Mini-Thesis

Employing Richard T. Lawrence's God Image Scales:
Two case studies from Hanover Park

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Declaration

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Name: Trevor Enrico Pedro

Date: 19 November 2019

Signature:

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Abstract

This study is situated in the field of Practical Theology with specific reference to empirical studies on the God-images that lay people operate with in their daily lives. It is often observed in the discourse on theology and development that the images people hold of God reflect a sense of power or powerlessness but may also influence the way lay people respond to their social environment. This applies irrespective of religious or denominational affiliation, age group, gender, occupation or socio-economic standing. In particular, this study focusses on two congregations, namely St Dominic's Anglican Church and the Pentecostal Protestant Church, both located in Hanover Park. These are selected because they represent diverging theological traditions that may or may not shape people's God-images. The assumption is that whether people see God as law-giver and law-enforcer, a strict judge, an advisor, an advocate, a close friend, a problem-solver or dispenser of goods and services, that this would make a significant difference to how people view themselves in relation to their world. Whilst this interest in understanding the types of God-images and the influence these God-images might have on particular groupings of people is not new, the interest in God-images is new within the field of practical theology (Counted 2015; Hoffman 2005; Lawrence 1997).

The God Image Scale that was developed by Richard T. Lawrence (1997), is used in this study. Lawrence (1997:214) a Roman Catholic priest, who served as a pastor at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Baltimore Maryland, developed two instruments namely the God-Image Inventory (GII) and the God Image Scales (GIS). Whilst the GII is used within clinical and pastoral counselling, the GIS has been more widely used in empirical studies in the field of religious psychology and, especially in North America, on the ways in which images of God function amongst specific groups of people. These instruments have not been widely used in the African or the South African contexts although Africa is widely regarded as "notoriously religious". Such findings on God-images may be significant for Christian education in violence-ridden communities, not only in Hanover Park.

The significance of this study on God-images within a specific community context is tied to the complexities of attempting to measure the quality of an individual's God-

image across different denominations, religious beliefs, religious practices and religious educational frameworks. Of equal importance is the need to distinguish between the influence that different doctrinal teachings and religious practices have on the formation of God-images and God-concepts. Whilst people who are social beings learn from their contexts, are influenced by their experiences and make choices based on intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors, the corpus of God-image literature recognises the pivotal role and influence that one's God-image have on religious knowledge, attitudes and behaviours within any given context.

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"Merely because there exists a religious experience, if you will, that is grounded in some manner . . . it by no means follows that the reality which grounds it should conform objectively with the idea believers have of it. The very fact that the way in which this reality has been conceived has varied infinitely in different times is enough to prove that none of these conceptions express it adequately." (Emile Durkheim, 1995. The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, translated by Karen E. Fields)

Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

This study is situated in the field of Practical Theology with specific reference to empirical studies on the God-images that lay people operate with in their daily lives. In the discourse on theology and development it is often observed that the images people hold of God not only reflect a sense of power or powerlessness but may also influence the way lay people respond to their social environment. This applies irrespective of religious or denominational affiliation, age groups, gender, occupation or socio-economic standing.

The significance of this study on God-images within a specific community context is tied to the complexities of attempting to measure the quality of an individual's God-image across different denominations, religious beliefs, religious practices and religious educational frameworks. Of equal importance is the need to distinguish between the influence that different doctrinal teachings and religious practices have on the formation of God-images and God-concepts. Whilst people who are social beings learn from their contexts, are influenced by their experiences and make choices based on intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors, the corpus of God-image literature recognises the pivotal role and influence that one's God-image has on religious knowledge, attitudes and behaviours within any given context.

In particular, this study focusses on two congregations, namely St Dominic's Anglican Church and the Pentecostal Protestant Church, both located in Hanover Park. These churches were selected because they represent diverging theological traditions that

may or may not shape people's God-images. Ten members of the St Dominic's Anglican Church and ten members of the Pentecostal Protestant Church were identified by the local pastors based on the following criteria: a) be of good standing in the congregation; b) are active in congregational ministries; c) are parents of teenaged children; and d) reside in Hanover Park.

The God Image Scale that was developed by Richard T. Lawrence (1997), is used in this study. Lawrence (1997:214) a Roman Catholic priest who served as a pastor at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Baltimore Maryland, developed two instruments namely the God-Image Inventory (GII) and the God Image Scales (GIS). Whilst the GII is used within clinical and pastoral counselling, the GIS has been more widely used in empirical studies in the field of religious psychology and, especially in North America, on the ways in which images of God function amongst specific groups of people. These instruments have not been widely used in the African or the South African contexts although Africa is widely regarded as "notoriously religious". Such findings on God-images may be significant for Christian education in violence-ridden communities, not only in Hanover Park.

The results of the God Image Scales completed by participants of the identified congregations, namely St Dominic's Anglican Church and the Pentecostal Protestant Church are compared in order to to show similarities, differences and significant patterns. These findings are discussed with reference to the reviewed literature and the community context. Such findings on God-images is significant for Christian education in violence-ridden communities, not only in Hanover Park. Such a case study may also help to assess the validity of the research instrument employed (the God Image Scales) and in this way contribute internationally to empirical studies on God-images.

1.2 The context within which the study is situated

1.2.1 Personal experiences in working on development in Hanover Park

I have been working in the youth, community, organisational development space for the 30 years and in practical ministry as a pastor for the last 10 years. Working at senior management level at some of the largest Non-Governmental Organisations

(NGOs) in South Africa has afforded me the opportunity to develop extensive social, economic, health and religious development knowledge needed to sustain programme management systems and applications within different South African contexts. Currently, I am self- employed, working as a development consultant offering facilitation, training and project management services which includes developing, implementing and supporting youth, community development and sport for development programmes at provincial, national level and international level. For the last three years I have also started to work with pastors of smaller independent churches by offering education and practical ministry support.

My journey in the development sector was shaped during my student years at the Cape Evangelical Bible Institute (CEBI). While studying at CEBI, a group of my Christian friends and I founded Compassion Corner, which was a faith-based youth and community development organisation. Compassion Corner worked with children and youth affected by the push and pull effects of poverty, gang violence, substance abuse and widespread family dysfunction in Hanover Park. The organisation offered after-school programmes that focussed on academic support, life-skills development and recreational activities. Parallel to working with children and youth, the organisation also developed various parent support programmes.

Hanover Park, which is now home to approximately 53 000 people, remains one of the most violent communities on the Cape Flats. Parents fear for the lives of their teenage children in a community which regards itself as religious. Churches have either opted for outreach programmes that focused purely on spiritual needs or have responded to social dysfunction with welfare, charity and aid projects and also with skills building initiatives. Confronted with the lack of holistic support services and opportunities for young people from disadvantaged communities like Hanover Park, Compassion Corner started to work towards influencing policies in relation to children and youth development. Drawing on my experience in child and youth care, church and community youth work, I presented theoretical frameworks for multi-disciplinary approaches in support of the development of young people to local, district, provincial government stakeholders.

Over the years, I became somewhat disillusioned by the reality that development is a

term used loosely to cover a range of issues resulting from colonialism, apartheid, exploitative trade relations and manipulative political agendas. Even more so with the use of development terminology in church contexts. My experience at that stage was that such development approaches failed to take religious belief systems and practices of church members into account. Beneficiaries of development programmes became increasingly more dependent on these welfare-aid projects. The reality was that too many people struggled to make positive life-style choices. Low self-esteem and feelings of powerlessness resulted in many of these beneficiaries being unable to sustain development opportunities. Cycles of disempowerment were maintained even though Hanover Park was known as a deeply religious community.

Where does one begin to peel back the layers of complexity which inform and maintain this sense of powerlessness in the church amidst challenging socio-economic circumstances in Hanover Park? How can the church through practical ministry become a significant and authentic influence in the development of Hanover Park?

This study contributes to the theological discourse on this ecclesial problem through an investigation of the ways in which members of churches in Hanover Park view and experience God and how this may influence their engagement with such issues within the community.

1.2.2 The role of religious beliefs in discourse on social development

The agenda for social transformation has often been defined by economic, social and political disciplines so that the religious dimension tends to go unnoticed.[1] However, the expanding corpus of literature on religion and development as presented by Swart and Nell (2016:4) points toward a shift in global thinking about the impact religion has on development practices. Jones and Peterson (2011:1291) found that this growing collection of religion and development research literature opens new fields within social development approaches. Ongoing research in the field of religion and development

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[1] As Steve de Gruchy observed (in a discussion of the absence of references to religion in the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework), "How can we expect to understand and help people if we miss the very thing that they consider to be the most important thing in their lives simply because it is not important in our lives?" See Steve. M. de Gruchy, *Keeping Body and Soul Together: Reflections by Steve de Gruchy on Theology and Development,* edited by Beverley Haddad (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2015), 258.

also resulted in an ability to identify and analyse critical gaps in broad based development practices.

Swart and Nell (2016:2) noted that: "scholars of development have started to come to terms with the reality of the continuing, if not increased importance of religion in the lives and identities of people in large parts of our contemporary world". Studies completed by Ter Haar (2011:14) indicate that development processes for those who hold strong religious beliefs and who have been empowered to use religious resources as part of development strategies yield better results that can be sustained over time. One may conclude that religious beliefs are both shaped by a particular social context but may also be a driving force that shapes the social imaginary which in turn enables social transformation. Thus, the role of religious beliefs in every aspect of an individual's life, as indicated in such literature, forces social development practitioners to acknowledge the discipline of religion and development as integral to development frameworks.

1.2.3 Empirical studies on God-images

In order to investigate the role played by God-images, for example in contexts such as Hanover Park, it was necessary to consider a body of empirical studies that have been done on God-images and God-concepts, especially in the South African context. Empirical studies on God-images have been undertaken in the field of pastoral counselling, practical theology, missiology, religion, gender and psychology (Counted 2015:1).

Such empirical studies on God-images are not as strong within Africa as they are in countries of the global North. Within South Africa, the corpus of empirical studies show a marked shift in emphasis from understanding the formation of God-images and God-concepts and attachment theories, to understanding the elements embedded in God-images in relation to religious attitudes, thinking and behaviour (Counted 2015; Counted & Moustafa 2017; Louw 2015; Magezi 2006; Magezi & Manda 2016; Thurlow 2000; Van der Merwe 2010; Van Niekerk 2007; Venter 2008).

1.2.4 Richard T. Lawrence's research instrument: The God Image Scales

God-image research instruments within practical theology are non-existent, whereas within the field of psychology of religion, there are more than 125 measures of religiosity and spirituality (Edwards & Hall 2002:341). Recognising the gap within practical theology as well as the need for more objective God-image research instruments, Richard Lawrence (1997) developed the God-image inventory and the God Image Scales which aim to measure different elements of a person's knowledge, experiences of God and a person's feelings and behaviour toward God.

The significance of this God Image Scale as a research instrument is based on the complexities of attempting to measure the quality of an individual's God-image across different denominations, religious beliefs, religious practices and religious educational frameworks. Of equal importance is the need to distinguish between the influence that different doctrinal teachings and religious practices have on the formation of God-images and God-concepts. Whilst people who are social beings learn from their contexts, are influenced by their experiences and make choices based on intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors, the corpus of God-image literature recognises the pivotal role and influence that one's God-image has on religious knowledge, attitudes and behaviours within any given context.

1.3 Delimitation and statement of the research problem

This study contributes to the growing quantity of empirical studies on God-images from within a very particular social context, namely Hanover Park as a suburb on the Cape Flats in the Cape Town Metropole. Hanover Park is deeply affected by ongoing violence, gangsterism, unemployment and poverty-related social problems. It was recently declared a "red zone" due to the escalation of violence. The assumption is that it makes a significant difference whether people see God as law-giver and law-enforcer, a strict judge, an advisor, an advocate, a close friend, a problem-solver or dispenser of goods and services. In each case, such an image of God reflects social realities but also reinforces such realities. It therefore makes for an interesting case study of how this cognitive-emotional schema of God influences and is influenced by a particular social context. This study also contributes to theological discourse on the religious differences and current problems found amongst the different churches in the

community. It is therefore important to investigate the ways in which members of churches in Hanover Park view and experience God and how this may influence their engagement with such issues within the community.

I am hoping that the findings of this study will indicate why development work in a community such as Hanover Park needs to take into consideration the God-images that church members hold. This delimitation is further clarified on the following aspects:

1.3.1 Hanover Park: A socio-economic profile

The 2011 census found that Hanover Park which spans an area of 2.09 km² has a total population of 34 625 people. 97.47% of the people living in Hanover Park are predominantly Afrikaans-speaking Coloured people with 52.49% female and 47.51% male. 42% of the total population is younger than 19 years old. Those aged between 18 and 64 years are deemed to be the majority of the economically active population, making up 58% of the population. Senior citizens or the elderly (aged 60 and over) only constitute 9% of Hanover Park. A community survey completed by the City of Cape Town's VPUU (Violence Prevention through Urban Upgrade) programme in 2012, found that 18 900 people are considered to be informal dwellers in addition to the 34 625 people recorded by the 2011 census (Frith:2011).

Hanover Park is a community that struggles with issues of poverty, unemployment, learning problems, absent fathers, family dysfunction, domestic violence, broken relationships, alcohol abuse, drug addiction, gangsterism, child abuse and prostitution (Benjamin 2011; Veitch 2014). These factors contribute towards residents experiencing moments of powerlessness and feelings of disempowerment (Benjamin 2014; Magidi et al. 2016; Veitch 2014). As a result, primary caregivers tend to be a lot more absent during the more critical phases of a child's life. Members of families within Hanover Park, who are confronted with such realities, therefore employ different coping strategies which also include religious coping.

