Sabbaticals and the Christian Business Faculty

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ABSTRACT: Faculty sabbaticals have long been a fixture of the academic world, albeit with relatively little research on their purpose or outcomes. Recently, many non-academic organizations have begun to affirm a strategic purpose for sabbaticals in retaining employees and addressing burnout. This article seeks to answer the question, "How can Christian faculty and their institutions fashion sabbaticals in ways that honor the biblical concept of the Hebrew *shimita* (release) and serve the needs of both in the modern world?" The article first reviews the extant literature on faculty sabbaticals, focusing on the kaleidoscope career model (KCM) of sabbaticals. The authors then revise this model to incorporate unique faculty characteristics at faith-based institutions, extending it from its roots in secular, research-based institutions to teaching-focused, faith-based institutions. Preliminary data on a small sample (n=3) of sabbatical participants demonstrates and supports the extended model. Finally, the authors suggest organizational approaches to improve sabbaticals and identify future research directions, including measurement approaches to test the model.

KEYWORDS: faculty, sabbaticals, Christian business

INTRODUCTION

Academic life has unique characteristics that have attracted significant research interest (Carraher et al., 2014). However, much of the focus has been on early career stages. As faculty members mature, they face complex, life-altering career decisions, including sabbaticals and retirement (Anderson et al., 2021). Faculty at Christian colleges and universities have additional considerations that their secular colleagues do not. Notably, Christian faculty often see their work as part of their faith and a calling from God. The initial excitement of a Christian mission can grow dull as the years go by, leading to career crises and burnout (Park, 2019). In like fashion, faculty at secular universities may consider sabbaticals as a career tool to overcome burnout and extend their careers (Carraher et al., 2014).

Historically, academic institutions began granting faculty sabbaticals in the late 1800s as an incentive for faculty to work at a university (Else, 2015). Typical terms include a release from teaching and administrative duties, often after seven years of service (Baker & Boland, 2023). Sabbaticals permit faculty members time to refresh themselves and, increasingly, to complete projects that allow for professional development. Many institutions intend sabbaticals to take the faculty member away from campus to provide fresh perspectives, often at another institution or even a different country.

A review of current sabbatical policies at a small sample (n=5) of U.S. faith-based institutions reveals a striking similarity to the norms of secular institutions. Faculty handbooks at these five institutions briefly note that the primary purpose of the sabbatical is professional development. Like their secular counterparts, the handbooks reviewed provided significant policy details on eligibility, application processes, and pay policies with little focus on the purpose or intent of the sabbatical.

While the academic world, including faith-based institutions, has retained sabbaticals with relatively little change, the non-academic world has seen dramatic increases in the use of sabbaticals in recent years. Researching sabbaticals, Schabram et al. (2023a) cite exponential growth in the private (non-educational) sector from the first recorded sabbatical in U.S. firms at McDonald's in 1977. Sabbatical use grew from 17% of U.S. firms in the pre-COVID year of 2017 to a tripling since the "great resignation" of the early 2020s. Their qualitative study of 50 non-academic professionals characterizes modern sabbaticals into three groups: "working holidays" (alternating recovery and practice), "free dives" (alternating recovery and exploration), and "quests" (unfolding from recovery to exploration to practice). In their research, they note sabbaticals as a part of a broader area of organizational research on rest and authenticity. They report positive experiences from sabbaticals and their valuable impacts on employees' post-sabbatical careers. Further recent research supports the benefits of sabbaticals in their work with emergency physicians (Throop et al., 2022).

This leads to the guiding question for this article: "How can Christian faculty and their employers fashion sabbaticals in ways that honor the biblical concept of the Hebrew *shimita* (release) and serve the needs of both in the modern world?" Here, we seek to combine the wisdom of scripture with the benefits of modern organizational thinking to form an updated view of faculty sabbaticals at faith-based academic institutions.

This article explores the literature on sabbaticals and connects the career literature with a Christian perspective on the biblical concept of the Sabbath. First, this article reviews secular literature on sabbaticals and how it fits into mid- and late-faculty careers. Second, we address how one can view academic sabbaticals as a type of Sabbath. Third, preliminary data collection with a small group (n=3) of faculty describes how a sabbatical can revive and revitalize one's late-stage career. Fourth, the authors provide an updated research model and recommendations on structuring sabbaticals for mutual benefit to faculty and Christian institutions. Finally, the authors discuss future research directions and potential measurement approaches to test the research model.

LITERATURE REVIEW ON FACULTY SABBATICALS

As noted, sabbaticals have long been part of academic life, dating back to the late 1800s, when institutions used them as a "respite," a translation of the Hebrew "scimitar." However, there has been relatively little empirical research on the subject (Carraher et al., 2014; Gardner, 2022). Much of the career literature on faculty has focused on reasons people enter academic life (Zacher et al., 2019), early career socialization (Huisman et al., 2002), pre-tenure publication (Fernandes & Walter, 2023), and mentorship of recent doctoral graduates (Kirchmeyer, 2005). Career decisions in the middle and later years of a faculty career have yet to be a focus in literature. Indeed, one of the most significant decisions for such faculty is taking a sabbatical (Carraher et al., 2014). Moreover, much of the sabbatical literature amounts to first-person accounts (McClain, 2006; Reichardt, 2022).

