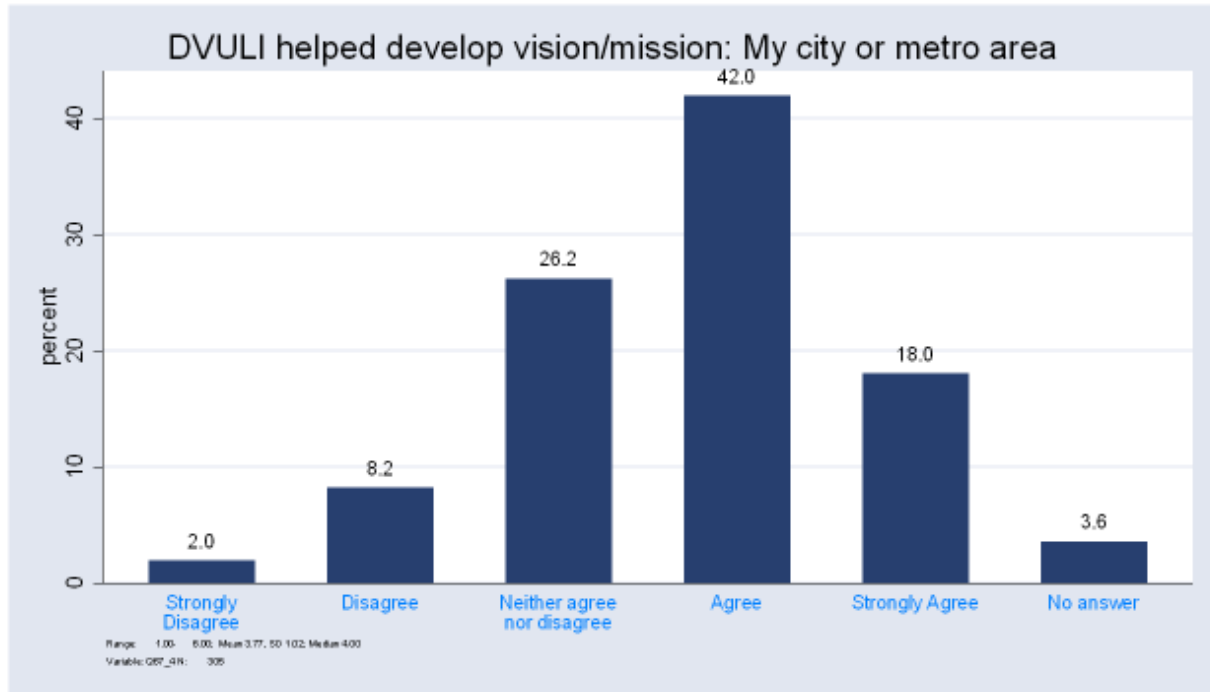
What is the overall assessment of ministry success? The survey asked alumni whether their vision or mission is being accomplished in each of several domains. In terms of personal mission, about 32 percent strongly agree that their personal mission is being accomplished, and another 54 percent agree. In terms of their organization and ministry, about 29 percent strongly agree that their vision and mission is being accomplished, and 55 percent agree. On the question of whether their vision or mission is being accomplished in their local community, a somewhat lower 18 percent strongly agree that it is, and another 43 percent agree. Regarding the city or metro area, a higher hurdle, 13 percent strongly agree and 41 percent agree that their mission and vision is being accomplished in their city or metro area. Overall, these are impressive numbers, reflecting the level of accomplishment and confidence important for maintaining momentum in youth ministry in disadvantaged contexts.

DVULI helped develop vision/mission: My personal mission



DVULI helped develop vision/mission: My local community





Women are more likely to report that they are accomplishing their personal mission and their organizational mission. Older alumni are less likely to be accomplishing their community mission. Hispanics are more likely than whites to accomplish their vision and mission for their community and metro area. African Americans are accomplishing their community mission as well. “Other” races report that they are accomplishing their vision or mission for their organization, community, and metro area. More educated alumni accomplish their personal mission. Alumni working in schools are more likely to say they are accomplishing their mission for the city. Those working for nonprofits accomplish their personal mission to a greater degree than those working in churches. Alumni working in “other” ministry organizations are more likely to accomplish their mission for the metro area. Executive directors and senior pastors are generally higher on mission accomplishment, except for personal mission. Specifically, program directors and associate pastors are less likely to say they accomplish their community and city vision than are senior pastors. Program coordinators, youth leaders, and those in “other” ministry positions are less likely to accomplish their vision for their organization and community, and trend lower on metro area. Volunteers are less likely to accomplish their personal mission and organization mission. Those with more professional ministry years are more likely to be accomplishing their personal mission.

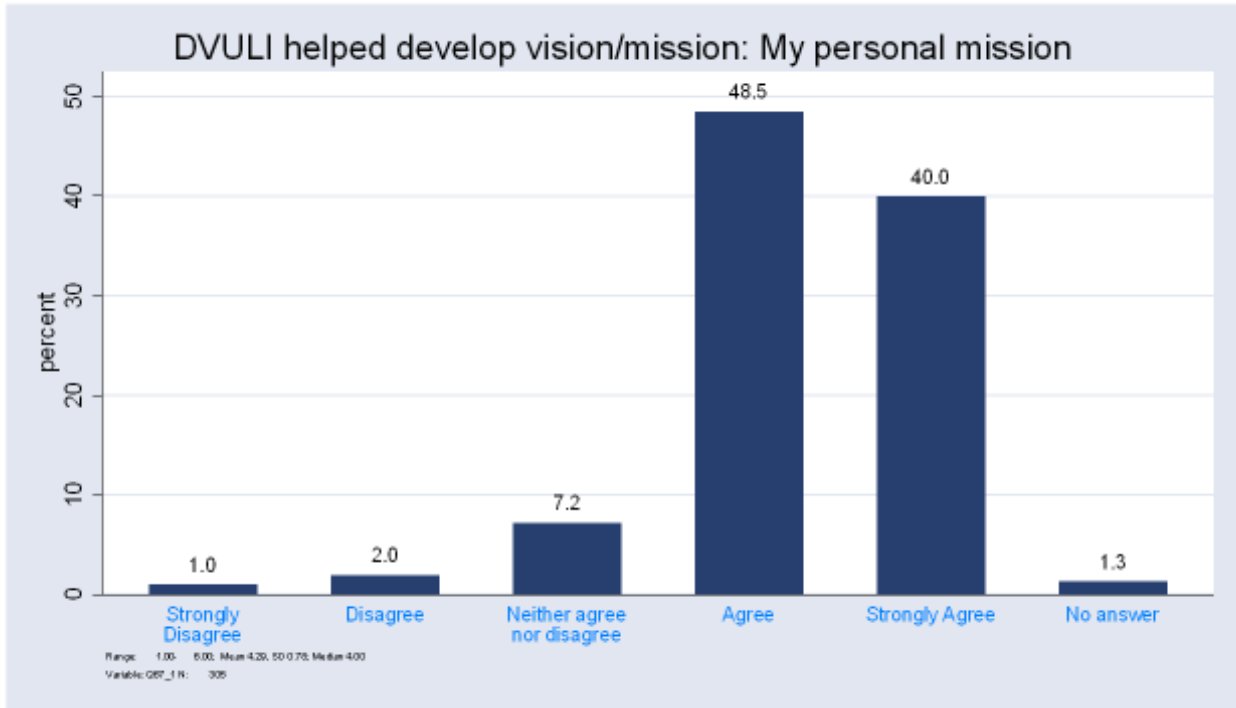
*We find evidence that Hispanics are implementing and achieving Breakthrough Plan goals, and accomplishing their community and metro area mission. This may reflect the integration of ministry and community in areas where Hispanics work. African Americans are accomplishing their vision for their communities as well. Women are better able to accomplish a personal and organizational mission. “Lower” level positions create challenges to accomplishing vision and mission in one’s organization and community. Senior pastors and executive directors perhaps have greater focus vision and mission for an organization and community, and more opportunities to accomplish that mission.*

## Evaluation of DVULI training

Beyond leadership skills and practices, the Alumni Survey asked several questions about alumni experiences and assessment of DVULI. We summarize these responses in this section.

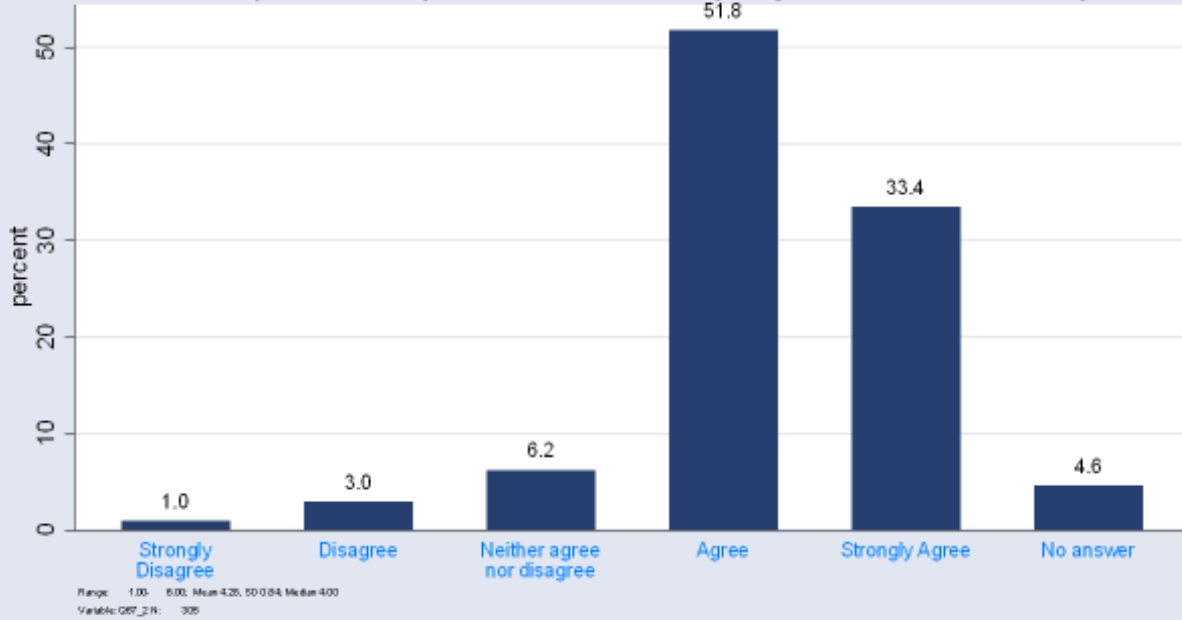
*Vision and Mission Overall*

Did DVULI influence their vision and mission in ministry? In terms of influencing their personal mission, about 40 percent strongly agree that DVULI influenced them, and 49 percent agree. A somewhat lower percent (33) strongly agree that DVULI helped develop their vision/mission regarding their organization or ministry. Still, another 52 percent agree (but not strongly) that DVULI had this impact. Somewhat lower percentages felt that DVULI training helped them develop their vision/mission in relation to their local community. About 24 percent strongly agree with this, and 41 percent agree. This somewhat lower percentage agreement is not surprising given the additional challenge of applying vision/mission to diverse and often complex local environments. Similar conclusions regard the vision/mission for their city or metro area: about 18 percent strongly agree that DVULI helped them develop in this area, and another 42 percent agree.

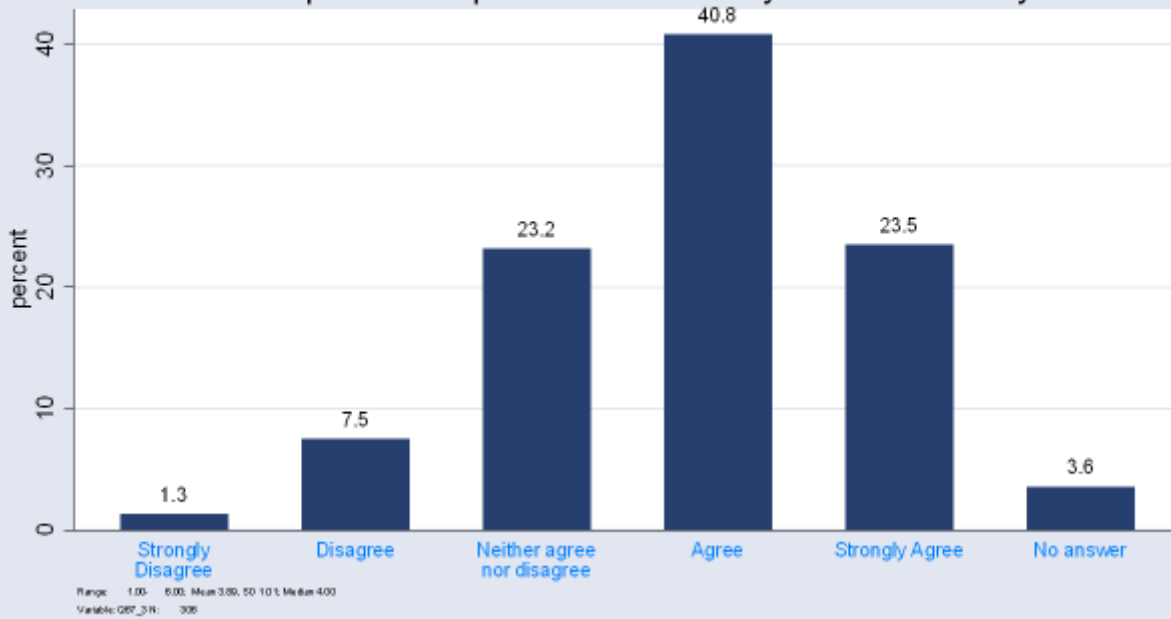


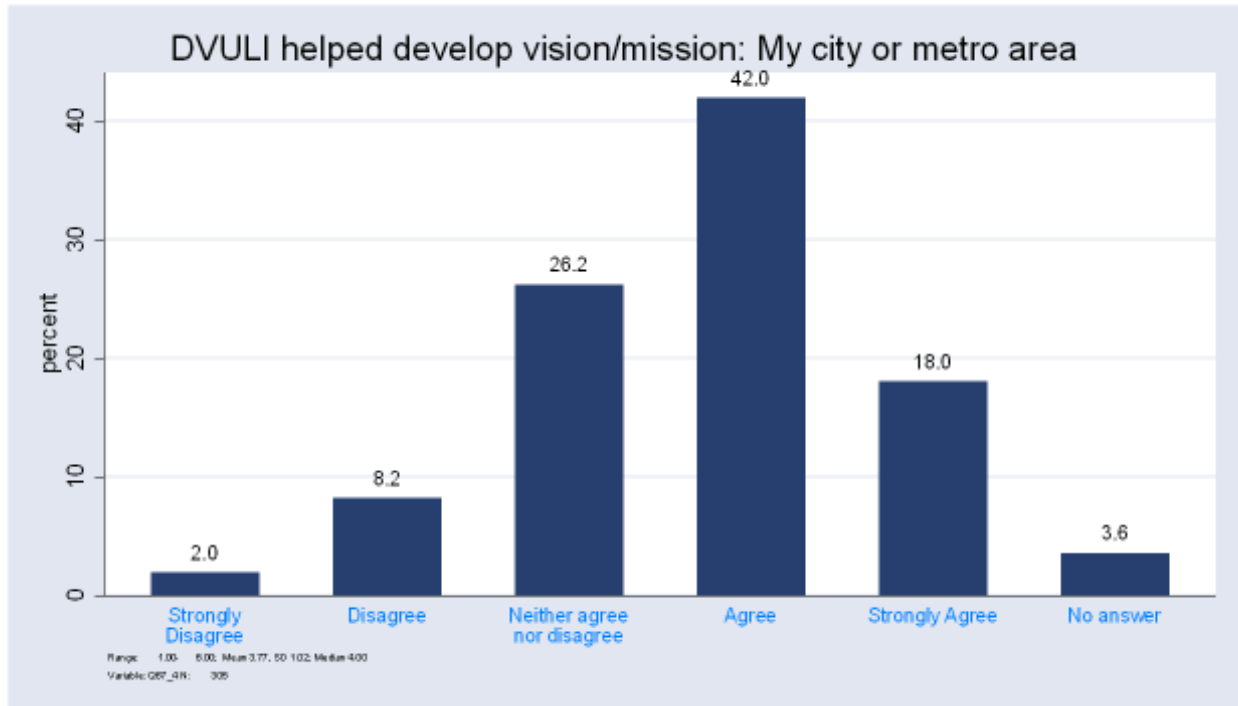


DVULI helped develop vision/mission: My organization or ministry



DVULI helped develop vision/mission: My local community





Overall, higher percentages are confident about developing their personal mission through DVULI, and this confidence declines for organization, community, and metro area mission and vision. The degree of difficulty of developing a concrete mission for broader social sphere may explain this finding.

Interestingly, there are few differences among alumni on the extent of impact of DVULI on their vision and mission. *DVULI is appreciated equally by alumni*; DVULI helped diverse alums shape their vision and mission in several spheres. Among the exceptions, women are more likely to say that DVULI helped them develop their *personal* vision and mission than men. Hispanics are more likely than whites to say that DVULI helped them develop their vision and mission for their community. Those in “other” organizations see DVULI as more useful for developing their vision for their community and metro area.

*Key findings are that DVULI training has a stronger impact on vision and mission for women and Hispanics. This may reflect responsiveness to the program, fit with the program and ministries, and fewer opportunities for leadership development prior to DVULI.*

### Youth Ministry Development

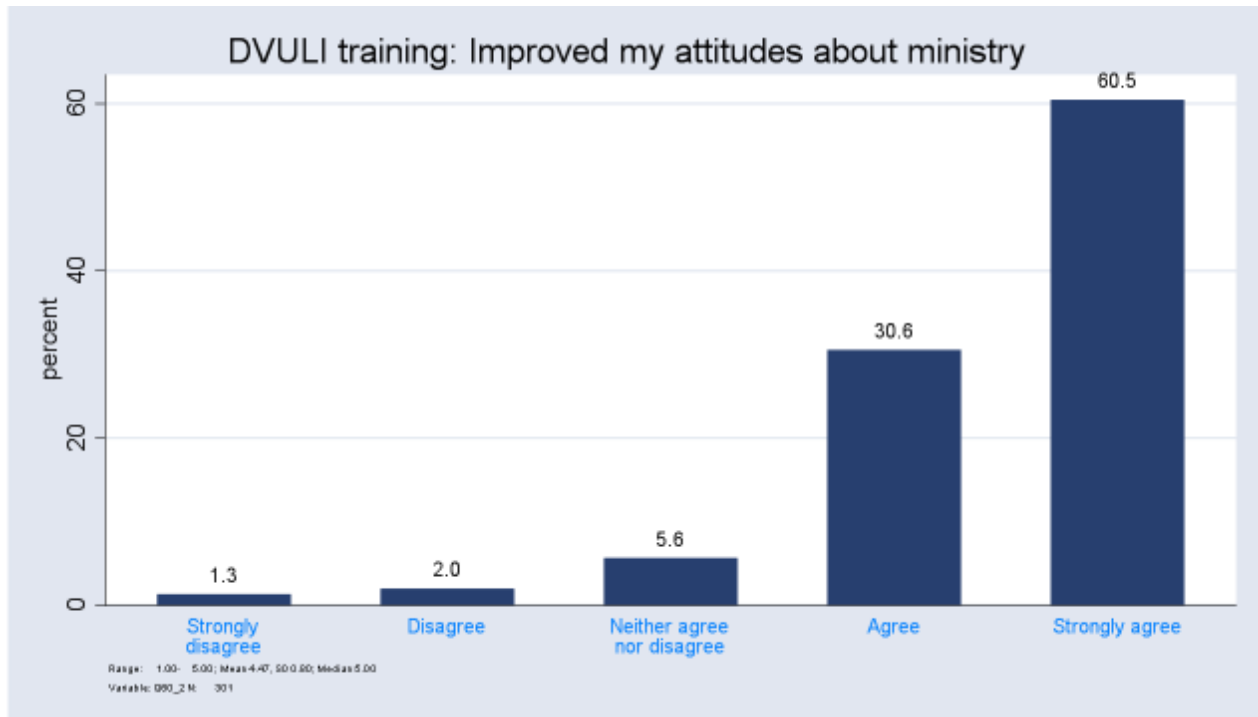
DVULI seeks to strengthen successful youth ministers by preparing and developing leaders for life in youth ministry. There are several dimensions of life in ministry that are enhanced through DVULI participation.

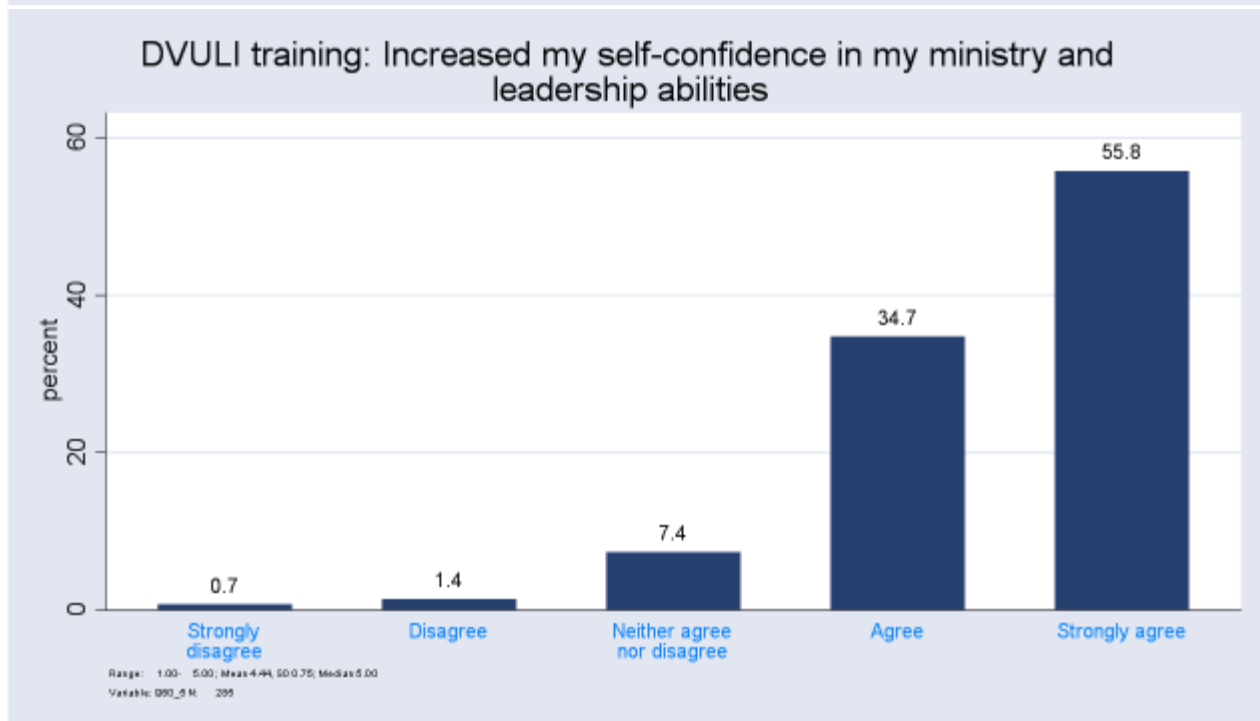
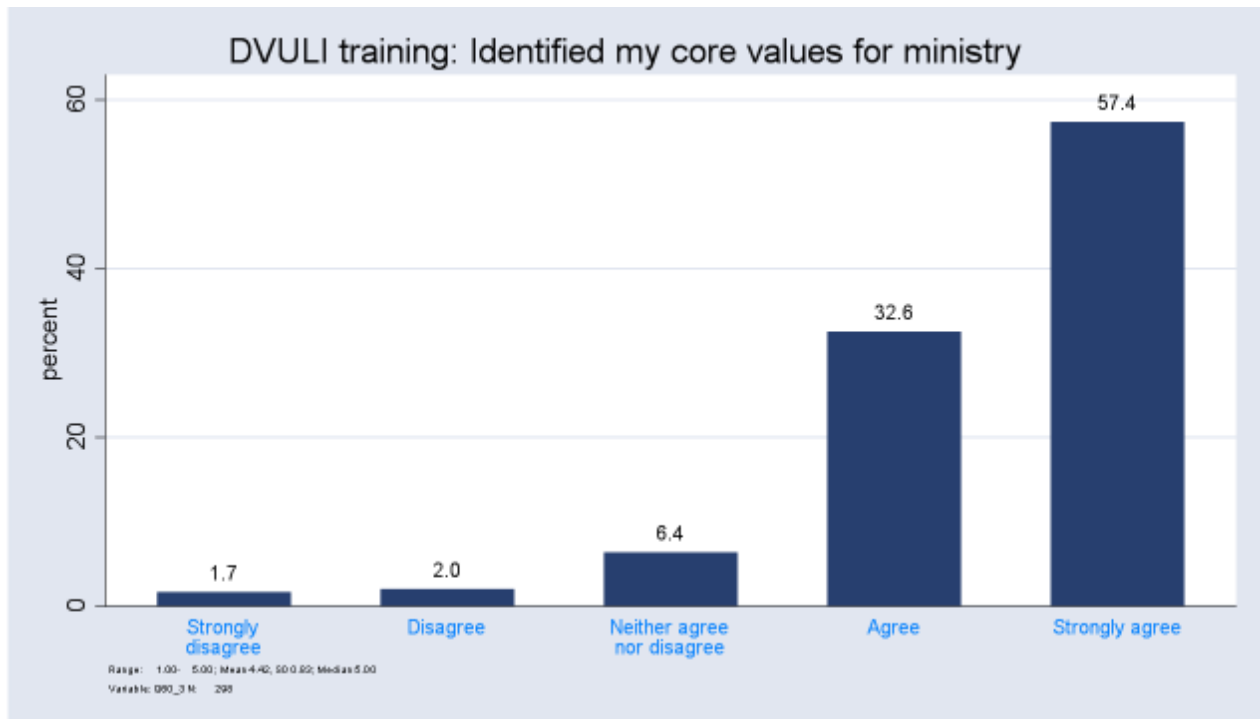
First, DVULI training improved the alums attitude toward ministry. About 89 percent agree or strongly agree that their ministry attitudes improved through the program. Likely this positive finding reflects the social, spiritual, and intellectual supports for life in ministry developed through DVULI.

Another reason for this outcome is that DVULI emphasized five core values critical to ministry success, including accountability, empowerment, balance, interdependence, and leverage. Alumni seemed to

incorporate these core values into their ministry. About 56 percent strongly agree that DVULI training “identified my core values for ministry.” Another 32 percent agree that DVULI participation helped them identify their core ministry values. While DVULI training is not directly focused on “discovering” one’s core values, alumni seem to have taken to heart the discussion and training on essential core ministry values.

Increased self-confidence was a common outcome as well. About 55 percent said that DVULI training increased their self-confidence in their ministry and leadership abilities. If we include those who agree with this statement, 90 percent agree that DVULI improved their self-confidence. A likely explanation of this finding is the development of a support community through DVULI, along with the systematic and holistic approach to youth ministry made possible through the extended DVULI program.





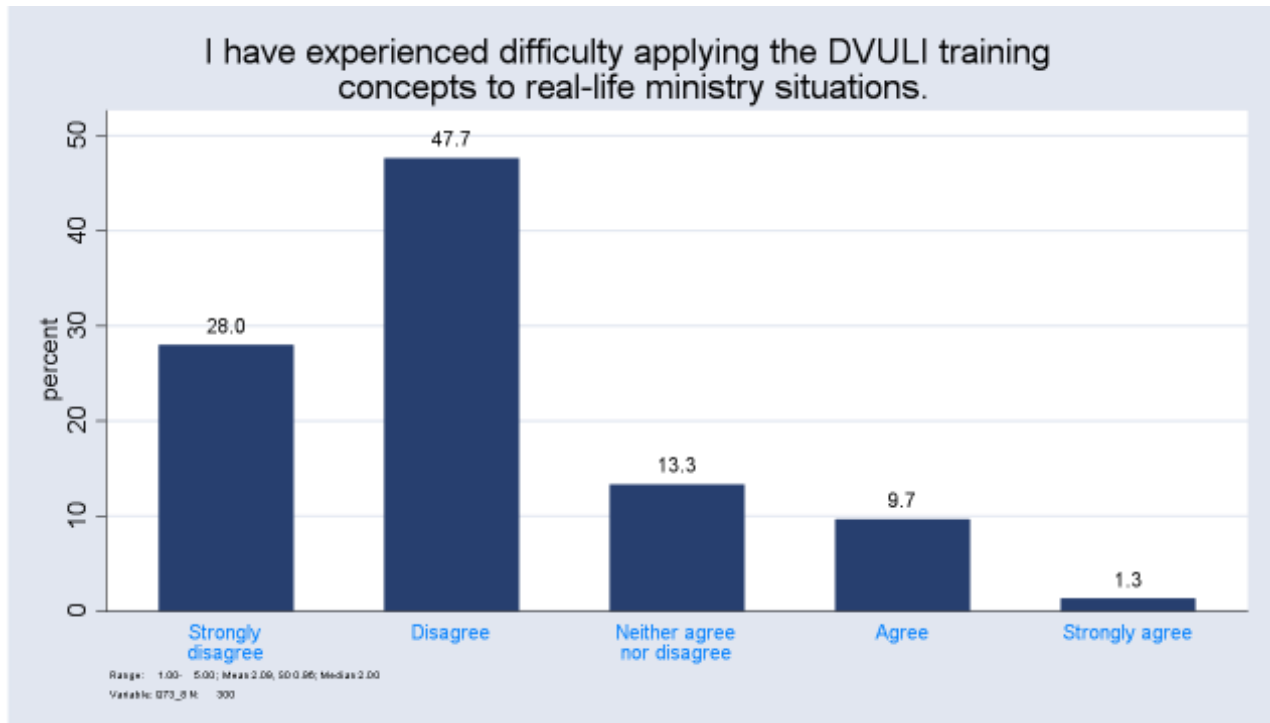
There are not many differences among alumni on their perception of DVULI impact on life in ministry. Hispanics, who are very positive on DVULI, provide the lone significant finding on the question of improving ministry attitudes. Women are more likely than men to say that DVULI training helped to identify their core ministry values. The effect of DVULI on self-confidence is lower among more recent cohorts. Similar to earlier findings, Hispanics say that DVULI improved their self-confidence in their ministry and leadership abilities.

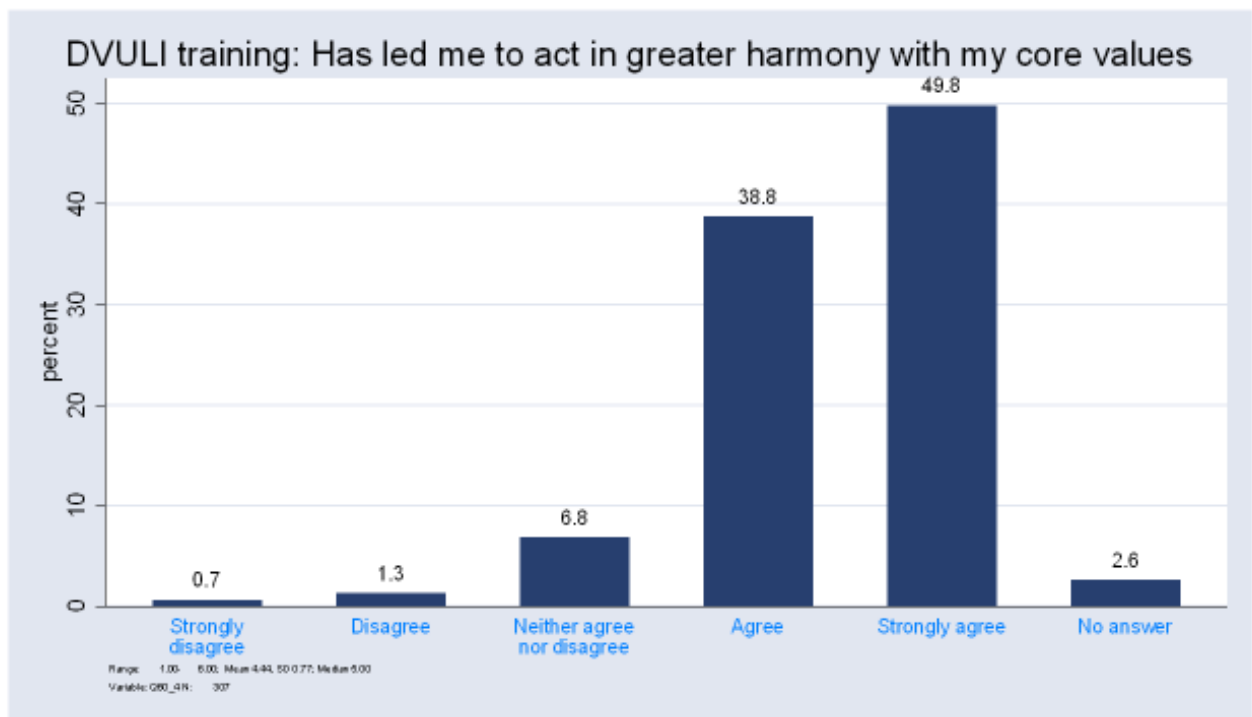
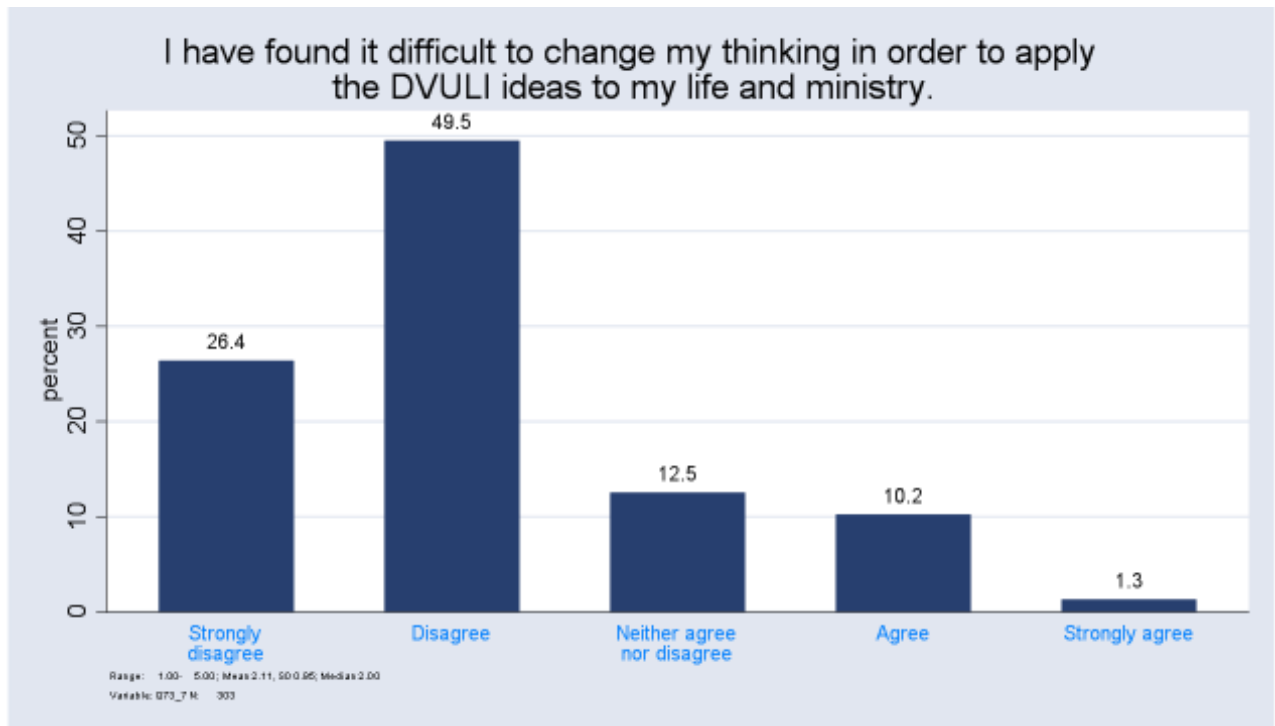
The main take-away is that DVULI tends to improve youth ministry prep consistently across diverse alumni. Very high percentages report significant positive impacts on their ministry. Again, Hispanics and women appear to gain even more from DVULI.

### Practicing DVULI

Has it been difficult to apply DVULI training concepts to real-life ministry situations? A high percentage disagree (74 percent disagree or strongly disagree). That leaves 26 percent who report some implementation challenges or are “on the fence” on this question. Again, the 11 percent that report some challenges is relatively small, though perhaps significant. Still, this level of concern is very reasonable given the fact that implementing any new practice in complex environments is extremely challenging.

Practice remains a significant hurdle. A relatively small but important percent report that it has been difficult to change their thinking in order to apply DVULI ideas to their life and ministry. About 11 percent agree or strongly agree with this, and another 12 percent are unsure or neutral. About 75 percent disagree or strongly disagree, with 26 percent strongly disagreeing with this statement. A further challenge is to act in greater harmony with one’s core ministry values. An impressive 50 percent strongly agree that DVULI training had this impact on their practices, and another 39 percent agree.





More recent cohorts report greater difficulty in applying DVULI training concepts, but this is not significant in the full models. For both difficulties, applying concepts to real-life ministry and changing thinking, Hispanics and older alumni report fewer difficulties. African Americans are less likely than whites to say that it has been difficult to change their thinking to use DVULI. The program directors or associate/youth pastors

say they have fewer difficulties applying DVULI concepts to ministry compared to executive directors and senior pastors. Program coordinators and youth leaders also have fewer difficulties changing their thinking to benefit from DVULI.

Interestingly, Hispanics are the only group to report higher levels of acting in harmony with core ministry values because of DVULI.

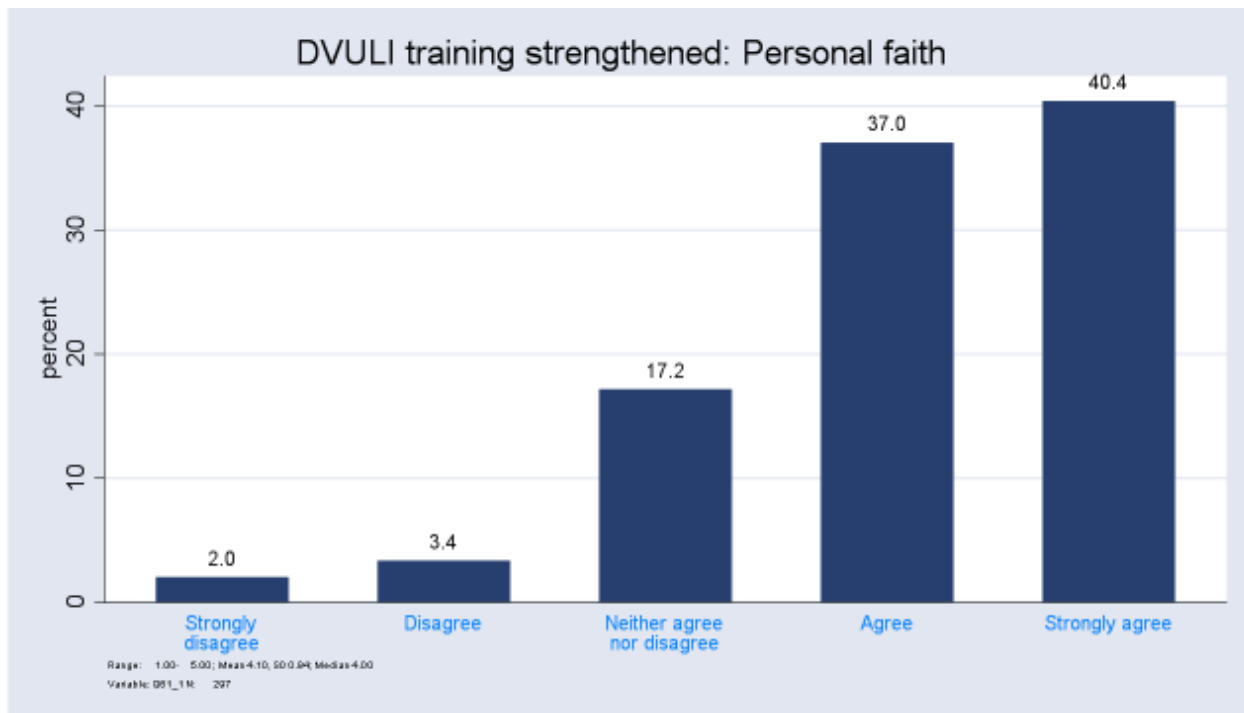
*Highlights for measures of practicing DVULI include the higher impact on Hispanics and, in changing orientations to ministry, on African Americans. Moreover, the “middle” level ministry positions seem to most strongly apply DVULI concepts to their ministry. Note, however, that alumni in “lower” level positions are very open to changing their thinking in response to DVULI.*

### Faith and Faith-based Mission

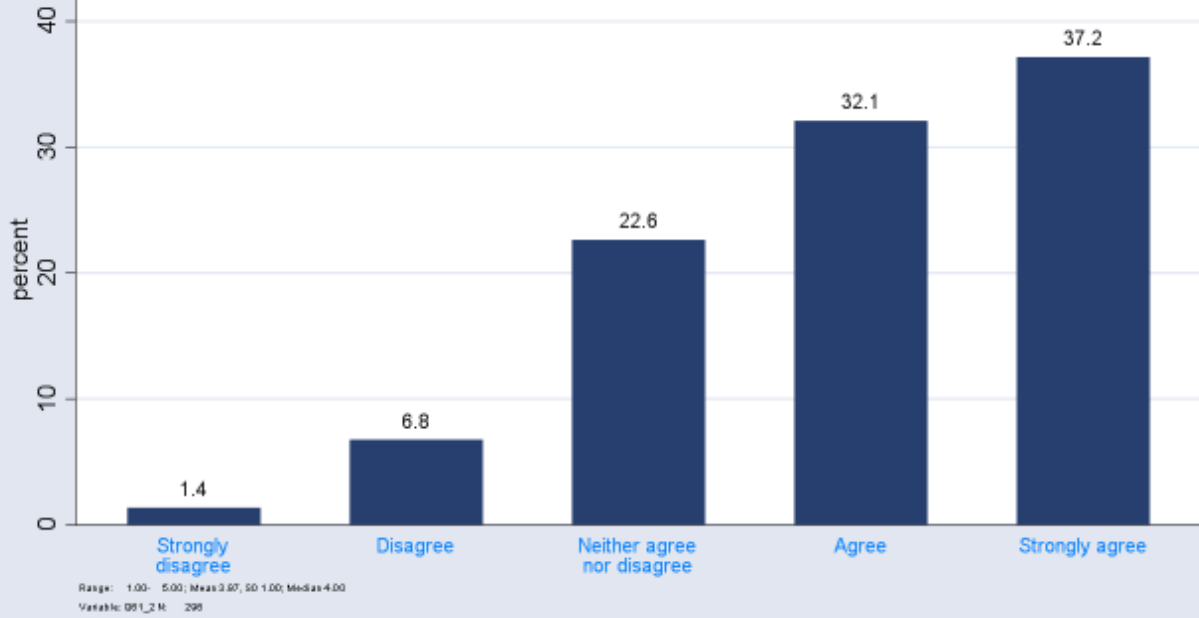
Compared to other outcomes, a smaller percentage agree that DVULI training strengthened their personal faith, but of course many entered the program with a strong personal faith. About 39 percent strongly agree that DVULI training strengthened their personal faith, and another 36 percent agree. Similar percentages said that DVULI training strengthened their relationship to a local faith community (36 percent strongly agree, and 31 percent agree).

DVULI training strongly increased commitment to the faith-based mission of their organization as well. About 40 percent strongly agree and 36 percent agree that DVULI training has this positive effect.

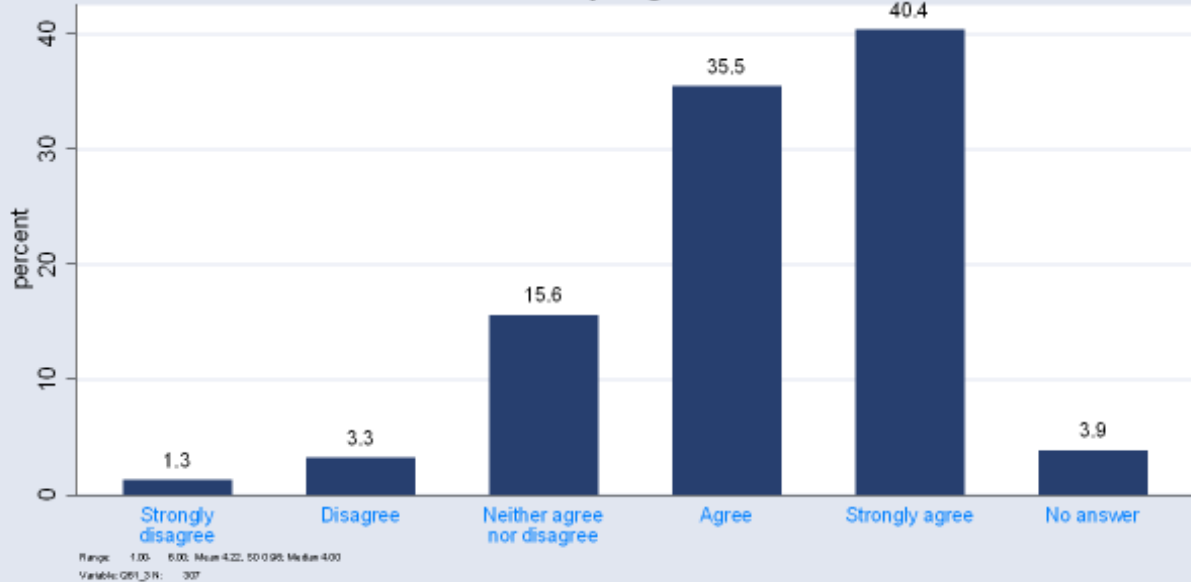
A high percentage agree that DVULI training led to a broad-based and holistic vision of evangelism. About 41 percent strongly agree, and 34 percent agree that DVULI training gave them this vision.



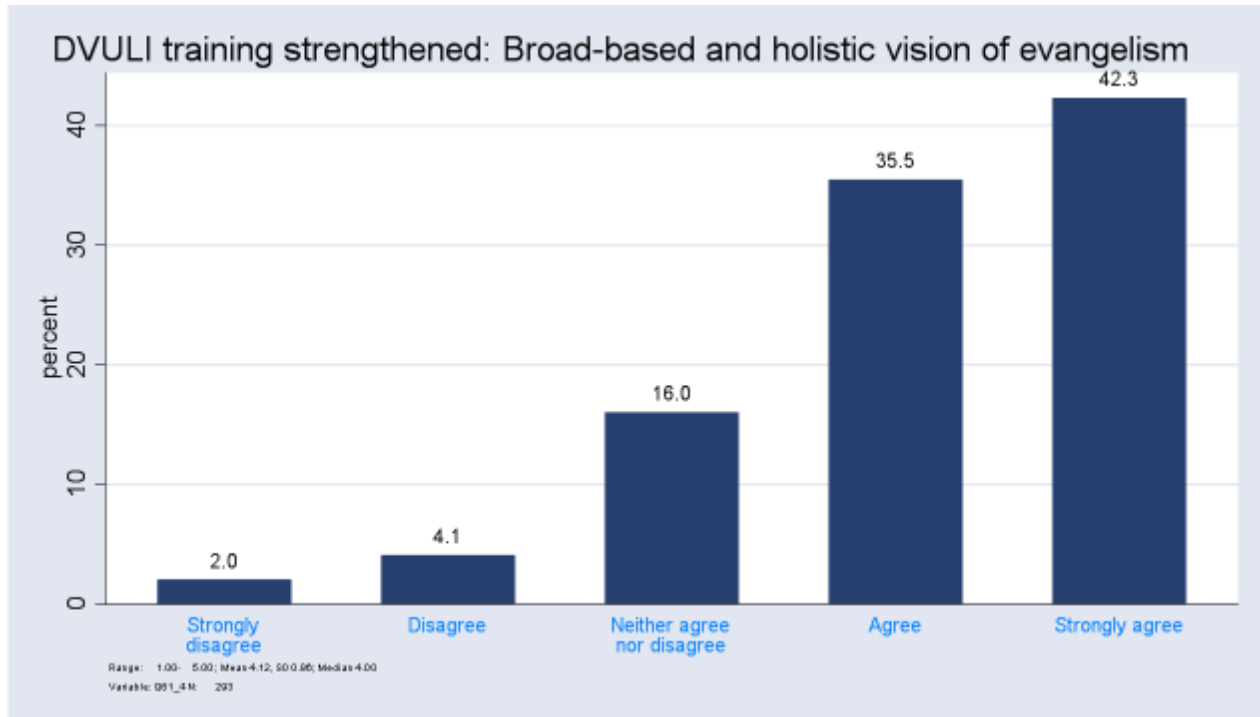
### DVULI training strengthened: Relationship to a local faith community



### DVULI training strengthened: Commitment to the faith-based mission of my organization







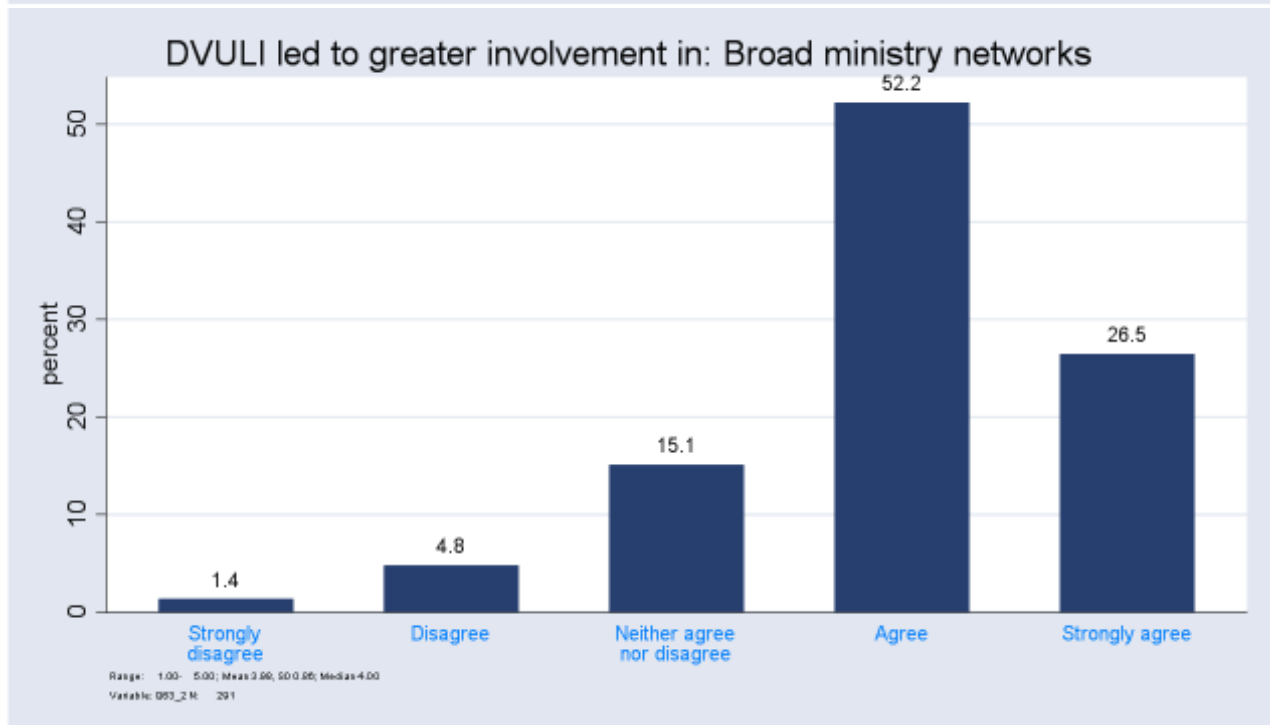
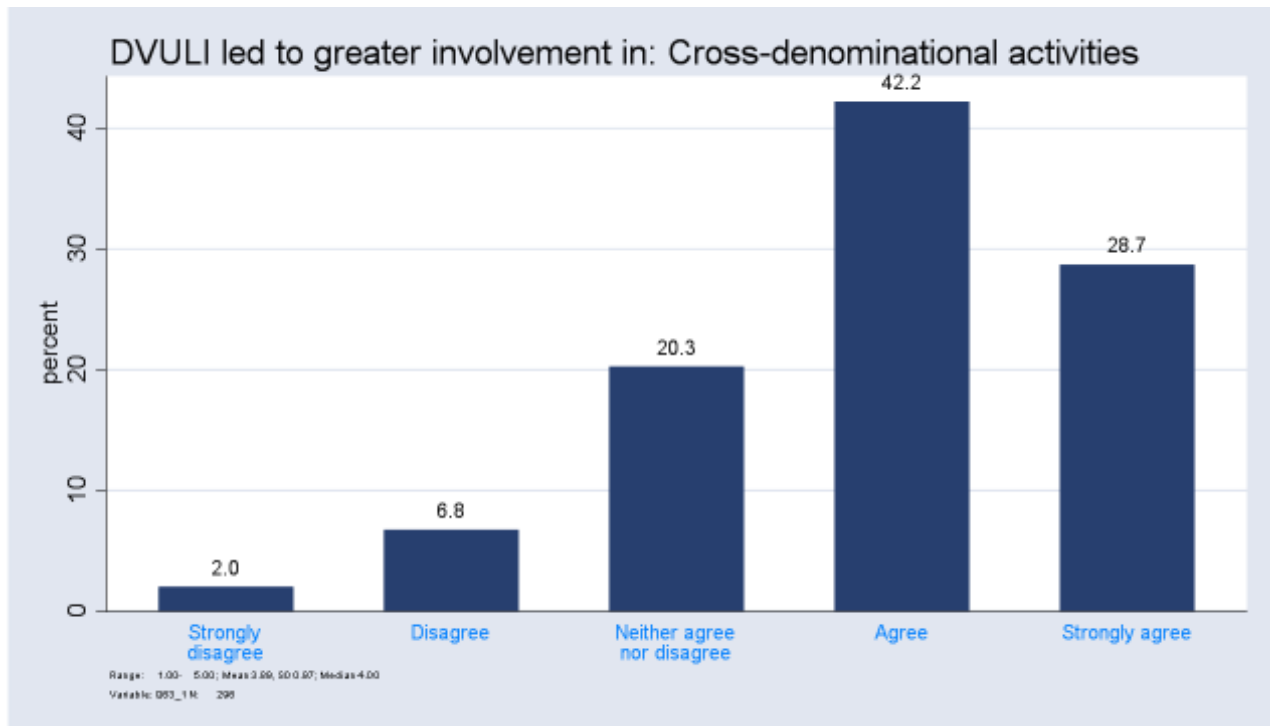
Women are more likely than men to say that DVULI experience strengthened their faith. Hispanics and African Americans agree. There is some evidence that those working in schools compared to churches are somewhat more likely to report that DVULI strengthening their faith.

Hispanics also believe that DVULI increased their commitment to the faith-based mission of their organization. Education since DVULI is positively related to this commitment in some models. Similarly, Hispanics and those with additional education since DVULI say that DVULI increased their commitment to a holistic approach to evangelism.

*In sum, solid percentages of alumni grew their faith and faith-based mission through DVULI, including a more expansive vision of evangelism. This is especially apparent for women, Hispanics, and those who received more education after DVULI.*

#### *Cooperation with Outside Ministry Organizations*

Percentages that believed that DVULI training led to greater involvement in cross-denominational activities is high, given the degree of difficulty, if somewhat lower than the other benefits of DVULI training. About 28 percent strongly agree that DVULI training led to greater cross-denominational activities, and another 41 percent agree with this statement. Similarly, 25 percent strongly agree and 50 percent agree that DVULI training led to greater involvement in broad ministry networks.



The impact of DVULI on cooperation with outside organizations is widespread. The only exception is that interdenominational cooperation is higher among those who obtained more education since DVULI, and that broad ministry networks are not an outcome of DVULI for volunteers.

*The overall numbers who built ministry bridges to other people and organizations through DVULI are impressively high. The “social capital” impact of DVULI interacts with educational experiences after DVULI.*

### Community Leadership

One of the strengths of the DVULI training, according to the alumni, is that it provides preparation for leadership in the community. About 61 percent of alumni strongly agree that DVULI training prepared them for leadership in their community, and another 30 percent agree (if not strongly). There is a strong consensus among alumni that DVULI has a major impact on preparing them for community engagement.

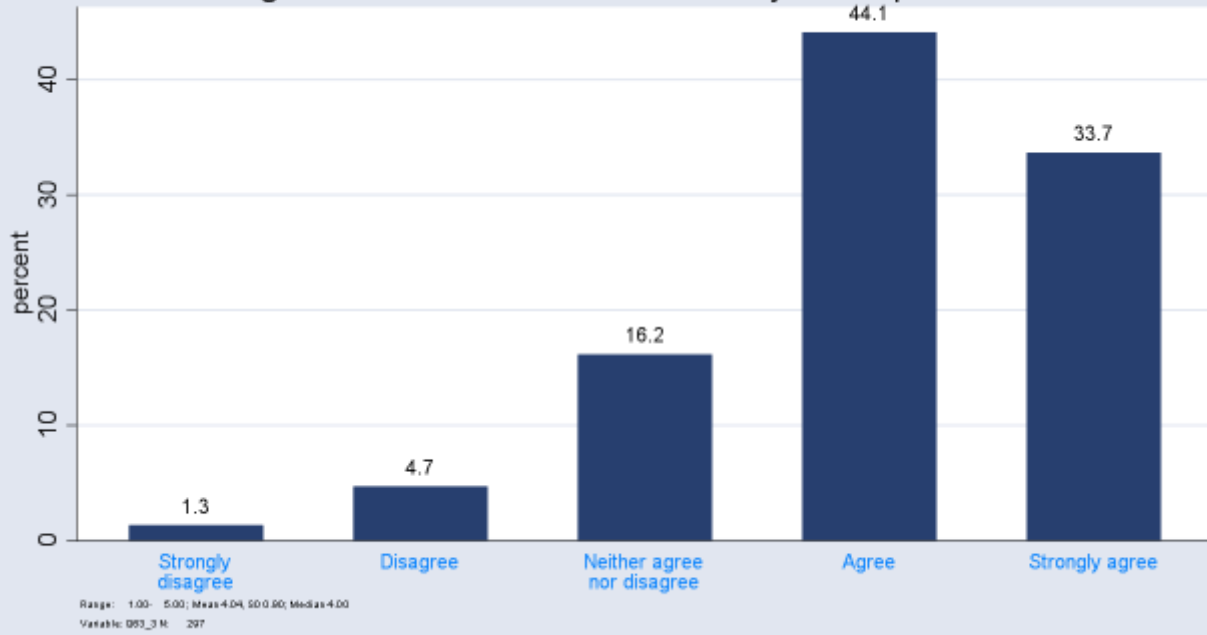
A high percentage reported that DVULI training led to greater involvement in community development activities. The high percentage support for this statement (33 percent strongly agree and 43 percent agree) is striking given the challenges involved in community development.

DVULI training had some impact—though perhaps less so—on increasing the involvement of alumni in volunteer work in the community. A high percentage agree with this statement (44 percent), though a smaller percentage (20) strongly agree.

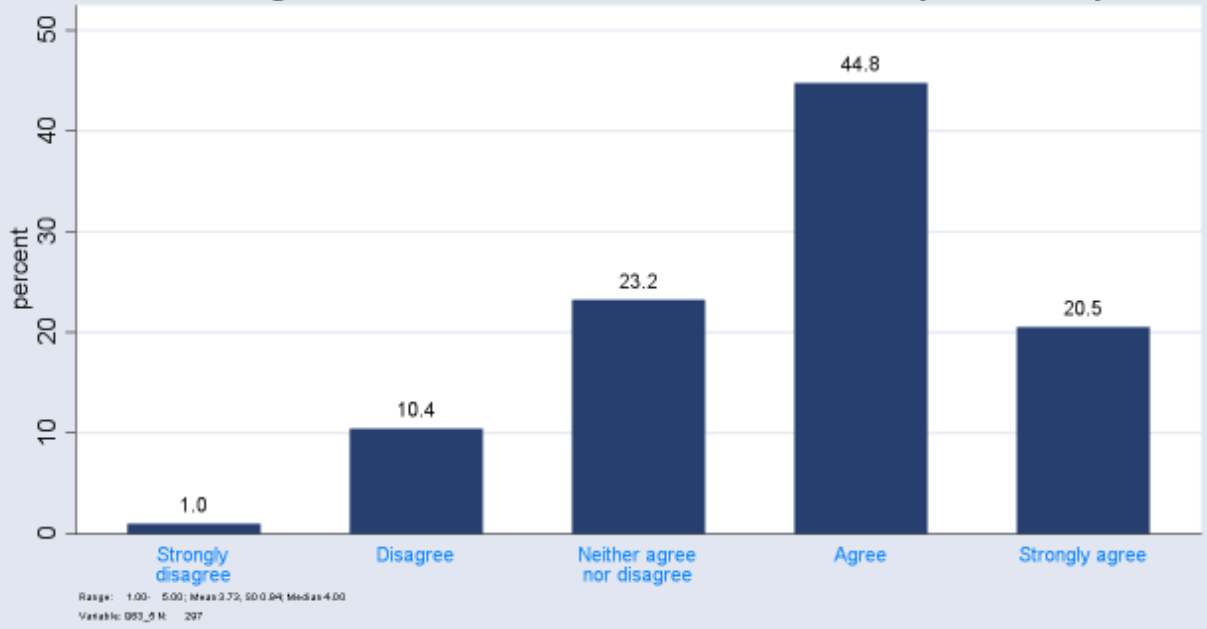
A lower percentage thinks that DVULI training led to greater involvement in political and civic affairs. About 17 percent strongly agree on this measure, and 28 percent agree. But 22 percent disagree and 28 percent are neutral or unsure. It should be noted that most leaders involved in religious ministry would be reticent to increase time on political involvement given the day-to-day time and energy necessary to build an effective youth ministry. Despite this, 45 percent of alumni have been able to bring these together.