Van der Merwe et al (2010:2) found that religious coping provides believers with some sense of control. Religion can also be experienced as a source of power that deals with everyday problems (Conradie 2015:74). Communities of faith provide support and connection with other support structures (Benjamin 2014:217). Religion therefore plays

an important role in the daily lives of the residents in Hanover Park. Members of religious institutions feel less alone in their battle to survive. In fact, those who are members of such religious institutions are more likely to demonstrate positive levels of self-confidence due to their involvement in activities aimed at making a difference in their community (Van der Merwe 2010:6).

Apart from the negative social factors, Hanover Park has also been home to well-known authors, sport personalities and artists that include the likes of Ryland Fisher, Benny McCarthy, Jonathan Rubain, Vicky Sampson and Neville D.

1.3.2 Statement and explanation of the research problem

On the basis of the discussion above, the research problem is investigated in this study is stated in the following way:

> What similarities and differences may be identified when Richard Lawrence's God Image Scale is completed by selected members of the St Dominic's Anglican Church in Hanover Park who are parents of teenage children in comparison with selected members of the Pentecostal Protestant Church in Hanover Park who are also parents of teenage children?

This study focusses on the God-images that lay people operate with in their daily lives, given the influence that these God-images may have on the way in which such lay people respond to their social environment (Davis, Moriarty & Mauch 2013).

In discourse on theology and development, various scholars have noted that people think and feel about God in far more complex ways than is acknowledged by current measurement approaches (Hill & Pargament 2003; Gibson 2008). This study therefore represents an opportunity to address the need for empirical research in an emerging field and to advocate a form of practical ministry that would take cognisance of people's God-images.

1.3.3 Ethics statement

This study was conducted in accordance with the general ethical guidelines as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy of the University of the Western Cape. Ethical issues

were anticipated and planned for. Measures were put in place to protect the rights of people who participated in the study. This included the right to self-determination, right to privacy, right to autonomy and confidentiality, right to fair treatment and the right to protection from discomfort and harm (Mouton 2001:243). The following specific ethical considerations were taken into account:

a) The rights to use the God Image Scales as developed by Richard T. Lawrence

The God Image Scales developed by Richard T. Lawrence has been published in the public domain, also through the website of Jay Gattis at www.godimage.org. In the original publication on the research instrument, Lawrence (1997:223) concludes the article with the following note:

> The God Image Inventory has been constructed as an objective psychometric instrument for clinical and pastoral use in measuring a subject's image of God. The existence of standards based on a goodly number of adult North Americans, chiefly Christians of one kind or another, and the imminent availability of a computerized format for test administration and report preparation make it a potentially useful tool in work with individuals by qualified clinicians. The God Image Scales have been derived from the Inventory for research use, and some data is already available to suggest the usefulness of this tool in either the 3-scale, 36-item or the 6-scale, 72- item format. The GIS is in the public scholarly domain, and reports are greatly appreciated on its further use by researchers.

This formally indicates that the instrument may be used free of charge for the purposes of research, including this study. I intend to send a copy of this thesis to Richard Lawrence and to Jay Gattis, upon completion.

b) Informed consent

The senior pastor of St Dominic's Anglican Church and the senior pastor Pentecostal Protestant Church were approached to request the participation of these two congregations in this study. See the attached letter in this regard (Appendix A).

An information and briefing meeting were held with the senior pastor of the St Dominic's Anglican Church and the senior pastor Pentecostal Protestant Church. The purpose, process and benefits of the envisaged thesis was discussed with an emphasis on the ethical considerations and the measures that in place to ensure that the rights and interests of the two congregations as well as those of the participants were protected. Copies of the information sheet and the informed consent forms (Appendix B) were shared and discussed at these meetings.

Information and briefing meetings were also held with the participants of the St Dominic's Anglican Church and the Pentecostal Protestant Church where copies of the information sheet and the informed consent forms were shared and discussed. The objectives and the voluntary nature of participation in the study was explained before participants were asked to complete and sign the informed consent forms. The opportunity was created to answer or discuss any issues of clarity relating to the completion of the God Image Scales (Appendix C).

c) Right to fair treatment and right to withdraw

It was explained to participants that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any given point. Whilst great care was taken to ensure that participants were at ease, comfortable and free from any attitude that might be interpreted as manipulative or coercive, unforeseen factors which may have caused discomfort (feasible time to complete questionnaires, venue, interpreted expectations) were also taken into consideration.

d) Confidentiality

The instrument of the God Image Scales as developed by Richard Lawrence was completed anonymously. Participants were required to fill out responses on a four-point Likert-scale. The identity of each participant was further protected by assigning a number and abbreviation for the church to each participant in each congregation, more or less in the order of completing the God Image Scales.

e) Data protection

The information gathered through this study is stored in a safe place, in the office of the researcher, i.e. at Oasis Business Park, Schaapkraal, Philippi. The hard copies will

be stored for a period of five years and will then be destroyed. The electronic data will also be deleted after this period of five years.

f) Dissemination

The completed questionnaires will be placed on a file and kept in safe space. A detailed research report on the findings as well as the issues noted during observation will be compiled and submitted as a Master's thesis that will become part of the UWC electronic resources.

1.3.4 Chapter outline

This thesis consists of six chapters which is organized as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter focuses on the purpose and background information for this study. This chapter also provides an overview of the rationale of this study. The research problem is discussed, and the research procedure explained within the ethical framework which guided the research process.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

This chapter provides a synopsis of the theoretical framework for this study and looks at relevant literature in order substantiate the need for this study. The chapter also offers a detailed description of the research instrument based on the available primary literature together with a critical assessment of the strengths and limitations of this research instrument with reference to secondary literature.

Chapter 3: Data collection and analysis – St Dominic's Anglican Church

This chapter is focused on a brief description of the St Dominic's Anglican Church, its history, forms of ministry and current leadership on the basis of denominational histories, internet sources and available pamphlets. The research approach is discussed, and analysis of the collected data is provided. Key findings are discussed against each of the six God-image subscales.

Chapter 4: Data collection and analysis – Pentecostal Protestant Church

This chapter is focused on a brief description of the Pentecostal Protestant Church, its history, forms of ministry and current leadership on the basis of denominational histories, internet sources and available pamphlets. The research approach is discussed, and analysis of the collected data is provided. Key findings are discussed against each of the six God-image subscales.

Chapter 5: Comparison of the research findings

This chapter provides the comparison of the results of the God Image Scales that was completed by participants of the identified congregations, namely St Dominic's Anglican Church and the Pentecostal Protestant Church in order to to show the similarities, differences and patterns that emerged. The findings of this study is further discussed with reference to the reviewed literature and the community context.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and recommendations

This chapter offers the conclusions of this study in terms of the findings and how they relate to the research question. The significance of the study within a neighbourhood characterised by continuous cycles of direct and structural violence for wider empirical research on God-concepts and God-images is discussed. This chapter also reflects on the significance of such findings for practical ministry in neighbourhoods such as Hanover Park and makes recommendations in this regard for the discipline of practical theology and for discourse on religion and development.

Chapter 2 – Empirical Research on God-images

2.1 Introduction

Empirical studies on God-images have been undertaken in the field of pastoral counselling, practical theology, missiology, religion, gender and psychology of religion (Counted 2015:1). God-images have been defined within practical theology as well as within psychology of religion as a person's emotional experience of God, whereas God-concepts have been defined as the intellectualised, theological or cognitive understanding of God (Davis, Moriarty & Mauch 2013; Gibson 2008; Lawrence 1997; Rizzuto 2007; Venter 2008).

Research indicates that God-images reinforce attitudes, behaviours and practices of people within religious communities (Doehring 2008; Laurin, Kay & Fitzsimmons 2012; Van Niekerk 1997) . However, very little is known about the extent to which God-images and God-concepts affect people's thoughts and behaviour (Laurin, Kay & Fitzsimmons 2012:4). Bader and Froese (2005:16) found that God-concepts have a direct influence on the formation of an individual's worldview whilst Louw (2015:15-16) argues that the formation of God-images and God-concepts are influenced by theological and cultural schemas. Zahl and Gibson (2012:228) established that an individual's perception of God affects how they relate to God, and how they relate to God reveals particular dimensions of their perception of what God is like. Lawrence (1997:214), on the other hand, noted the correlation between God-images and an individual's self-esteem. Therefore, it makes a significant difference whether people see God as law-giver and law-enforcer, a strict judge, an advisor, an advocate, a close friend, a problem-solver or dispenser of goods and services.

Empirical research on God-images found that the family and the community children are born into, plays a significant role in shaping the religious identity and the images they hold of God (Hoffman et al. 2008; Smith & Crosby 2016; Van Niekerk 2018; Van Niekerk 2015; Yust 2017). It is therefore important to explore how these religious identities and the images people hold of God are formed and shaped throughout their lives.

2.2 Theoretical framework for God-Image Research

Studies within the field of psychology and religion, which have paved the way for current God-image research, have primarily studied the formation of God-images using object relations and attachment theories. These psychoanalytic theories, propose that the relationship primary caregivers have with an infant, is the incubator within which the initial markers for religious identities and God-images are formed (Block 1997; Counted 2015; Granqvist 2002; Lawrence 1997; Marsh & Low 2006; Rizzuto 2007). Being concerned with the unconscious mind, the field of psychology and religion emphasises how an infant develops a sense of self, a sense of others, and a sense of the world around them through their interaction with these objects of significance and the attachment bonds that are formed.

These theories draw on the extent of these childhood experience, whether it has been positive or negative, determine the type and quality of the relationships people enter into during their lifespan. However, without a religious context, children will not be able to connect their religious markers with the reality or existence of God. Therefore, to better position the use of Lawrence's God Image Scales as the research instruments for the two case studies in Hanover Park, a further exploration of social and religious constructs is required. More so, because Lawrence link God-image formation with self-esteem development (Lawrence 1997:214). Social and religious construct theories emphasise that people are products of their society.

Religious identity formation therefore requires religious families and societies to provide the context of the child's development of self. This is necessary to establish the initial markers for religious identities with the God of these primary caregivers.

2.2.1 Social and Religious Constructs

Social and religious constructs have a direct influence on the formation of God-images in the lives of children. Safa & Ahmad (2011:2) found that the society children are born into, not only plays a role in shaping religious identities, but also confirm such religious identities and God-images. Research findings also point toward the link between people's interpretation and meaning given to their lived religious experiences and their God-images. According to Laurin, Kay & Fitzsimmons (2012) and Ter Haar (2011),

God-images influence the functionality of many societies. It is also widely maintained that God-images form part of the everyday consciousness of people through which they interact with society (Berger & Luckman 1966; Counted 2015; Laurin et al. 2012; Lawrence 1997; Louw 2015; Marsh & Low 2006; Rizzuto 2007). In each of these studies, God-images reflect religious and social realities but also reinforce such realities.

The role primary caregivers' play in faith development processes of children is entrenched in the value they place on their religious traditions (Van Niekerk 2018:2). Christian biblical stories, symbols, pictures, types of music as well as the types of religious language children are exposed to during their early years lay a foundation upon which God-images are formed (Dayringer 2012; Yust 2017). At this early stage of a child's development, children are participants in the cultural and religious practices of their families and their communities (Dayringer 2012; Van Niekerk 2015). Children learn and internalise the distinctions made between acceptable and unacceptable religious and cultural behaviour based on the approval or disapproval of their primary caregivers (Smith & Crosby 2016; Van Niekerk 2018; Van Niekerk 2015; Yust 2017).

Through these interactions within religious families, children discover the word "God", and develop his or her own language to express the images they have of their primary caregivers and the God of their family (Cresswell, McLean & Ashley 2016; Moulin 2013; Yust 2017). Such religious language is reinforced by associated behaviours common to the religious affiliation of the family. Therefore, religious affiliation has a powerful function in shaping the psychological and social processes of children, as it provides the cultural data which informs the values, choices and behaviours of individuals and groups (Mitchell 2005; Moulin 2013; Ysseldyk et al. 2010; Yust 2017). The God-images at the centre of religious affiliation takes on meaning in the lives of children as these children develop religious habits and behaviours. As participants in these religious traditions, children process their experiences and connections with others through these filters. As they grow older, their religious identities and God-images continue to evolve (Berger & Luckman 1966; Gibson 2008; Hoffman 2005; Laurin et al. 2012; Louw 2015; Schaap-Jonker et al. 2016).

One can therefore conclude that a person's God-image is formed and shaped by a

particular religious and social context in the childhood years and drive the belief systems of these religious and social contexts as the individual matures.

2.2.2 Object Relations Theory

Using the Object Relations Theory (ORT), Anna-Maria Rizzuto gave rise to further exploration of the psychological construct of the God-image. ORT is best understood as the infant's activity of reaching out to the world which is facilitated by the primary caregivers (Block 1997; Burns-Smith 1999; Parker 2008; Rizzuto 2007; Winnicott 1969). Rizzuto (2007:29), explains that the engagement between the primary caregiver to that of an infant is the departure point for the positioning of the infant's concept of self within in the world and in relation to as well as interactions that inform the construction of the God-image.

