SKOLE AND SABBATH AS A WAY OF BEING IN CLASSICAL EDUCATORS: A HERMENEUTIC PHENOMENOLOGY ON LEISURE

by

Erin Haley Uminn

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

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Abstract

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to describe the essence of the lived experiences of 10 classical Christian secondary teachers and administrators who embrace Greek skolé and Christian Sabbath at classical Christian schools in the United States. Leisure theory guided this study, particularly Sabbath as described by Heschel and Brueggeman, Christian leisure as understood by Pieper and Heintzman, and Samaras' description of skolé in Greek philosophy, as they point to a specific type of leisure and way of being understood by classical Christian educators. van Manen's hermeneutic phenomenological approach was used for data collection and analysis of open-ended response logs, individual interviews, and focus groups. Participants were recruited using snowballing and criterion sampling in United States classical Christian schools who participate in skolé or Sabbath at least four times per week. The study was developed with the following central research question in mind: What are the lived experiences of secondary classical Christian educators who develop skolé and Sabbath practices outside of the classroom? The research sub-questions also sought to uncover how classical Christian educators develop the cross-section of skolé and Sabbath disciplines to enhance meaningful contribution to their work in the classroom. Four essential themes identified through data analysis were intentional boundaries, activity or practice as a medium for contemplation, the human element, and the posture of receptivity leading to thematic interpretations: leisure approach mirrored learning philosophy and skolé and Sabbath practices led to holistic mindfulness for participants, quality relationships, and measurable order and discipline qualities that were transferable to teaching.

Keywords: burnout, classical Christian education, leisure, leisure theory, Sabbath, skolé

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Dedication

In dedication to those who know and inspire me:

My grandparents, the Reverend Will Maynard Davis, Greta Charlene Davis (née Randall), Donald Stanley Daam, and Marlyn Jane Daam (née Kuemple), who led virtuous, disciplined, intellectual lives and gave me glimpses into the Good since I was small.

My parents, Jack Lyndon Daam and Debra Anne Daam (née Davis), who raised me surrounded by books, music, faith, and an insatiable desire to pursue education and writing. You planted the seeds. I have tried to faithfully walk in your footsteps.

My children, Elise Avielle, Irelyn Haley, and William Howard, who have given me the motivation and purpose to pursue hard things, to spread deep and strong roots. You teach me, change me for the better, and make me unendingly proud.

My loving husband, William Raynold Uminn, owns this work as much as I do. You are a man of integrity, humility, faith, and dedication. The seed may have been planted before you, and our children have stabilized us both, but you are what sustains my growth. Without you, I could never have thrived this healthy and tall. Forever one with you.

My God, who redeems all things, and resurrects from ash.

Sursum corda, Habemus ad Dominum

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List of Abbreviations

Association of Classical Christian Schools (ACCS)

Classical Christian school (CCS)

Classical Learning Test (CLT)

Society for Classical Learning (SCL)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

In a 2022 Washington Post article, the state of education in the United States was described as at a critical "breaking point": low academic test scores, teacher burnout, parental frustration exhibited at school board meetings, and plunging enrollment numbers in public schools (Meckler, 2022). The COVID pandemic blew the door off its hinges, exposing students, teachers, and parents as vulnerable, paying a significant toll during lockdowns and mitigations (Chen et al., 2020; Chou & Chou, 2021; Kaden, 2020; Kim & Asbury, 2020; McCluskey et al., 2021; Styck et al., 2021).Teacher shortages have gone from serious to devastating; the ramifications of teacher burnout and scarcity led to lower enrollment in public schools in 2020-2021 that dropped even further in 2021-2022, with parents electing private or charter options, and even homeschooling (Meckler, 2022; Wiggan et al., 2021). However, despite this alarming reality, the classical Christian school (CCS) movement and the culture it fosters continues to thrive and has begun to gain recognition from colleges and scholars across the United States, from Dr. Robert P. George (2022) and Dr. Margarita Mooney-Suarez (2022), both of Princeton, to being promoted by Dr. Angel Parham (2022) of the University of Virginia, Dr. Anika Prather (2022) of Howard University, and the Former California Poet laureate, previous Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, essayist, and critic Dana Gioia (2022). Additionally, the Classical Learning Test (CLT), a college entrance exam that has been recently developed to rival the ACT and SAT, has a voice of support from Cornel West (Tate, 2022). This introductory chapter will outline the research problem, give background to the development and purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study, the significance of the research to the education field, introduce the research questions that guided the study, and present appropriate definitions.

Background

Occupational burnout as a concept is not new but has been studied extensively since the 1970s (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Burke & Greenglass, 1993; Friedman, 1991; Friesen & Sarros, 1989; Kariou et al., 2021; Kyriacou, 1998; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Ozturk et al., 2021; Schaufeli et al., 2009). Moreover, burnout among teachers is prevalent due to the emotional resources required to work with students, parents, and administration (Friesen & Sarros, 1989; Kariou et al., 2021; Ozturk et al., 2021; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Leisure has been shown to significantly influence the well-being and health of individuals and communities and is foundational to human flourishing, but leisure is often considered secondary—a way to recharge to get back to work, or as a coping strategy to remedy occupational burnout (Allen, 1989; Crain et al., 2017; Di Paolantonio, 2019; Dubie, 2021; Gary, 2016; Heintzman, 2000; Klein et al., 2019; White et al., 2015). During the pandemic, remote work and extended time away from traditional workspaces caused many to rethink their work-life balance and the chaotic pace at which they produced results for their place of employment, including teachers (Baker et al., 2021; Bodenheimer & Shuster, 2020; Chen et al., 2020; Kariou et al., 2021; Klapproth et al., 2020; Mansfield, 2021). By rethinking the sacrifices and costs of work, and rediscovering the benefits of protected leisure time, space, and activities, there has been a newfound interest in the recent literature on this topic (Abos et al., 2019; Blackshaw, 2016; Boppart & Ngai, 2021; Datillo & Frias, 2021; Gary, 2016; Henderson, 2010; Iwasaki, 2017; Jo, 2019; Kyriacou, 2001). The background section of this chapter will summarize a brief historical, social, and theoretical understanding of the problem of teacher burnout. It will also emphasize the need for a fuller examination of leisure as a pre-condition to a way of life that holds work in its proper place, found in the CCS movement (Gary, 2016).

Historical Context

Decades ago, burnout syndrome was clarified to include three defining components that are widely recognized across occupations: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced accomplishment (Bodenheimer & Shuster, 2020; Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Burke & Greenglass, 1993; Lauermann & Konig, 2016; Madigan & Kim, 2021; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Schaufeli et al., 2009). Various research studies have shed light on the unique components that contribute to burnout in teachers: workload, excessive paperwork, lack of social support from colleagues and administrators, low salary, student misbehavior and difficult relationships with parents, time pressures, low student motivation, role ambiguity or conflict, and the school culture and environment in combination with teacher age, sex, marital status, education, years of experience and self-efficacy (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Burke & Greenlass, 1993; Friedman, 1991; Kariou et al., 2021; Kokkinos, 2007; Kyriacou, 1998; Mojsa-Kaja et al., 2015; Ozturk et al., 2021; Schonfeld, 2001; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Thus, working conditions, school climate, and school culture highly contribute to or mitigate teacher burnout (Friedman, 1991; Mojsa-Kaja et al., 2015; Ozturk et al., 2021; Schonfeld, 2001; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011; Turnipseed, 1994). Consequently, teacher burnout leads to psychological, physiological, and social challenges: anxiety, depression, anger, and guilt, which result in teachers pulling away from their work, students, and productivity, reducing their confidence in their skill or ability (Friedman, 1991; Schonfeld, 2001).

The contributions to and outcomes of teacher burnout continue to be critically examined considering the challenges of teaching in the 21st century (Baker et al., 2021; Chou & Chou, 2021; Cutri et al., 2020; Garcia- Carmona et al., 2018; Friesen & Sarros, 1989; Huk et al., 2018; Iwasaki, 2017; Kaden, 2020; Klein et al., 2019; Lee & Ashford, 1996; Madigan & Kim, 2021;

Richards et al., 2018; Wiggan et al., 2021). In a recent meta-analysis of secondary teacher burnout conducted by Garcia-Carmona et al. (2018) that analyzed 45 studies from 1993 to 2017, the teacher burnout rate was between 20-40%. Lauermann & Konig (2016) echoed this worrying trend. In a study of self-efficacy, pedagogical knowledge, and burnout that controlled for gender and experience, the professional context in which teachers work had more influence than the teacher's general self-efficacy (Lauermann & Konig, 2016). Even more interesting, it was found that self-efficacy, the belief that a teacher could impose progress with the resources at hand to meet professional goals, was lower among older, experienced teachers than novice teachers, suggesting disillusionment and fatigue among those who had been working in the field for some time, despite their professional knowledge and tenure (Lauerman & Konig, 2016). Burnout was linked to self-efficacy and professional pedagogical knowledge, which were largely influenced by the teaching environment and the administrative support teachers received, which was also supported by Huk et al. (2018) (Lauerman & Konig, 2016).

A recent meta-analysis focused on teacher attrition, where exhaustion and job satisfaction were significant predictors of a teacher's intentions to quit (Madigan & Kim, 2021). Specifically, exhaustion ($r+$ = -.42; 95% Confidence Interval = -0.48, -0.36; N = 14,217), depersonalization ($r+$ = -0.33; 95% Confidence Interval = -0.38, -0.28; N = 6340) and reduced accomplishment ($r+$ = -0.30; 95% Confidence Interval = -0.38, -0.22; N = 7831) all indicated a significant negative relationship with job satisfaction (Madigan & Kim, 2021). The researchers noted that burnout created "interpersonal conflict and tiredness both inside and outside the classroom," influencing their self-efficacy and the quality of their emotional labor (Madigan & Kim, 2021, p. 10). A teacher's exhaustion and low productivity, linked to overtime hours at work as a risk factor, was also supported by Kreuzfeld et al. (2022). On a positive note, job satisfaction was associated with

reduced turnover and increased productivity, and teachers who were satisfied in their teaching environment had greater levels of motivation, enjoyment, and enthusiasm, suggesting it is necessary to reduce workload, increase resources and mentorship, and to provide social support if schools are to retain qualified, experienced educators in the classroom (Madigan & Kim, 2021).

Social Context

A circular effect exists between teachers, students, and the school environment. Since school culture and environment contribute to or mitigate teacher burnout, and teacher burnout directly impacts student success, policies and administrative support for teachers are instrumental to producing successful outcomes for students (Allensworth et al. 2009; Arvidsson et al., 2019; Azeem & Hussain, 2021; Boyd et al., 2011; Elyashiv, 2019; Ford et al., 2019; Grissom, 2011; Ladd, 2011; Mohamed, 2020; Redding et al., 2019; Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Sutcher et al., 2016). To create the social and normative conditions that are required for student success and well-being, support for teachers' well-being must be robust to avoid teacher burnout and attrition (Arvidsson et al., 2019; Ford et al., 2019; Mohamed, 2020; Redding et al., 2019). Particularly, organizational support that improves the overall climate and social conditions of a school to build trust between teachers, interpersonal support that focuses on leaderships' relationship with individual teachers and teams, and intrapersonal support that bolsters the daily workplace experience perceived by individual teachers is needed (Arvidsson et al., 2019; Ford et al., 2019). As teachers experience higher burnout rates due to organizational, interpersonal, and intrapersonal factors of poor school environment leading to low job satisfaction and attrition, student achievement suffers (Kruezfeld et al., 2022; Madigan & Kim, 2021).

Therefore, when the school culture and environment support and nourish the teacher, the teacher, in turn, is motivated, enthusiastic, and passionate about their work and their interactions with students, and the expertise they provide is of sound and high quality (Allensworth et al., 2009; Boyd et al., 2011; Grissom, 2011; Ladd, 2011; Redding et al., 2019). However, without the support of a thriving school culture, teachers are more likely to experience burnout that quickly affects their students' psychological well-being and academic outcomes. (Arvidsson et al., 2019; Azeem & Hussain, 2021). In a recent longitudinal mixed-methods study, Redding et al. (2019) found that administrators reported instructional and emotional support for teachers, a positive school and teacher community, induction, mentoring, and teacher autonomy mitigated against teacher attrition in 64 teachers across 11 districts in 4 states. However, it should be noted that of the 64 teachers, 10 left the profession completely within the first 3 years; after 4 years 23 teachers moved schools and only 31 stayed in their original school (Redding et al., 2019). Administrators indicated that sometimes it is best to support teachers who intend to leave the profession if they are unmotivated and unproductive, since student success and classroom environment mirror the teachers' (Redding et al., 2019). Additionally, if teacher attrition is high due to lack of administrative support, mentorship, and negative school climate, expectations tend to be lowered when hiring teachers to fill those vacant positions (Sutcher et al., 2016). Rather, an administration that leads with a positive but realistic view, brings clarity to roles, enforces rules and behavior, offers a plan of support regarding instruction and classroom management, while simultaneously approving a lower workload, paperwork, and improved occupational conditions, salaries, and recognitions, bolsters the faculty community (Allensworth et al., 2009; Boyd et al., 2011; Elyashiv, 2019; Grissom, 2011; Ladd, 2011; Redding et al., 2019).