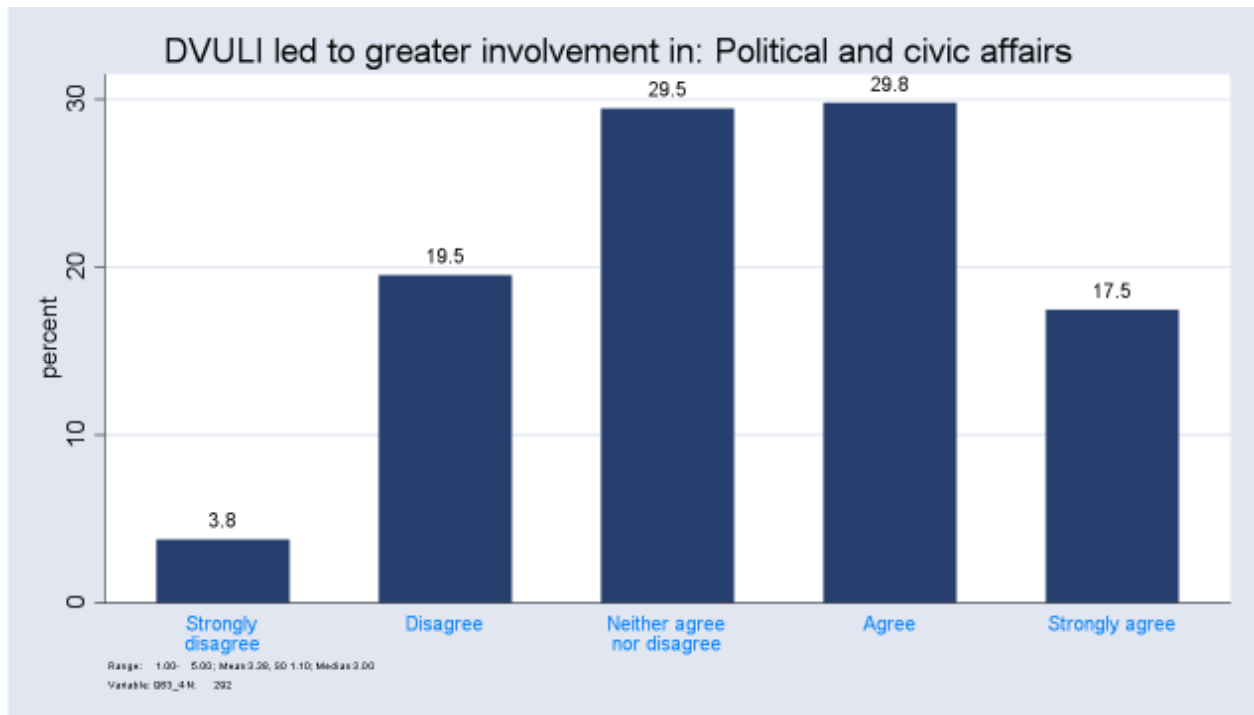


### DVULI led to greater involvement in: Community development activities



### DVULI led to greater involvement in: Volunteer work in my community





Women are more likely than men to believe that DVULI prepared them for leadership in their community. The impact of DVULI on community leadership is less for older than for younger alumni. Those in nonprofit and “other” organizations see DVULI training as preparing them for community leadership to a greater extent than those who work in churches. Executive directors and senior pastors believe that DVULI prepared them for community leadership. Volunteers are negatively related to community leadership, and years of professional ministry is positively related.

“Other” races and ethnicities and volunteers are less likely to say that DVULI enhanced their involvement in community development, but those working in “other” ministry organizations are more likely to say that DVULI increased their involvement in community development activities.

The sense that DVULI increased volunteering in the community, and involvement in political and civic affairs, is higher for Hispanics. African Americans are higher on political involvement. Those working in “other” ministry organizations are also more likely to believe that DVULI increased volunteering and political involvement compared with those working in churches.

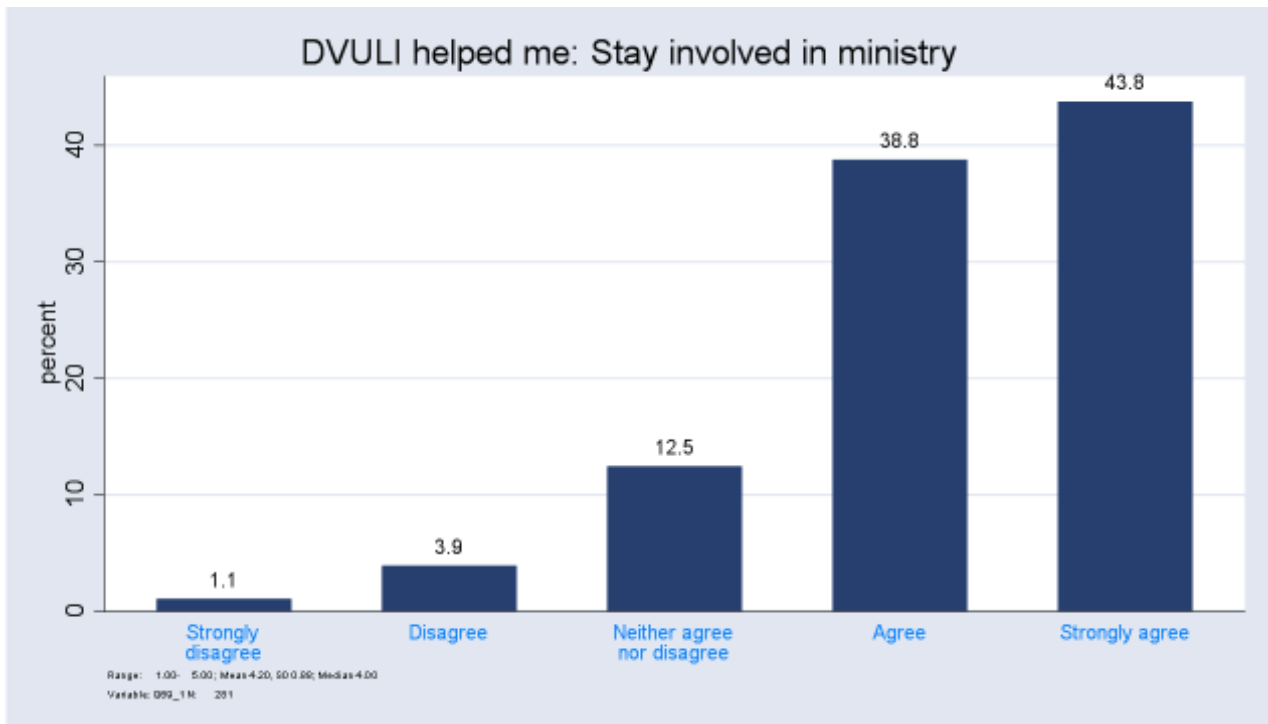
*Alumni are very likely to see the strength of DVULI as building community leadership skills. These skills are particularly important to women and younger alumni. Those in nonprofit ministry settings are consistently oriented to and benefiting from the community leadership opportunities provided by DVULI. Even though somewhat fewer are confident DVULI increased their volunteering and political engagement, the impact of DVULI on civic skills and engagement is impressive given the difficulty of motivating public action. Civic engagement skills and orientations are particularly important for Hispanics and African Americans.*

*Career Direction*

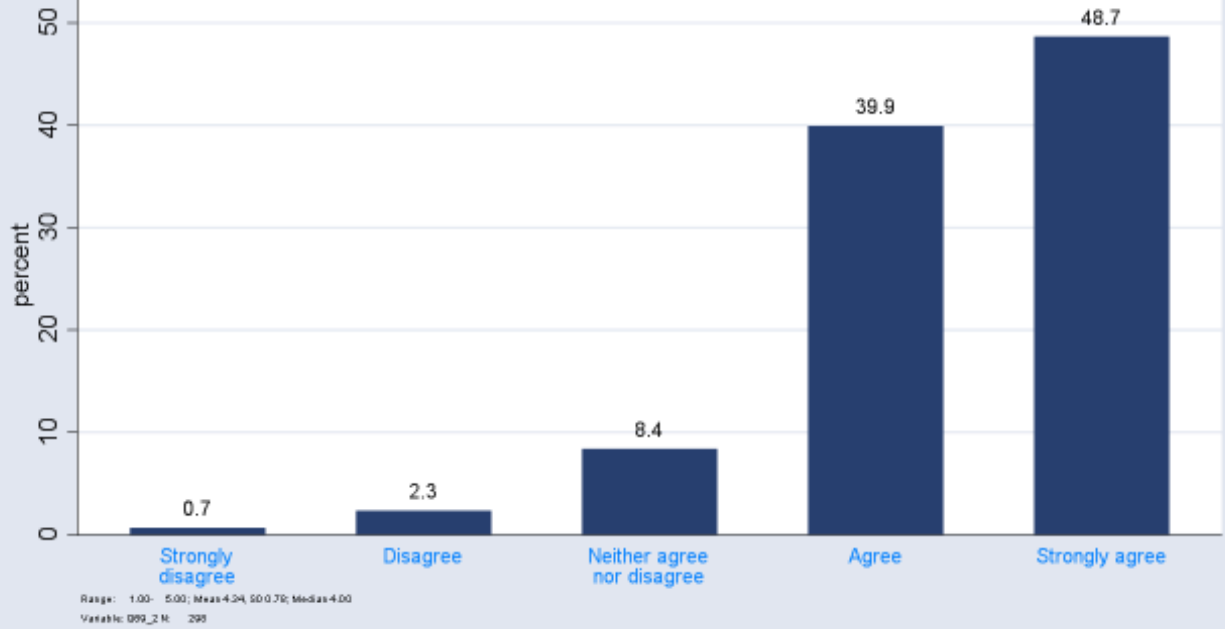
Alumni are confident that DVULI had a strong impact on their career direction. A high percent (80) agree that DVULI helped them stay involved in ministry. Significantly, nearly 43 percent strongly agree that DVULI helped them stay in ministry. Surprisingly, this does not vary across alumni. Apparently, DVULI training is broadly effective in helping youth leaders stay in ministry.

An even higher percent (47) strongly agree that DVULI helped them improve their job performance. Including those who agree with this (but not strongly), a total of 87 percent agree that DVULI improved their job performance. In many cases, DVULI helped them earn a better ministry position. About 45 percent of alumni say that DVULI helped them do this. A somewhat lower but still substantial percentage, 40 percent, agree that DVULI helped them increase their personal income.

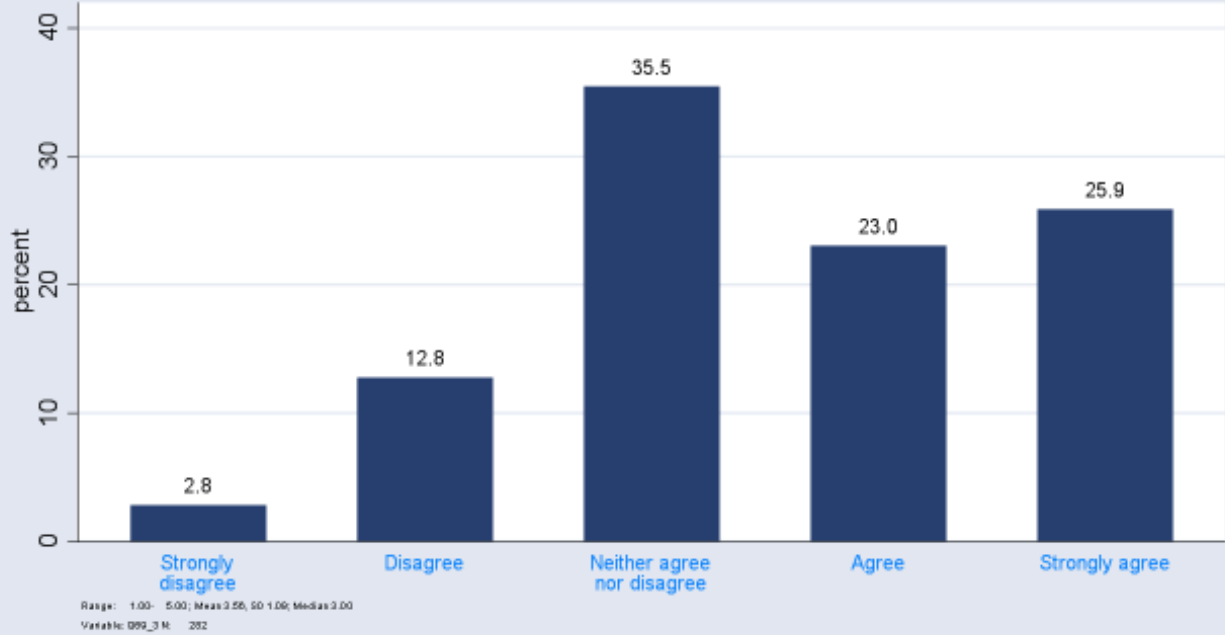
DVULI had other benefits as well. About 74 percent agree or strongly agree that DVULI helped them improve their job satisfaction. The DVULI program helped alumni earn the respect of supervisors as well. About 28 percent strongly agree that DVULI had this impact, and another 33 percent agree. For 70 percent of alumni DVULI training helped them earn the respect of their colleagues.



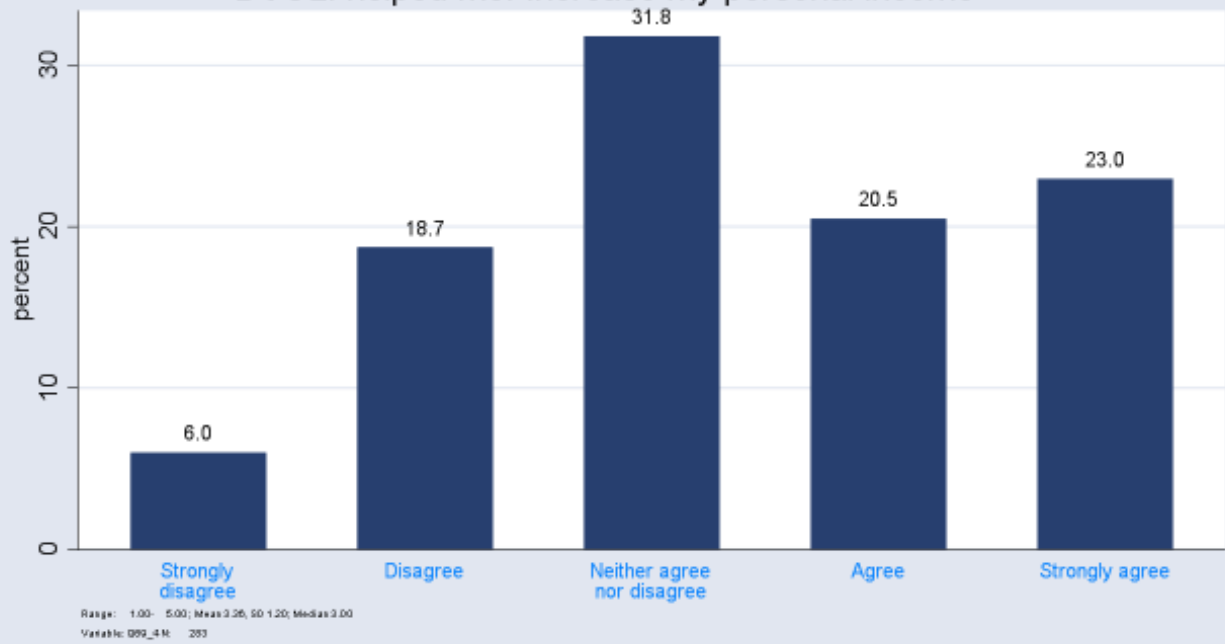
### DVULI helped me: Improve my job performance



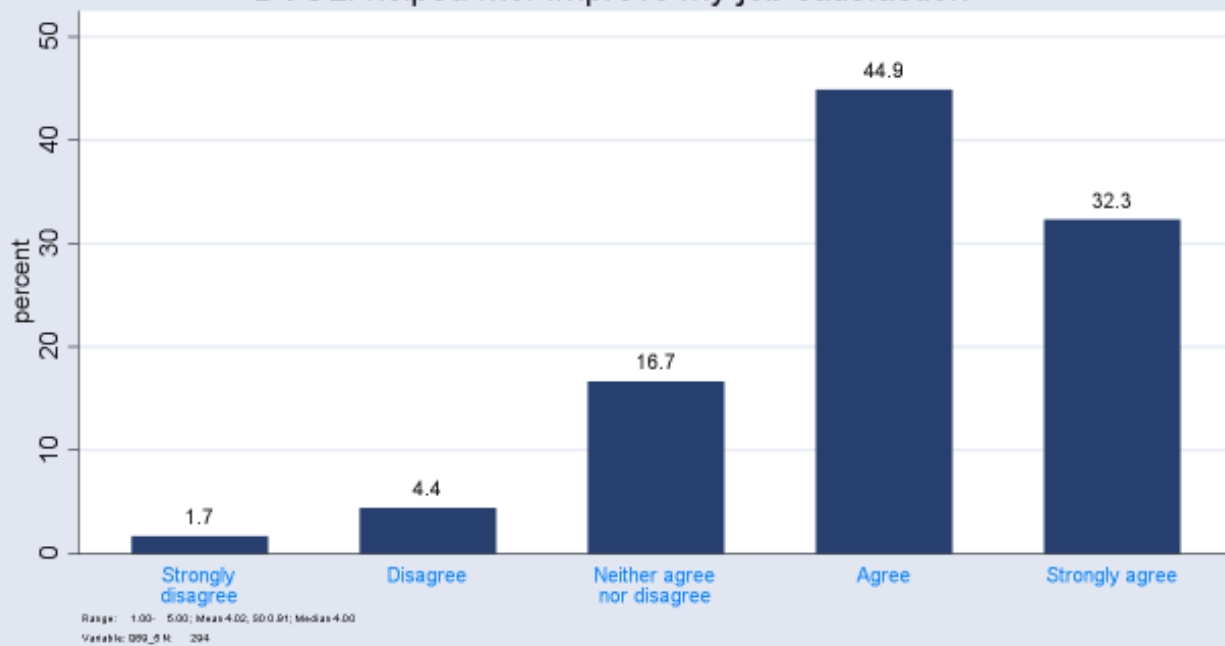
### DVULI helped me: Earn a better position



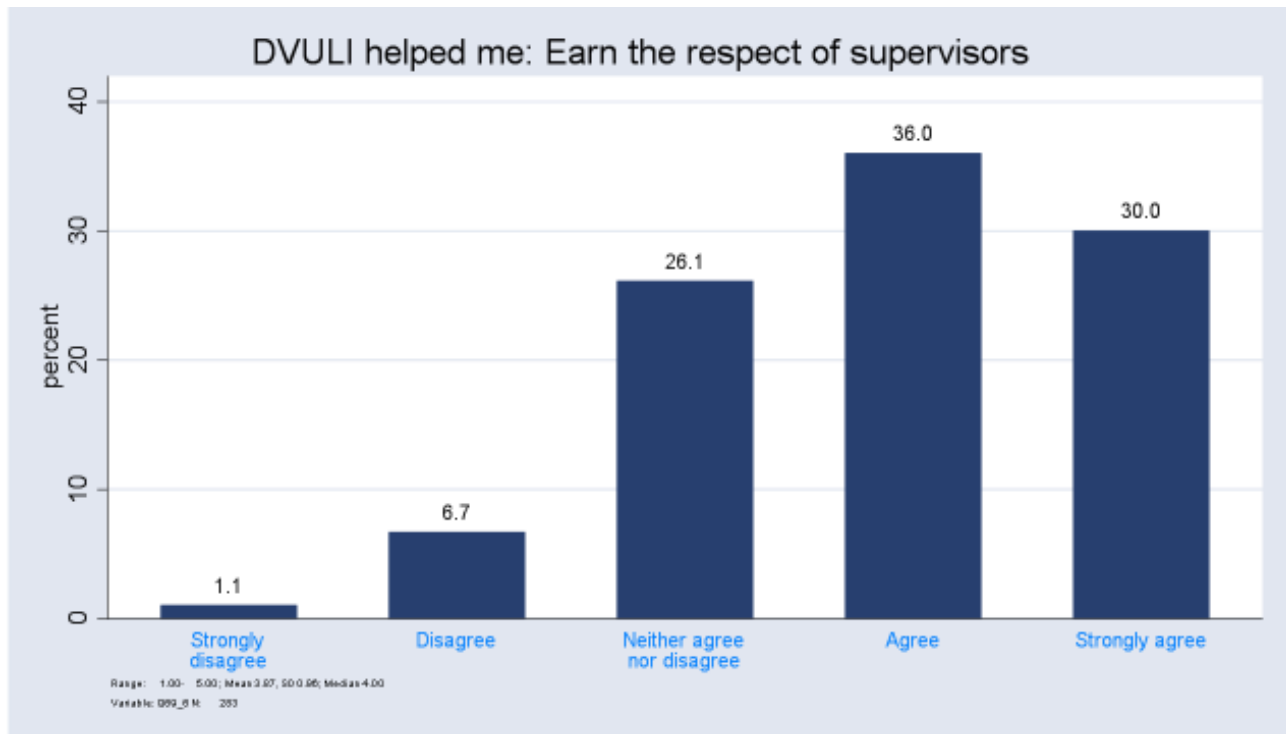
### DVULI helped me: Increase my personal income



### DVULI helped me: Improve my job satisfaction







The most recent cohorts report less impact of DVULI on obtaining better positions and increasing income. Though women report lower incomes than men, they are more likely to see DVULI as improving their job performance. Younger alumni report greater impact on job performance and ministry position. Hispanics say that DVULI has a positive impact on their ability to secure a better ministry position. Those working in schools or “other” ministry organizations believe DVULI has helped them reach a better ministry position. Volunteers are negatively related to seeing DVULI as improving job performance, and years in professional ministry is positively related to the impact of DVULI on job performance.

Earning the respect of supervisors through DVULI training is less likely for the most recent cohorts. This finding does not necessarily mean that the reception of DVULI has changed, or the challenges of implementing DVULI are heightened—though these are possible explanations for the finding. Assuming selection factors do not come into play, it seems likely that gaining respect from supervisors through DVULI is a process and recent cohorts will start to see greater DVULI impact over the longer term.

Older alumni are less likely to increase respect through DVULI than younger alumni, which may reflect ministry contexts in which younger alumni have “more to prove” than older. “Other” races and ethnicities report less impact of DVULI on supervisor respect. Those with more education are less likely to say that DVULI training increased supervisor respect, which may indicate that these alumni started with high levels of respect. Interestingly, alumni working in schools feel that DVULI has especially helped them garner more respect from supervisors. Volunteers do not think they gain as much respect from supervisors through DVULI.

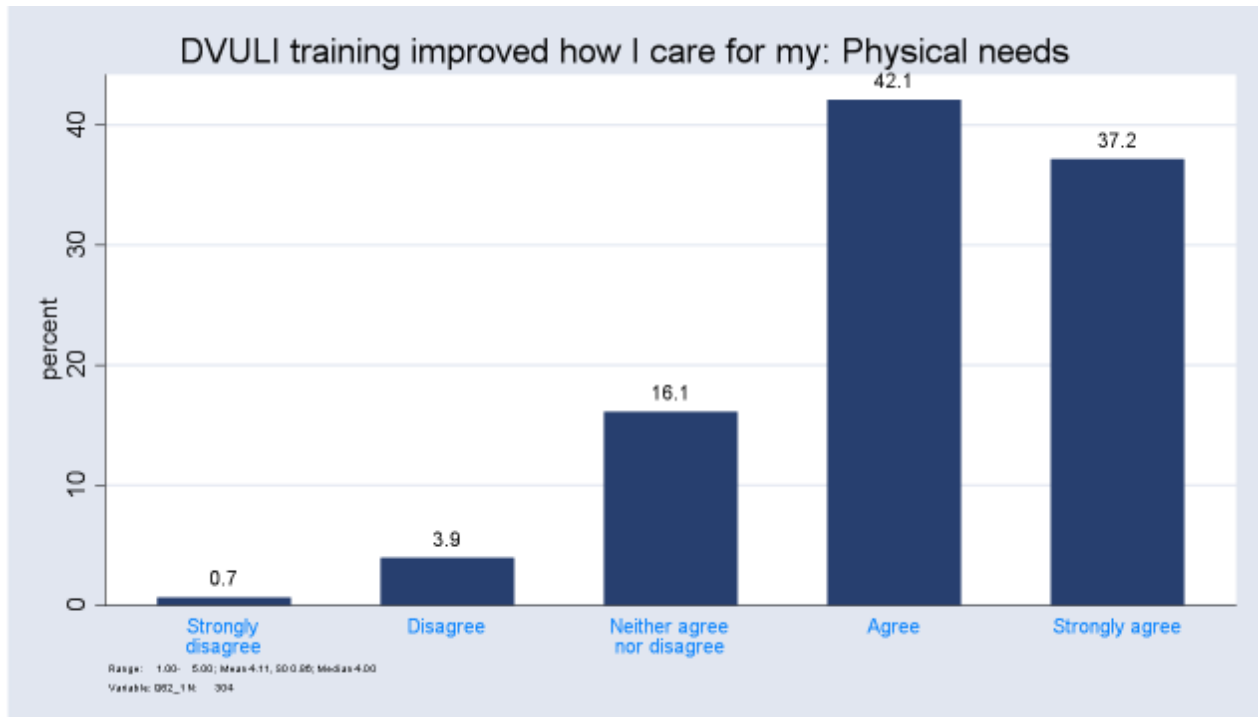
When asked about DVULI impact on respect from colleagues, we again find lower averages for alumni in more recent cohorts. Women report more gains in respect than men. No other alumni differences emerge.

*The key findings regarding career impact include the very great extent that DVULI helped alumni stay in youth ministry. This holds regardless of social position or contexts. Impressive as well is DVULI impact on*

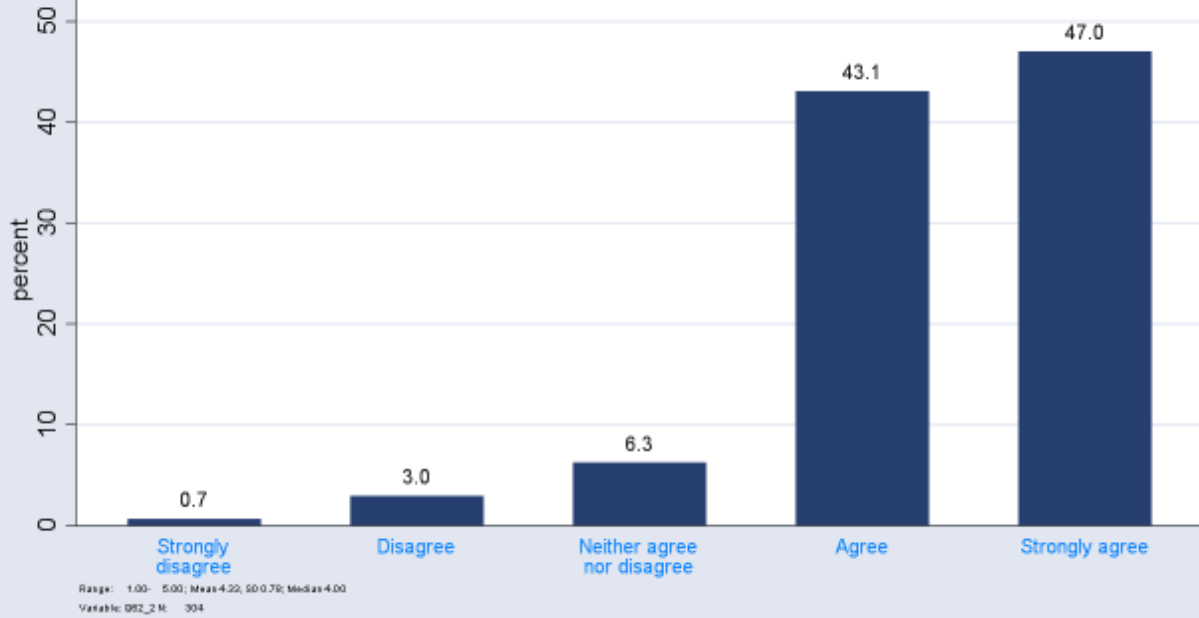
improving job performance and ministry position. DVULI alumni are happier and more successful because of their leadership training experiences. With the exception of income, these benefits of DVULI are especially important for women. Similarly, younger, Hispanic, and more experienced youth ministers are especially likely to report positive effects of DVULI on their job and career.

### Care for Personal and Family Needs

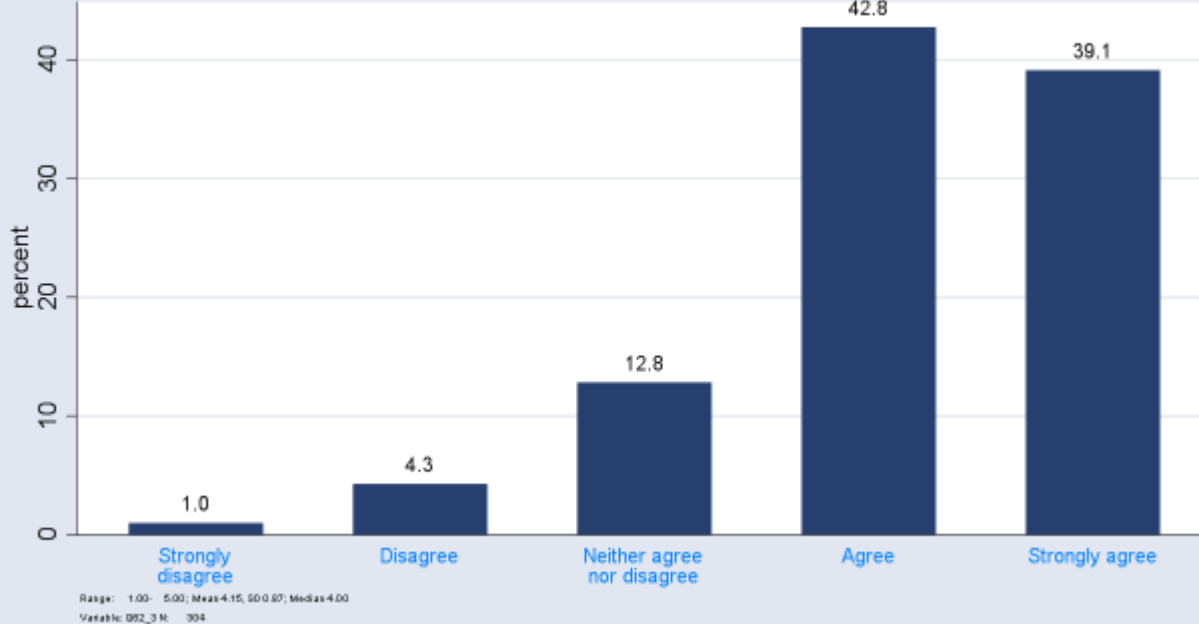
Relatively strong percentages (37 strongly agree, and 41 percent agree) believe that DVULI training improved how they care for their physical needs. Improved care for mental and intellectual needs is somewhat higher: 46 percent strongly agree that DVULI training provided this, and 43 percent agree. Improvement in caring for social needs through DVULI training is highly supported by alumni (81 percent agree or strongly agree), though on this measure the distribution is weighted somewhat toward “agree” (42 percent compared to 39 percent in the strongly agree category). More support is found on the question of whether DVULI training improved care for family needs. About 52 percent strongly agree with this, and another 33 percent agree. Similar percentages felt that DVULI training improved how they cared for their spiritual needs (49 percent strongly agree, and 35 percent agree). Overall, the holistic approach of DVULI is reflected in the successful impact on alumni across multiple spheres of life.

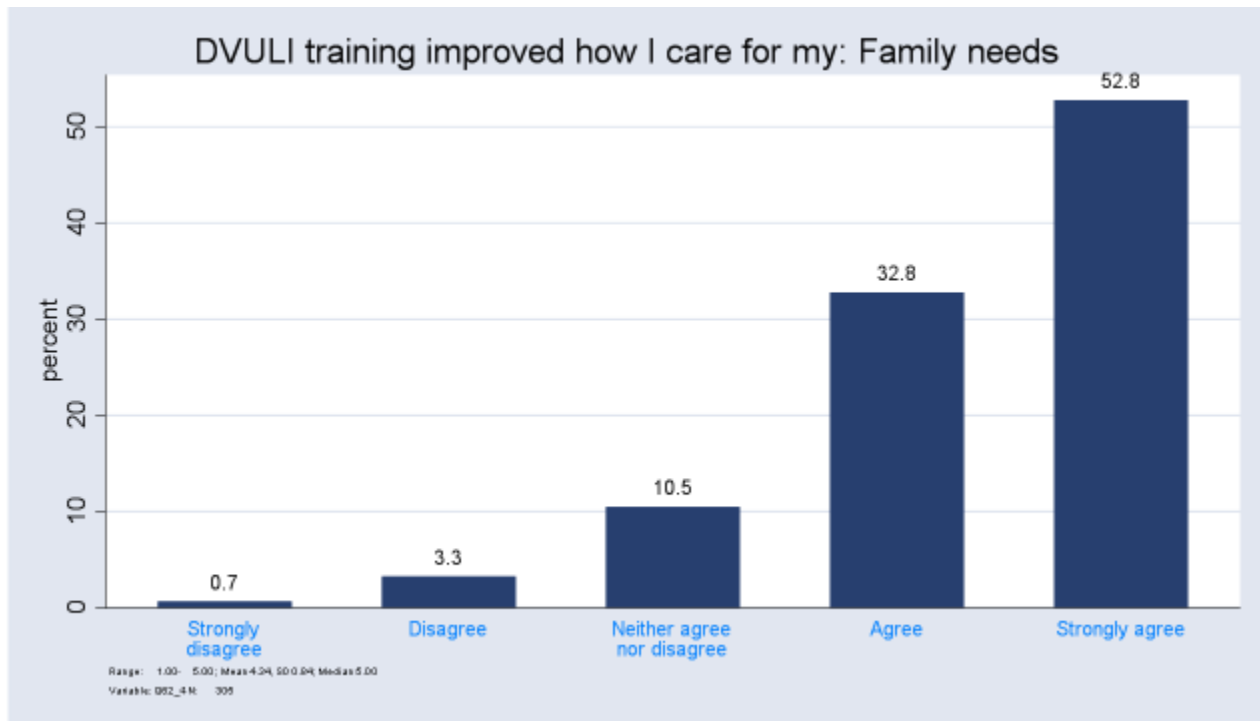


### DVULI training improved how I care for my: Mental and intellectual needs



### DVULI training improved how I care for my: Social needs





We find that women report that DVULI improved how they met physical, social, and spiritual needs more than men. Men and women did not differ in how DVULI influenced their mental and intellectual, and family well-being. Age is negatively related to improvement in meeting mental and intellectual, social, family, and spiritual needs; however, these findings appear to be accounted for by age-related differences in position and years in professional ministry. Hispanics say that DVULI helped them meet needs in the areas of physical, social, and spiritual aspects of life. Volunteer ministers did not see an improvement in physical,

mental/intellectual, and family well-being. Years in professional ministry is positively related to improvements in meeting physical and mental/intellectual needs, though negatively related to the meeting of social needs.

In sum, alumni see DVULI as improving their intellectual, family, and spiritual needs, which reflects the holistic approach to youth ministry leadership that guides DVULI training. Positive effects on well-being are stronger for women and Hispanics, and mixed for volunteers and more experienced youth ministers.

### **Summary and Conclusion: Descriptive Findings**

Across all of the measures of alumni ministry and DVULI evaluation, we have seen widespread agreement on the value of DVULI for personal, youth, organizational, and community development. On most measures, alumni have overwhelmingly positive assessments of the impact of DVULI on their lives and ministry.

This chapter has shown some variability across questions in the extent of alumni consensus, but we have not directly compared the level of consensus across all relevant measures.

We provide two descriptive rankings in this section. First, we calculate the percentage that agree or strongly agree with each question, and second, we calculate the average scores for each variable. After creating the percentages and averages, we rank the questions from highest to lowest.

First we limit the comparison to those questions with answer categories, strongly agree to strongly disagree (Table 1). Looking at the variables with the highest levels of alumni agreement, we find that well over 90 percent of DVULI alumni are very open to interactive leadership, including honest sharing and feedback with mentors and trusted others. This finding provides strong validation of the DVULI efforts to build effective leadership through feedback and reflection within committed relationships.

Alumni share a strong consensus that DVULI training has a positive impact on their personal orientation to ministry leadership, another key DVULI goal to effective life in ministry. The improved personal orientations include self-confidence, positive attitudes toward ministry, developing a personal mission, identifying core ministry values, acting in harmony with core values, and caring for mental and intellectual needs. On these measures, over 90 percent agree.

Interestingly, alumni nearly all agree that DVULI prepared them for leadership in their community. Lastly, we point out that DVULI alumni are very likely to agree that the Breakthrough Plan had a strong impact on their orientations to ministry.

In Table 2, we rank all variables based on the percent in the top categories, whether agreeing or strongly agreeing, or other roughly equivalent top response categories. Note that this comparison across variables with different response categories must remain tentative since it depends on establishing rough equivalence across varying response categories.

The ranking in Table 2 shows that alumni are very confident that they have been able to practice the core value of empowerment, which is a key aspect of servant leadership. Over 90 percent of alumni are also confident that they have been able to practice core values of accountability and collaboration, two of the

essential social aspects of life in ministry. The high level of support for these core values is consistent with the high percentage of alumni who are comfortable with interactive and collaborative leadership.

In a second strategy for comparing the level of consensus among alumni, we rank the questions based on the *average* response of DVULI alumni. To compare the extent of positive responses across questions, we took each outcome discussed in this chapter and constructed the average response, and then ranked the variables from highest to lowest average (positive) response. Before computing the averages, we rescaled each variable so that it ranged from 0 to 10. We reversed some variables so that nearly all of our outcomes are in the valued direction (e.g., the strongly agree to strongly disagree responses for the variable, “confused and frustrated over life direction,” are *reversed* to capture “NOT confused and frustrated over life direction”).

Table 3 shows the ranking of the averages for all the ministry questions used in this chapter. As we look for patterns in the ranking, keep in mind that some youth ministry values and practices, such as Asset Mapping, may not be highly ranked, but that to some extent reflects the degree of difficulty of the task, and that routine asset mapping may not lead to new insights about one’s community. Still, the ranking is of interest in capturing the kinds of values and practices that “rise to the top” when alumni report on DVULI and their life and ministry.

The first takeaway from the ranking of averages is that alumni consistently and strongly agree on the impact of DVULI training for understanding themselves and their ministry. In the top six, we find assessments of DVULI training that point to the incredible impact of DVULI experiences and community on self-confidence in ministry, improving ministry attitudes, understanding core values that are essential for youth ministry, and acting in harmony with core ministry values. To a large extent, the rest of DVULI flows from the central goal of equipping leaders with the personal knowledge, skills and commitments essential for life in youth ministry. Further confirming the DVULI impact in this area is the fact that alumni strongly and consistently value DVULI for developing their personal mission, which is nearly ranked in the top ten.

Looking farther down the list, note that the most highly ranked Breakthrough Skill is Personal Assessment, which is consistent with the importance of DVULI for growth of leaders as persons-in-ministry. The place of DVULI in helping alumni to *accomplish* their personal mission is less highly ranked, yet, considering its degree of difficulty, is very strongly and consistently agreed to by alumni.

This development of personal ministry does not preclude the impact of DVULI on other spheres of life, including family. Ranked in the top ten is the value of DVULI training in caring for family, and mental and intellectual needs. And the importance of DVULI for meeting spiritual needs is not far behind. DVULI is unique and valued in its ability to provide space to step back and consider the big picture, including the ultimate values and goals of ministry as well as the importance of holding faith, work and family together. In this regard, it is telling that close behind meeting spiritual needs is the confidence that DVULI improved alumni’s job performance, which, as we have seen, alumni understand holistically and in terms of faith.

The second conclusion from the average ranking findings is that the DVULI community and social support is highly valued by alumni. In particular, alumni report that they feel comfortable sharing ministry information with others, and improving their ministry through active mentor relationships.

Third, consistent with the importance of DVULI for creating space for systematic ministry reflection and “big picture” thinking—which is difficult to find or make time for in the hectic youth ministry world—we find

that alumni strongly and consistently see incredible value in creating a Breakthrough Plan. The view that the Breakthrough Plan has a lasting impact on their ministry is quite high in overall average ranking. Consistent with this is the relatively high ranking that alumni give to the impact of DVULI training in developing a ministry plan, a vision and mission, for their organization.

As we move from the general impact on person and mission to the more specific practices fostered by DVULI, it is encouraging that the practice of the core value of Empowerment ranks very highly among alumni, which is consistent with the servant leadership goals of the program. That Balance, Interdependence, and Accountability are close behind in ranking is heartening, since each focuses on key DVULI goals essential for a successful community that builds up person and ministry.

In the field, alumni are confident that they are making an impact through youth ministry. They are confident that they are actively trying to make changes and to resolve personal conflicts. And they strongly support the view that their vision and mission for their organization is being accomplished. Moreover, they are confident that DVULI has helped them to remain in youth ministry.

Lastly, we note the place of outside engagement in the ranking. While not in the top group, many of the outreach measures are tapping into activities that have a high degree of difficulty. Yet we find that alumni are very confident that DVULI training gave them a broad-based and holistic vision of evangelism. And, among the relatively highly ranked outcomes, alumni are confident that they are considering the bigger picture, including outside organizations, in how they do ministry. They are also confident that they can identify local places and organizations in the community that are youth ministry resources. Alumni believe strongly that DVULI training has led to greater involvement in broad ministry networks and in community development activities. While community engagement and organizational bridges for the benefit of youth ministry are challenging, and in some ways not as consistently and strongly pursued by all alumni, we have impressive evidence that most alumni pursue a holistic vision for ministry that includes active outreach to other organizations and persons in the local community.

Servant leadership theorists place a strong emphasis on self-giving relationships with the larger community as well with individuals in the workplace. In terms of cooperating with local community organizations in the youth ministry field, and focusing on the larger community, we have evidence that DVULI training is important for alumni youth ministry. Our descriptive findings provide important evidence that alumni are serious about servant leadership within their organizations, including empowerment and interdependence. And alumni are strongly oriented to developing and being guided by an overarching, faith-based vision and mission for themselves and their ministries. They strongly and consistently see DVULI as creating the opportunity and the mentoring relationships that improve their ministries and maintain their commitments to caring and working with youth.

### **Summary and Conclusion: Alumni Differences**

In addition to conclusions drawn from the descriptive findings, there are several general takeaways from the analysis of alumni differences in youth ministry and DVULI impact. In this final section, we put forward general interpretations of variation in alumni responses.

The claim with considerable support from our analysis of alumni differences is that DVULI has a strong impact on Hispanic alumni. The findings provide evidence that many of the skills, orientations, and commitments fostered by DVULI have important synergies with Hispanic youth ministry and communities. DVULI training adds incredible value to the youth ministry of Hispanic alumni, including personal and ministry growth as well as contributing to successful mentoring and empowering of co-workers in youth ministry. DVULI is highly regarded within Hispanic communities and youth ministry organizations, which makes it more likely that Hispanic alumni can translate DVULI training into concrete youth ministry outcomes. That might explain why the Breakthrough Plan has particular import and provides long-lasting value to Hispanic alumni. The tight connections between Hispanic youth ministers, youth, youth ministry organizations, and leaders and organizations in the local community create perhaps the best-case scenario for making use of DVULI skills, values, and practices, and provides the social support for youth ministry that builds a sense of efficacy and resilience in the face of difficulties, and a sense of hope. That is evident in the extent that Hispanic alumni are able to delegate to help others grow and involve youth in leadership activities in their ministry. It is encouraging that Hispanic alumni highly value DVULI and are very active in bringing its holistic vision of youth ministry to their local communities.

DVULI appears to be especially important for African American alumni, though the outcomes for African Americans are likely different from Hispanics given that the community and organizational context is less likely to have the social capital and institutional base from which African American alumni can build youth ministry (Klinenberg 2015). Still, we find that DVULI training is uniquely filling a need for space to grow leadership skills and orientations, especially assessment and reflection on personal and ministry growth, and to build organizational skills necessary for thriving youth ministry. That includes the high value African American alumni place on the Breakthrough Plan, and their ability to identify leaders, to engage in political life, and to accomplish their mission in local communities. Yet the challenge for African American alumni is daunting (Putnam 2015). These create obstacles to balancing work and personal life, and to working to empower co-workers and youth in their communities. Still, it is encouraging that the DVULI emphasis on community engagement and organizational bridges, while difficult within highly disadvantaged ministry contexts, is being carried by alumni into African American communities, including through community and political engagement of alumni. This contributes to the social and organizational capital most disadvantaged communities so desperately need.

Another general conclusion is that the precise influence of DVULI varies considerably by type of ministry organization. Alumni that work for nonprofit organizations have a more difficult time involving family and creating work/life balance, and have greater challenges organizing their youth ministry. But alumni in nonprofits have consistently strong relations to communities and have a singular focus on youth ministry. This may reflect the different orientations and sources of resources for civic organizations compared to churches. Nonprofit organizations operate in a different field, which creates a more complex environment for youth ministry. This in turn has implications for the impact of DVULI goals on alumni outcomes. Alumni in nonprofits especially gravitate to the holistic, bridging networks, and broad-based community emphases of DVULI. The flipside is that alumni in churches face a very different organizational context, which shapes the reception and implementation of DVULI. A broad religious and spiritual mission, an emphasis on mentoring, varied career paths, ministry specialization, and expectations for church-based youth ministry are reflected in alumni responses on issues as varied as respect on the job and (fewer) opportunities for cross-denominational and other bridging organizational efforts in local communities. The context for the work of alumni shapes DVULI outcomes. For example, youth ministry in churches starts with a sacred



building and church body, rather than a civic or public building and youth organized in schools, civic institutions, and neighborhoods. That creates different constraints and opportunities for youth ministry, including different orientations to local communities and organizations, which seem to emerge in how alumni respond to DVULI and its impact on their ministry.

DVULI has very different implications for those holding specific types of ministry positions as well. The not surprising finding is that alumni in “higher” level positions are very active in organizational networking and community engagement. Many of the “high end” leadership development tools available within DVULI have a natural fit with the position and tasks of executive directors and senior pastors. More important to theorize is the fact that “lower” level positions appear to have a difficult time developing and applying DVULI in their ministries, especially of the various skills and tools for building strong organizations. The important exception is areas related to personal growth in youth ministry, including personal and ministry assessment and seeking out and receiving feedback and mentoring. While there is some evidence that program coordinators and youth leaders have a good sense of their surrounding community, their ability to apply DVULI training to building external networks, resource networking, and community engagement is limited. Mentoring and sharing skills and values with co-workers is less likely as well.

Of course, the implication is not that program coordinators and youth leaders are not good candidates for DVULI. But it does point out the particular challenges that DVULI faces when trying to tailor training to the particular needs and challenges of specific ministry positions. This conclusion extends to our findings for ministry volunteers. The opportunities for implementing, and the impact of DVULI generally, is attenuated when alumni are in unpaid positions. One could argue, however, that in the longer run DVULI training will have a positive effect on the ability of volunteers and those in “lower” level positions to move into other youth ministry positions and develop a strong youth ministry. An analysis of the DVULI panel data will shed light on these longer-term effects of DVULI.

Further, education and DVULI training appear to have strong synergies. Whether it is more educated alumni, or, even more so, alumni who continue their education after DVULI training, the interaction of DVULI and education boosts several primary goals of DVULI. With few exceptions, the synergy between education and DVULI leads to positive outcomes, such as leadership development, planning, and reflection, and, especially, community networking and engagement. The impact of the Breakthrough Plan, increasing a sense of efficacy, empowering youth in ministry, assessment of ministry and developing personal ministry values and skills—each seems to be enhanced when combined with higher education or the pursuit of a higher education degree. DVULI has spent considerable effort encouraging further education among alumni, and, while difficult to accomplish, the strong and consistent findings pointing to a strong, positive impact of attaining an educational degree since DVULI on youth ministry orientations and skills provides further impetus to DVULI’s continuing education goals. That educational degrees obtained since DVULI matters for a broad range of youth ministry outcomes reinforces the argument that there is a strong synergy between DVULI leadership training and educational experiences in the local community.

For similar reasons, alumni with more years of experience in youth ministry seem to be doing more with DVULI across a broad range of youth ministry dimensions. This applies to youth ministry dimensions almost across the board, including efficacy and openness to change, leadership self-assessment, collaboration, empowerment, youth development, and community engagement. One interpretation of these findings is that it would be advisable to consider experience when selecting participants—something that DVULI is currently doing but may want emphasize further. We must keep in mind, however, that these consistent

findings could be revealing the long-term impact of DVULI. That is, the expression and fruition of DVULI may become clearer later in the careers of youth ministers. An analysis of the panel DVULI data will help to sort this out.

The differences between men and women in responses and use of DVULI are fascinating, but seem not to overwhelm the primary DVULI mission. That is, men and women have very similar learnings, benefits from, and success in bringing DVULI to the ministry field. Yet there are important differences that need to be kept in mind, and perhaps would point to different emphases for men and women in DVULI training and support. The use of skills of personal assessment, interdependence, accountability, dealing with relationship conflict, delegation, and collaboration tends to be higher among women (or a particular challenge for men). Personal assessment seems to be favored by women over organizational skills, and there is mixed evidence of higher work/life balance among women. Of course, one of the basic differences in impact of DVULI is due to the positions held by men and women, since women are more likely to be in ministry positions in which some aspects of DVULI are more difficult to implement.

Similarly, younger DVULI participants appear to have different training needs, and seem to benefit differently from DVULI in important ways. For example, some skills, such as resource networking and collaboration, are particularly useful and important to younger alumni. Younger alumni are more likely to be overwhelmed by difficulties and to feel anger because things feel out of control. Ministry assessment is valued more highly by older alumni, who also report a higher impact of the Breakthrough Plan and greater opportunities for mentoring and empowering followers. As with gender, age differences are not consistent across dimensions of youth ministry, which may reduce the need to tailor programming to different ages.

Finally, cohort differences deserve attention. Recent cohorts appear to be doing better on some outcomes, and seem to struggle with others. Discerning overall patterns in the findings for cohorts is difficult, and it is important to keep in mind that contextual and broader societal factors that vary across time may explain some of the cohort differences. Still, it appears that recent cohorts are stronger on accountability, youth development, and various leadership values and skills, especially related to collaboration. They also show strength in reflecting on personal and ministry strengths and weaknesses, and recent cohorts particularly value the skills of Accountability and Systems Thinking. Work/life balance has also strengthened in some ways among recent cohorts. It is encouraging that on key dimensions of servant leadership, including mentorship, reflection on goals and need for improvement, and empowering ministry teams, DVULI is increasingly effective at improving youth ministry leadership during challenging times for ministry. These efforts are particularly important for disadvantaged communities in our present crisis.

Related to the findings for cohort differences, there are several tentative conclusions to make regarding changes in the impact of DVULI. In recent years, DVULI has improved the extent that alumni rely on and benefit from mentoring, including honest personal and ministry assessment. Whether as self-assessment or incisive feedback from colleagues in youth ministry, recent alumni are responding to DVULI through an emphasis on teamwork and accountability. In general, according to alumni, DVULI training has helped to improve leadership practices, such as systematic planning for youth ministry. Important examples include: recent graduates are better at identifying limits when working on program strategies, see results of the Breakthrough Plan, and value and practice Systems Thinking. DVULI has successfully emphasized concrete practices of youth development, which is reflected more strongly among recent graduates, including sharing effective ministry skills and values with youth and offering leadership opportunities for youth. Overall, DVULI has strengthened outcomes related to servant leadership and youth.

## Chapter 2: Career Stage and DVULI Outcomes

One of the important questions about DVULI training is whether people in some social positions are more likely to benefit from the DVULI initiative, leading to the strengthening of youth ministry in their communities. Are there greater benefits in the field when DVULI pours time and resources into youth ministers at the early, middle, or later stages of their career? A related question is whether DVULI should be aware of or should tailor the program to the specific needs of youth ministers at different points in the career. What evidence do we have that DVULI outcomes vary by career stage in ways that indicate differences in the relevance of aspects of the DVULI program for alumni at different career stages?

The 2006 Alumni Survey report recommended that DVULI focus more of its efforts on mid-career youth ministers, since this group is better able—because of experience and social and organizational position—to appreciate and apply DVULI training in their current ministry. What evidence do we have that would support this argument?

The first take-away in this chapter is that career stage is not strongly associated with some of the important DVULI outcomes investigated in the alumni survey. On some key measures, there is substantial diversity in how various career stage groups respond to and incorporate DVULI training in their life and ministry. We do see patterns, however, that are suggestive and have implications for whether DVULI training is most impactful for mid-career alumni. The patterns discussed in this chapter show challenges for DVULI impact in the ministries of late career youth ministers, and several challenges specific to early career stage alumni. With some exceptions, there is evidence that mid-career alumni benefit broadly from DVULI training. The results also show some improvement over time in how DVULI training impacts the ministries of early career youth ministers.

Before looking at detailed analyses, we are reminded in the overall results presented thus far that some organizational or ministry positions have at least a short-term challenge in growing their youth ministry through the skills and support offered through DVULI. For example, those in unpaid positions and “lower” level positions are at times struggling to build on DVULI training, such as creating and implementing strategic ministry changes. And we found a good deal of evidence that years of professional experience mattered on many DVULI outcomes related to servant leadership. To the extent that career stage is related to ministry positions or years of experience, then we would expect that early career ministers have more difficulty applying DVULI training in their ministry contexts.

In this chapter, we take a closer look at the effect of career stage on DVULI outcomes. We take two approaches to the outcomes analyzed in this report so far. First, we split alumni into three groups based on their age when they entered the DVULI program: 20-32 years of age, 33-42 years, and 43-65 years old at time of DVULI training. We conduct three regressions using most of the variables from the previous chapters, except for type of organization (church, nonprofit, etc.) and organizational position variables (executive or senior pastor, program coordinator or youth leader, etc.), which are not available in the 2006 alumni survey data. In our basic analysis of career stage differences reported in this chapter, the first regression only includes age group at time of training, the second regression adds controls for basic demographic variables, such as gender, race and education, and the third regression adds work conditions by including a variable for those in unpaid positions and a variable for years of professional experience.

Second, we look for differences in “age” effects *over time*. The question we are trying to answer here is whether those in a particular career stage have different outcomes depending on when they went through the DVULI program. We split the sample into four “cohorts,” 1998-99, 2000-06, 2007-2012, and 2012-2018. Then we consider three regressions: the first includes the career stage groups, the DVULI cohort groups, and the interaction of DVULI “age” and cohort. The second regression adds controls for demographic characteristics, and the third includes all of these variables plus controls for unpaid positions and years of experience. The charts for this second set of regressions present the expected (or predicted) value for a particular career stage in a particular cohort.

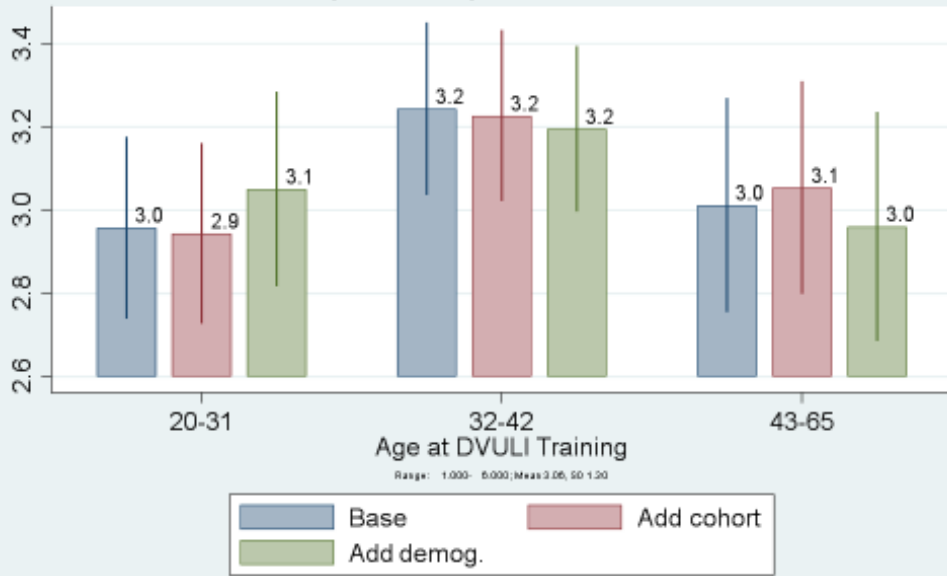
In general, across all outcomes, we do not find large and consistent differences on DVULI outcomes by career stage. Take for example the question of whether alumni identify limits, barriers, or constraints when deciding on program strategies. The basic regression shows some differences between alumni in different career stages, though the differences are not large (see charts below). The average difference (blue bars in bar chart below) reveal a slight advantage for mid-level alumni (average of 3.2), which is slightly higher than the average for early and late career alumni (average of 3.0). Since 1 equals “not at all,” and 5 equals “a lot” for this question, we are finding that the average is right in the middle of the scale, and the difference by career stage is relatively small. This difference between early and mid-career alumni narrows to 3.2 versus 3.1 after we control for demographic and work condition differences between these career stage groups (see the red bars in the bar chart below).<sup>3</sup> The mid-career alumni Thus, we conclude that there is a very slight advantage to mid-career alumni on identifying limits and constraints, though the career stage difference after controls is small.

Secondly, we consider whether career stage differences depend on the particular DVULI “cohort” (a set of years) attended by alumni. Consider first the most recent cohort, 2013-18 (the orange line in the line chart below). We see that early career alumni in this cohort are only slightly lower on identifying limits than the mid and late career alumni. This career stage comparison is much different in the earliest DVULI cohorts. In the 1998-1999 cohort (the blue line in the middle chart below) the older career stage alumni are much lower on identifying limits than the mid or early career stage alumni. What is more interesting is the change across cohorts for the late career alumni, which were much lower in the 1998-99 cohort, but improved across each cohort until they are nearly equal to the mid-career alumni in the most recent cohort. This could reflect changes in the selection of late career alumni, or changes in the DVULI program that now better reaches or influences alumni in late career. The other interesting pattern is that mid-career alumni seem to be slightly higher than early or late career alumni in each cohort. We see this since for all lines, the mid-career average is at least slightly higher than the early or late career average. As noted, however, the difference between mid and late career alumni on this outcome has diminished over time. Finally, consider the career stage differences across cohorts after we control for demographic and work conditions variables (the line chart below on the right). The patterns remain similar. The orange line is now even flatter, indicating few differences across career stage in the most recent cohort after standardizing the groups for differences in demographics and work experience.

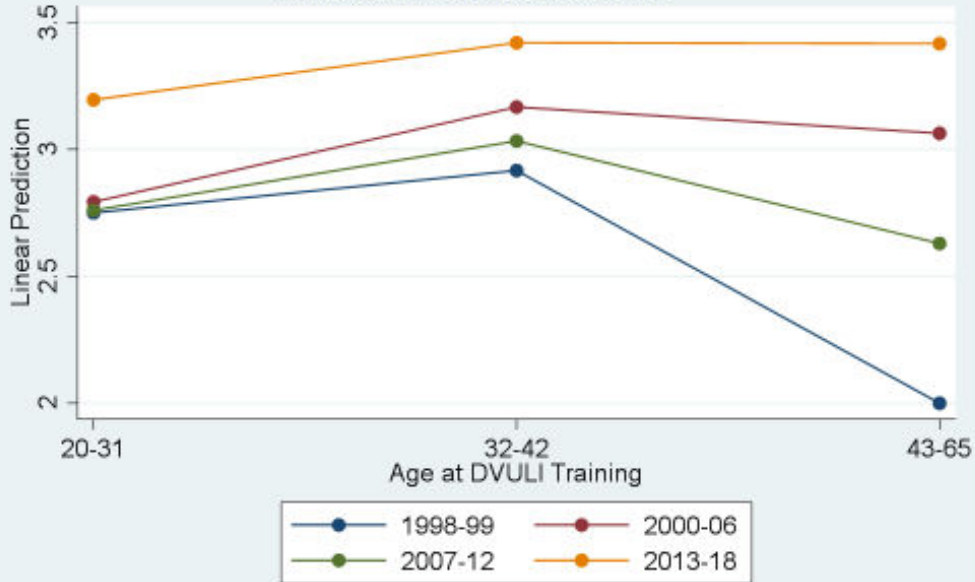
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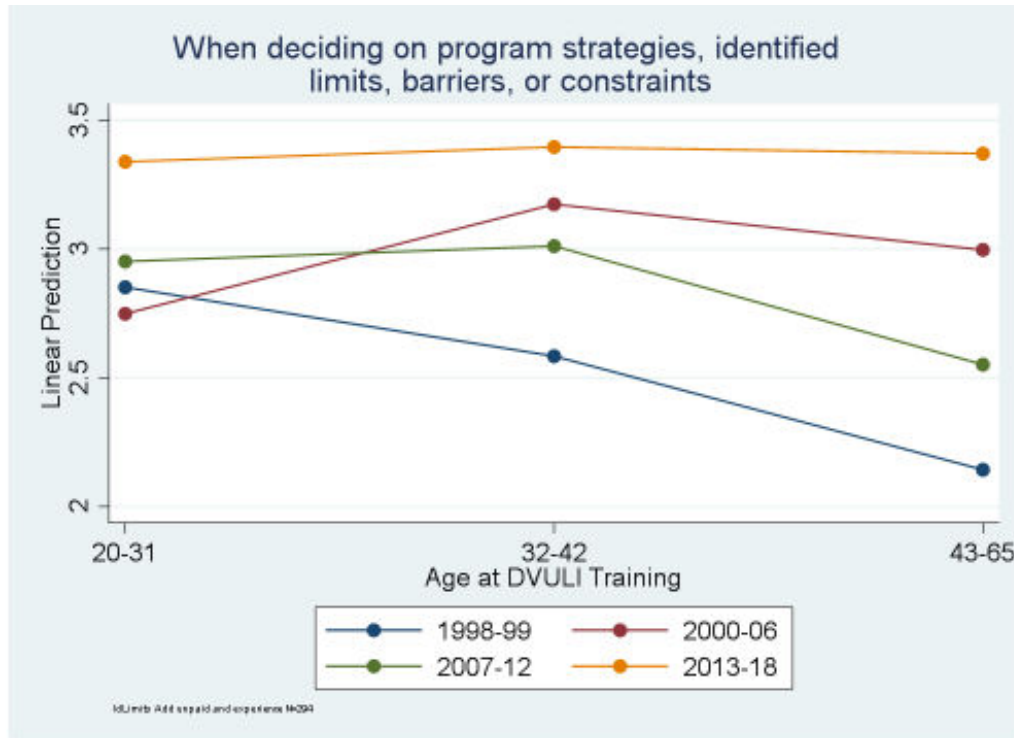
<sup>3</sup> This narrowing of the difference is likely because mid-career alumni are more likely to have more years of experience or more years of education, which explains part of the difference between early and mid-career alumni in identifying limits and constraints when deciding on program strategies.