Winnicott, who is well known for his development models that are based on ORT, focused his research on direct observations of infants and their mothers. Winnicott concluded that the mothering figure is central to the infant's first experience of a separate self from its world (Winnicott 1969:712). This mother-child relationship, which he termed the "good enough" holding environment, is what the child needs to understand the separate self. The more responsive this parental figure remains within this good enough holding environment, the stronger the child's ability to transition into relating to other objects. The less responsive this holding environment is, the more anxious the infant becomes in its understanding of a separate self (Kirkpatrick & Rowatt 2002:638).

Building on the work and findings of Winnicott, Rizzuto found that the child's relationship with God takes form in a transitional space, where the child begins to understand itself in relation to realities and fantasies that exist between itself and its primary caregivers (Rizzuto 2007:29). This holding environment from which the infant transitions and matures, becomes the arena from which the world of culture, the arts, and religion develop.

2.2.3 Attachment Theory

Counted (2015:1) noted that Attachment Theory (AT) stems from ORT. Whereas ORT

explains the infant's transition into a separate self, AT seeks to explain the nature and types of relationships the infant develops as a separate self, based on the type of bonds which is formed between the child and its primary caregivers (Reinert & Edwards 2014:2). AT can also be used to explain the religious dynamics of those who believe in a personal God. Attachment theorists argue that this early contact a child has with its primary caregivers, sets the foundations upon which the child learns and develops internal working models of self and others in relation to the levels of security and safety experienced (Counted 2015; Kirkpatrick & Shaver 1990; Reinert & Edwards 2014).

These internal working models, also known by attachment theorists as mental representations become a marker of the child-God relationship which evolves as the child gets older. Attachment to God replaces the attachment to the primary caregivers as the child becomes aware of the limitations and imperfections of the primary caregivers. Due to the child's need to feel safe, protected and cared for, the strength of the attachment to primary caregivers or, and to God is constantly evaluated at a subconscious level (Granqvist 2002; Kirkpatrick & Shaver 1990; Rizzuto 2007).

These mental representations remain with the child and will evolve as the child matures (Berger & Luckman 1966; Dayringer 2012; Granqvist 2002; Hoffman 2005; Laurin et al. 2012; Louw 2015; Schaap-Jonker et al. 2016). It is believed that children who form secure attachment bonds with primary caregivers develops a more positive self-esteem, better emotional well-being, stronger resilience, an ability to concentrate and higher social competence than children who form insecure attachments bonds (Counted 2017; Weinfeld et al. 1999).

2.3 God-image Research Instruments

Noting that this interest in understanding the types of God-images and the influence these God-images might have on particular groupings of people is not new, the interest in God-images is new within the field of practical theology (Counted 2015; Hoffman 2005). God-image research instruments within the broader field of practical theology are non-existent, whereas there are more than 125 measures of religiosity and spirituality within the specific field of religious psychology (Edwards & Hall 2002:341).

Such research acknowledged the influence that dominant God-images and God-

concepts have on how religious communities' function and the role they play within broader society (Counted 2015; Hoffman 2005; Johnson et al. 2013; Van Der Merwe 2010). However, scholars have also noted that people think and feel about God in far more complex ways than is acknowledged by current measurement approaches (Gibson 2008; Hill & Pargament 2003; Magezi & Manda 2016). Van Niekerk (1997:24) argues that God-images are abstract and complex due to the way religious beliefs give meaning to the transcendent nature of God. As a result, it cannot be measured against any norms and standards since these God-images people hold are fluid and responsive to contextual factors (Deneulin & Rakodi 2010; Hoffman et al. 2008; Smith & Crosby 2016; Van Niekerk 2015; Van Niekerk 1997).

Recognising this need for more objective God-image research instruments, Richard Lawrence (1997) developed the God-image inventory and the God Image Scales that aim to measure different elements of a person's knowledge, experiences of God and a person's feelings and behaviour toward God.

2.3.1 Richard T. Lawrence's research instrument: The God Image Scales

Lawrence (1997) helps build the bridge between psychology, religion and practical theology with specific reference to pastoral counselling. Schaap-Jonker (2018:22) found that amongst the existing research instruments which aim to measure God-images and God-concepts, Lawrence's God-image inventory and the God Image Scales are amongst the few who fit within the object relations theoretical framework. Working within the object relations and attachment theoretical frameworks, Lawrence argues that the quality of a child's relationship with his/her primary caregiver, directly influences the development of the child's self-image (Lawrence 1997:214).

Building on Rizzuto's research findings, Lawrence noted that the relational bonds with some type of God-image is not tied to direct personal experiences with God and is therefore open to be adapted based on the needs of the child and his/her religious experiences as he/she matures (Lawrence 1997:214). Of equal importance to Lawrence, is the need to distinguish between the influence that different doctrinal teachings and religious practices have on the formation of God-images and God-concepts (Lawrence 1997:216). This approach allows one to focus on both the perceived attributes of God as well as on the lived religious experiences of individuals

(Lawrence 1997:221).

Therefore, the significance of Lawrence's God Image Scale as a research instrument is based on how well these complexities have been integrated to measure the quality of an individual's God-image across different denominations, religious beliefs, religious practices and religious educational frameworks. Lawrence uses three self-image themes, namely belonging, goodness and control as a framework to measure six dimensions of the God-image, namely influence, providence, presence, challenge, acceptance, and benevolence (Lawrence 1997; Gattis 2001). Each of the six God-image dimensions contain 12 items equally balanced between negatively worded and positively worded items. For research purposes, the God Image Scale, which is a subset of the God-image inventory, can either be used as a 3-scale, 36-item or the 6-scale, 72-item format.

Each item on the God Image Scale is a full sentence which reflects the potential state of the relationship between an individual's God-image and his/her self-image (Lawrence 1997:216). Each set of 12 items are further structured around key questions which relates to the three self-image areas. See the Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1 Measurement areas of the God Image Scale

The God Image Scales Measurement Areas			
Self-Image Area	**Dimensions of the God-image scale**	**Focus of the scale**	**Content Questions**
Belonging	Presence	Focus is on the self	Is God there for me?
	Challenge	Focus is on the object of the relationship	Does God want me to grow?
Goodness	Acceptance	Focus is on the self	Am I good enough for God to love?
	Benevolence	Focus is on the object of the relationship	Is God the sort of person who would want to love me?
Control	Influence	Focus is on the self	How much can I control God?
	Providence	Focus is on the object of the relationship	How much can God control me?

Ludāne and Mārtinsone (2007:59) also noted that:

> "the presence scale assesses belonging issues; the challenge scale inquiries into the person's interaction with the world; the acceptance scale assesses self-acceptance; the benevolence scale assesses the views on the nature of God; the influence scale describes an individual's ability to influence God; and the providence scale pertains to views on God's control over the individual".

Participant responses are scored using a 4-point Likert scale ranging between 4 (strongly agree) and 1 (strongly disagree). The positively worded items are scored 4 points if answered, 'strongly agree', and 1 point each of the items answered, 'strongly disagree'. The negatively worded items are scored 4 points if answered, 'strongly disagree' and 1 point each of the items answered, 'strongly agree'. Items answered with 'agree' or 'disagree' are scored either 3 or 2 points depending on the positively worded items or negatively worded items.

The lowest possible score on the God Image Scale is 12 points and the highest possible score is 48 points for each of the 6 God-image dimensions (Lawrence 1997; Gattis 2001; Ludāne and Mārtinsone 2007). The total scores for each of the God-image dimensions is further calculated to measure the dominant traits of the participant's religious experiences.

2.4 Strengths and limitations of the God Image Scales

Whilst the emphasis for the use of Lawrence's research instruments remain on counselling or the more clinical aspects of practical ministry, it has to a large extent closed some of the gaps between religion and psychology. Lawrence's research instruments have gained credibility amongst God-image researchers and as a result been accepted by psychoanalysts like Rizzuto and researchers who work within the religion and psychology disciplines. There has also been an in increase in the use of the God-image Inventory and the God Image Scales over the last five years despite its psychometric problems.

Gibson (2008:229) found that one of the limitations of the God-image research instruments is the inconsistency in its use of God-image terminology to the extent that

a limited range of predefined markers exist which excludes contextual and experiential factors. With specific reference to Lawrence's God-Image Inventory (GII), Gibson notes that the 156-item inventory with eight subscales are likely to ignore important elements of the God-image any person can hold of God. A factor analysis on the GII which was conducted by Gibson revealed that apart from the difficulty to interpret the scores of the scales, the meaning of specific items can also change from one person to the next person (Gibson 2008:235).

Another limitation has been observed by Gattis (2001:1), who found that the manual GII scoring process tedious and difficult (Schaap-Jonker 2018:22). He listed this as the primary reason why researchers might avoid using Lawrence's GII and GIS. Schaap-Jonker (2018:70) on the other hand, found that the positive formulation of questions and statements used to measure the different dimensions a person's God-image complicates the expression of any negative feelings such a person may have.

These limitations have been taken into account in this study.

2.5 Conclusion

Although people, who are social beings that learn from their contexts, are influenced by their experiences and make choices based on intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors, the corpus of God-image literature recognises the pivotal role and influence that one's God-image has on religious knowledge, attitudes and behaviours within any given context. Empirical research on God-images revealed that a person's God-image is formed and shaped by a particular religious and social context in their childhood years. Initial God-images may evolve and change as the individual matures. Such God-images are also fluid and responsive to these contextual factors. Due to this level of complexity, God-images cannot be measured against any norms and standards. Therefore, God-image research instruments should take religious and social contexts into consideration.

Lawrence's God Image Scales have been regarded by God-image researchers as one of the few research instruments which is based on the Object Relations Theory and serves as the theoretical framework for understanding the God-image. Tied to the Object Relations Theory is the Attachment Theory which seeks to explain the religious

dynamics of those who believe in a personal God. These theoretical frameworks describe the psychological processes involved in developing the markers for religious development. Within these theoretical frameworks, the relationship and interaction between a child and his/her primary caregivers is seen as central to the child's development of self in relation to his/her world.

The significance of Lawrence's God Image Scale as a research instrument is based on how well these complexities have been integrated to measure the quality of an individual's God-image across different denominations, religious beliefs, religious practices and religious educational frameworks.

Chapter 3: Research findings – St Dominic's Anglican Church

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will provide the research analysis and findings of the data collected from the participants of the St Dominic's Anglican Church in Hanover Park. Central to this chapter is an overview of the St Dominic's Anglican Church with specific reference to the history of the church in Hanover Park, its traditions and practices as the context within which the study takes place. The approach to this study as well as the analysis and findings of the data are discussed against the thematic framework as has been developed by Lawrence and the faith formation processes within an Anglican Church.

3.2 Brief description of the St Dominic's Anglican Church

The St Dominic's Anglican Church is one of six mainline traditional churches in Hanover Park. It is home to more than 500 members of which 400 members regularly attend the weekly services and participate in the different ministries offered by the church. Members of this church come from a long line of Anglican families. The church therefore has been a part of the significant moments in the lives of its members over multiple generations, with the fourth generation of its members now entering parenthood.

Most of these members are from English-speaking families. English-speaking families in Hanover Park, have also been known to mostly fall within the average to middle income brackets. St Dominic's members appear to have a more stable family life with an average of 3 children per household. Most of the children of these families, tend to enter the job market with a university degree or technical vocational qualification.

3.3 History of the St Dominic's Anglican Church

St Dominic's Anglican Church services started in 1971 at the Blomvlei Community Centre in Hanover Park. Two years later, the church moved into their newly built church hall in Lonedown Road in December 1972. Apart from helping community members deal with the trauma and socio-economic impact of forced removals from District Six to communities like Hanover Park on the Cape Flats, St Dominic's became known as

a safe space during the riots and community unrests which followed in 1976.

3.4 Church traditions and practices

Church life at St Dominic's Anglican Church is informed by the sacred symbols, traditions and practices which connect its members to the Anglican Diocese of Cape Town and to the Anglican Church of Southern Africa. These sacred symbols, traditions and practices find expression through seven sacramental acts which include baptism, communion, confirmation, marriage, ordination, reconciliation and unction (McKenzie 2014:181). Held together by the traditional liturgical order of Anglican worship, these sacramental acts span the life of church members, from birth to death.

The Anglican liturgy celebrates God as the centre of all of life. It encourages the believer to respond to God as the creator of all that is known and to exercise their free will to worship Him with every part of their body, whether seated, kneeling or standing. Church service therefore becomes a place of celebration and worship. Even though this religious experience can mean different things to different people, the use of sacred symbols, reading scriptures, singing hymns and Holy Communion establishes a common place which seeks to guide these religious experiences.

3.5 Forms of ministry

Members of St Dominic's are taught the basic principles of the faith through their participation and involvement in the weekly bible studies, mid-week services and the various fellowship and support groups. These different forms of ministries not only provide members with the opportunity to share their religious experiences in practical ways, but also provide an opportunity for learning more about the Anglican traditions and religious practices. Weekly bible studies for example, would explore the detail of the principles and application of biblical scriptures for use in everyday life, within the context of Anglican doctrine.

Fundamental to Anglican doctrine is that members are Christian by manner of birth. The journey as a member of the Anglican church begins with baptism as an infant. As much as what the responsibility of faith development remains with the primary caregivers, the church provides training and religious instruction throughout a child's

life until the child reaches an age where they are able to accept responsibility for their spiritual well-being. As children reach puberty, they begin to accept more responsibility for their thinking, attitude and behaviour as a Christian within the Anglican tradition. This confirmation ceremony is celebrated publicly amongst family and friends.