Administrative support should involve an active, positive school climate that incorporates mentorship and professional development to target teachers' sensibilities and motivates them over and above a total-work mentality. The classical Christian school (CCS) acknowledges the reality of soul and mind refreshment for teachers to thrive within a hearty culture: one that is Christian and passed down by the traditional Church, and one that is classical, referring to the time period of the Greeks and the Romans, roughly 600 B.C. to 476 A.D. (Perrin, 2004). The classical tradition of the Greeks and Romans, which included the concept of *paedia*, or training up in the humanities and the Greek and Latin languages with excellence to pass down a culture, was carefully preserved by the medieval church and Muslim scholars (Adler, 1952/1998; Clark & Jain, 2019). Classical education, then, has evolved since the time of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, but has come to encompass classic literature and history that is of enduring quality before and since (Perrin, 2004). It includes the study of those histories, literature, and languages that continue the great conversation of all humanity, probing the deepest transcendental and existential questions and greatest thoughts that mankind has asked, studied, and passed down (Adler, 1952/1998; Prather & Parham, 2020; Parham & Prather, 2022). Therefore, a classical and Christian education is one that has preserved the great conversation and traditions of the Western canon and does not just include those of the ancient Greeks and Romans, but a wide breadth of human history and original sources (Adler, 1952; Parham & Prather, 2022; Perrin, 2004; Tarnas, 1991). It is from this social context that the modern CCS has reemerged in the United States over the last few decades, attempting to preserve, recover, and continue the classical tradition of a liberal education, including leisure practice over and above a total work regime, that was slowly weeded out of United States schools after the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution, and the Great War (Perrin, 2004). This classical, Christian perspective impacts the school climate and

culture, though empirical research is lacking to show how the CCS and its focus on leisure as a way of life, specifically the inclusion skolé and Sabbath, influence teachers' pedagogy and classroom environment. Leisure is socially and communally oriented, because it is taught in a larger cultural context and modeled through education and the Church. Schools undeniably instill a posture toward the world to their students, and to their teachers (Anthony & Benson, 2003; Barzun, 1991).

The CCS utilizes the seven liberal arts of the Western canon contained in the trivium and the quadrivium: grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music (Clark & Jain, 2019). Within this context, the classical Christian educator teaches disciplines deeply and to mastery, with a central focus on the philosophy of wisdom and the theology of virtue to form students' souls with discovery and wonder (Clark & Jain, 2019; Perrin, 2004; Perrin, 2021). In fact, classical Christian education is not one that posits knowledge acumen for the sake of a job in the workforce upon graduation but a development of the soul through life-long learning, where one's profession is a noble calling, and a paycheck is a necessary byproduct of an artful, virtuous way of living life (Clark & Jain, 2019). This is the social context in which skolé and Sabbath practices are daily incorporated into the life of educators, informing the pedagogy and rhythms of the school community, but are intentional and practiced in the teacher's personal life so that their work and life outside of the school are holistic, rather than compartmentalized and fragmented.

Greek and Christian leisure practice is rich in history and cultural context, built into one's daily or weekly life to develop the soul, and is modeled by administration and teachers to students, intentionally dignifying one another (Heintzman, 2008; Heintzman, 2017; Jo, 2019; Perrin, 2021; Samaras, 2017). A sharp cross-section of Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian leisure

practice reside in educators who teach in CCSs. The CCS movement began in the early 1990s as a rediscovery of classical education that was discarded in the United States during the 20th century (Wilson, 1996). It started as a small society but has grown exponentially in the last decade. Classical Christian educators hold a unique perspective and balance of the phenomenon of Greek and Christian leisure, answering some of the difficulties of modern life and teaching, including stressful school environments and increased mental health crises that have boomed in the digital age and during the global pandemic (Baker et al., 2021; Chou & Chou, 2021; Klapproth et al., 2020; Jo, 2019; Santamaria et al., 2021).

Leisure practices and one's understanding of leisure is dependent upon one's culture, and CCSs certainly have a culture that ascribes to values concerning good habits of leisure, and therefore, education (Davidovich, 2017). Although this subsection of educators in the United States has written extensively on the topic of leisure, presented the information to other classical Christian educators at conferences, and continues to develop learning tools and access to classical Christian resources, as of 2022, there are no peer-reviewed articles or original research on the outcomes of such educational practices (Association of Classical Christian Schools, 2021; Circe, 2022; ClassicalU Classical Academic Press, 2022; Society for Classical Learning, 2022). An exploration of leisure and education is shared within the community from teacher to teacher, in workshops and seminars, or in training, but original, empirical research is lacking. Among the lack of research includes an understanding of the foundational attitudes and practices of teachers when discussing the historic, Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian concepts of leisure, which are essential, foundational pieces to the educational heritage they model and engage with (Heintzman, 2017).

Theoretical Context

Modern leisure studies and conceptualization have focused quite extensively on mindfulness and spiritual benefits to the individual (Blackshaw, 2016; Harris, 2005; Hegarty, 2009; Iwasaki, 2017; Kleiber et al., 2002). The connection between leisure and one's need to make meaning of one's life and purpose has been shown to positively impact mental health and to cope with stressful events (Iwasaki, 2017; Iwasaki et al., 2015; Kleiber et al., 2002). This connection between meaning in one's work and leisurely pursuits that improve and develop the soul have a natural and positive impact on one's personal well-being, and consequently, on one's work. These ideas were first explored in the Western canon of history through biblical concepts of Sabbath reclamation of time away from work and Greek philosophy's discussion of leisure, virtue, and intellectual excellence (Aristotle, ca. 350 B. C. E./1995, ca. 350 B. C. E./2009; Bruggeman, 2017; Markos, 2021; Pieper, 1952/2009; Plato, ca. 380 B. C. E./2005). This theoretical context is foundational to CCS and educators who practice leisure in their daily and weekly lives to inform their teaching and live holistically.

According to Heintzman (2017), the concepts of skolé and Sabbath are historically, socially, and practically intertwined. The notion of leisure in early Christianity included pacing one's work and developing the ability to rest to enjoy beauty, influenced and modified by the Greek skolé concept of the contemplative life (Fox, 2009; Heintzman, 2017; Jo, 2019). This was later noted by Augustine's (427/1997) view of the life of work, the life of leisure, and the life of work and leisure combined, where truth was explored and work or action did not ignore the contemplation of truth or beauty, nor did contemplation ignore work needing to be done (Heinztman, 2017). Leisure became a broader concept of intellectual pursuit and the ordering of one's affections by living one's life outwardly in a social, practical, daily context.

Sabbath rest in Judeo-Christian belief is outlined in the Torah as a period set aside to reflect on God's goodness as modeled by God after creation to be observed every seventh day (*English Standard Version*, 2001/2022, Genesis 2:2-3, Exodus 20:8-11). Christians practice Sabbath not only by attendance at church each Sunday, but as a way of life where intentional, restful practices outside of work to enjoy the goodness of creation is a cultural tradition, understanding as the Scriptures say, "the Sabbath was made for man" and the teaching of God's word and the life of the community of believers was to be passed down to each generation: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and you shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way" (Anthony & Benson, 2003; *English Standard Version,* 2001/2022, Mark 2:27, Deuteronomy 6:5-7; Pieper, 1952/2009).

Leisure in ancient Greek philosophy originates in skolé, σχολή, known as restful and fulfilled learning, taking up one's life in the process and forming the character and soul of the person (Clark & Jain, 2019; Perrin, 2021). It is through this that we gain the English word scholar, and school from skolé σχολείο (Clark and Jain, 2019; Perrin, 2021). The Greek understanding of leisure is defined by development and growth, and one's contemplation of Plato's ideas, or forms, and Aristotle's systematic understanding of the world (Aristotle, ca. 350 B. C. E./1995; Aristotle, ca. 350 B. C. E./2009; Markos, 2021; Plato, ca. 380 B. C. E./2005). In the ancient Greek understanding, the school was the cultivating environment of leisurely practice. In this way, leisure is a distinct and intentional posture, where individuals are selective in what and how they participate in activity to evoke soulful, virtuous change within themselves that revolves around faith and intellect to inform one's lifework (Pieper, 1952/2009; Heintzman, 2017; Samaras, 2017;

Sertrillanges, 1987). This harkens back to Plato's allegory of the cave, which posits the enlightenment of man to true reality over forms, shadows, and shapes (Markos, 2021; Plato, ca. 380 B. C. E./2004). One did not select pursuits for self-expression or fame; one received and passed down personal and communal practices that would form one's piety and virtue on a larger stage: gymnastic and music, or the concept of leisure that nurtures both the body and the soul through "poetic and moral education" to be within the world (Clark & Jain, 2019, p. 25).

The concept of Sabbath meshed with skolé continued to intertwine and expand through the teachings of St. Augustine (427/1997) and St. Thomas Aquinas (1485/2018), who used the principles of Aristotelian philosophy to develop a contemplative view of God and a systematic theology (Anthony & Benson, 2003; Heintzman, 2017). St. Benedict's (516/2008) rule for the monastic life extended and interweaved the personal with the communal. Development persisted under the teachings of Martin Luther, who viewed all life, whether work or rest, as contemplative and soul forming (Heintzman, 2017). Consequently, the work or rest that one participates in forms the person, either for good or poor development, impacting the larger community.

Problem Statement

The problem is that teachers encounter unique stressors, and they often do not utilize or fully realize a foundation of healthy leisure practices as attainable or a necessary component to one's work life to manage occupational stress and lack of environmental control (Bodenheimer & Shuster, 2020; Cutri et al., 2020; Kaden, 2020; Niemi & Kousa, 2020; Scott, 2020). Researchers and scholars have emphasized teacher mental health and coping strategies that include positive reinterpretation, drug-alcohol disengagement, behavioral disengagement, and various coping mechanisms such as venting, reinterpretation, denial, restraint, acceptance, and religious belief (Klapproth et al., 2020). Teacher stress, anxiety, and depression have also been

highlighted, as well as functional and dysfunctional coping strategies that include planning or seeking social support, to giving up alcohol and other substances (Klapproth et al., 2020).

Some studies have shed light on student and teacher mental health and the mindful practices they employ (Hayes et al., 2019; Matiz et al., 2020). However, little exploration and discovery has been conducted on leisure practices teachers employ to intentionally integrate their work with all aspects of their life in a way that is healthy and balanced, allowing them to engage in the noble but challenging work of teaching (Heintzman, 2017). Additionally, according to Heintzman (2017) Christian leisure studies are not extensive or widespread, focusing exclusively on the Amish, Mennonites, evangelical theologians, Assembly of God, Brethren, the Black Church, and Christian leisure in Australia (Anderson & Autry, 2011; Collins, 1993; Hothem, 1983; Livengood, 2004; Schulz & Auld, 2009; Waller, 2009; Wenger, 2003). Spirituality and leisure have been gaining exposure in the literature but do not reflect Christian leisure practices or the combination of skolé and Sabbath practices (Heintzman, 2016; Heintzman, 2017).

In the last two years, teachers have reported new stressors: feeling underprepared for the technical difficulties they encountered when required to teach online and, despite years of experience, becoming novices once again as plans, mitigations, and communication from the state or their administration were constantly changing (Cutri, et al, 2020). These alterations made it difficult to assess student learning and respond accordingly (Cutri, et al., 2020). Additionally, the increase in teacher workload and emotional involvement are escalating, coupled with unreliable internet and lack of access to resources that were only relieved by colleague interactions and open communication (Kaden, 2020). Emotional labor, as well as the ways in which teachers perceive support, may be part of a more complex belief system influenced by personal practices (Kaden, 2020; Niemi & Kousa, 2020; Scott, 2020). The current research does

not draw a link between personal reflective practices exercised on personal time or outside of the work environment, against the new and unique stressors encountered under modern teaching and how they influence instructional practice and efficacy. Extraordinarily little empirical research has been conducted on Christian leisure practice in action, or those that have a deep understanding of skolé (Heintzman, 2017; Samaras, 2017).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to describe the essence of the lived experiences of 10 classical Christian secondary teachers and administrators who embrace Greek skolé and Christian Sabbath at classical Christian schools in the United States. At this stage in the research, Greek skolé will be generally defined as restful learning through meditation, cultivation of habits, and enjoyment of meaningful, personal growth in a conducive, interactive environment (Perrin, 2021; Samaras, 2017). CCSs have deep roots in historical Christianity and the canon of western literature and history, with classical schools and educators developing distinctive practices of skolé and Sabbath: the classical understanding of restful, lifelong learning and purposeful leisure attitude or way of being to encounter the world (Clark & Jain, 2019; Perrin, 2021).

Significance of the Study

A strong understanding of leisure as an attitude or posture toward the world has unique implications for educators in their work. An educator's ability to adapt to various difficult circumstances is a hallmark of the profession. Additionally, the wonder and awe one feels toward their discipline is rooted in a teacher's pursuit of vocation. Therefore, adapting to the educational climate and environment through leisure as a way of being fosters wonder and awe for teachers,

and they may pass this passion on to their students. The following section will describe the theoretical, empirical, and practical significance of this study.

