

The Unitarian Church in Westport Ministerial Search Committee Congregational Survey



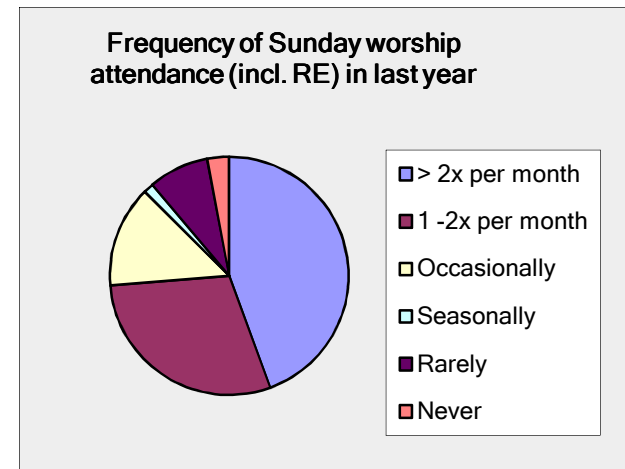
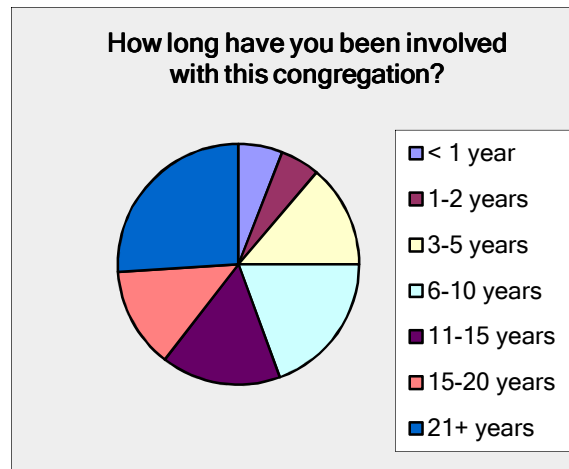
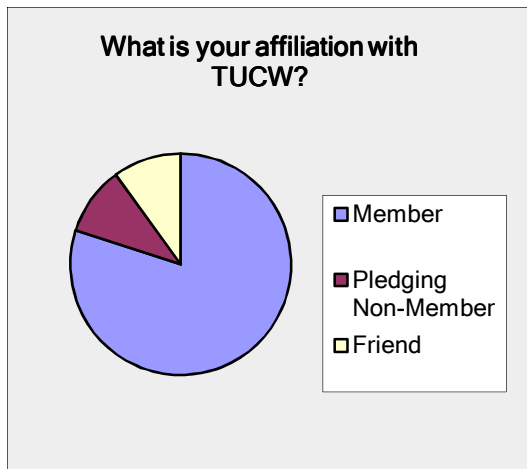
Conducted October, 2014

Full survey results are available at:

http://www.uuwestport.org/images/stories/docs/min_search_articles/msc_2014_survey_results.pdf

Who completed the survey?

- 305 total responses
- Most are Members (80%)
- Most have been involved in TUCW for 3+ years (89%)
- Most attend Sunday worship at least once per month (87%)