Studies attempting to quantify the results of sabbaticals do show positive results in terms of articles published and reduced stress (Carraher et al., 2014). Gardner's (2022) qualitative work (n=12) supports this finding. Davidson et al. (2010) completed a quasi-experiment in which they compared 129 matched pairs of professors (one of whom took a sabbatical). He found an increase in psychological resources and a decrease in stress.

Another study by Iravania (2011) was done in Iran. It lists five significant outcomes of sabbaticals in order of importance. These findings further support earlier work by Davidson et al. (2010) and more recent work by Gardner (2022):

1. Professional (articles and books written)
2. Psychological (reduced stress and spiritual refreshment)
3. Capacity building (new ideas or teaching methods)
4. Institutional productivity (grants)
5. Personal motivation (reputation building)

While sabbaticals are often viewed as developmental efforts with faculty outcomes, Mamiseishvili and Miller (2010) found that sabbaticals were more often an institutional reward for service. Docherty (2012) supported this more political aspect. These findings led Carraher et al. (2014) to include work contexts in their model. A more recent work context in the U.S. has a less positive perspective. Public-funded institutions have been accused of offering sabbaticals as "paid vacations" by their state legislatures, seeing higher education in a neoliberal notion of capitalist outcomes (Gardner, 2022).

Viewing sabbaticals from a historical perspective, Macfarlane (2023) traces a gradual shift in the purpose of academic sabbaticals from one of rest to that of hyper-productivity. As noted below and by Gardner (2022), the word "sabbatical" finds its roots in the biblical narrative as a time of "rest" from labor. In contrast, Macfarlane (2023) notes that modern universities are increasingly under an audit culture that demands performance. As one author said, "Who took the Sabbath out of sabbatical?" (Page, 2010).

Carraher et al. (2014) developed a model of faculty sabbaticals based on the kaleidoscope career model (KCM) and the theory of planned behavior (TPB) to provide "a systematic, theory-driven approach to studying this important decision which may have long-term implications for an individual's career success and satisfaction as well as for organizational outcomes (e.g., organizational commitment, intention to remain, and organizational citizenship behaviors)" (p. 296). Figure 1 summarizes the Carraher et al. (2014) model. The KCM as a model of career behavior has its roots in the work of Mainiero and Sullivan (2005). Several studies have subsequently used it (Knowles & Mainiero, 2021; Simmons et al., 2022).

The KCM is described by Carraher et al. (2014) as follows:
Just like a kaleidoscope that produces changing patterns when the tube is rotated, and its glass chips fall into new arrangements, the KCM describes how individuals change the pattern of their career by rotating the varied aspects of their lives to arrange their relationships and roles in new, more satisfying ways. (p. 303)

Three parameters in KCM lead individuals to make career choices. At different stages of one's career, one of these parameters may be paramount in the faculty member's choices.

1. **Authenticity**—where people make choices that are true to themselves.
2. **Balance**—where people seek equilibrium between work and other life demands.
3. **Challenge**—where people strive for stimulating work and career advancement.

Notably, each of these three terms ("authenticity," "balance," and "challenge") appear frequently in Schabram et al.'s (2023a) more recent study (n=50) on sabbaticals in a broad cross-section of non-academic organizations.

Carraher et al. (2014) combine KCM with TPB in developing their model of sabbaticals. The theory of planned behavior is widely used to describe decisions in a variety of contexts. The theory of planned behavior is the basis of the highly influential technology acceptance model (TAM) (Lai, 2017; Lee et al., 2003) used in the information systems literature. The key theme of TPB (and TAM) is that decision-makers balance feasibility and desirability in determining their behavioral intent.