Theoretical significance

Leisure studies have a wide and deep history, and this study focused specifically on the classical understanding of Greek skolé and Christian Sabbath (Heintzman, 2017; Samaras, 2017). Greek skolé involves intellectual, contemplative pursuits for the purpose of virtuous formation of the soul, including faith, hope, charity, prudence, fortitude, justice, and temperance (Clark & Jain, 2019). Christian leisure practices directly stem from Jewish practices, as found in the historic, religious, cultural practice of Sabbath (Bruggeman, 2017; Pieper, 1952/2009). Judeo-Christian Sabbath involves a reclamation of time away from work and the marketplace to participate in communal singing, prayers, feasting, and conversation (Heschel, 1951/2005). This often involves stepping away from social media and other electronic media or technology. This study has theoretical significance in leisure research because it contributed to the need for a hearty examination of Christian Sabbath and skolé practices as part of the larger context of leisure theory.

Empirical Significance

As stated by Heintzman (2017) and Samaras (2017), very little empirical research exists to describe the practices and implications of Judeo-Christian Sabbath or Greek skolé, and there is no empirical research on the combination of these two leisure attitudes in CCSs. This research study of classical, Christian educators and their understanding of leisure practices that are distinctly classical (Greco-Roman) and Christian in modern, 21st century education furthered empirical exploration of leisure in education and specific leisure attitudes and practices of teachers outside of their classroom and work demands. The implications and practical

application of skolé and Sabbath practice are far reaching and propitious for those who are willing to step back from frantic, anxious accommodations to the thoughtful cultivation of the self and students (Clark & Jain, 2019). Additionally, this study may help to pave the way for further research on traditional leisure as a way of being and religious and cultural forms of leisure that are currently lacking (Gary, 2016; Heintzman, 2017; Henderson, 2010; Parr & Schmalz, 2019; Payne et al., 2018; Samaras, 2017).

Practical Significance

By understanding teacher lived experience and how their leisure practices inform their teaching, specifically skolé and Sabbath, secondary educators have a greater grasp on practical application that strikes at the root of personal belief. Although restful, lifelong growth and learning is not a feature of classical educators only, the practicability of their discipline should not be ignored considering the mental health crises and burnout facing teachers, especially since emergency pandemic teaching (Perrin, 2021). This study holds promising outcomes for schools and educators who have similar values and missions. Skolé and Sabbath are future-oriented and reflective, requiring a fuller understanding of the world, the human being situated within the world, and personal growth through slow-paced, soporific learning that cultivates stability despite shifting circumstances (Clark & Jain, 2019; Perrin, 2021; Pieper, 1952/2009; Sertillanges, 1987).

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

Central Research Question

What are the lived experiences of secondary classical Christian educators who develop skolé and Sabbath practices outside of the classroom?

Sub-Question One

What are the beliefs that influence the choice to pursue skolé and Sabbath practices in secondary classical Christian education teachers?

Sub-Question Two

How do the skolé and Sabbath practices of secondary classical Christian educators outside of the classroom influence their teaching?

Definitions

1. *Burnout syndrome*- emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced accomplishment (Bodenheimer & Shuster, 2020)
2. *Classical Christian education* – Education that is marked by the development of virtue, following the classical methods and practices first honed by the Greeks and Romans, passed down through the Church in the Middle Ages (Clark & Jain, 2019; Perrin, 2021; Pieper, 1952/2009)
3. *Leisure*- space and time away from work for a contemplative, reflective life (Pieper, 1952/2009)
4. *Sabbath*- a religious, Judeo-Christian reclamation of time with sacred observance and ritual (Bruggeman, 2017; Heschel, 1951/2005)
5. *Self-efficacy*- the idea that human beings are able to exercise control over their actions which effect their lives (Bandura, 1997).
6. *Skolé* – from the Greek, meaning restful learning through meditation, cultivation of habits, and enjoyment of meaningful, personal growth in a conducive, interactive environment (Perrin, 2021; Samaras, 2017).

Summary

The problem is that teachers encounter unique stressors, and they often do not utilize or fully realize a foundation of healthy leisure practices as attainable or a necessary component to one's work life to manage occupational stress and lack of environmental control (Bodenheimer & Shuster, 2020; Cutri et al., 2020; Kaden, 2020; Niemi & Kousa, 2020; Scott, 2020). The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to describe the essence of the lived experiences of 10 classical Christian secondary teachers and administrators who embrace Greek skolé and Christian Sabbath at classical Christian schools in the United States. At this stage in the research, Greek skolé will be generally defined as restful learning through meditation, cultivation of habits, and enjoyment of meaningful, personal growth in a conducive, interactive environment (Perrin, 2021; Samaras, 2017). A thorough understanding of the mental health implications on teachers and their subsequent ability to confront and adapt to the unique challenges of modern teaching allow current and future educators to adopt techniques and practices that benefit their emotional and spiritual health (Bodenheimer & Shuster, 2020; Chen et al., 2020; Klapproth et al., 2020).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to describe the essence of the lived experiences of 10 classical Christian secondary teachers and administrators who embrace Greek skolé and Christian Sabbath at classical Christian schools in the United States. At this stage in the research, Greek skolé will be generally defined as restful learning through meditation, cultivation of habits, and enjoyment of meaningful, personal growth in a conducive, interactive environment (Perrin, 2021; Samaras, 2017). The verdant source of historic and traditional leisure, both Greek and Christian, provide intentional, meaningful, and robust perspectives that influence one's development of the soul and impact one's work. First, this literature review begins with a theoretical framework that describes an emergent, contemporary understanding of leisure theory contrasted with historic, Western philosophy. The historic exploration of leisure will highlight skolé and Sabbath's relevance to the call for substance and clarity in modern leisure practice, where there is a renewed interest in religious and non-religious peoples and institutions (Roosien, 2021; Showen & Mantie, 2019). Next, current empirical research related to the benefits of time and space away from work and constant connectivity, and activities revolving around mindfulness, reflection, and meaning in one's lifework, will be presented to frame the proposed study (White et al., 2015). Finally, the literature review concludes with a clear presentation of the need for further research on Greek skolé and Christian Sabbath attitude and practice, as well as the lack of empirical research exploring CCSs in the United States (Heintzman, 2017; McLean, 2017; Speedling, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of a scientific study is the most important aspect of qualitative research scholarship, guiding and sustaining "a rational basis for explaining or interpreting the results of research" and propagating research questions to extend previous inquiry and investigation (Gall et al., 2007, p. 45). Without a robust theoretical framework, research fails to yield important findings and may address trivial questions without a clear roadmap or justification for conducting the research (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Gall et al., 2007). For this study, the theoretical framework was comprised of a clear understanding of the convergence of Greek skolé and Christian Sabbath practiced by classical Christian educators to ground the research questions and address implications for future exploration (Adler, 1951/1998; Gary, 2006). Within leisure theory are several key and preliminary concepts, including the definition of leisure, the time devoted to leisurely pursuits, what constitutes a leisure activity, the reasons for partaking in leisure activity, and the benefits or outcomes.

Modern Leisure Theory

Leisure studies, which focus on the societal and communal practices of individuals or groups in the absence of work, have altered criteria based on time period, geographic location, and group affiliation, but are dictated by one's environmental influences and place in the world (Blackshaw, 2016; Harris, 2005). Leisure has a thick, deep history that dates back millennia. However, modern leisure studies of the past century often cause confusion because leisure has ceased to be a fixed subject with an agreed upon definition or clear categories among scholars and researchers (Harris, 2005; Spracklen et al., 2017). Therefore, modern developments of leisure, which have stemmed from ancient and medieval conceptions both Western and Eastern, have recently been criticized for the lack of foundational precision among researchers (Codina & Pestana, 2019; Parr & Schmalz, 2019; Payne et al., 2018). Some leisure theorists have recently

highlighted the nebulous, sinking sand of modern leisure studies and have attempted to develop deeper, fuller conceptions that shift away from leisure as transactional to leisure as a reflective way of being (Rooisen, 2021; Snyder, 2018). Interestingly, it is an older, traditional understanding of leisure that scholars are advocating for (Parr & Schmalz, 2019; Payne et al., 2018; Roosien, 2021; Sivan, 2017; Tonietto et al, 2021; Zarate et al., 2019).

Heavy-handed emphasis on measurable outcomes by way of grades and test scores in a rigid environment that require teachers to give up more time to working hours, coupled with constant internet connection and availability, has resulted in teacher pushback (Baker et al., 2021; Chou & Chou, 2021; Elyashiv, 2019; Garcia-Carmona, et al. 2018; Huk et al., 2018; Kariou et al., 2021; Klusmann et al., 2016). Moderation, with a focus on human thriving, is desired more than ever (Ulvik et al., 2021). Indeed, Mohamed (2020) laments the factory-based, industrialized instructional model in use over the past century that adheres to strict rubrics and complicated grading systems "without much attention to or concern for the emotions of students if and when their efforts fall short" (p. 44). However, this industrialized form of schooling is a blight on teachers as well, encouraging a vicious cycle of machine-like production between students, teachers, and administration. This does not mean that academic expectations or quality outcomes should be done away with, but overwork that causes relentless fatigue must be addressed. An education that considers the whole soul of an individual in a life-long process of development over and above procedure, harkens to the methods and philosophies developed by Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, and others, dipping into the deep well of history where tradition is rich and thick in meaning, applicability, and resource (Markos, 2021; Pieper, 1952/2009). Teachers may rediscover and use these traditions to reclaim their time and space for contemplation, self-reflection, and ultimately, to model the good life to their students.

To become fully knowledgeable about any branch of study, “one must consult the living man and listen to his living voice,” sitting with a wise teacher for diverse and intricate learning to weed out blind spots, weaknesses, and ignorance (Newman, 1852/2016, p. 8). The teacher must first be nourished before they can serve their own students well, and this is only attainable with adequate time, space, and contemplation (Gary, 2006; Horner, 2015; Turley, 2014). In the following related literature, studies will be presented to highlight the need for uncluttered time, mental and physical space, and mindful, contemplative activities. The lack of empirical research that implements or explores reflective practices of teachers will be noted.

Defined by Time and Transaction

Leisure is currently defined as “time free from any compulsory activity,” or whatever one might do in the absence of work or time away from work (Gary, 2017; Snyder, 2018; Veledo, 2018, p. 1). Consequently, leisure activities are not strictly defined. According to Mannberg et al. (2021), one’s leisure resides in one’s utilization of goods, activities, and pursuits of choice when away from work. Currently, there is a distinct, economic flavor to leisure as beneficial production—one of three market values alongside work and home production, where the more productive one’s leisure time is, the more productive and energetic they may be as a result (Boppart & Ngai, 2021). This thinking about leisure mirrors how society transactionally thinks about money and purchasing power: the more money acquired, the bigger the house or the more extravagant the vacation, wardrobe, or other possessions. In the same way, modern leisure theory views leisure time as transactional: the more leisure hours I enjoy, the more satisfied I will be, the more work I may produce, or the more engaged I may be as a parent, friend, or partner (Crain et al., 2017; Ho & Cho, 2021; Henderson, 2010; Kleiber et al., 2002; Lovelock et al., 2019;

Pressley, 2021). It is true that leisure does provide beneficial outcomes for individuals, but it is often too simply viewed as a commodity to acquire rather than a way of life to be built.

Settling down to pursue leisure is often difficult to achieve. Boppart & Ngai (2021) recently developed a model showing average leisure time and inequality among low and high skilled workers by conducting a meta-analysis on the economic impact of leisure. The focus of the comparison study looked at the "implicit price of leisure increases over time," where rising household wages were connected to increasing average "leisure production" (Boppart & Ngai, 2021, p. 154, 156). Households that experienced a faster wage growth and higher education had slow surges in leisure time. In other words, the "price" of market, home, and leisure "budgeted" into one's daily allotment found that low-skilled workers, on average, had more time away from work and had less access to "market time," and those with higher education and skills tended to work lengthier hours (Boppart & Ngai, 2021, p. 157). The comparison of leisure to an economic category was not hidden, but implicit.

Overabundance of Activities

Using this understanding, modern leisure theory has focused on the socio-economic-political implications of one's access or barriers to time away from the obligatory work week, namely weekends or vacations to participate in tourism, gaming, digital realities, or television viewing (Nichols, 2019; Rojek, 2010; Roosien, 2021; Spracklen et al., 2017). Consequently, a fuller, deeper appreciation of leisure as a contemplative discipline has been misunderstood and misinterpreted as one-dimensional and flat, conjuring visions of luxury without pressing responsibility (Snyder, 2018). This inevitably leads to questions of equity, where some hold occupations that allow for nights and weekends off to pursue enjoyable activities and others do not. However, recent studies indicate that those with availability in their schedules often fill their

time away from work with busyness or distracted entertainment (Boppart & Ngai, 2021; Mullens & Glorieux, 2020). Concepts of Sabbath-keeping or Aristotle's (ca. 350 B. C. E./1995) writings on ethical reflections and virtuous leisure seem antiquated and out of touch to our modern-day sensibilities and concerns. Yet, the traditional, contemplative form of leisure is being brought up with more frequency as an answer to overwork (Mansfield, 2021; Orams & Brown, 2021; Payne, 2018; Sivan, 2017; Tonietto et al., 2021).