When deciding on program strategies, identified limits, barriers, or constraints



When deciding on program strategies, identified limits, barriers, or constraints





A final take-away from the line charts is that the emphasis on identifying limits and constraints is improving across time. Note that the orange line is higher than the other lines, indicating that the average for the recent cohort is higher for all career stages.

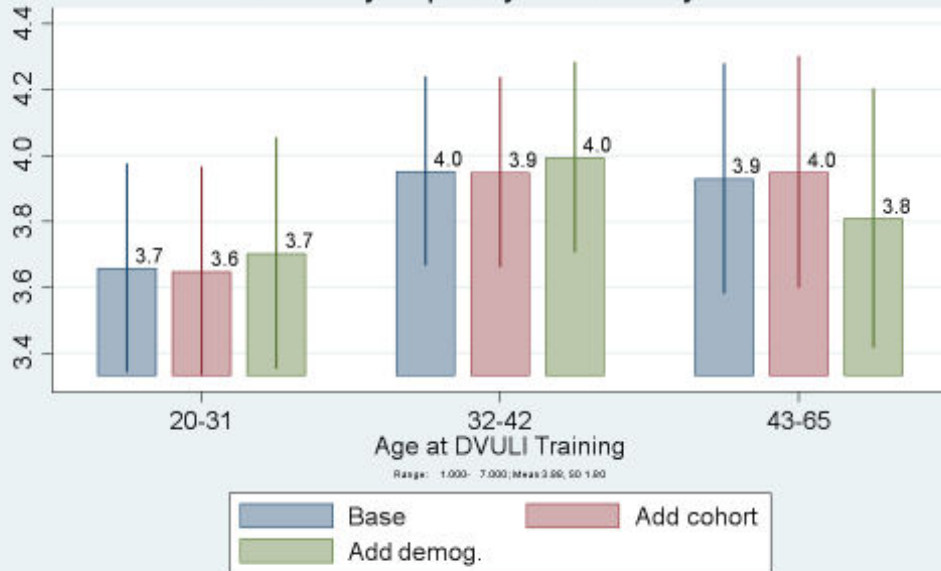
The discussion thus far provides a model for “reading” the DVULI outcomes by career stage. In what follows, we point out the most striking career stage differences in our survey findings. These findings provide clues to the different challenges faced by alumni in each career stage.

### Personal Life and Ministry

We find a few career stage differences in DVULI outcomes related to personal life and ministry.

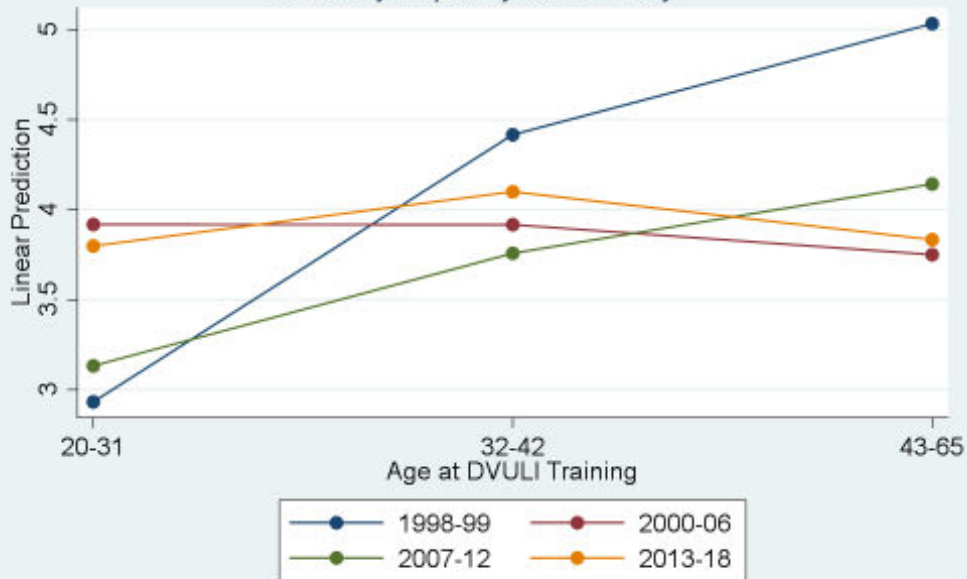
Early career alumni, for example, are somewhat lower on the question of examining beliefs, images and assumptions as these impact their ministry. But note that this finding is less true of the most recent cohorts (orange and red lines), where we find instead that late career alumni show slightly less likelihood of this form of personal examination. We conclude then that DVULI training has done a better job in recent years of helping early career youth ministers examine beliefs and assumptions as they impact their ministry.

### Examine your beliefs, images, and assumptions and how they impact your ministry

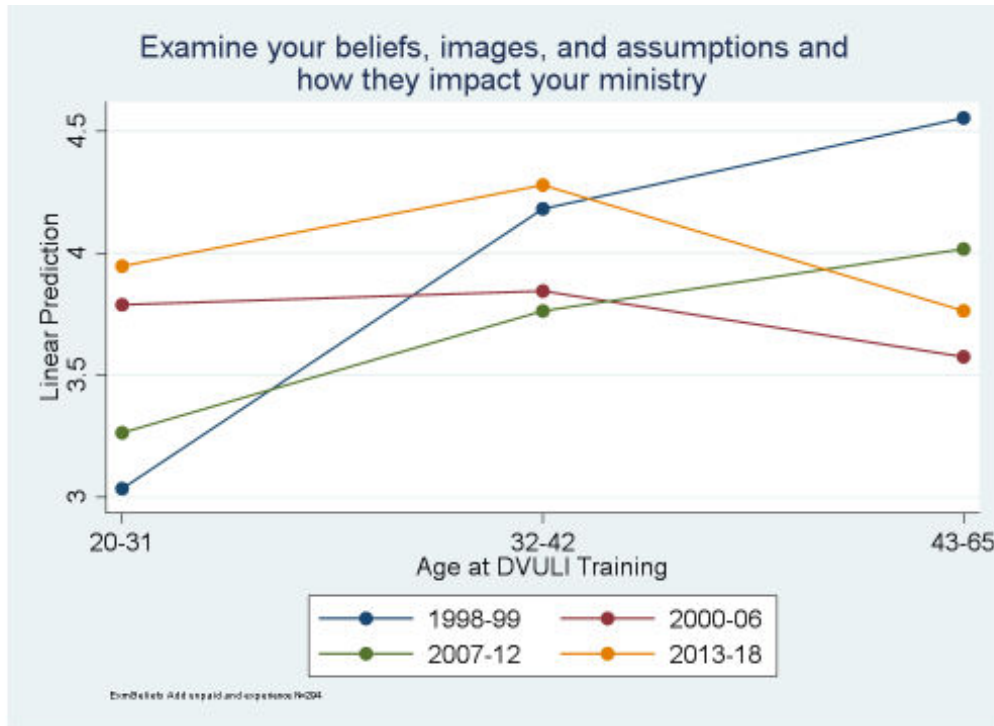


ExamBeliefs / PropAge03 / CohortM / Female / Race2 / EduBA / EduS / IncDVUL / Mix / POC / Mix / Other / PopMin / Yof / PopMin / CohortM / 1

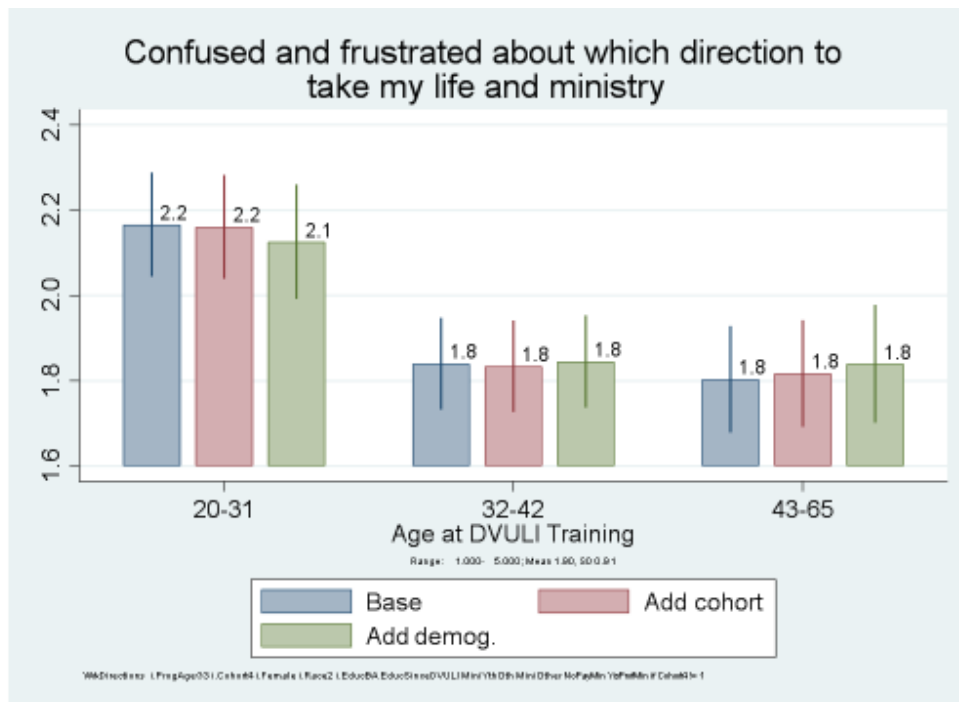
### Examine your beliefs, images, and assumptions and how they impact your ministry



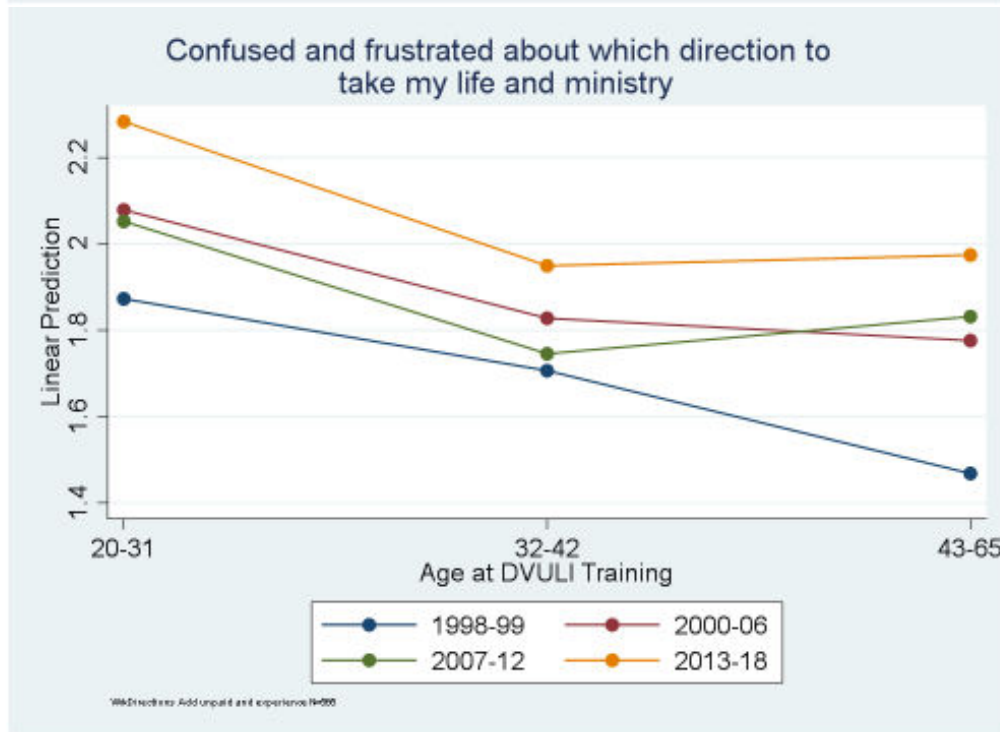
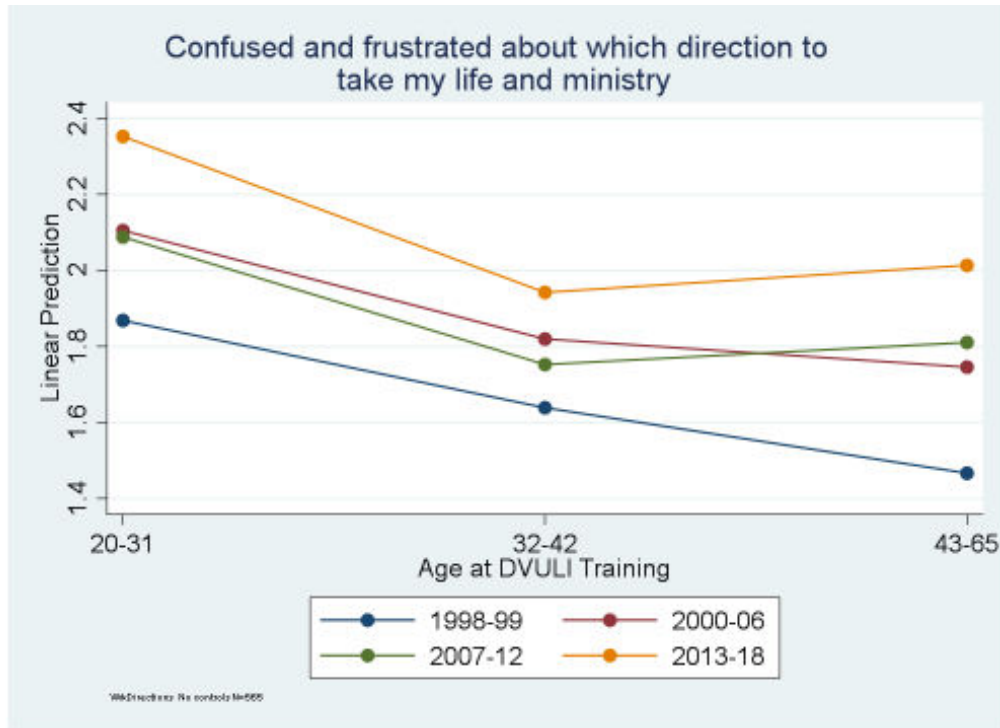
ExamBeliefs / No controls / M204



This early career difference holds for the question about whether alumni are confused and frustrated about which direction to take in life and ministry. Early career alumni are more likely to agree with this statement. In contrast to examining beliefs, recent cohorts (orange and red lines) reveal the same pattern. Later career ministers have their direction in life and ministry, perhaps because they are able to build on DVULI successfully, but one of the key struggles for early career ministers is direction and mission.

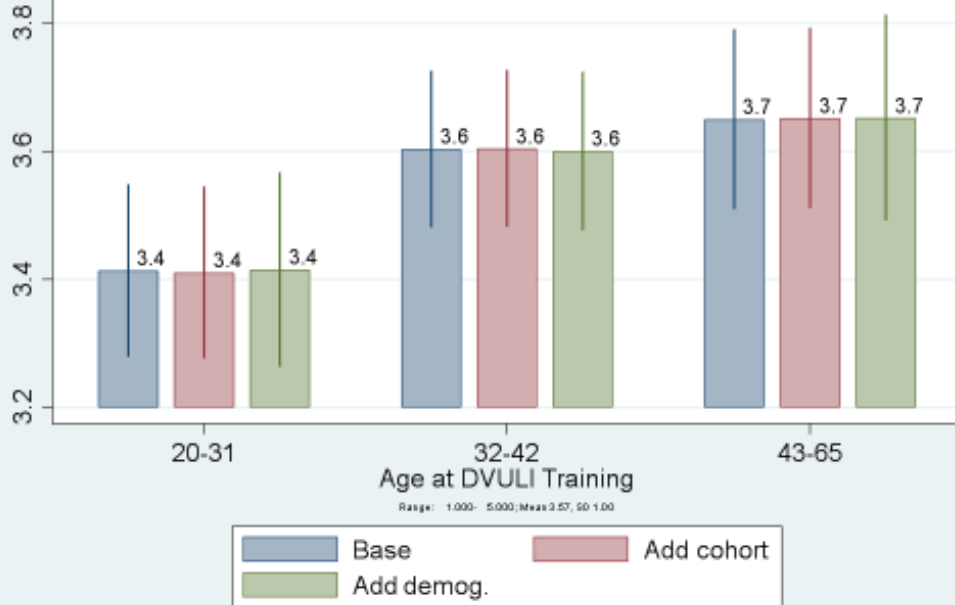






Practicing the Breakthrough Skill of Personal Assessment is less frequent among early career alumni. In the most recent cohort, however, the late career participants are slightly less likely to practice this Breakthrough Skill. It is not clear why early career ministers would be less likely to practice Personal Assessment, but perhaps the mid-career alumni are better able to take advantage of DVULI training in this area.

### Practice breakthrough skills (freq.): Personal assessment

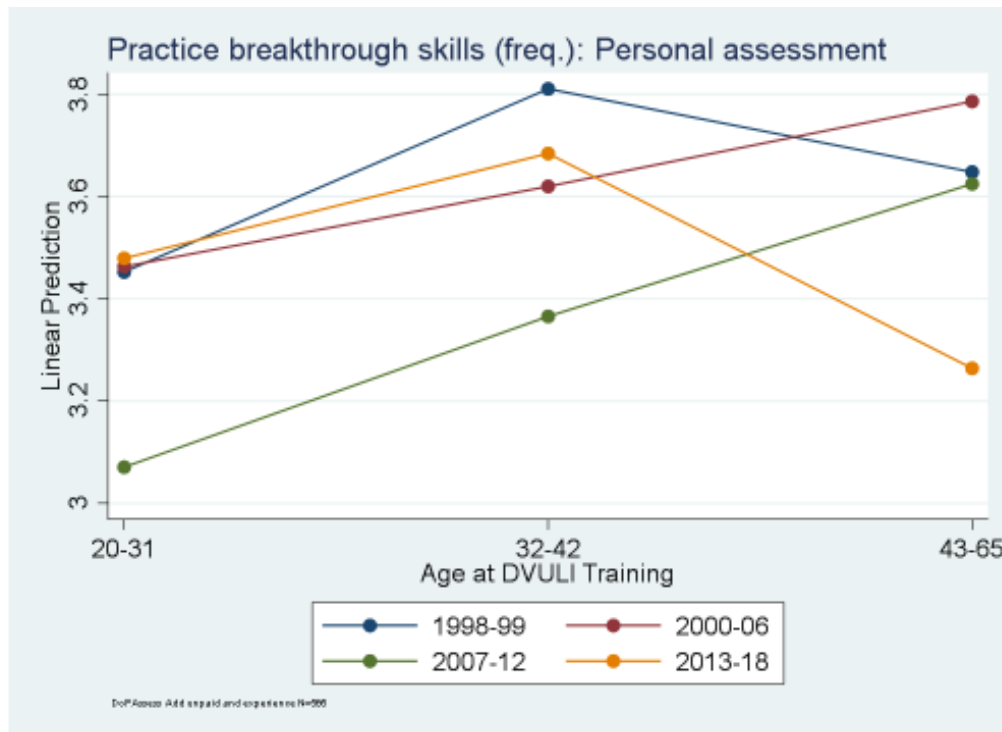


DoFAssess | ProgAge03 | Cohort | Female | Race2 | EthnicBAE4s | StressDVULI Mix | FOMA Mix | Other | Risk | Pain | Yo | Health | Cohort | 1

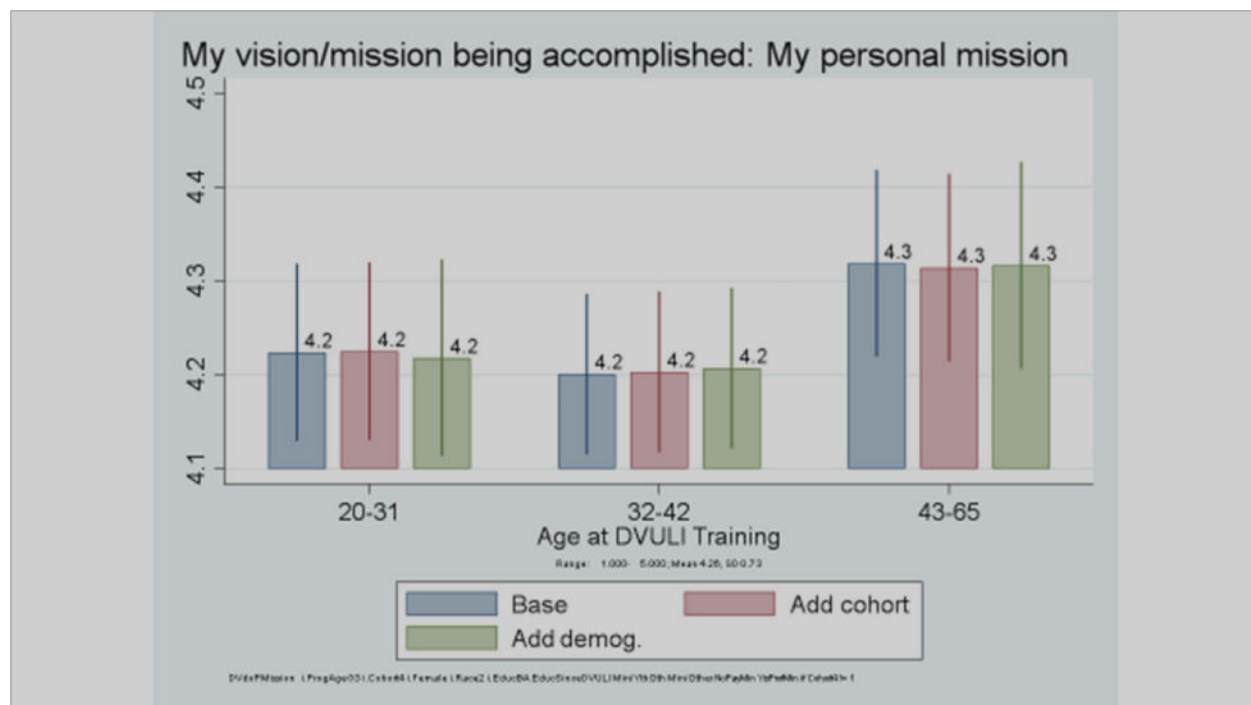
### Practice breakthrough skills (freq.): Personal assessment

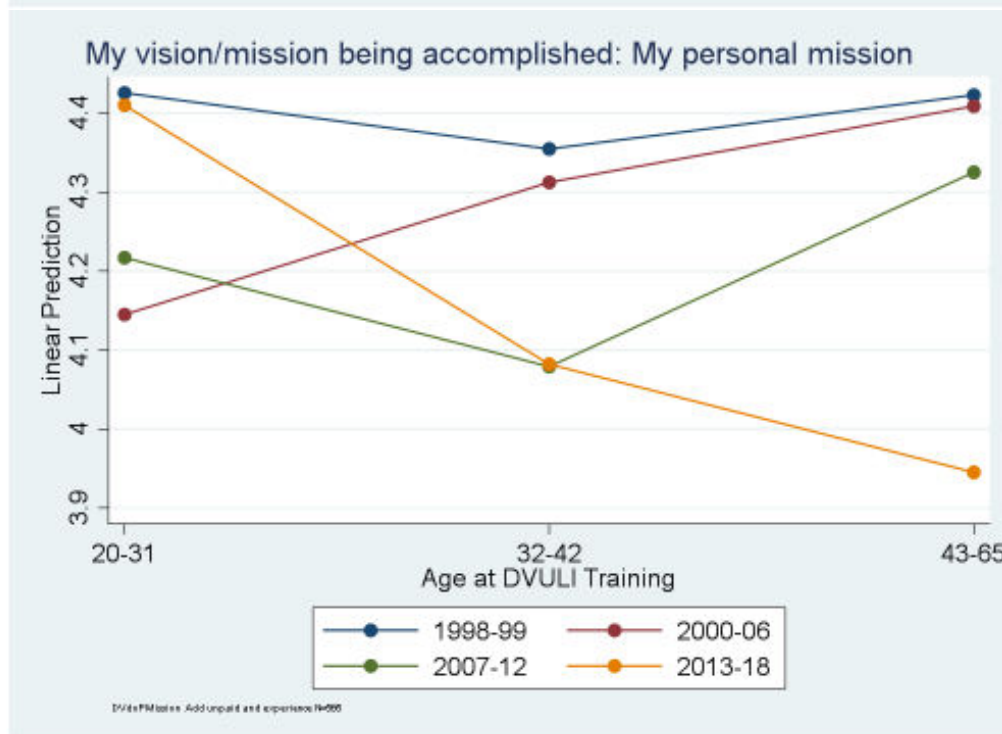
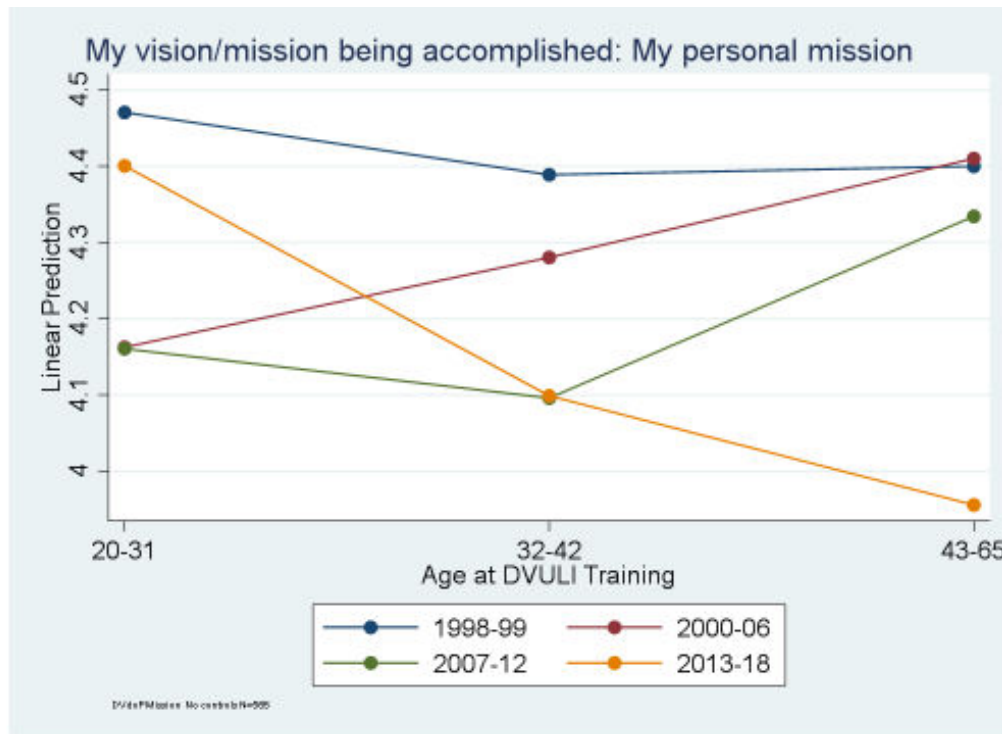


DoFAssess | No | center | N=555



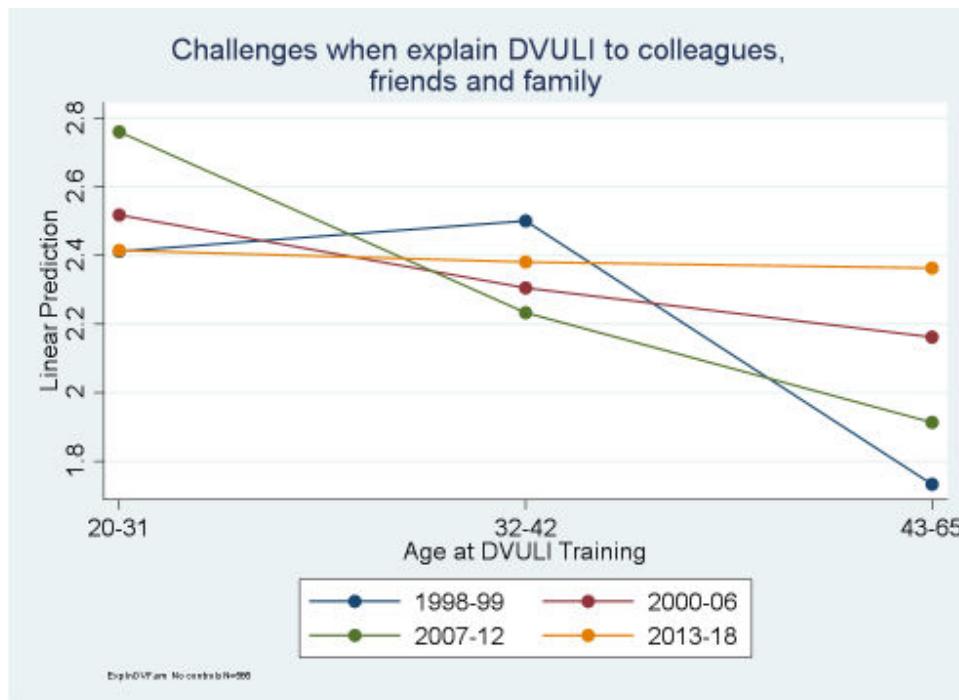
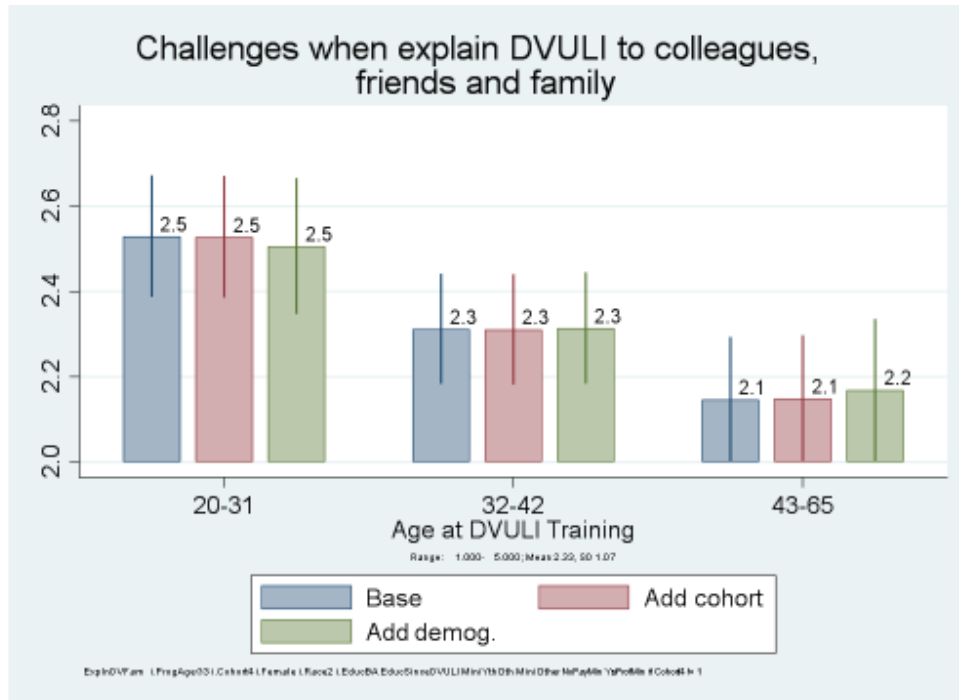
At the same time, in the most recent cohort, early career alumni are more likely to agree that their personal mission is being accomplished in their life and ministry.

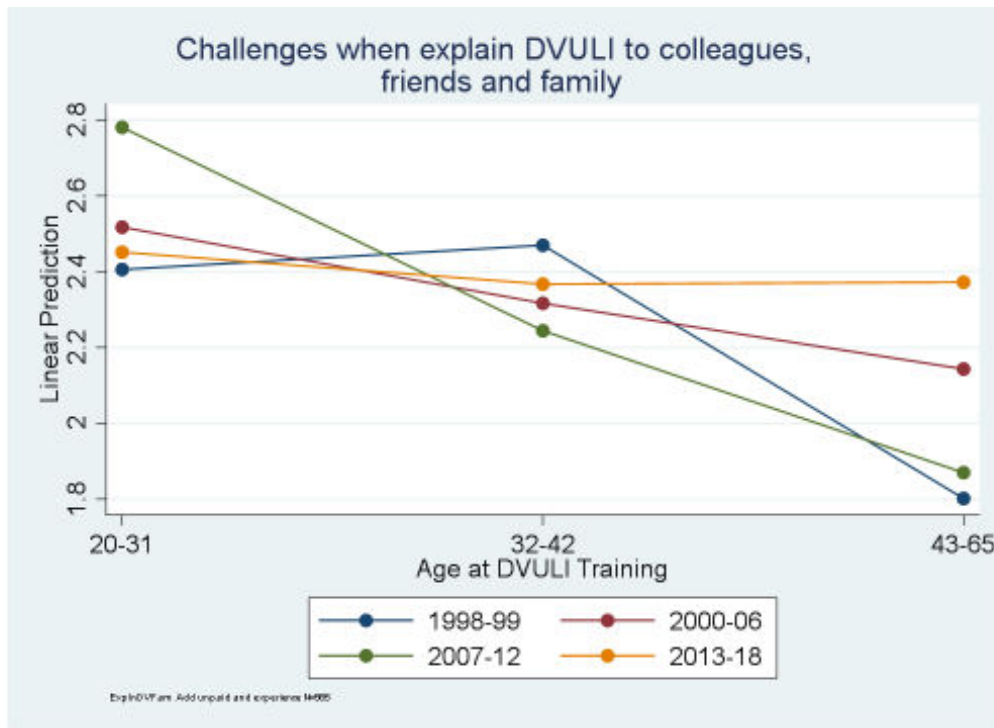




Late career alumni report a better balance in their use of time for personal and ministry goals (chart not shown). There is slight evidence that balance of time is slightly more difficult for mid-career alums. That use of professional time matches ministry goals is lower among early career alumni.

Overall, we find that early career alums experience slightly greater challenges in explaining DVULI to colleagues, friends and family, but this is not the case in the most recent cohort. It seems likely that DVULI training has improved in its ability to prepare early career alumni to explain their leadership training to others.





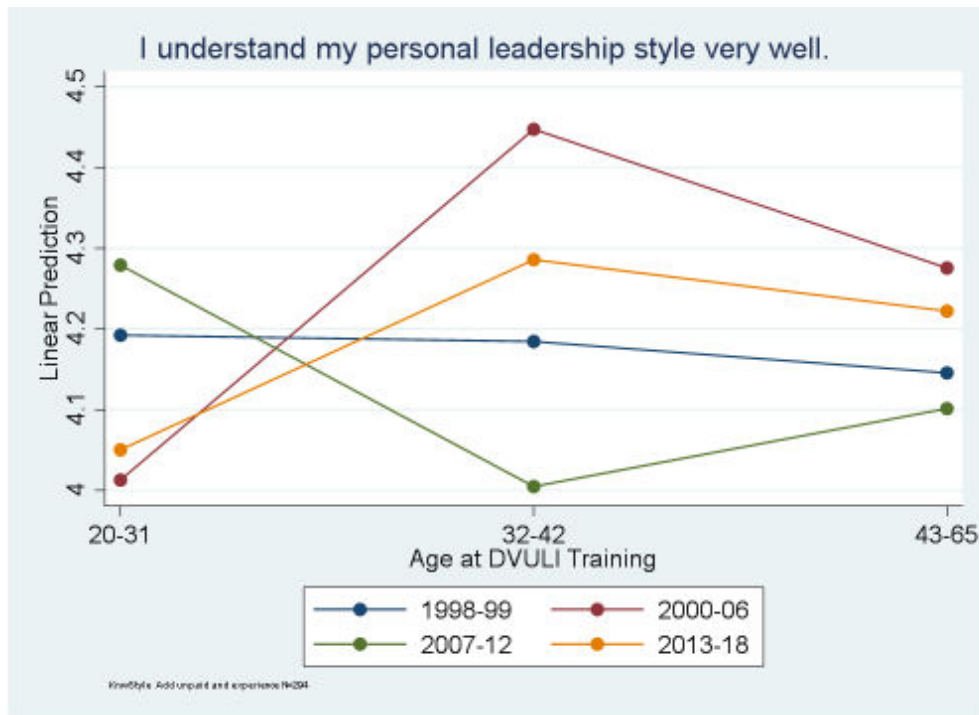
While career stage differences are not consistent across measures of personal life and ministry, we find some evidence of improvement in DVULI outcomes for early career alumni, including a stronger sense of personal accomplishment in ministry. However, early career alumni appear to have greater challenges balancing life and ministry, and finding clear direction in life and ministry. There is some evidence that DVULI training is doing a better job of helping early career youth ministers explain DVULI to colleagues, friends, and family.

### Leadership Styles

We would expect that mid-career ministers are at the place in their career where they can benefit from DVULI efforts to build servant leadership skills and orientations.

We find that early career alumni have somewhat less understanding of their personal leadership style. In more recent cohorts, early career alumni are particularly likely to agree that they are somewhat unclear about their personal leadership style. Mid and late-career alumni seem to be doing somewhat better on this score.

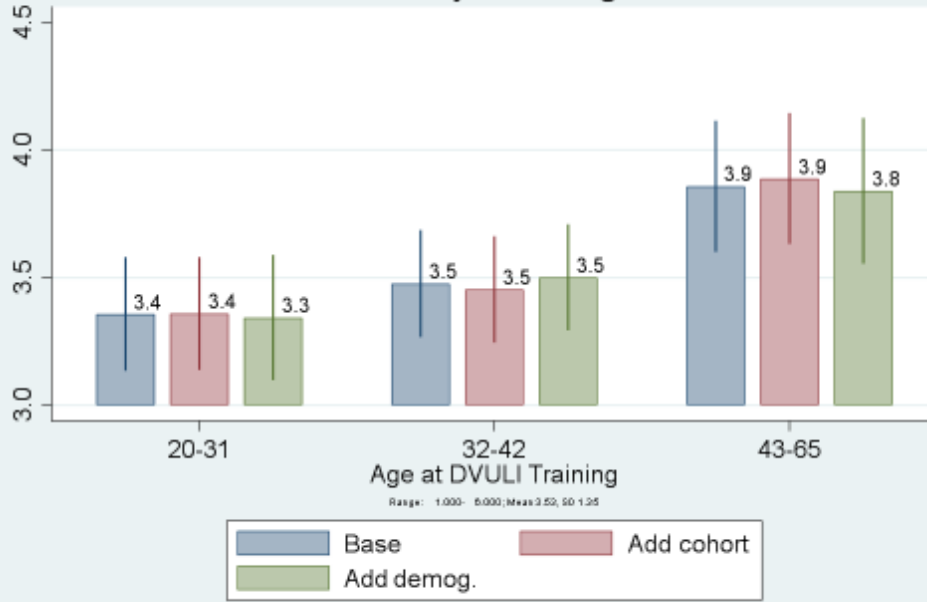




The mid-career and late career alumni are more likely to set aside time to reflect on their growth as a leader. The late career advantage on this dimension perhaps reflects their years of experience, such that late career alumni become more reflective or simply have more years to reflect on their leadership growth. This finding is quite consistent across cohorts, though interestingly we see a strengthening among early career alumni across cohorts. In the most recent cohort, early career alumni are doing nearly equally well on this measure. This could reflect DVULI improvement in influencing early career alumni to set aside time to reflect on their growth as a leader.

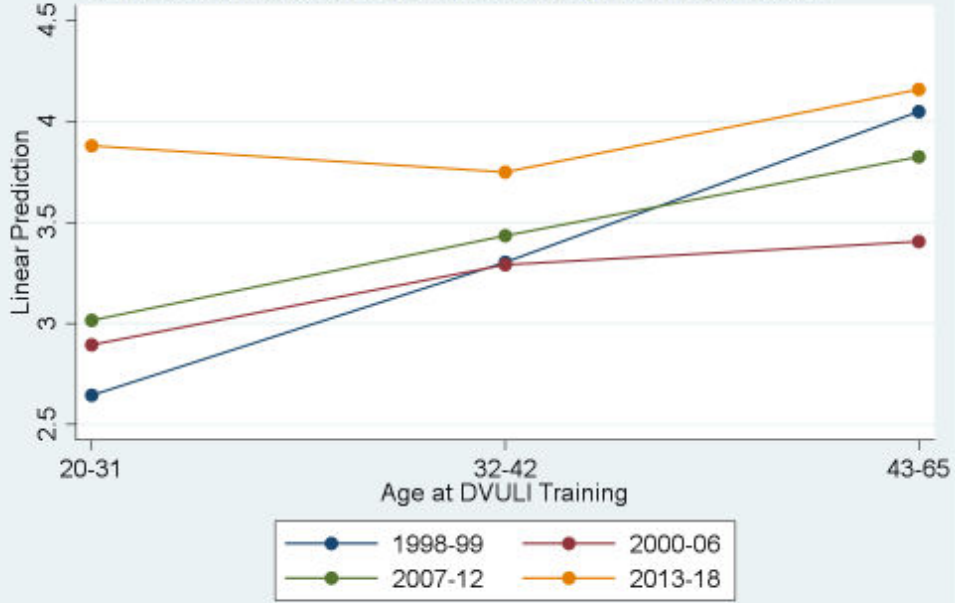


### Set aside time to reflect on your own growth as a leader

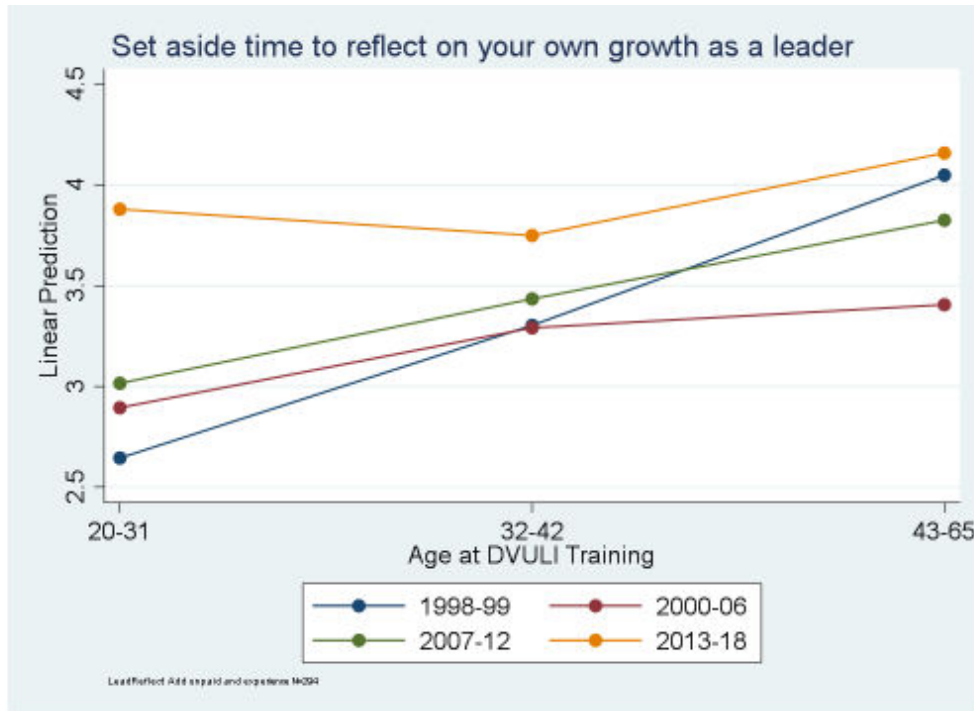


LeadReflect | Program 03 | Cohort | Female | Item 2 | Edit | Add | Edit | DVULI Mix | Other | Mix | Other | Mix | Other | Mix | Cohort | 1

### Set aside time to reflect on your own growth as a leader

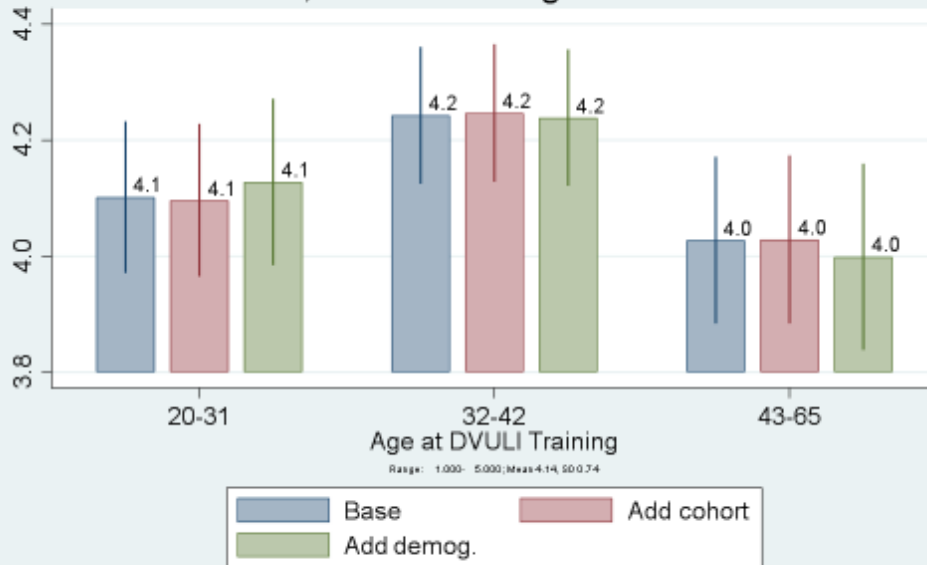


LeadReflect Add unpaid and experience MD04



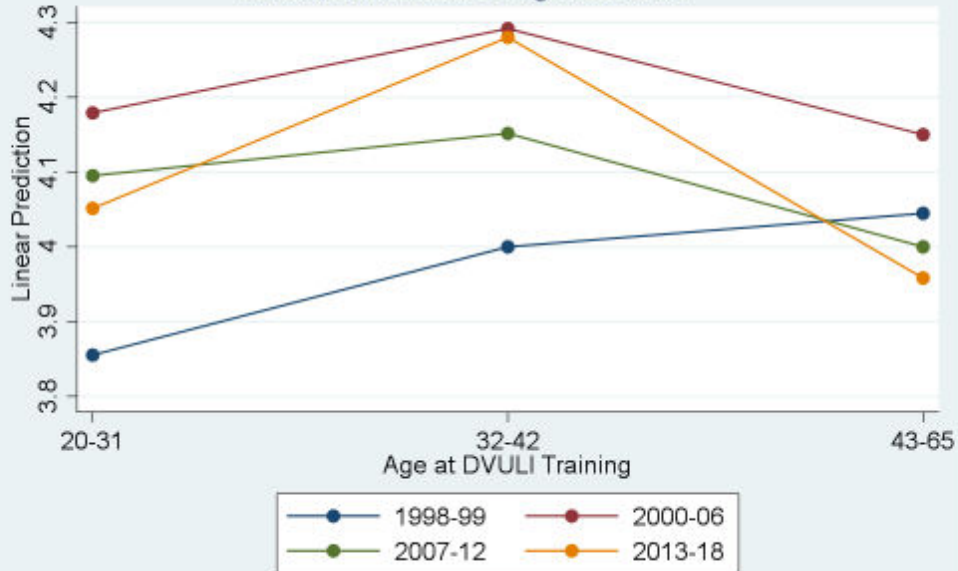
The mid-career alumni have an advantage regarding ministry planning. Thinking about what could happen in the future that impacts ministry is more likely among mid-career alumni, and this is particularly the case for the most recent cohorts, 2007 through 2018 (orange and red lines). Again, this could support the claim that DVULI training is well-suited to the mid-career stage.

I think about things that could happen in the future, how those things could aff

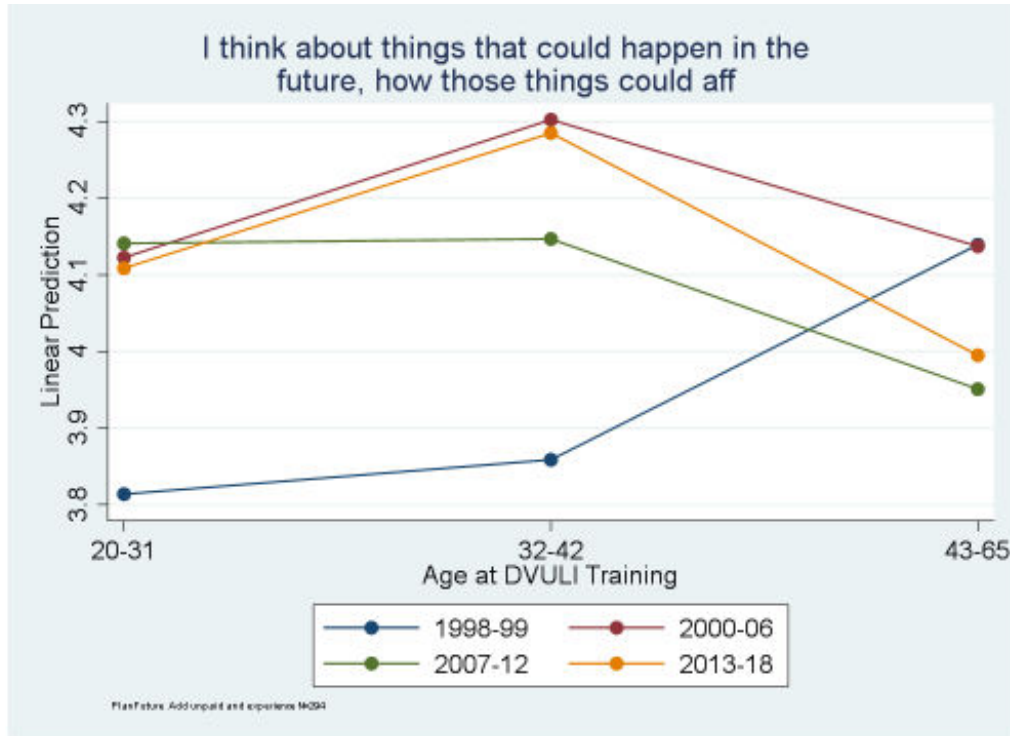


PlanFctns: L.FragAge(3) | Cohort | Female | Race2 | EduDBA | EduSt | EduSt | DVULIM | Y18 | M | Other | MPA | M | Y | P | M | # | Cohort | 1

I think about things that could happen in the future, how those things could aff



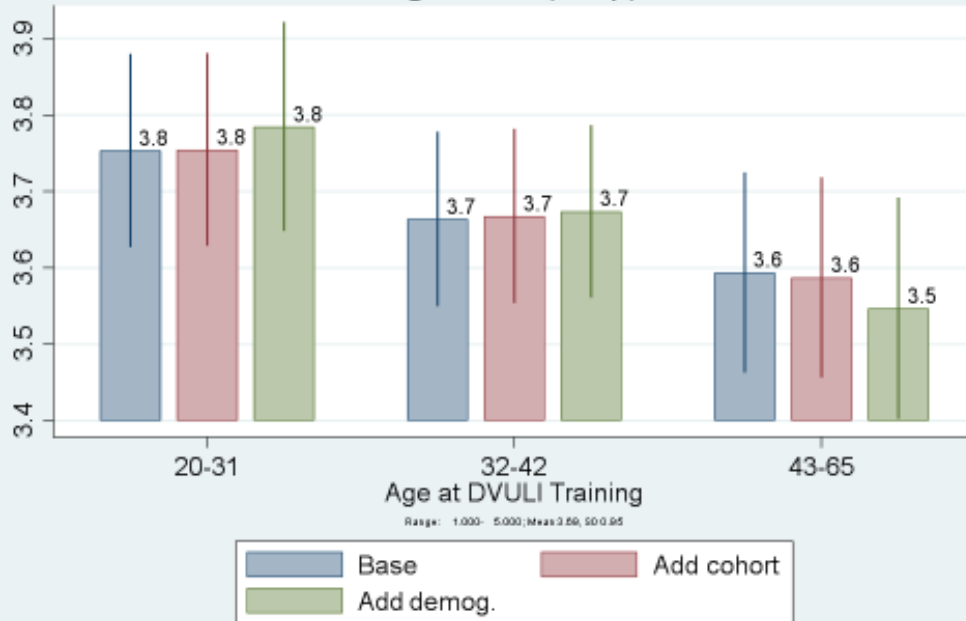
PlanFctns: No contribs=294



Interestingly, we see some strengthening of collaborative leadership styles among early career alumni in the most recent cohort. Making changes through collaborative work is higher among early career alumni (chart not shown). Collaborative training in DVULI seems to have strengthened for early career alumni in recent years.

Moreover, the frequency of practicing the breakthrough skill of Collaboration is higher among early career alumni, though the difference is primarily with late career stage alumni. Mid-career alumni are similar to early career in the practice of Collaboration.

Practice breakthrough skills (freq.): Collaboration

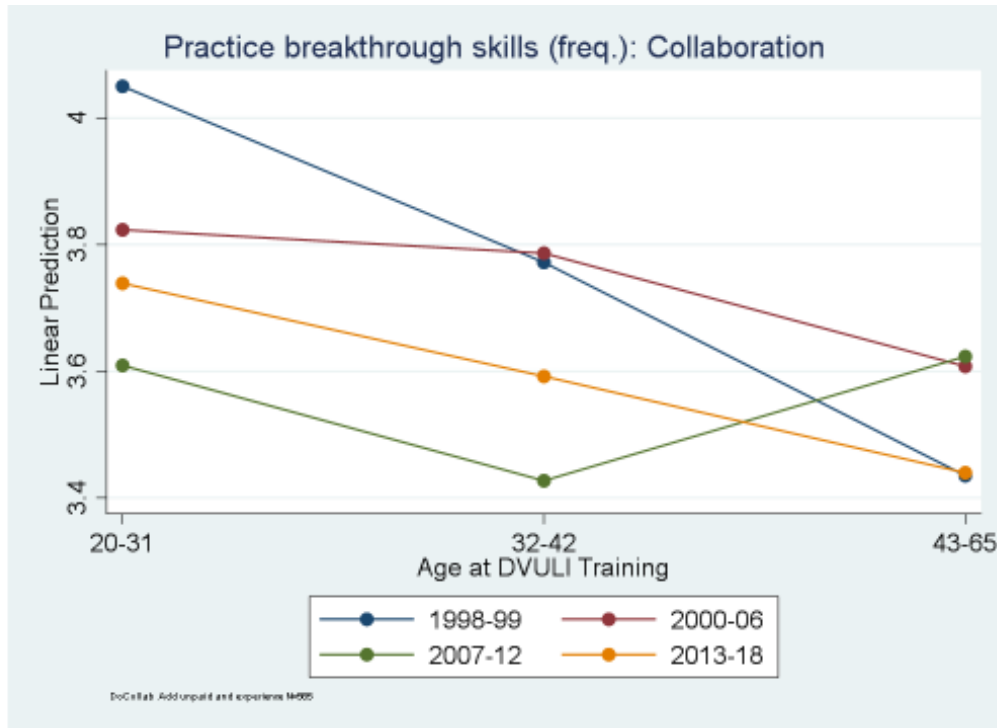


DoCoLab | PrepAge(31) | Cohort4 | Female | Race2 | EducBA | EducStres | DVULI | MiniY18 | Dh | MiniDhr | M | P | M | S | Y | H | O | M | S | # | Cohort | N = 1

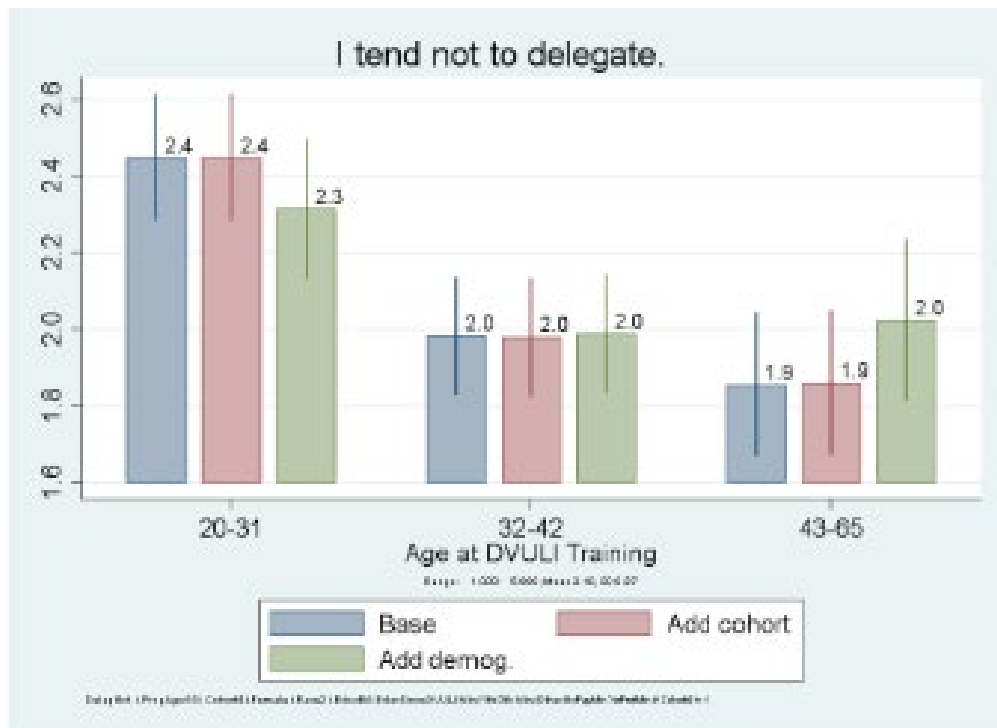
Practice breakthrough skills (freq.): Collaboration

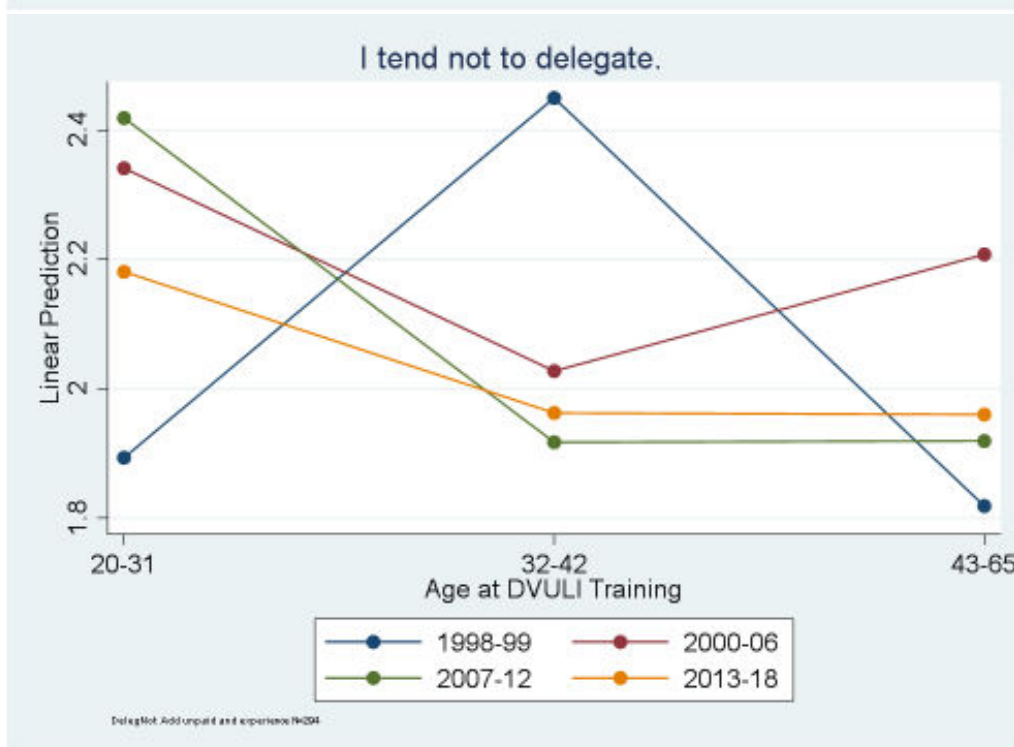
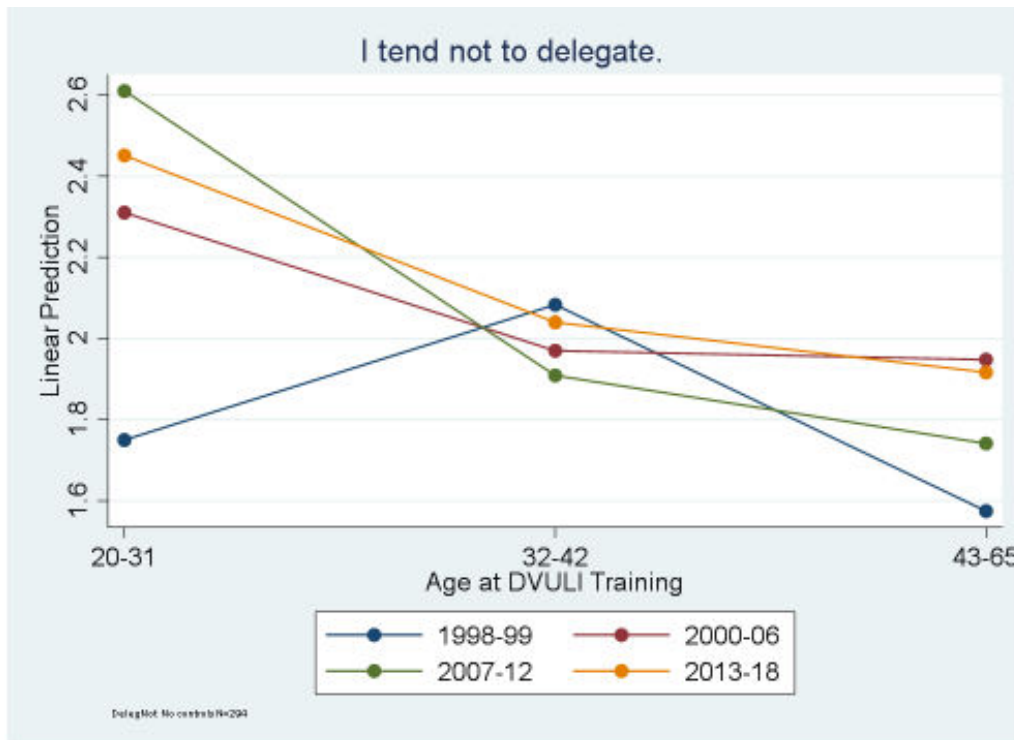


DoCoLab | No | co | str | b | N = 98



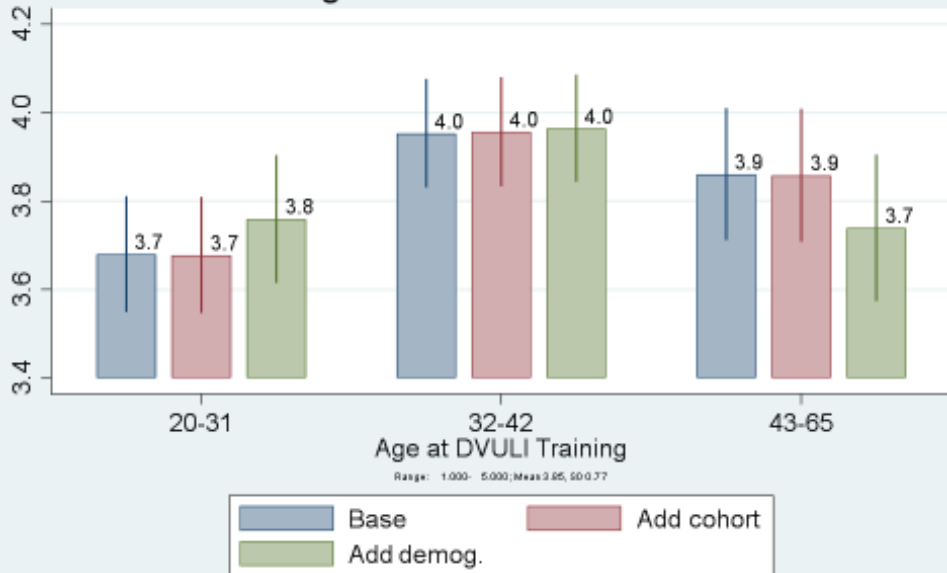
We also find that early career alumni, especially in the most recent cohort, are less likely to delegate tasks. Perhaps this reflects specifics of the kinds of positions that early career alumni tend to occupy. Again, however, this could provide further evidence that mid-career ministers are better prepared to benefit from the primary DVULI emphases.