Figure 1: Summarized Kaleidoscope Career Model of Sabbaticals
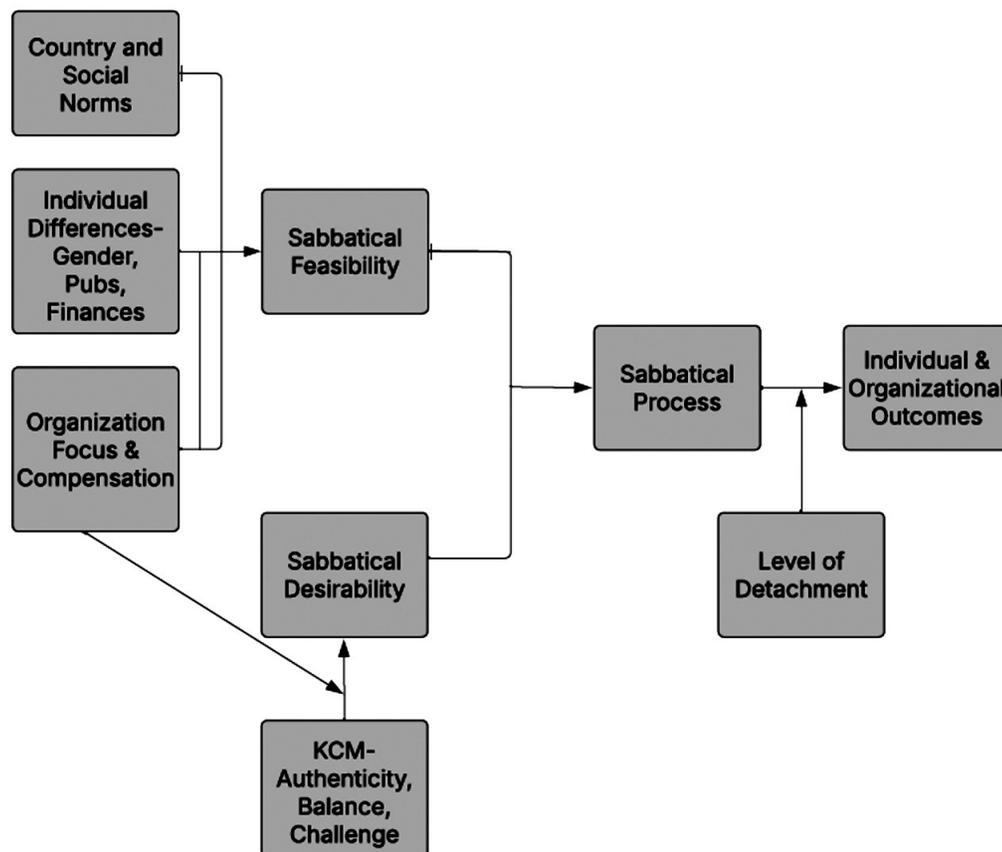
Adapted from "A kaleidoscope career perspective on faculty sabbaticals" (Carraher et al., 2014, 295-313)

Overall, Carraher et al.'s (2014) work is notable in their research question, which seeks a holistic view of sabbaticals: "How do individual factors, as well as organizational, country, and labor market factors, impact faculty members' decisions about the sabbatical and individual and organizational level outcomes?" (p. 298).

Carraher et al. (2014) provide a helpful model that posits sabbatical feasibility and sabbatical desirability as the key inputs in the decision to complete a sabbatical. This framework combines KCM's focus on individual psychological factors (including authenticity, life balance, and challenge) and TPB's focus on how feasibility and desirability influence behavioral intent. The model led Carraher et al. (2014) to nine propositions (pp. 300-307). These propositions are framed in the context of traditional research universities in the United Kingdom, but we will see them present in other settings:

1. The university's strategic focus will moderate the relationship between the faculty member's record of publishing or grant attainment and the extent to which the sabbatical is perceived as feasible.
2. Faculty members will match their sabbatical goals to their university's strategic focus in order to increase sabbatical feasibility.
3. The extent to which faculty members have alternative sources of income or expect greater opportunity costs in forgoing a sabbatical will be related to the extent to which the sabbatical is perceived as feasible in the face of reductions in sabbatical compensation rates.
4. Women faculty members will perceive sabbaticals as less feasible than men.
5. A country's legislation and social norms will moderate the relationship between gender and sabbatical feasibility.
6. Global labor market conditions will moderate the relationship between organizational context and sabbatical feasibility.
7. A faculty member's perceived level of sabbatical desirability will be higher if the faculty member's sabbatical purpose is aligned with his/her primary KCM parameter.
8. Organizational context will moderate the relationship between a faculty member's primary KCM parameter and sabbatical desirability.
9. The degree of organizational detachment during the sabbatical will moderate the relationship of the sabbatical process with individual and organizational outcomes.

The Carraher et al. (2014) model provides a valuable starting point for this article. However, the context of teaching-focused, faith-based institutions brings up unique factors that an updated model will address below. In particular:

1. Carraher's model (Figure 1) specifies outcomes but does not elaborate on what these might be. This is a noted shortcoming from prior research on sabbaticals (Gardner, 2022). As stated above, research institutions may look for publications or laboratory research as well as faculty renewal. Faith-based institutions may seek other outcomes, such as spiritual renewal or new institutional relationships with partner schools.
2. Carraher's perspective is that of research-intensive institutions. Many faith-based institutions are teaching-intensive, with research a secondary consideration (Mallard & Atkins, 2004).
3. Faculty work at faith-based institutions is motivated not only as an academic pursuit but also as part of their faith (Park, 2019). Hence, a faculty member's "sensemaking" process in deciding about a sabbatical has additional spiritual dimensions that secular faculty do not have. Further, their decision process partly takes cues from their institution and its uniquely Christian mission (Gardner, 2022).
4. Faith-based institutions often have less funding available to support sabbaticals. Many are strongly tuition-dependent and face intense funding pressures (Gehrz, 2023; MSNBC, 2023), especially during the demographic cliff of the 2020s.