Related Literature

In a perusal of the last two years alone, leisure science studies have focused on a dizzying array of pursuits, from tourism to extreme sporting or adventure recreation, including snowboarding, snowshoeing, and surfing across multiple countries (Calvi & Hover, 2021; Houge Mackenzie & Brymer, 2020; Houge Mackenzie & Hodge, 2020; Mannberg et al., 2021; Piispa, 2021; Spowart, 2021). Studies have continued exploring nature-based leisure including hiking, climbing, and the mental health benefits of being out-of-doors (Hewitt & McEvilly, 2021; Lee & Lee, 2021; Lepp et al., 2021; Lovelock et al., 2019). In addition to the types of leisure employed, scholars have also focused on group leisure practices of indigenous peoples, Muslim and Black women, the homeless, those with intellectual disabilities, and the physical activity, internet, and social media use of elderly populations (Campbell, 2019; Gallistl & Nimrod, 2020; Hallmon et al., 2021; Harmon, 2021; Ho & Cho, 2021; Lee et al., 2020; Maxwell et al., 2021; Meisner, 2021; Naganathan et al., 2021; Olive et al., 2021; Petty & Trussell; 2021; Soltani, 2021; Son et al., 2021; Stodolska et al., 2020). Even drug use, sex, watching television or binging social media are included (Lee & Northcott, 2021; McCormack et al., 2021). Each of these studies focuses on the mental health benefits of leisure, but never fully define it objectively: it is personally and vaguely circumscribed as a pursuit for some type of measurable, often marketable, benefit. The

search for the perfect coping mechanism to modern despair is on full display in leisure studies, and community, culture, and well-being are desperately sought.

Purpose and Meaning

One's notion of leisure (and subsequent leisure activities) is intertwined with one's worldview: a foundational understanding of the world and one's engagement with it (Parr & Schmalz, 2019; Spracklen et al., 2017). Restless pursuits, like excessive social media use and hectic schedules, display an inner restlessness defined by anxiety and "aimless discontent" (Jo, 2019, p. 377; Syvertsen & Enli, 2020). When one participates in activities outside of work, one's attitude or understanding of the world prescribes whether those activities are either meaningful and leisurely, an extension of detached thoughtlessness and alienation, or harried achievement and pressured busyness (Jo, 2019; Pieper, 1952/2009). Modern leisure research knowingly includes distraction or escape through recreation as legitimate pursuits, typified by a restlessness with family, work, and the world that could be linked back to modern humanity's understanding of their place in the universe (Dunlap & Harmon, 2021; Frankl, 1946/2006). In a larger sense, man's search for meaning has everything to do with man's search for purpose and pleasure in work and leisure, or the ultimate search for the good life (Frankl, 1946/2006; Mooney-Suarez, 2022).

Contemporary studies that explore the myriad of activities or group affiliations highlight mental health and well-being as a repeated theme throughout as if searching for a magic bullet, despite the absence of an agreed upon model. Parr & Schmalz (2019) contend that the evolution of leisure research over the last six decades has created an insulated, circular, and fragmented development that subsequently lacks connection to other disciplines or fields in a way that is meaningful or helpful, creating a dissonance that is rudder-less and often aimless. Payne et al.

(2018) magnified the interdisciplinary nature of leisure studies and the "variety of scientific lenses" available to examine leisure "through freely chosen time or activities rather than examining a state of mind" (p. 2). More scholars within the field are recommending that leisure scholarship return to a state of equilibrium to develop a more cohesive, firm identity that stimulates organized, clear research across disciplines and fields (Codina & Pestana, 2019; Datillo & Frias, 2021; Henderson, 2010; Parr & Schmalz, 2019; Payne et al., 2018). This is where this proposed study bridges a gap, connecting the well-being of teachers with a harmonized, traditional, way of being that influences pedagogy (van Manen, 2015).

Meaningful leisure, or leisure activities that produce meaning for individuals and provide a context for wonder, has a decades long history (Iwasaki et al., 2015; Kleiber et al., 2002; Wensley & Slade, 2012). Several years ago, Hegarty (2009) crafted a traditional definition of leisure that included three concepts: time, recreation, and psychological state. Hegarty (2009) argued that creativity and creative leisure could be undertaken despite constraints and obstacles, as individuals may participate in several forms of daily creativity but may not recognize the concept as leisure. Further, creativity, even in the most basic of forms, such as making up a song or impromptu joke to cheer up a friend, or building with blocks or sand knowing that the structure will inevitably be destroyed, is tied to a meaningful and purposefully fulfilling life, requiring a shift in perspective about one's current activities and how they play into one's satisfaction (Hegarty, 2009).

Purposeful, traditional leisure practices encourage contemplation, personal growth, and learning to foster hope and reconciliation with one's existence (Heschel, 1951/2005; Pieper, 1952/2009). For example, Showen & Mantie (2019) reference Aristotle's love of learning model, describing it as "not political or practical" in their research on musical leisure, but something that

influences one's love of beauty (p. 385). Contemplative and reflective activities carve a holistic pathway: visiting art galleries, participating in artistic and creative expression such as drawing, painting, sculpture, music, and poetry, and taking up outdoor activities (Brandao et al., 2019; Dunlap & Harmon, 2021; Lee & Northcott, 2021). These contemplative forms of leisure move beyond "escapism," requiring one to consider an aesthetic and sensory experience as spiritually significant and promoting a truly free mind that envisions greater realities (Lee & Northcott, 2021). It is both individual and communal, because individuals cannot escape their placement within a culture or society (Brueggeman, 2017; Lee & Northcott, 2021; Pieper, 1952/2009).

The Call to Return

In these examples, there is a rising demand for a revival of contemplative, restful leisure that focuses on art, music, language, poetry, physical movement, and intellectual stimulation (Dunlap & Harmon, 2021; Kelly et al., 2020; Showen & Mantie, 2019; Sivan, 2017). Interestingly, these types of activities include the development of affections and loves in reclaimed, dedicated time, requiring one's reorientation to their place in the larger world. This is uniquely skolé and Sabbath in nature (Augustine, 427/1997; Clark & Jain, 2019; Showen & Mantie, 2019). Yet, reclaiming chunks of uninterrupted time and space in the milieu of the average life requires selective intentionality, often swimming against the postmodern current of production, quota, and a drive to be constantly innovative and entrepreneurial with one's hobby-turned-side-hustle, especially with the increasing novelty of digital and smart technology (Adler, 1951/1998; Heschel, 1951/2005; Lin et al., 2020). As indicated previously, even leisure studies have fallen prey to this revolving door of reinvention to remain relevant, resulting in impersonal and sterile understandings of leisure (Codina & Pestana, 2019; Datillo & Frias, 2021; Henderson, 2010; Parr & Schmalz, 2019; Payne et al., 2018). In the education field, positive technological

advancements have become a slavery that submerges the modern human into the unrelenting sea of constant connection, response, interaction, and information, even banal and vulgar (Greenfield, 2015). As smart technology continues to blaze forward, the off-the-clock versus on-the-clock distinctions between work and leisure are not just blurred, but erased entirely, resulting in what Roosien (2021) calls an unending 24/7 time that limits an individual's ability to step away from personal and professional obligations for a truly restful existence (Boppart & Ngai, 2021; Kariou et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2021). Indeed, some working professionals view leisure as wasteful, but this view is associated with lower reported happiness and greater reported depression, anxiety, and stress (Tonietto et al., 2021).

In the lingering shadow of the recent global pandemic, the escalation of instantaneous consumerism, smart technology, and the never-ending demand to be available through educational platforms and online conference meetings, all while managing household and family roles, blurred the lines between work and leisure even further (Bodenheimer & Shuster, 2020; Kim et al., 2021). This extreme distortion has created an isolated, anxious sort of existence where productivity and consumerism are relentless, monetized, and exploited (Greenfield, 2015; Roosien, 2021). The growing body of literature underscores the lasting impact global lockdowns had on the reclamation of time away from one's work and the hectic, superficial pace of multitasking, highlighting the demand for re-evaluation (Mansfield, 2021). Thus, it requires intentional freeing, both personally and collectively, and a model may be found in skolé and Sabbath practices of many classical Christian educators. It is a way of being that is ripe for revival and renewal, without minimizing factual, modern concerns. This robust perspective has been an integral aspect of leisure for centuries and goes much deeper than recreation or sport (Aristotle, ca. 350 B. C. E./1995; Horner, 2015; Plato, ca. 380 B. C. E./2004; Turley, 2014). It is

specifically defined, as will be seen below, and one that focuses on one's attitude and way of being in the world virtuously and soulfully, rather than merely taking part in an activity to recharge and reenter work.

Traditional Leisure-- A Way Forward

Understanding the complex social, economic, political, and existential implications of leisure within a diverse world is not original to the modern era (Brueggemann, 2017). Both Judeo-Christian scriptures and ancient Greco-Roman texts link the necessity of leisure to the broader socio-economic-political systems at large, the human tendency to overwork for the benefit of income or recognition, and the accessibility of leisure for the common people versus the elite class on cultural and educational practices (Brueggemann, 2017; Aristotle, ca. 350 B. C. E./2009; Aristotle, ca. 350 B. C. E./1995; *English Standard Version*, 2001/2021, Exodus 5). It is necessary to review ancient, robust conceptions of leisure that address the current situation and bring it to account.

Josef Pieper (1952/2009), a German Catholic leisure theorist, spent his life unpacking the concept of leisure as an anecdote to pain and suffering in the world long before digital and smart technology. His contemporary was the Jewish writer and teacher, Abraham Heschel (1951/2005). Writing in the aftermath of the second world war, Heschel (1951/2005) and Pieper (1952/2009) both warned against the machinist appeal of total work at the cost of the soul. Admittedly, many contemporary leisure scholars view traditional, Western conceptions of leisure as unrealistic, narrow, and impossibly ignorant ideals (Jo, 2019). Nevertheless, neither Heschel (1951/2005) nor Pieper (1952/2009) were oblivious to human suffering, and they dismissed a superficial positivity that unjustly ignored crises and concerns across the modern world in their lectures and writings. Rather, acceptance of life and its many paradoxes, contradictions, grief, death, and

sorrow could preserve human dignity, which is something all humans desire despite their differing beliefs or religions (Heschel, 1951/2005; Jo, 2019; Pieper, 1952/2009). Coming to grips with humanity's frailty and vulnerability, juxtaposed with human ability to discipline the self and overcome adversity, is at the heart of Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian leisure (Mansfield, 2021; McLean, 2017; Mooney-Suarez, 2022). It is making sense of and reconciling the person to the world.

The new millennium requires scholars and researchers to understand more profoundly the "art of living" concept found in skolé and Sabbath practices—interacting with others in meaningful ways and giving purpose to life that is both devotional and performative (Blackshaw, 2016, p. 8; Mooney-Suarez, 2022). In short, leisure is a form of authenticity and an uncluttered way of living, both physically and mentally (Blackshaw, 2016; Datillo & Frias, 2021; Iwasaki, 2017; Spracklen, 2017). It requires a philosophy of life. Therefore, while leisure certainly involves beneficial use of one's time through selected activities, one's attitude and posture toward leisure is the critical, defining element.

The Jewish Shabbat and Christian Sabbath are as fresh as they are ancient, establishing a reclamation of liturgical time that invites the individual and the community to free themselves from commerce, from buying and selling, and to step away from manic thought about what must be accomplished next, ushering in equality between those who have access to certain consumer goods and those who are denied, between those in superior positions of power and those who are in positions of subservience (Carter, 2018; Heschel, 1951/2005; Mudge, 2018). Brueggeman (2017) and Moller's (2019) thorough examination of Sabbath will be used to construct an understanding that is distinctly historic and rooted in the Old Testament, but also addresses modern work and leisure. Heschel (1951/2005) remains a preeminent voice on Jewish Sabbath-

keeping, and his argument for reclamation of time over a total work mentality will be included. Lastly, Pieper's (1952/2009) theory of leisure as culturally necessary will be explored.

Sabbath's Origins

The practice of Jewish, and later Christian, Sabbath originated in the Old Testament Hebrew scriptures. In the first book of the Old Testament, God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh day (*English Standard Version*, 2001/2022, Genesis 2:1-3). This rest was not due to sheer exhaustion or restless boredom but has been understood as God stepping back to view all He had made, to take enjoyment in it, and He pronounced it good (*English Standard Version*, 2001/2022, Genesis 1:31). God's rest after Creation was a state of being, where He ceased creative activity and in Him was found perfect or eternal rest alongside perfect love, holiness, peace, and goodness (Moller, 2019). The Hebrew word for this rest is shabbat, and is defined by security, stability, and peace due to the nature of God's total control and rule over the world (Moller, 2019). Hence, rest is a worldview understanding of reality that lends itself to outward practice, based on the nature and attributes of who the God of the Bible is and claims to be. It is holistic, religious, and declarative.

