

## **Utilizing Communication Technology in Spiritual Direction: The Deaf Experience**

### **Researcher:**

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### **Abstract**

This dissertation study investigated the experience of spiritual direction utilizing videophone technology between a spiritual director and spiritual directees, all of whom are deaf. The interview questionnaire was designed with four major content domains that investigated the experience of spiritual direction. The content validity index (CVI) was employed to evaluate the content validity of the questionnaire. Twelve experts consented to participate in the content validity analysis of the questionnaire. As a result, the questionnaire was reduced from 81 to 77 items, resulting in a CVI of .99. These findings suggest a high level of content validity.

The spiritual and technological experiences of the spiritual directees and the spiritual director were examined utilizing the questionnaire. The participants were interviewed via direct videophone to videophone where each of the participants was interviewed in his or her own homes. Each interview was transcribed from sign language into written English and portraits were developed for each spiritual directee participant. The questionnaire also guided the heuristic inquiry and development of the spiritual director's portrait.

Three different qualitative analyses were used in the study from which emerged four common thematic categories. Salient themes from the analyses were consolidated into eight major themes under the four thematic categories, supporting the four propositions inherent in the study's theoretical framework. The results from this study suggest that both communication technology and spiritual direction played an important role in empowering the spiritual directees who are deaf in their relationship with other people and with God.

### **Description**

The goal of this proposal is to present my dissertation study and findings. Through disseminating of information, the objectives include contributing to the body of research regarding social work and spirituality, increasing cultural competency with the Deaf community as an underserved population, and recommending culturally appropriate and spiritually sensitive practices for social workers.