Other research has addressed the subject of faculty sabbaticals in the context of mid- and late-faculty career development. First, there is a general acknowledgment, in keeping with KCM, that as faculty members age, their career focus needs to change. Clark (2023) asserts that scaling back from ambitious career goals may help strengthen one's academic career. Rather than doubling down on strategies that work well for a junior faculty member seeking tenure, maturing faculty members need to know when to pivot their approach. Rather than follow a universal timeline, individual faculty need to see their own time to shift to a different strategy and not necessarily pursue more of what they have done to succeed in their early career.

Career burnout among Christian business faculty is often reported. According to Frances Hesselbein, "When we're called, we're given the energy to do the calling, but when we're no longer called, we will not have the energy" (as cited in Park, 2019, p. 71). Park has a ten-question faculty crisis checklist highlighting signs of burnout (e.g., "I am excited less for school or department meetings"). He offers four recommendations on how to change one's perspective

on teaching. These include reflecting on God's grace and the unexpected blessings that former students bring with a positive note or call. Interestingly, sabbaticals are not listed.

Looking at the highly visible position of deans, Finch et al. (2022) address the exit paths of business school deans. The work of a dean typically includes significant role conflict, ambiguity, and stress as they serve as the "face" of the school both internally and externally. Unlike other administrators, deans typically have tenure and can remain employed after leaving the role of dean. Examining the 2014 to 2020 period, Finch et al. (2022) observed approximately 80% turnover among deans at AACSB-accredited schools. Their research over two time periods (2014 and 2018) identified intended exit strategies as returning to faculty (36-40%), moving to another dean position (19%), retiring (10-17%), being promoted to provost/president (12-17%) and uncertain/other (19%). The return to faculty path may entail a sabbatical, often a reward for service (consistent with Mamiseishvili & Miller, 2010). They note, however, that returning to faculty is challenging and that a one-semester sabbatical may be insufficient to revive teaching and scholarship duties.

In summary, the literature on faculty sabbaticals, especially studies inspired by Carraher et al. (2014) and other subsequent researchers, provides a basis for understanding how sabbaticals can work in colleges and universities for both faculty and institutions. However, the following sections address the unique aspects of faith-based institutions.

SABBATICALS, REST, AND SABBATH

Beyond the literature from secular sources, Christian business faculty have another unique source for the concept of sabbaticals: an arrangement for the observance of the Sabbath. This, in part, is because Christian faculty see their work not only as a professional career but also as a call to mission in serving God with their gifts. Alexander (2024) defines Sabbath in scripture as: "The verbal root shabat means to cease from a given activity, and the noun shabbat was used to designate every seventh day, which was marked by a cessation from everyday work." Hence, there is a perspective of using sabbaticals as an avenue to observe the Sabbath.

Beyond the word similarities of "sabbath" and "sabbatical," one can consider the more general biblical concept of "rest," including the Sabbath, the seventh-year rest for farmland (Leviticus 25), and feasts such as Booths (Leviticus 23) in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, God promises Christians a Sabbath rest (Hebrews 4). Not surprisingly,

modern organizational research has a significant thread of research on "rest" and "recovery" (Schabram et al., 2023a).

There is one notable challenge in connecting a biblical view of the Sabbath and the modern academic use of the term sabbatical. The biblical view calls for an absence of work (Exodus 20:9-10). As noted, modern academic use of a sabbatical has become increasingly performative (Macfarlane, 2023). Thus, faculty sabbaticals today may result less in "rest" and more in taking on different and hopefully more renewing work. Nonetheless, research by Gardner (2022) and Schabram et al. (2023a) acknowledges the "renewing" and "recovering" aspects of sabbaticals.

After a review of the literature, Heintzman (2015) offered several reasons why Christian businesspeople feel the need to observe the Sabbath in the course of their work. These include the following arguments:

1. Humans are created in the image of God and, therefore, must fulfill the analogy of God resting on the seventh day after creation. Thus, humans should use the observance of the Sabbath as an invitation to experience the nature of God (Exodus 20:8-11.
2. The observance of the Sabbath is a remembrance of Israel's gracious deliverance from Egypt that gave them rest from the taskmasters of Pharaoh (Deuteronomy 5:12–15).
3. Observance of the Sabbath based in humanitarian reasons of human rest, restoration, and recreation (Exodus 23:12).
4. The observance of the Sabbath is evidence of the covenant between God and Israel (Exodus 31:16, 17).