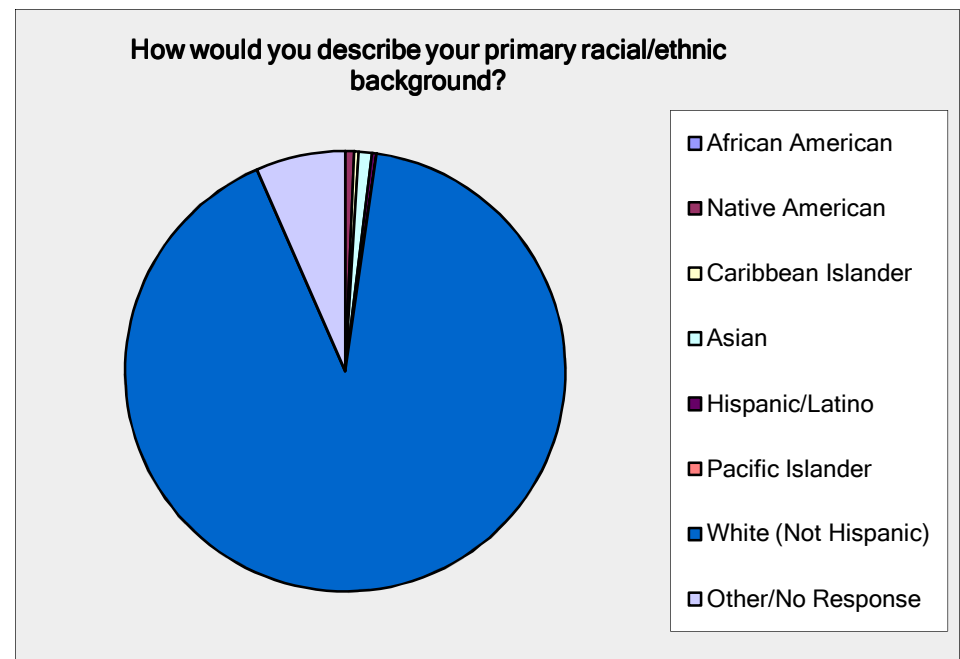
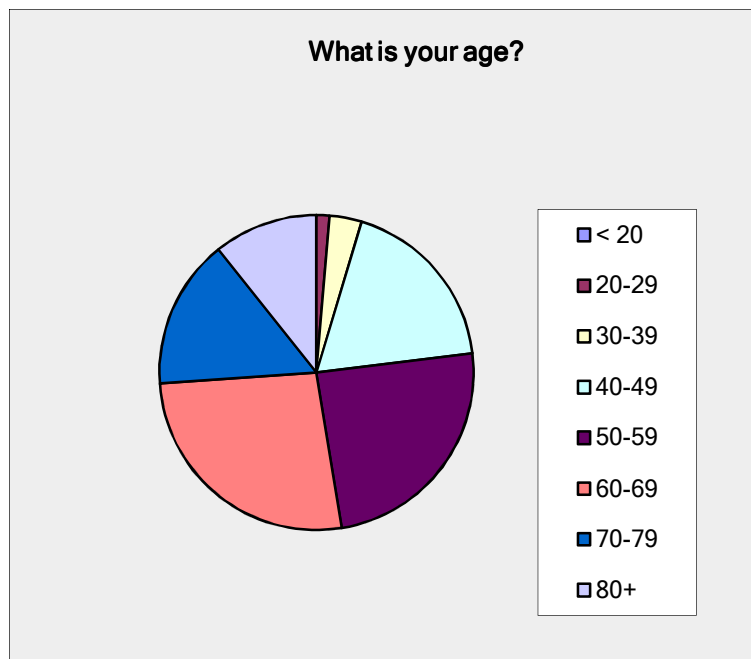


(Chart categories listed in same order as in the legend, starting at 12 o'clock (at top of graph), proceeding clockwise)

Demographics of Congregation

Aging: 52% over 60
77% over 50
95% over 40

Primarily White (94%)