Early career alums do less to encourage ministry leaders to prepare for change, while mid-career appear to do more of this. This difference holds for the most recent cohorts. This may indicate an advantage for mid-career ministers in applying DVULI training in their ministry.

I encourage other ministry leaders to prepare for changes that could affect thei



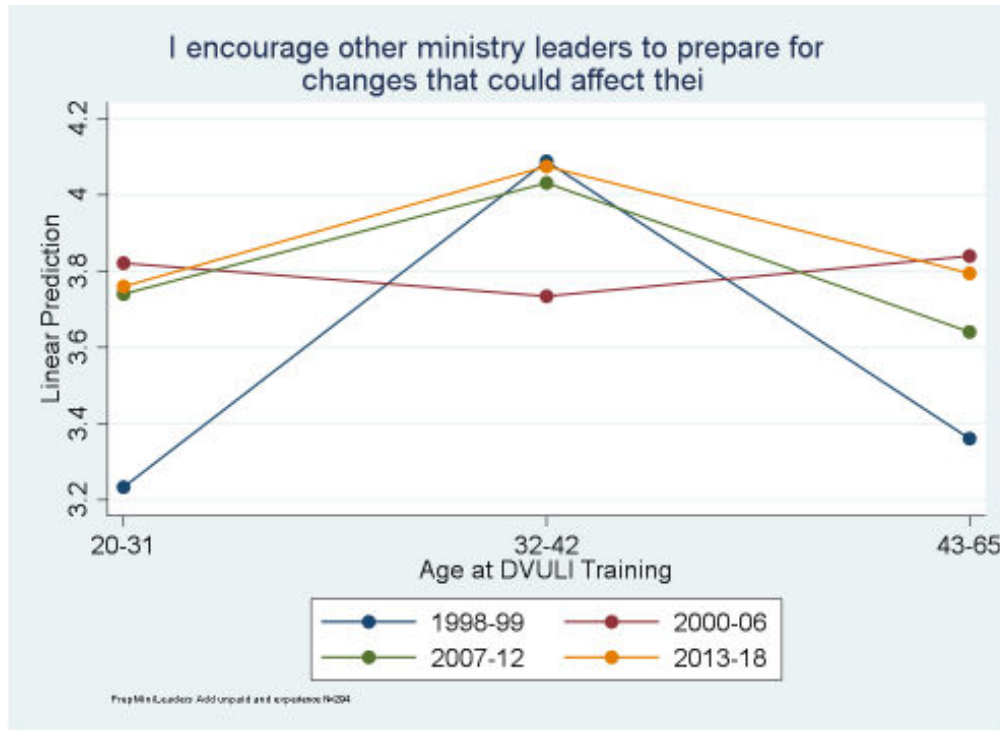
PrepMinLeaders | PrepAge001 | Cohort | Female | Race2 | EducBA | EducDiss | DVULI | Min | 15 | 0 | 5 | Min | 0 | 5 | 0 | 5 | Min | 1 | 0 | 5 | Min | 1 | Cohort | 1

I encourage other ministry leaders to prepare for changes that could affect thei



PrepMinLeaders | No control | N=294





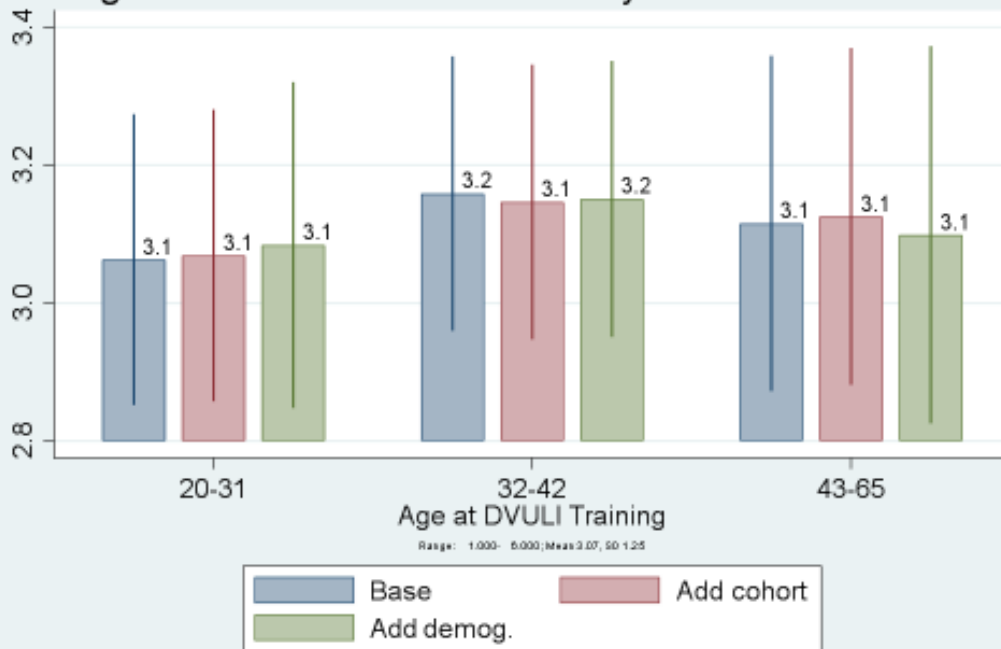
In terms of leadership style, we see some strengths for mid-career alumni, and these appear to hold in the most recent cohorts. We should mention, however, that early career alumni are quite strong on collaborative forms of leadership.

### Mentorship

An important aspect of leadership style is mentoring other leaders, and growing through interaction with others in ministry. Mid-career ministers may be better positioned to play a strong mentorship role.

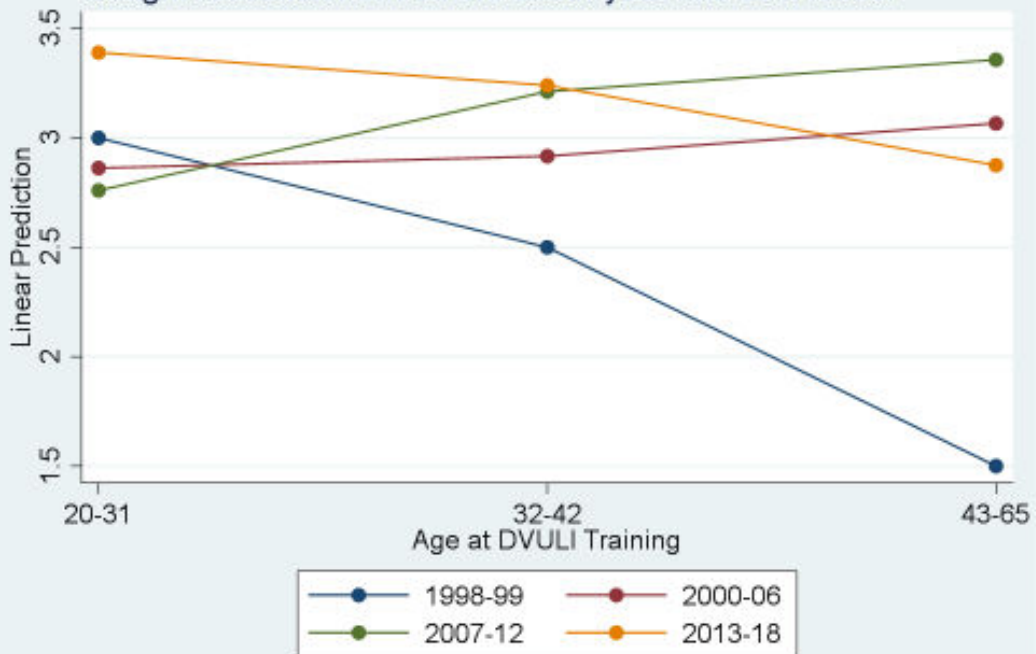
We find that early career youth ministers are just as likely to seek feedback from others about their role as a leader. This holds especially for the 2013-18 cohort. Early career alumni are also more likely to meet with a mentor for ministry or personal life guidance. This is particularly the case in the latest two cohorts. This is consistent with the claim that DVULI training has improved on the issue of mentorship, and this has improved for early career alumni in particular.

### Sought feedback from others about your role as a leader



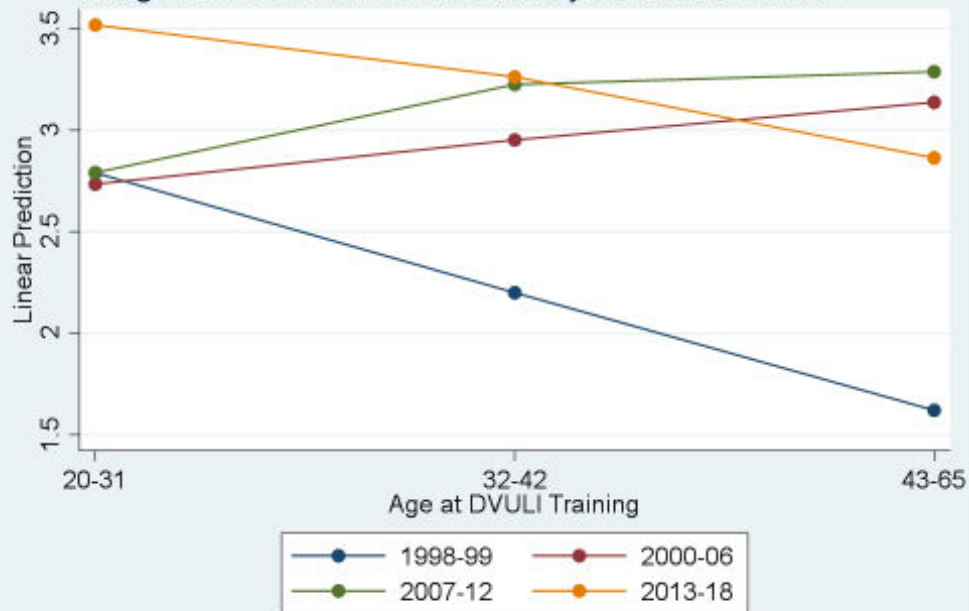
LeafFeedback | PropAge03 | CohorR1 | Female | Race2 | EduBA | EduS | Inc | DVULI | Min | Other | Min | Other | No | Pay | Min | Yo | Fed | Min | CohorR1

### Sought feedback from others about your role as a leader



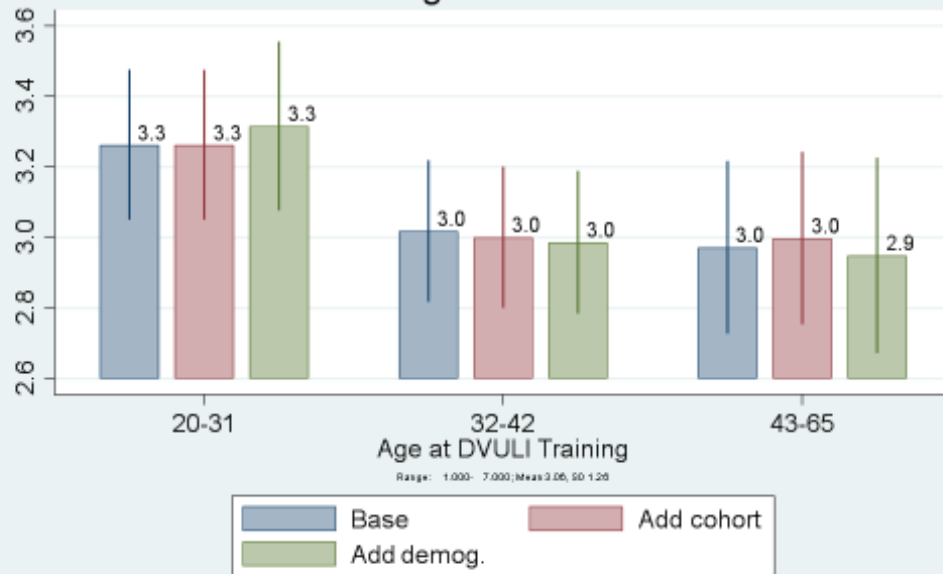
LeafFeedback | No controls | N=294

### Sought feedback from others about your role as a leader

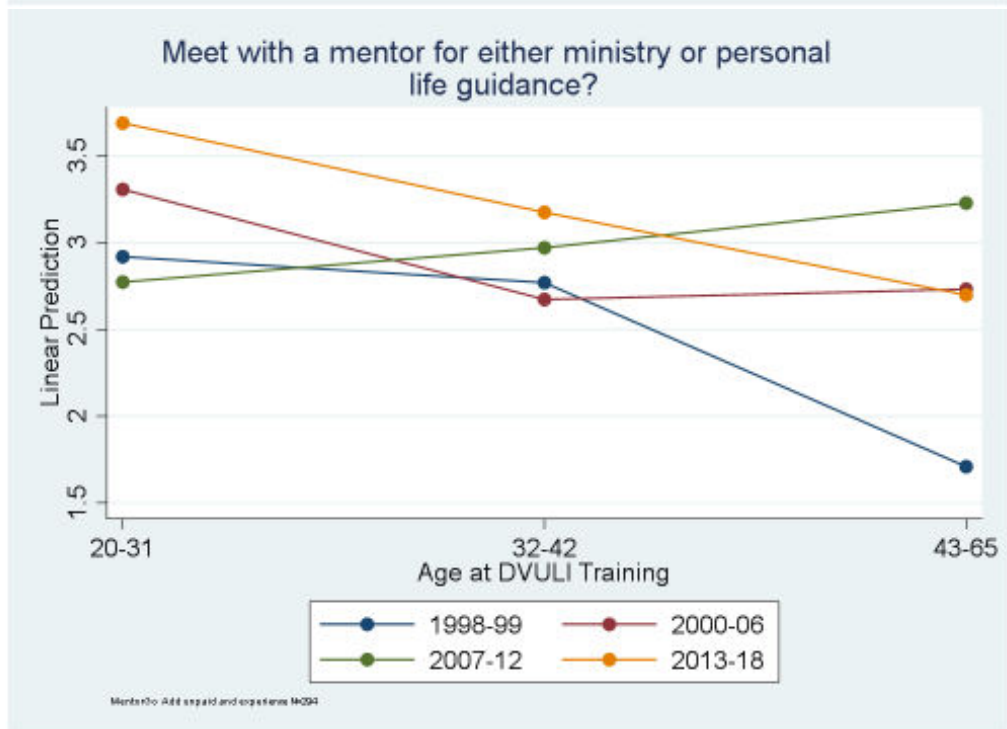
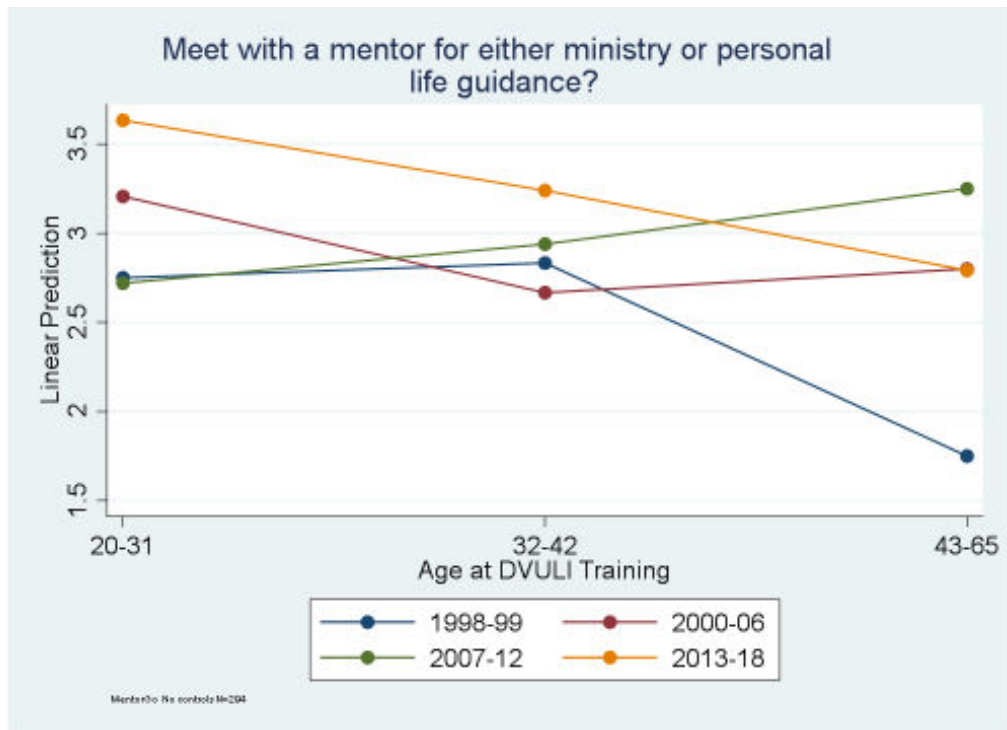


LeafFeedback Add cohort and age group (PC)

### Meet with a mentor for either ministry or personal life guidance?

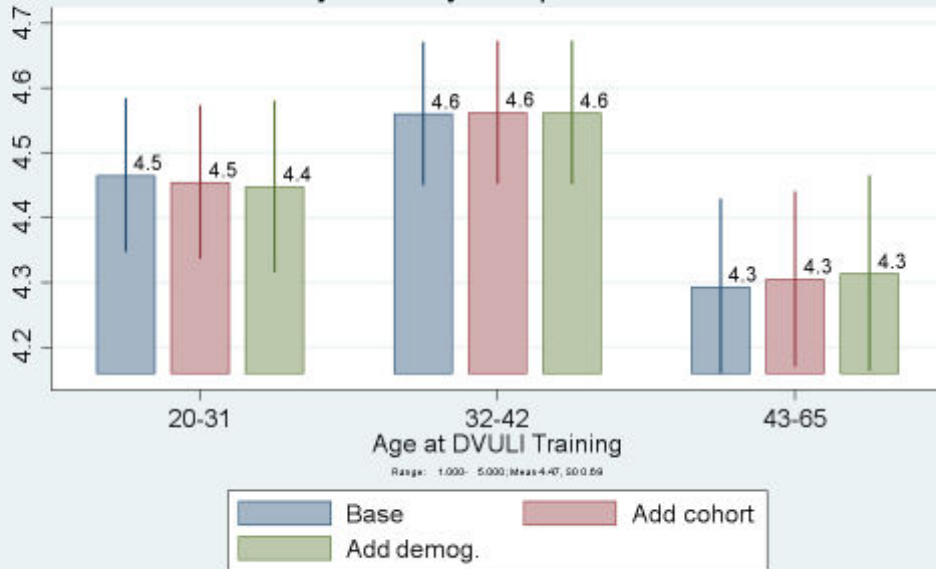


Mentorship | PropAge03 | Cohort | Female | Race2 | Ethnic | Age at DVULI | Mix | Other | M | Pay | Min | Whole | # Cohort | 1



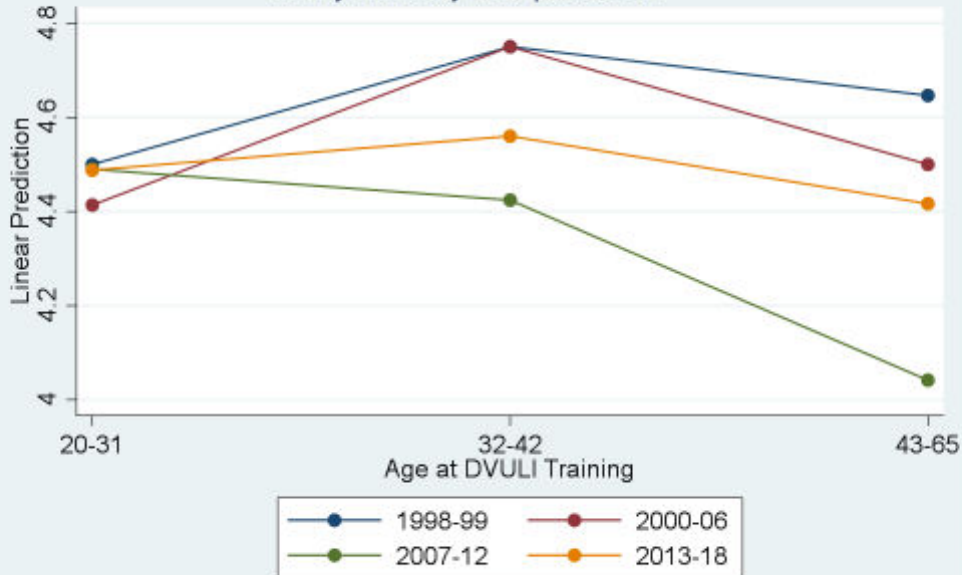
Mid-career youth ministers are slightly more likely to agree that they give trusted others permission to give feedback on life and ministry. This advantage for mid-career is smaller in the latest cohort. In the most recent cohort, DVULI training appears to be reaching alumni regardless of career stage.

Give trusted others permission to give me feedback in my ministry and personal I

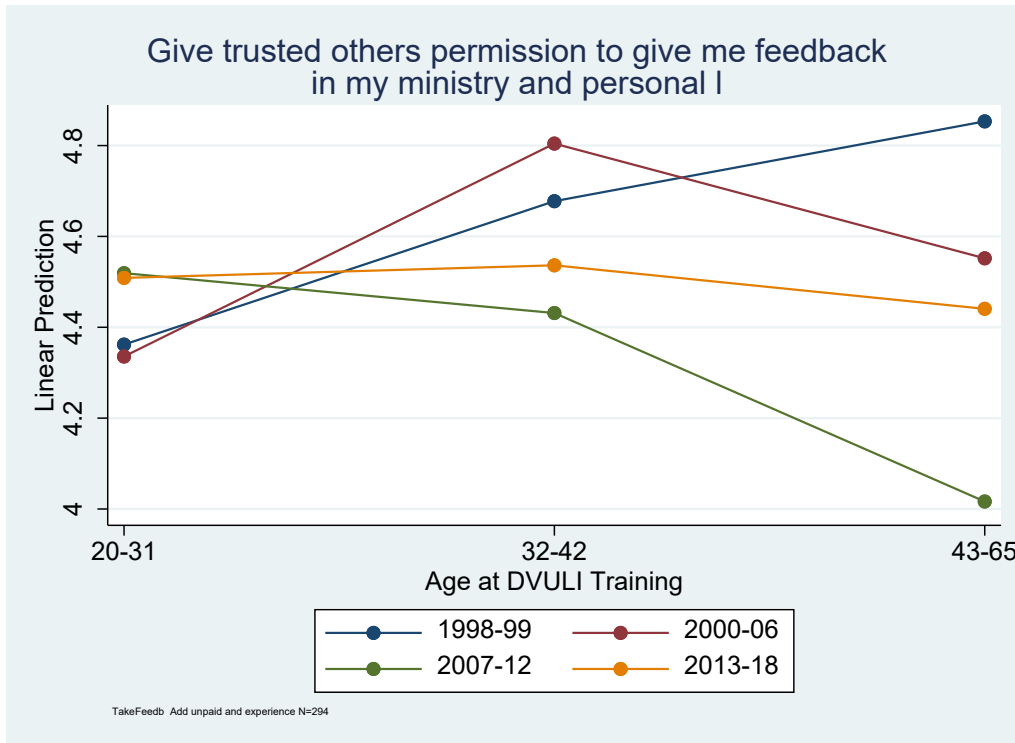


TakeFeedb: 1/ProgAge03 LCohort1/Female1/Race21/EthnicBA/EthnicDVULI/Mix1/BOB/Mix1/Other1/NoPhyAb1/NoPhyAb1/Cohort1

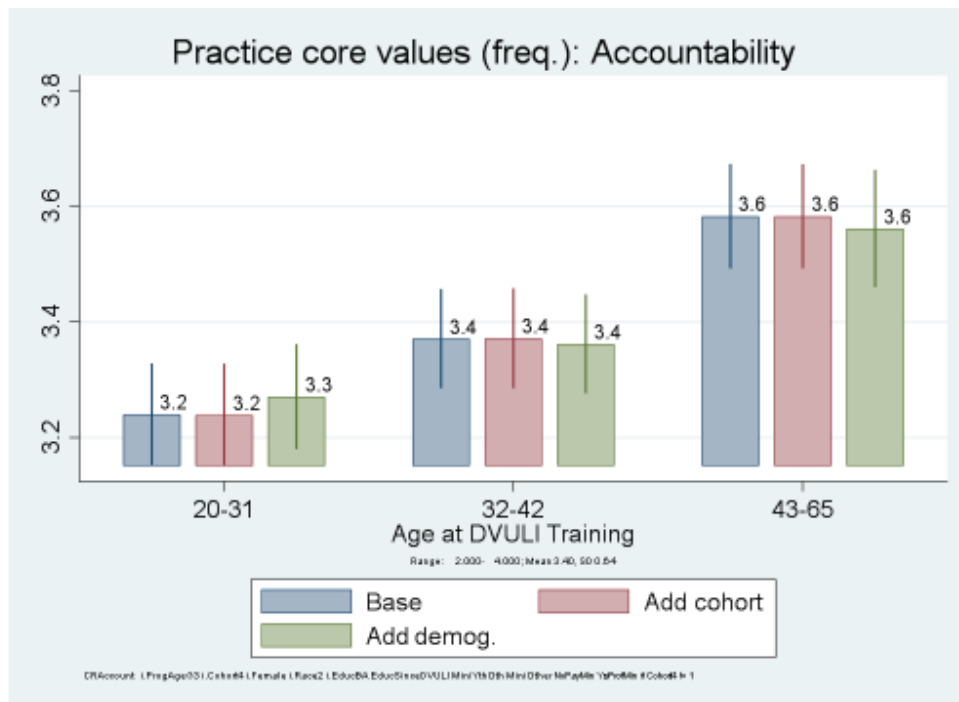
Give trusted others permission to give me feedback in my ministry and personal I

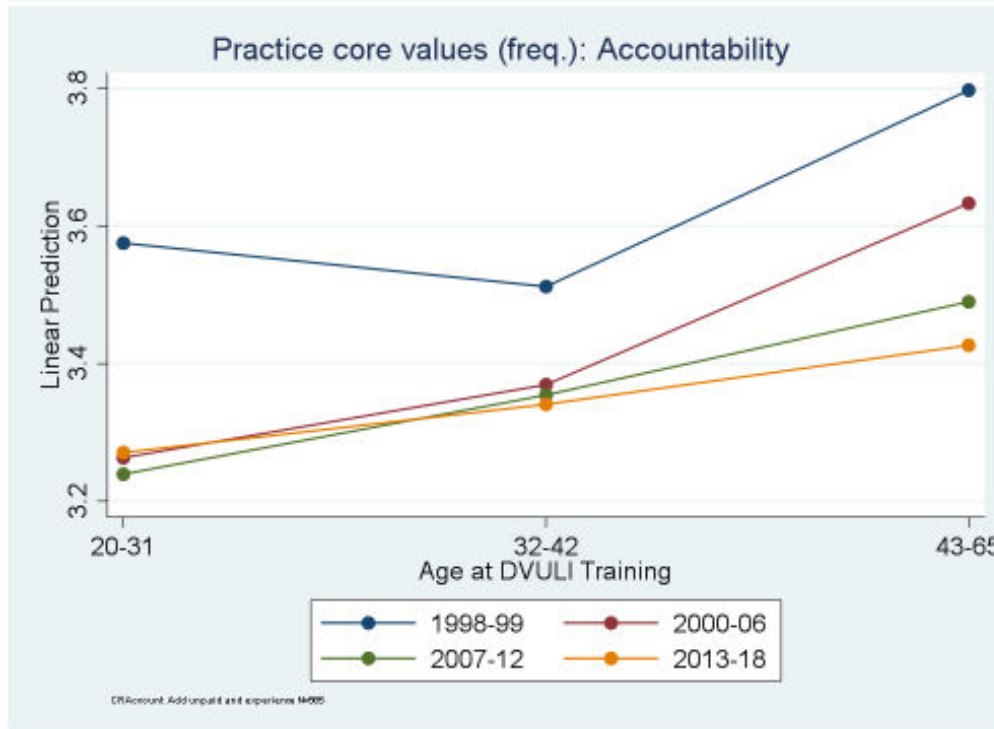
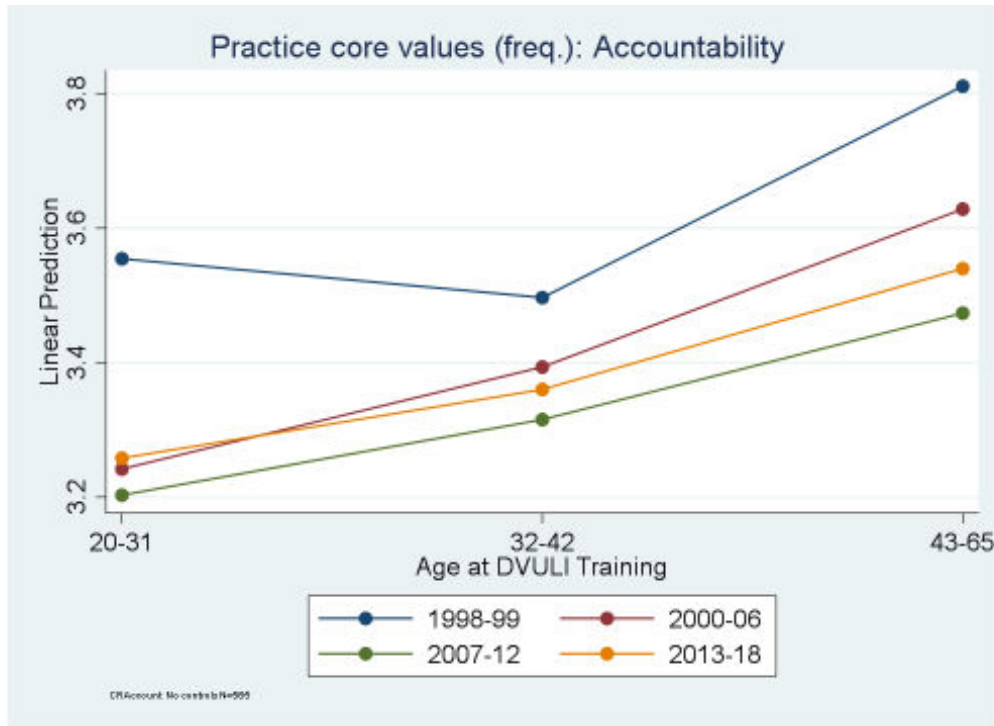


TakeFeedb: No controls/M204



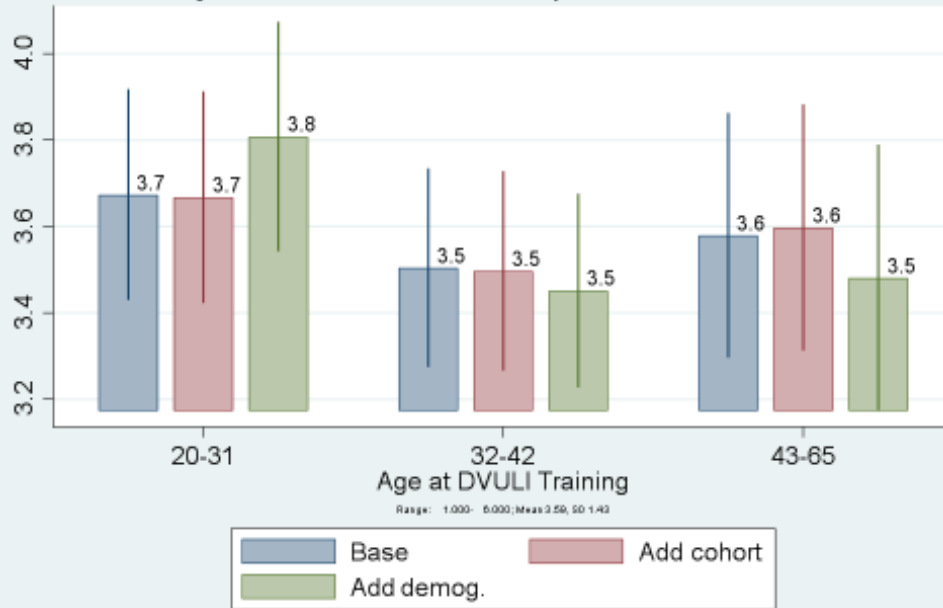
Practicing the core value of Accountability is lower among early career and higher among late career alumni. Mid-career alumni appear to be slightly higher on the practice of Accountability. Again, we find some evidence that early career ministers have a more difficult time building on DVULI training.





In the most recent cohorts, mentorship of key subordinate leaders is higher among early compared to late career alumni. This career stage difference extends in the most recent cohort to having subordinates participate in leadership skill-building opportunities. And the size of this mentorship difference is larger when alumni are asked if they have intentionally invested in the development of other leaders, especially in the most recent cohort. Early career alums are quite strong in identifying leadership styles and skills of subordinate leaders, and this holds especially in the most recent cohort.

### Intentionally invested in the development of other leaders



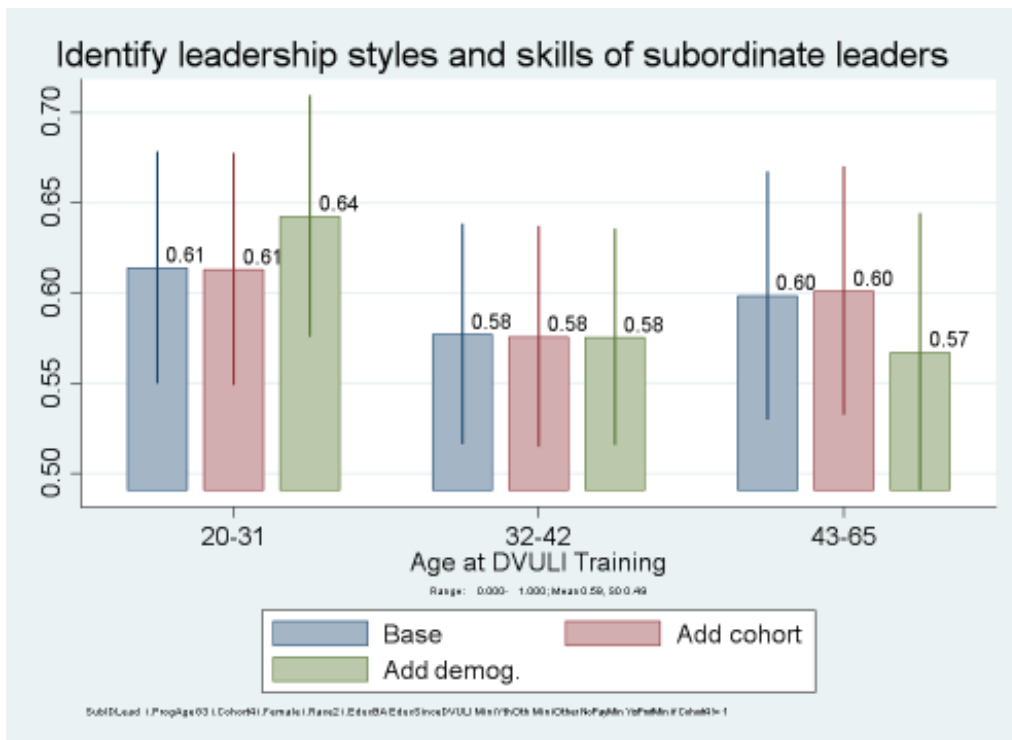
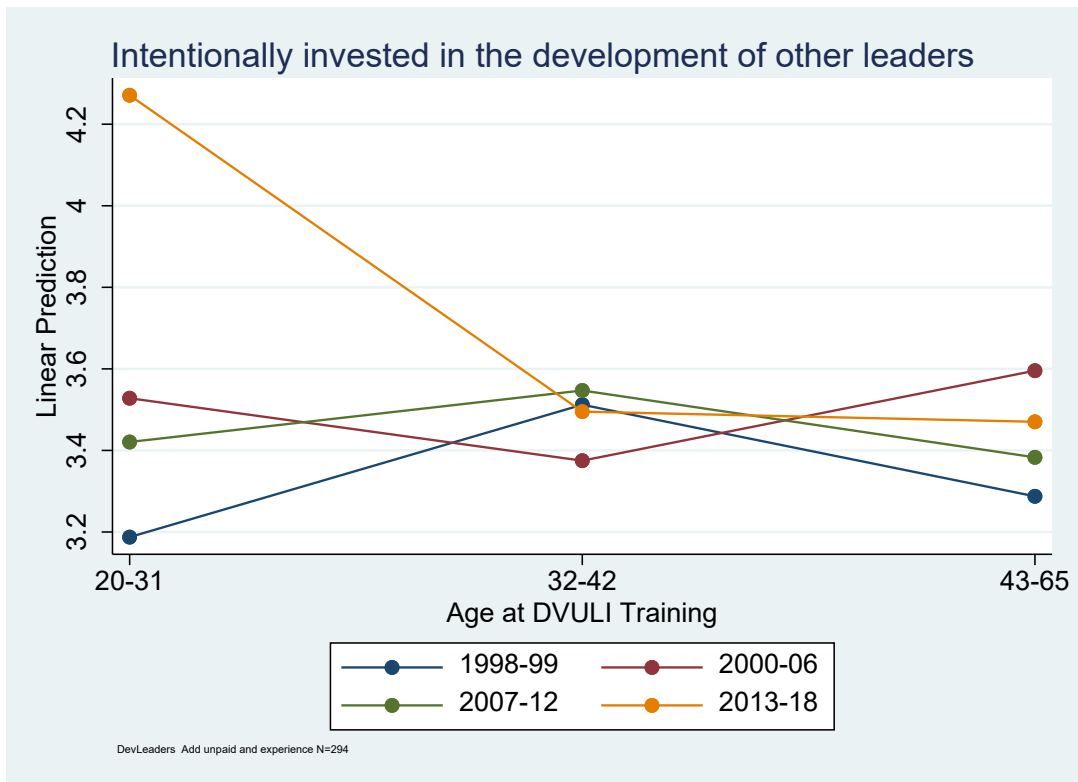
DevLeades | ProgAge03 | Cohort | Female | Race2 | Edu0BA | Edu5Ince | DVULI | Min | P005 | Min | Obs | No | P | Min | P | Cohort | 1

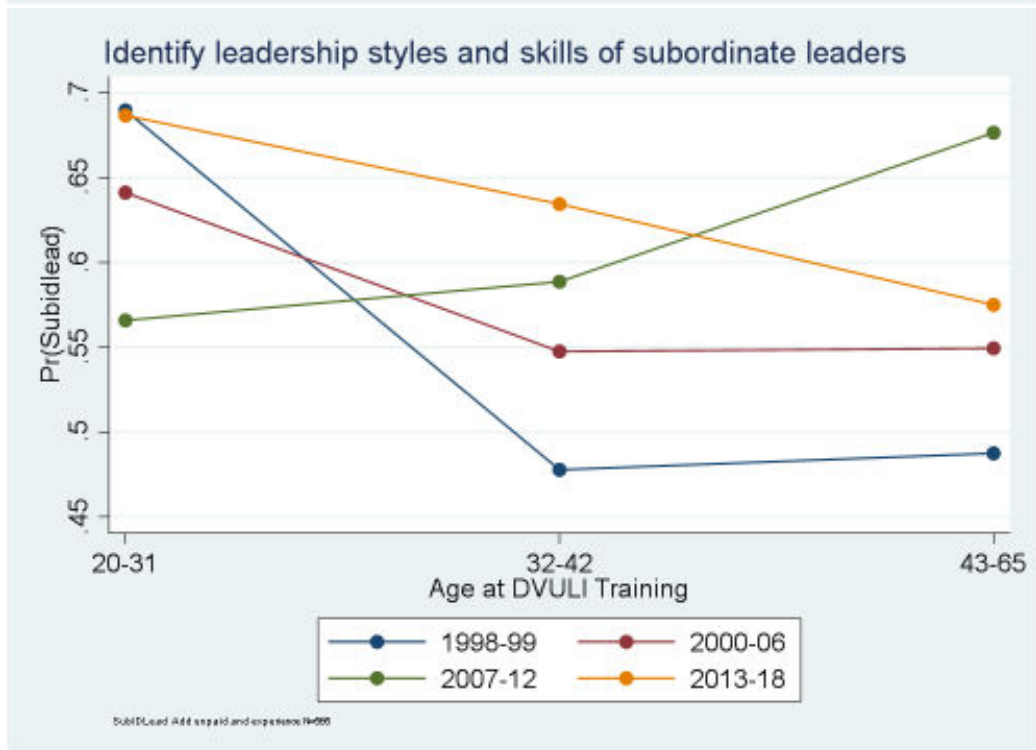
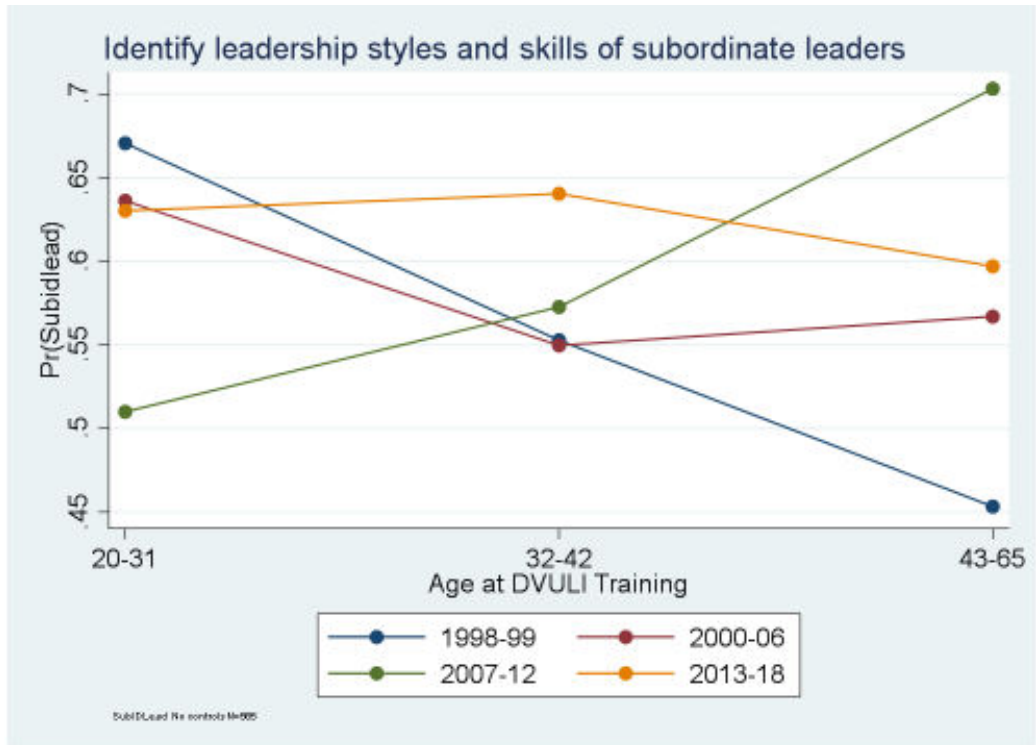
### Intentionally invested in the development of other leaders



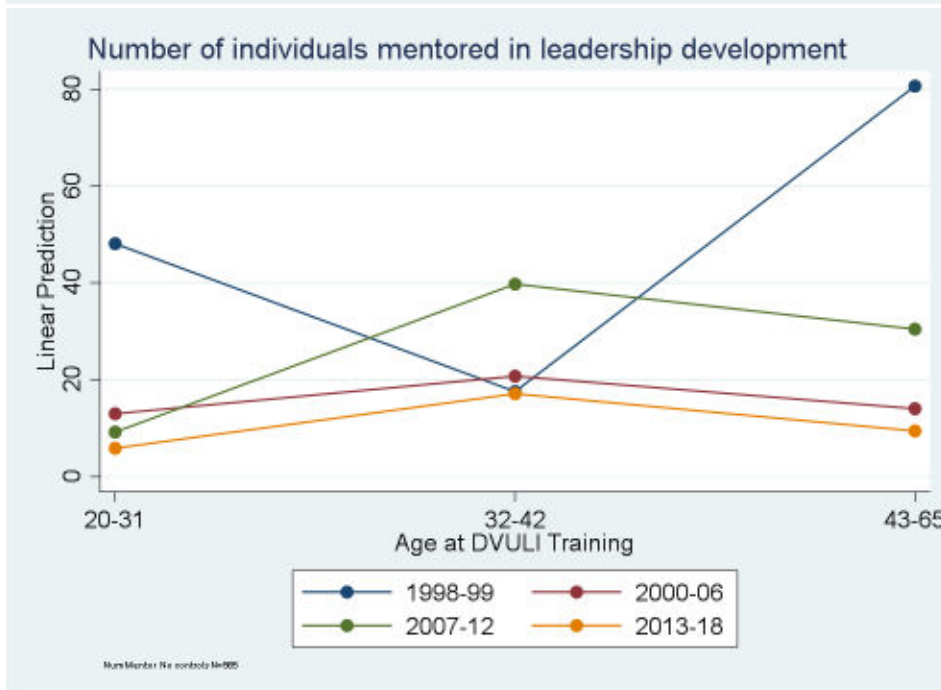
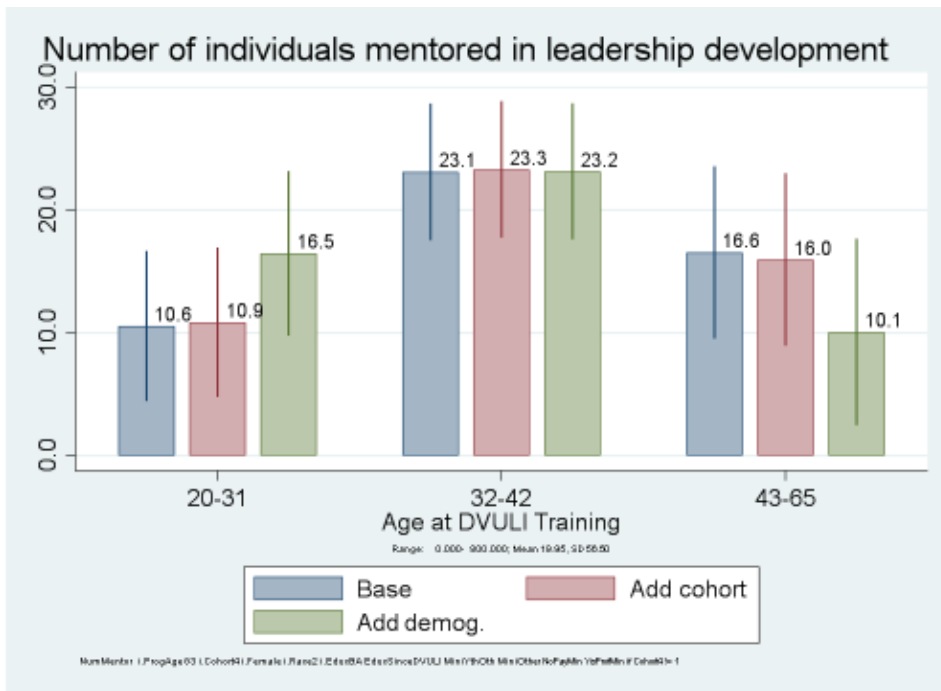
DevLeades | No | controls | M | 204

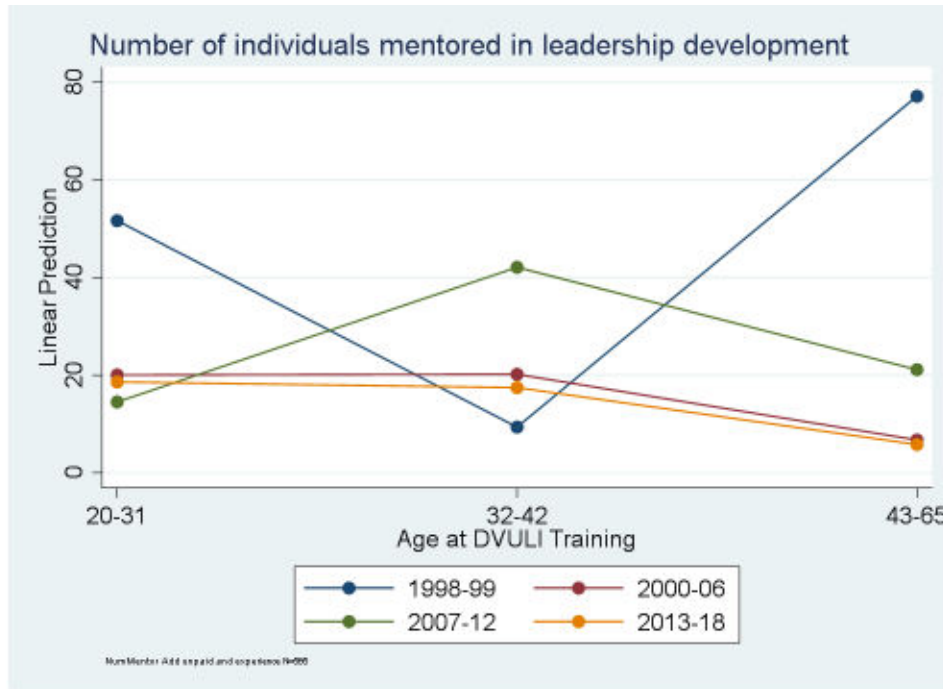






We find that mid-career youth ministers mentor a greater number of individuals for leadership development.



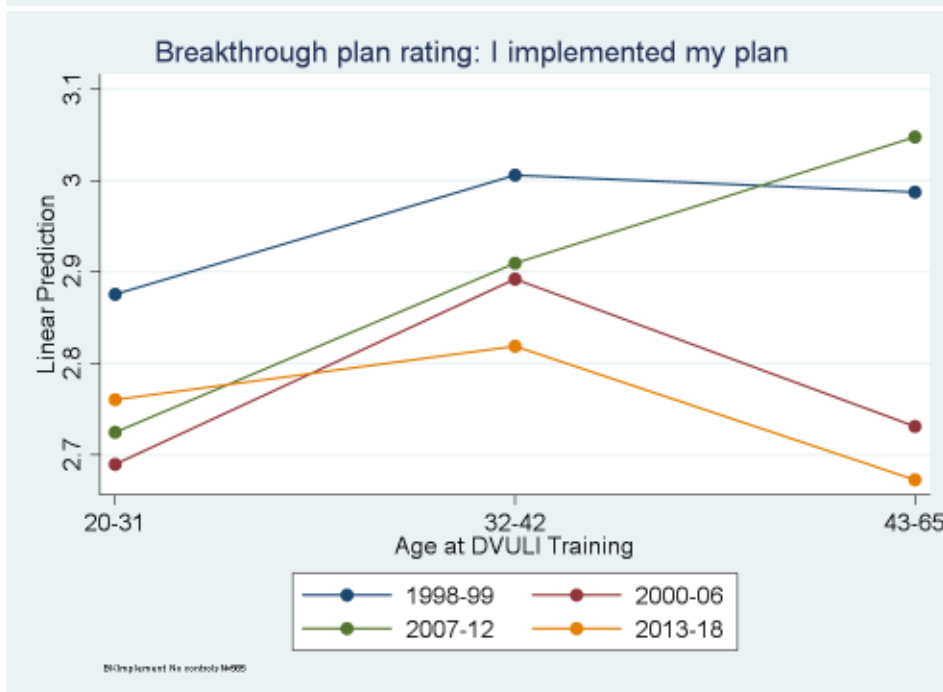
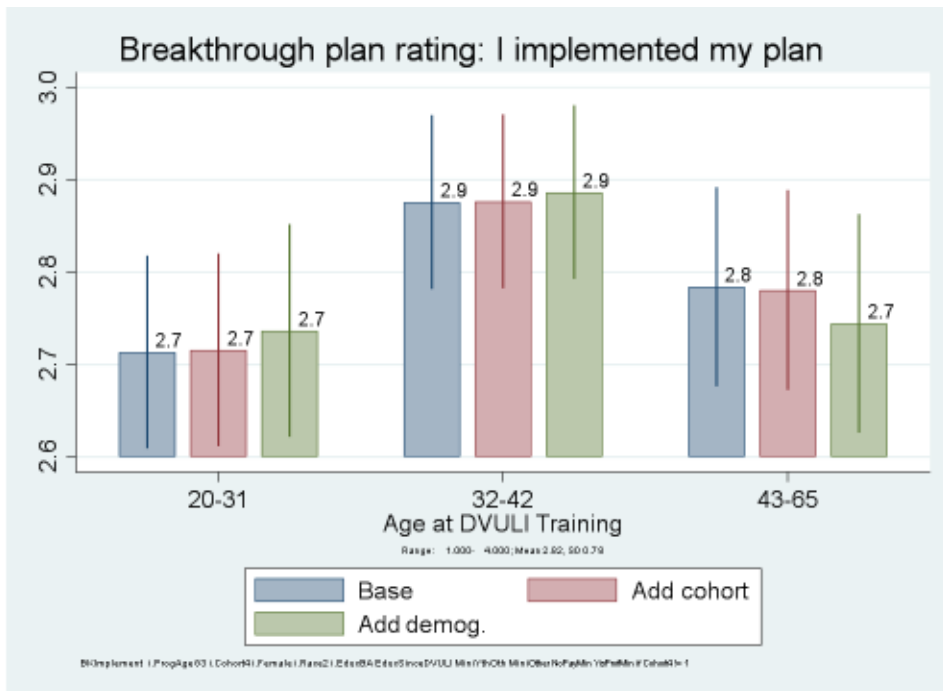


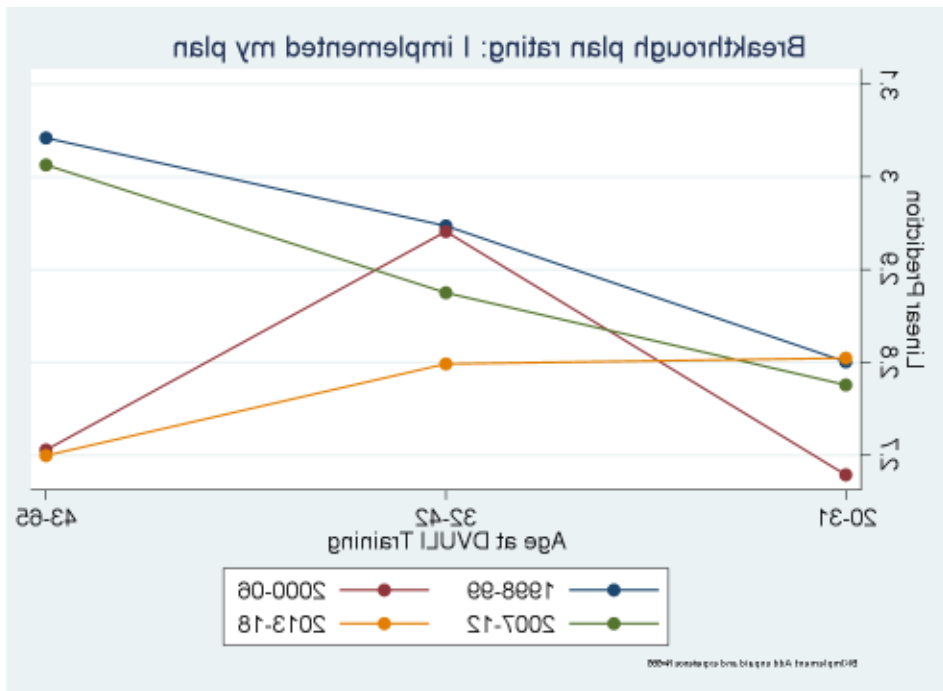
Overall, we find evidence that early and mid-career alumni are very active in mentorship of other youth ministry leaders. This strength has improved in recent iterations of DVULI training, especially for early career alumni.

### Career Trajectories

Not surprisingly, we find that the challenges in staying in ministry and transitioning to another ministry position are higher among early career alumni. This is especially the case among more recent DVULI cohorts.

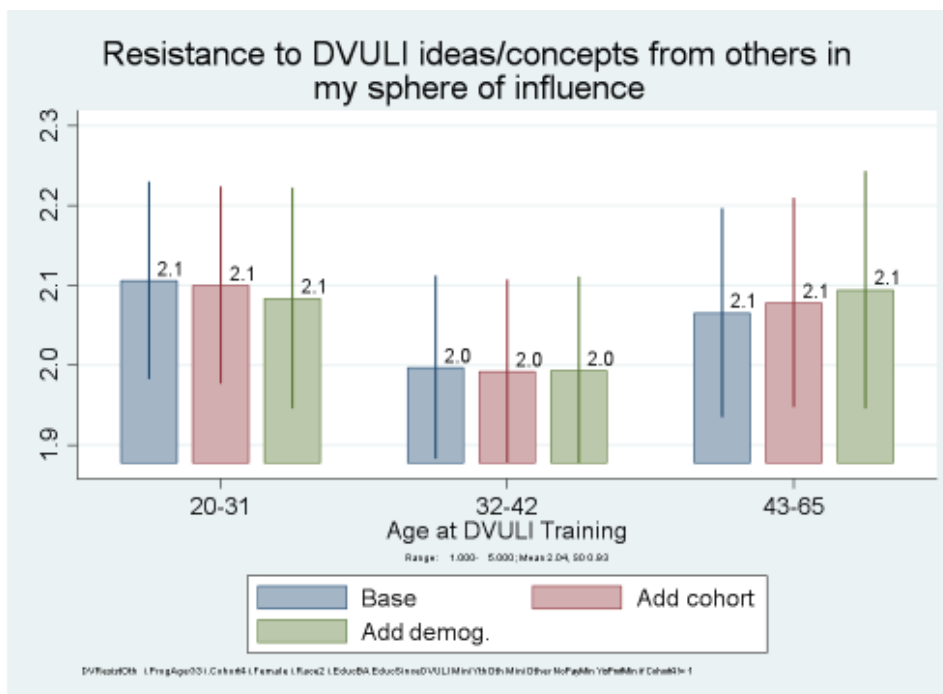
Implementation of the Breakthrough Plan is higher among mid-career alumni, and lower among early career alumni. This finding applies to the more recent cohorts, though the older alumni have lower scores on implementation in more recent cohorts. Similarly, in terms of achieving the goals of the Breakthrough Plan, the older alumni in more recent cohorts are less likely to report achieving these goals.