The above arguments imply that Christian workers should observe the Sabbath through rest and worship of God in fulfillment of Jesus' teachings, which emphasize the Sabbath as a time for bringing healing, wholeness, and fullness (Mark 2:27). Banks (1983) summarized the teachings of the New Testament on the Sabbath thus: "While Christians were no longer obliged to relax on a set day of the week (Romans 14:5; Colossians 2:16–17), the principle of taking proper physical and spiritual rest remained important" (p. 185). This implies that the Christian should take the Sabbath whenever the need or opportunity for it arose, rather than on a specified day.

Locke (2015) reflects on how the observance of the Sabbath could impact one's professional career. His article narrates the experience of the author, who did not have much respect for the observance of the Sabbath early in his career, a position that gained legitimacy when he accepted the call to work as a pastor requiring formal work on Sundays (the day the author considered to be the day of the Sabbath). Persuasion from family compelled Locke to adjust, and he began to take observance of the Sabbath seri-

ously. The adjustment positively impacted his professional life, making him more productive and healthier. Locke (2015) concludes that observing the Sabbath has taught him how to rest in the providential hand of God and to reflect on the goodness of work, emphasizing that it is good to work but equally good to rest as both are the intention of God as is evident in the account of creation.

The narration by Locke (2015) and Heintzman (2015) points to the Christian perspective of workers needing rest after work. It emphasizes that rest emanates from the observance of the Sabbath and provides an opportunity for leisure. Notably, the works of Locke (2015) and Heintzman (2015) can be related to the KCM model, particularly in the parameters regarding "balance" and "authenticity" (Carraher et al., 2014).

Faculty sabbaticals allow Christian faculty members to observe the Sabbath after several years of immersion in teaching, learning, and researching. Locke (2015) suggests the need for a time of non-work where the businessperson rests and focuses on God and his gifts of creation, even in busy work seasons. Faculty sabbaticals may be the most appropriate season for rest from regular work. Heintzman (2015) concludes that it is essential to continually cultivate a spiritual attitude of rest, joy, freedom, and celebration of God and the gift of his creation, which is the foundation for a weekly Sabbath. Further, sabbaticals can provide a time for faculty to renew their calling and vocation, which is a key theme in the work of outstanding Christian faculty members (Livingston & Jun, 2011).

PRELIMINARY DATA COLLECTION

The KCM model shown in Figure 1 and the updated model presented in Figure 2 may lead the reader to ask if there is data to support the model. Before engaging in a significant data collection effort, the authors collected data from a small sample (n=3) based on published reports, personal communication, and the personal experience of one of the authors. In personal communication, the focus of the conversation was on the three KCM parameters: "balance," "authenticity," and "challenge."

Kent Saunders (2023) relayed his experience in a Fulbright Scholar program that took him from a teaching role at Anderson University in South Carolina to Moldova and Romania. During this program, he taught at a university and conducted case study research with fellow faculty. In personal communication, Saunders characterized his sabbatical as focused on challenge. It came in his career at a point when his last child had graduated from college. Hence, his sense of balance had changed, and he had time to pursue a

new adventure. Finally, Saunders mentioned that he and his father had conducted some workshops for teachers from the countries of the former Soviet Union many years before. His Fulbright time allowed for authenticity to his earlier work. Outcomes of his Fulbright experience included teaching a course at his home institution on the Russo-Ukrainian war and his school hosting a Fulbright scholar from Moldova.

As noted above, Larry Locke (2015) relayed his experience with sabbatical in his career transition from practicing corporate law to being a pastor and now serving as a university professor. In his career as a corporate lawyer, his work drove his life. After facing a conflicted history with Sabbath and with help from his spouse, he began a practice of Friday sundown to Saturday sundown sabbath. In personal communication, Locke reflects on the Sabbath not as "balance" as all three career choices required many work hours. He also was not looking for "challenge" in his career changes. "Authenticity" was the prime driver as Locke sought to change his life to conform to his faith. While the costs of this move were unascertainable, Locke finds the benefits of Sabbath-keeping to be great, helping him understand, "Sabbath taught me to value rest as a spiritual good, rather than reject it as a failure of productivity" (Locke, 2015, p. 64).

A third data point came to one of the authors in the spring of 2023. After 10 years serving as a 12-month contracted administrator (department chair and associate dean) and faculty member, the author applied for and received a one-semester sabbatical from Lipscomb University, a faith-based university. The faculty member intended to return to his home institution after the sabbatical in a full-time teaching role as a ramp to eventual retirement.