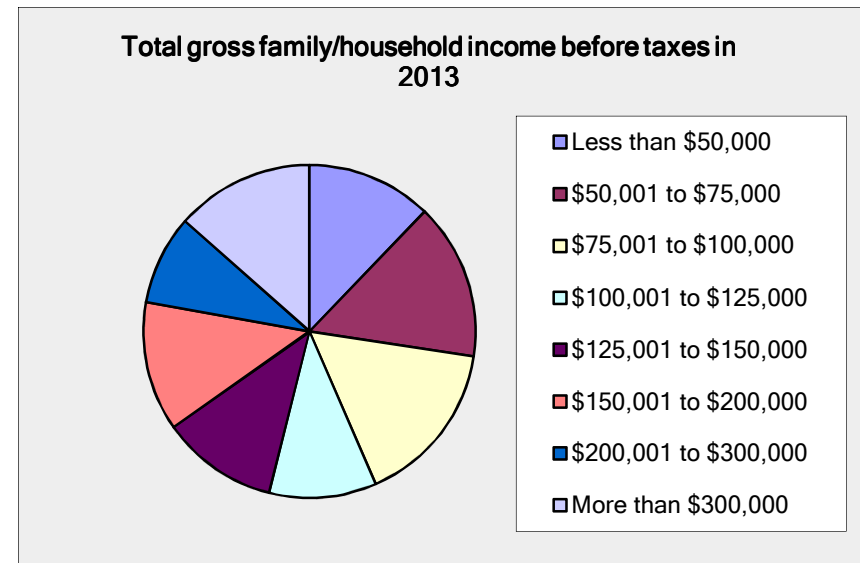
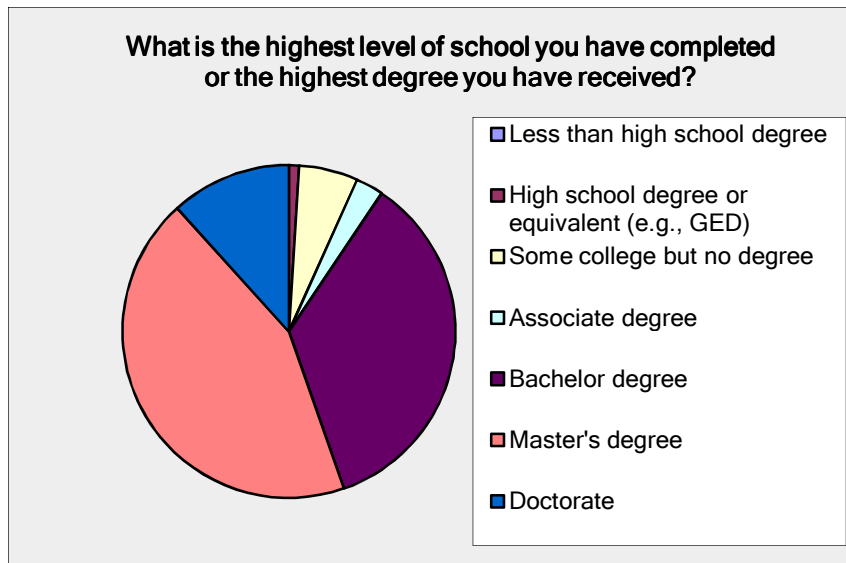


(Chart categories listed in same order as in the legend, starting at 12 o'clock (at top of graph), proceeding clockwise)

Demographics of Congregation, continued

Well Educated: 55% have advanced degrees
91% have at least a bachelors degree

Wide variety of income levels

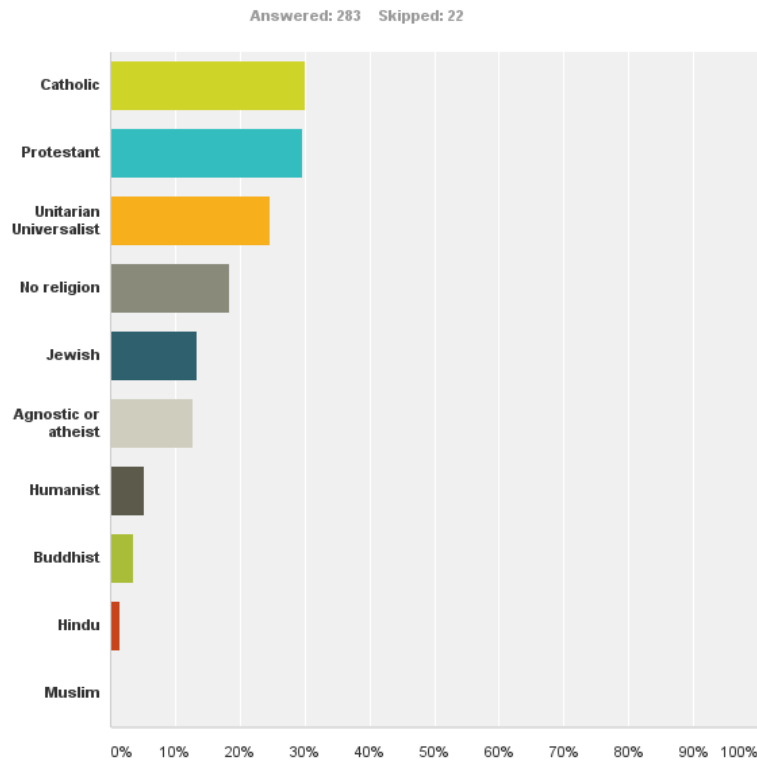


Religious Backgrounds, Current Theologies

Most congregants come from Christian backgrounds (60%)