These various forms of ministries celebrate the understanding of what it means to be an Anglican whilst simultaneously supporting the social and religious cultures within the church.

3.6 Current leadership

The church is governed by a parish council that is made up of lay ministers and church wardens, who work in support of a parish priest who are placed at the church by the Anglican Diocese for a period of two to five years. In addition to supporting the ministry, the parish council is also responsible for the property, administrative and financial affairs. Lay ministers provide ongoing support to the members of the church through house visitation, bible study home groups and prayer meetings. The lay ministers together with the parish council meet with the parish priest on a regular basis to discuss issues relating to the spiritual wellbeing of the members.

Leadership within the Anglican Church has a wider value to the context of this study. Members who show an interest in church leadership must demonstrate proficiency in both the articulation as well as the application of the Anglican values and religious principles. Lay leaders within the Anglican Church therefore play a strong role in ensuring the church's presence is felt and experienced in the life of its members from birth to the grave. Leaders within the Anglican Church are looked upon to provide the spiritual answers to the more difficult issues members face in their life, as they journey through life.

Therefore, within the context of this study, lay leadership reinforces the church culture, church traditions and a particular religious language which directly influence the formation and validation of God-images amongst members of the St Dominic's Anglican Church.

3.7 Research approach

St Dominic's Anglican Church was selected to participate in this case study because of its distinct liturgical order, traditions and practices. A meeting with the local minister was held to discuss this study in detail and to request the church to be involved in the research. I presented the research proposal as well as the reasons why St Dominic's is most suited for this case study. This meeting was followed up with a written request for members of St Dominic's to participate in this study.

In response to the written request, ten members of the St Dominic's Anglican Church in Hanover Park were identified by the local minister to complete self-administered questionnaires on their God-images. These members were selected on the basis that they meet the following criteria:

a) Participants should be of good standing in the congregation;
b) Participants are active in congregational ministries;
c) Participants are a parent of a teenaged child; and
d) Participants reside in Hanover Park.

Information sheets were handed out to the selected members in preparation of their participation of this study. The initial design for data collection involved a briefing session at the local church which was to be followed by identified members completing the self-administered God-image questionnaires in my presence in the the privacy of their homes. This was changed due to time constraints. The church offered a neutral venue with the space to complete the questionnaires uninterrupted from the demands of family members in the local homes. It was then decided to allow the selected members of the church to complete the questionnaires after the briefing meeting.

The objectives and the voluntary nature of participation in the study were explained before the purpose, process and benefits of the envisaged thesis was discussed. Members were also invited to pose questions and raise any issues relating to their involvement in this study. Emphasis was placed on the ethical considerations and the measures used to ensure that the rights and interests of St Dominic's Anglican Church and those of the participants are protected. Participants were issued with the consent form and requested to sign before completing the questionnaire. The identity of each participant was protected by assigning a number to each participant in the order of

completing the God-image questionnaire.

Great care was taken to ensure that participants were at ease, comfortable and free from any attitude that could have been interpreted as manipulative or coercive. Unforeseen factors which could have caused discomfort (feasible time to complete questionnaires, venue, interpreted expectations) were also taken into consideration.

3.8 Analysis of the collected data

Participant responses for the 72 God-image scale questions were captured on a Google document template and further analysed with the use of Excel spreadsheets and the associated formulas used for statistical reports. There were 36 of the 72 questions of the God Image Scales which contained positively worded items. These were scored 4 points if answered, 'strongly agree', and 1 point was awarded for each of the items answered, 'strongly disagree'. The other 36 questions of the God Image Scales contained negatively worded items. These questions were scored 4 points if answered, 'strongly disagree' and 1 point was awarded for each of the items answered, 'strongly agree'. Questions answered with 'agree' or 'disagree' were scored either 3 or 2 points depending on the positively worded items or negatively worded items.

The focal point of this study was to identify the dominant God-images members of the St Dominic's Church operate with in their daily lives using Lawrence's God Image Scales as the research instrument. Ten members (four male and six female) of the St Dominic's Anglican Church completed the self-administered questionnaire. The participants' age ranged from 31 to 55, with nine of them married and one participant divorced. Six participants were employed with four participants unemployed.

The average score of the completed God Image Scales for the male participants totalled 40.38 with the female participants scoring an average of 39.81. Employed participants scored an average of 39.94 whilst the unemployed participants scored and average of 40.17. Married participants scored an average of 40.02 and the single participants scored an average of 40.17. See Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 Participant scores specific to gender, age, employment status and marital status – St Dominic's Anglican Church

SDC Average Scores Across Average Age					
Male (4) Average Age (44)	Female (6) Average Age (43)	Employed (6) Average Age (44,50)	Unemployed (4) Average Age (41,75)	Single/Divorced/Widowed (1) Average Age (36)	Married (9) Average Age (44,22)
40,38	39,81	39,94	40,17	40,17	40,02

The average scores of the Acceptance and Benevolence Scales which measures the 'goodness' area of self-image totalled 41.75. This was followed by the Presence and Challenge Scales which measures the 'belonging' area of self-image with an average total of 39.45. The lowest of the average scores which totalled 38.90 measured the third area of self-image namely 'control', with the use of the Influence and Providence Scales. These are shown in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2 Details of participant scores – St Dominic's Anglican Church

Scales	SDC 1 (39,F,M,U)	SDC 2 (38,F,M,U)	SDC 3 (36,F,D,E)	SDC 4 (42,M,M,E)	SDC 5 (55,F,M,E)	SDC 6 (43,M,M,E)	SDC 7 (51,M,M,E)	SDC 8 (40,M,M,E)	SDC 9 (43,F,M,U)	SDC 10 (47,F,M,U)	Mean	Std Dev
Presence	46,00	43,00	44,00	40,00	40,00	48,00	39,00	42,00	45,00	36,00	42,30	3,62
Challenge	36,00	37,00	37,00	38,00	33,00	36,00	39,00	35,00	43,00	32,00	36,60	3,10
Acceptance	40,00	45,00	42,00	43,00	38,00	39,00	44,00	39,00	48,00	32,00	41,00	4,45
Benevolence	42,00	46,00	44,00	42,00	41,00	43,00	44,00	42,00	46,00	35,00	42,50	3,14
Influence	37,00	47,00	36,00	42,00	36,00	42,00	39,00	35,00	41,00	36,00	39,10	3,84
Providence	40,00	34,00	38,00	37,00	40,00	47,00	35,00	39,00	43,00	34,00	38,70	4,11
Mean of Raw Scores	40,17	42,00	40,17	40,33	38,00	42,50	40,00	38,67	44,33	34,17		
Mean of Standard Scores	40,03	40,03	40,03	40,03	40,03	40,03	40,03	40,03	40,03	40,03		
Deviation	0,13	1,97	0,13	0,30	-2,03	2,47	-0,03	-1,37	4,30	-5,87		

Code Key below participant number: (Age, Gender (M/F), Marital Status (M/S) & Employment Status (E/U))

Whilst there was little difference between the average scores of the three primary areas of self-image, namely belonging, goodness and control as measured by the God Image Scales, there were in fact some differences in the average scores for each of the six God-image dimensions. These differences are shown for each of the God-image dimensions below.

The Benevolence Scale recorded the highest average score of 42.50 with a standard deviation of 3.14. The chart below measures the consistency in the range of the recorded scores of the St Dominic's Anglican Church participants, on the Benevolance scale. Three participants scored 42; two participants scored 46; two participants scored 44; one participant scored 43; one participant scored 41 and one participant scored 35.

Chart 3.1 Benevolence Scale - St Dominic's Anglican Church

The Presence Scale recorded the second highest average score of 42.30 with a standard deviation of 3.62. The chart below measures the consistency in the range of the recorded scores of the St Dominic's Anglican Church participants, on the Presence scale. Two participants scored 40; one participant scored 48; one participant scored 46; one participant scored 45; one participant scored 44; one participant scored 43; one participant scored 42; one participant scored 39 and one participant scored 36.

Chart 3.2 Presence Scale - St Dominic's Anglican Church

The Acceptance Scale recorded an average score of 41.00 with a standard deviation of 4.45. The chart below measures the consistency in the range of the recorded scores of the St Dominic's Anglican Church participants, on the

Acceptance Scale. Two participants scored 39; one participant scored 48; one participant scored 45; one participant scored 44; one participant scored 43; one participant scored 42; one participant scored 40; one participant scored 38 and one participant scored 32.
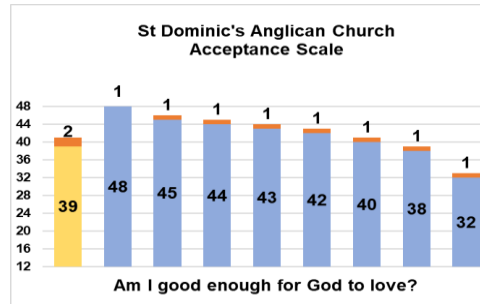
Chart 3.3 Acceptance Scale - St Dominic's Anglican Church

The Influence Scale recorded an average score of 39.10 with a standard deviation of 3.84. The chart below measures the consistency in the range of the recorded scores of the St Dominic's Anglican Church participants, on the Influence scale. Three participants scored 36; two participants scored 42; one participant scored 47; one participant scored 41; one participant scored 39; one participant scored 37 and one participant scored 35.
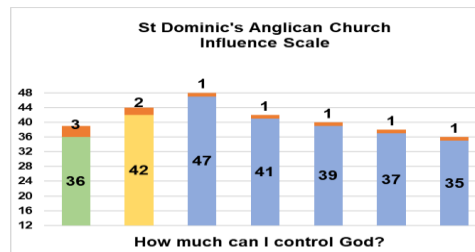
Chart 3.4 Influence Scale - St Dominic's Anglican Church

The Providence Scale recorded an average score of 38.70 with a standard deviation of 4.11. The chart below measures the consistency in the range of the recorded scores of the St Dominic's Anglican Church participants, on the Providence scale. Two participants scored 40; two participants scored 34; one participant scored 47; one participant scored 43; one participant scored 39; one participant scored 38; one participant scored 37 and one participant scored 35.
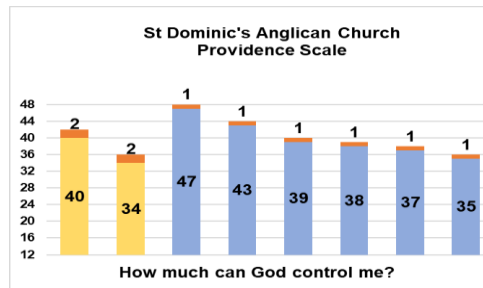
Chart 3.5 Providence Scale - St Dominic's Anglican Church

The Challenge Scale recorded an average score of 36.60 with a standard deviation of 3.10. The chart below measures the consistency in the range of the recorded scores of the St Dominic's Anglican Church participants, on the Challenge scale. Two participants scored 37; two participants scored 36; one participant scored 43; one participant scored 39; one participant scored 38; one participant scored 35; one participant scored 33 and one participant scored 32.
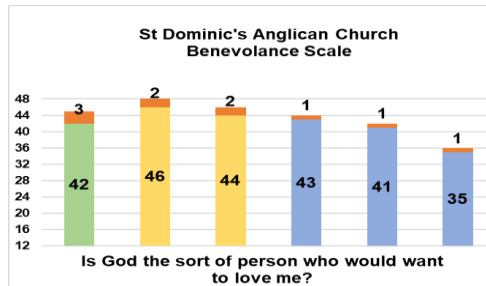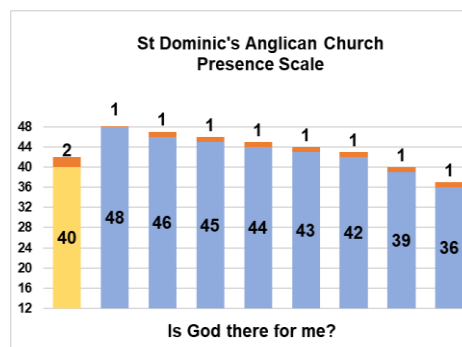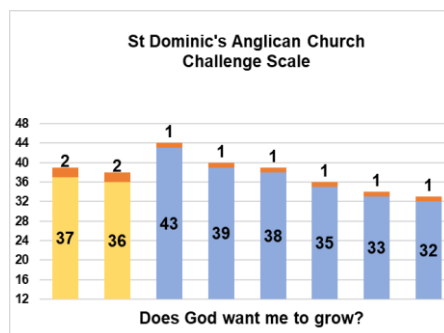

Chart 3.6 Challenge Scale - St Dominic's Anglican Church

3.9 Findings of the study

Great care was taken to remain objective in how the data was captured, organised and interpreted. Consideration was given to the impact the researcher's own experiences may have on interpreting the data.

The findings of this study show that members of the St Dominic's Anglican Church view God's nature as one of unconditional love. God is also experienced as being in close proximity to the daily life of believers. Members of the St Dominic's Anglican Church are confident in their belief systems and displays a positive self-image. God is

therefore viewed as an enabler and not as a controlling force or strict judge. On this basis, members of this church are more likely drive the belief systems, religious traditions and practices of the church.