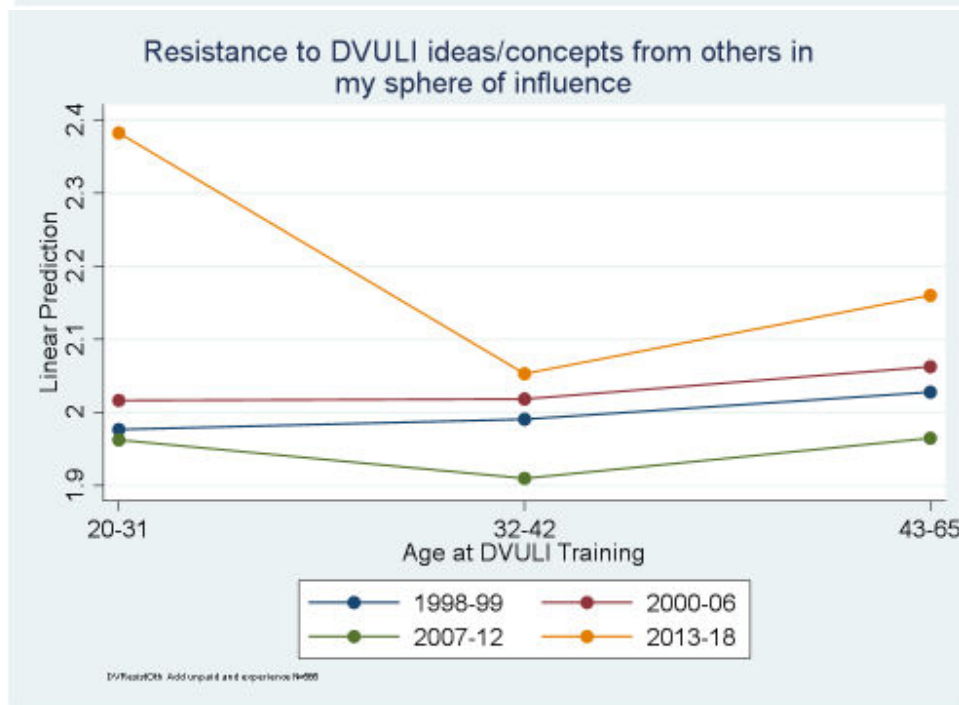
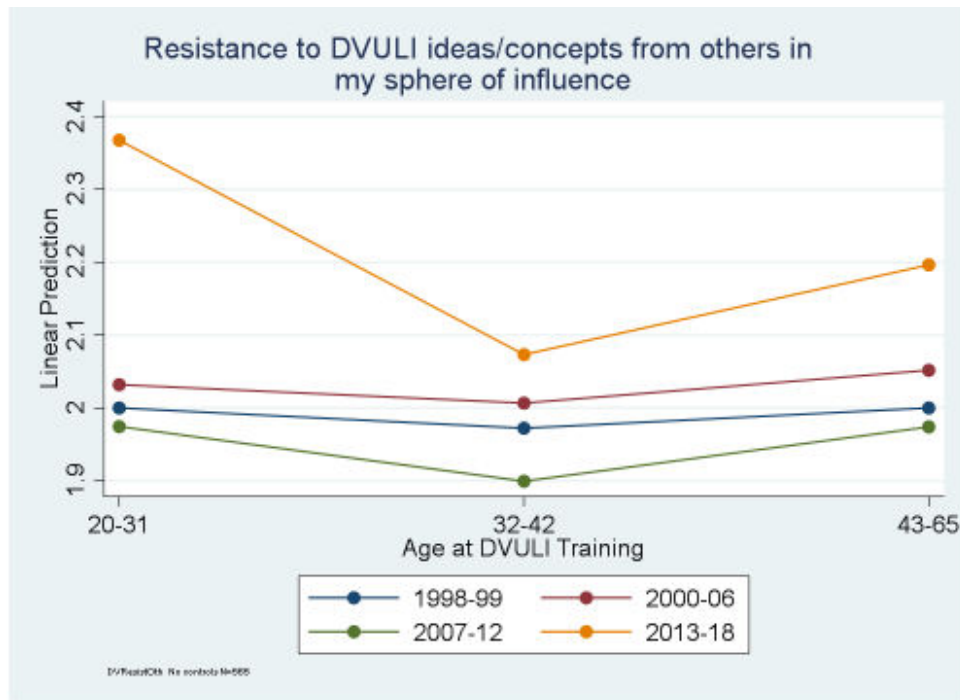




Interestingly, the lasting impact of the Breakthrough Plan exercise on alumni youth ministry is reported to be higher among late career compared to early career alumni (not shown). This seems to hold in the most recent cohort. It is possible that the early career alumni will benefit from the Breakthrough Plan later in their career.

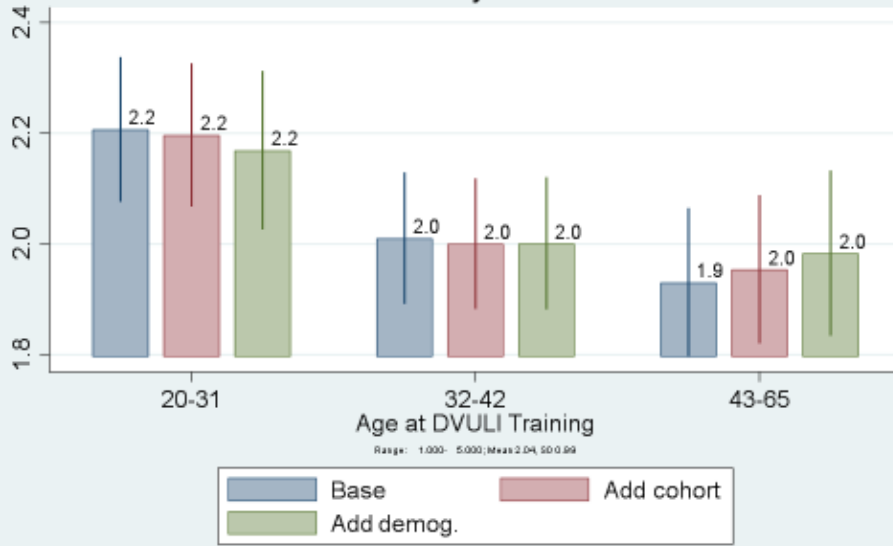
We find some evidence that mid-career alumni experience less resistance to DVULI from others in their sphere of influence. This finding holds consistently across cohorts, and may indicate a mid-career advantage in taking DVULI training to youth ministry effectively.





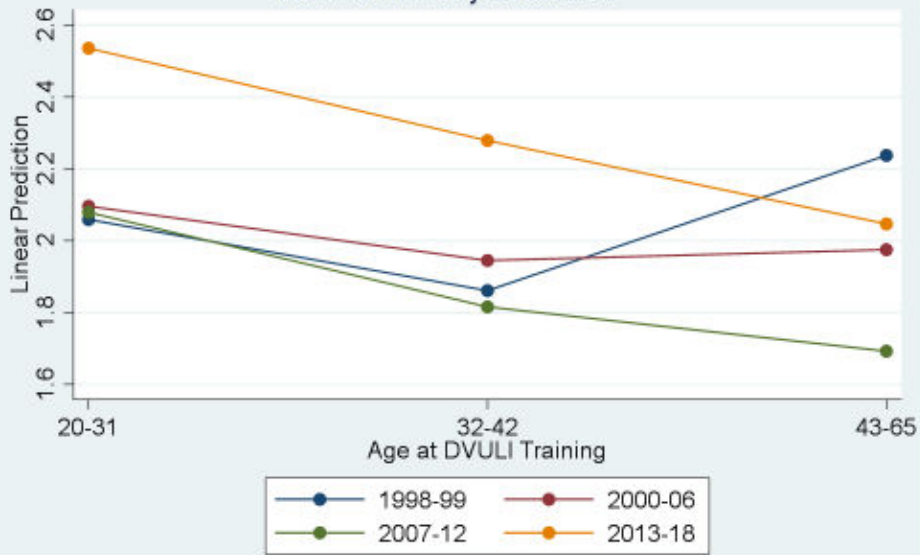
The data show a slight tendency of early career alumni to have more difficulty applying DVULI training to real life ministry, and this slight trend does apply in the most recent cohort. This difference extends to the related question of whether alumni have difficulty changing their thinking in response to DVULI. Again, this provides some evidence that it is more challenging for early career alumni to benefit from DVULI training.

### Difficulty applying the DVULI training concepts to real-life ministry situations



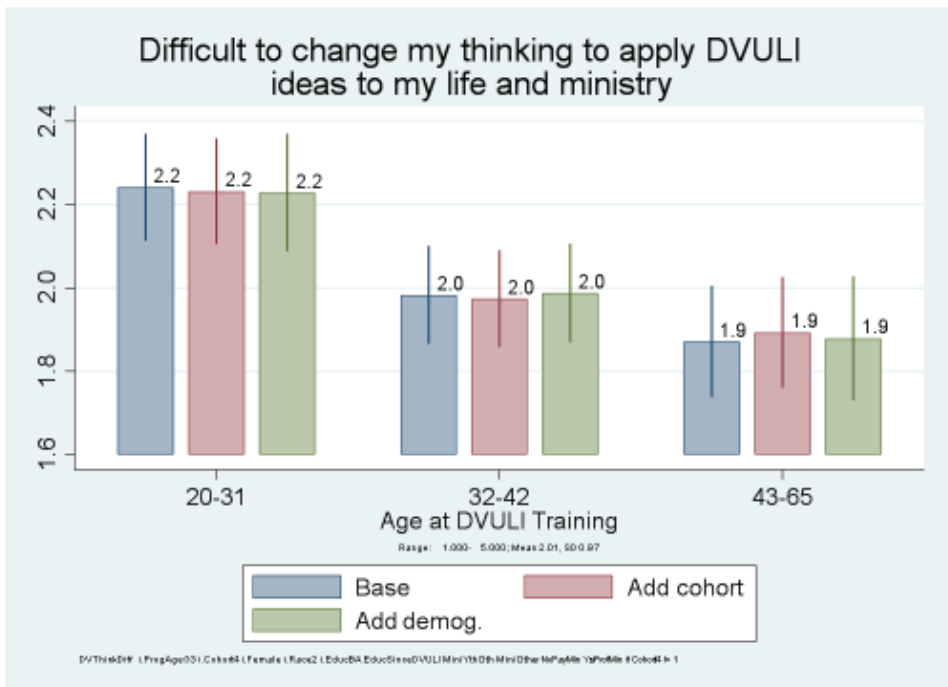
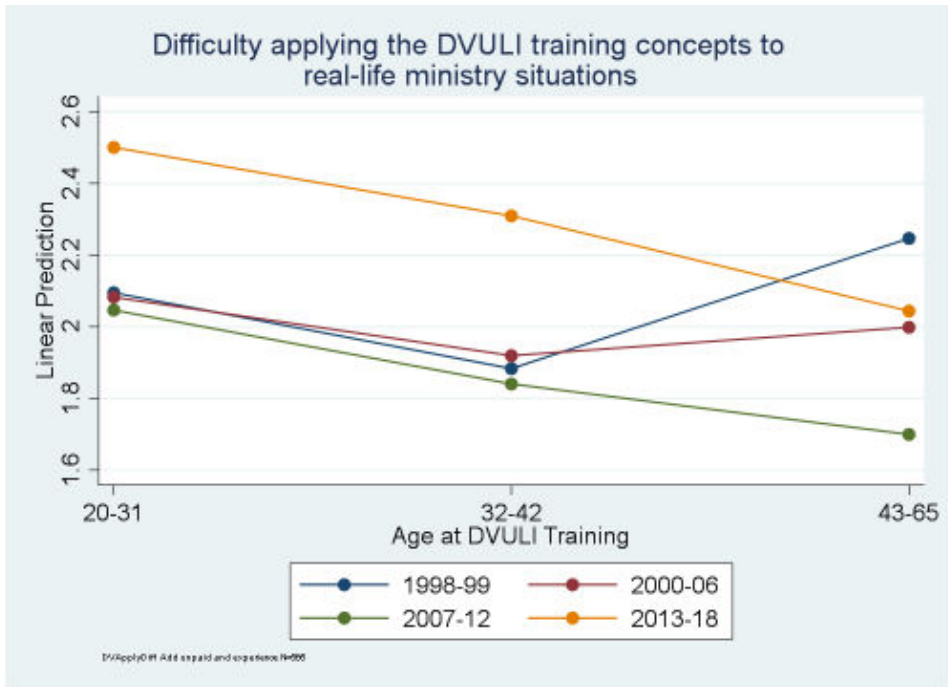
DVApply01# 1 / People03 / Cohort1 / Female / Race2 / Eds04 / Eds05 / InceDVULI / Min / W04 / Min / Other / People / Yo / People / Cohort1

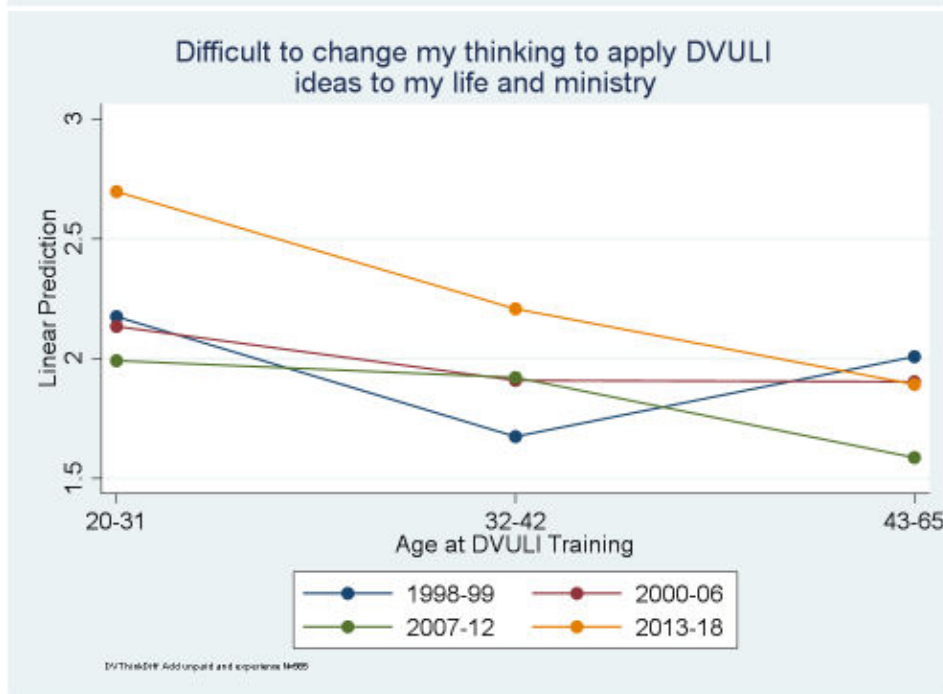
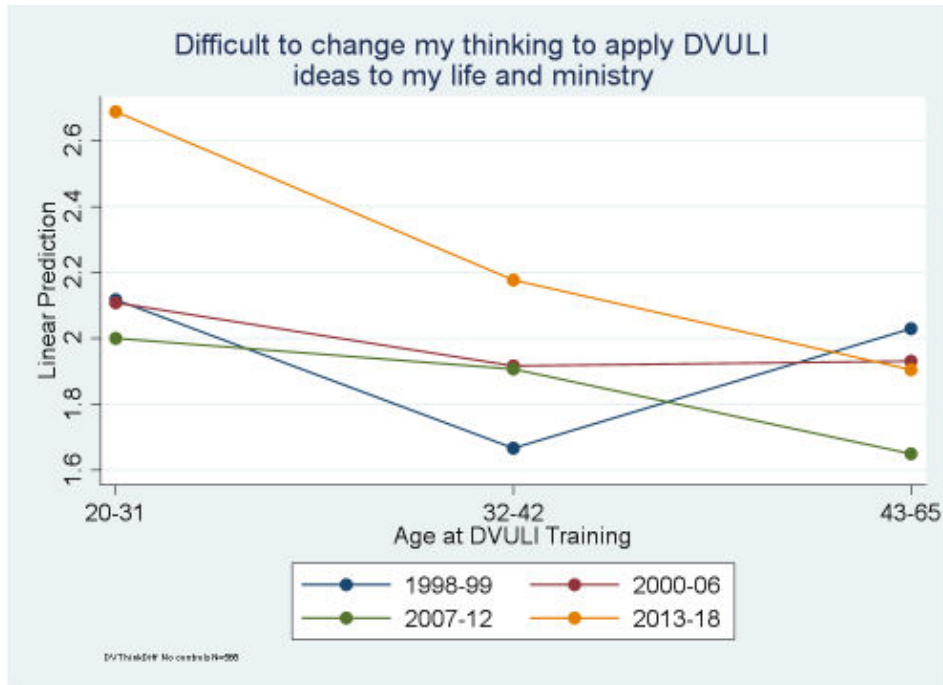
### Difficulty applying the DVULI training concepts to real-life ministry situations



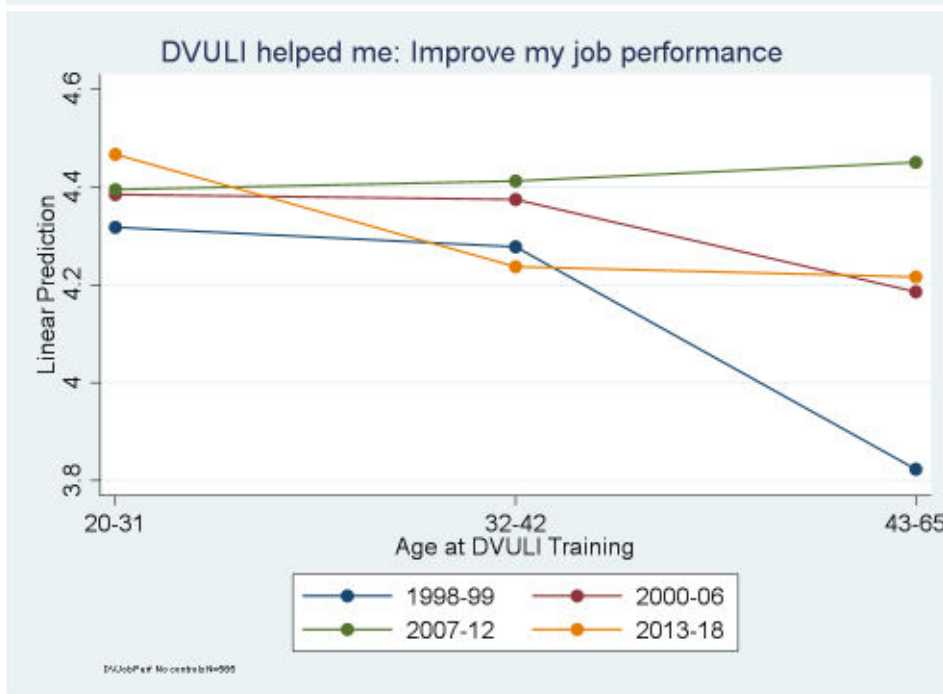
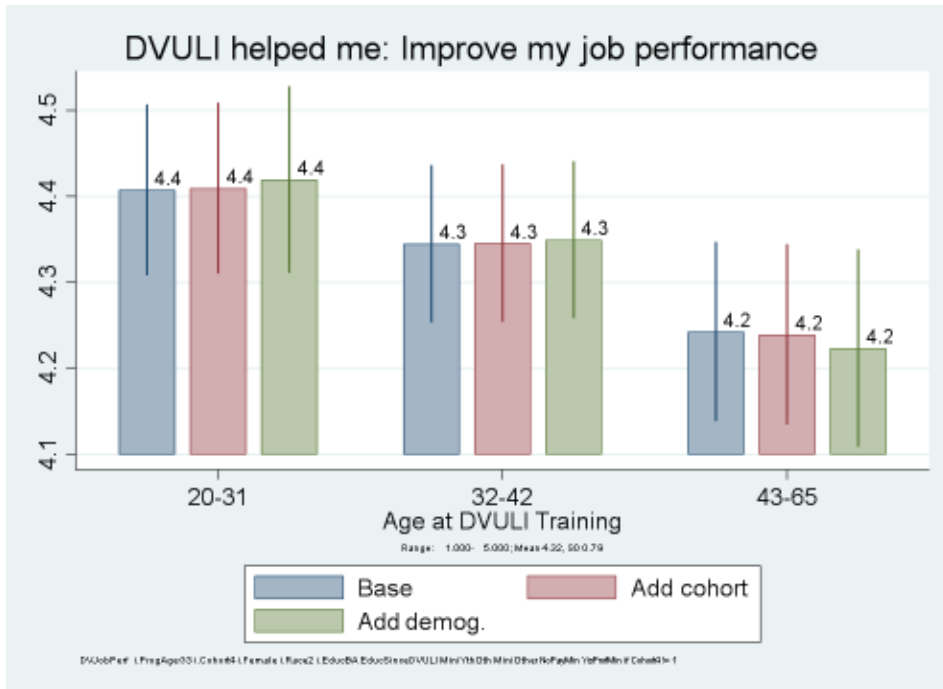
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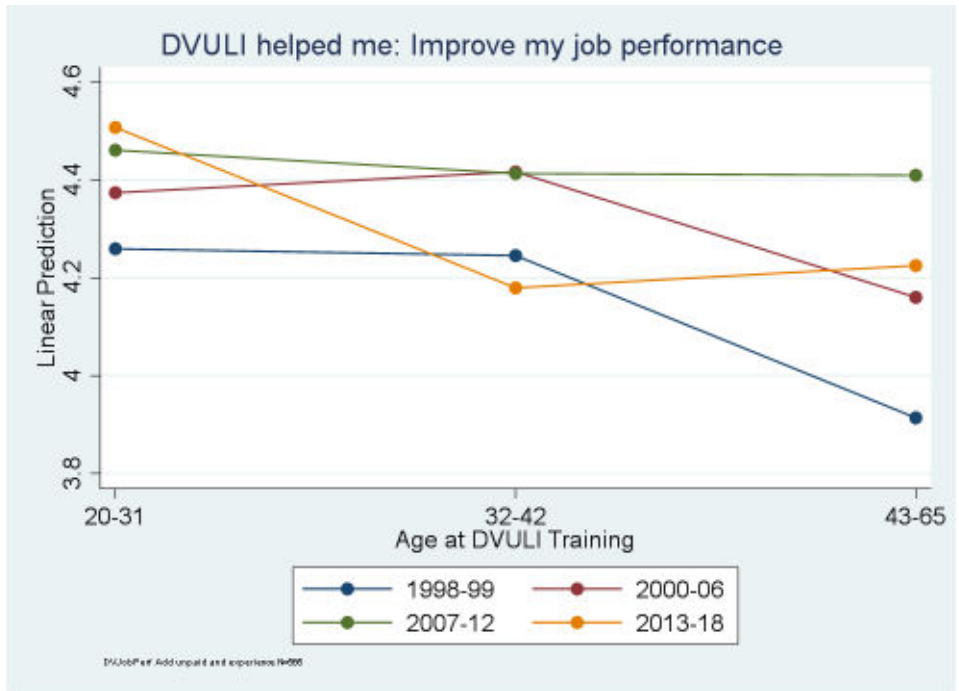




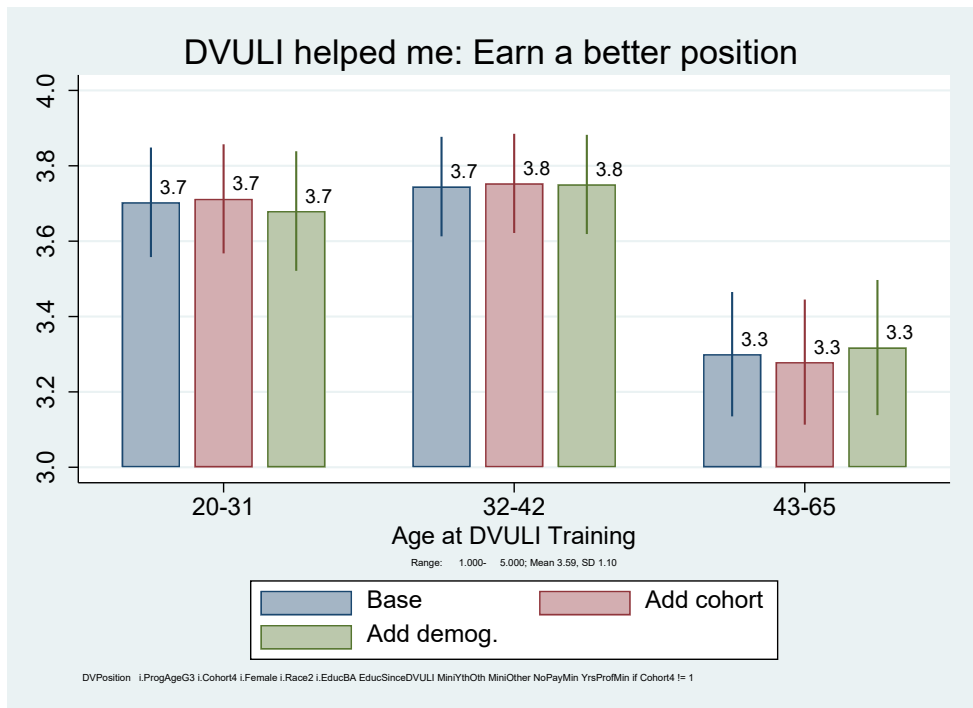


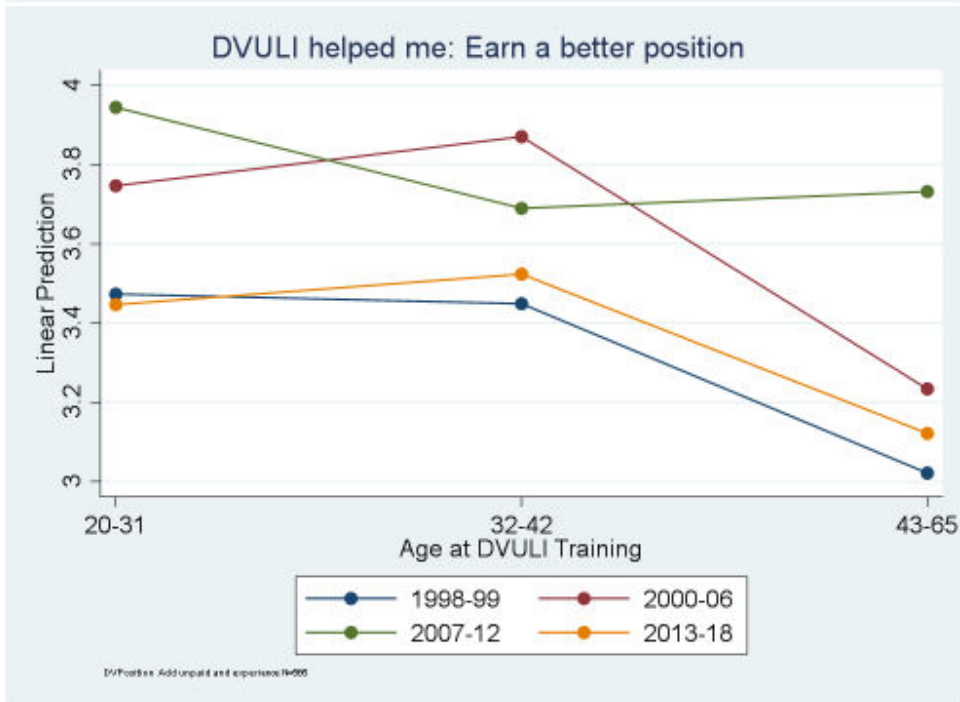
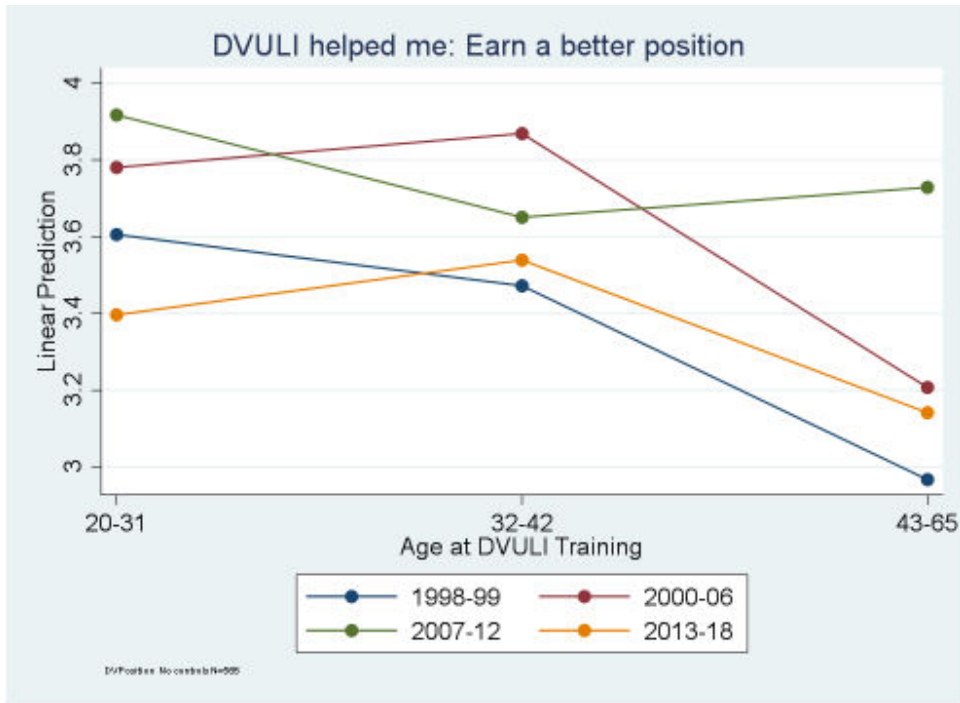
We find that early career youth ministers are more likely to say that DVULI training helped to improve their job performance. This applies well to the most recent cohort. We see a similar early career advantage when asking alumni whether DVULI helped to improve their job satisfaction (not shown).



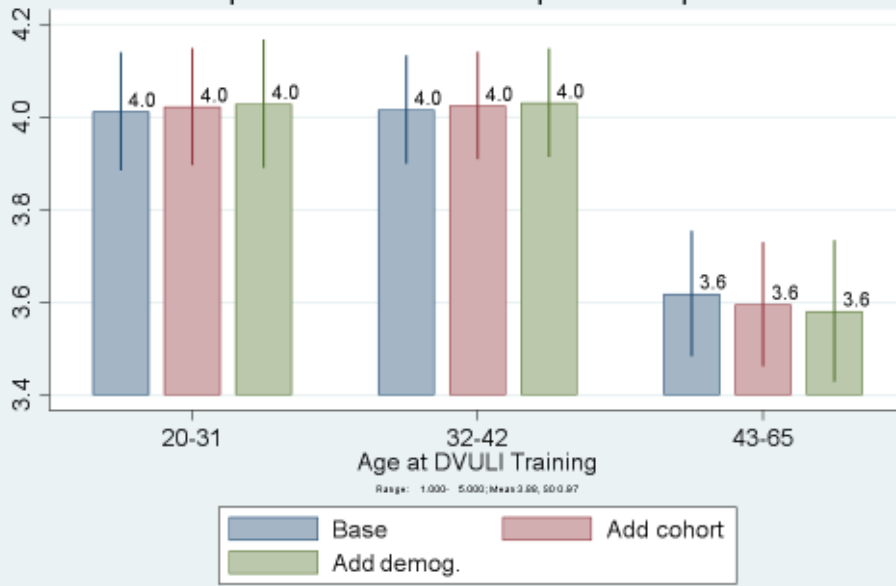


Earning a better position because of DVULI is somewhat lower among late career alums. Late career alumni are also somewhat lower on earning respect of supervisors, and earning respect of colleagues because of DVULI.





### DVULI helped me: Earn the respect of supervisors

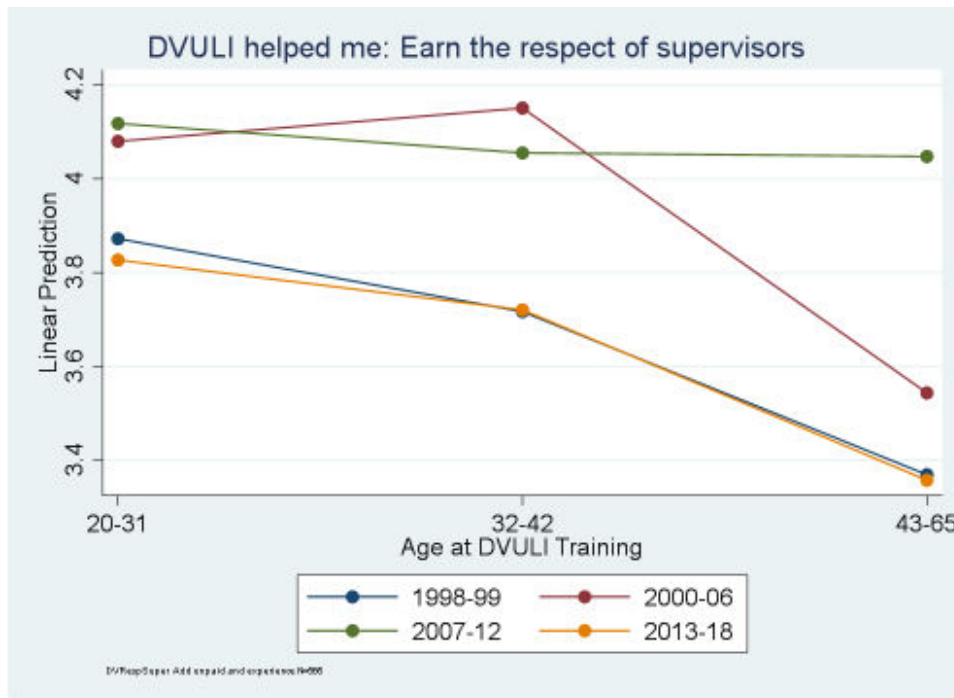


DV\Resp\Super 1 Prop\Age03 | Cohort | Female | Race | Education | Since DVULI | Mix | BOB | Mix | Other | Ref | Min | Yes | Min | Cohort | 1

### DVULI helped me: Earn the respect of supervisors



DV\Resp\Super 1x controls | M=555



Altogether, we find some career stage differences in career outcomes of DVULI training. Early career alumni do face higher challenges in this regard, but we find that DVULI experiences are especially helpful in the challenges they face in securing a better position and higher job satisfaction. Mid-career alumni seem to be able to overcome resistance to DVULI, to apply DVULI to their ministry, and to change their thinking in response to DVULI leadership training. The career impact of DVULI does appear to be higher for mid-career alumni. To some extent, late career alumni are less likely to gain all the career benefits available through DVULI.

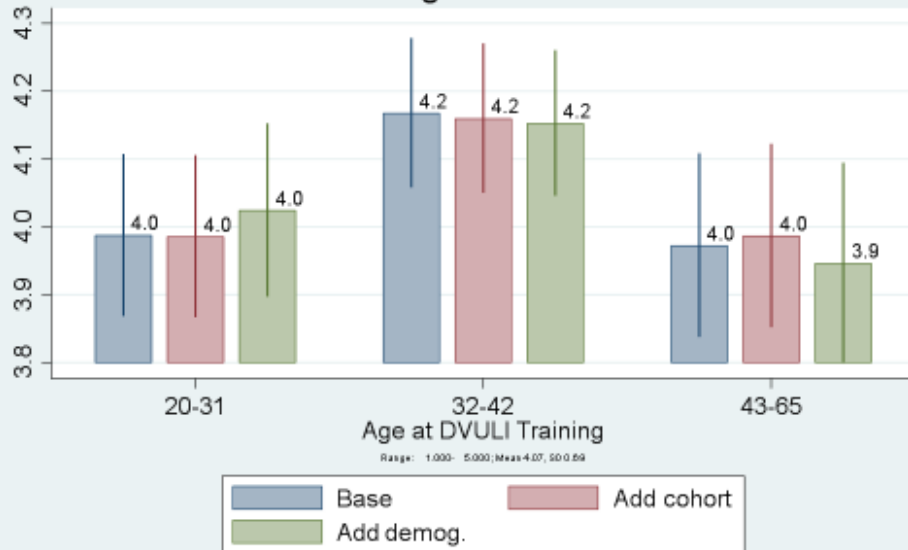
### Practices within Youth Ministry Organizations

How does DVULI training impact alumni at different career stages when it comes to practices within their youth ministry organizations?

We do not see major differences on the question of whether alumni examine ministry structures to improve them (not shown). The exception is that late career alumni are less likely to do this in some cohorts.

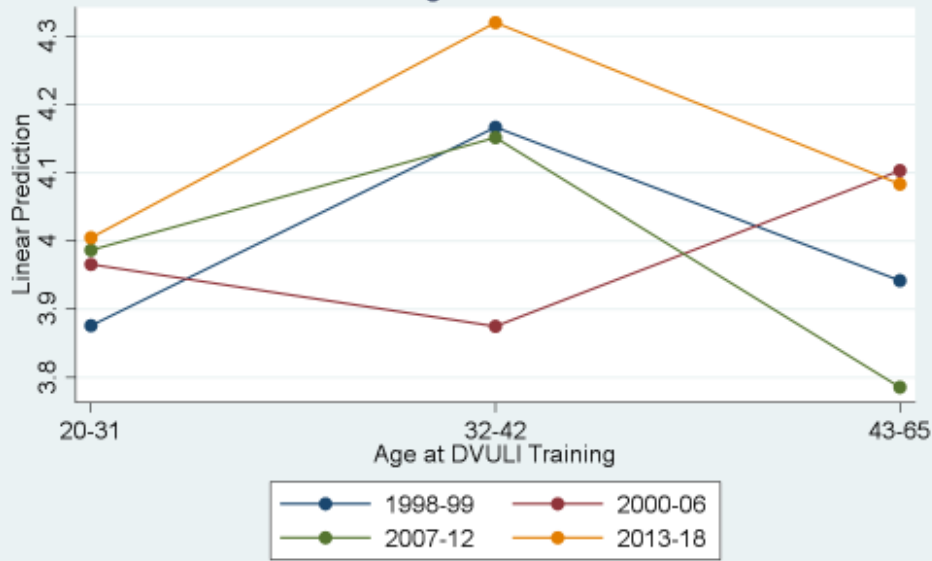
We do find that the frequency of practicing the Breakthrough Skill of Ministry Assessment is lower among early career alumni. Perhaps alumni in early career positions have less need for this skill in their current ministry.

### Youth in my ministry: Trust me and seek my support and guidance



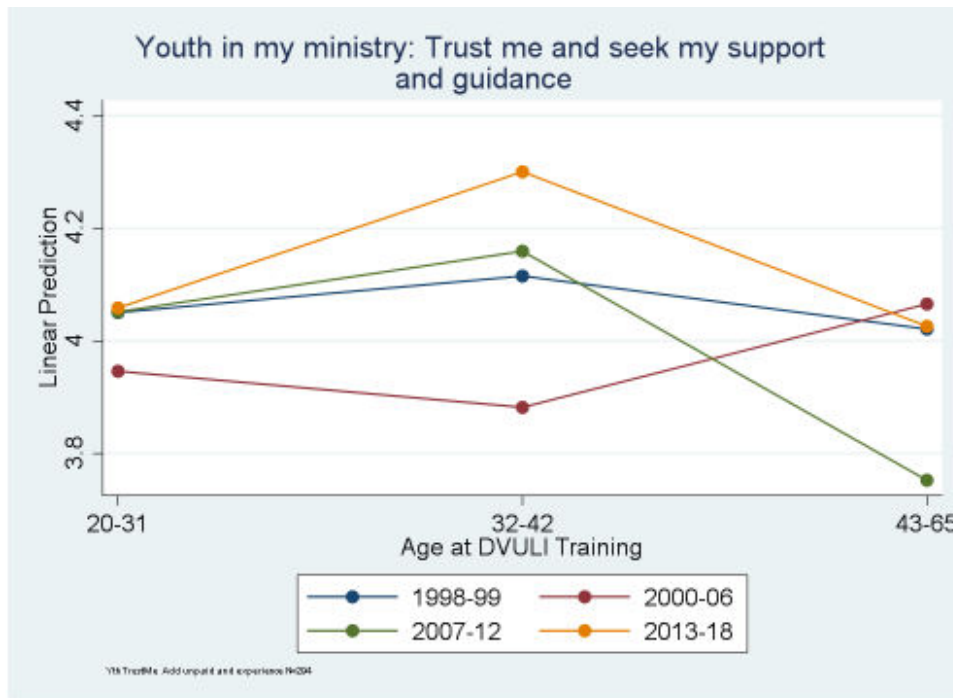
Y:\TrustMe - Prep\Age\31\ Cohort\ Female - Educ\BA\_Educ\Sexes\DVULI\Mini\Y09\Mini\Other\Kofa\Min\Yofa\Min\F Cohort\ 1

### Youth in my ministry: Trust me and seek my support and guidance

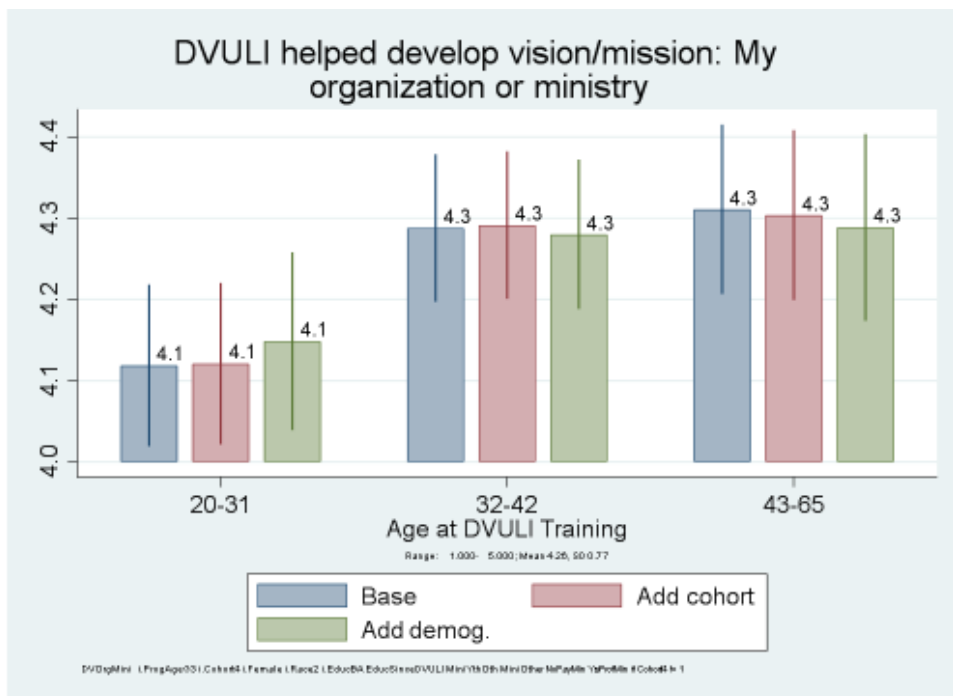


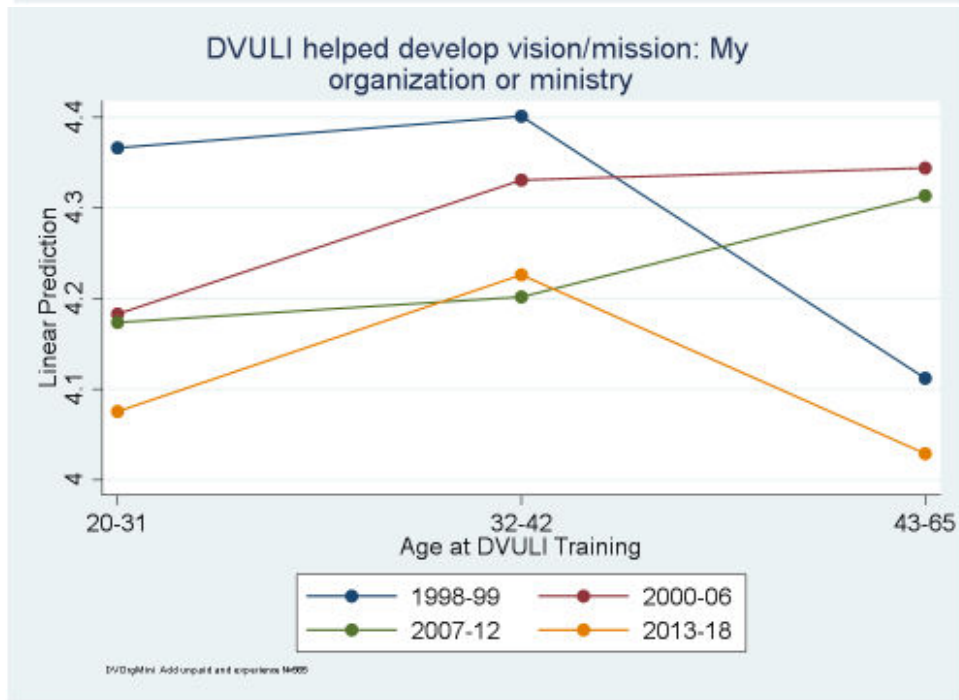
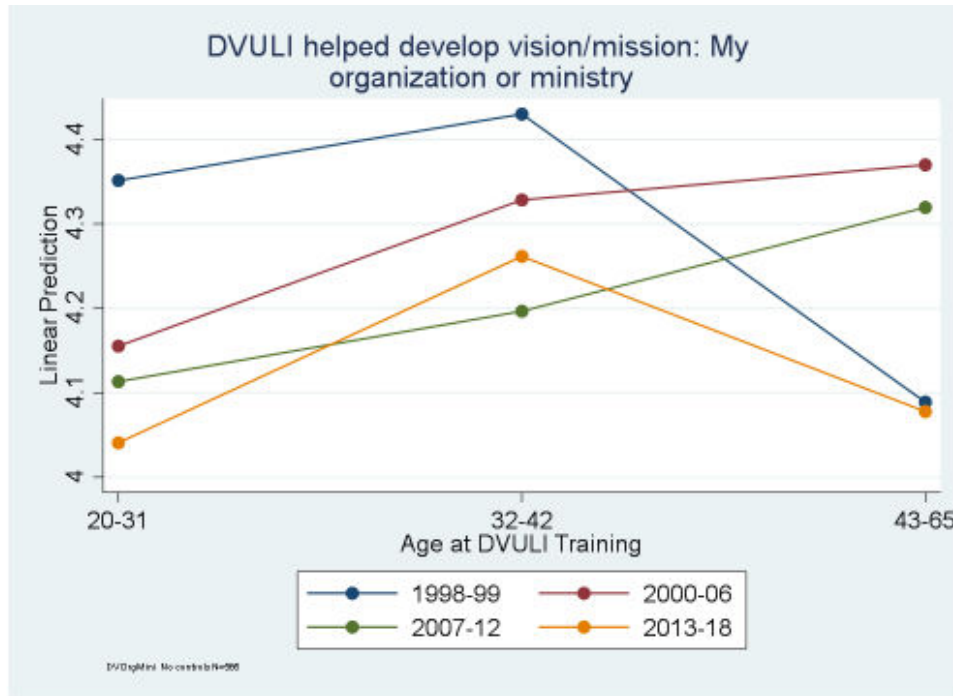
Y:\TrustMe - Moco\sr\B\N\294





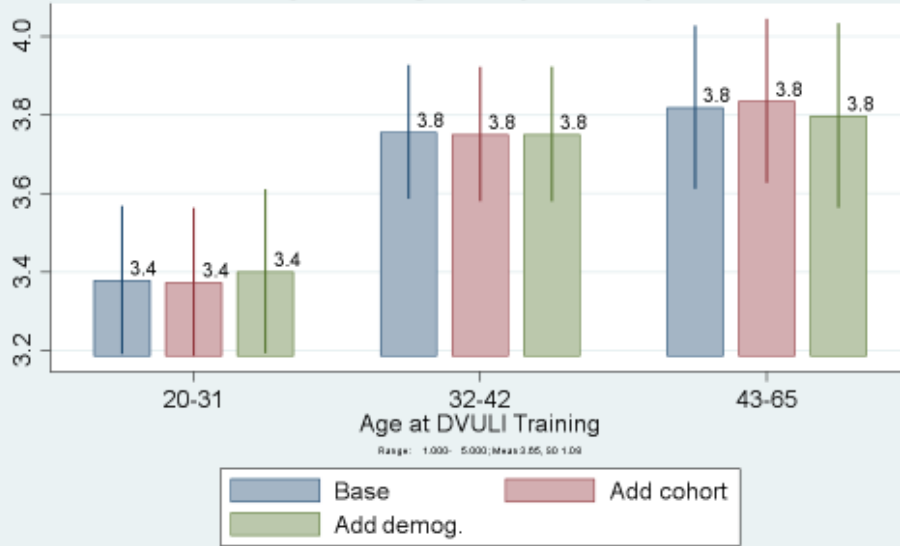
Similarly, when alumni are asked if they have developed a vision and mission for their organization and ministry, we find lower averages for early career alumni. Considering the most recent cohort, we find tentative evidence that mid-career alumni have a greater ability to take advantage of DVULI to develop the vision and mission of their organization.





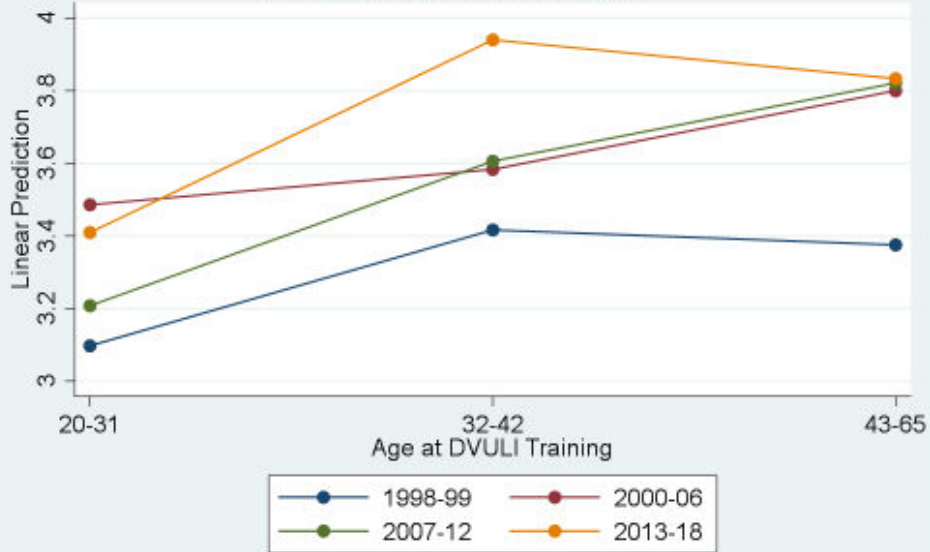
Early career alumni are less likely to have written a ministry plan regarding a potential major change in their ministry. This finding is consistent across all cohorts. In the most recent cohorts, the mid-career alumni have a slight advantage in writing ministry plans about potential major ministry changes.

### I have written a ministry plan on a potential major change in my ministry

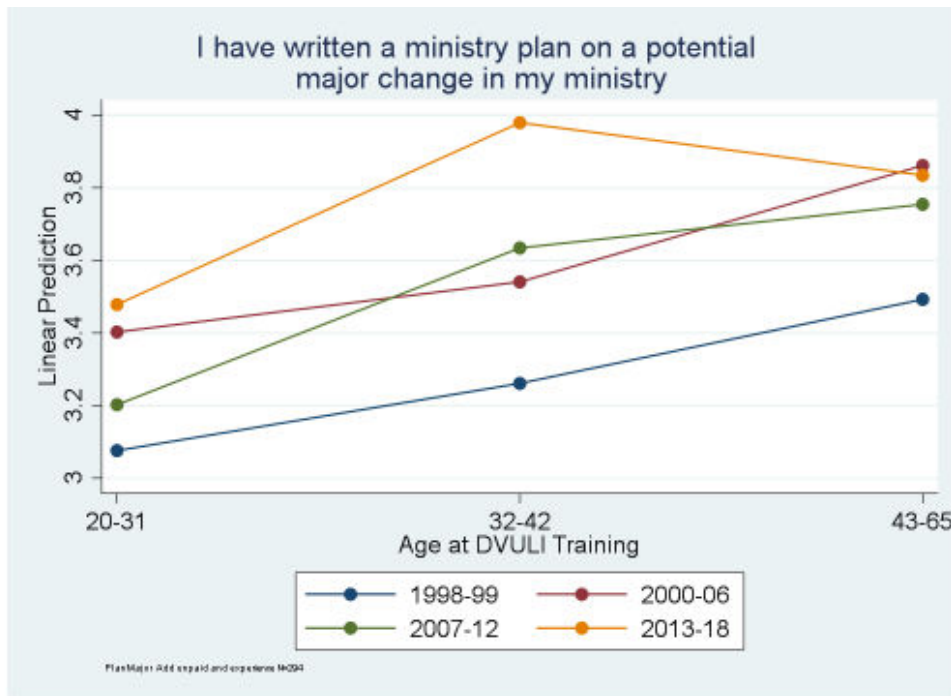


PlanMajor / ProgAge03 / Cohort01 / Female / Plan2 / EduBA / Edu3 / Soc / DVULI / Min / In / CM / Min / Cbr / M / Pa / Min / Whole / Cohort / 1

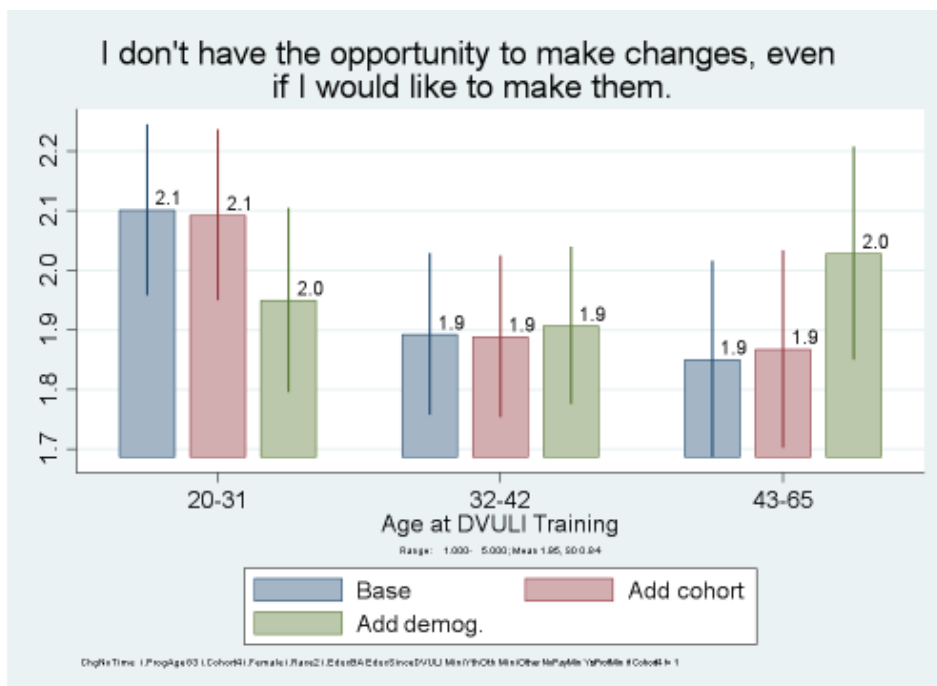
### I have written a ministry plan on a potential major change in my ministry

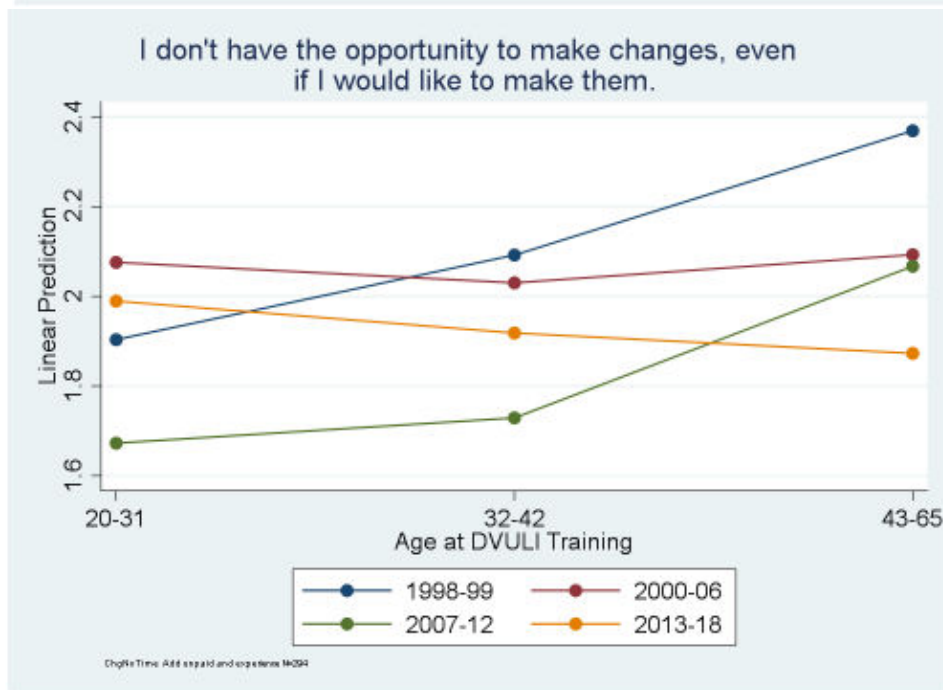
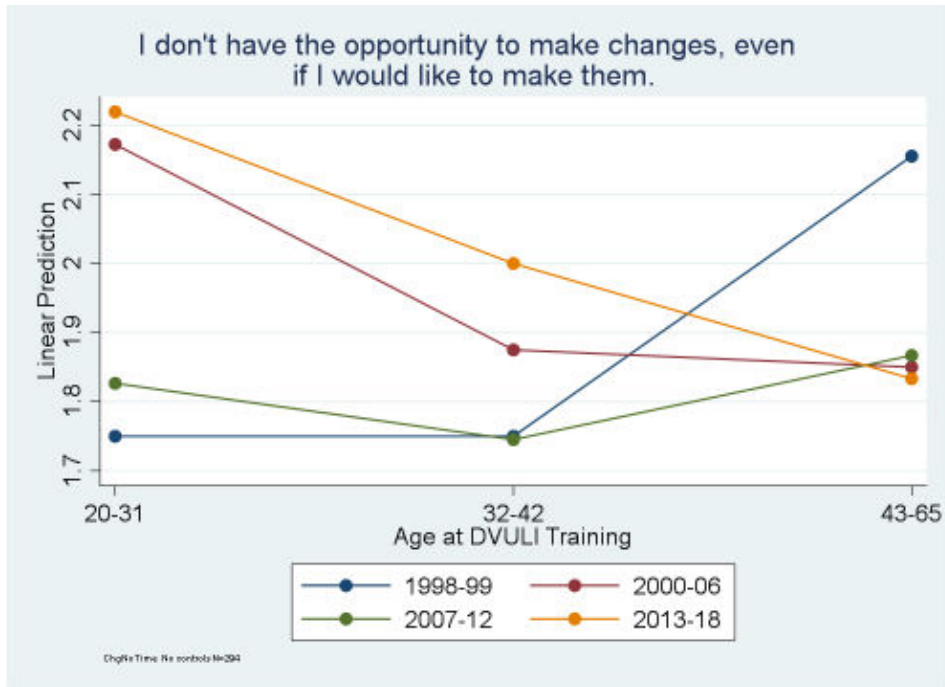


PlanMajor / R / control / M204



The mid-career alumni seem to have slightly more opportunities to make changes in their ministry, as we would expect. Note, however, that after accounting for control variables, early career alumni are not far behind. Considering differences in the DVULI effect across cohorts, it appears that in the recent cohorts it is primarily the early career alumni who do not have as many opportunities to make ministry changes in their organization, though career differences are muted after controlling for other factors.



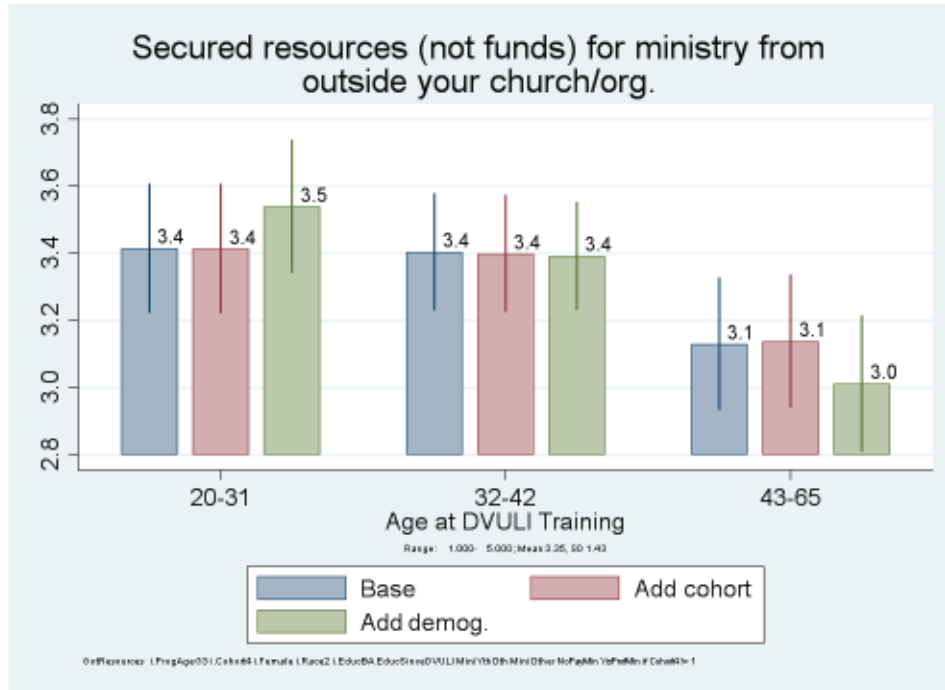


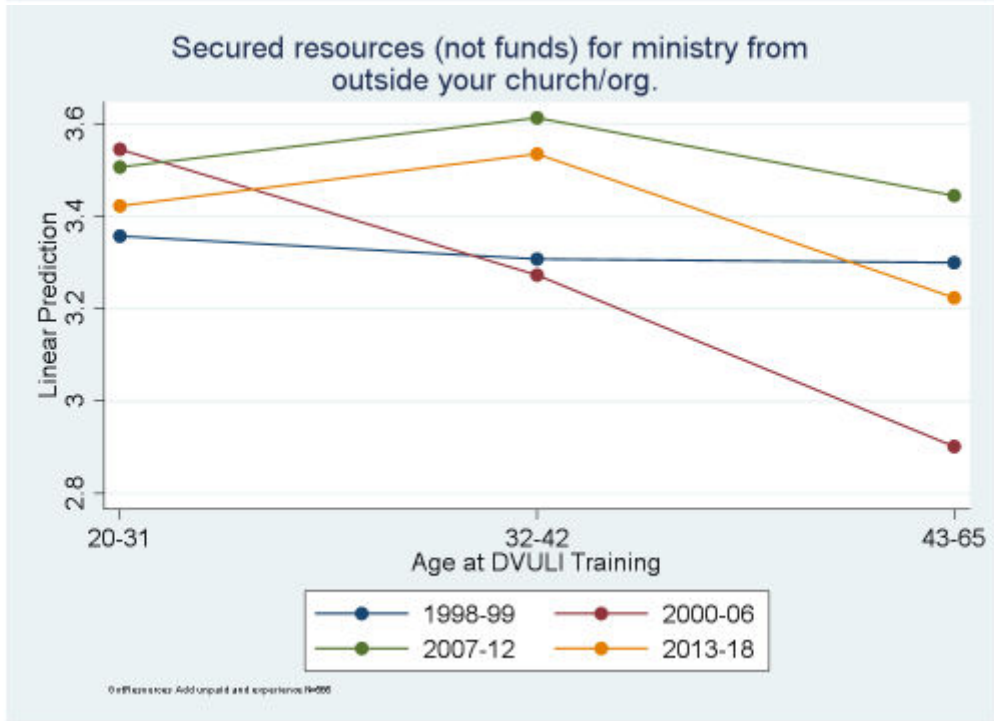
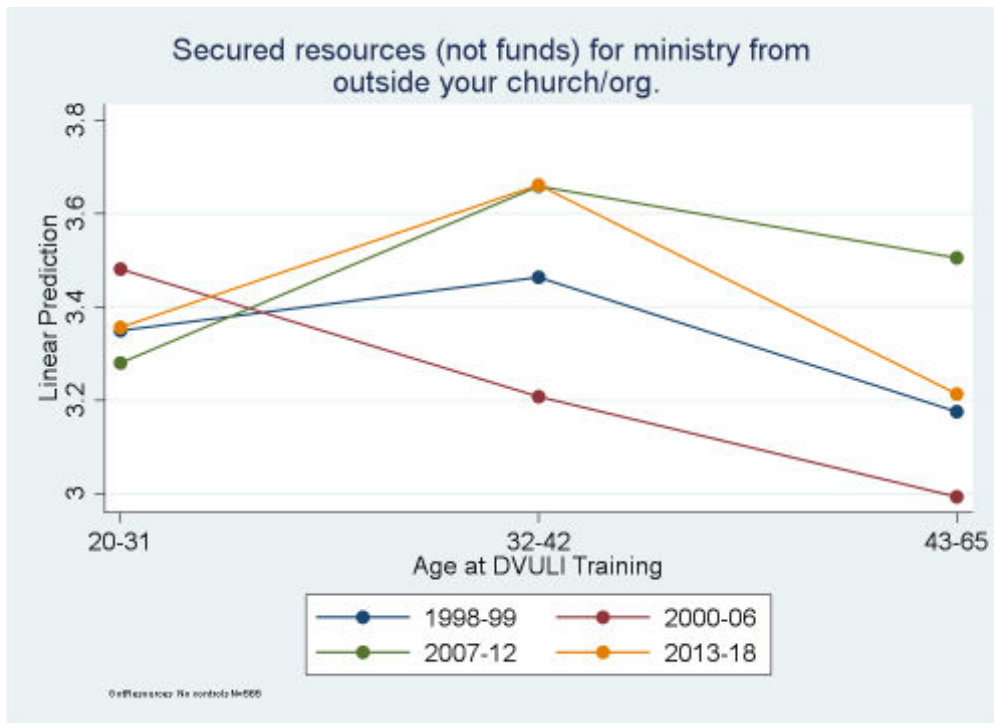
While not entirely consistent, we find evidence that mid-career alumni are better able to implement DVULI skills for the benefit of their youth ministry organization. Early career alumni are perhaps in positions that do not directly benefit from some of the DVULI training. Note, however, that DVULI training appears in some cases to have improved in ways that more effectively reach early career youth ministers.