The seventh day of rest is a reclamation of time in a different way than any of the other days of Creation –those ended with descriptions of morning and evening in the scriptural text, but the day of rest is understood by scholars to be "the presence of eternity in time" and the hope of eternal rest and the unified world to come (Moller, 2019, p.2). There are other prominent examples of rest in the Hebrew Scriptures. God's law, or ten commandments, were given to the Hebrew people after their escape from slavery in Egypt. The fourth commandment called for a day of restful observation after the pattern God established in creation:

> "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy" (Exodus 20:8-11, *English Standard Version*, 2001/2022).

According to Brueggeman's (2017) description, protected rest every seventh day was in direct response to the Hebrew's salvation from slavery under Pharoah, so that they remembered their humble beginnings and gave themselves a margin of protection. It also indicated that God was not merely an isolated, uninterested deity but was compassionately concerned with the socio-economic-political practices and policies of humanity, legitimizing a specific form of existence that saw invention and creativity through work as good, and protected rest as part of humanity's good as well (Brueggeman, 2017; Heschel, 1951/2005). As a result, it resisted the concept of total, grueling, and humiliating work depicted by Pharoah's demands in the economic marketplace that set production, consumption, and profit over and above the well-being of individuals (Brueggeman, 2017). In Exodus 5, Pharaoh relentlessly called for more production, described the Hebrews as lazy, and demanded quotas to be completed without break. Considering this, for God to command Sabbath observance was not a restriction on the Hebrew people but a freedom—respite provided by a merciful Creator. Modern Jews have continued to practice this worldview reality as a cultural and religious community (Brueggeman, 2017; Carter, 2018; Heintzman, 2006; Mudge, 2018; Sherman, 2005). The message of the narrative is clear: rest is unifying and freeing in conjunction with good work, but total work destroys the soul

(Heschel, 1951/2005). The biblical connection to modern work life is profound, because the ancient text speaks directly to the contemporary struggle of de-humanizing work without restoration.

The Hebrew observance of Sabbath, as outlined in Exodus, is considered an eternal promise and oath between the people and God that was met with death if not observed (Exodus 31:14-17, *English Standard Version*, 2001/2022). Metaphorically, the connection between lack of rest leading to death is linked to spiritual or inner death because of grueling, crushing work. In addition, Brueggeman (2017) references Amos' description of idle entertainment and triviality of the wealthy at the expense of the poor and the working class as a judgement (Amos 5:6-7, 10-15). In the Old Testament scriptures, rest is connected to prosperity, peace, and joy; it is the antithesis to slavery of the body and the soul (Moller, 2019). In addition, Sabbath rest was also associated with social justice and equality (Fox, 2009). Every seventh year was known as the year of Jubilee, during which land rest, rest for animals, the forgiveness of debts, freeing of slaves, and repossession of land provided a rationale for outward practices that brought equality back into Hebrew society (Fox, 2009; Leviticus 25:8-13). Sabbath was to be a picture of hope, of reconciliation, and of permanence amid a chaotic, temporary, consumption-driven world (Moller, 2019). Sabbath was an outward practice of a worldview reality.

Modern Sabbath

Sabbath and other forms of intentional reclamation of time away from marketplace concerns are influenced by one's worldview. The Christian connection to Judaism cannot be dismissed but is indispensable to it and draws its understanding of Sabbath from the Old and New Testaments. Consequently, Moller (2019) describes a threefold understanding of Sabbath, with God's identification with rest in creation first, then the Hebrew or Jewish community's

identification with the day of rest, and lastly, the Church's identification with rest through Christ. Identity is an interesting concept here, because it alludes to being known as followers of God through Sabbath practice and belief in His Word, which calls for both justice and peace. It is personally held and practiced as well as collectively protected and honored by those who observe the Sabbath (Heschel, 1951/2005). It links inner soul formation to physical practices, where body and soul must participate in the contemplative, restorative practice of rest as outlined by Sabbath (Carter, 2018; Heschel, 1951/2005; Lin et al., 2020; McLean, 2017). It is individually transformative, practiced within a community, and passed on as a social, political, religious, and cultural heritage.

The modern practice of Sabbath requires a full day of cessation from one's work (Carter, 2018; Heschel, 1951/2005). Today, this often includes a break from phones and media to separate oneself from notifications and commerce (Syvestern & Enli, 2020). The Jewish practice of Sabbath begins on Friday evening and ends on Saturday evening, and the Christian day of rest usually takes place on Sunday, though some Christians incorporate protected rest into their week based on their unique schedules (Carter, 2018). Many Roman Catholics, Orthodox, and Protestant Christians are returning to Jewish practices of Sabbath to understand Christianity more fully, and therefore have taken on Jewish contemplative and restful practices, away from the marketplace of buying and technology, to combat the social climate of frenetic life agitated by a lack of time (Brueggemann, 2017; Carter, 2018; di Villiers & Marchinkowski, 2021). Open dialogue, sharing, and reflecting between adherents of the Jewish faith and the Christian faith strengthens sensibility and care between communities, between various Christian denominations, and even those of other religious faiths on this rich tradition (Carter, 2018). Specifically, humility, patience, empathy, and hospitality that are necessary "to the ethical and political

dimensions of any relationship," including managers and employees, or teachers and students (Carter, 2018, p. 69). Therefore, Brueggemann (2017) refers to Sabbath adherence as a movement of resistance, specifically resisting the constant demands of work and consumerism to nurture the soul and return to the marketplace with a restful, just, and ethical posture.

The practice of Shabbat for Jews and Sabbath for Christians is steeped in representative symbols, liturgy, rituals, prayers, food, and music away from the regular activities of the week (Carter, 2018). The purpose of Sabbath is to contemplate and experientially participate in hope, beauty, and goodness (Heschel, 1951/2005). Heschel (1951/2005) states that the enjoyment of cultural food, music, and peaceful conversation among family and friends are celebrated, protected, and enjoyed on the day of rest. The food, music, scriptural readings shared aloud, the lighting of candles, and other activities may be slightly different for each family, but they revolve around Jewish and Christian scriptures, historic teachings, and other religious infusions. It is both spiritual and cultural, rather than individualistic and practical. This understanding of leisure denotes not just time away from one's job, but time away from work to intentionally participate in culturally rich and meaningful practices with loved ones depicted by food, the arts—including music, artistic expressions, dance, or literature and language—and contemplative conversation and thought (Brueggeman, 2017). It becomes a balm and a safeguard against the demands of total work, putting work back into its proper place so that it does not sabotage and overtake the soul (Heschel, 1951/2005).

The Sabbath highlights one's understanding of human experience within the world as either accepting or rejecting the order of nature and reality, and to conduct oneself through the practice of Sabbath takes effort and discipline to set aside typical connections to work and the marketplace (Heschel, 1951/2005; Lin et al., 2020). Secondly, Sabbath connects rest to social

and cultural institutions such as schools, communities, places of employment, churches, synagogues, and families (Jo, 2019). While there are numerous theoretical articles and books on the topic of Sabbath, very little empirical research about the practice of Sabbath as intentionally specified time and space away from typical activities and work have been conducted, especially beyond Orthodox Jewish practice and Seventh Day Adventists (Carter, 2018; Speedling, 2019).

Greek Skolé

Leisure, or *skolé* σχολή in ancient Greek philosophy, was known as reflective learning that took up the whole of life to form the character and soul of a person, wherein we gain the English word school, or σχολείο (Clark & Jain, 2019; Perrin, 2021). The West's original understanding of school, therefore, equates to the Greek understanding of leisure—to be and become virtuous through seeking and employing (Adler, 1951/1998). For this reason, I will continue to use the word skolé to refer to leisurely, contemplative learning for virtue formation as described by Plato (ca. 380 B. C. E./2004) (Markos, 2021). To be educated, therefore, was to have the intellectual and moral resources and tools to contemplate the largest questions of life and act on them virtuously and justly. Although education included skill acquisition in various disciplines, the purpose for excelling academically was to search for truth, goodness, and beauty and to live life in community accordingly (Adler, 1951/1998; Gary, 2006; Markos, 2021; Turley, 2014). It was a coveted way of life. However, the concept of skolé as leisurely, restful learning is almost completely lost in our modern interpretation of school (McClean, 2017; Perrin, 2021).

A hermeneutic philosophy of leisure such as skolé is often hastily bypassed or overlooked in search of leisure as something to acquire like currency, as means to a truncated end (Hurly, 2021). Leisure as a way of being allows for an ontological experience above a utilitarian aim (Hurly, 2021). "Greek philosophers such as Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, and Seneca

considered leisure essential for providing the necessary nurturance of intellectual, artistic, spiritual, mental, and physical blossoming" (Hurly, 2021, p. 732). Skolé, or a humble posture of restful learning, was anchored in character formation and carried a responsibility to employ ethical wisdom for the benefit of others. However, a work-based system, where work and monetary wealth is considered virtuous, has come to define the concept of a successful and rewarding life, over and above ethical and wise behavior (Rooisen, 2021). Because of this confusion, it makes sense then that leisure is thought of in our modern society as linked to the outcomes of the marketplace, requiring money to purchase goods and services. A reclamation of ethical wisdom that is grounded in skolé and a hermeneutic, language-oriented ontology may be a valuable balm for a society overburdened with techno communication, constant availability, and existential crisis (Hurly, 2021; Stebbins, 2017).

It is important to acknowledge at the outset that Plato and Aristotle spoke of differing classes of the polis—Greek city states—and of those who were able to participate in leisure and those who were not, specifically the slave and farming classes versus the political or philosopher king classes (Aristotle, ca. 350 B. C. E./1995; Owens, 1981; Reynolds, 2009). Due to this, Greek philosophy and education have often been judged as obsolete and oppressive, but some have attempted to show that this view is a misunderstanding that omits the connection between the thriving human soul and disciplined, lifelong learning (Dewey, 1938/1997; Fox, 2009; Markos, 2021). For the ancient Greco-Roman world, an attitude of humility that considered virtuous leisure was attainable by all in degrees (Aristotle, ca 350 B. C. E./2009; Owens, 1981).

One example of attainability in degrees is displayed by Aristotle's discussion of farmers. A farmer's work demanded their whole life, making the pursuit of leisure quite different than that of a politician, philosopher, or king (Aristotle, ca. 350 B. C. E./1995, ca. 350 B. C. E./2009;

Nossaman, 2018; Owens, 1981). However, Aristotle did not dismiss the farmer's ability to pursue skolé and illuded to differing states for distinct groups of people based on their responsibilities, resources, and circumstances. It would be a mistake to dismiss the Greek concept of skolé set forth by Plato (ca. 380 B. C. E./2004) and Aristotle (ca. 350 B. C. E./2009) as attainable for only a privileged handful and may be probed deeply for application to a present day understanding of leisure (Owens, 1981).

A modern example is Wendall Berry (2005, 2013), the Kentucky writer and farmer who used contemplative skolé in his understanding of creation, seasons, and the land he worked with a tender, caregiving, pastoral posture (Nossaman, 2018). One could hardly argue against Berry's virtue as a farmer and theologian, which has raised him to a level of respected leadership within literary and Christian circles due to his willingness to display deep philosophical and poetic thought to his work and honestly depicting the various struggles of farm life through essay, poem, and novel (Berry, 2013). He is extensively well-read, has written and published poetry and beloved fiction narratives, winner of The National Humanities Medal and an elected member of the Fellowship of Southern Writers, sharing his experiences of Sabbath and community with those seeking the leisurely, or good, life amid uncontrollable circumstances that define life (Berry, 2005; Berry 2013; Nossaman, 2018). For Berry (2005) (2013) skolé involves reclaimed time for the purpose of literature, language, hymn, breaking bread, and restoration with the universe, the Earth, and God. It is from this contemporary example of a man living an average existence of daily toil for survival who carved out a path of Sabbath and skolé practice can one see a model for how these specific types of leisure are possible if one desires to build this type of life.

Ancient novelty of skolé.

It is curious that Plato (ca. 380 B. C. E./2004) and Aristotle (ca. 350 B. C. E./1995; 2009) spoke of raw talent and plain skill acquisition secondary to leisure. Skolé was discussed by these two famous philosophers as the space in which to ruminate and challenge human understanding of truth, goodness, and beauty intentionally, logically, and with discipline toward certain loves and affections for their own sake (Aristotle, ca. 350 B. C. E./1995, ca. 350 B. C. E./2009; Plato, ca. 380 B. C. E./2004). Even in their own era, they were not the only Greeks defining education or leisure, and were often considered controversial, though not as controversial as Socrates had been (Perrin, 2004). It is well known that Plato's teacher, Socrates, was condemned to death for his provocative, philosophical teachings on reality before they were embraced more widely and valued by later generations. Plato (ca. 380 B. C. E./2004) developed his mentor's philosophy to seek after Truth and acquire the four cardinal virtues of justice, courage, temperance, and prudence, and he taught that the ideal community would find men devoted to such pursuits and make them leaders, though he was often challenged on this count for being impractical and idealistic (Markos, 2021).

Further, Plato (ca. 380 B. C. E./2004) passionately explained that leisure was not mere spare time and did not include idleness, which he considered degenerate, unproductive daydreaming (O'Leary, 1973). Even multitasking that leads to distraction is antithetical to skolé, whereas skolé encompasses one's singular focus and suitedness for a task. When one is fully able to engage in work free from being distracted by other forms of labor, are self-possessed, and able to reflect on their quality of action no matter their station, skolé is pursued. One might argue that skolé is not the cultivation of idle luxury or self-interest, but a disposition that allows an individual to meaningfully engage in their work because they are given the freedom to fully

focus on their life's purpose and reconcile ontological, epistemological, and axiological questions (Berry, 2013; Nossaman, 2018; O'Leary, 1973).