The average of the standard scores totals 40.03, which also indicates that most of the members have a strong sense of self and of God. This is consistent with the benevolence and presence dimension of the God-image where these individual scores are the highest. The benevolence scale which measures the participant's experience of God's unconditional love combined with Presence scale, which measures the participant's experience of God as a safe haven, shows that the dominant God-image members of the St Dominic's Church operate with, view God as available and trustworthy (Lawrence 1997; Ludāne and Mārtinsone 2007).

The extent to which the participants childhood experiences with their primary caregivers, and the role their religious and social contexts play in influencing their God-images, has not been measured by this study. However, empirical research has shown a strong connection between childhood experiences with primary caregivers and their religious experiences with God.

3.10 Conclusion

Faith development within the St Dominic's Anglican Church is informed and supported by its traditional liturgical church order, rich symbols and the different forms of ministries. With a more than 40-year-old history in Hanover Park, the church is a well-known religious institution in the community. The church's connection and affiliation to the national and inter-national Anglican community has given it a unique voice of hope and support as the community dealt with the trauma of forced removals and the continuous struggle with poverty and violence issues.

Chapter 4: Research findings – Pentecostal Protestant Church

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will provide an overview of the Pentecostal Protestant Church with specific reference to the history of the church in Hanover Park, its traditions and practices. This chapter will also discuss the various ministries within the church and the role church leaders play in the everyday life of this church. The approach to this study as well as the analysis and findings of the data will be discussed against the thematic framework as has been developed by Lawrence.

4.2 Brief description of the Hanover Park Pentecostal Protestant Church

The Pentecostal Protestant Church in Hanover Park is home to 320 members of which 70% are female and 40% are young people. There are more than 20 different Pentecostal churches in Hanover Park. However, only nine of these Pentecostal churches, including the Pentecostal Protestant Church, operate from owned facilities. The Pentecostal Protestant Church forms part of the regional, national and international Pentecostal Protestant network and management infrastructure.

Following the practices and principles of traditional Pentecostalism, the Hanover Park branch operates within the boundaries of doctrinal uniformity, a centralised church government system and co-operative decision-making processes as set forth by the National Pentecostal Protestant Church.

4.3 History of the Hanover Park Pentecostal Protestant Church

It was first started in Crawford in 1973 before opening its doors in Hanover Park as part of its outreach programme towards the late 1970's. As one of the first established churches in Hanover Park, the Pentecostal Protestant Church very quickly got involved in various forms of outreach and welfare ministries. It maintained a presence of religious discipline with strong family values in response to the difficult political and socio-economic issues faced in those early years.

4.4 Church traditions and practices

Church traditions and religious practices are structured around the doctrine of salvation which is anchored in the repentance of sin, the acceptance of God's forgiveness and a commitment to live life in obedience to God. Within the Pentecostal Protestant Church tradition, the journey as a believer and follower of Jesus Christ begins with the decision to be born again. Water baptism as well as the Baptism of the Holy Spirit marks the confirmation of a renewed sanctified life. Reihling (2015) explained it as follows: "I found that to be 'born again,' first of all, meant to give up control within a ritually demarcated frame of reference that was an entry point into ongoing work on the self and the restructuring of dominant emotional dispositions through religious engagement".

Members of the Pentecostal Protestant Church are drawn mostly from the more traditional protestant churches. Membership by conversion also marks the beginning of the formation of faith process. Whilst the experiences of previously attended churches are taken into consideration, new members are taught and supported to live lives of increased levels of holiness. Discipleship classes and bible studies are instructional in nature as these are designed to equip members with the knowledge and skills to live according to a higher moral, ethical and spiritual standard. Members are also encouraged to make fasting, prayer and personal devotions a central part of their spiritual journeys.

4.5 Forms of ministry

Apart from its ministry focus, the Pentecostal Protestant Church is also involved in different community development projects and programmes. It is one of the first churches to have a registered NGO, the First Community Resources Centre since 2002, as part of its church structure. Whilst the NGO is governed separately, it does provide the opportunity for the church to engage the community on spiritual as well as community development matters.

4.6 Current leadership

The church is governed by a senior pastor, an assistant pastor and a youth pastor with

the support of church elders and deacons. As a leadership team, matters relating to the well-being of the members are discussed and solutions are proposed. Although the leadership team can influence decisions, the pastoral team carry the authority to make the final decision which relates to operational matters. Any discussions and decisions which deals with church doctrine and practices are discussed at regional and national levels. These matters can also be placed on the agenda of regional leadership meetings and the annual national church conference.

4.7 Research approach

The Pentecostal Protestant Church was selected to participate in this case study because of its Pentecostal traditions and practices. The same research approach and procedures applied with the St Dominic's Anglican Church have been applied to the Pentecostal Protestant Church. The process followed is described below.

A meeting with the local minister was held to discuss this study in detail and to request the church to be involved in the research. I presented the research proposal as well as the reasons why the Pentecostal Protestant Church is most suited for this case study. This meeting was followed up with a written request for members of the Pentecostal Protestant Church to participate in this study.

In response to the written request, ten members of the Pentecostal Protestant Church in Hanover Park were identified by the local minister to complete self-administered questionnaires on their God-images. These members were selected using the following criteria:

a) Participants should be of good standing in the congregation;

b) Participants are active in congregational ministries;

c) Participants are a parent of a teenaged child; and

d) Participants reside in Hanover Park.

Information sheets were given to the selected members in preparation of their participation of this study. The initial design for data collection involved a briefing

session at the local church which was to be followed by the identified church members completing the self-administered God-image questionnaires in the privacy of their homes in my presence.

Similar to the research approach of the St Dominic's Anglican Church, the venue was changed to the church due to expressions of discomfort made by participants about their homes being used for the completion of the questionnaires. Participants welcomed the opportunity to meet in smaller groups at one of the offices at the church during the day. Also, the church offered a more controlled space for the completion of the God Image Scales. Sessions were therefore arranged according to participants availability.

The objectives and the voluntary nature of participation in the study were explained and discussed at each of the sessions. Members were also invited to pose questions and raise any issues relating to their involvement in this study. Emphasis was placed on the ethical considerations and the measures used to ensure that the rights and interests of the Pentecostal Protestant Church and those of the participants were protected. Participants were handed the consent form to complete and sign before commencing with the questionnaire. The identity of each participant was protected by assigning a number to each participant in the order of completing the God-image questionnaire.

Great care was taken to ensure that participants were at ease, comfortable and free from any attitude that could have been interpreted as manipulative or coercive. Unforeseen factors which could have caused discomfort (feasible time to complete questionnaires, venue, interpreted expectations) were also taken into consideration.

4.8 Analysis of the collected data

Participant responses for the 72 God-image scale questions were captured on a Google doc's template and further analysed with the use of Excel spreadsheets and the associated formulas used for statistical reports. Participant responses were scored as per the 4-point Likert scale ranging between 4 (strongly agree) and 1 (strongly disagree). The lowest possible score was 12 points and the highest possible score was 48 points for each of the 6 God-image dimensions (Lawrence 1997; Ludāne and

Mārtinsone 2007). The total scores for each of the God-image dimensions is further calculated to measure the dominant traits of the participant's religious experiences.

There were 36 of the 72 questions of the God Image Scales which contained positively worded items. These were scored 4 points if answered, 'strongly agree', and 1 point was awarded for each of the items answered, 'strongly disagree'. The other 36 questions of the God Image Scales contained negatively worded items. These questions were scored 4 points if answered, 'strongly disagree' and 1 point was awarded for each of the items answered, 'strongly agree'. Questions answered with 'agree' or 'disagree' were scored either 3 or 2 points depending on the positively worded items or negatively worded items.

Ten members (five males and five females) of the Pentecostal Protestant Church in Hanover Park completed the God Image Scales. Seven participants (three males and four females), are married and three participants (one male and two females) are single. Six participants, (three males and three females), are employed with four participants, (two males and two females), being unemployed. The participant's age ranged from 31 to 58 with an average age of 40.2 for the group.

The average score of the completed God Image Scales for the male participants totalled 41.03 with the female participants scoring an average of 39.03. Employed participants scored an average of 40.03 whilst the unemployed participants scored and average of 40.04. Married participants scored an average of 39.33 and the single participants scored an average of 41.67. See Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Participant scores specific to gender, age, employment status and marital status – Pentecostal Protestant Church

PPK Average Scores Across Average Age					
Male (5) Average Age (43)	Female (5) Average Age (37,4)	Employed (6) Average Age (40,33)	Unemployed (4) Average Age (40)	Single/Divorced/Widowed (3) Average Age (36,67)	Married (7) Average Age (41,71)
41,03	39,03	40,03	40,04	41,67	39,33

The average scores of the Acceptance and Benevolence Scales which measures the 'goodness' area of self-image totals 41.05. This is followed by the Presence and Challenge Scales which measures the 'belonging' area of self-image with an average

total of 40.55. The lowest of the average scores which totals 38.50 measured the third area of self-image namely 'control', with the use of the Influence and Providence scales. Though there is little difference between the average scores of these three primary areas of self-image, namely belonging, goodness and control, there were in fact some difference in the average scores for each of the six, God-image dimensions. These are shown in the table below.

Table 4.2 Participant scores specific to gender, age, employment status and marital status – Pentecostal Protestant Church

Scales	PPK 1 (58,M,M,U)	PPK 2 (49,F,M,E)	PPK 3 (35,M,S,E)	PPK 4 (48,M,M,E)	PPK 5 (38,F,W,E)	PPK 6 (37,F,D,E)	PPK 7 (39,M,M,U)	PPK 8 (31,F,M,U)	PPK 9 (35,M,M,E)	PPK 10 (32,F,M,U)	Mean	Std Dev
Presence	44,00	42,00	48,00	39,00	34,00	46,00	43,00	42,00	44,00	42,00	42,40	3,84
Challenge	42,00	34,00	44,00	37,00	37,00	45,00	37,00	32,00	42,00	37,00	38,70	4,32
Acceptance	40,00	32,00	46,00	38,00	41,00	45,00	42,00	40,00	43,00	42,00	40,90	3,93
Benevolence	46,00	37,00	37,00	37,00	39,00	48,00	45,00	37,00	44,00	42,00	41,20	4,32
Influence	48,00	34,00	43,00	34,00	37,00	41,00	34,00	40,00	43,00	38,00	39,20	4,69
Providence	36,00	39,00	41,00	34,00	34,00	44,00	42,00	34,00	38,00	36,00	37,80	3,61
Mean of Raw Scores	42,67	36,33	43,17	36,50	37,00	44,83	40,50	37,50	42,33	39,50		
Mean of Standard Scores	40,03	40,03	40,03	40,03	40,03	40,03	40,03	40,03	40,03	40,03		
Deviation	2,63	-3,70	3,13	-3,53	-3,03	4,80	0,47	-2,53	2,30	-0,53		

Code Key below participant number: (Age, Gender (M/F), Marital Status (M/S) & Employment Status (E/U))

Whilst there was also little difference between the average scores of the three primary areas of self-image, namely belonging, goodness and control as measured by the God Image Scales, there were differences noted in the average scores for each of the six God-image dimensions. These differences are shown for each of the God-image dimensions below.

The Presence scale recorded the highest average score of 42.40 with a standard deviation of 3.84. The chart below measures the consistency in the range of the recorded scores of the Pentecostal Protestant Church participants, on the Presence scale. Three participants scored 42; two participants scored 44; one participant scored 48; one participant scored 46; one participant scored 43; one participant scored 39 and one participant scored 34.

Chart 4.1 Presence Scale - Pentecostal Protestant Church

The Benevolence Scale recorded the second highest average score of 41.20 with a standard deviation of 4.32. The chart below measures the consistency in the range of the recorded scores of the Pentecostal Protestant Church participants, on the Benevolence Scale. Four participants scored 37; one participant scored 48; one participant scored 46; one participant scored 45; one participant scored 44; 1 participant scored 42 and one participant scored 39.