## Resources and Networks

We would expect that mid-career youth ministers are in a better position to secure resources, including developing volunteer and leadership networks, than early career ministers. Yet early career may bring energy and commitment to the task, and may be particularly open to learning skills through DVULI useful for supporting challenges they face in ministry.

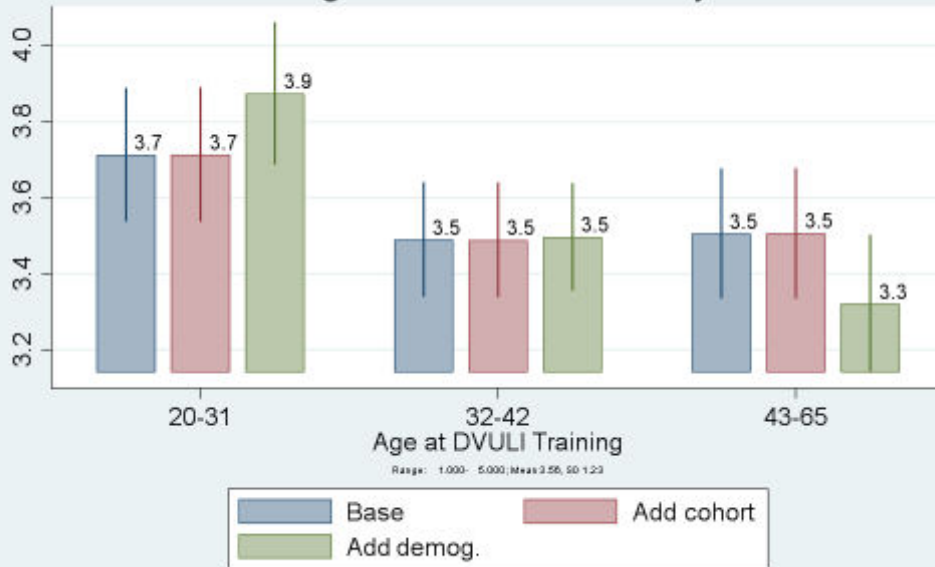
Overall, early career are doing quite well securing resources (not funds) for ministry outside their organization. Late career alumni are somewhat lower on securing resources for ministry. In the most recent cohort, we find a slightly higher value for mid-career.





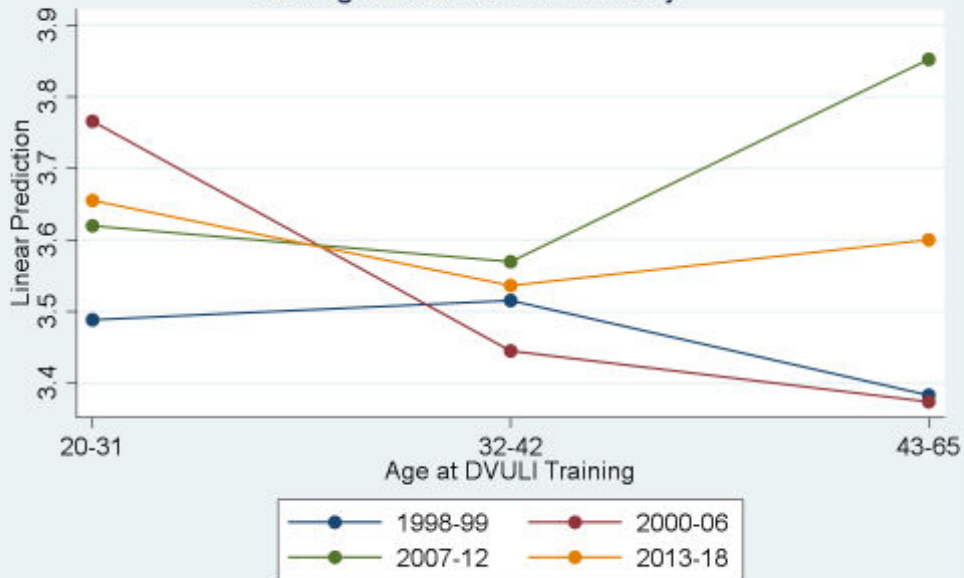
And early career alumni are doing well in developing a network of people and organizations to get resources for ministry, particularly when compared to late career alumni. In the most recent cohort, however, the career stage differences are smaller.

Developed network of people (including orgs.),  
could get resources for ministry



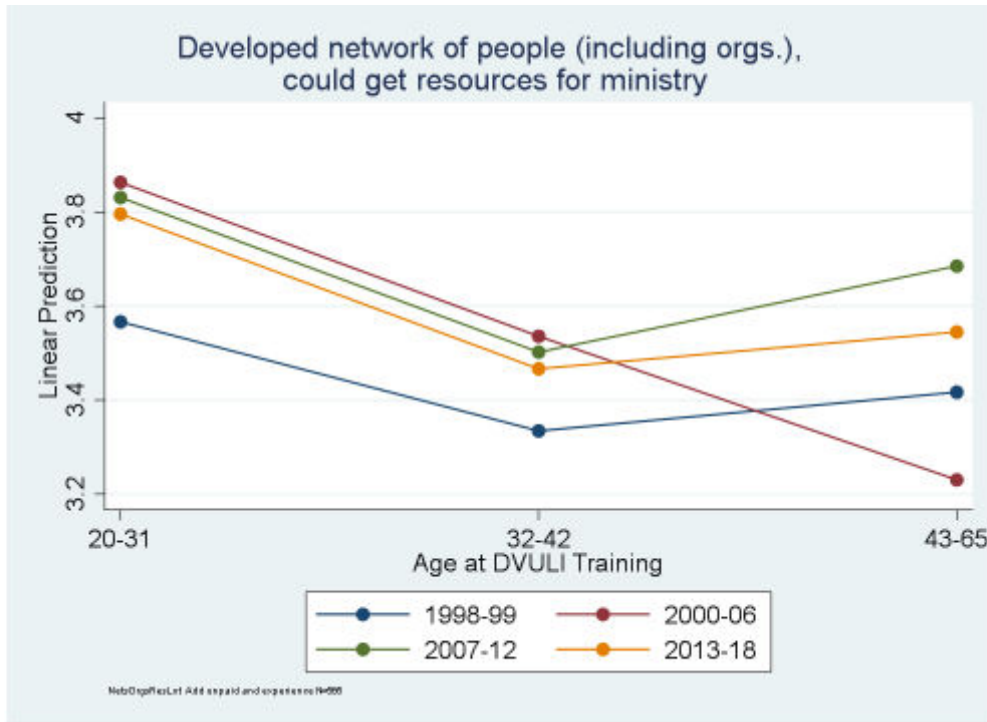
NetDgpRerLet 1 PropAge03 Cohort1 Female1 Race2 1 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 40 42 44 46 48 50 52 54 56 58 60 62 64 66 68 70 72 74 76 78 80 82 84 86 88 90 92 94 96 98 100

Developed network of people (including orgs.),  
could get resources for ministry

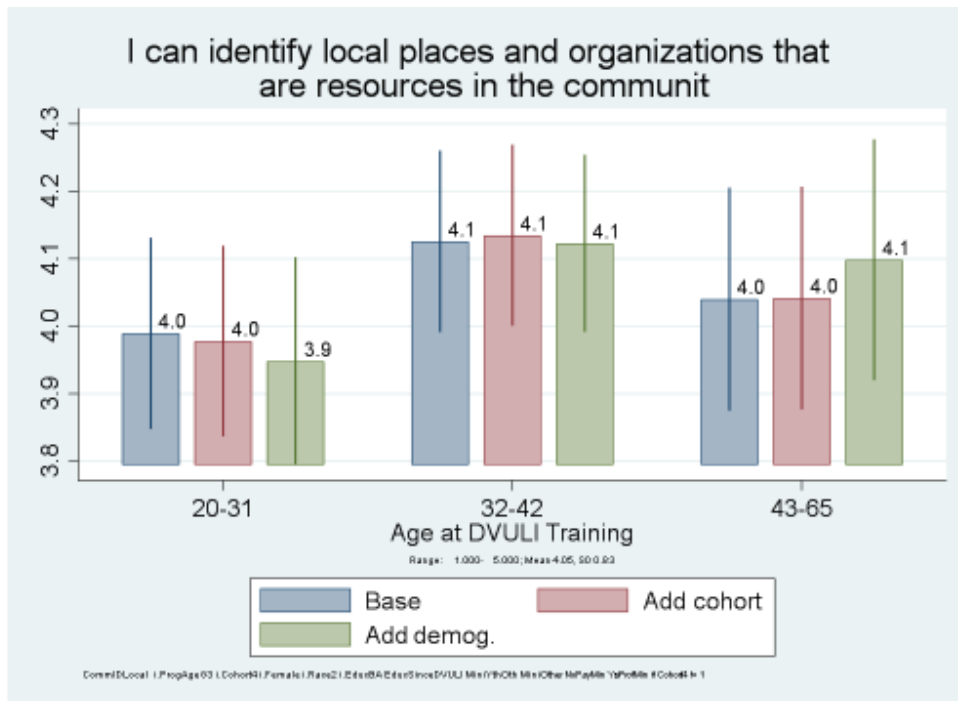


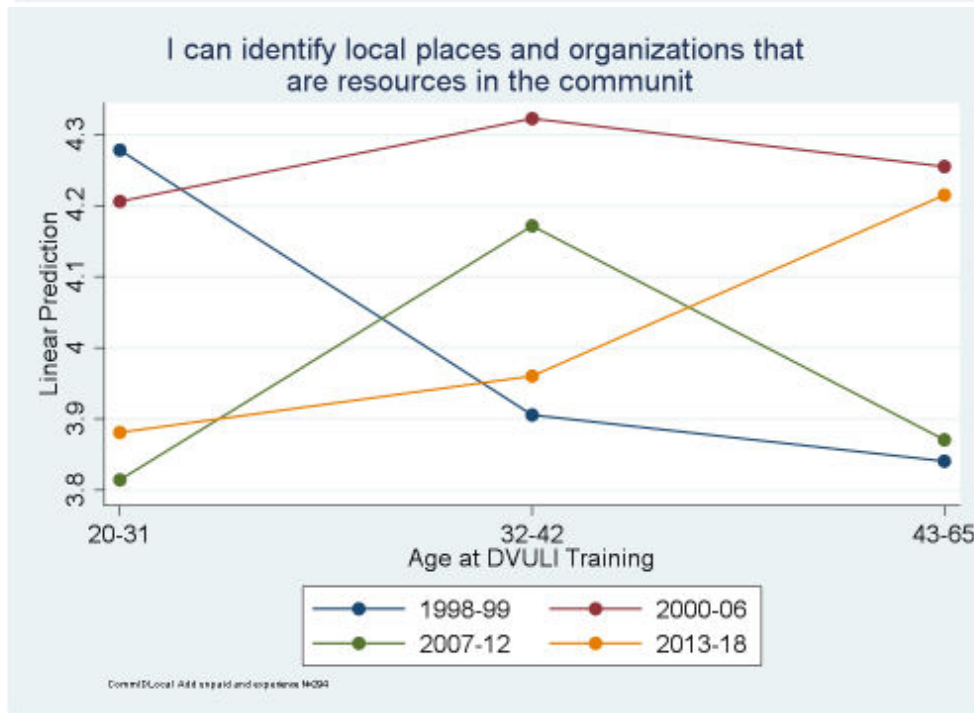
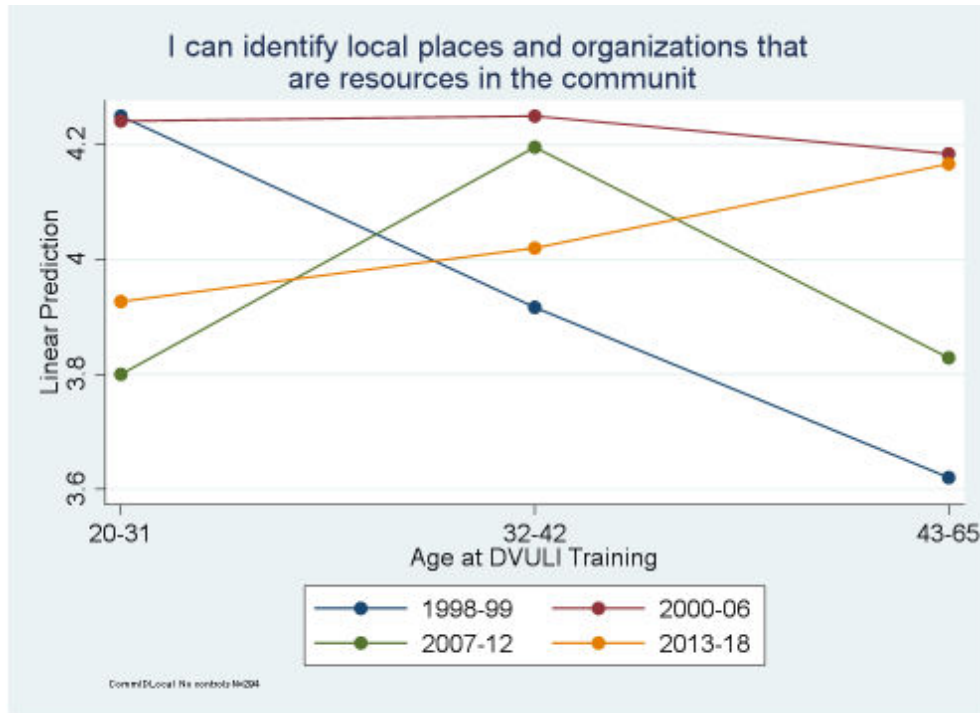
NetDgpRerLet No conbco M=665





Identifying local places and organizations that are resources in the community is higher among mid and late career alums.



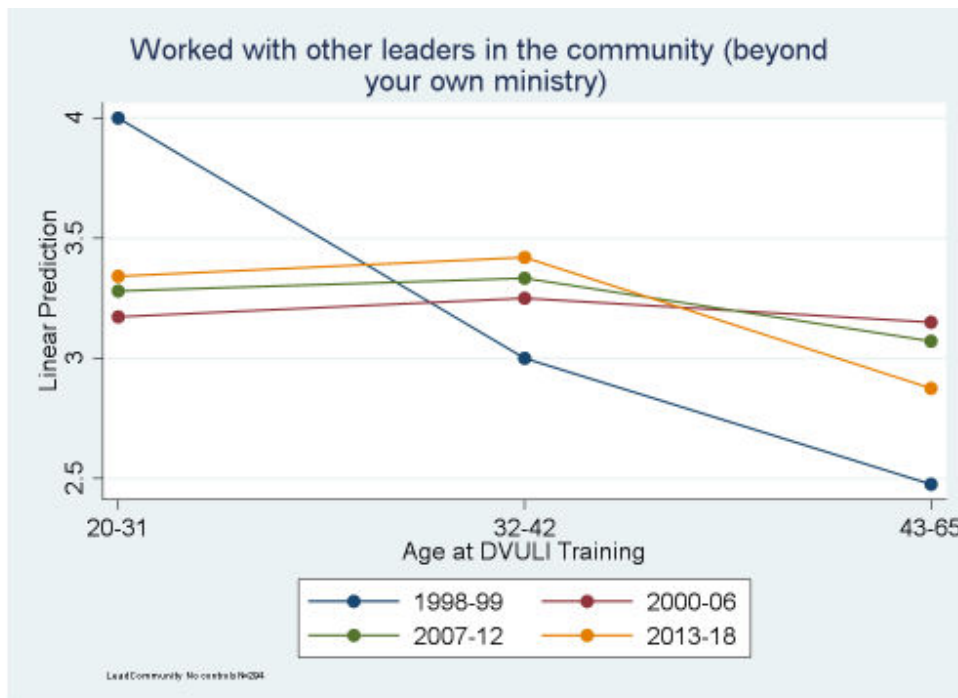
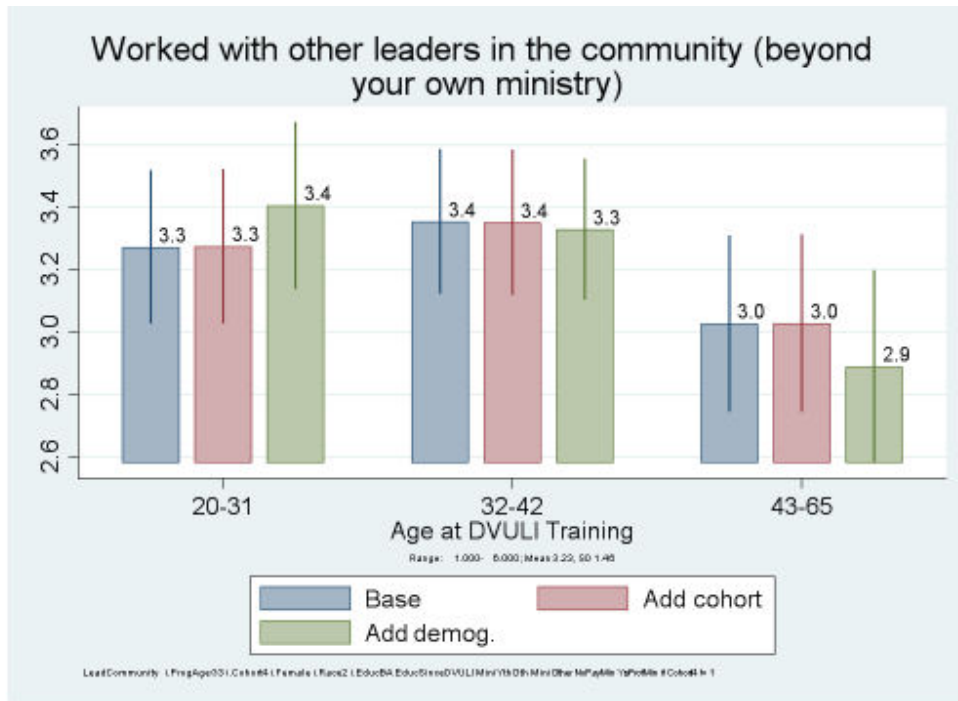


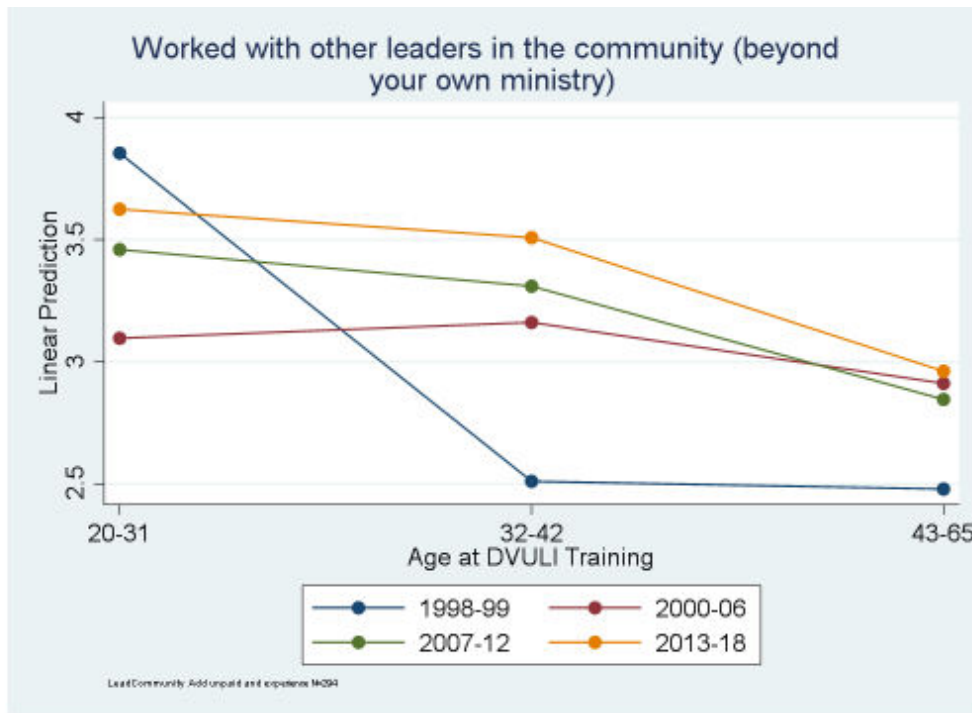
We find mixed evidence, then, on the relation of career stage, networks, and resources. Mid-career appear to do well on issues of networks and resources, but early career alumni do seem to be putting a good deal of time and effort into building network resources.

## Community

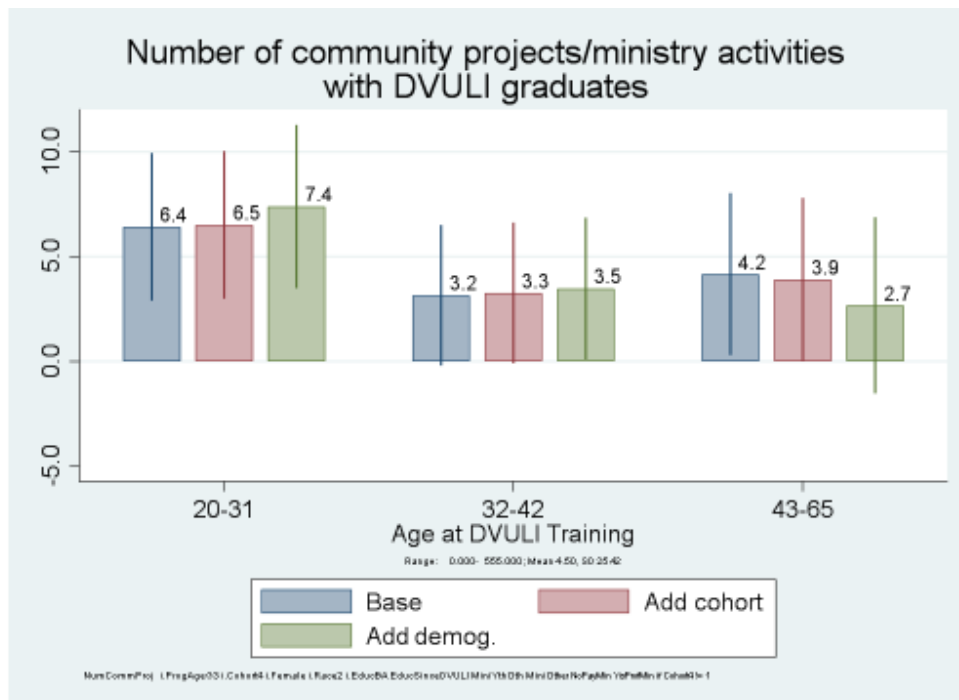
A related question is how career stage interacts with DVULI training to influence engagement with the local community. We would think that mid-career alumni would have been better able to build on DVULI training in this area, though early career alumni may be highly motivated to engage their community.

We find that late career alumni are lower on extent of working with other leaders in the community. This holds for the most recent cohort.

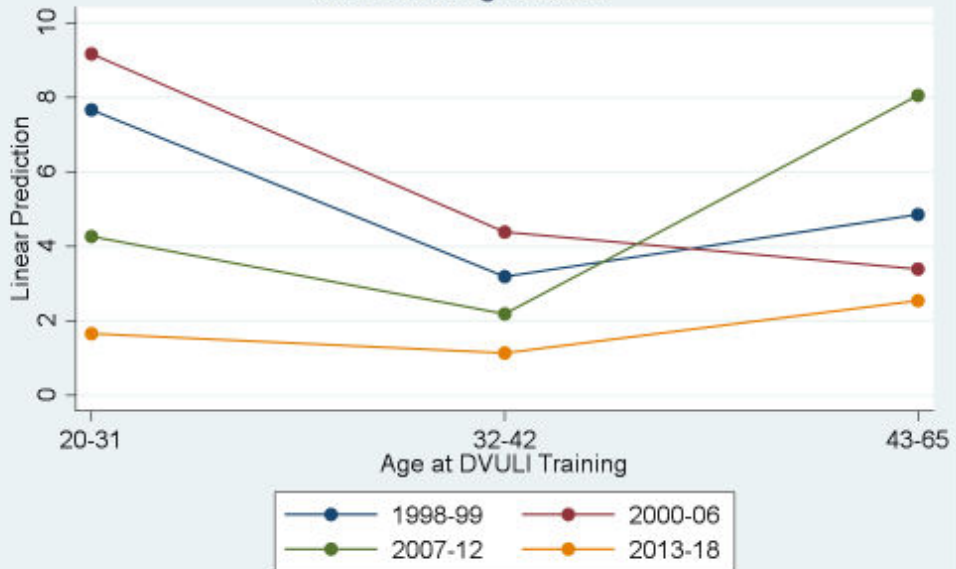




Early career alumni have a higher number of community projects and ministry activities with DVULI graduates. This finding holds for the most recent cohort. Early career alumni are also reporting a higher number of organizations that they partner with to provide ministry or service. When focused on cohort differences, however, the most recent cohort does not reveal large differences in partner organizations across career stage. This could indicate that DVULI in more recent years has been more successful in generating community engagement for all alumni.

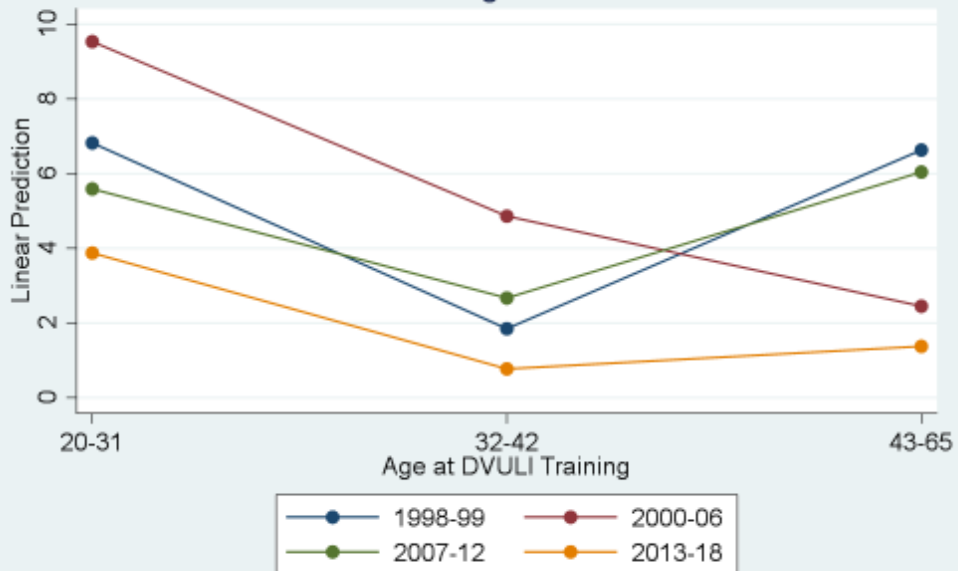


Number of community projects/ministry activities with DVULI graduates



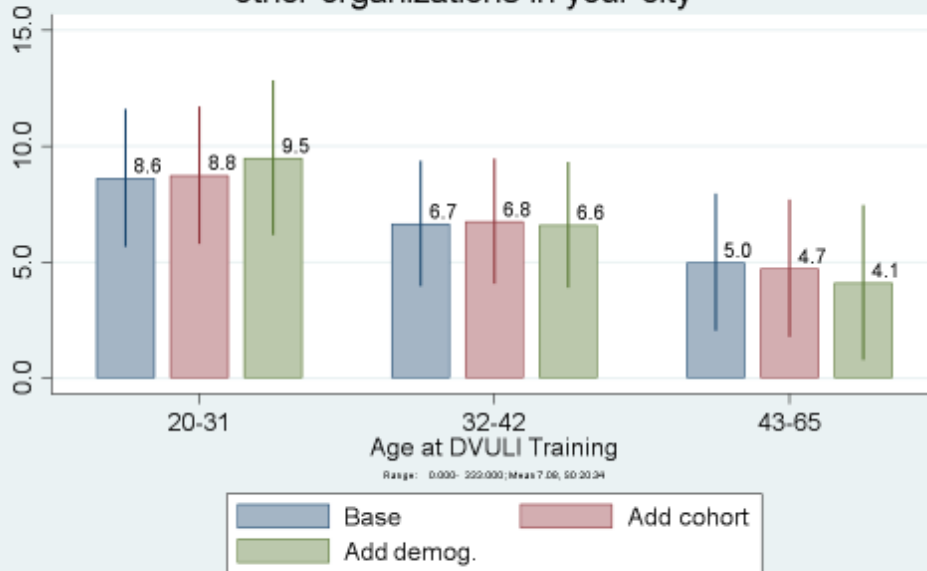
MoreCommProj\_MoreContribN400

Number of community projects/ministry activities with DVULI graduates



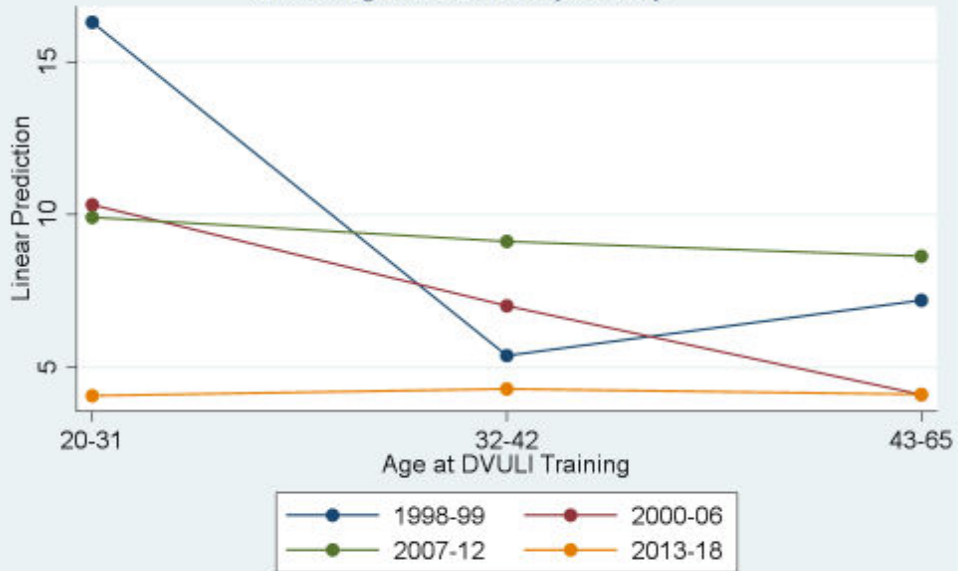
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### Community projects or ministry activities with other organizations in your city

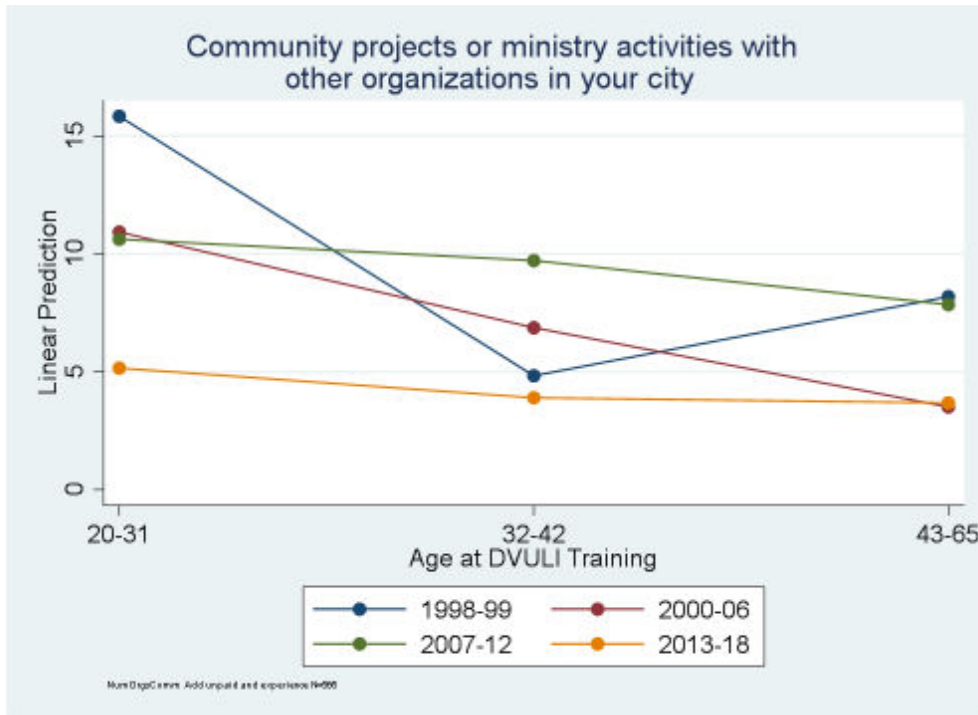


More DVULI Centers | ProgAge@31 | Cohort@1 | Female | Race@2 | Educ@4 | EducSt@5 | DVULIMin@15 | Min@16 | PaMin | Yeh@Min | Cohort@1

### Community projects or ministry activities with other organizations in your city



More DVULI Centers | No centers@1@999



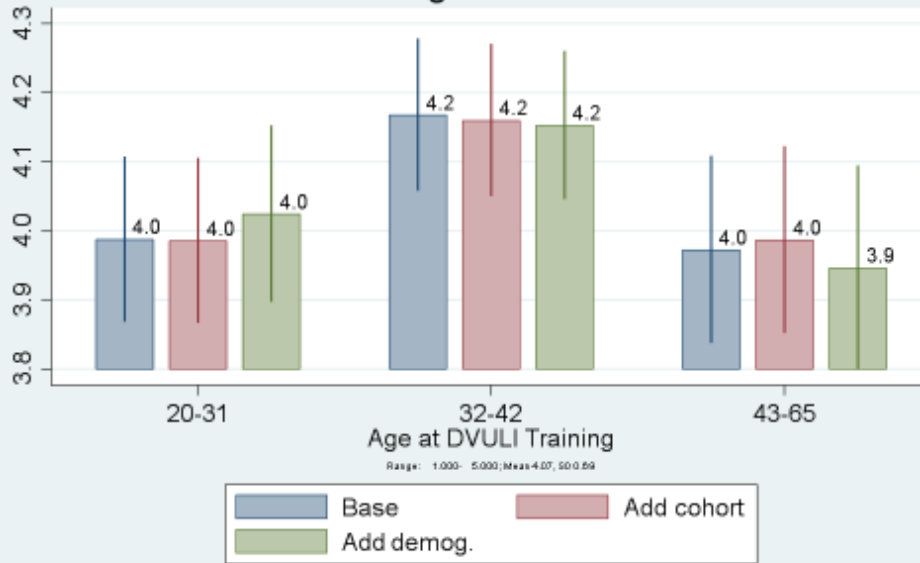
Overall, we find some evidence that early career alumni are very active in bringing together youth ministry and community engagement.

### Youth Development

Regarding relationships with youth, we would expect that early career alumni have some advantages in taking DVULI training into the ministry field.

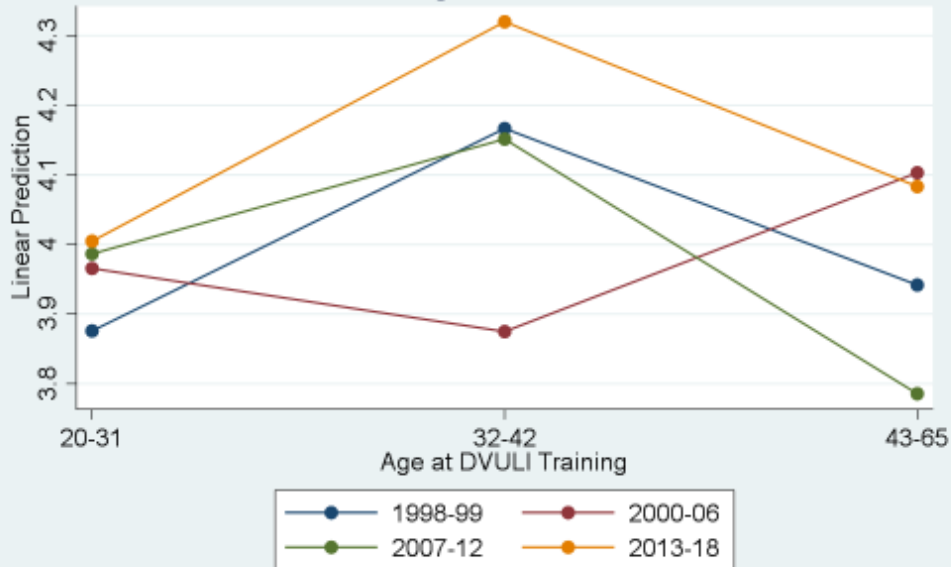
What we find is that the extent that alumni report that youth trust them and seek their support and guidance is greater for mid-career alumni. This finding applies to the recent cohorts as well.

### Youth in my ministry: Trust me and seek my support and guidance



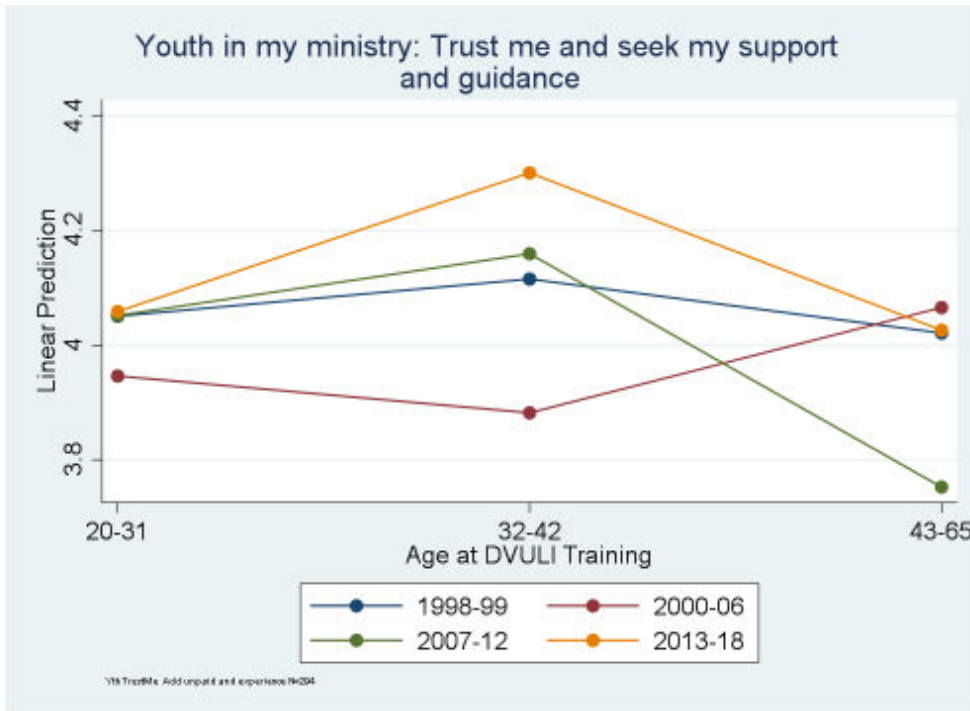
Y18 TrstMn L PrsgAge031 Cchr041 Fmnl1 Rnc2 L Edu04 Edu050x DVULIMin Y18Dr Min 0BvRk PpMn YofMn F Cchr01

### Youth in my ministry: Trust me and seek my support and guidance

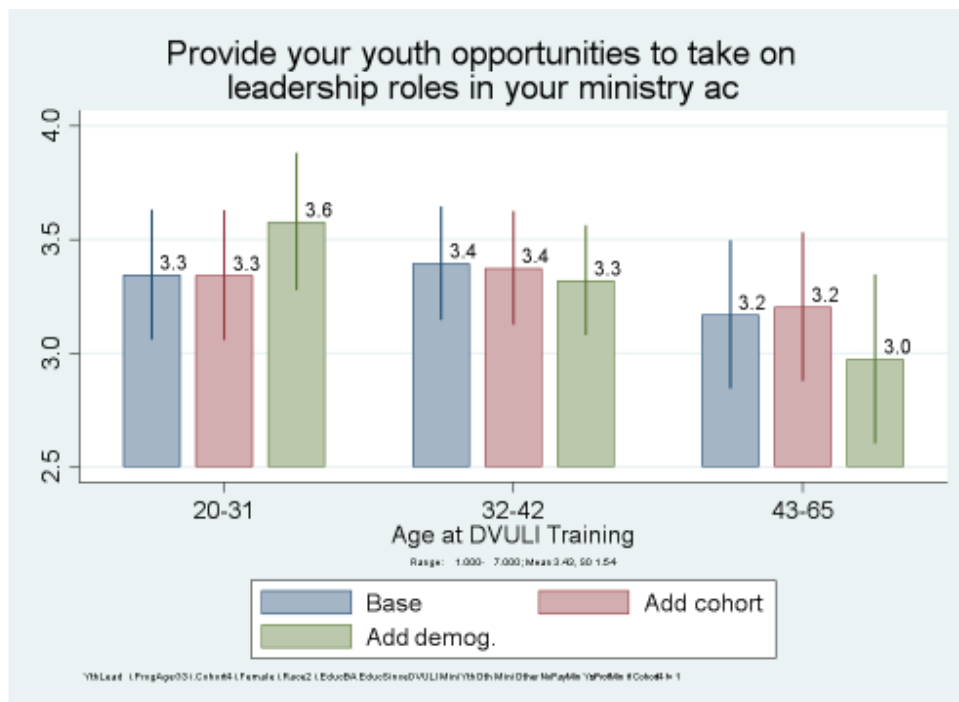


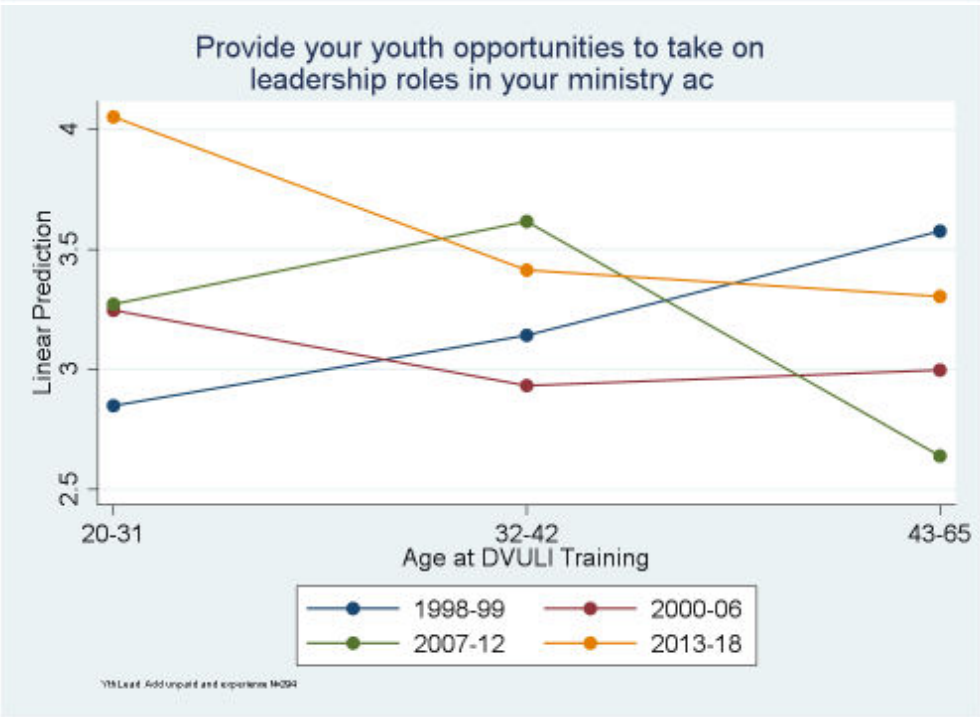
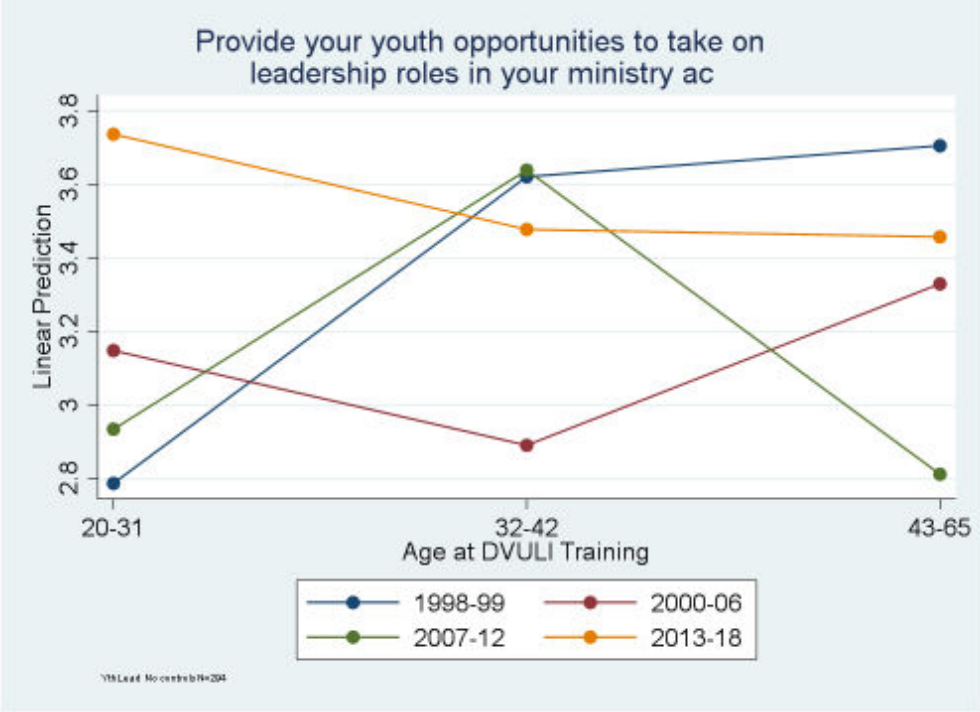
Y18 TrstMn No cchr01 R=294





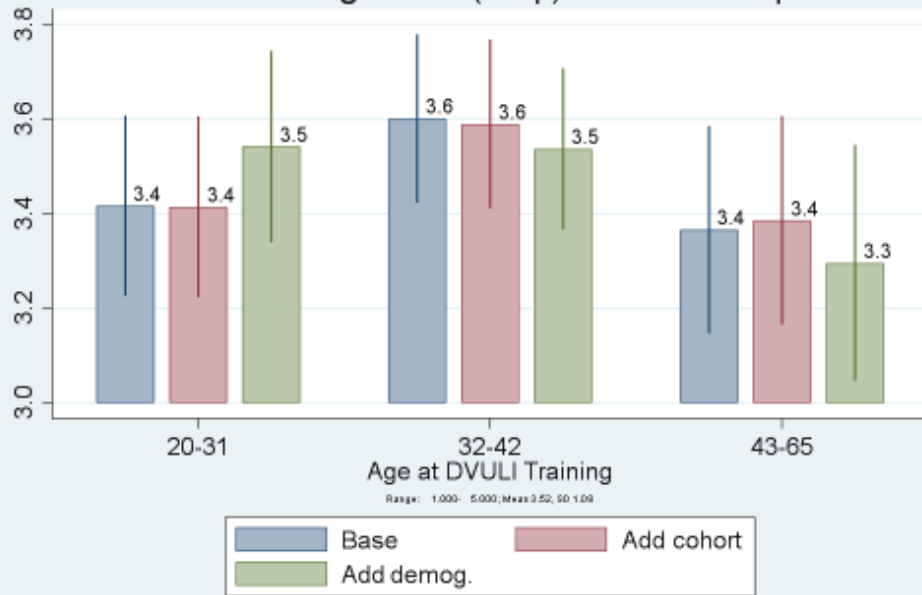
Providing youth opportunities to take up leadership roles in ministry, however, is higher for early career alumni. This outcome is lower among late career alumni.





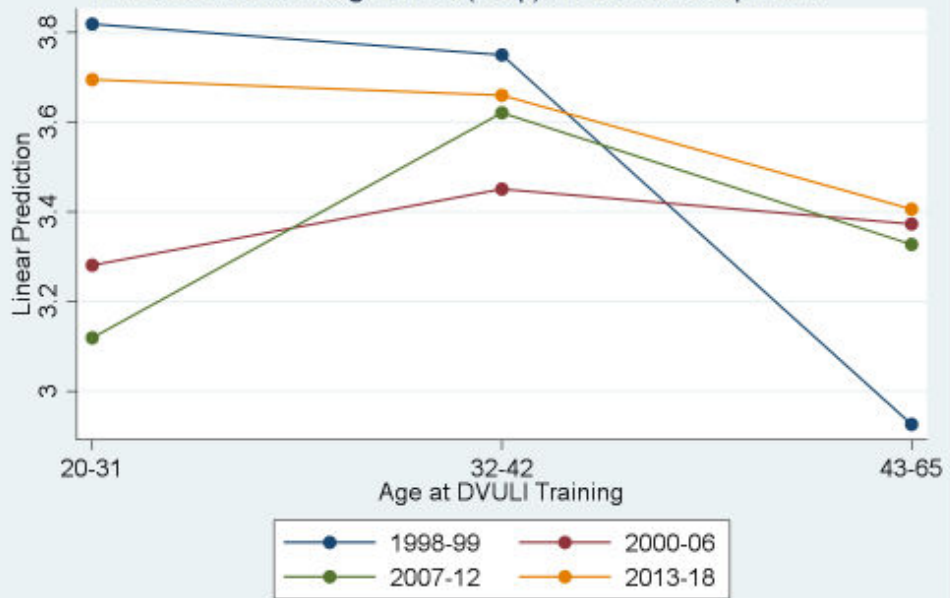
In addition, the frequency of practicing youth development as a breakthrough skill is higher among early and mid-career alumni compared to late career alumni.

Practice breakthrough skills (freq.): Youth development

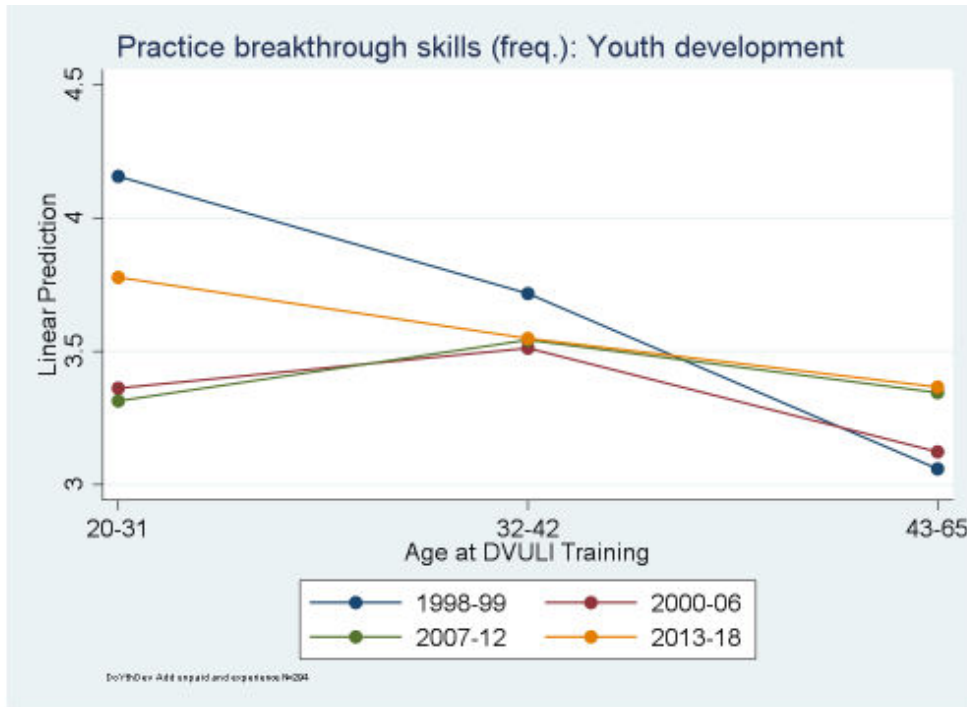


DoY8Dex 1 PropAge03 LCohort01 Female1 Race21 EdExpBA EdExpDVULI Mix01BCH Mix02KerK0 PafMin YofPafMin Y Cohort0-1

Practice breakthrough skills (freq.): Youth development



DoY8Dex Ns conbols Mc2D4



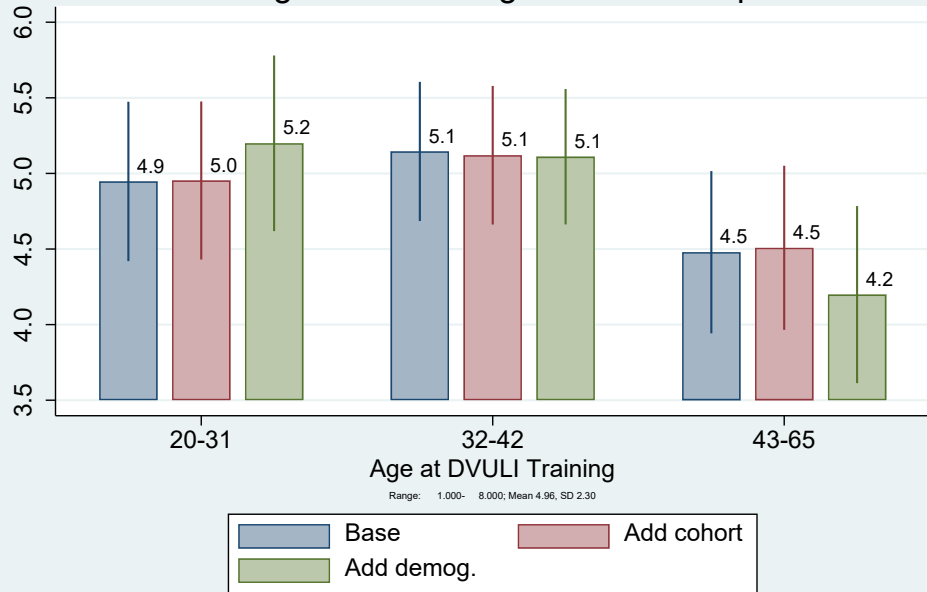
On issues of youth development, we find some evidence that early and mid-career alumni are building on DVULI training for the benefit of youth. We find less evidence of a youth development strength among late career alumni.

### Breakthrough Skills

Career stage may influence how alumni view and practice breakthrough skills. These differences may be helpful in understanding what alumni from different career stages value from DVULI training.

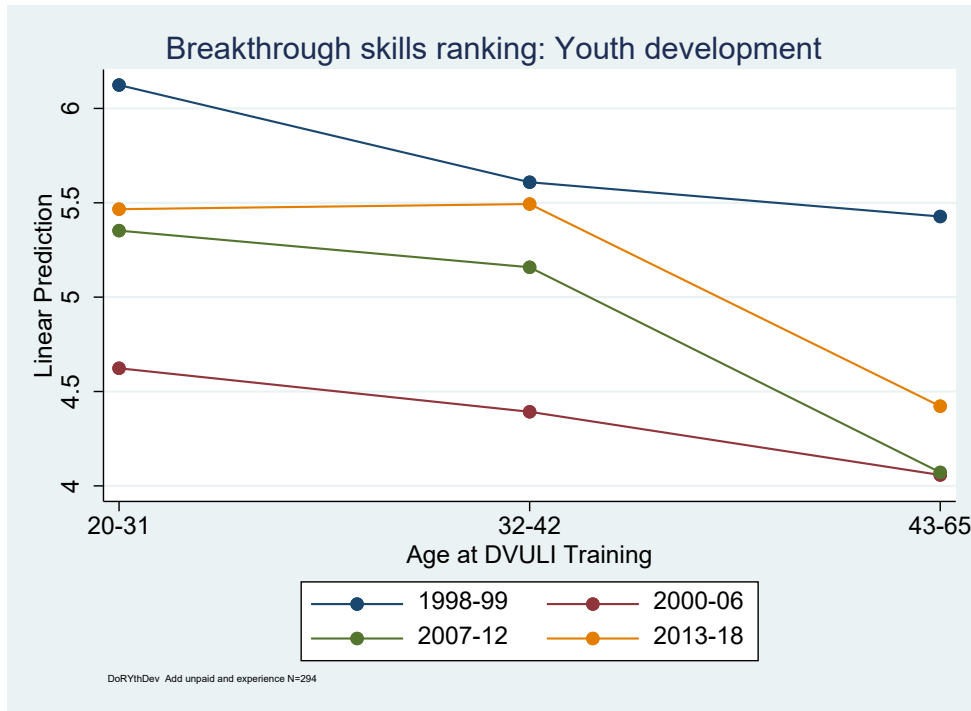
Youth Development as a breakthrough skill is ranked lower among late career alumni, and this finding tends to hold across cohorts.