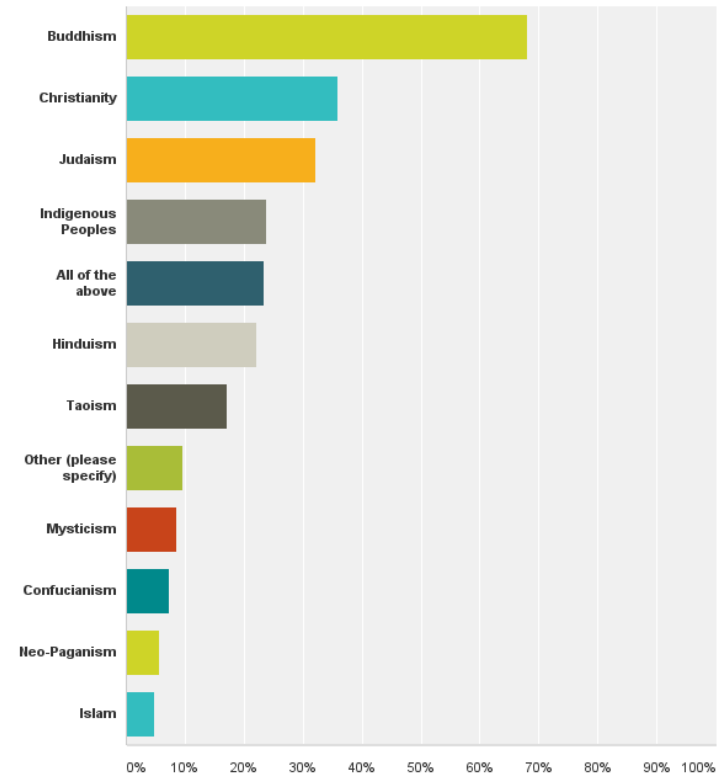
Most congregants find Buddhism particularly inspirational (68%)

Q15 Religious affiliation(s) prior to attending TUCW



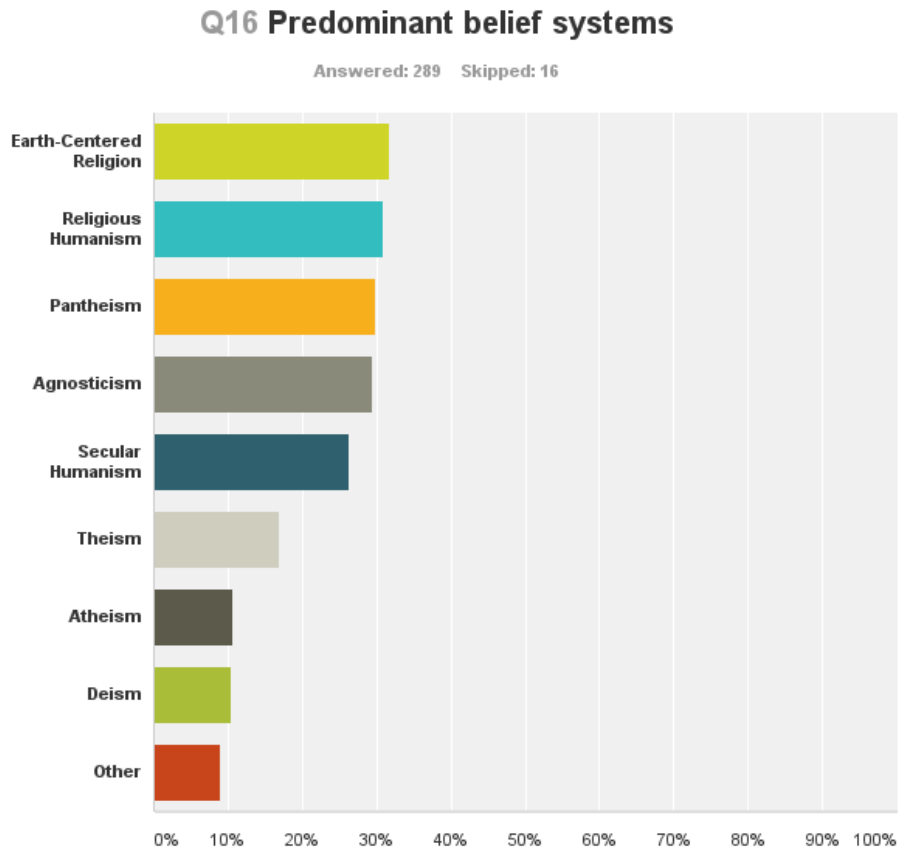
Q17 Religions found particularly inspirational