Aristotle's (ca. 350 B. C. E./1995) understanding of skolé as separate from recreation and entertainment matches what Plato (ca. 380 B. C. E./2004) argued (Owens, 1981). Recreation is a way to break from work and recharge so that one may take work back up again. Breaking for amusement or pastimes were in a separate category apart from skolé. In contrast, skolé required that a person purposefully moderate their life so that they had the mental clarity and time to pursue obligations with virtue, discipline, and purpose, and this was a consistent theme linked to skolé in Aristotle's (ca. 350 B. C. E./1995, ca. 350 B. C. E./2009) writings. Therefore, education and virtue were bound together in skolé, forming a holistic, liberal freedom of the soul. Choice, then, in leisurely pursuits must still be bound by virtue and moderation. Connecting this to Sabbath practice, a harmonious dance between inventive and creative work, contemplation, rest, and enjoyment, were liturgically and seasonally developed.

Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian Leisure Combined

Although it may be believed that Greek skolé is no longer applicable in today's multicultural and globally minded world, the teachings of Plato (ca. 380 B. C. E./2005) and Aristotle (ca. 350 B. C. E./2009), and later Christ and St. Paul, rose to prominence in a vast, diverse, vibrant empire of intricate commercial and socio-political realities (Fox, 2009). This ancient era of diverse peoples blended the Greek language, mythology, religion, politics, philosophy and Hebrew Sabbath, education, virtue formation, anthropology, and justice within the Roman Empire. The canonical gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were recorded a few centuries after the philosophical golden age of Greece and influenced by a "multicultural world defined by Greek internationalism, Roman imperialism and oppression, Jewish tradition,

and Egyptian and Persian influences" (Fox, 2009, p. 14). The various ethnic peoples of the ancient, Mediterranean world believed that economic, political, and social forces were essential to each other and intertwined, meaning the day-to-day economic and political activities were layered and interwoven with belief, religion, cultural practices, and various linguistic and ethnic backgrounds (Fox, 2009). Saint Paul, the Jewish apostle of Christ who stood and spoke on the Areopagus, or hill of Ares opposite Athen's Acropolis, utilized systematic Greek skolé thought and philosophy to present the concept of Christian theology to the people gathered (Reynolds, 2009).

The combination of skolé and Sabbath is displayed in the gospel of Luke, where leisure as an attitude of rest and contemplation is presented through dining, picnics, sharing food, socializing, listening at the feet of Christ, visits to the wilderness, and seeking greater understanding in order to live life well in one's sphere of work and family (Fox, 2009). Community food practices like banquets, sharing, generosity, and hospitality were not only a part of Judeo-Christian culture, but also Greek and Roman cultures. Known as "table fellowship," philosophizing, contemplative discussion, thinking, and learning were emphasized as a focal point of the polytheistic Greco-Roman culture (Fox, 2009, p. 24). Christian and biblical focus on spiritual health (belief and practice) and physical health (food and outdoors) accentuated a moderate view of living that united physical, emotional, spiritual health. Perrin (2021), a scholar and educator in the classical, Christian education field, described skolé this way—restful learning typified around a table of close friends—eating, drinking, and discussing literature, philosophy, art, and the good life.

Based on the Judeo-Christian and Greco-Roman combined understanding of leisure, the modern view of shifting from one activity to another, from work to non-work as a recharge, is a

misunderstanding of the original concept that needs to be redefined to separate relaxation from leisure. Leisure is something else entirely: it is primary and the undercurrent of one's existence (Snyder, 2018; Payne et al., 2018). Rather than viewing work as the aim of life and leisure as entertainment or diversion, leisure is the "comportment of the soul," or the demeanor and attitude one takes, that is intentionally closed off to other ways of being to be able to approach daily life with virtue always at hand (Snyder, 2018, p. 360). Leisure, then, is not rest in the sense of sleep or idleness, but "requires the use of excellences" (Snyder, 2018, p. 361). Specific virtues that are required and strengthened through leisure are courage, endurance, moderation, and justice (Aristole, ca. 350 B. C. E./1995; Snyder, 2018). Therefore, it requires a disposition that is not individually defined but universally proscribed, something that is cultivated and is not possible without the disciplined development of humility, moderation, justice, courage, and endurance (Snyder, 2018). One must look at rest or leisure from a completely different lens than our modern understanding of blocking our time and filling it with distractions such as media or adventure travel as a means of escape but rather shifting one's focus to view such activities as either developing virtue or degrading it.

Concerns in Education

The current climate concerning leisure in the education field revolves around leisure practices of students (Di Paolantio, 2019; Hayes et al., 2019). Within these studies, only classroom curriculum that allows for student-led development of leisure practices, recreation, or the structure of physical education classes have been explored extensively (Veledo et al., 2018). There is little to no exploration of teacher perspectives or experiences with leisure and how it directly impacts their quality of life, work-life balance, or their teaching pedagogy. However, several studies do highlight the optimistic possibilities of protected time for mental health,

mindfulness training that applies to one's work, and intentionality in leisure practices of choice (Mullens & Glorieux, 2020; Zarate et al., 2019).

Protected Time

Researchers have reported that time away from work is a fundamental component of leisure, but one's work patterns and attitude dictate how one structures their leisure time and activities. Although the amount of time away from work has risen over the past two decades in Western countries, individuals feel pressured to fill that time with busy schedules and frenzied rhythms that are linked to advancements in technology, resulting in "time poverty," even for those who are highly educated with high-income jobs (Mullens & Glorieux, 2020, p. 1). This may be seen in a study on time-use, where 1,877 participants ages 18-76 confirmed that time away from work was fragmented, pressured, and busy. The dependent variables studied were the diversity of leisure activities, activities outside the home, cultural activities, and television watching; independent variables were time related (duration, weekend timing, recurrent fragmentation, and time pressure) (Mullens & Glorieux, 2020). When looking at work-related patterns, negative leisure time associations existed for those with self-determined, flexible work hours in independent or manual labor jobs ($p < 0.00$). Results also indicated that 33% of leisure was spent outside of the home on weekends for both men and women, but that 17% of women participated in weekly cultural activities, in comparison with just 10.6% of men, and 40% of all participants spent weekend leisure time watching television (Mullens & Glorieux, 2020). Interestingly, those who had greater flexibility and more autonomy in their work, and thus had more time that they could devote to leisure, may have felt pressure to fill their time with work-related or busy activities that fragment their leisure or push it off. Less time may be devoted to

leisure activities that result in contemplation or soul-formation, such as out-of-home or cultural options, in lieu of entertainment options such as television watching (Muller & Glorieux, 2020).

The amount of time available for leisure also impacts satisfaction and dedication to activities. A recent study on leisure compared the leisure experience of 435 men with 434 women between the ages of 18-24, where time was defined as "the fundamental variable", directly impacting behavior and attitudes surrounding engagement and satisfaction (Codina & Pestana, 2019, p. 1). A quantitative approach was used with two tools: an ad hoc questionnaire structured for time budgeting and the Likert scale Zimbardo's Time Perspective Inventory. The studied variables were satisfaction, freedom of choice, and time spent per day, with statistically significant differences found based on gender χ^2 (4, n = 869) = 14.50, p = 0.006 (Codina & Pestana, 2019). Results indicated that 51.1% of female participants spent less than one hour on leisure per day, compared with 48.9% of male participants. The majority of those who spent over 2.5 hours on leisure per day were 60.4% of male participants compared with just 39.6% of female participants (Codina & Pestana, 2019). Freedom of choice in activity was highest among participants who reported one to two and a half hours of leisure time per day (F(4, 165) = 2.62, p = 0.033) (Codina & Pestana, 2019, p. 6). However, women reported greater satisfaction with their leisure experience than men, even though they spent less time on leisure activities t(867) = -2.07, p = 0.039, d = 0.15 (Codina & Pestana, 2019). Meaning or purpose in leisure activity was extremely important to all participants, particularly in relation to individual choice, but large chunks of time each day were not the sole indicators of satisfying, positive leisure experiences for all, since women recorded greater satisfaction with smaller chunks of time (Codina & Pestana, 2019). Women may develop meaning in their leisure experience based on their perspective going into activity, whereas men may derive meaning based on greater chunks of

time to develop their mindset and perspective. The various possible reasons for these differences were discussed as pivotal for future research to understand attitude and way of being in one's leisure.

Dubie (2021) noted that those in caregiving professions, including teachers, are often encouraged to tend to their positive mental health and self-care by separating themselves from their work. This idea is summed up in the common phrase 'leaving work at work': avoiding answering texts or emails after the workday and to stop tasks and paperwork to maintain a work-life balance, drawing a distinct line between the material and emotional aspects of work and personal time. This is a view that is expressed by Aquinas (1485/2018) in his development of active and contemplative spheres of life (Dubie, 2021). Moreover, a digital detox, or "periodic disconnection from social or online media" has shown promising results for purposeful and reflective time necessary for leisure practices that are often difficult or impossible to achieve when constantly connected to notifications, emails, and texts (Syvertsen & Enli, 2020, p. 1269).

Mindfulness and Contemplation

Wesley and Slade (2012) conducted a qualitative study on walking as a meaningful leisure practice for adults with mental health illness. Six individuals living in a community setting participated in semi-structured interviews, lasting 30-60 minutes, about their current walking routines. The interpretive phenomenological analysis highlighted multiple themes that leisure walking developed social connectedness, wellbeing, a connection to nature, and self-actualization in achieving a challenge (Wensley & Slade, 2012). The research underlined the interwoven experience of leisure that involved the beauty and simplicity of nature, building social relationships around a common interest, and an environmental space that provided physical and emotional well-being (Wensley & Slade, 2012). This research highlights the

connection between leisurely activity that is purposeful communally and personally, which allow for breaks and stimulation. In relation to such types of qualitative research, Heijnen et al. (2021) expressed the importance of "aligning the ontological position of place" in research by conducting "walking interviews" with participants and not just face to face, stationary, sit-down interviews (p. 2). The authors underscore the cultural, historical, and social experiences of participants that may be explored through discussion and movement which hold a benefit for teacher participants as they are able to control the environment they are in and shed light on their space of choice for the researcher (Heijnen et al., 2021).

Orams and Brown (2021) discussed the sociocultural Judeo-Christian and Greek links to the sea as dangerous and chaotic, but more recently viewed as a space for freedom from limitations or constraints of industrialization. In an autoethnography, Orams and Brown (2021) explored the lived experiences of an offshore sailor with data collected by and on oneself in a contemplative process, focused on the concepts of freedom and escape. The authoethnography entries, 31 in total, were selected for inclusion in the results if they linked to these themes. The participant noted their desire for escape and to develop unique experiences and encounter something wholly different from their day-to-day life. In the entries, the participant repeatedly noted the responsibilities and quotas associated with their work in management, and the desire to step away from those pressures to "refind my true self" (Orams & Brown, 2021, p. 202). The study also noted a desire for deep connection with the natural world that is difficult to achieve in urban and work environments, while also recognizing the difficult and unpleasant circumstances involved with offshore sailing, causing the participant to struggle with fatigue and doubt (Orams & Brown, 2021). However, the benefits outweighed the difficulties in the participant's mind because of their rediscovery of the good life, or a life well lived not defined by work or work

responsibilities (Orams & Brown, 2021). It is true that this paper argues that people from all backgrounds and walks of life have the ability to enter into leisure in some form or degree, yet not everyone has the means to walk away from a job or income to pursue wilderness wanderings, but the study highlights important themes of time away from frenetic, workaday schedules to be able to settle and discipline the mind and work through difficult obstacles for growth and soul formation.

Recent research interventions have focused on mindfulness training. Mindfulness training that organizations provide for their teachers include yoga and exercise, meditation, and visual exercises (Crain et al., 2017; Zarate et al., 2019). Klapproth et al. (2020) reported significant findings on teacher stress levels and coping strategies in a cross-sectional quantitative study of 380 teachers. They found that teachers reported medium-to-high stress during pandemic lockdowns ($SD = 0.98$, $F_{(3, 289)} = 4.88$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .05$). Additionally, it was found that teachers reported more functional coping strategies ($M = 2.59$, $SD = 0.45$) like seeking social support, rather than dysfunctional coping strategies ($M = 1.70$, $SD = 0.39$), $t_{(359)} = 27.71$, $p < 0.001$, such as giving up on goals or drinking alcohol. Additionally, the more stress that was perceived, the more teachers reported higher functional ($r = .25$, $p = .001$) and dysfunctional ($r = .40$, $p < .001$) coping mechanisms. This research showed that individuals, and teachers in particular, look for tools and strategies to mitigate stressful and difficult work demands that will help them mindfully cope and refocus.