### Breakthrough skills ranking: Youth development

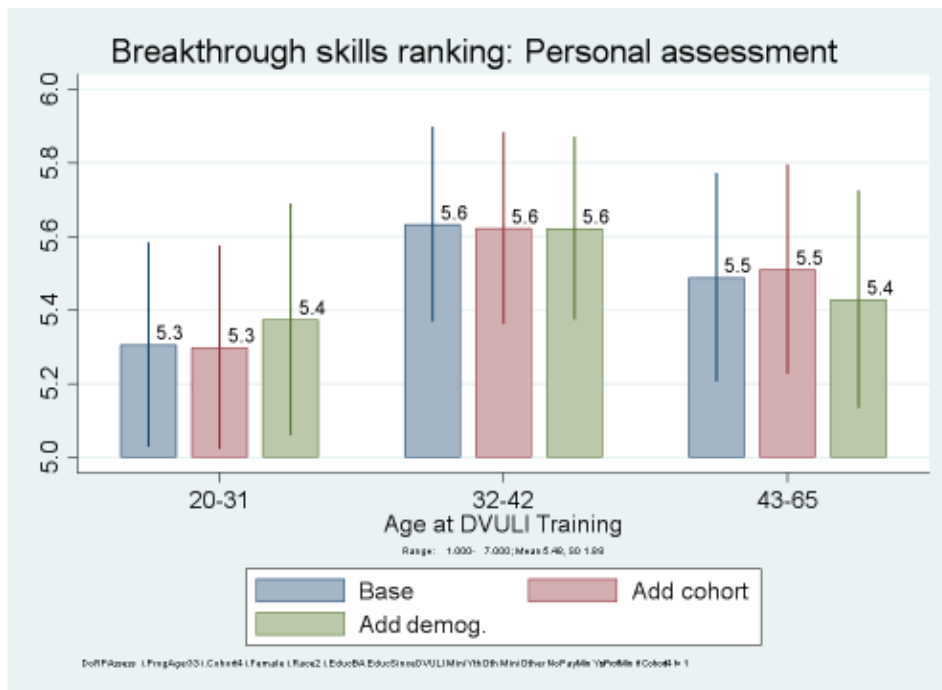


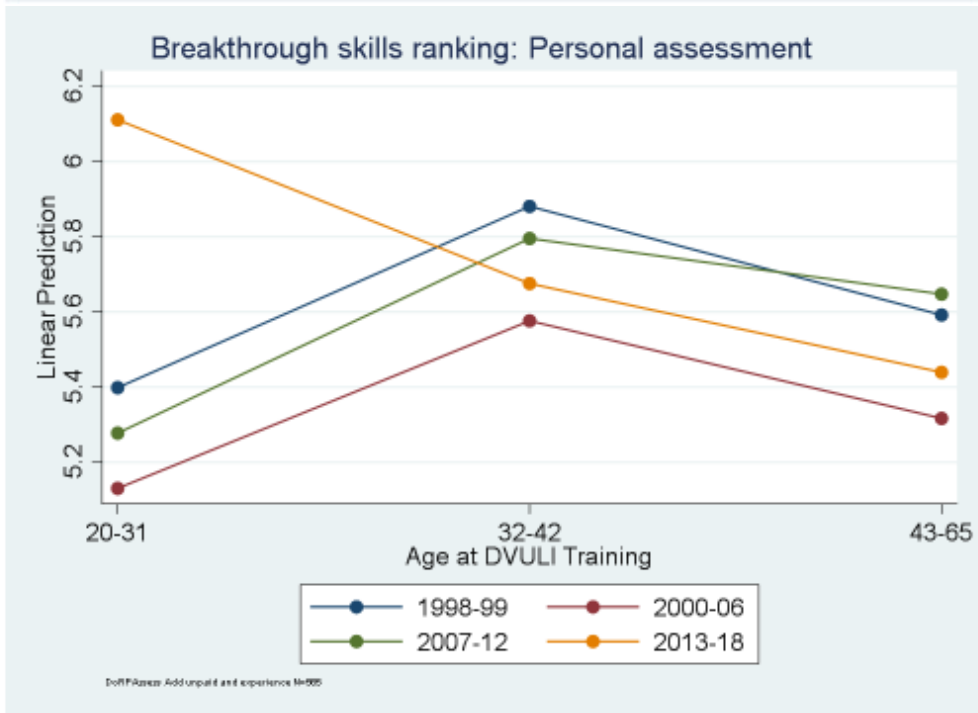
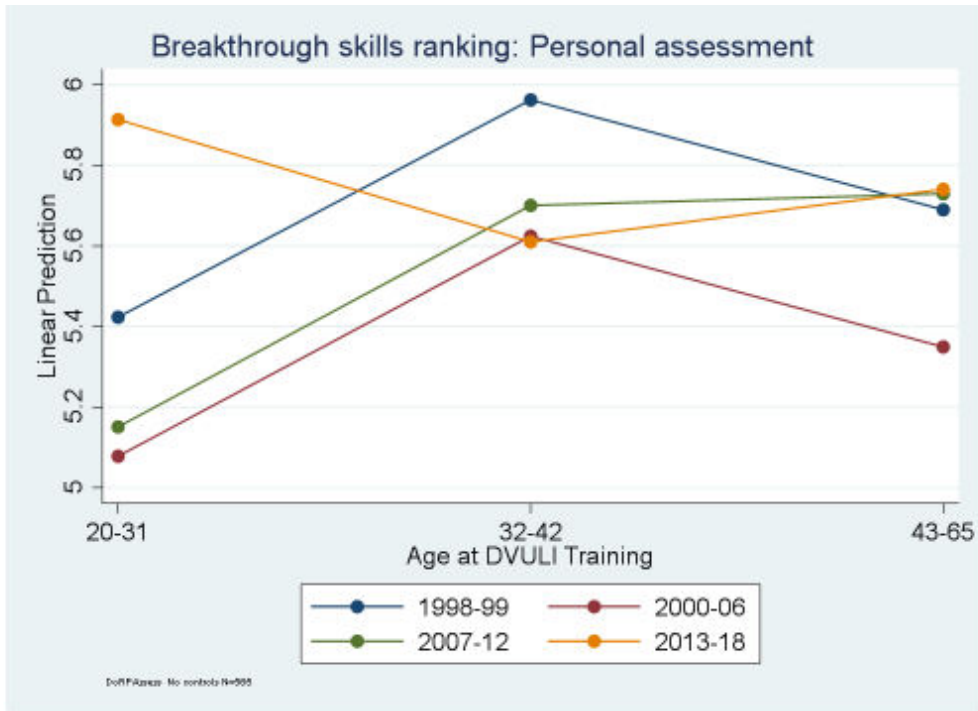
### Breakthrough skills ranking: Youth development





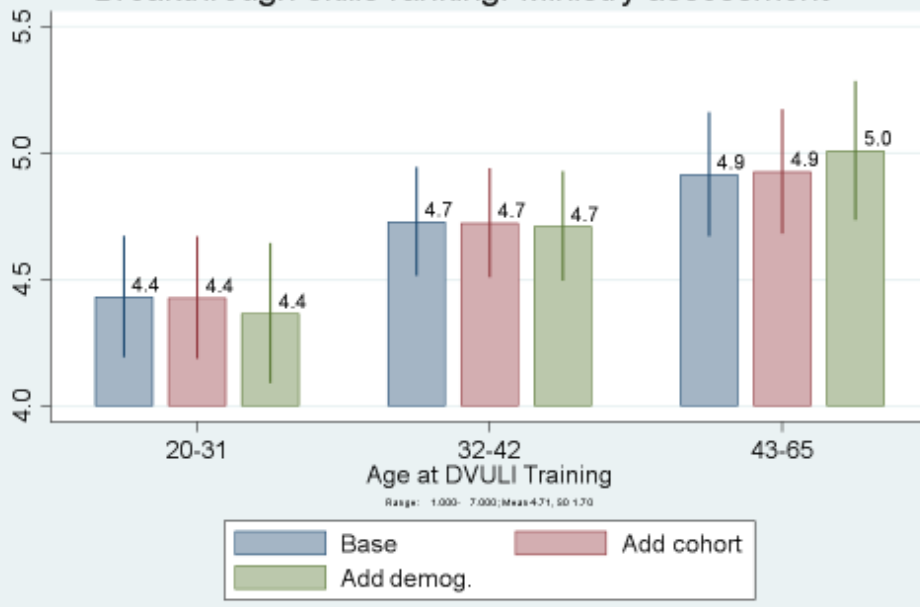
The ranking of Personal Assessment is similar across career stages, but, interestingly, the early career alumni in more recent cohorts rank Personal Assessment much higher than other cohorts. Perhaps this reflects a changing emphasis in DVULI training that is particularly important to early career alumni. In other cohorts, we find that Personal Assessment tends to be ranked more highly by mid-career alumni.





Ministry Assessment ranking appears to be higher among mid and late career alumni. This difference is smaller in more recent cohorts. Perhaps DVULI has become more effective over time in tailoring this breakthrough skill to early career alumni.

### Breakthrough skills ranking: Ministry assessment



DoITMAnzest | PregAge031 | Cohort4 | Female | Race2 | EducBA | EducD | EduD | EduL | EduM | EduO | EduP | EduR | EduS | EduT | EduU | EduV | EduW | EduX | EduY | EduZ | EduAA | EduAB | EduAC | EduAD | EduAE | EduAF | EduAG | EduAH | EduAI | EduAJ | EduAK | EduAL | EduAM | EduAN | EduAO | EduAP | EduAQ | EduAR | EduAS | EduAT | EduAU | EduAV | EduAW | EduAX | EduAY | EduAZ | EduBA | EduBB | EduBC | EduBD | EduBE | EduBF | EduBG | EduBH | EduBI | EduBJ | EduBK | EduBL | EduBM | EduBN | EduBO | EduBP | EduBQ | EduBR | EduBS | EduBT | EduBU | EduBV | EduBW | EduBX | EduBY | EduBZ | EduCA | EduCB | EduCC | EduCD | EduCE | EduCF | EduCG | EduCH | EduCI | EduCJ | EduCK | EduCL | EduCM | EduCN | EduCO | EduCP | EduCQ | EduCR | EduCS | EduCT | EduCU | EduCV | EduCW | EduCX | EduCY | EduCZ | EduDA | EduDB | EduDC | EduDD | EduDE | EduDF | EduDG | EduDH | EduDI | EduDJ | EduDK | EduDL | EduDM | EduDN | EduDO | EduDP | EduDQ | EduDR | EduDS | EduDT | EduDU | EduDV | EduDW | EduDX | EduDY | EduDZ | EduEA | EduEB | EduEC | EduED | EduEE | EduEF | EduEG | EduEH | EduEI | EduEJ | EduEK | EduEL | EduEM | EduEN | EduEO | EduEP | EduEQ | EduER | EduES | EduET | EduEU | EduEV | EduEW | EduEX | EduEY | EduEZ | EduFA | EduFB | EduFC | EduFD | EduFE | EduFF | EduFG | EduFH | EduFI | EduFJ | EduFK | EduFL | EduFM | EduFN | EduFO | EduFP | EduFQ | EduFR | EduFS | EduFT | EduFU | EduFV | EduFW | EduFX | EduFY | EduFZ | EduGA | EduGB | EduGC | EduGD | EduGE | EduGF | EduGG | EduGH | EduGI | EduGJ | EduGK | EduGL | EduGM | EduGN | EduGO | EduGP | EduGQ | EduGR | EduGS | EduGT | EduGU | EduGV | EduGW | EduGX | EduGY | EduGZ | EduHA | EduHB | EduHC | EduHD | EduHE | EduHF | EduHG | EduHH | EduHI | EduHJ | EduHK | EduHL | EduHM | EduHN | EduHO | EduHP | EduHQ | EduHR | EduHS | EduHT | EduHU | EduHV | EduHW | EduHX | EduHY | EduHZ | EduIA | EduIB | EduIC | EduID | EduIE | EduIF | EduIG | EduIH | EduII | EduIJ | EduIK | EduIL | EduIM | EduIN | EduIO | EduIP | EduIQ | EduIR | EduIS | EduIT | EduIU | EduIV | EduIW | EduIX | EduIY | EduIZ | EduJA | EduJB | EduJC | EduJD | EduJE | EduJF | EduJG | EduJH | EduJI | EduJJ | EduJK | EduJL | EduJM | EduJN | EduJO | EduJP | EduJQ | EduJR | EduJS | EduJT | EduJU | EduJV | EduJW | EduJX | EduJY | EduJZ | EduKA | EduKB | EduKC | EduKD | EduKE | EduKF | EduKG | EduKH | EduKI | EduKJ | EduKK | EduKL | EduKM | EduKN | EduKO | EduKP | EduKQ | EduKR | EduKS | EduKT | EduKU | EduKV | EduKW | EduKX | EduKY | EduKZ | EduLA | EduLB | EduLC | EduLD | EduLE | EduLF | EduLG | EduLH | EduLI | EduLJ | EduLK | EduLL | EduLM | EduLN | EduLO | EduLP | EduLQ | EduLR | EduLS | EduLT | EduLU | EduLV | EduLW | EduLX | EduLY | EduLZ | EduMA | EduMB | EduMC | EduMD | EduME | EduMF | EduMG | EduMH | EduMI | EduMJ | EduMK | EduML | EduMN | EduMO | EduMP | EduMQ | EduMR | EduMS | EduMT | EduMU | EduMV | EduMW | EduMX | EduMY | EduMZ | EduNA | EduNB | EduNC | EduND | EduNE | EduNF | EduNG | EduNH | EduNI | EduNJ | EduNK | EduNL | EduNM | EduNN | EduNO | EduNP | EduNQ | 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EduSM | EduSN | EduSO | EduSP | EduSQ | EduSR | EduSS | EduST | EduSU | EduSV | EduSW | EduSX | EduSY | EduSZ | EduTA | EduTB | EduTC | EduTD | EduTE | EduTF | EduTG | EduTH | EduTI | EduTJ | EduTK | EduTL | EduTM | EduTN | EduTO | EduTP | EduTQ | EduTR | EduTS | EduTT | EduTU | EduTV | EduTW | EduTX | EduTY | EduTZ | EduUA | EduUB | EduUC | EduUD | EduUE | EduUF | EduUG | EduUH | EduUI | EduUJ | EduUK | EduUL | EduUM | EduUN | EduUO | EduUP | EduUQ | EduUR | EduUS | EduUT | EduUU | EduUV | EduUW | EduUX | EduUY | EduUZ | EduVA | EduVB | EduVC | EduVD | EduVE | EduVF | EduVG | EduVH | EduVI | EduVJ | EduVK | EduVL | EduVM | EduVN | EduVO | EduVP | EduVQ | EduVR | EduVS | EduVT | EduVU | EduVV | EduVW | EduVX | EduVY | EduVZ | EduWA | EduWB | EduWC | EduWD | EduWE | EduWF | EduWG | EduWH | EduWI | EduWJ | EduWK | EduWL | EduWM | EduWN | EduWO | EduWP | EduWQ | EduWR | EduWS | EduWT | EduWU | EduWV | EduWW | EduWX | EduWY | EduWZ | EduXA | EduXB | EduXC | EduXD | EduXE | EduXF | EduXG | EduXH | EduXI | EduXJ | EduXK | EduXL | EduXM | EduXN | EduXO | EduXP | EduXQ | EduXR | EduXS | EduXT | EduXU | EduXV | EduXW | EduXX | EduXY | EduXZ | EduYA | EduYB | EduYC | EduYD | EduYE | EduYF | EduYG | EduYH | EduYI | EduYJ | EduYK | EduYL | EduYM | EduYN | EduYO | EduYP | EduYQ | EduYR | EduYS | EduYT | EduYU | EduYV | EduYW | EduYX | EduYY | EduYZ | EduZA | EduZB | EduZC | EduZD | EduZE | EduZF | EduZG | EduZH | EduZI | EduZJ | EduZK | EduZL | EduZM | EduZN | EduZO | EduZP | EduZQ | EduZR | EduZS | EduZT | EduZU | EduZV | EduZW | EduZX | EduZY | EduZZ

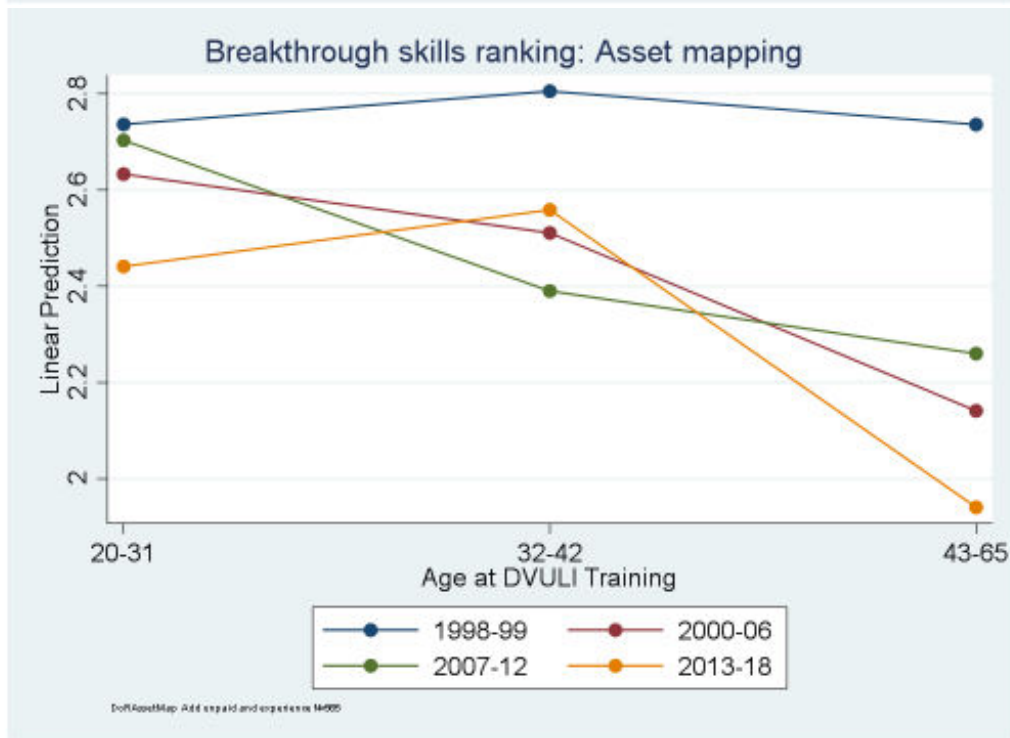
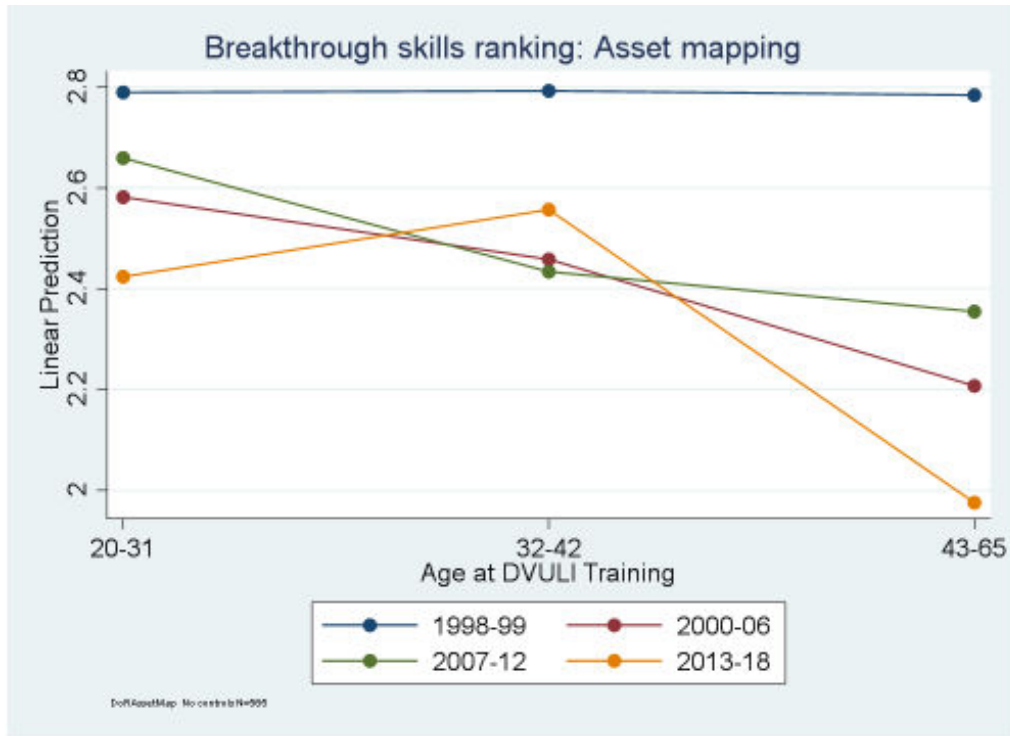
### Breakthrough skills ranking: Ministry assessment



DoITMAnzest | No controls | N=999

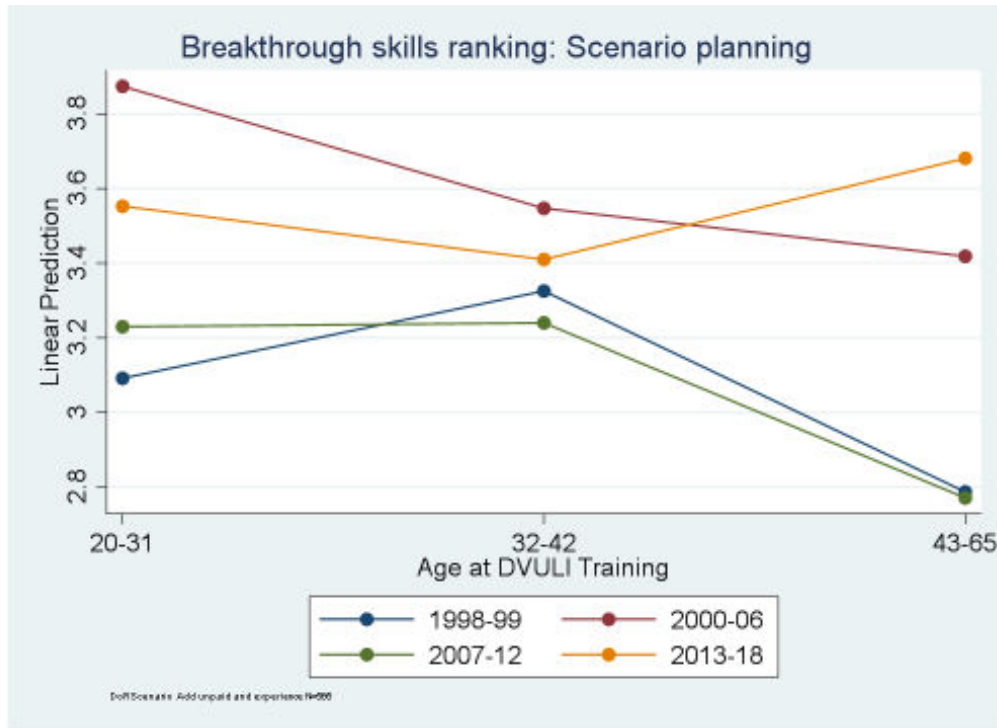




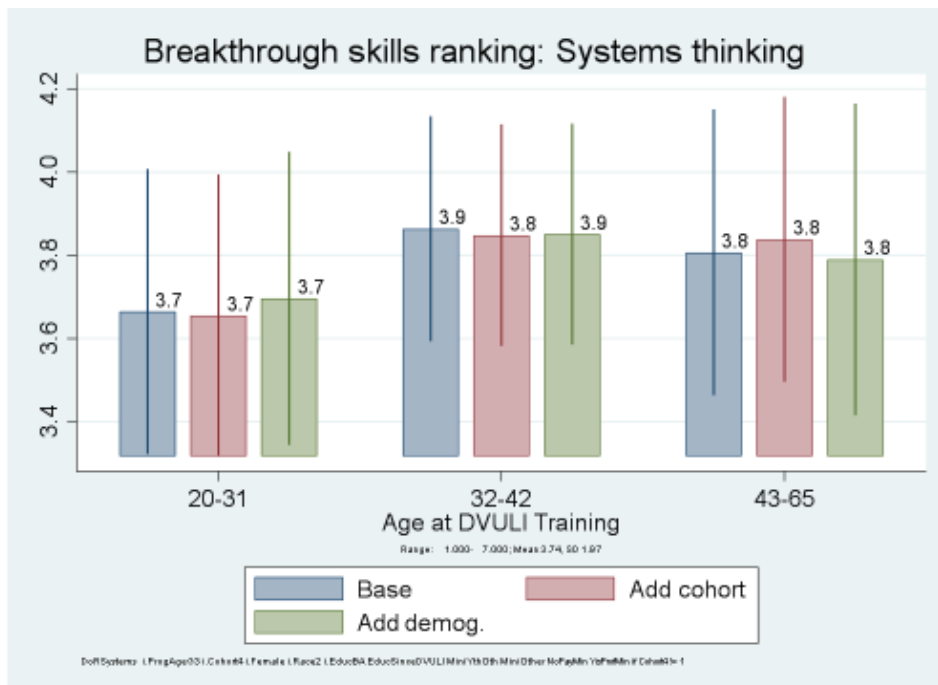


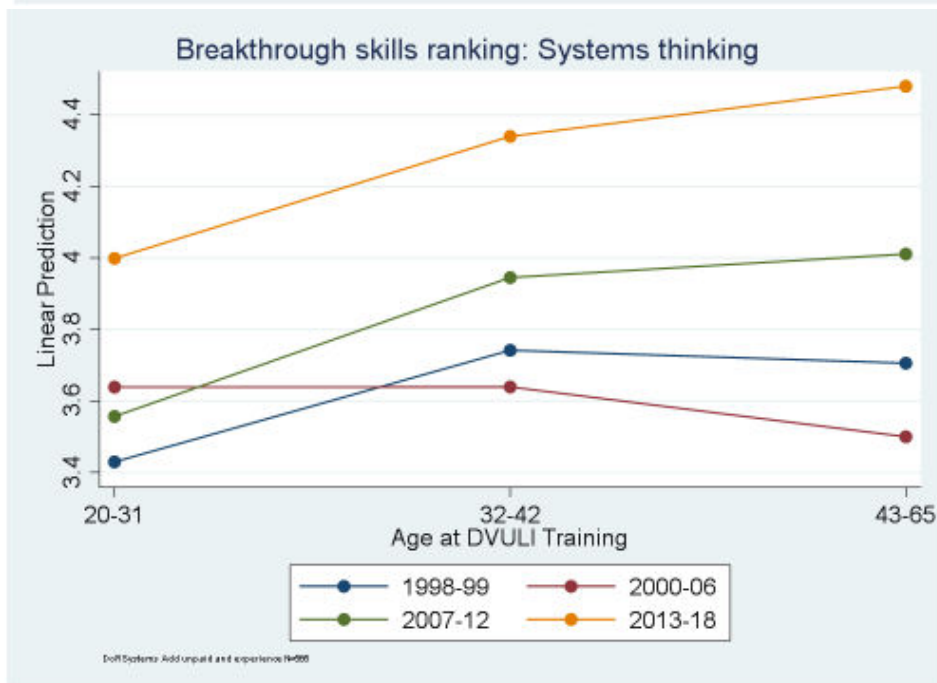
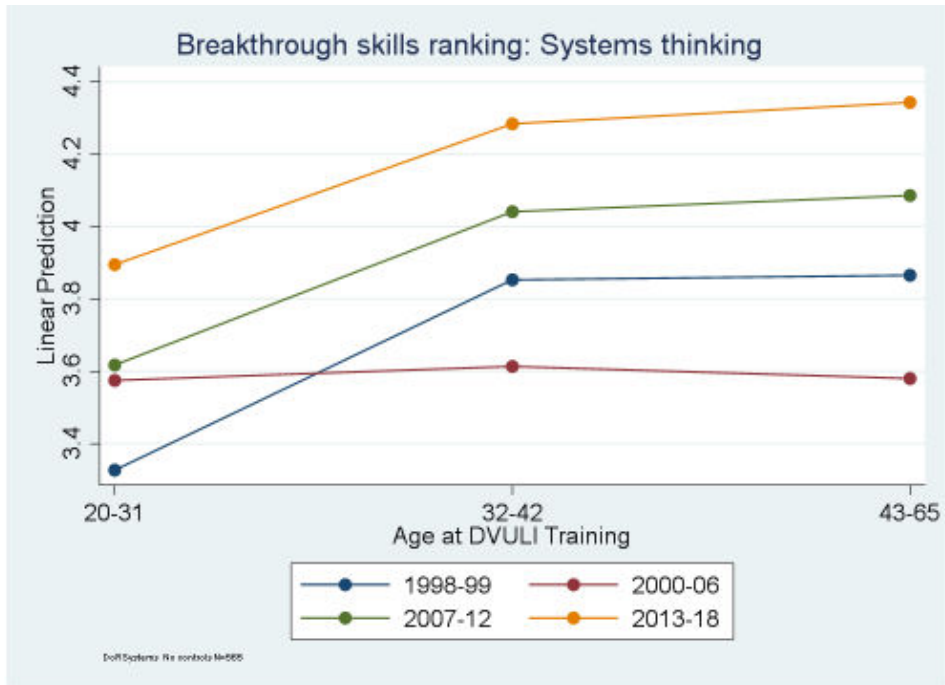
Scenario Planning ranking is very similar—lower among late career alumni—but, interestingly, career stage differences disappear in more recent cohorts. This change may reflect different approaches to Scenario Planning in DVULI training in more recent years.





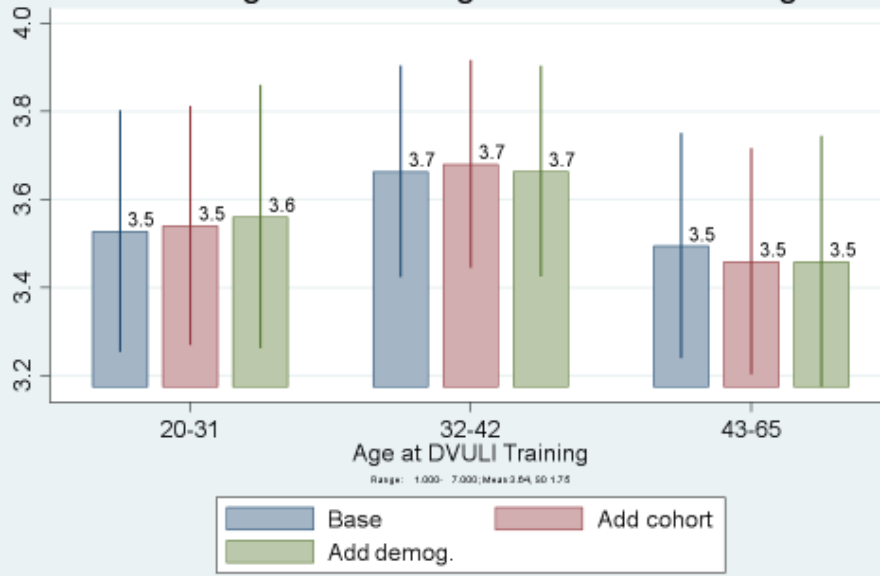
Systems Thinking is slightly less valued among early career alumni, and this career stage difference is strongest in the most recent cohort.





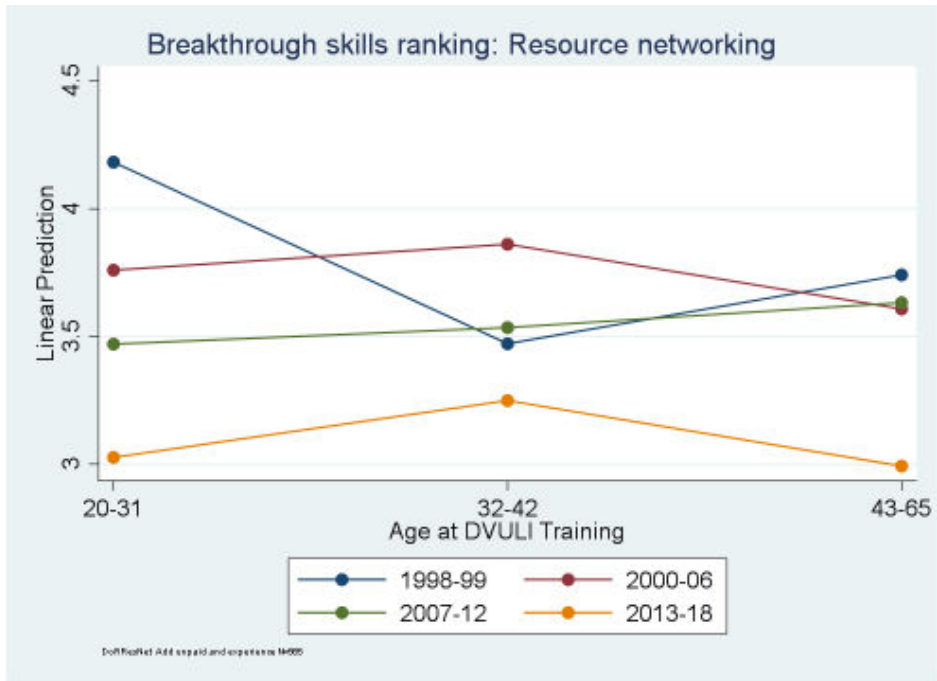
In the ranking of Resource Networking, career stage differences in DVULI outcomes are muted, though mid-career alumni appear to value this skill slightly more. In addition, more recent cohorts appear to rank this breakthrough skill lower than other cohorts.

Breakthrough skills ranking: Resource networking

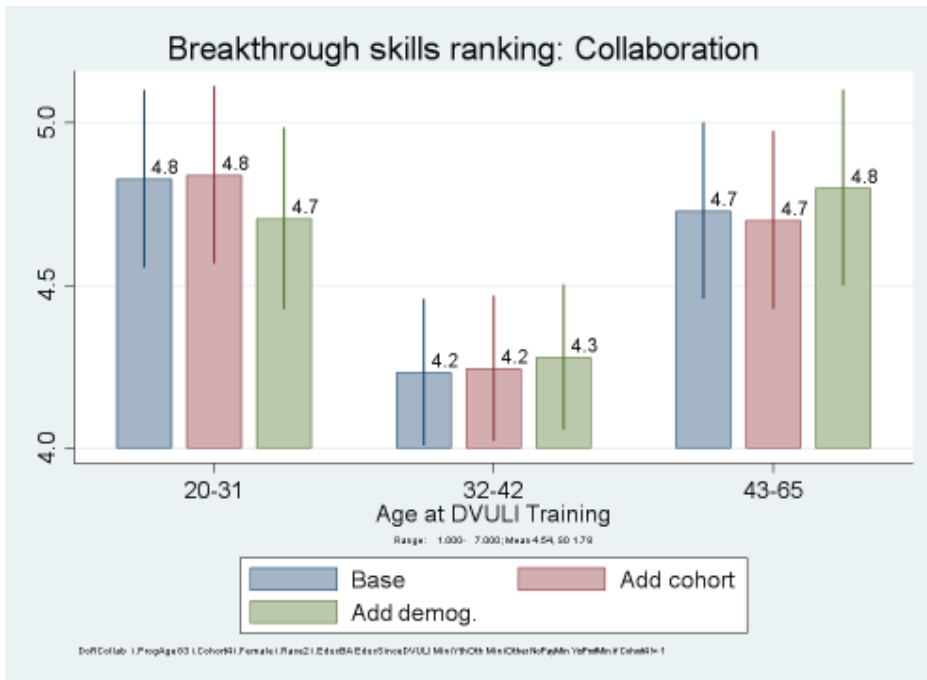


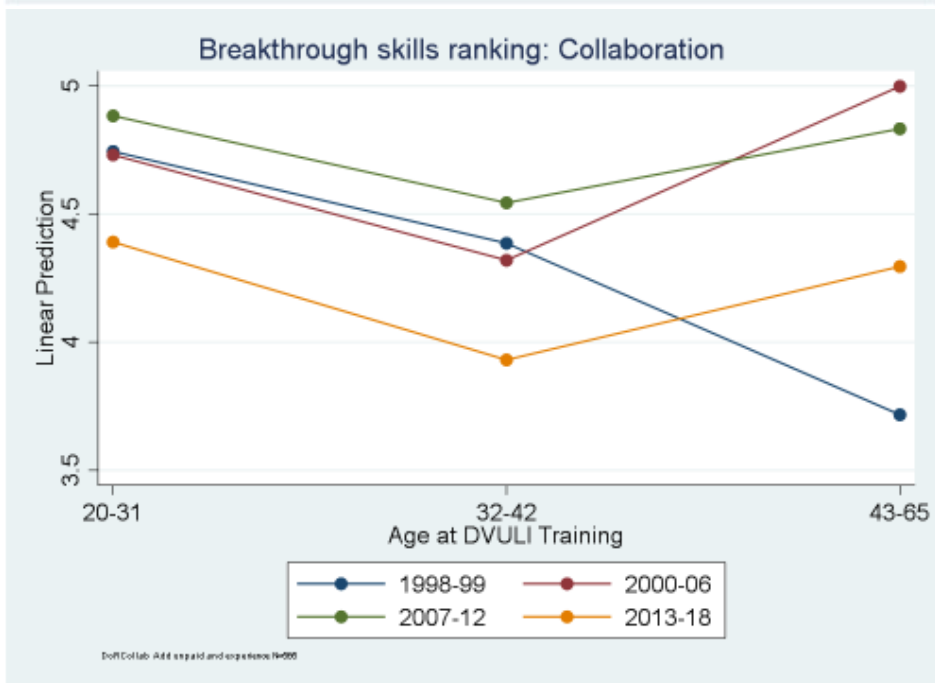
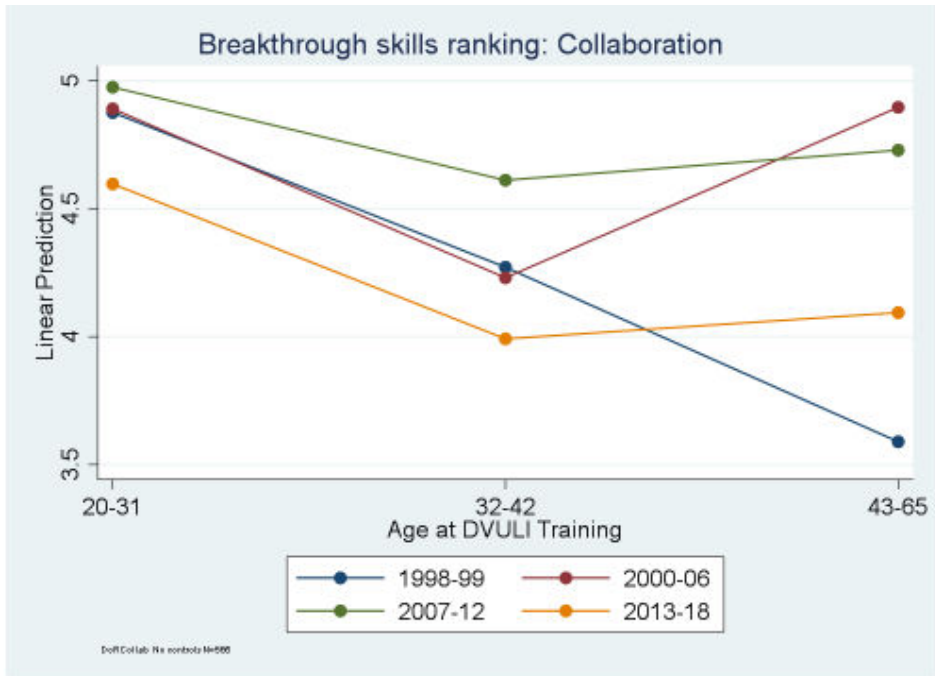
Breakthrough skills ranking: Resource networking





Collaboration is ranked lower among mid-career alumni. This difference is not large in the most recent cohort.





In sum, we find that late career alumni tend not to rank Youth Development or Asset Mapping as highly. Perhaps these skills are less relevant to the specifics of the type of youth ministry position common among late career alumni. Early career alumni show some differences as well. Early career youth ministers tend to rank Systems Thinking less highly, to value Personal Assessment highly, and to be somewhat less enthusiastic about Ministry Assessment.



## **Conclusion**

In general, only some dimensions of DVULI outcomes are related to career stage. While we find many tendencies in this chapter, we note that many of our outcome measures did not show stark differences by career stage. How DVULI alumni deal with conflict, for example, is similar across career stage. The extent that DVULI alumni practice the core value of Interdependence is not strongly related to career stage.

Yet there are patterns that are worth considering. Early and mid-career alumni seem to resonate broadly with most of the emphases and skills available through DVULI. It is difficult to conclude that early or mid-career participants benefit more from DVULI, but we do see that early career alumni resonate with the networking, collaboration, and community engagement aspects of DVULI but have ministry challenges that perhaps make it more difficult to incorporate other DVULI emphases, such as Systems Thinking or Ministry Assessment. There is some evidence that mid-career youth ministers benefit broadly from the DVULI experience, including in their relation to youth and the “change-maker” role within their organization. Late career alumni do major in many important aspects of DVULI, though overall appear less engaged in several DVULI emphases, such as youth development, resources and networking, and community engagement.

### Chapter 3: Leadership: Concepts and Practices

The descriptive findings in Chapter 1 offer a straightforward assessment of leadership orientations and practices, including the distribution of alumni responses and the averages for each variable. The findings provide strong evidence of the orientations, skills, and practices characteristic of transformative and servant leadership among DVULI alumni. Analysis of variation in alumni outcomes provided insight into the strengths of DVULI across social differences and occupational setting.

In this chapter, we can go beyond descriptive findings and demographic differences to an analysis of the relationship of alumni responses across survey questions. Essentially, we are looking to illuminate patterns across questions. Rather than focusing on responses to each question, our analysis will search for broader patterns, orientations or practices of alumni that drive or undergird responses to individual survey questions. We will assess and interpret patterns of association that emerge across survey related survey questions.

What dimensions or concepts appear to organize alumni responses to the multitude of individual questions in the survey? What can an analysis of these dimensions tell us about how DVULI influences youth ministry of alumni? There are several reasons that variables might “hang together,” measuring something similar. One is that DVULI training—explicitly or implicitly—emphasized relationships between aspects of youth ministry, and alumni survey responses reflect what is learned and practiced because of DVULI. It is also possible that in the field and in alumni experience certain youth ministry orientations or activities are necessarily associated—several ingredients must be mixed together to bake the alumni’s youth ministry cake. The ingredients of youth ministry may depend in part on the particular community context as well, including the civic or organizational life in a city or neighborhood. A third, related possibility is that common understandings of spheres of life, such as personal, family, work, and community, influence alumni to see certain questions as asking the “same” thing. What is held in common across questions, then, can provide insight into how alumni understand and experience DVULI, youth ministry, and their community context.

The approach taken in this chapter is to understand the contours of youth ministry from the perspective of alumni. What are the most important dimensions or parameters that shape how alumni think about their life and ministry? What aspects of their life and ministry do they see as closely connected? How are these underlying dimensions consistent with transformational, altruistic, and servant leadership? What do the emerging concepts tell us about how life and ministry are experienced by alumni?

As we attempt to see what is behind the curtain, we are of course limited to the questions asked in the survey. Patterns in the data might differ if other questions were asked in the Alumni Survey. But we have a lot of dimensions of youth ministry to work with since the survey included questions about multiple aspects of youth ministry. The correlations across survey questions can bring into focus how DVULI training is received, understood, and practiced by alumni in their ministries.

The first take on patterns of associations in the data is to focus on the factors that seem best to indicate a single underlying dimension of DVULI evaluation. That is, what variables from which dimensions of youth ministry seem to “hang together”?

After determining support for the primary concepts or dimensions of the DVULI experience, we consider how outcomes vary for alumni in different social positions or community contexts. This includes an analysis of variation in DVULI experiences by education, race and ethnicity, gender, age, and relationship to youth ministry. We also consider variation by the multi-year DVULI cohorts used in Chapter 1. Finally, we consider a full model accounting for all the alumni characteristics considered in Chapter 1.

## **Methods**

The questions on youth ministry outcomes analyzed individually in chapter 1 are included in this analysis. The statistical program, Mplus, was used to conduct an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with the variables. In some cases, the variables used in the EFA were limited to a particular dimension of youth ministry; for example, community involvement measures were considered as a separate set when determining the final indicators of the community-related factors. The analysis was conducted with the 2019 survey data, and subsequently with the 2006 and 2019 data combined. Before calculating the factors and relationships, missing data was imputed based on available information for other variables and their associations. Data imputation helps to ensure that missing responses do not lead to biased results in our analysis.

The results of the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) allowed us to create latent variables for each of the main factors, which become outcomes in a regression analysis of the effects of demographic and organizational variables. The cohort and other independent variables are identical to those used in the analysis reported in the first chapter.

Each of the 11 dimensions of DVULI experience are used as dependent variables. We account for variation in each dependent variable with a basic model, which includes marital status, demographic characteristics (age, gender, race and ethnicity, education, educational attainment since DVULI), involvement in youth ministry, and multi-year cohorts. We then ran a full model, which replicates the independent variables used in the Chapter 1 models. This full model does not include marital status, but adds variables for the type of organization the alumnus works at (church, school, nonprofit, “other”), and for the type of position they hold (executive director or senior pastor; program director or associate pastor; program coordinator or youth leader; “other”). It also includes measures of working in unpaid youth ministry positions, and of the number of years that the alum has worked in youth ministry.

## **An Overall Assessment**

Our findings point to several underlying dimensions or concepts that organize the life and ministry of DVULI alumni. Interestingly, about 11 factors emerge in the exploratory factor analysis. We summarize these as:

- Faith and Faith-based Mission
- Practicing Breakthrough Skills
- Breakthrough Plan Success
- Care for Personal and Social Needs
- Work and Life Balance

- Community Leadership and Ministry Commitment
- Community Engagement
- Vision and Mission
- Mission Accomplished
- Career Impact
- Income and Job Advancement

There are several conclusions based on the factors that emerged in the analysis. First, DVULI alumni hold faith and work very closely. Several of the 11 dimensions include measures explicitly related to faith and faith-based mission, which is integral to how alumni envision every aspect of their ministry. Even community leadership, in the minds and practices of alumni, is closely connected to youth ministry commitment.

Second, the dominant factors revolve around social and religious aspects of the program. That is, if only a few survey questions were chosen to represent the reality of the life and ministry of alumni, those questions would largely tap social and religious dimensions. Alumni organize their life and ministry around the key social and religious dimensions that we would expect from servant leaders.

This finding provides support for the claim that one of the most important impacts of DVULI training is through the ministry community it generates and, partly as a result of that community, the personal religious and spiritual growth it fosters. Youth ministry is demanding, and likely feels isolating and overwhelming at times for religious leaders working in disadvantaged communities. DVULI seems to provide the kind of life direction and social support essential for navigating the personal, relational, and organizational challenges presented by youth ministry in disadvantaged urban areas.

If we step back and ask, “What is the fundamental dimension of DVULI training for alumni?,” we arrive at a striking finding. Across all survey questions on life and ministry, the single dimension that most strongly organizes alumni thinking and practices is indicated by questions about care for social, spiritual, and mental and intellectual needs. According to alumni, DVULI provides the space to step back and think systematically about ministry and, perhaps more importantly, provides the necessary social and community scaffolding to carry it out. Alumni see a strong connection between getting “right” with God and others, and their work of understanding and applying the values and skills available through DVULI for improving youth ministry. This is a holistic approach, integrating faith and work, which is central to how alumni think about DVULI and youth ministry. The lynchpin of youth ministry in the eyes of alumni is personal growth, including faith and understanding, from which the rest of DVULI youth ministry flows.

A second approach to fundamental dimensions of ministry is to assess what seems to undergird or organize the 11 dimensions listed above. When considering the relationships among the top 11 factors that emerge from the 2019 data, the findings point to two dimensions that strongly govern respondents’ overall understanding of DVULI and their ministry. The first dimension provides further support for the importance of faith and work integration among alumni. We dub this dimension, Personal and Family Needs, which consists of improving how alumni care for their 1) mental and intellectual needs, 2) social needs, 3) family needs, and 4) spiritual needs (in order of importance as measures of this dimension). The finding points to the important role of DVULI in providing a space to reflect on faith and ministry, to think systematically

about vision, values, ministry commitments and strategies, and to integrate this work with a growing faith and healthy personal and family life.

The second overarching dimension is as important: Faith and Ministry Integration. This consists of the extent that DVULI training strengthened alumni commitment to the 1) faith-based mission of their organization, 2) their relationship to a local faith community, and 3) their commitment to a broad-based and holistic vision of evangelism, and 4) their personal faith. On these two concepts hang a good portion of the overall impact of DVULI on the life and ministry of alumni. What is unique about DVULI impact is that it tightly links faith and leadership skills and practices for the benefit of youth ministry.

Of course, youth ministers selected for DVULI training likely come into the program with the strong inclination that faith and work are and should be closely linked. We expect that this commitment to faith and ministry integration is enhanced brought to fruition through DVULI participation. DVULI likely provides space to reflect on and practice the integration of the “how” and the “why” of youth ministry, while providing the social support that reinforces these orientations. As reported in the 2006 study, many alumni move from seeing youth ministry in terms of a “to do “ list to a renewed commitment and concrete practices of holistic ministry, systematically integrating faith, ministry, leadership skills, and social and community aspects of successful youth ministry.

### **The Dimensions of DVULI Youth Ministry**

The most general picture of DVULI impact on the life and ministry of graduates, then, is summed up by the concepts of Personal and Family Needs, and Faith and Ministry Integration. Next, we drill down, taking an in-depth look at the primary concepts that make sense of alumni’s fundamental orientations to DVULI and youth ministry. Searching for underlying dimensions, we uncovered 11 general factors, indicated by multiple variables in the 2019 dataset, which emerge from the exploratory factor analysis. The question responses of alumni are organized as these 11 dimensions or concepts.

After discussing each dimension, we present findings from regression analyses that reveal how demographic and cohort differences are related to the concept (as measured by the indicators of the latent variable). This will provide evidence for gender, age, cohort, and racial-ethnic correlations with each dimension. Note that each “cohort” in this analysis is a group of several cohort years, early, middle, and recent years. We run these regressions with the 2019 data, and then with the 2006 and 2019 data combined.

#### Faith and Faith-Based Mission

The first conceptual dimension that emerges from the survey responses is oriented to personal faith and the faith-based mission of ministry organizations. Note that alumni do not make a strong distinction between faith-based mission, personal faith, and a holistic approach to evangelism. That seems to reflect a core DVULI emphasis on integrating personal and organizational mission, rather than compartmentalizing faith and work. To a lesser extent, alumni associate personal faith and faith-based mission with their

development and commitment to core ministry values. Still, the fact that core ministry values and faith-based mission are closely integrated in the minds and practices of alumni speaks to the commitment to fostering the integration of personal faith and organizational ministry. DVULI training and community provides important supports for this youth ministry work.

That these measures cohere into a Faith and Faith-based Mission scale is not surprising since a high percentage of alumni remain active in youth ministry. At the same time, the way alumni put the pieces together is consistent with the place of spiritual commitments and personal integrity in servant leadership. In addition, the key measure organizing this space is the commitment to the faith-based mission of the alumni's organization. That other-directed motivation, looking out for organizational mission over personal self-interest, is encouraging for the impact of DVULI on servant leadership. From the alumni's perspective, DVULI is anchored in faith-based mission, relationship to a local faith community, personal faith, and a broad-based and holistic vision of evangelism, all of which were strengthened by DVULI training.

Primary measures of the Faith and Faith-based Mission concept:

*DVULI training strengthened:*

1. Commitment to the faith-based mission of my organization
2. Relationship to a local faith community
3. Personal faith
4. Broad-based and holistic vision of evangelism

Some of the less strongly related factors in this scale (detailed in Appendix A) point to important associations for alumni between faith and faith-based mission and core ministry values. These measures capture personal commitments to ministry and ministry core values: namely, identifying core values for life in ministry, improving attitudes about ministry, acting in greater harmony with core values, and acting in ministry with greater self-confidence--each of these, according to alumni, were improved through DVULI training.

We can conclude that core work values, personal faith, and commitment to faith-based organizational mission are strongly linked for DVULI alumni. That alumni see these as developing through DVULI training supports the claim that the dominant message of DVULI is the integration of life and ministry for the spiritual benefit of others.

### *Focus on Demographics*

When we treat the Faith and Faith-based Mission scale as a dependent variable, we find two relatively strong associations with this outcome: education, and race and ethnicity. Faith and Faith-based Mission is strongly and positively related to Hispanic alumni. And it is higher among those who have continued their educational career after DVULI. We expect that in Hispanic communities the integration of personal faith and work life is particularly salient for youth ministry. That is, the personal, family, religious organization, and community is tightly linked and mutually reinforcing. Thus, a holistic orientation to life and ministry may be particularly valued among Hispanics.

Importantly, we also find that the synergy between educational attainment and DVULI training enhances the faith-based orientations of alumni. Growth through educational experiences is well integrated with the primary commitment of DVULI graduates to the faith-based mission of their organizations and personal faith.

The DVULI cohorts are not strongly different from each other, though there is a tendency of this scale to be higher among more recent cohorts compared to the 2000-2006 cohort.

In the full model, after including variables for the type of organization and the job position of alumni, we confirm the strong, positive relationship between Hispanics and Faith and Faith-based Mission. Education since DVULI is positively related to Faith and Faith-based Mission as well.

#### *Focus on Demographics, 2006 and 2019*

After including respondents from the 2006 and the 2019 waves, we find that the Hispanic effect continues to be very large and significantly positive in comparison to whites.

#### Practicing Breakthrough Skills

This second concept or dimension coheres primarily around fundamental breakthrough skills, Collaboration, Systems Thinking, Resource Networking, Asset Mapping, and Scenario Planning. From a servant leadership perspective, it is encouraging that Collaboration plays a central role in organizing alumni's approach to ministry skills. Alumni see Collaboration and Resource Networking, along with Systems Thinking, as core practices for youth ministry. We can think of these measures as the most salient and essential elements of the alumni's approach to Breakthrough Skill practices. In this analysis, we are not considering whether alumni began the program with this orientation to collaboration and other ministry skills or developed these commitments through DVULI experiences. Likely both factors help to explain this finding. We expect that DVULI is the dominant factor since the experiences build on prior orientations, providing a clear and systematic approach to these particular breakthrough skills as well as the social support to enhance and the opportunities to practice these skills. Either way, this finding is consistent with the emphasis in servant leadership on working cooperatively with other organizations for the benefit of youth ministry.

Primary measures:

*Frequency of practicing the breakthrough skill of...*

1. Collaboration
2. Systems thinking
3. Resource networking
4. Asset mapping
5. Scenario planning

Quite closely related to these breakthrough skills are the core values of Interdependence and Empowerment (see Appendix A for details), which are important aspects of each of the major breakthrough skills. Empowerment and interdependence are consistent with the other-oriented leadership style of servant leaders. The finding provides evidence that alumni orientations to Breakthrough Skill practices are likely motivated by the core values of empowering others and recognizing that we are “better together.” Organizational skills learned through DVULI are tightly linked to a meaningful and necessary social foundation for successful youth ministry.

Other Breakthrough Skills, such as Ministry Assessment and Youth Development are connected to the Practicing Breakthrough Skill scale, which reveals the close connection that alumni find between their youth ministry and collaboration, systems thinking, and resource networking (see Appendix A for detailed lists of variables for each scale).

### *Focus on Demographics*

Interestingly, none of the demographic variables is significantly related to Practicing Breakthrough Skills. That is good news in that DVULI seems to be influencing all demographics equally on these outcomes. Only the variable, consistency in youth ministry work, is close to positively and significantly related to this outcome. In this model, we do not find crisp distinctions between cohorts either.

Results differ in the full model, which includes information on the type of organization and job position of the alumni. In this model, we find that Hispanics are higher on Practicing Breakthrough Skills. More educated alumni and, less consistently, education since DVULI is associated with higher values on this outcome as well. Alumni in nonprofit organizations and “other” organizations are much more likely to practice breakthrough skills compared to alumni in church settings. Executive directors and senior pastors report higher levels of Practicing Breakthrough Skills than alumni in “lower” level job positions. Alumni in unpaid positions are lower on this outcome. Alumni with more years in youth ministry are more likely to practice breakthrough skills.

### *Focus on Demographics, 2006 and 2019*

After including respondents in 2006 as well as 2019, the variable for consistency in youth ministry is strongly and positively related to Practicing Breakthrough Skills. The other variable that is significant captures alums who have gained additional education since DVULI. These respondents are positively related to breakthrough skill practices. As we find in several analyses, further education and DVULI training seem to work well together.



### Breakthrough Plan Success

A separate scale captures the implementation and impact of the respondent's Breakthrough Plan. Alumni make a clear distinction between 1) practicing Breakthrough Skills, and 2) developing and succeeding in implementing the Breakthrough Plan in their ministry. Parallel to findings in Chapter 1, the Breakthrough Plan is extremely salient to DVULI impact on alumni, and clearly distinct from other DVULI practices. It seems likely that besides Faith and Faith-based Mission, alumni are very strongly oriented to the Breakthrough Plan as the essence of their DVULI-inspired youth ministry work. Most likely, the Breakthrough Plan exercise provides concrete practices that alumni build on as they attempt to apply DVULI learnings in their youth ministry.

Primary measures:

1. Breakthrough plan rating: implemented my plan
2. Breakthrough plan rating: achieved my plan's goals

### *Focus on Demographics*

Hispanics are much higher on this scale, Breakthrough Plan Success. The most likely explanation is the community context of youth ministry for Hispanics, which provides an ideal crucible for the implementation and success of DVULI. We speculate that youth ministry of Hispanic alumni succeeds because Hispanic religious organizations and communities respond very well to DVULI graduates, who bring valued and needed knowledge and skills, and their collaborative and holistic approach to youth ministry. The integration of family, religious organization, and community is likely stronger for many Hispanic alumni, which provides the social capital from which DVULI alumni can build a successful youth ministry.

Other than that, the associations with other variables are not strong, which indicates that the DVULI implementation of the Breakthrough Plan is working for a diverse group of alumni. There is inconsistent evidence that "other races" are lower on this scale. No cohort differences emerge, indicating that program effects on Breakthrough Plan Success have been relatively consistent across time among those who completed the 2019 survey.

When running the full model, including organization type and job position, we confirm that Hispanic alumni are considerably higher than whites on Breakthrough Plan Success. More educated alumni are higher on this outcome, though this result is inconsistent. Working in schools is negatively related to Breakthrough Plan Success, but again this effect is not consistent. Alumni in "other" organizations are positively related to this outcome compared to those in churches. Alumni with more years in youth ministry are more likely to experience Breakthrough Plan Success.

### *Focus on Demographics, 2006 and 2019*

When including data from both waves, the Hispanic effect remains quite strong. The negative effect for "other races" is more consistent in the full sample. A consistent career in youth ministry is associated with

higher ratings on Breakthrough Success. That could indicate that DVULI has the strongest effects on those who stick with “the program” over the longer term.

### Care for Personal and Social Needs

This scale coheres well around personal growth, understood holistically. Consistent with our first set of analyses, DVULI alumni tend to see a very close connection between faith and spirituality, and social and family needs. Each of the questions on life dimensions is strongly related to the underlying concept. In the view of alums, DVULI improved how they care for each dimension of their lives, which seems an important and unique contribution of DVULI as a leadership training program. Again, the take-away for alumni is that the various dimensions of their life are not to be compartmentalized, and that DVULI training is shaping all spheres. They see DVULI training as having a holistic impact on their lives.

Measures:

*DVULI training improved how I care for my:*

1. Mental and intellectual needs
2. Physical needs
3. Social needs
4. Family needs
5. Spiritual needs

### *Focus on Demographics*

Interestingly, married respondents tend to be higher on the scale of Care for Personal and Social Needs. That would seem to support the claim that DVULI integrates well with family life, not only impacting formal religious ministry. Note that in the alumni’s view (or practices) Care for Personal and Social Needs is distinct from Work/Life Balance. Perhaps these concepts are mutually supportive, but they are separate dimensions.

Marginal relationships are evident between Care for Personal and Social Needs and younger, female, and Hispanic alums, as well as those who have completed an educational degree since DVULI. More recent cohorts are higher on this scale, which could indicate that Care for Personal and Social Needs has been more strongly or successfully implemented in later cohorts. Besides the finding for marriage, however, these relationships cannot be asserted confidently.

The full models confirm these findings. Organization type and job position are not significantly related to Care for Personal and Social Needs.

### *Focus on Demographics, 2006 and 2019*

The findings for Care for Personal and Social Needs are more definitive when including the entire sample. Younger and female alums are higher on this outcome. The flipside of course is that perhaps older and male

respondents are less receptive to the DVULI emphasis on Care for Personal and Social Needs. Hispanics are also higher than whites on this measure of Care for Personal/Social Needs, which is consistent with earlier findings showing holistic benefits from DVULI training of Hispanics.

### Work and Life Balance

This dimension coheres around establishing a balance of life responsibilities, especially related to use of work and personal time. Care for Personal and Social Needs is likely the next step, but it is an additional step. Work/life balance may provide the context in which personal care is made possible. The strength of the Work/Life Balance factor is not surprising given the emphasis DVULI places on ensuring that work, family, and faith do not detract from, but support each other.

Primary measures:

1. Use of personal time matches up with what is important in my personal life
2. Am 'in balance' (time for your ministry, yourself, your family, and God)
3. Use of ministry and professional time matches what is important in my ministry and life
4. Exhibited work/life balance

### *Focus on Demographics*

Using the 2019 survey data, we find that age is positively related to Work and Life Balance, which makes sense in life course terms. Hispanics are significantly higher on this scale as well, reflecting differences in the relation of family and work in the Hispanic community, perhaps due to a tighter integration of home, church, and community. More recent cohorts appear to be higher on Work and Life Balance, but these findings are not consistent.

When we consider the full model, including job characteristics, we find much higher values for Hispanics and those who have a college degree. Those working in schools report lower work/life balance than those in churches. Executive directors and senior pastors, compared with program directors, associate pastors, program coordinators, and youth leaders, report higher levels of work/life balance.

### *Focus on Demographics, 2006 and 2019*

There are several demographic differences on Work and Life Balance when combining the two waves of data. Older respondents report higher values on this scale than younger, which makes sense in terms of life course patterns. Females are associated with higher values on Work and Life Balance, which may reflect differences in positions, or gender differences in the place of work in one's life. But we find a high level of variation among women, so we are not confident in our findings on gender.

In contrast, there is little doubt about Hispanic-white differences. Hispanics are much higher on Work and Life Balance, which is perhaps consistent with other findings for the work, family, and community integration in Hispanic communities. African Americans on average have lower values on Work and Life Balance, though this finding is inconsistent. There is a good deal of variation among blacks on this scale.

Finally, we note in passing that respondents to the 2019 survey report lower average levels of Work and Life Balance than 2006 respondents, net of the other variables in the model. This could reflect a period effect, such that Work and Life Balance is becoming more difficult to sustain under rapidly changing social and economic conditions, including pressures on religious institutions responding to lower levels of lay commitment and increasing secularization among younger generations.

### Community Leadership and Ministry Commitment

This dimension captures improvement in community and ministry leadership and commitments. In this case, the variables are not as strongly associated with the underlying concept compared to the other scales (and their indicators) discussed in this chapter. Still, there are interesting patterns. Community leadership is at the heart of this dimension, a key DVULI goal for urban leaders. Interestingly, preparation for community leadership is closely linked to identifying core values central to ministry and improving attitudes toward ministry. This is encouraging since alumni see ministry commitments and community leadership as working together. And it likely reflects the impact of DVULI in helping alumni see deep connections between their ministry and their community. Note, however, that ministry values and attitudes are linked to community leadership, not to broader forms of community engagement (see below), which involve organizational networking. Alumni make a distinction between community leadership and community engagement and connect leadership more tightly to the impact of DVULI on their ministry values and attitudes. At the very least, alumni see a tight connection in the impact of DVULI on both community and ministry commitments. In terms of how alumni see DVULI training working in their lives, they connect community leadership and ministry commitment, which is encouraging since it is an important way that servant leadership is expressed.

