Preachers of all cultural backgrounds are considered occupational voice users—they require a clear, dependable, and strong voice to be proficient in their career. It has been well established that all preachers are at risk for developing voice disorders; however, it is unknown as to whether Black preachers experience a greater incidence of voice disorders than others. According to K. R. Gilbert, Black preaching is characterized by longer average sermons, a melodic voice which intensifies as the sermon reaches its climax, and which requires a clear, dependable, and strong voice to be proficient in their career. It has been well established that all preachers are required to develop voice disorders because of their occupation. Preachers of all cultural backgrounds are considered dependable, and strong voice to be proficient in their career. It has been well established that all preachers are at risk for developing voice disorders; however, it is unknown as to whether Black preachers experience a greater incidence of voice disorders than others. According to K. R. Gilbert, Black preaching is characterized by longer average sermons, a melodic voice which intensifies as the sermon reaches its climax, and which requires a clear, dependable, and strong voice to be proficient in their career.

Methodology

- Researchers used a purposive sample of participants recruited from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University and from SDA churches in the surrounding area.
- Only preachers who have experience preaching at least twice a month for at least three years were included.
- In total, 22 Seventh-day Adventist preachers participated in the study.
- Each participant filled out an eligibility survey with the following information:
  - Length of Preaching Career
  - Average Duration of Kneels
  - Frequency of Preaching

Results

Upon analyzing the raw data, there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups except for the measure of Sustained Phonation. After analyzing the data, the only statistically significant difference between Black and non-Black preachers the researchers found was the measure of Sustained Phonation. Further research should be conducted to discover why this measure differed between the two groups and to understand how some of the demographic measures impacted the data. Some limitations of this study include small sample size and participants’ understanding of self-reported data. By observing individual data and comparing the measures to normative values, we found several members of each group that might be at risk for developing voice disorders. This validates the research that asserts that preachers of all cultural backgrounds are at risk for developing voice disorders because of their occupation.

Discussion

Multiple regression analysis was used to test if any of the demographic (e.g., ethnicity, gender, style of preaching) or voice measurements significantly predicted participants’ sustained phonation. The results of the regression indicated one predictor explained 35% of the variance ($R^2=.354, F(1,19)=11.859, p = .003$). It was found that sustained phonation was strongly predicted by ethnicity ($\beta = -.620, p = .003$).

Selected References