The author planned to teach at Heritage College in Amasaman, Ghana, for the spring semester of 2023. Lipscomb University policy provided full pay and benefits during the sabbatical. Heritage College provided round-trip airfare and accommodation. His stated purposes to Lipscomb University in applying for the sabbatical were:

1. Faculty development. Teaching at Heritage College would immerse Professor Borchers in a developing nation with diverse students. He would return with increased cross-cultural knowledge and skills and be refreshed to return to full-time teaching at Lipscomb.
2. Student travel courses. Professor Borchers would serve as a host for Lipscomb University students on a Maymester trip in 2023. These travel opportunities would provide excellent student experiences, especially for Business as Mission (BAM) Fellows and entrepreneurship majors.
3. Research. Working with faculty colleagues in Ghana, Professor Borchers would collect data on comparative

entrepreneurship, global supply chains and sustainability projects.

The sabbatical proved to be highly successful. The author completed several scholarly projects with Heritage College faculty, co-hosted a group of Lipscomb students on a Maymester trip, renewed his teaching passion, and conducted church-related service. While this may not sound like a Sabbath away from the Lipscomb campus, the author found himself working at a far different pace. The author had time to travel and meet new people. He renewed his passion for teaching. Professor Borchers' story connects with Schabram et al.'s (2023a) "quest" concept as he first recovered from administrative overload, explored a new culture and academic institution, and then returned to teaching.

Reviewing Carraher et al. (2014), this sabbatical supported four of the nine propositions noted above:

1. Faculty members will match their sabbatical goals to their university's strategic focus to increase sabbatical feasibility. The university has long supported mission-oriented trips, and Business as Mission (BAM) is a major college of business (COB) strategic initiative. Further, the COB recently achieved AACSB accreditation and requires continuing faculty scholarship.

2. The extent to which faculty members have alternative sources of income or expect greater opportunity costs in forgoing a sabbatical will be related to the extent to which the sabbatical is perceived as feasible in the face of reductions in sabbatical compensation rates. Since the faculty member received full pay, housing, and airfare, there was no opportunity cost.

3. A faculty member's perceived level of sabbatical desirability will be higher if the faculty member's sabbatical purpose is aligned with his/her primary KCM parameter. In this case, the author's focus during this sabbatical dealt with authenticity and balance. The author values faith integration in teaching and Lipscomb University provided this in classes and numerous church service opportunities on campus. Concerning balance, the sabbatical provided a bridge from a 12-month, heavily loaded administrative/teaching load to a 10-month teaching role and eventual retirement.

4. Organizational context will moderate the relationship between a faculty member's primary KCM parameter and sabbatical desirability. The organizational context at Lipscomb University is strongly aligned with authenticity in faith integration.

Heritage College, like many small, developing institutions, has ongoing needs for faculty members with considerable experience, skills, and expertise in teaching and research, spiritual, and character formation to train, mentor, and inspire younger faculty members and students. Heritage College also needs the expertise of faculty with experience in administration to transfer the administrative skills of the deanship and department chair to the institution's faculty to help them grow. Opportunities for collaborative research that help the young faculty members of the institution were also needed to build confidence for the faculty to research and publish in high-impact journals. Heritage College, therefore, had much to gain from the experience of the senior and experienced faculty member spending a sabbatical on their campus. The students at Heritage College benefited from instruction from an experienced faculty member from a different cultural context, helping to internationalize the teaching and learning experience and improving the students' global competence.

Faculty sabbaticals away from their home campus present Christian faculty members with an invaluable opportunity to reflect on the supremacy of God and the use of their talents to serve God at institutions that need their help. Notably, both Schabram et al. (2023a) and Carraher et al. (2014) include "Level of Detachment" as a factor that can favorably influence the outcome of a sabbatical. In this small sample, the experiences of Saunders (2023) and Borchers support this point.

## STRUCTURING SABBATICALS FOR MUTUAL BENEFIT: A MODEL FOR CHRISTIAN FACULTY SABBATICALS

Having reviewed the literature and one illustrative example, we now focus on an updated model of sabbaticals for faculty at Christian colleges and universities. While the Carraher et al. (2014) model provides a starting point, it has limitations, as noted above. First, Carraher's work is in the context of secular research universities. Faith-based institutions are most often teaching-focused. Second, the extant literature is almost entirely from secular institutions where the faith focus, a prime motivation of Christian faculty, is largely absent. Third, the financial strength of faith-based institutions is typically much weaker than secular research institutions.

The authors suggest the following changes to Carraher et al. (2014) as shown in Figure 2:

1. **Antecedents**—The authors altered the antecedents to sabbatical feasibility to add faith and service components. Christian faculty seeking sabbaticals may do so in response to spiritual burnout or a calling to kingdom service during their sabbatical.

2. **KCM parameters**—Christian faculty are likely to view the nature of KCM parameters (authenticity, balance, and challenge) from a distinct faith perspective.

3. **Process**—The sabbatical process in the original model views a sabbatical decision as an intellectual and career decision. Christian faculty and their institutions bring an element of spiritual discernment to the decision to approve and complete a sabbatical.