Matiz et al. (2020) reported the positive impact of mindfulness, or reflection, on the mental health of female teachers. In a quantitative study of 67 school teachers in primary and secondary schools across England who participated in an eight-week mindfulness program, teacher mental health was documented and examined. Results from an ANOVA indicated a

significant interaction between time and scale that was associated with interoceptive awareness, psychological well-being, and mindfulness skill improvement for high-resilience teachers ($F(4, 224) = 2.8$, $p[GG] = .03$, $\eta P2 = .048$). This research showed a significant interaction between being mindful of one's stressors and learned practices associated with coping strategies that mitigate stressful conditions were of importance to teachers.

Wonder and Awe

A sense of wonder, over and above a restless and grasping curiosity that looks for the next form of entertainment, is the seed and root of skolé and Sabbath (Di Paolantonio, 2019). Wonder explores the world and truth expressed in Greco-Roman philosophy and the Judeo-Christian practice of worship and concept of awe (Bruggeman, 2017; Jo, 2019; Pieper, 1952/2009). A sense of awe and wonder exhibited by teachers requires an academic theology that is unafraid to deal with questions of truth, goodness, beauty, and meaning, relating to religion not only for their students, but for themselves (Fox, 2009).

In a recent phenomenological study conducted by Carter (2018), the lived experiences of six orthodox (non-Messianic) Jewish rabbis in the United States were explored to describe the vivid, personal experience of Sabbath. Carter (2018) specified that empirical research describing Jewish practices of Sabbath for Christian reflection and use is growing in popularity, and that Sabbath practices should be described in detail and the individuals that practice them should be able to speak on their own terms. Interestingly, Carter's (2018) research found that the rabbis all understood their practice of Sabbath was influenced by more than the Hebrew Scriptures. Other than the prescription to observe Sabbath in Exodus and Deuteronomy, the scriptures do not give detail as to how to observe the day of rest (Carter, 2018). Those details are included in other teachings and writings stemming from later oral traditions in the Jewish community (Carter,

2018). One participant reflected, “More than the Jews have kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath has kept the Jews” (p. 76). This is also echoed by Heschel (1951/2005), who explained that whether someone was successful in their work or not, met their economic, organizational, or even relationship goals for the week or not, Sabbath invited them back into peace without a ticket or requirement for entrance—they were simply able to rest. It was not something earned, but something that cultivated and nurtured them, and protected their heritage and identity (Heschel, 1951/2005). These restful, contemplative practices, then, are an invitation for those who would set aside their weekly activities and pursuits for a decidedly different set of activities to be developed and formed by them. Rather than strictly individualistic in choice, Sabbath is an invitation to participate in something larger than the self, but transforms the self through shared activities and disciplines, rather than self-indulgent entertainment.

Art and literature have also been researched as tools for leisure practice that evoke wonder and curiosity for their own sake. Brandao et al. (2019) conducted a systematic review of the literature on art and the impact on individuals with depressive disorders. Looking at database articles from 2013-2017 with keywords depression, art, and body language, 3,848 articles were sifted through and 14 were included in the review for their clarity, methodology, and credibility of results (Brandao et al., 2019). Results indicated that art therapy for depressive disorders is on the rise, particularly arts that utilized certain tools, like drawing, painting, sculpture, modeling, poetry, writing, and photography (Brandao et al., 2019). Additionally, diet and prayer were also found to be beneficial, and in each of the reviewed studies, treatment groups with art therapy interventions had significantly better outcomes than control groups (Brandao et al., 2019).

Meaning making through writing, particularly in journals, has been found helpful for teachers as they reflect on their work (Kelly et al., 2020). Specifically, Kelly et al. (2020)

described the study as exploring the history of teacher reflective writing for two purposes—understanding current problems teachers face and to improve their well-being through the process of self-reflective writing in the pilot "Reimagining the Diary" project (p. 262). Teachers in Bristol schools in the UK were able to step away from their teaching roles for personal time by keeping diaries, but Kelly et al. (2020) contended that for some teachers, mandating self-reflective diary keeping as a leisure tool can be problematic for those who do not find writing to be calming and may need another outlet for contemplative leisure, as outlined above in art practices or through physical activity.

Lack of Leisure in Education

Teacher attrition has been of national concern in the United States for more than four decades, as a steady 20-50% of new teachers leave the profession within the first five years due to burnout (Elyashiv, 2019; Garcia-Carmona et al., 2019). Although teachers who make it past the five-year mark are more likely to continue in the field, they often persist while exhibiting occupational burnout symptoms: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment, directly impacting their motivation to develop professionally and contribute to their educational community (Freisen & Sarros, 1994; Garcia- Carmona et al., 2019; Lee & Ashford, 1996; Richards et al., 2018; Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990; Stinebrickner, 1998; Turnipseed, 1994). Reported risk factors that lead to occupational burnout include extreme workload and paperwork, large class size or overcrowding, classroom management and discipline problems, lack of administrative support, frequent changes to curriculum and school reform efforts, conflict with administration, parents, and coworkers, lack of training, time or scheduling difficulties, and poor facilities (Blase, 1986; Freisen & Sarros, 1989; Garcia-Carmona et al., 2018; Huk et al., 2018; Pressley, 2021). In a study conducted in 2022, 36% of German

secondary teachers reported that they regularly worked more than 48 hours per week to meet the demands of teaching, and 15% worked more than 55 hours per week (Kruezfeld et al.). Those who admitted to working over 45 hours per week experienced emotional exhaustion and difficulty recovering, with little room for reflection or rest, a problem repeatedly studied in English speaking countries across the globe (Jerrim & Sims, 2021; Kreuzfeld et al., 2022). The considerable toll on teachers has therefore been a concern of stake holders (Jerrim & Sims, 2021). Although circumstances such as classroom behavioral problems, large class size, and paperwork will never fully subside, teachers require time and space away from work and excessive availability if they are to be effective educators. Thriving in time away from work directly impacts one's occupational motivations and contributions (Klein et al., 2019). Teachers need tangible, realistic solutions and activities that personally benefit their growth, requiring small adjustments to their daily lives with little to no financial and resource constraints.

Additionally, teacher burnout and attrition at the secondary level has been a problem in the educational field for decades (Arvidsson et al., 2019; Azzeem & Hussain, 2021; Blase, 1986; Boyd et al., 2011; Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Burke & Greenglass, 1993; Ford et al., 2019; Friedman, 1991; Friesen & Sarros, 1989; Kyriacou, 1998; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Mojsa-Kaja et al., 2015; Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011; Stinebrckner, 1998). Researchers have extensively explored the factors influencing burnout and subsequent attrition and have found that pre-service teachers often have false expectations of the teaching profession (Kariou et al., 2021; Klusman et al., 2016). Other contributing factors that researchers have uncovered include unsustainable workload, work stress, and lack of administrative support. Schools have sought to build support within the school environment and decrease poor mental health and fatigue through modeling, mentorship, induction, and professional development,

based on research findings. Some of the most recent literature has focused on personal coping mechanisms such as mindfulness training (Crain et al., 2017).

Pre-service and in-service teachers in numerous contexts are often asked what type of support they desire or find lacking that lead to stress and burnout. There have also been various studies on how professional development and training opportunities build teacher self-efficacy and collective efficacy. The empirical research highlights teacher mental health in high-stress circumstances, but considering mitigated, COVID-19 teaching online and in the classroom, there is still a focus on what is causes teacher stress rather than how to alleviate it (Chen et al., 2020; Chou & Chou, 2021). Pre and post pandemic research indicate the role of mental health and coping strategies such as mindfulness training. However, little to no research has given voice to individual teacher experiences of success in mindfulness and intentionally restful practices that induce growth and well-being within a cultural community (Heintzman, 2017). Further research that targets the successful leisure practices of educators that are thriving could help other educators adopt intentional practices for their long-term success in the educational profession.

Increasingly, leisure theorists and researchers recognize and highlight the moral and collaborative way in which one lives out their life and their need for rest (Blackshaw, 2016; Datillo & Frias, 2021; Hurly, 2021; Iwasaki, 2017; Jo, 2019). Datillo & Frias (2021) critically examined modern leisure and rather than accepting leisure as fundamental to time and activity, sought rather to define leisure as a state of being that involved learning, meaning, and authenticity. Therefore, it is important to narrow the focus of this study to show the unique convergence of Greek and Christian leisure, how they specifically relate to human learning and purpose, and their unique place in modern leisure studies (Datillo & Frias, 2021). Particularly,

this study will seek to answer the desire to refocus and reclaim leisure studies with "hermeneutic sociology" at its core (Blackshaw, 2016; Hurly, 2021, p. 7).

As an intervention for burnout among secondary teachers, Abos et al. (2019) conducted a quasi-experimental design study on a convenience sample of 57 participants from two secondary schools in Canada, with 22 participating in the experiment group and 35 in the control group. Noting the benefits of physical and aerobic exercise on burnout and depressive symptoms alongside mindfulness and reflective practices, teachers were specifically targeted for this study due to the lack of prior research. All participants reported on measures for burnout and demographics using the Burnout Clinical Subtype Questionnaire, Teacher Job Satisfaction Scale, Utrecht Work Engagement Scale, and Basic Psychological Needs at Work Scale (Abos et al., 2019). The experimental group also received 32 group sessions of cooperative or playful sessions, strength sessions, aerobic sessions, and back pain prevention sessions from November to June. Significant differences were found between the baseline values and after intervention values within the experimental group, and significant differences were also found in the experimental groups post-intervention in relation to work satisfaction ($F(1,55) = 8.211$; $p = .006$; $\eta_p^2 = .130$), vigor ($F(1,55) = 14/413$; $p<.001$; $\eta_p^2= .208$), and job satisfaction ($F(1,55) = 9.921$; $p = .003$; $\eta_p^2 = .153$) when compared to the control group in a MANOVA (Abos et al., 2019). Teacher well-being and job satisfaction were significantly impacted by physical activity in a social context.

The Greek philosophical practice of skolé, known as restful, contemplative learning that is personally selected but culturally influenced, and the Judeo-Christian concept of keeping Sabbath to reclaim time, referred to as "re-souling" rest, are combined and practiced today by educators in CCSs (Clark & Jain, 2019; Mudge, 2018, p. 261; Perrin, 2004). Skolé and Sabbath

are ways of being, or an attitude and posture, that one pursues to wrestle with first principles to develop an ethical, virtuous way of being in the world (Heintzman, 2017; Lin et al., 2020; Mansfield, 2021; McLean, 2017; Mudge, 2018; Pieper, 1952/2009; Samaras, 2017). It is a way of life that requires one to set aside modern assumptions of leisure to rediscover ancient and medieval forms that are refreshingly applicable (Markos, 2021; Pieper, 1952/2009). In skolé and Sabbath practice, leisure is not passive or inactive but an intentional discipline of personal reflection and life-long growth away from the demands of work (Brueggeman, 2017; Sertillanges, 1987). Therefore, the context examined in this study were CCS educators who described their experiences of skolé and Sabbath practices and how they affected their teaching.

Classical Christian Education

If Sabbath is the re-souling rest that wakes us from our stupor, Greek skolé tells us what we ought to be developing with our newfound understanding, and CCSs, stemming from the medieval Church, provide real examples in time and space to observe how to practice leisure (Clark & Jain, 2019; Mudge, 2018; Perrin, 2021). A short history of classical education and its rediscovery in the last several decades is necessary.

Classical education began and evolved with the Greeks and the Romans. It was an education that had a great deal of variety and growth during the classical period, roughly 600 B.C. to 476 A.D., and was concerned with formation of the soul and striving for personal excellence (Clark & Jain, 2019; Perrin, 2004; Wilson, 1996). Education in the classical world included the classical languages, Greek and Latin, as well a robust knowledge of the literature and histories of Western civilizations, utilizing the trivium (grammar, logic, and rhetoric), and the quadrivium (astronomy, arithmetic, music, and geometry), with a heavy focus on gymnastic, also called physical excellence (Clark & Jain, 2019; Perrin, 2004; Wilson, 1996). Many famous

teachers of the classical period had their own views about how to acquire the best education, such as Protagoras, Isocrates, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle; each emphasized various aspects of logic and rhetoric (Perrin, 2004). However, the defining factor in classical education, beyond the curriculum, was the Greek understanding of *paideia*, that "man was to be crafted like a work of art by a standard of excellence" (Adler, 1952/1998; Perrin, 2004, p. 10). This highlights the fact that educated persons in the Greco-Roman world were educated to be well-rounded individuals, or the liberally minded human concerned with ethics and justice (Adler, 1952/1998; Gary, 2006; Perrin, 2004; Sayers, 1947/2017).

The medieval era, which is often considered an obscure, uninteresting gap between ancient and modern epochs by most modern individuals, was hardly so. It spanned multiple centuries, witnessed amazing invention and discovery, and truly was the nursery of the infant Church and the development of Christian education patterned after classical forebearers after Rome was Christianized (Anthony & Benson, 2003; Delhaye, 1960; Reynolds, 2009) . The first part of the era saw Boethius and Cassiodorus, some of the last of the Romans, translating ancient philosophy and history and continuing the work of the ancient academy and the classical schools (Delhaye, 1960). They were followed by countless others that are impossible to exhaustively name, but include St. Gregory, Jerome, Bede and more: African, European, Middle Eastern, Irish, and English bishops and monks who were instrumental and foundational in extending distinctly Judeo-Christian and Greco-Roman thought forward, translating and transcribing texts (Delhaye, 1960; Markos, 2021; Perrin, 2004). Augustine, Aquinas, and Dante saw the richness of Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy in relation to Judeo-Christian revelation and became literary giants not only in their time, but in the canon of world history (Delhaye, 1960; Markos, 2020, 2021). They were enriched by the ancient systems of philosophy, becoming a bridge in logical

analysis from ancient inquiry to modern thought. This distinct, Greco-Roman philosophical and skolé influence on Christian theology and practice was heavily displayed in monasteries which coupled thoughtful meditation, thinking, rituals, and routines of monks and theologians, including *lecto divina*, prayer and meditation, service, writing and translation, and artistic expression in the form of illuminated texts, architecture, and other mediums (Delhaye, 1960).