Answered: 270 Skipped: 35



Predominant Belief Systems

Our congregation holds many belief systems, but the most predominant belief system is that the divine is manifested in nature and the earth (32%)



Belief systems were defined as the following:

- Earth-Centered Religion (The divine is manifested in Nature and the Earth)
- Religious Humanism (Humanism combined with deism, belief in ethical culture)
- Pantheism (God is in all creation)
- Agnosticism (I don't know if there is a God)
- Secular Humanism (Belief in human agency, reason rather than faith, rejection of supernatural)
- Theism (There is one God, found in all religions)
- Atheism (There is no God)
- Deism (We can only know God through reason and observation of the natural world)

Involvement at TUCW

Top 5 activities respondents participated in within the last year:

Social Events (48%)

Voices Cafe (45%)

Neighborhood Circles (35%)

Religious Education for Children/Youth (34%)

Committee/Task Force Meetings (32%)

Top 5 things most important to making respondents' involvement in TUCW valuable:

(weighted on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 meaning most important)

Minister (4.59)

Worship Services (4.40)

Sense of Belonging (4.31)

Intellectual Stimulation (4.24)

Choirs/Music Program (4.13)

Sermon Topics

5 most important sermon topics:

(weighted on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being most important)

- Personal Growth (4.30)
- Spiritual Growth (4.28)
- Coping With Life (4.24)
- Philosophical Ideas (4.19)
- Family Relationships and Values (4.07)

Ministerial Qualities

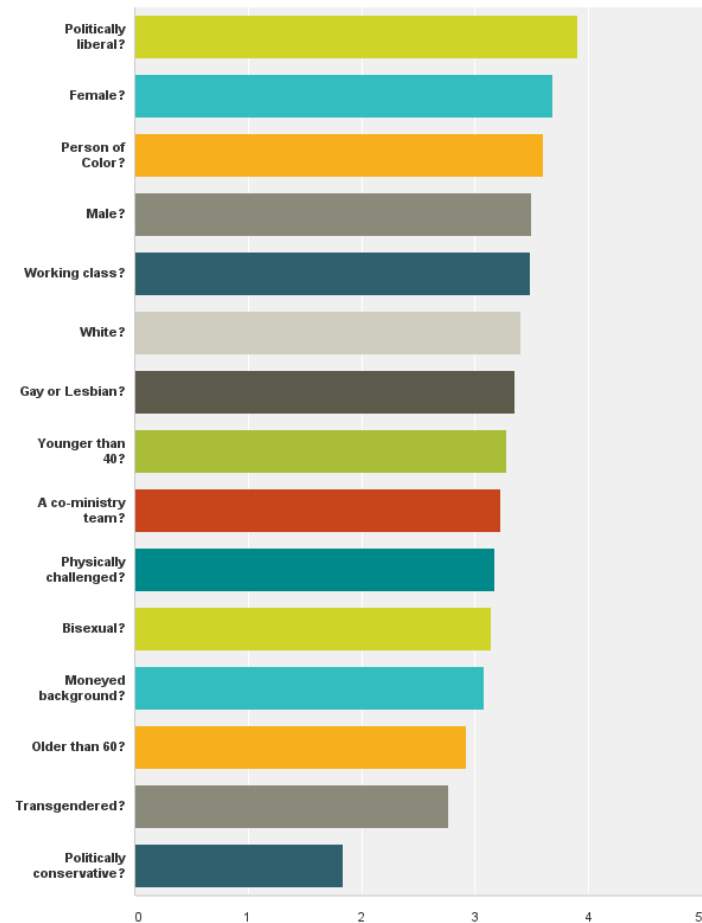
The 5 most important personal qualities for a minister are:

(weighted on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being most important)

- Empathy (shows genuine interest in and concern about others) (4.54)
- Character (strong moral consistency, stability, reliability) (4.52)
- Preaching skill (4.52)
- Intellectual depth (educated, informed, interesting) (4.49)
- Professional competence (ability to communicate, counsel, empower) (4.42)

Q22 Congregation's comfort with calling a minister who is: (5 means very comfortable, 0 means not comfortable)