4. **Outcomes**—Outcomes are more clearly specified for individual and organizational perspectives, as Gardner (2022) calls for. In particular, individual faculty may see spiritual renewal, Christian service, and more traditional outcomes in teaching and scholarly renewal. Organizational outcomes for Christian institutions may lead to on-going partnerships and further faculty/student exchanges with host institutions.

5. **Community**—An interesting addition to the model could be the inclusion of community outcomes. Gibson (2022) studied corporate community co-development and noted that sustained efforts between corporate participant secondments and at-risk communities produced psychological and behavioral changes in the community and corporate participants. The analysis revealed that community outcomes, such as increased technical and professional skills, proactivity, and strategic capability, occurred through relational processes that connected communities and corporations. Similarly, the corporate participants experienced behavioral growth in their attitudes toward their employers and increased loyalty and performance. The key was the relational processes of mutual perspective-taking, reciprocal respect, and

Figure 2: Updated KCM Model of Sabbaticals for Faculty at Faith-based Institutions
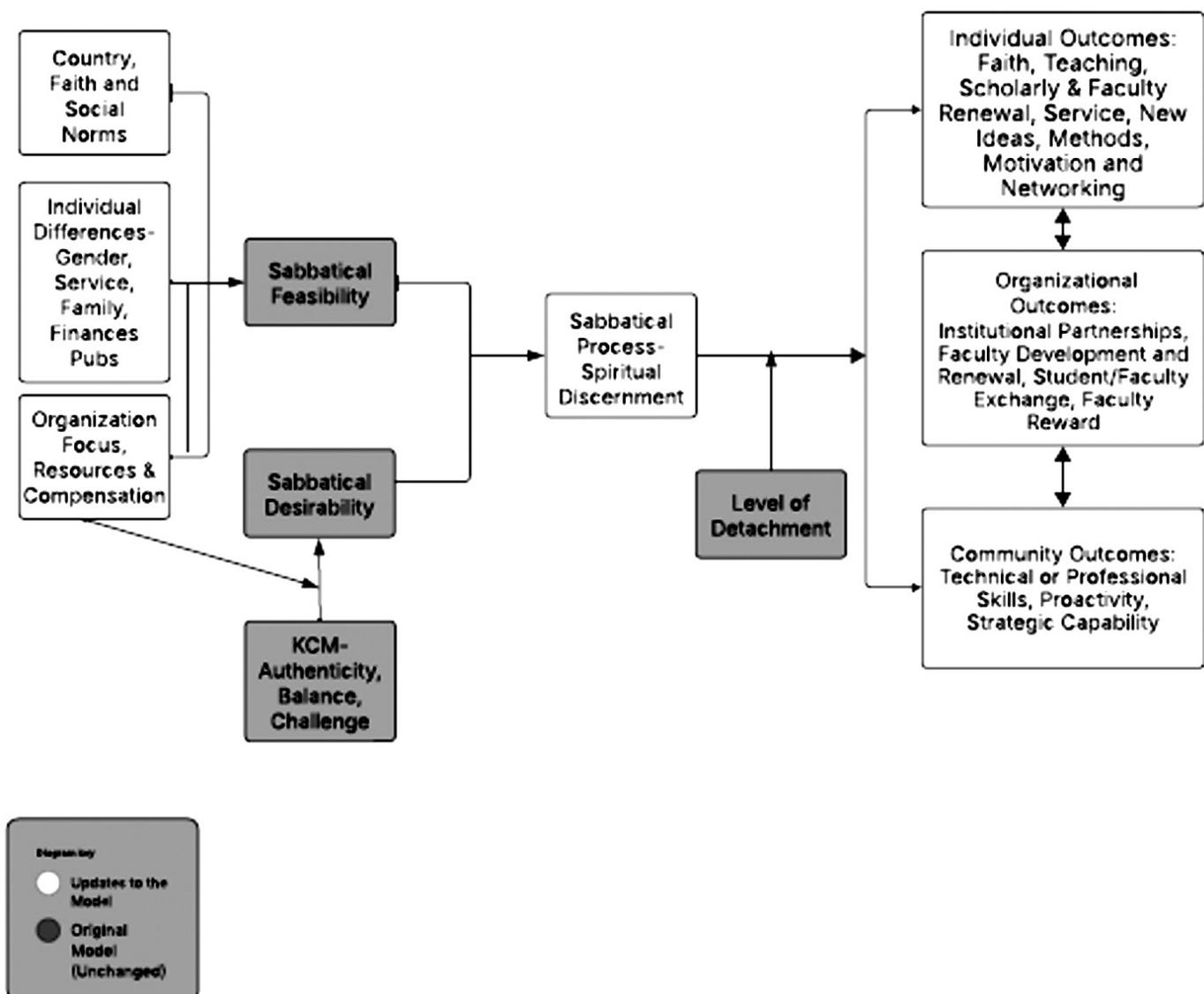
communal advocacy (Gibson, 2022). Relationships are key to the Christian faith and are modeled by the relationship between God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:16-17, 2 Corinthians 13:14). In addition, core Christian values included empathy (Matthew 9:36), respect (James 2:1-4), and advocacy for the rights of those less fortunate (Micah 6:8). Christian faculty sabbaticals have the potential to realize community outcomes similar to those recognized in the corporate community co-development study while simultaneously reducing burnout and renewing a sense of purpose and performance for the faculty.