Chart 4.2 Benevolence Scale - Pentecostal Protestant Church

The Acceptance Scale recorded an average score of 40.90 with a standard deviation of 3.93. The chart below measures the consistency in the range of the recorded scores of the Pentecostal Protestant Church participants, on the Acceptance Scale. Two participants scored 42; two participants scored 40; one participant scored 46; one participant scored 45; one participant scored 43; one participant scored 41; one participant scored 38 and one participant scored 32.
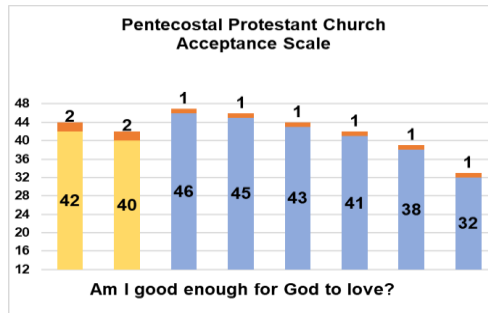
Chart 4.3 Acceptance Scale - Pentecostal Protestant Church

The Influence Scale recorded an average score of 39.20 with a standard deviation of 4.69. The chart below measures the consistency in the range of the recorded scores of the Pentecostal Protestant Church participants, on the Influence Scale. Three participants scored 34; two participants scored 43; one participant scored 48; one participant scored 41; one participant scored 40; one participant scored 38 and one participant scored 37.
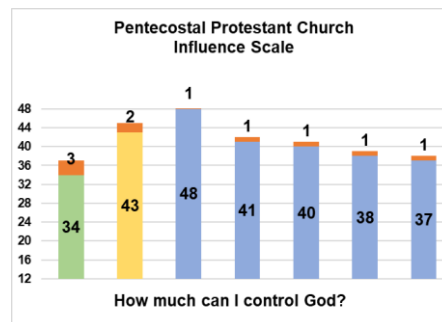
Chart 4.4 Influence Scale - Pentecostal Protestant Church

The Challenge Scale recorded an average score of 38.70 with a standard deviation of 4.32. The chart below measures the consistency in the range of the recorded scores of the Pentecostal Protestant Church participants, on the Challenge Scale. Four participants scored 37; two participants scored 42; one participant scored 45; one participant scored 44; one participant scored 34 and one participant scored 32.
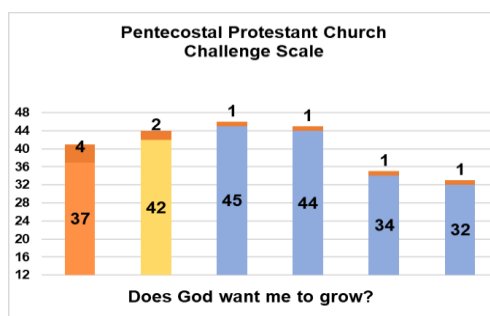
Chart 4.5 Challenge Scale - Pentecostal Protestant Church

The Providence Scale recorded an average score of 37.80 with a standard deviation of 3.61. The chart below measures the consistency in the range of the recorded scores of the Pentecostal Protestant Church participants, on the Providence Scale. Three participants scored 34; two participants scored 36; one participant scored 44; one participant scored 42; one participant scored 41; one participant scored 39 and one participant scored 38.
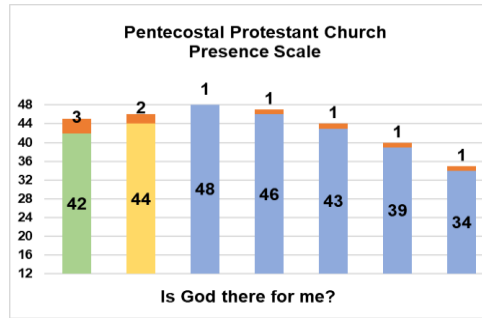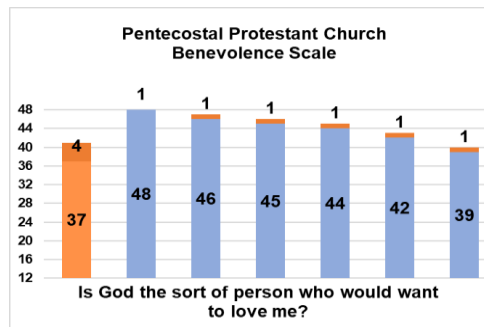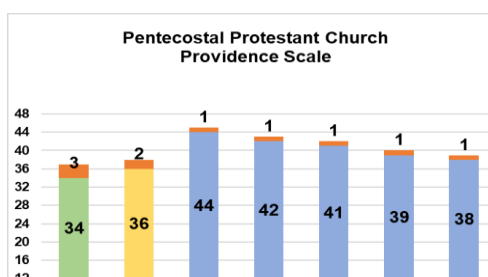

Chart 4.6 Providence Scale - Pentecostal Protestant Church

4.9 Findings of the study

Great care was taken to remain objective in how the data was captured, organised and interpreted. Consideration was given to the impact the researcher's own experiences may have on interpreting the data.

According the average scores of the self-administered questionnaires, members of the Pentecostal Protestant Church, have a positive religious experience. God is viewed as having a strong presence in the lives of believers. The scores of the self-image control area, which is measured by the Influence and Providence Scales, indicate that members do not experience God as a controlling force, nor do they see themselves as having the ability to control the action of God. The different variables of age, gender, marital status and employment status appears to have no influence on the God-images

members of the Pentecostal Protestant Church operate with on a daily basis.

4.10 Conclusion

Within the Pentecostal Protestant Church's traditions and practices, members experience God as strongly present and loving. The church's emphasis on personal salvation, God's grace and the Holy Spirit's continued work of sanctification contributes positively towards the formation of faith of new converts. The intensity of the discipleship classes and bible studies have been designed to equip members with the knowledge and skills to live according to a higher moral, ethical and spiritual standard. Since church members also enter the church space from all walks of life, water baptism signals the start of the new spiritual journey. The baptism of the Holy Spirit follows afterwards as a sign of God's acceptance of the member's conversion experience. The manner in which the church supports its members could play a significant role of how God is experienced and ultimately viewed. This makes for an interesting qualitative study, especially within the context of Hanover Park.

Chapter 5: Comparison of the research findings

5.1 Introduction

The faith formation processes within the St Dominic's Anglican Church and that of the Pentecostal Protestant Church provide the framework for the expression of the religious beliefs of its members in Hanover Park. Religious symbols, church doctrine, ceremonial practices and practical ministry opportunities of churches across these different church traditions, not only reinforce such religious beliefs, but also give meaning to the religious experience of its church members. The individuals' exposure to the religious language, traditions and church practices throughout his/her life, form and shape mental pictures of God.

Noting that church membership in itself is also a powerful driver of particular religious views, attitudes and behaviours, the question this study seek to answer is as follows:

> What similarities and differences may be identified when Richard Lawrence's God Image Scale is completed by selected members of the St Dominic's Anglican Church in Hanover Park who are parents of teenage children in comparison with selected members of the Pentecostal Protestant Church in Hanover Park who are also parents of teenage children?

Various studies also indicate that the formation of an individual's God-image is largely influenced by, the attachment bonds with primary caregivers, the childhood experiences with primary caregivers as it develops into a separate self, as well as the individual's experiences within specific religious and social contexts. Against this background, I will compare the results of the God Image Scales completed by participants of the identified congregations, namely St Dominic's Anglican Church and the Pentecostal Protestant Church in order to show similarities, differences and any patterns that might emerge. I will situate the findings of this study with reference to the reviewed literature.

5.2 Comparison of the results

The overall score average for all six subscales shows no difference at all. Despite the difference in church traditions, religious practices and doctrinal beliefs, the recorded

overall average scores are the same, 40,03 for the 10 participants from the St Dominic's Anglican Church and 40,03 for the 10 participants from the Pentecostal Protestant Church. See Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1 Comparison of participant responses

Self-Image Area	Scales	Focus of the scale	Key Content Questions	St Dominic's Anglican Church Average	St Dominic's Anglican Church Std Deviation	Pentecostal Protestant Church Average	Pentecostal Protestant Church Std Deviation
Belonging	Presence	Focus is on the self	Is God there for me?	42,30	3,62	42,40	3,84
	Challenge	Focus is on the object of the relationship	Does God want me to grow?	36,60	3,10	38,70	4,32
Goodness	Acceptance	Focus is on the self	Am I good enough for God to love?	41,00	4,45	40,90	3,93
	Benevolence	Focus is on the object of the relationship	Is God the sort of person who would want to love me?	42,50	3,14	41,20	4,32
Control	Influence	Focus is on the self	How much can I control God?	39,10	3,84	39,20	4,69
	Providence	Focus is on the object of the relationship	How much can God control me?	38,70	4,11	37,80	3,61
Std Score Average				40,03	3,71	40,03	4,12

Participant responses shows that they have positive God-images across the three self-image domains, namely, belonging, goodness and control. These recorded responses also indicate that the community context of violence, widespread dysfunction and harsh socio-economic realities have had little influence on their self-image. Whilst the scales which measured control and goodness had the biggest range of mixed responses, the overall results indicated that that these participants operate with positive God-images.

The St Dominic's Anglican Church also provide its members with a strong sense of identity. This may or may not contribute towards the formation of positive self-images amongst its members. The confines of this study did not allow for an in-depth exploration of the influence church membership has on God-image formation. However, various studies (Mitchell 2005; Moulin 2013; Ysseldyk et al. 2010; Yust 2017) have indicated that church membership contribute towards feelings of belonging which is one of the self-image domains of the God Image Scale. Van der Merwe (2010:6) also found that church members are more likely to demonstrate positive levels of self-confidence due to their involvement church ministry activities.

What was interesting is that these responses show that church membership despite the doctrinal differences and different church traditions, contribute to development of

positive levels of self-confidence.

There are however some marginal similarities and differences when the scores for each of the six subscales are compared between the two churches. These are discussed below.

5.2.1 Presence Scale

Participants of the Pentecostal Protestant Church scored slightly higher on the Presence Scale than the participants of the St Dominic's Anglican Church. Participants of the Pentecostal Protestant Church also appear to be more confident in the view that God is there for them. Eight of the St Dominic's Anglican Church participants had different scores giving the scores an appearance of being closely scattered as opposed to the members of the Pentecostal Protestant Church where only five of the participants had individual scores.

The comparitive chart, Chart 5.1 below, indicates the consistency of the participant responses on the Presence Scale.
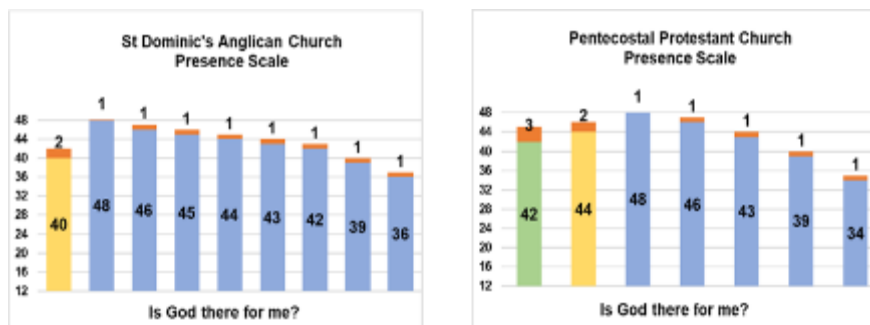
Chart 5.1 Church comparison of participant responses on the Presence Scales

The Presence Scale also focusses more on the self as the first scale dealing with the belonging area of the self-image (Lawrence 1997:215). Therefore, with the participants from both these churches demonstrating a strong view that God is there for them, the likelihood that inter-generational relationships they have been exposed to during their life at their respective churches could have been largely positive (Smith & Crosby 2016:86). Lawrence argues that high scores on the Presence Scale indicates positive childhood experiences with primary caregivers (Lawrence 1997:215-216).

In Hanover Park however, continued cycles of violence have disturbed family life and

introduced a culture of emotional survival. As a result, primary caregivers tend to be a lot more absent during the more critical phases of a child's life, therefore forcing such a child to turn to a substitute attachment figure or object which can become as noted by Kirkpatrick (2005:55) as a safe haven or secure base. Significant relationships with others, especially those who are able to provide a secure base for individuals, can become the basis upon which the presence of God is experienced in a more positive way.

5.2.2 Challenge Scale

Whilst the participant score average on the Challenge Scale reflects a positive view of God for all participants, the scores are not as strong as the scores on the Presence scale. The Challenge Scale for the St Dominic's Anglican Church recorded the lowest total score average whereas the Challenge Scale overall total score average for the Pentecostal Protestant Church participants was recorded as the fifth highest score. The number of participants who had the same score is also higher on Pentecostal Protestant Church Challenge Scale. Six participants of the St Dominic's Anglican Church recorded individual scores as opposed to the Pentecostal Protestant Church who recorded four participants with individual scores.

The comparitive chart, see Chart 5.2 below, indicates the consistency of the participant responses on the Challenge Scale.
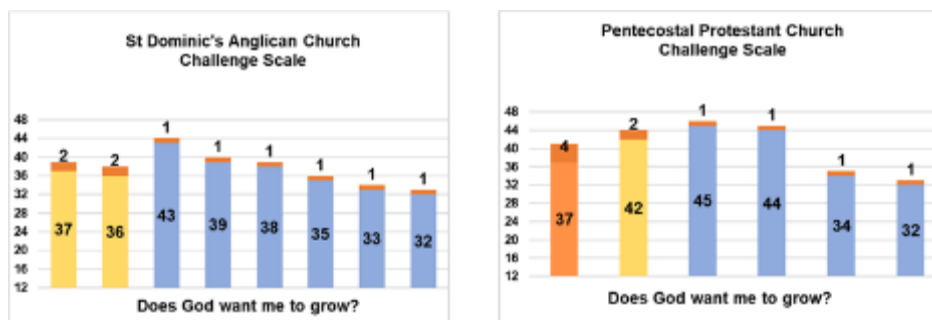
Chart 5.2 Church comparison of participant responses on the Challenge Scales

The Challenge Scale explores God's desire to see personal change and growth as the object of the relationship within the belonging dimension of self-image. The twelve items on this scale probe the participants view of whether they believe that God requires of them to use extra effort, be open to risk and become more conscious of

their personal learning processes. Lawrence (1997:216) described this emphasis of growth associated with this scale as the belief that living near God requires believers, "to explore and interact with world around them". Responses on this scale is closely link with beliefs that God is watching and that the sense of belonging is tied to feelings around God's approval or disapproval. Responses therefore depend largely on previous experiences and achievements.

Participant scores however appear to be inconsistent with some of the community realities. It could be that the meaning of some of the Challenge Scale items are too abstract, for example, item C10: 'God never challenges me', and item C29: 'God keeps asking me to try harder', can only be interpreted against the background of the childhood experiences of the participants. Alternatively, participants chose to respond based on what was learnt over the years through their involvement in their respective churches. If this is the case, then this study provides evidence that members of churches have a more positive self-image than community members who are not members of religious institutions. What is clear is that the items on this scale requires further exploration.