Answered: 286 Skipped: 19



Ministerial Success/Responsibilities

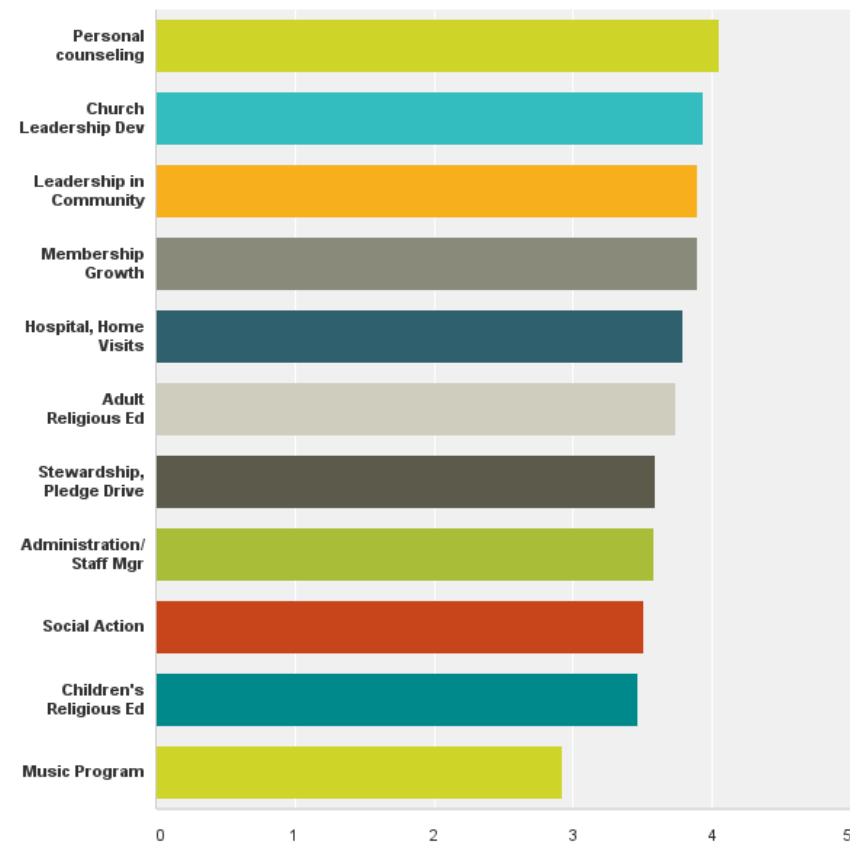
Top 5 Measures of Success for our new minister:

(weighted on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 meaning most important)

- Great sermons and interesting services (4.84)
- “I want to go to church,” and so do others (4.67)
- Feelings of energy and enthusiasm are evident in the congregation (4.67)
- I feel the minister is worthy of my trust (4.58)
- Stronger sense of community and belonging among us (4.49)

Q24 Importance of minister being involved in the following activities (5 meaning most important)

Answered: 283 Skipped: 22



Top Answers Given for “The Worst Mistake Our New Minister Could Make”

- Alienate people or staff, takes sides, have an agenda (43 responses)
- Have personality issues like aloofness, cold, not listening; lacking humility, unable to establish 1-1 relationships with members (38 responses)
- To not respect the history and traditions of the church (28 responses)
- To be dictatorial, arrogant, divisive (a stronger version of the first theme above) (24 responses)
- To not be authentic, or genuine, trying to be someone they're not (18 responses)

Full analysis is at: http://www.uuwestport.org/images/stories/docs/min_search_articles/Biggest_mistake_table.pdf

Focus Group Results

“Looking back, after our new minister has been here for two years, what will be the measures of success? What achievements will make you say you’re glad this minister is among us?”

Top 5 themes:

- Creation of a better church community
- Growth of TUCW
- More robust annual giving and fundraising
- Compelling Sunday services
- Stronger lay leadership

“If you were on the search committee, what are the most important attributes you would look for?”

Top 5 themes:

- Great preacher who’s inspirational and charismatic
- Strong leadership skills
- Good listener with empathy and compassion
- Good manager who works well with people
- Personable, trustworthy, genuine, approachable

Full focus group analysis is at:

http://www.uuwestport.org/images/stories/docs/min_search_articles/focus_group_analysis.pdf