The case for institutional support and faculty participation in sabbaticals is evident in the model, the authors' experiences, and recent trends in non-academic organizations noted by Schabram et al. (2023b). As the model suggests, there are numerous positive outcomes for both the faculty member and the institution. Institutional support for sabbatical leaves can be a financial challenge for institutions, particularly with the challenges of the looming demographic cliff schools faced in the 2020s. As widely reported (MSNBC, 2023), this drop in college-age youths has resulted in the closure of small, private colleges, especially faith-based schools. However, institutions must balance the short-term financial implications of a faculty sabbatical with the potential long-term benefit of retaining a rejuvenated faculty member after the sabbatical. Indeed, higher education needs to take a strategic view of academic career development as they compete for talent and face an aging faculty pool (Zacher et al., 2019).

INSTITUTIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Although more extensive data collection is needed, the authors' current work suggests several steps that faculty and academic institutions can take to make more effective use of sabbaticals. These suggestions can lead to a more holistic view of sabbaticals. Further, with more purposeful planning, engagement, and reentry, faculty sabbaticals can generate more significant benefits (Baker & Boland, 2023):

1. Recognize diverse faculty needs. As noted, current faculty handbooks briefly identify the purpose of sabbaticals as "professional" development and focus on procedural matters (eligibility, application, and deliverables). The KCM sabbatical model (Figure 1) suggests a more nuanced view of the purpose of sabbaticals based on the faculty member's career stage and their need for authenticity, balance, and chal-

lenge. The enhanced model shown in Figure 2 adds a faith perspective, including spiritual discernment in deciding on a sabbatical and multiple outcomes.

2. Recognize the need for more planning at the pre-sabbatical, mid-sabbatical, and post-sabbatical levels. These efforts can result in improved sabbaticals and enhanced post-sabbatical benefits for the faculty member and institution.

3. Identify and emphasize the potential organizational and community benefits of sabbaticals. As noted in Lipscomb's case, sabbaticals can be a launching point for collaborative projects with peer institutions. Following Gibson's (2022) research, sabbaticals can bring about desirable organizational and community changes.

FUTURE RESEARCH

The revised KCM sabbatical model in Figure 2 raises the question of whether the model can be tested empirically. Three paths are evident. First, Davidson et al. (2010), Gardner (2022), and Schabram et al. (2023a) pursued a qualitative methodology in academic and non-academic settings to study sabbaticals with sample sizes ranging from 12 to 129.

Second, the authors could take a quantitative approach like Simmons et al. (2022). In Simmons' works, the authors created and validated an instrument that measures the KCM parameters of authenticity, balance, and challenge. This instrument, combined with a measure of the constructs in the theory of planned behavior, could be implemented.

Both approaches offer potential benefits. The qualitative approach could be accomplished by interviewing faculty at single or multiple faith-based institutions. Such an effort may not be generalizable but may offer valuable and transferable insights from the institution's context. A quantitative study such as Simmons et al. (2022) may be more generalizable as it could reach faculty from numerous institutions and offer a broader perspective. However, collecting a suitable sample may prove problematic.

A third approach is an explanatory sequential mixed-method research design. Continuing with the Simmons et al. (2022) validated measure, a quantitative survey phase could test hypotheses developed around the updated model for faculty at faith-based institutions. Informed by the quantitative study results, a small-scale interpretive qualitative study could provide additional insight into the statistical relationships between the phenomena measured in the quantitative research (Edmondson & McManus, 2007;

Gibson, 2017). This method would enhance the quantitative results and assist with the explanatory interpretation of the data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Beyond data collection and analysis on the modified Carraher model, a second area of research could be with university administrators. A starting point would be to identify general trends in sabbatical policies among faith-based schools. Indeed, financial challenges at faith-based institutions and workload needs may lead to fewer sabbaticals in the future. Another study area could be leadership perceptions of the value and need for sabbaticals.

CONCLUSION

Faculty sabbaticals have long been a fixture of the academic world, albeit with relatively little research on their purpose or outcomes. Recently, the non-academic world has rapidly adopted sabbaticals to reduce burnout and retain scarce talent. This article reviews the extant literature on faculty sabbaticals and extends the view to incorporate the unique characteristics of faith-based institutions, including the biblical concept of the Sabbath. The article also extends the KCM model of sabbaticals (Carraher et al., 2014) from its roots in secular, research-based institutions to teaching-focused, faith-based institutions. Preliminary data collection shows support for the extended model. The authors identify multiple areas for future research.

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