5.2.3 Acceptance Scale

Participants of the St Dominic's Anglican Church scored slightly higher on the Acceptance Scale than the participants of the Pentecostal Protestant Church. Participant responses leans towards a stronger and more confident view that they are good enough for God to love, which in turn speaks of high levels of self-esteem and positive feelings of self-worth. It is only one participant in each of the church groups who scored way below the standard average for this scale. Most of the participants who had individual scores were close or above the standard average for this scale.

The graph below, Chart 5.3, indicates the consistency of the participant responses on the Acceptance scale.
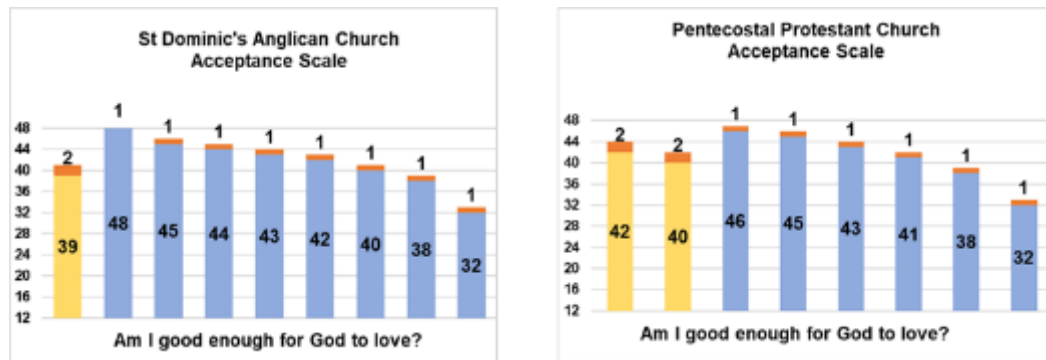
Chart 5.3 Church comparison of participant responses on the Acceptance Scales

This scale measures whether participants think of themselves as good enough and deserving of God's love. Items on the Acceptance Scale probes the participants' sense of self in relation to any positive or negative childhood experiences with their primary caregivers. Gattis (2001:3), developed a website to house an online scoring tool for Lawrence's God Image Inventory (GII) and the God Image Scales (GIS). On this site, www,godimage.org, he provides users with a sample report in which he explains the framework for interpreting the scores of the God Image Scales. Whilst Lawrence provides a brief description of the Acceptance Scale (1997:216), Gattis offers more detail in his sample report that is worth considering. Gattis states that:

> The Acceptance Scale answers the primitive, foundational question 'Am I good enough to be loved?' Specifically, the question concerns God, 'Am I good enough for God to love?', but the score here usually also reflects the subject's perceptions of early experiences: 'Am I good enough for (Mom, Dad, etc.) to love?' Persons with high scores on this scale usually experienced early primary caregivers as loving and believe that God and other persons in general should be able to love them.

In light of the above framework for interpretation, the high scores recorded on the Acceptance Scale for both groups of participants show high levels of confidence in the belief that they are good enough for God to love. Another factor worth considering when interpreting the scores is the religious culture within the St Dominic's Anglican Church and the Pentecostal Protestant Church that is centred around God's love and

God's grace. These teachings combined with the weekly evangelistic campaigns reinforce beliefs that everyone is good enough for God to love. The standard invitation is for the hearer to respond by accepting this love God has for them. Therefore, responses to the 12 items on this scale should be probed even further through focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews in efforts to better understand the responses of these participants.

5.2.4 Benevolence Scale

Again, participants of the St Dominic's Anglican Church scored slightly higher on the Benevolence Scale than the participants of the Pentecostal Protestant Church. Scores on the Benevolence Scale seems less scattered than the previous scales. Participants from the St Dominic's Church come across with more confidence in the view that God's love is unconditional. Only three of the ten participants from the St Dominic's Anglican Church had individual scores as opposed to the six participants of the Pentecostal Protestant Church participants who had individual scores.

The graph below indicates the consistency of the participant responses on the Benevolence Scale.
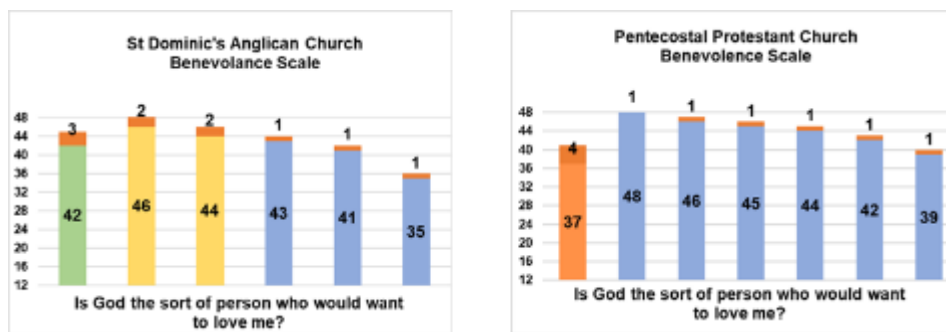
Chart 5.4 Church comparison of participant responses on the Benevolence Scales

The Benevolence Scale measures the extent to which God expresses His benevolence to the world. The high scores on the Benevolence Scale confirms that participants have a positive self-image and therefore a positive view of God. But, Lawrence (1997:216) expressed concern that participants may respond to the character of God as opposed to a relationship with God. As mentioned before in the discussion on the Acceptance

Scale, God's love is central to all the religious expressions within Hanover Park. It is this very nature of God's love, the belief in God's benevolence that drives the Christian way of life. Almost every facet of Anglican worship speaks to the benevolence of God. McKenzie (2014:169) observes that believers within the Anglican Church worship to please God. God is the focus and at the centre of the liturgical experience. The worship experience in the Pentecostal Church on the other hand centres around the experience of God's presence. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that the participants view God as benevolent.

5.2.5 Influence Scale

The scores of the Influence Scale for the participants of the St Dominic's Anglican Church and score of the of the participants of the Pentecostal Protestant Church are almost identical. These scores on this scale are also recorded as the fourth highest score for the participants of the St Dominic's Anglican Church and the participants of the Pentecostal Protestant Church. However, participants of the Pentecostal Protestant Church scored slightly higher on the Influence Scale than the participants of the St Dominic's Anglican Church.

Chart 5.5 below indicates the consistency of the participant responses on the Influence scale.
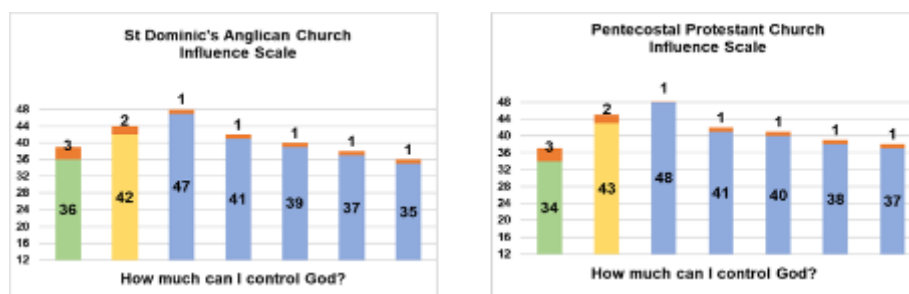
Chart 5.5 Church comparison of participant responses on the Influence Scales

The Influence Scale measures whether participants think and feel how much of God they can control through religious behaviour of church practices. Items on this scale, explore the relationship between what participants understand to be good Christian

behaviour and the level of control they feel they have in response to the issues they face every day. The high scores on the Influence Scale indicate that participants may feel that God has the most power over them, they too may also feel that they have the most power over God (Lawrence 1997:216).

In a community like Hanover Park where residents often feel disempowered by their set of circumstances (Benjamin 2014; Magidi et al. 2016; Veitch 2014), religious beliefs can help people maintain some sense of control (Van der Merwe et al. 2010:2). Religion is thus experienced as a source of power that deals with everyday problems (Conradie 2015:74).

5.2.6 Providence Scale

Despite participants of the St Dominic's Anglican Church slightly higher score on the Providence Scale than the participants of the Pentecostal Protestant Church, there is not much difference between the scores on this scale. The high scores on this scale do however indicate that participants view God as having control over what happens to them and around them in the world.

Chart 5.6 below indicates the consistency of the participant responses on the Providence Scale.
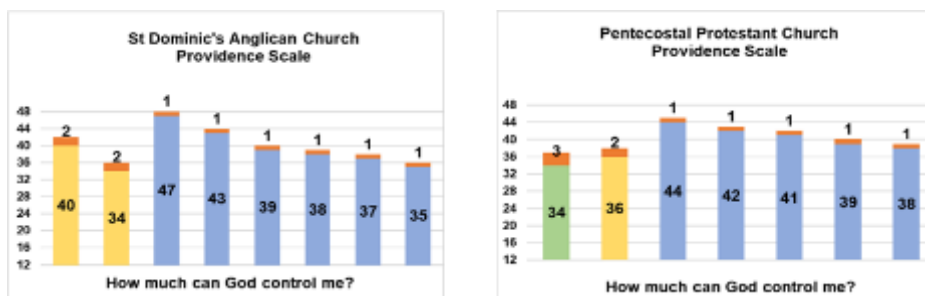
Chart 5.6 Church comparison of participant responses on the Providence Scales

The Providence Scale measures the extent participants see and experience God as provider and protector. Lawrence (1997:2016) briefly reflects on the question of human freedom in relation to this scale and suggests that feelings around what God chooses to control and the extent to which He exercises this control should be a matter of further psychological investigation. Van Niekerk (2015:333) however, found that church

members who live with harsh realities are more likely to hand all control over their life to God. This type of dependency on God is a way of coping with the anxieties that are associated with living and in difficult community and family circumstances (Van der Merwe et al. 2010:2). Equating control with freedom is complex and more so in a community like Hanover Park where issues of control and freedom are closely linked with the socio-economic conditions of the community.

The participants of the St Dominic's Anglican Church and the participants of the Pentecostal Protestant Church scored low on item Pro.24 'What happens in my life is largely a result of decisions I make' and item Pro.65 'I am pretty much responsible for my own life' and high on item Pro.34 'God is in control of my life' and item Pro.37 'God will always provide for me'. These scores support previous findings that members who live in communities like Hanover Park view God as being in control of the lives and circumstances of believers (Van der Merwe et al. 2010; Van Niekerk 2015).

5.3 Conclusion

The scores recorded for the participants of the St Dominic's Anglican Church and the scores recorded for the participants of the Pentecostal Protestant Church lean towards a positive view of God. More similarities than differences emerge when comparing the results of the scores of the St Dominic's Anglican Church with scores of the Pentecostal Protestant Church. Despite the differences in how these churches operate within the Christian religious setting, the overall score average proved to be the same. Recorded scores for each of the six subscales are also notably consistent with the level of support and care provided for the members of their respective churches.

The limitation of this study lies within the reliance on the assumption that background information on each of the participants is available. This makes it more difficult to determine the extent to which participant's responses reflect faith formation processes from their childhood or their lived religious experiences as adults. The God Image Scale however is useful in identifying the dominant God-images participants operate with in their daily lives. Whether the relationships with primary caregivers gave rise to these positive God-images or socio-religious context of the different churches contributed towards these high scores should be explored through further studies.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will offer conclusions in terms of the findings and how they relate to the research question. I will reflect on the significance of this study within a neighbourhood characterised by continuous cycles of direct and structural violence for wider empirical research on God-concepts and God-images. I will also reflect on the significance of such findings for practical ministry in neighbourhoods such as Hanover Park and make recommendations in this regard for the discipline of practical theology and for discourse on religion and development.

6.2 Key findings and how they relate to the research question

The key findings of this study indicate that church membership in communities like Hanover Park contribute positively to the formation of self-images and positive God-images. This is seen in the marginal differences in the score of participants across very diverse doctrines and church traditions. Also, despite these differences in how St Dominic's Anglican Church and the Pentecostal Protestant Church operate, the recorded overall score average proved to be the same. The research question that framed this study is as follows:

> What similarities and differences may be identified when Richard Lawrence's God-Image Scale is completed by selected members of the St Dominic's Anglican Church in Hanover Park who are parents of teenage children in comparison with selected members of the Pentecostal Protestant Church in Hanover Park who are also parents of teenage children?

This study shows that there are marginal similarities differences between the recorded scores of the participants of the St Dominic's Anglican Church and the participants of the Pentecostal Protestant Church. Variables of parenthood, gender, age, employment status and marital status appear to have no real influence on the individual and group scores. All participants from these different denominational backgrounds demonstrate positive self-images and positive God-images.

Participant responses also demonstrate that they have a strong sense of self across

the different denominations. The recorded responses indicate that the community context of violence, widespread dysfunction and harsh socio-economic realities have had little influence on their self-image. Scales which measured control and goodness had the biggest range of mixed responses. What was interesting is that these responses show that church membership, despite the doctrinal differences and different church traditions, contribute to development of positive levels of self-confidence.

6.2 Significance of this study for wider empirical research on God-images

This study represents an opportunity to address the need for empirical research on God-images in an emerging field of practical theology and in this way contribute internationally to empirical studies on God-images. This case study found that the God Image Scale as designed by Lawrence (1997) successfully helps to identify the dominant God-images lay people operate with in their daily lives. However, additional research tools are needed to identify the different contextual factors which may or may not have contributed the findings of this study. These findings on the study on God-images within a community such as Hanover Park, therefore, raises questions with regards to the extent contextual community and church denominational factors contribute to positive or negative God-images.