Primary measures:

*DVULI training...*

1. Has prepared me for leadership in my community
2. Identified my core values for ministry
3. Improved my attitudes about ministry

Other measures have a weaker relation to the overall concept but provide further insight on “what works together” in the minds and practices of DVULI alumni (see Appendix A for variables). In particular, alumni see a connection between community leadership, ministry commitment, and their Breakthrough Plan. Measures of whether the Breakthrough Plan had a lasting impact on ministry and was a useful exercise for future planning are also indicative of Community Leadership and Ministry Commitment. In alumni training experience and practice, the Breakthrough Plan is tightly linked to being prepared for community leadership and committed to core ministry values. This may help to explain why many alumni, including Hispanics and

African Americans, see the Breakthrough Plan as fundamental to the impact of DVULI on their youth ministry.

### *Focus on Demographics*

Hispanics are much higher on the scale of Community Leadership and Ministry Commitment than are whites. This provides further evidence that the DVULI program is particularly useful and salient to Hispanics when it focuses on an integrated approach to youth ministry, which sees a close link between serving the community and serving youth.

There is weak evidence that married respondents and those with a BA are higher on this scale. The cohort effects are generally positive for more recent graduates, but these findings are not definitive.

Using the full model, including the type of organization and position of the alumni, we do not find consistent findings, though the Hispanic positive effect is strong. Organization type and position are not consistently related to Community Leadership and Ministry Commitment.

### *Focus on Demographics, 2006 and 2019*

The findings for Community Leadership and Ministry Commitment are nearly identical when including respondents from both waves. Blacks, like Hispanics, are trending higher on this measure, but this finding is not consistent—there is considerable variation among blacks on this outcome.

### Community Engagement

This scale captures several types of ties to outside organizations, including religious organizations, and civic life. This concept's indicators regard the perceived impact of DVULI on building social capital in communities and cities, especially through organizational partnerships. In these results, organizational networking is closely tied to alumni engagement in community activities.

Interestingly, alumni see DVULI having an impact on community engagement especially through religious organizations, including inter-denominational efforts and "broad ministry networks." This is not entirely surprising since many alumni are working in religious organizations, are highly involved in their churches, and are committed to integrating faith, faith-based organizations, and engagement with the local community. That approach to community life undergirds the close association that alumni make between DVULI impact on religious organizational capital and more traditional civic activities, such as community development and volunteer work in the community.

The weakest indicators of Community Engagement include involvement in political and civic affairs. We should point out, however, that it is common for evangelicals to tread carefully between community engagement, especially through religious organizations, and involvement in politics (Beyerlein and Chaves

2003). The weaker impact of DVULI on involvement in political and civic affairs could reflect program emphases, though it seems likely that this works in tandem with the approach of evangelicals and evangelical organizations to community engagement, which includes a reticence for direct political involvement (Beyerlein and Chaves 2003).

Primary measures:

*DVULI led to greater involvement in...*

1. Cross-denominational activities
2. Broad ministry networks
3. Community development activities
4. Volunteer work in my community
5. Political and civic affairs

### *Focus on Demographics*

The only demographic variable that clearly affects Community Engagement is the measure of attaining further education after DVULI. That is consistent with findings that more educated Americans are much more likely to be involved in the public square, and this seems to extend to efforts to build organizational capital within the religious civic sphere. The pursuit of higher education in the local metro area may also contribute to networks and influences that facilitate and encourage involvement in civic life (Nie, Junn and Stehlik-Barry 1996)

The inconsistent findings of note include: a negative relationship to this scale among “other race” alums, and a higher value on this scale for the most recent cohorts. This finding is consistent with the claim that DVULI has placed a higher emphasis on collaboration across organizations in recent years. The DVULI emphasis on the skills of Interdependence and Collaboration for successful youth ministry is evident here.

In the full model, including organization type and job position, we confirm the strong positive effect of education since DVULI on Community Engagement. In addition, the findings reveal that alumni in “other” organizations are more engaged in their communities than those in churches. Executive directors and senior pastors are higher on Community Engagement than other ministry positions, especially compared to program directors and associate pastors, and those in “other” positions. Program coordinators and youth leaders trend lower than those in executive or senior positions, but this difference is not consistent.

### *Focus on Demographics, 2006 and 2019*

Interestingly, the race effects are somewhat different when considering the entire sample. Hispanics are now significantly higher than whites on Community Engagement. The “educational degree since DVULI” variable remains consistent and positive across alumni. The early cohort (1998-99) is significantly lower on community engagement compared to the 2000-2005 cohort.

## Career Impact

This dimension focuses on DVULI impact on job positions, and how the alumnus is viewed by supervisors and colleagues at their ministry organization. In this scale, respect from work colleagues strongly indicates the impact of DVULI on the careers of alumni, which seems consistent with DVULI mission. The place of respect in alumni careers corresponds with the place of respect and trust in servant leadership. This provides more evidence that DVULI training is creating the kind of urban leaders that can build effective organizations and ministries. Alumni link greater respect from colleagues with DVULI's impact on earning a better position and improving their work performance. It is encouraging that DVULI alumni are finding a tight link between the type of leader they are becoming and the quality of their work and position.

Primary measures:

*DVULI helped me...*

1. Earn the respect of supervisors
2. Earn the respect of colleagues
3. Earn a better position
4. Improve my job satisfaction
5. Improve my job performance

### *Focus on Demographics*

The DVULI program appears to enhance the Career Impact of older respondents more than younger respondents, who may face greater challenges in gaining respect from leaders. Still, younger alums may simply need time to see the career impact of DVULI. The finding does raise the question, under what conditions is DVULI more effective for younger respondents?

Hispanics compared to whites seem to be benefiting more from the DVULI program impact on career. This may reflect connections between DVULI and Hispanic organizations and communities, or, perhaps more likely, the kind of skills and orientations that DVULI seeks are especially needed and valued in the urban Hispanic community.

Those with a BA, and to a lesser extent, those who have continued their education since DVULI, gain more in terms of Career Impact than less educated alumni. This may result if the effect of DVULI on workplace respect, for example, depends on the combination of the skills, abilities, and credentials of more educated participants, and DVULI training.

Inconsistent findings include married respondents and those who have been consistently involved in youth ministry, which trend higher on the Career Impact scale. Cohort differences appear to be muted, with weak evidence of a decline among most recent cohorts.

When including organization and position variables, we confirm these findings, though the education effects are less consistent. While the “lower level” and unpaid positions trend lower on this outcome, these findings are not consistent across alumni.

#### *Focus on Demographics, 2006 and 2019*

The findings for Hispanics and years of age are confirmed in the full sample. The education effects are not significant, however. And the “other race” alumni report lower Career Impact, raising one concern that perhaps would benefit from additional attention. With the full sample, higher Career Impact is associated with consistent involvement in youth ministry over the career. The early years (1998-1999) experienced less impact on career, while the 2006-12 group shows a slight uptick. The most recent cohort, 2013-18, are significantly lower on Career Impact compared to the 2000-2006 group. Again, this may reflect broad social changes, including the challenges of religious organizations in the face of secularizing trends. This interpretation is speculative, however, and may intersect with more proximate factors. Perhaps the answer is simply that DVULI alumni are moving into different types of organizations and positions in more recent years where the challenges to gaining respect and trust are greater.

#### Vision and Mission

This scale focuses on the impact of DVULI on one’s vision and mission in various spaces, from city or metro, to neighborhood, to individual. It is striking that the influence of DVULI on vision and mission begins with community, which is the most important indicator of DVULI influence on Vision and Mission. One interpretation of this finding is that DVULI provides the most added value regarding community vision and mission. That may reflect a weakness in community vision for religious leaders outside of DVULI, and the particular strengths of DVULI for helping develop community vision. We know, based on other results, that alumni do not separate a religious from a community vision and mission. For DVULI alumni, the community and religious vision are closely knit. That comes through in this Vision and Mission scale in that alumni link DVULI impact on community and on their (religious) organization or ministry. In addition, the coherence of this scale indicates that alumni do not make a sharp divide between DVULI influence on personal vision and mission, and the mission of their ministry and community.

Measures:

*DVULI helped develop vision/mission...*

1. My local community
2. My organization or ministry
3. My city or metro area
4. My personal mission

#### *Focus on Demographics*



Higher values on Vision and Mission are associated with more educated respondents (with a BA), and those who have attained further education since DVULI. Similar to our discussion of Community Engagement findings, we argue that the more educated respondent is more likely to build and act on DVULI emphases that integrate personal, organizational, and community vision and mission.

No other variable is related consistently to Vision and Mission, which is a positive sign, providing evidence for universal effects of DVULI training on the development of various forms of vision and mission among alumni.

These findings are confirmed when including job characteristics in the full model.

#### *Focus on Demographics, 2006 and 2019*

With the full sample, the education effects are not significant. There is a general trend toward lower scores in later cohorts, but this is not a consistent effect across alumni.

#### Mission Accomplished

This dimension captures the extent that one's mission is being accomplished across various spheres as a result of DVULI training. The first two measures, for city and community, are by far the most strongly associated with this concept. It is not surprising that a separate scale is necessary to indicate whether personal vision and mission are *accomplished* in one's community and city—which perhaps is a very tall order. Note, however, the finding that accomplishing vision and mission for one's organization or ministry, or personal mission, is closely tied to the city and community. The personal, ministry organization, community, and metro area vision and mission are integrated for DVULI alumni.

In addition, the work of DVULI in developing a mission and vision for the city or metro area is closely linked to the alumni's sense of accomplishment in this sphere. One possible interpretation of this finding is that alumni's vision and mission for metro areas is less developed coming into DVULI, and therefore there is much value added in the DVULI work in developing a vision and mission for the city.

We should note that the measure of personal mission, while useful here, is not as strongly connected to this concept. The association is nonetheless important given that the personal is conceptually distinct from the group or community in American culture. The finding provides some evidence that alumni see a connection in accomplishment of vision for their city and the accomplishment of their personal mission.

Measures:

*My vision/mission is being accomplished for...*

1. My city or metro area
2. My local community
3. [DVULI training helped develop vision/mission for:] My city or metro area

4. My organization or ministry
5. My personal mission

### *Focus on Demographics*

Hispanics and blacks are significantly higher than whites on the Mission Accomplished scale. This may reflect the importance of uniting personal faith and community and city vision for disadvantaged racial and ethnic minority communities and their youth ministers.

In addition, those who have attained an educational degree since DVULI report higher values on this dimension. This is consistent with earlier findings on the importance of educational attainment for community engagement.

Including the position and organization variables, we confirm that Hispanics and blacks are higher on the Mission Accomplished scale. Education since DVULI is also positively related to accomplishing mission for community and city. The “lower level” positions are less likely to report that their mission is being accomplished than executive directors and senior pastors.

### *Focus on Demographics, 2006 and 2019*

The main findings for race and ethnicity are confirmed in the full sample, but the educational degree effect is not statistically significant in the full sample. In addition, those who have been consistently in youth ministry since DVULI have higher scores on the Mission Accomplished outcome. This seems consistent with the claim that the DVULI effect tends to come to fruition over the longer course of the youth ministry career.

### Income and Job Advancement

This scale is a bit of a hodgepodge, and certainly related to the Career Impact scale. Yet there is some coherence and uniqueness to it, albeit oriented primarily to the first two measures, increasing personal income and earning a better position. These outcomes are not explicit DVULI goals but are likely byproducts of the kind of growth fostered and supported through DVULI. Given the faith-based mission of youth ministry, and its financial sacrifices, it is not surprising that a separate “worldly” job dimension would emerge. With the addition of the third most important indicator, the lasting impact of DVULI, the scale tracks career advancement most directly. Interestingly, alumni see and experience a connection between income and position, and planning for and impact of their Breakthrough Plan. Consistent with other findings, the Breakthrough Plan is central to the impact of DVULI on alumni ministry. This may provide further evidence that the knowledge and skills enhanced through DVULI, especially the comprehensive and holistic approach to ministry, is highly needed and valued in youth ministry in many disadvantaged communities.

Measures:

1. DVULI helped me: Increase my personal income
2. DVULI helped me: Earn a better position
3. My Breakthrough Plan: Had a lasting impact on my ministry
4. DVULI led to greater involvement in: Political and civic affairs
5. My Breakthrough Plan: Was a useful exercise for future planning
6. DVULI helped me: Improve my job satisfaction

*Focus on Demographics 2019*

DVULI training appears to have a greater impact on Income and Job Advancement among younger alumni. In addition, DVULI training has a very strong positive effect on the advancement of Hispanics. This could reflect the greater need for DVULI training in the Hispanic community, or a greater acceptance of its emphases and importance. Alternatively, the lack of effect for African Americans may reflect fewer opportunities for income and job advancement for many black alumni.

The impact on advancement is greater for those who have continued their education since DVULI. The impact of DVULI on motive and capacity for achieving additional education may explain this effect. This finding may also point to the particular impact of combining DVULI training with continuing education.

Cohort effects are inconsistent, though there is some evidence that the latest cohorts have experienced lower impact on Income and Job Advancement. The finding is weak, but may reflect changes in the religious field in recent years that have reduced opportunities for youth ministers.

In the full model, including job characteristics, we confirm that Hispanic alumni and those who have received an educational degree since DVULI have experienced improvement in job and income. Those in nonprofits and “other” organizations tend to experience greater advancement than those in churches. The organization type favors the “upper” level positions, but these differences are not large or consistent.

*Focus on Demographics 2006, 2019*

The findings are generally stronger when considering data from both waves, with one exception. While younger ages and Hispanics are still positively affected by DVULI training, educational advancement since DVULI is not statistically significant when using the entire sample, even though it remains positive.

Net of the other variables in the model, consistent involvement in youth ministry is positively related to Income and Job Advancement. We should note as well that those who are not in youth ministry report that DVULI training helped them a great deal in terms of income and job advancement. This seems consistent with the claim that DVULI training has a positive impact on preparation for ministry, whether or not alumni remain in youth ministry.

The cohort effects reveal similar levels for the 2006-2012 and 2000-2006 cohorts, though the 2006-2012 cohort is slightly positive on Income and Job Advancement. The 2013-2018 cohort is significantly lower on this outcome, though it is important to keep in mind that this finding is net of the other variables in the model, including age. It seems possible, too, that economic conditions following the 2008 recession could be mitigating the DVULI effect in following years, and this may be exacerbated through the declining fortunes of religious organizations in American society.

## **Summary and Conclusions**

The primary dimensions that organize DVULI alumni life and ministry further support the claim of a close connection between personal faith, the faith-based mission of the youth ministry organization, and outreach to the local community. According to the pattern of alumni responses, this is expressed clearly in the Breakthrough Plan and its impact on their ministry and communities. In addition, alumni tightly link personal and community vision and mission, and community leadership and ministry commitments. They see personal mission and growth as one of the key dimensions of the DVULI experience, from which they launch into their organization, youth ministry work, and community.

When explaining alumni differences on each of the 11 dimensions of DVULI youth ministry, we find that Hispanics are very strong on faith-based mission, accomplishing vision and mission, community leadership and community engagement. Part of the explanation for these differences is the integration of family, church, youth ministry, and community for many Hispanic alumni. Hispanic churches tend to be family-focused and organized to support Hispanic families and community. That setting works well for achieving DVULI mission and goals. In addition, many senior pastors and leaders in Hispanic churches do not have high levels of education (Hernandez, Peña and Davis 2006; Hernández et al. 2005). But in some contexts, there is some suspicion of outside ideas and vision. The combination of a supportive community, in which Hispanic alumni are well-trusted, and the need for DVULI knowledge, vision, and skills likely ensures that Hispanic alumni have opportunities for successful youth ministry inspired by DVULI.

Education since DVULI is positively associated with several of the underlying dimensions, including community engagement and organizational strengths as well as those closely related to faith. Similarly, we find that alumni who have completed a college degree seem to benefit more from DVULI, and more successfully apply DVULI in their ministries. As seen in the first chapter, the synergy between education and DVULI training tends to lead to stronger youth ministry outcomes.

## Chapter 4: How Do the Essential Aspects of the DVULI Experience Relate to Each Other?

Now that we have boiled down the attitudes, experiences, and practices of DVULI alumni to 11 key dimensions, measured in Chapter 2 as scales using multiple survey variables, we can consider how these dimensions fit together. What are the more fundamental aspects of the DVULI experience that shape outcomes on other dimensions? Are some dimensions more closely related to others? What can this tell us about how DVULI training “works”?

In this chapter, we first consider correlations between the essential scales, and then turn to predicting outcomes for Income and Job Advancement, Career Impact, and Mission Accomplished. The first analysis will investigate the “higher level” associations across dimensions of the DVULI experience, and the latter will consider the factors that lead to career advancement and accomplishing each alumni’s mission.

### Correlation of Concepts/Scales

We are interested in the interrelationships of the 11 dimensions or concepts that seem to capture the dimensions of alumni experience and practice of DVULI. The causal relationship between the 11 dimensions is very difficult to sort out, however. The problem is determining which is an antecedent variable—the uncaused cause, so to speak. We are not likely to have the detailed theories necessary to say that one aspect of the DVULI experience and practice determines outcomes on other dimensions, rather than vice versa. For the most part, we will need to be cautious about any causal order claims.

Instead, we focus on the simple associations or correlations of the scales, which do not assume a causal relationship. As in chapter 3, we are looking at which dimensions “hang together.” The correlation analysis provides information on how concepts are related, evidence that can guide theories about DVULI effects.

Before running the correlation analysis, indicators were assigned exclusively to one concept. To do this, we removed variables as measures of concepts for which they were only weakly related, and instead used them exclusively as indicators of concepts for which they were more strongly related.

### *Strongly Interrelated Dimensions*

The strongest correlation between the concepts/scales (.55) is between Career Impact, and Income and Job Advancement. Not surprisingly, the impact of DVULI on career, including respect from colleagues, seems to lead to better positions, which include greater financial stability.

Next up is the (.44) correlation between Vision and Mission, and Mission Accomplished. This is not surprising either, but confirms that DVULI impact on the development of a sense of vision in several spheres is strongly related to reports of accomplishing one’s vision in practice. A clear vision sets the stage for accomplishing that mission. DVULI appears to be holding together emphases on forming and on putting into practice vision and mission in youth ministry.

Interestingly, Income and Job Advancement is correlated highly (.41) with the scale for Faith and Faith-based Mission. A possible explanation of this is that a strong commitment to faith and the place of faith in religious organizations creates the kind of leader that is recognized through advances in position. If so, the religious calling of youth ministry, which is enhanced through DVULI training, is upheld and respected in hiring decisions.

A similar correlation (.41) is revealed between Faith and Faith-based Mission, and Care for Personal and Social Needs. This makes sense given the centrality of faith and spirituality in these two dimensions. And it seems consistent with the claim that religious commitments fostered through DVULI, including the sense of community it generates and maintains, are among the most important DVULI impacts on youth ministry. DVULI animates faith through community, and this in turn has an impact in youth ministry.

### *Moderately Strong Relationships*

The correlation (of .39) between Faith and Faith-based Mission, and Career Impact could be seen as further supporting the important connection between faith and youth ministry that is central to DVULI and the lives of alumni. This is perhaps not surprising, but it is helpful and reassuring to see this connection clearly in the data.

The story continues in the strong correlation (.39) between Faith and Faith-based Mission, and Community Engagement. Again, the faith development mission of DVULI corresponds closely and seems supportive of the emphasis on ministry through community outreach. The integration of faith and community engagement is strongly supported through DVULI training.

Community Engagement is associated strongly (.38) with Income and Job Advancement as well. This may reflect processes within religious organizations, especially nonprofits, in which community engagement plays a central role. Community engagement may increasingly be important for successful youth ministry careers. Or the finding could reflect broader social network processes. This theory points to social capital as central to career advancement, and community networks lead to new job opportunities.

Faith and Faith-based Mission is also associated (.37) with Community Leadership and Ministry Commitment. This finding may support the general claim that DVULI furthers a tight and fruitful connection between faith and work commitments.

Care for Personal and Social Needs, including intellectual, social, family, and spiritual, is strongly correlated (.36) with Career Impact. This is encouraging given the holistic and balanced approach to work and life issues that is central to DVULI. For DVULI alumni, career Impact is not orthogonal to caring for personal and social needs.

Vision and Mission is correlated at similar levels (.35) with Community Engagement, and Income and Job Advancement. The influence of DVULI on ministry vision is closely tied to other important goals, including community engagement and leadership positions in ministry, and it may be that the enhancement of Vision and Mission has an important impact in strengthening community engagement and job advancement in

youth ministry. Vision and Mission is also associated (.33) with Career Impact, which includes respect from supervisors and colleagues.

Income and Job Advancement is quite strongly associated with Care for Personal and Social Needs (.33), and Mission Accomplished (.32). The coherence of personal care, accomplishing the mission of youth ministry, and job advancement in youth ministry appears consistent with DVULI goals.

Our final notable associations (above .3) include Care for Personal and Social Needs, and both Community Engagement (.30) and Career Impact (.31). The DVULI impact on the integration of personal, community, and youth ministry career is striking and encouraging. At the very least, it seems that the holistic DVULI message is coming across quite strongly.

## **WHAT EXPLAINS KEY DVULI OUTCOMES?**

The number of scales is limited that can safely be considered outcomes to be predicted. Income and Job Advancement is one of these, since theories of servant, authentic, and transformational leadership argue that certain leader orientations and practices lead to more successful relationships in the workplace and, ultimately, more successful organizations. Career Impact, similarly, seems reasonably an outcome of personal and leadership orientations, rather than the reverse. In addition, Mission Accomplished embodies the kind of “end game” result—a vision being accomplished in community and organizations—that is an outcome of other dimensions of the DVULI training and experience. Note that the causal analysis in this section is tentative, given the possibility of reverse and reciprocal relationships among the scales.

### Income and Job Advancement and Career Impact

The correlation analysis in the previous chapter provides some direction on a model that would assume a causal relationship between the key dimensions that organize alumni life and ministry. First, we consider what dimensions predict higher values on the Income and Job Advancement scale (the dependent variable). Preliminary analysis reveals that Faith and Faith-based Mission is one of the stronger predictors of Income and Job Advancement. In addition, Breakthrough Plan Success and Practicing Breakthrough Skills positively impact Income and Job Advancement. As argued above, job advancement for DVULI alumni is dependent on a commitment to faith and the mission of the ministry organization, as well as the development and practice of the breakthrough plan and skills. It appears from these results that DVULI participation has a strong impact on career advancement.

### *Path Model*

As shown in our correlation analysis, some of the dimensions are fairly strongly related to each other, which makes it more difficult to sort out the independent effect of each on Income and Job Advancement. One alternative is to organize the scales, “back to front,” in a path model. In this case, we assumed that Income

and Job Advancement, the ultimate dependent variable, is predicted by Career Impact and Community Engagement. That is, we argue that Income and Job Advancement is explained by higher scores on the Career Impact and Community Engagement scales. It is reasonable to think that greater respect from colleagues and networks developed through community engagement lead to improvements in job and income.

In turn, and farther “back” in the causal model, Career Impact is likely to be influenced by Breakthrough Plan Success, Faith and Faith-based Mission, and Vision and Mission. Respect from colleagues in youth ministry is enhanced through the success of a breakthrough plan, faith commitment, and a coherent vision and mission for various spheres of life.

The most antecedent variable (farthest in the background) is the impact of Practicing Breakthrough Skills. In addition, the model assumes that both Income and Job Placement and Career Impact are explained by the standard demographic variables, such as age, gender, and race and ethnicity.

### *Results for Each Dimension*

The results of the path model show that Career Impact has a strong, positive effect on Income and Job Advancement. These two scales are difficult to disentangle, though we would argue that the effect of DVULI on gaining respect from colleagues (Career Impact) has the longer-term positive effect on job advancement.

Moreover, Community Engagement positively influences Income and Job Advancement. Again, this could be seen in terms of social capital built through community engagement, which has an independent effect on job advancement (but not Career Impact). Net of these scales, Care for Personal and Social Needs has a small negative impact on Income and Job Advancement, while Community Leadership and Ministry Commitment is positive on job advancement but not consistent across alumni.

From the direct effects of these dimensions on Income and Job Advancement, we could argue that there is tension between job advancement, and care for personal and social needs. In addition, Community Leadership and Ministry Commitment has a positive effect on job advancement for many but not all alumni (i.e., there is considerably variation in the effect of this dimension on alumni). Community engagement to some extent offers the social and organizational ties that on average improve the likelihood of job advancement.

What influences the Career Impact scale? The strongest predictor is Faith and Faith-based Mission, while Vision and Mission is close behind. And we know that Career Impact has a strong positive effect on job advancement. We conclude, therefore, that Faith and Faith-based Mission has a strong positive effect on Income and Job Advancement indirectly through the effect of Faith and Faith-based Mission on Career Impact. Thus, we find a strong pathway from commitment to faith-based mission to respect from colleagues and, in turn, job advancement. Interestingly, this pathway is also present for Care for Personal and Social Needs, which has a positive effect on Career Impact. The negative direct effect of Care for Personal and Social Needs on Income and Job Advancement is partially countered by the positive effect of Care for Personal and Social Needs on Career Impact.



Breakthrough Plan Success is also positively related to Career Impact. And, not surprisingly, Practicing Breakthrough Skills has a strong impact on Breakthrough Plan Success. As expected, then, Practicing Breakthrough Skills improves Career Impact indirectly, through Breakthrough Success. The theoretical argument is that practicing the breakthrough skills enhances the likelihood that the breakthrough plan is successfully achieved, and that in turn improves the Career Impact of DVULI training. Career Impact, in turn, improves Income and Job Advancement. In addition, we find that Community Engagement and Ministry Commitment has a positive impact on Breakthrough Plan Success, but this is not consistent across alumni.

### *Demographic Findings*

Some of the most interesting findings in this path model involve the demographic variables. Most importantly, blacks and Hispanics report a much higher impact of DVULI on Income and Job Advancement than do whites, net of the other variables in the model. This supports the argument that DVULI training is most needed and useful for blacks and Hispanics, perhaps because these groups have few opportunities for this kind of leadership training outside of DVULI. We should consider as well whether this effect is due to the fact that disadvantaged minority neighborhoods are particularly in need of the human and social capital that DVULI generates, and minority DVULI alums are well-positioned to fill the gap.

An advanced degree is associated positively with Income and Job Advancement. Likely this effect can be explained in standard accounts of the relation between advanced education and social mobility (e.g., social and cultural capital, credentialing, etc.). We would also speculate that DVULI training and higher education interact to further boost Income and Job Advancement. The cohort effects in the path model are somewhat weak, but indicate that the 2006-2012 cohort have experienced greater Income and Job Advancement and that this continues—less strongly—among the most recent cohorts. These effects are net of the other variables in the model, which must be kept in mind when comparing these cohort results with those in Chapter 3.

The demographic variables have a different relation to the Career Impact scale. Blacks compared to whites are much less likely to report a positive Career Impact, net of the other variables in the model. This would seem to reflect the difficulty that blacks in the U.S. face in communities and workplaces. The effect may be generated either by discrimination or perceived discrimination, and it may reflect lower levels of legitimacy of DVULI or DVULI ideals in the black Protestant community. Whatever the explanation, race appears to be real in its consequences in these models. We are reminded, however, that the net effect of DVULI training on black job advancement is overwhelmingly positive (since the direct effect is positive and large). We conclude, then, that DVULI training is on balance a strong positive for African Americans, despite the higher bar that black alumni appear to face in gaining respect on the job.

Age is negatively related to Career Impact. The conclusion here must be that younger alums have more to gain in respectability from colleagues by going through the DVULI training. Surprisingly, an advanced degree is negatively associated with Career Impact. That finding is difficult to interpret, but perhaps is explained by a ceiling effect (whether perceived or actual) on the impact of educational attainment on respect from colleagues. The cohort effects are weak, but the most recent cohorts are negatively related to Career Impact. In particular, the 2012-2018 cohort is reporting a more difficult time gaining respect from

colleagues through DVULI participation. Perhaps this finding reflects broader societal trends. One hopes that it is not the result of an increasingly (ideologically) polarized society.

### Mission Accomplished

Another concept/scale that can reasonably be considered an outcome of other dimensions is Mission Accomplished, which captures the extent that alumni report that they have been able to accomplish their vision and mission for various spheres of life (metro, local community, organization, personal, etc.).

What we find is that Mission Accomplished is strongly positively explained by Community Engagement, Career Impact, and Practicing Breakthrough Skills. Community engagement seems essential for accomplishing one's vision and mission, so that finding is less surprising. Career Impact, especially gaining respect from one's colleagues through DVULI, seems to play an important role in ensuring that alumni vision and mission can be accomplished. Interestingly, Practicing Breakthrough Skills shows a direct impact on accomplishing one's vision and mission, which seems to reflect well on the importance and impact of DVULI in linking program and outcomes in the field.

The effect of Care for Personal and Social Needs is again complicated. This dimension has a negative direct effect on Mission Accomplished, but a positive indirect effect through its strong positive relation to Career Impact. Although speculative, we again would point to potential trade-offs between job accomplishments and personal and family care, which would not be surprising and perhaps are necessary in many ways. Note, however, that this direct negative effect of Care for Personal and Social Needs is not significantly related to Mission Accomplished when including the direct effect of Vision and Mission on Mission Accomplished. Overall, we conclude that Care for Personal and Social Needs does not hinder accomplishing youth ministry missions but instead contributes to a number of valued DVULI outcomes, which in turn strengthen the ability of alumni to accomplish their mission.

One potential problem of including Vision and Mission as an independent variable predicting Mission Accomplished is the close association of the wording of the items in each scale. Vision and Mission asks whether DVULI helped develop one's mission and vision for each of several spheres of ministry. In theory, this is distinct from accomplishing that mission and vision, but we cannot be sure that respondents kept this distinct in their own minds.

Still, it is notable that when (in an auxiliary model) we include the direct effect of Vision and Mission on Mission Accomplished, we find a strong positive effect of Vision and Mission on the outcome. And in this new model, Care for Personal and Social Needs is not a consistent factor in determining the extent that alumni mission and vision is accomplished. One reasonable conclusion is that DVULI is making a difference both in developing a clear vision and mission for alumni, and also fostering the tools that help them to accomplish that vision.

The positive indirect effects in the Mission Accomplished model follow those of the job advancement model quite closely. Career Impact is positively related to Mission Accomplished. In turn, Faith and Faith-based Mission, Vision and Mission, Care for Personal and Social Needs, and Practicing Breakthrough Skills

are positively related to Career Impact, and are thus indirectly positively related to Mission Accomplished as well.

### *Demographic Findings*

Again, the demographic variable results are interesting. The direct effects of demographic variables on Career Impact are the same as described in the findings for job advancement. But the demographic effects on Mission Accomplished differ somewhat. Blacks and Hispanics are strongly positively related to Mission Accomplished compared to whites. In addition, “other races” are positively related to Mission Accomplished. Again, the importance of DVULI for minority races and disadvantaged minority communities is evident here.

There is a tendency for married respondents to be less likely to report that they have accomplished their vision and mission in various ministry spheres. This effect is not entirely consistent across alumni, but seems to capture a small negative effect that is explained by the tensions between work and family common in most ministry positions.

The cohort differences are very weak. There seems to be an improvement in Mission Accomplished scores in more recent cohorts, especially the 2012-2018 cohort. However, this finding is not entirely consistent across alumni.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

We conclude with theoretical claims that are consistent with the findings in this chapter. Note that these are not the only theories that could be supported by our findings but are a reasonable first take on the empirical relationships between various aspects of the DVULI program.

First, building respect from supervisors and work colleagues is one of the essential aspects of DVULI training. The recent DVULI program emphasis on dealing with potential resistance to DVULI concepts and practices is crucial, leading to much stronger career outcomes for youth ministers. The strong positive impact of breakthrough plan skills and practices on youth ministry careers depends on workplace respect. Addressing strategies to bring DVULI into the field in a clear and winsome manner has the added benefit for alumni of improving attitudes toward and investment in the youth ministry career. The long-term effect is to lengthen youth ministry careers and increase their impact on youth and communities.

Second, the DVULI focus on Vision and Mission is essential to the impact of DVULI in alumni’s youth ministry. It is not so much that DVULI helps alumni develop a concrete vision and mission—though many alumni seem to appreciate DVULI opportunities to reflect on their ultimate goals and vision. But the day-to-day experience in the youth ministry field in challenging environments can stifle the energy and commitment necessary to apply mission and vision to youth ministry consistently. DVULI training offers the space, skills, and social support necessary to build a tight connection between vision and mission and the concrete practices and activities of holistic and community-engaged youth ministry. The space, skills, and community that undergird Vision and Mission make possible the accomplishment of youth ministry goals.

Third, dimensions of faith, especially the integration of faith, personal and social life, and work life, and commitment to the faith-based mission of one's organization, are tightly linked to many valued DVULI outcomes, including respect from colleagues (measured as Career Impact) and job advancement. This finding is not surprising, of course, but does point to the value of the holistic approach to youth ministry taken by the DVULI program. The success of DVULI in fostering servant and transformational leadership depends on the integration of personal faith, spirituality, and a community of faith with explicit attention to the key values and skills of successful ministry, including interdependence, accountability, empowerment, and community engagement.

Fourth, and consistent with findings in earlier chapters, the DVULI emphasis on the skills and practices of the Breakthrough Plan play a central role in the short and long term impact of DVULI in youth ministry fields, including accomplishing one's mission, gaining respect from work colleagues, and job advancement. Most likely, the Breakthrough Plan has unique advantages for uniting leadership theory and youth ministry practices in a way that can be effectively adapted and applied by alumni in various youth ministry contexts and situations.

Lastly, the findings in this chapter confirm earlier conclusions regarding race and ethnicity. Job and income advancement and accomplishing one's youth ministry mission is stronger for African Americans and Hispanics. The DVULI program provides unique advantages for racial minorities, who especially benefit from the space to reflect on youth ministry, to develop concepts, skills, and practices for successful youth ministry, and to become embedded in a community of support and encouragement. Given these findings, we conclude that DVULI is making a difference in disadvantaged communities that are particularly in need of the kind of social capital, educational experiences, and leadership skills and abilities enhanced by DVULI. Most likely, integrating servant and transformational leadership knowledge, skills, and practices with faith commitments is particularly appreciated and effective in communities in which religion plays a strong role in public life.

## Chapter 5: Recommendations

This last section of this report draws on the 2019 findings to make specific recommendations for DVULI. First, we focus our discussion on the specific recommendations from the 2006 Alumni Survey report, and the DVULI response to them. In the second section of this chapter we discuss DVULI emphases developed internally. Finally, we discuss other recommendations that emerge in the 2019 DVULI Alumni Survey findings.

### Responses to 2006 Recommendations

In this section, we address each of the recommendations from the 2006 Alumni Survey report as well as the specific responses of DVULI since 2006.

*1. 2006 Report Recommendation (p. 19): Consider recruiting more younger leaders and continue recruiting a large number of middle ministry leaders (11-20 years in ministry).*

The argument for emphasizing younger and middle career participants is that they are in a position to be more receptive to leadership growth opportunities through DVULI in part because they are positioned in their career and organization to readily apply and build on skills, knowledge, and opportunities made available in the DVULI training.

Action: DVULI has not specifically tried to recruit a greater number of younger leaders. Because one DVULI criteria is that the participant “must be in a leadership position to implement change within the organization”, younger leaders are often not selected since they are not yet in those kinds of leadership positions. DVULI continues to focus on selecting middle ministry leaders and very rarely invites older ministry leaders to participate.

2019 Contribution:

Focusing on leaders who can implement change and on more experienced ministry leaders is consistent with the findings in this report. On numerous outcomes, we find that leaders with greater experience are better able to draw from DVULI training and successfully implement the principles of servant and transformational leadership. As we note in the report, it is possible that younger participants will more effectively draw on DVULI training as they mature in their career.

Thus far, however, our evidence supports the focus on mid-career ministry leaders. When we look specifically for evidence on differences in resonating with or applying various aspects of DVULI, we find evidence that the mid-career DVULI participants tend to do slightly to somewhat better on key DVULI goals/outcomes.

We do find that early career participants respond well to several aspects of the DVULI program, such as networking and community engagement. Yet there are program areas that seem difficult for early career alumni to apply in their current ministry positions. And we note here that those in “lower” level positions or volunteer positions, which is more common for younger youth ministers,

have a more difficult time adapting and drawing on many of the DVULI program emphases. And, though not consistent across all outcomes, we generally find that greater years of age or experience have small positive effects on orientations and practices for successful ministry.

*2. 2006 Recommendation: Modify the curriculum to target different age groups*

Action: No modifications have been made on this score. After discussing the issue, DVULI administration agreed that the cost of age specialization outweighed the potential benefits.

2019 Contribution:

While age of participant is related to some DVULI outcomes, the age effects are not consistently strong, nor do the age findings tell a consistent story that could guide the development of a DVULI program specific to a particular age group.

It is possible that career stage, which is related but conceptually different than participant age, could benefit from a targeted curriculum. We do find that some aspects of the DVULI program are less relevant to or less valued in the ministries of late or early career alumni. Based on the 2019 findings, one could recommend forms of “breakout groups” or other attempts to focus on career stage subgroups that would allow some tailoring of DVULI to the specific challenges of early and late career participants.

*3. 2006 Recommendation: Assign more experienced leaders to mentor younger ministry leaders after graduation.*

Action: None. This type of activity seemed too difficult to develop and monitor.

2019 Contribution:

Although the 2019 data cannot speak to issues of cost and coordination of this kind of mentoring initiative, there is support in the data for the argument that those with more years of experience differ on DVULI outcomes in important ways. We do not have data on whether more experienced leaders could (more) effectively mentor those newer to youth ministry. More experienced youth ministers are more likely to be in “higher” level positions, which may create advantages and constraints for mentoring less experienced youth ministers. We also note that youth ministry leadership appears quite different across organizations and position level. That may have to be taken into account in any attempt to form a longer-term mentorship dyad.

*4. 2006 Recommendation: Train graduates how to replicate DVULI training back in their home communities, particularly with their ministry teams.*

Action: An extensive new initiative to address this concern began in 2008 and continues to be developed. This has included providing training toolkits with facilitation guides, videos, and other resources to reproduce DVULI training. In addition, grant dollars are available to alumni who work collaboratively to provide training to others in their communities. Liaisons have been established to

connect with alumni and support them in their efforts to train others. This includes a consulting service to help launch a DVULI-type training locally.

2019 Contribution:

The findings offer a few indirect supports for this initiative. First, multi-dimensional community engagement is central to how many DVULI graduates view their life and ministry. This is particularly useful and valued by African Americans and Hispanics, who often work in contexts in which leadership training is valued and rare. DVULI alumni are uniformly positive about many of the core elements of their leadership training, including the Breakthrough Plan, and are highly committed to mentoring, networking, collaboration, and empowerment as central to their ministry. We expect that this new initiative is in part reflected in our findings, and is highly valued by most alumni. We would also note the evidence in our data that points to the challenges of holistic youth ministry in contexts that lack resources, including social capital and a vibrant civic life. For example, we find that African American alumni—while strongly valuing a holistic approach to ministry that is embedded in civic life—tend to have access to fewer resources, including less paid, full-time ministry positions across religious and civic nonprofit organizations. The addition of DVULI resources, especially in terms of leadership skills and networking, is likely to be highly valued in disadvantaged neighborhoods.

*5. 2006 Recommendation (p. 20): Recruit people who spend at least half or more of their time in ministry, especially those in paid, fulltime ministry positions.*

Action: Changes in this regard are constrained by the realities of youth ministry. It is very difficult to find paid, full-time people in youth ministry in North American cities. Youth work doesn't pay enough to support an individual and their family. DVULI has continued to accept participants who are volunteers and bi-vocational people serving youth. However, the application process now requires a minimum of 10 hours per week in ministry. The 10-hour requirement was recommended in the full 2006 report.

2019 Contribution:

We note first of all that it is even more difficult to pursue only the full-time youth ministers since blacks, Hispanics, and women are more likely to be in volunteer and bi-vocational youth ministry positions. Yet the diversity of the DVULI community, united in faith and mission, is one of its unique strengths.

We find, however, consistently lower outcomes for alumni who are in volunteer positions or are in "lower level" positions as compared to the paid associate and senior pastors and youth ministry directors. For that reason, we support the recommendation of the 2006 report, while acknowledging the constraints of resource limitations of youth ministry in disadvantaged contexts. A compromise position may involve tailoring some parts of DVULI training to the particular challenges of youth ministry for those in "lower" level and volunteer positions in disadvantaged areas.

We should also point out that our analysis does not consider the value added over the short or long term careers of alumni who are volunteers or in "lower level" positions. How much are the

volunteers and the bi-vocational growing through DVULI training over the longer-term, and is this comparable to that of other alumni? Does DVULI-inspired growth lead to a new position—perhaps a full-time, paid position that is better served by DVULI training? Perhaps the networking and ministry collaboration has special benefits for alumni who in tenuous positions. Not to mention that DVULI strengths brought to disadvantaged communities could build the kind of civic skills and social and organizational capital that leads to stronger and better resourced youth minister organizations. In essence, DVULI is laying the leadership and organizational foundation that encourages and attracts financial and social resource investment in disadvantaged areas.

Based on what we have seen so far, we would expect that the DVULI impact is stronger among those in paid, full-time positions. Analysis of the change over time for each individual will help to sort this out, likely confirming our expectation that those in paid positions in the mid to upper position levels are better positioned to develop through and build on DVULI training in their ministries.

*6. 2006 Recommendation: Train graduates to anticipate job transitions and life changes.*

Action: No specific action was taken, but DVULI does encourage participants NOT to make ministry job changes while in the Initiative training. DVULI sees its role as helping participants stay in youth ministry for the long-term. Young people need caring adults in their lives that are dependable and willing to walk with and disciple them to do life together. Transitioning to another position is not a DVULI goal. DVULI did make some changes to Systems Thinking in 2011 that help participants navigate change in general. It would be helpful to see if these changes are having an impact on navigating life and ministry transitions.

2019 Contribution:

The 2019 findings support the argument that DVULI improves consistency in youth ministry focus for most alumni. We find evidence that DVULI training helps alumni improve their job performance, gain respect from supervisors, and gain new youth ministry positions. This is particularly the case for early and mid-career alumni. But the more recent cohorts, 2012-2019, are less likely to say that DVULI helped them earn a new position. Encouraging is that 2019 survey respondents compared to the 2006 survey respondents are less likely to say they have difficulty remaining in their ministry position. This is strengthened through the valued emphases of resource networking, mentorship and other social supports for youth ministers, the integration of personal faith and organizational youth ministry commitments, and the skills and values of Collaboration and Systems Thinking. We find, for example, that Systems Thinking is more strongly valued by alumni in the most recent cohorts (2013-18), which supports the argument that DVULI has effectively emphasized preparation for navigating change in general.

*7. 2006 Recommendation: Develop city-based ministry teams to conduct simultaneous or follow-up trainings.*

Action: As noted above, DVULI has put multiple resources into play to help make this happen.

2019 Contribution:



Our 2019 findings show that the social side of DVULI, the social support, mentorship, and networking for life and ministry, is incredibly valued by alumni. Local approaches likely improve the strengths of this important social side of the DVULI impact.

In addition, the 2019 survey reveals high levels of collaboration between DVULI alumni. Collaboration is particularly high among racial minorities and women. Collaboration is less well-established among alumni in “lower” level positions, who likely both need and have a more difficult time participating in the collaborative potential of city-based ministry teams. As we show below, the “critical mass” of youth ministry community generated through DVULI, which makes possible the social supports needed for youth ministers, has important effects on the success of the program in local communities.

*8. 2006 Recommendation: Train a greater number of participants from large cities, etc.*

Action: DVULI tested doing three cohorts in New York City (2009, 2010, 2011), which helped to build critical mass in one major city. But the number of participants did not make much difference in the effectiveness of the program. In addition, DVULI adapted this recommendation by returning multiple times to larger cities rather than expanding to new cities.

2019 Contribution:

To address this question, we conducted a basic analysis to determine whether there is evidence that alumni in cities with a large number of participants are better able to build on DVULI training, improving youth ministry in their city as the result of a local “critical mass” of alumni. Our outcomes are the 11 concepts/dimensions of life and ministry discussed in Chapter 3. Our independent variables include all the variables from our demographic analysis, including the type of organization and position in the organization. We then added a variable for the number of alumni who completed the survey in the survey respondent’s city, which provides a rough measure of the number of DVULI alumni in each DVULI city. We did not include a control for the population size of the city.

We find that alumni report higher levels of Practicing Breakthrough Skills in cities with a greater number of alumni (who completed the survey). The level of practicing these breakthrough skills, Collaboration, Systems Thinking, Resource Networking, Asset Mapping, and Scenario Planning, is positively related to the number of alumni in the respondent’s city. This provides evidence that a “critical mass” in a local area contributes to DVULI success (on average) among the alumni working there.

We also find a positive relationship between the number of alumni in the city and Community Engagement. This includes community engagement through inter-denominational efforts, “broad ministry networks,” community development activities, and volunteer work in the community.

In contrast, the findings reveal a negative relationship between the number of alumni in the city and Breakthrough Plan Success, especially in terms of whether the alumnus implemented their Breakthrough Plan and achieved the goals of their plan. The reason for this is not clear, but it could

be due to challenges related to ministry in cities with larger populations or a higher perceived bar for success among alumni in greater contact with each other in a particular city.

The other ministry dimensions are not strongly related to the number of alumni in the city. We find a positive effect of the number of local alumni on Faith and Faith-based Mission, but this relationship is very small and inconsistent. The same conclusion applies to the outcome of Community Leadership and Ministry Commitment. We do not find a relationship between a “critical mass” of alumni in the city and Care for Personal and Social Needs. Nor do not find a relationship with Career Impact. There is a slight and inconsistent negative relationship between number of alumni in the city and Vision and Mission. We do not find a relationship with Mission Accomplished, with Income and Job Advancement, or with Work and Life Balance.

On the whole, then, we find support for the recommendation that a critical mass of alumni in a particular city improves the DVULI impact on the ministries of each alumnus in that city. Practicing Breakthrough Skills and Community Engagement is more likely if the alumnus has the social support from a larger DVULI alumni team in their city.

*9. 2006 Recommendation (p. 22): Provide participants with ACE credit. Develop a pilot portfolio program with an academic institution. Collaborate with an academic institution to provide credit for DVULI training.*

Action: DVULI worked hard to address this recommendation, providing multiple educational options since 2012. Currently participants can receive 9 credits at the BA level or 9 credits at the MA level for their participation. DVULI is revisiting other options (PLA and CEUs) this year.

2019 Contribution:

Continuing education is one of the most consistent factors in explaining the positive impact of DVULI for participants, including the dimensions of community engagement, networking, and strategic planning. The extent that continuing education improves the impact of DVULI may depend on synergies between involvement in local educational institutions, DVULI training, and youth ministry of alumni. For example, we find that continuing education is strongly related to an important leadership skill, identifying limits and constraints when considering ministry strategies. In particular, the interaction of DVULI and educational experiences may improve the kind of social and cultural capital that contributes to a stronger holistic ministry, including extensive community engagement of alumni. Alumni gaining additional education through a local institution likely generate social ties and civic knowledge that are useful for effective youth ministry within a particular community context. In addition, educational experiences may create opportunities for alumni to build on the kinds of leadership skills and knowledge fostered within DVULI training.

*10. 2006 Recommendation (p23-24): Foster opportunities for alumni to develop networks and collaborate together in order to provide training for others.*

Action: DVULI has taken three steps to address this recommendation. In terms of personnel, DVULI has contracted with 9 alumni to serve as part-time liaisons to participants in particular cities. DVULI has provided consulting to alumni who are replicating DVULI on a local level. DVULI is providing

grant dollars to support alumni efforts to enhance collaboration and build the infrastructure necessary for expanding the reach of DVULI training within local communities.

2019 Contribution:

The 2019 findings certainly support the claim that alumni highly value the social side of DVULI. Over 90 percent of alumni highly value Accountability and Collaboration. Generating a community of support for youth ministry reinforces DVULI-inspired skills and knowledge and heightens the emotional energy and commitment to carrying out ministry under challenging conditions.

*11. 2006 Recommendation: Continue to develop training models that can expand and replicate DVULI, compare these less expensive and time intensive models to DVULI to determine what pieces offer the greatest impact; expand the reach of DVULI by creating a resource center for disseminating program materials and training activities.*

Action: Since this report, DVULI has worked internally on creating resources that are housed on the DVULI website for alumni. DVULI seeks to do a better job of tracking how these resources are used and getting feedback from alumni on how they can be improved. DVULI also has made several attempts to partner with other youth-serving organizations to share DVULI training resources. Some of these collaborations have been very successful, though others have failed.

2019 Contribution:

According to alumni, learning in the context of a community of youth ministry leaders who share intellectual and faith commitments and seek to engage organizations, leaders, and volunteers in their local area is the core of DVULI. The intellectual growth and challenge through DVULI is highly valued by alumni, which likely includes continuing opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills of ministry leadership. For example, many alumni highly value the process of developing and implementing the Breakthrough Plan, which is central to alumni conceptions of DVULI's impact on their ministry. While social support is key to carrying these skills and knowledge into the field, the attention to intellectual and mental needs, integrated with faith at the personal and organizational level, provides the unique power of DVULI for youth ministry in disadvantaged contexts. Efforts that integrate leadership skills, knowledge, and orientations in the context of a supportive and committed community at the local level will continue to strengthen the DVULI impact on youth ministry.

## **Recommendations and Changes Developed From Internal Evaluation**

### *Focus on Youth Development*

In 2011 DVULI shortened the community development content and added the principles of youth development/youth empowerment/youth-adult partnerships. The goal of this change was to help shape youth ministry philosophy around discipling youth rather than providing activities that are limited to a commitment to Christ and to keeping teens safe and active.

#### 2019 Contribution:

Recent cohorts have adopted this emphasis enthusiastically; Youth Development is highly ranked in our survey findings. And this emphasis is consistent with the alumni's strong commitment to the integration of faith development and youth ministry, which emerges throughout our 2019 findings.

This emphasis raises challenges and perhaps trade-offs in the DVULI task of uniting the personal and social side of youth ministry with the more organizational or "technical" side of leadership in organizations and communities. For example, grant getting skills and building organizational capital along with more technical skills of Scenario Planning, Resource Networking, and Asset Mapping are sometimes seen in evangelical circles as mundane distractions to a mission oriented around faith and spiritual formation. Yet the unique strength of DVULI is integrating the practical and the faith dimensions of youth ministry in evangelical contexts. Continuing to find creative ways to hold Youth Development together with the growth of skills and knowledge of leadership in organizations and communities is at the heart of the DVULI mission.

#### *Increasing Hispanic Participants and Outreach*

DVULI self-assessments (2009, 2012, and 2016) noted the exponential growth in the number of Hispanic leaders in US cities—a demographic shift that was not matched in the number of Hispanics in the DVULI program. In response, DVULI committed to include at least 2 cities with a high percentage of Hispanics for every 5 cities that were targeted each year. In 2012 DVULI reviewed alumni demographics, again noting no improvement in the percentage of Hispanic leaders in DVULI. Even DVULI cities with many Hispanics, such as Miami and Houston, had participants who were mostly Black and white. DVULI committed to more significant changes designed to attract Hispanic leaders. All recruitment materials were published in English and Spanish. DVULI partnered with AETH to develop training on the core DVULI values, which were offered free to the AETH (Hispanic) pastor network. In 2016 DVULI hired an outside firm to study the problem, which provided a number of recommendations—implemented by DVULI—for building brand recognition and credibility in the Hispanic community.

#### 2019 Contribution:

The 2019 survey results provide a rousing endorsement to these DVULI efforts. The result of the outreach to Hispanic communities and ministers is reflected in the DVULI alumni numbers, including the consistent positive impact of DVULI training on Hispanic alumni.

On an impressive number of outcomes considered in this report, Hispanics are on average benefiting more from DVULI training and responding more positively to it. The likely explanation is a strong synergy between the goals and strategies of the DVULI program and specific aspects of the Hispanic ministry context. These findings likely reflect the need for leadership training options as well as the supportive community and church context for building on DVULI training at the local level. The DVULI program is not only demanding but takes a holistic approach and supports the development of structural supports for youth ministry, all of which are highly valued and supported in the Hispanic ministry context. The positive reception and community supports in Hispanic contexts provide an ideal crucible for a strong impact of DVULI training on youth ministry.

## Other Recommendations

In this last section, we bring together recommendations for which we find support in the 2019 Alumni Survey findings.

1. Consider partnerships with local educational institutions to encourage continuing education of DVULI alumni for the benefit of youth ministry in local communities.

Our 2019 findings show striking and fairly consistent positive DVULI outcomes as a result of alumni's continued involvement in educational institutions. These effects are not limited to what is learned in a particular educational program but extend to networking, community engagement, strategic thinking, and personal growth. The synergies between continuing education and DVULI-inspired youth ministry practices in communities likely depend on engagement in local educational institutions. This kind of involvement offers not only opportunities to grow leadership skills and orientations emphasized in DVULI, but also to engage with civic leaders and local organizations that have a presence in their community and to encourage the work of considering the "bigger picture" of the local community context.

2. Consider further adapting DVULI to account for different ministry contexts related to types of organizations and specific aspects of ministry positions.

The 2019 results do not clearly demand unique DVULI training for specific organizational positions, but they do point to important differences in youth ministry positions depending on "level" within the organization and the type of organization. Those in church contexts face greater challenges in collaboration and mentorship as well as community engagement and organizational partnerships. Those in nonprofits face very different challenges for engaging youth and developing resource streams for the support of youth ministry. DVULI training and support should benefit from accounting for these differences, perhaps through some tailoring of learnings and the organization of social support to take into account differences in youth ministry related to organizational type and position.

3. Evaluate DVULI training to ensure that the particular challenges of youth ministry for women and minority races are taken into account.

DVULI has been particularly attuned to the lives and communities of disadvantaged groups, and this is evident in our 2019 outcomes, which reveal many positive outcomes that extend broadly to alumni across social differences. We did find differences that perhaps could be taken into account in DVULI training and organization moving forward. Women and men, for example, are drawing equally and benefiting from most aspects of the DVULI training. Yet we find challenges for women due to their positions in youth ministry, and we find tendencies for women to be stronger on personal and social DVULI outcomes and less enamored with the organizational or "technical" aspects of DVULI. It seems likely that simply recognizing these tendencies within DVULI will

encourage women and men to put more time and effort into areas that they currently are less engaged with.

Likewise, we emphasize broad similarities in DVULI reception and outcomes across race and ethnicity of alumni. The power of DVULI is its ability to bring together faithful youth mission and social differences—to the benefit of both. With that general conclusion in mind, we note that DVULI could make slight adaptations to take into account important contextual differences related to race and ethnicity. We have discussed the Hispanic context above, for which our findings provide strong endorsement of the DVULI mission and organization for disadvantaged communities. We would add to that discussion the particular context faced by African Americans. One is the greater challenge of youth ministry resources in African American communities, which includes the likelihood that many African Americans are working in part-time, volunteer, or “lower” level positions. Yet this challenge exists alongside the high value that African Americans place on embedding youth ministry in the context of their broader communities, including value placed on civic and political engagement for the benefit of youth ministry. The resource networking and organizational networking aspects of DVULI, along with the strong support for mentorship and personal assessment and growth, are particularly important to the experience of African American DVULI alumni.

4. DVULI should celebrate the accomplishment of providing key social and intellectual supports for faithful mission that integrates life and ministry.

We would be remiss if we didn’t mention that DVULI alumni are overwhelmingly positive about what DVULI offers to them as persons and youth ministers and as caring citizens of their community. And they particularly value how DVULI provide support for the mutual growth of life, faith, and work. They strongly appreciate the holistic DVULI approach for its commitment to uniting the personal, intellectual, and communal in faithful service to the needs of youth. DVULI integration of life and ministry in faithful service along with the structural supports for this work continues to make DVULI uniquely valuable to servant leaders who are stretched at times by the often heightened challenges of youth ministry in contemporary urban contexts. That calls for the continued celebration and advancement of a ministry that unites head and heart in fruitful communities of service.

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## Appendix A

### Practicing Breakthrough Skills

- Practice breakthrough skills (freq.): Collaboration
- Practice breakthrough skills (freq.): Systems thinking
- Practice breakthrough skills (freq.): Resource networking
- Practice breakthrough skills (freq.): Asset mapping
- Practice breakthrough skills (freq.): Scenario planning
- Practice core values (freq.): Interdependence
- Practice core values (freq.): Empowerment
- Practice breakthrough skills (freq.): Ministry assessment
- Practice breakthrough skills (freq.): Youth development
- Practice core values (freq.): Leverage
- Practice breakthrough skills (freq.): Personal assessment
- Practice core values (freq.): Accountability
- Practice core values (freq.): Balance

(Variables: DoCollab DoSystems DoResNetwork DoAssetMap DoScenarioPlan CRInterdep CREmpower DoMAssess DoYthDev CRLeverage DoPAssess CRAccount CRBalance)

### Faith and Faith-Based Mission

- DVULI training strengthened: Commitment to the faith-based mission of my org.
- DVULI training strengthened: Relationship to a local faith community
- DVULI training strengthened: Personal faith
- DVULI training strengthened: Broad-based and holistic vision of evangelism
- DVULIs training: Identified my core values for ministry
- DVULI training: Improved my attitudes about ministry
- DVULI training: Has led me to act in greater harmony with my core values
- DVULI training: Increased my self-confidence in my ministry and leadership

(Variables: DVRelMissionCmt DVFaithComm DVFaith DVHolistic DVCoreValues DVAttitude  
DVDoCoreValues DVSelfConfid)

### Breakthrough Success

Note: the first two variables are tightly connected, and the third, less so. The fourth variable seems to make sense conceptually, but its association with this concept is actually quite low; it may need to be considered as a separate subcomponent.

Breakthrough plan rating: implemented my plan

Breakthrough plan rating: achieved my plan's goals

My Breakthrough Plan: lasting impact on my ministry

My Breakthrough Plan: useful exercise for future planning

(Variables: BKImplement BKAchieved BKLastImpact BKUseful)

### Care for Personal and Social Needs

Measures:

*DVULI training improved how I care for my:*

Mental and intellectual needs

Physical needs

Social needs

Family needs

Spiritual needs

(Variables: DVMentalNeeds DVPhyNeeds DVSocialNeeds DVFamNeeds DVSpNeeds)

### Work and Life Balance

This concept coheres around establishing a balance of life responsibilities.

Use of personal time matches up with what is important in my personal life

Am 'in balance' (time on your ministry, yourself, your family, and God)

Use of ministry and professional time matches what is important in my ministry and life

Exhibited work/life balance

(Variables: DoPTimeWell MiniBalance DoMTimeWell WrkLifeBal)

### Community Leadership and Ministry Commitment

Note: The last four have a weaker relation to this concept (especially the last two variables).

DVULI training: Has prepared me for leadership in my community

DVULI training: Identified my core values for ministry

DVULI training: Improved my attitudes about ministry

My Breakthrough Plan: Had a lasting impact on my ministry

My Breakthrough Plan: Was a useful exercise for future planning

DVULI training: Has led me to act in greater harmony with my core values

DVULI training: Increased my self-confidence in my ministry and leadership

(Variables: DVPrepLead DVCoreValues DVAttitude BKLastImpact BKUseful DVDoCoreValues DVSelfConfid)

### Community Engagement

This scale captures several types of ties to outside organizations, including religious organizations, and civic life. The smallest association is political and civic affairs, which has face validity for this concept even if the dominant form of community engagement is through connections to religious organizations.

DVULI led to greater involvement in: Cross-denominational activities

DVULI led to greater involvement in: Broad ministry networks

DVULI led to greater involvement in: Community development activities

DVULI led to greater involvement in: Volunteer work in my community

DVULI led to greater involvement in: Political and civic affairs

(Variables: DVInterDenom DVWideNets DVCommDevActs DVVolunt DVPolCivic)

### Career Impact

This scale focused on DVULI impact on job positions and the view of the respondent from supervisors and colleagues at the ministry organization. The final listed variable is less strongly related to this dimension, but is reasonably well connected and makes some theoretical sense. Still, some analyses may want to focus on the non-monetary impact of DVULI on occupational positions and performance.

DVULI helped me: Earn the respect of supervisors

DVULI helped me: Earn the respect of colleagues

DVULI helped me: Earn a better position

DVULI helped me: Improve my job satisfaction

DVULI helped me: Improve my job performance

DVULI helped me: Stay involved in ministry

DVULI helped me: Increase my personal income

(Variables: DVRespSuper DVRespColl DVPosition DVsatisfaction DVJobPerf DVStayMini DVIncome)

### Vision and Mission

This scale focuses on the impact of DVULI on one's vision and mission in various spheres, from city or metro to individual. It is interesting that local community vision is most strongly associated with this dimension, but that may change in more detailed factor analysis.

DVULI helped develop vision/mission: My local community

DVULI helped develop vision/mission: My organization or ministry

DVULI helped develop vision/mission: My city or metro area

DVULI helped develop vision/mission: My personal mission

(Variables: DVCommun DVOrgMini DVMetro DVPMission)

### Mission Accomplished

This scale primarily captures the extent that one's mission is being accomplished across several spheres as a result of DVULI training. Note that the top two measures, for city and community, are by far the most strongly associated with this dimension. The measure of personal mission makes some sense for this dimension, though the association in this analysis is less strong.

My vision/mission being accomplished: My city or metro area

My vision/mission being accomplished: My local community

DVULI helped develop vision/mission: My city or metro area

My vision/mission being accomplished: My organization or ministry

My vision/mission being accomplished: My personal mission

(Variables: DVdoMetro DVdoCommun DVMetro DVdoOrgMini DVdoPMission)

### Income and Job Advancement

This scale is a bit of a hodgepodge, and certainly related to the Career Impact scale. Yet there is some coherence and uniqueness to it, albeit oriented primarily to the first two measures, increasing personal income and earning a better position. The addition of the third most important indicator, the lasting impact of DVULI, the scale tracks career advancement most directly.

DVULI helped me: Increase my personal income

DVULI helped me: Earn a better position

My Breakthrough Plan: Had a lasting impact on my ministry

DVULI led to greater involvement in: Political and civic affairs

My Breakthrough Plan: Was a useful exercise for future planning

DVULI helped me: Improve my job satisfaction

(Variables: DVIncome DVPosition BKLastImpact DVPolCivic BKUseful DVsatisfaction)