The participants of this study for example have been exposed to high levels of gang related violence which often results in feelings of disempowerment (Van Niekerk 2015; Veitch 2014). Yet, the high scores recorded for each of these participants who completed the God Image Scales, indicate that despite these variables, they continue to operate with positive images of God. Previous studies (Benjamin 2014; Magidi et al. 2016; Van Niekerk 2015; Veitch 2014) in similar settings have also found that high levels of violence, poverty and substance abuse disrupt family life. However, when members of communities such as Hanover Park are confronted with how little control they have over their external circumstances, their religious beliefs, traditions and practices are perceived to restore some sense of power and control (Benjamin 2014; Magidi et al. 2016).

Therefore, within the context of Hanover Park, participant responses on each of the

God-image subscales may or may not take on new meaning. The extent to which contextual factors influence the interpretation of participant scores is therefore unknown. This is made more difficult in the absence of a clear framework needed for the interpretation of participant responses. Interpretation of participant responses are therefore largely dependent on additional assessment instruments linked to specific disciplines. The use of the God Image Scales as a research instrument in communities such as Hanover park should therefore be used in its current form to purely identify the dominant God-images believers operate with. The findings of such studies should then be considered as the basis for the further exploration of the influence contextual factors have on the formation of God-images.

This study does not deny the findings of previous God-image studies on the influence attachment bonds and the childhood experiences with primary caregivers have on the formation of God-images. Nor does this study imply that the God Image Scale as developed by Lawrence (1997) is an unsuitable research instrument for similar studies. This study however argues that the socio-religious context of the participants who completed the God Image Scales, may wield a much stronger influence on the type of God-images lay people operate with in communities such as Hanover Park than what has been previously thought. Therefore, this study supports the need for wider empirical studies on God-images within communities such as Hanover Park.

6.3 Significance of this study for practical ministry in neighbourhoods such as Hanover Park

This study advocates for a form of practical ministry that would take cognisance of people's God-images. Louw (2015:15-16) argues that the formation of God-images and God-concepts are influenced by theological and cultural schemas. Zahl and Gibson (2012:228) noted that an individual's perception not only affects how such persons relate to God, but also the extent that this relationship with God may reveal particular dimensions of their perception of what God is like. Bader and Froese (2005:16) found that God-concepts have a direct influence on the formation of an individual's worldview.

Doctrinal differences and church traditions often have a divisive effect within the Christian religious community especially on matters relating to the role and work of the

Holy Spirit (Conradie 2015:66). Combined with dubious practices which have become common in the public space over recent years, many churches opted to operate in isolation. As a result, central spaces in the lives of the broader community that should be occupied by the church, have been overtaken by negative sub-cultures such as drug smuggling rings, gangs, criminal enterprises and fraudulent entities.

The findings of this study, however, can be used as a point of entry or a means to bring different churches together. This study shows that churches may have a lot more in common than what is currently visible. Renewed dialogues could help the churches in communities like Hanover Park to respond to and protect the interests of the most vulnerable in such communities through practical ministry efforts.

The confines of this study did not allow for an in-depth exploration of the influence church membership has on God-image formation. However, various studies (Mitchell 2005; Moulin 2013; Ysseldyk et al. 2010; Yust 2017) have indicated that church membership contribute towards feelings of belonging which is one of the self-image domains of the God Image Scale. Van der Merwe (2010:6) also found that church members are more likely to demonstrate positive levels of self-confidence due to their involvement church ministry activities. This study therefore can contribute towards the design of bible study content, delivery approaches of training and teaching as well as family support and counselling processes for churches who operate in communities such as Hanover Park.

6.4 Recommendations for the discipline of practical theology and for discourse on religion and development

The findings of this study indicate that an in-depth understanding of God-images church members hold is critical for development work in communities such as Hanover Park. The following recommendations should therefore be a consideration for the discipline of practical theology and for the discourse on religion and development:

i. As much as there is excitement about this interest in religion's role in development, careful consideration is required as to develop a shared agenda which acknowledges the centrality of religious beliefs. Any form of development interventions should begin to consider the widespread implication of God-images

on such processes. Beneficiaries therefore should no longer be regarded as merely recipients of welfare. Various scholars (Ter Haar 2010; Bowers du Toit 2014; Swart & Nell 2016) have noted that religion influences people's construction of self and the meaning they give to the world around them.

ii. Based on their connection to and their affiliation with religious institutions, community members should be involved at a consultative level, but should be allowed to define the scope of social transformation processes for themselves. Those who hold strong religious beliefs live by principles and values that bring about a sense of purpose and renewed feeling of empowerment (Van der Merwe 2010:6). Religious beliefs and practices, therefore, connect the believer with a transformative spiritual power that enables the individual to recreate his/her beliefs system to fit the religious contexts they live in (Van Der Merwe 2010; Ter Haar 2010). Thus, the role religious beliefs play in the lives of believers should take a more central place in the design and delivery of community development programmes.

iii. Community based dialogues should be facilitated where the complexities of faith driven development practices can be explored with religious leaders. Studies have shown that God-images influences the functionality of societies and it forms part of the everyday consciousness through which people interact with society (Berger & Luckman 1966; Counted 2015; Marsh & Low 2006; Rizzuto 2007). Ter Haar (2011:14) further argue that the development processes for those who hold strong religious beliefs and who have been empowered to use religious resources as part of development strategies yield better results that can be sustained over time.

This demonstrated importance of religion in the lives of members of communities such as Hanover Park should not be undermined, nor ignored by local or national role-players. The international development community has already started to show interest in the role religion plays within development processes. The study on God-images is therefore and should be regarded as a critical component in understanding the extent to which it contributes toward the formation of a positive self-image. Jones and Peterson (2011:1291) noted that there is a growing corpus of religion and development research literature that has started to set the scene for new approaches within social

development disciplines.

This study on God-images within Hanover Park therefore acknowledges that the images people hold of God reflect a sense of power or powerlessness that influence the way lay people respond to their social environment. Religious beliefs are not only shaped by a particular social context but should be acknowledged as the driving force that shapes the social imaginary which in turn enables social transformation.

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Appendix A: Letter to St Dominic's Anglican Church and the Pentecostal Protestant Church

Letter Requesting Permission to Conduct Research.

Dear Pastor Engel and Reverend Dias

I kindly request your permission and your assistance for conducting research amongst your church members. This study is in partial fulfilment of a Master of Theology degree at the University of the Western Cape.

This study will focus on the God-images lay people operate with in their daily lives, given the influence that these God-images may have on the way in which they may choose to respond to their social environment. The strategy that will be adopted is to focus on parents of teenaged children with the assumption that they are most likely directly or indirectly confronted with the harsh realities of continuous violence, exposure to substance abuse and risky youth behaviour. With so many variables beyond parental control, it would be significant to establish the dominant God-images that these parents hold. It would also be interesting to know how this may influence their involvement in your Church's ministry.

Richard Lawrence's 6-scales; 72-item questionnaire, namely the God-image scales, will be used to identify the similarities and differences when it is completed by 10 selected members of the St Dominic's Anglican Church in Hanover Park who are parents of teenage children in comparison with 10 selected members of the Pentecostal Protestant Church in Hanover Park who are also parents of teenage children.

I would appreciate your assistance in identifying and selecting 10 members (male and female) in your church to participate in this study. These identified members should meet the following selection criteria:

a) Participants should be of good standing in your congregation,
b) Participants are active in congregational ministries,
c) Participants are a parent of a teenaged child,
d) Participants reside in Hanover Park.

I have attached the research information sheet as well the informed consent form for your information. Copies of these documentation will be delivered to your church, to be handed to the selected participants. Each participant must complete and sign the informed consent form ahead of a 20-minute research briefing session which will be scheduled in consultation with you. Before the questionnaire will be handed out for completion at this briefing session, I will answer and discuss questions and/ or any issues participants might raise in relation to this study. The self-administered questionnaire should take between 30 and 45 minutes to complete.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on 0840616966 should you have any questions pertaining to this request. I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely

Trevor Pedro
0840616966
Student: 3698046

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Appendix B: Informed Consent Forms

CONSENT FORM

University of the Western Cape

Research Project:
Employing Richard T. Lawrence's God-image Scales: Two Case Studies from Hanover Park

Researcher: Trevor Pedro (3698046)

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and have understood the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.
(If I wish to withdraw I may contact the lead researcher at any time)

3. I understand my responses and personal information will be anonymised and kept strictly confidential. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the reports or publications that result for the research.

4. I agree that the data collected from me may be used in future research.

5. I agree to take part in the above research project.

_____   _____   _____
Name of Participant   Date   Signature
(*or legal representative*)

_____   _____   _____
Name of person taking consent   Date   Signature
(*If different from lead researcher*)

Trevor Pedro

_____   _____   _____
Lead Researcher   Date   Signature
(*To be signed and dated in presence of the participant*)

Copies: All participants will receive a copy of the signed and dated version of the consent form and information sheet for themselves. A copy of this will be filed and kept in a secure location for research purposes only.

Researcher:	**Supervisor:**	**HOD:**
Student Name: Trevor Pedro	Professor E.M Conradie	Dr John Klaasen
Student Number: 3698046	Department of Religion and Theology	Department of Religion and Theology
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Appendix C: God Image Scale – 72 Item Format

God Image Scales – 72 Item

You are being asked to complete this questionnaire to help gain an understanding of the image you hold of God. There are no right or wrong answers. We just want to know how you honestly feel. **Your answers will be completely confidential; therefore, we do not need to know your name. However, we need you to complete some basic information about yourself in the spaces provided below.**

Age	Gender		Marital Status	Employment status
	Male	Female		

Date Completed:……………………………   **Participant #:……………..**

Please respond to each statement by ticking the box to the response that comes closest to describing your feeling:

- **Strongly Agree**, if the statement is a particularly good way of describing how you feel about God.
- **Agree**, if the statement just adequately describes your feelings about God.
- **Disagree**, if the statement does not adequately describe your feelings about God.
- **Strongly Disagree**, if the statement is a particularly bad way of describing your feelings about God.

QID	Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	When I obey God's rules, God makes good things happen for me.				
2	I imagine God to be rather formal, almost standoffish.				
3	I am sometimes anxious about whether God still loves me.				
4	Asking God for help rarely does me any good.				
5	I am confident of God's love for me.				
6	I know I'm not perfect, but God loves me anyway.				
7	I have sometimes felt that I have committed the unforgivable sin.				

QID	Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8	The voice of God tells me what to do.				67
9	Even when I mess things up, I know God will straighten them out.				
10	God never challenges me.				
11	Thinking too much could endanger my faith.				
12	I think of God as more compassionate than demanding.				
13	I get what I pray for.				
14	I can feel God deep inside of me.				
15	God's love for me has no strings attached.				
16	God doesn't feel very personal to me.				
17	No matter how hard I pray, it doesn't do any good.				
18	Even when I do bad things, I know God still loves me.				
19	I can talk to God on an intimate basis.				
20	God is always there for me.				
21	God nurtures me.				
22	I get no feeling of closeness to God, even in prayer.				
23	God loves me only when I perform perfectly.				
24	What happens in my life is largely a result of decisions I make.				
25	I think God even loves atheists.				
26	God loves me regardless.				
27	God takes pleasure in my achievements.				
28	I can't imagine anyone God couldn't love.				
29	God keeps asking me to try harder.				

QID	Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
30	I get no help from God even if I pray for it.				68
31	Being close to God and being active in the world don't mix.				
32	God can easily be provoked by disobedience.				
33	I often worry about whether God can love me.				
34	God is in control of my life.				
35	God wants me to achieve all I can in life.				
36	I am a very powerful person because of God.				
37	God will always provide for me.				
38	I think God mostly leaves people free.				
39	If God listens to prayers, you couldn't prove it to me.				
40	God is looking for a chance to get even with me.				
41	God's mercy is for everyone.				
42	God's love for me is unconditional.				
43	I know what to do to get God to listen to me.				
44	God asks me to keep growing as a person.				
45	I think God only loves certain people.				
46	God almost always answers my prayers.				
47	God doesn't want me to ask too many questions				
48	God does not do much to determine the outcome of my life.				
49	God lets the world run by its own laws.				
50	Even if my beliefs about God were wrong. God would still love me.				
51	I am not good enough for God to love.				

QID	Questions				
52	God's compassion knows no religious boundaries.				69
53	I sometimes feel cradled in God's arms.				

QID	Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
54	God has never asked me to do hard things.				
55	Running the world is more important to God than caring about people.				
56	I often feel that I am in the hands of God.				
57	I don't think my faith gives me any special influence with God.				
58	Mostly, I have to provide for myself.				
59	I am particularly drawn to the image of God as a shepherd.				
60	God does not answer when I call.				
61	God feels distant to me.				
62	I think human achievements are a delight to God.				
63	I rarely feel that God is with me.				
64	I feel warm inside when I pray.				
65	I am pretty much responsible for my own life.				
66	God rarely, if ever, seems to give me what I ask for.				
67	I think God must enjoy getting even with us when we deserve it.				
68	God encourages me to go forward on the journey of life.				
69	God sometimes intervenes at my request.				
70	God never reaches out to me.				
71	God doesn't mind if I don't grow very much.				
72	Sometimes I think that not even God could love me.				