Cicero defined philosophy as love of wisdom in the ancient era, the medieval Christians defined theology as the love of wisdom at its highest form, and therefore theology became the highest philosophy, utilizing skolé as a medium (Delhaye, 1960). Philosophy was more than just the metaphysical wisdom of pagan antiquity but included prudence and knowledge as a "manner of life, view of the world" (Delhaye, 1960, p. 8). Delhaye (1960) quoted Aquinas' defense of Christian theologians studying ancient philosophy as admirable and necessary:

> "Whereas we pride ourselves on our independence in our thought, the ancients took pride in being gathered around a master and continuing his teaching…it constitutes a privileged foundation for the study of philosophy, for it includes so many of the thinkers of the past" (p. 12).

It was understood that even the pagan (pre-Christian) philosophers were given insight to truths that were more fully explained in Romans 1 and Colossians 2:8, which spoke of all truth being from God, not just the special revelation of Scripture, but creation as experienced through the senses and human reason (Delhaye, 1960). Aquinas' (1485/2018) *Summa Theologica* defended his own study of the ancients as a benefit to his understanding of the universe and the scriptures (Markos, 2020). The myths of the pagan antiquity were viewed as archtypes of Christ and the complex reality of order amid chaos in the universe (Markos, 2020).

The rise of the university in the Middle Ages was inextricably linked to the medieval growth of the Church, developing a liberal arts education fashioned after the classical academy, including the study of Latin, Greek, and the literature and history of the Greco-Roman era, but theology was added as the highest of all considerations (Perrin, 2004). The great works of the Western canon, later called The Great Books, including the religious scriptures of the Bible and the Quran, were read, translated, and their truths considered (Adler, 1952/1998). These great works of the Western world, carefully preserved and passed on as what came to known as the great conversation between humans down through the centuries, centered on questions that all humanity has wrestled with throughout history, and they involved such topics as knowledge, reality, and ethics (Adler, 1952/1998). Augustine (427/1997) and Aquinas (1485/2018) modeled this carryover from ancient to medieval thought in their writings, displaying their respect and reverence for the classical languages and literature as an inheritance to be passed down through the Church as medieval schools, the university, and the monasteries grew. This form of education, even with slight variations, remained consistent up through the Enlightenment, and the founding fathers of the United States were also inheritors of such an education (Perrin, 2004). Moreover, Frederick Douglass, Anna Julia Cooper, Malcom X, and Martin Luther King Jr. repeatedly referred to classical thought in the U.S. Constitution to argue for freedom and equality (Parham & Prather, 2022).

In the last century, the Western way of education waned (Littlejohn & Evans, 2006; Perrin, 2004; Wilson, 1996). From the Industrial Revolution onward, the classical and Christian way of training pupils was fractured and compartmentalized, starting with the elimination of learning Latin and Greek, because it was considered unnecessary and unattainable for the modern public, including the large influx of immigrants and freed slaves (Perrin, 2004;

Simmons, 2007). A more industrialized type of education rose in its place, emphasizing vocation-based skills and learning-by-doing as more valuable than logic and rhetoric, as argued by John Dewey (1938/1997), who believed that intellectual pursuit for most humans was not dominant and therefore a classical education was not democratic but elitist and out of touch. Over the course of several decades, an ethical or values-laden education was watered down, and a more individually procured education emerged (Perrin, 2004). Additionally, subjects were taught in isolation from one another rather than bringing them together in a well-rounded view that applied to the human soul or transformation (Perrin, 2004; Wilson, 1996). In short, the great aim of education passed down from the Greeks to form the soul of young people was cut off at the root for pragmatic, vocational skill training disconnected from matters of the essence of being and the whole person (Clark & Jain, 2019). Leisure was cast out of schools for a work-based, factory type model. However, many theorists and educators continued to express the need for a classical education, the development of ethical virtue among pupils, and reading of The Great Books to develop the soul, notably Adler (1952/1998), Cooper (1892/2016), and Sayers (1947/2017), who described the lost cultural heritage of learning and education in the West. Simultaneous to these changes schools are floundering across the country, teachers and students swim in a sea of mental health crisis of overwork and anxiety, unable to pass even the most basic of math and reading benchmarks, while jumping through the hoops of reform after reform, to no avail (Kreuzfeld et al, 2022; Lauerman & Konig, 2016; Richards et al., 2018; Scott, 2020; Stinebrickner, 1998; Turnipseed, 1994; ; Wilson, 1991; Wilson, 1996).

In the 1980s and 1990s, a movement aimed at recovering classical, Christian education in the modern era began to take shape (Littlejohn & Evans, 2006; Wilson, 1991, 1996). These schools went back to the fundamentals of a classical education: teaching Latin and Greek,

reading The Great Books of the Western Canon, and sought to follow an adaptable approach to learning that included stages of grammar, logic, and rhetoric for students K-12 (Campbell, 2008; Littlejohn & Evans, 2006; Simmons, 2007; Wilson, 1991). Additionally, utilization of students' strengths in each stage of growth was maximized. Young children chant, memorize, and sing, middle grades begin to piece together facts logically, argue, and ask questions to understand, and older students explain, orally and in writing, to persuade or argue a certain topic with humility and a desire to learn (Littlejohn & Evans, 2006; Perrin, 2004; Sayers, 2017; Wilson, 1996). It is an education that goes back to the fundamentals of language, mathematics, literature, history, science, and the arts to teach students how to learn so that they may take on any subject or skill in their future with ethical and virtuous consideration, anchored in a traditional catholic Christian culture (Clark & Jain, 2019). Perrin (2004) defines classical, Christian education as "the authoritative, traditional, and enduring form of education, begun by the Greeks and the Romans, developed through history and now being renewed and recovered in the 21st century" (p. 6). Hundreds of brick-and-mortar CCSs, as well as classical, Christian homeschool organizations, have spread across the United States in the past few decades, along with online programs to train teachers and parents (Association of Classical Christian Schools, 2020; Bauer & Wise, 1999; Campbell, 2008; ClassicalU, 2022; Circe Institute, 2022; Society for Classical Learning, 2021).

The tie between The Great Books, virtue formation, and the historic conversation over centuries to answer modern concerns of community and education is also gaining traction from university educators like Dr. Karen Swallow Prior, Dr. Anika Prather, and Dr. Angela Parham. Prior (2018), a literature professor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, teaches extensively on reading widely, and specifically reading well, which is to mean engagement with quality literature for the purpose of contemplation and soul formation on questions of existence

and reality. Prior (2018) systematically highlights the virtues of prudence, temperance, justice, courage, faith, hope, and charity through specific classic literary selections, guiding readers (and her students) through the purpose of reading classical literature: to form the character. Dr. Angela Parham, a sociology professor at the University of Virginia who also founded an after-school program known as Nyansa Classical Community, and Dr. Anika Prather, a classics professor at Howard University and founder of The Living Water School, have created an online course for classical, Christian educators entitled, "The Black Intellectual Tradition and The Great Conversation" (Parham & Prather, 2022; Prather & Parham, 2020). Both Dr. Prather and Dr. Parham (2020) advocate for a classical, Christian education as the answer to the crippled K-12 education system in the United States today. As Black women, they often defend their love of classical education in their communities but contend that this type of education does not belong to any one group of people but to all, and therefore is not elite or exclusionary but one that is steeped in multicultural diversity—rich in African and Middle Eastern voices contemplating the largest questions of human existence and reality throughout history, ripe for reclamation (Parham & Prather, 2022).

As leisure studies seek to reaffirm a solid foundation and definition, scholars have highlighted the importance of meaning, wonder, and reflection (Matiz et al., 2020; Orams & Brown, 2021; Wensley & Slade, 2012). Digital detox, or time set aside away from smart technology, is a precursor to reflective, contemplative leisure (Syvertsen & Enli, 2020). Outdoor walking, spiritual pursuits such as prayer and scriptural readings, communal gatherings and sharing of food, and a focus on literature and art mirrors Judeo-Christian practice of Sabbath and the Greco-Roman cherishing of the gymnastic, moral, and poetic education. However, as noted by Heintzman (2017), extraordinarily little empirical research on Christian leisure exists but is

needed, especially as it pertains to the call for leisure studies to develop robust definitions and practices.

Summary

Teacher burnout and stress is a contributing factor to attrition, and leisure is an important component of a healthy attitude toward one's work (Datillo & Frias, 2021; Garcia-Carmona, 2018; Heintzman, 2000; Huk et al., 2018; Iwasaki, 2017; Kariou et al., 2021; Kruezfeld et al., 2022;). However, a lack of empirical research on teacher leisure practices and how the leisure practices they apply outside of working hours impact their pedagogy exist (Chou & Chou, 2021; Hayes et al., 2019; Heintzman, 2017). Skolé and Sabbath are key pieces to understanding leisure more robustly, and the lack of understanding surrounding ancient leisure is evidenced by the modern tendency to constantly connect or be available to demands without rest (Gary, 2006, 2016; Heschel, 1951/2005; Pieper, 1952/2009). However, CCSs and educators are a readily available resource and voice to conduct a study to develop solutions because of the unique connection to the convergence of Sabbath and skolé practices that are hardwired to their teaching and professional growth.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

Overview

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to describe the essence of the lived experiences of 10 classical Christian secondary teachers and administrators who embrace Greek skolé and Christian Sabbath at classical Christian schools in the United States (Allen, 1989). At this stage in the research, Greek skolé will be generally defined as restful learning through meditation, cultivation of habits, and enjoyment of meaningful, personal growth in a conducive, interactive environment (Perrin, 2021; Samaras, 2017). Hermeneutic phenomenology is a branch of phenomenology that relies on language and writing to make meaning of the essential elements of lived experiences between participants and the researcher (van Manen, 2015; van Manen & van Manen, 2021). This chapter will begin with a summarization of the research design, including the central research question and the sub-questions that drive the study, with support from primary texts and scholars to support their crafting and inclusion. Next, a detailed description of the setting and participants, researcher positionality, procedures, and the comprehensive data collection plan and analysis will be provided (Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 2015). Lastly, the trustworthiness of the study will be discussed, which includes credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and ethical considerations.

Research Design

Qualitative inquiry requires the researcher to become situated as an observer of the organic life world of participants in a natural setting, applying interpretive practices to analyze and study phenomena and the meanings people give to them (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Lincoln & Guba, 2016). Therefore, qualitative research lends itself naturally to the

education field and teaching profession. Further, qualitative research design unapologetically rests on the philosophical assumptions and theoretical framework of the researcher as a sensitive professional, acknowledging the applicable insights of the researcher that inform the inquiry and the researcher's ability to underline participant voices as they describe their experiences as the raw, collected data (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Heidegger, 1927/2010). By analyzing teacher experiences, meaning making, and consciousness, participants become knowers and insightful researchers become the interpretive tool (Capobianco, 2014; Laverty, 2003). A qualitative research design was appropriate for this study because it drew attention to participant voices with thick, rich, and deep descriptions of the essence of the lived experience of classical Christian educators who employ skolé and Sabbath practices outside of the classroom that consequently impact their teaching (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 2015).

Furthermore, the qualitative approach of phenomenology describes the lived experience shared between multiple individuals, uncovering themes that all participants have in common when separately or personally encountering the same phenomenon under investigation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). van Manen (2015) developed a hermeneutic phenomenology of practice influenced by the famous transcendental phenomenologist, Husserl (1913/2017), and the hermeneutic phenomenologist, Heidegger (1927/2010). While transcendental phenomenology is descriptive of participant voices speaking for themselves without researcher interpretation that brackets or suspends biases of the researcher, a hermeneutic phenomenology gives voice to participants through a hermeneutic circle, where the researcher has experienced the phenomenon under investigation and therefore holds fore-sight, or fore-conception, into the need for inquiry (Gadamer, 1960/2013; Heidegger, 1927/2010; Husserl, 1913/2017; Peoples, 2021; van Manen, 2015).

van Manen (2015) made a clear distinction between phenomenological research methodology and phenomenological research techniques and procedures. Specifically, methodology refers to epistemological assumptions of the researcher present in the research, but techniques are closer to an art form and procedures are steps to be carried out according to detailed rules or routines, all of which will be described further in this chapter (Gadamer, 1960/2013; van Manen, 2015). Triangulated data collection and analysis methods were applied to the study through an open-ended response log, individual interviews, and two follow-up focus groups consistent with hermeneutic phenomenology that considered the whole, parts, and synthesis of the phenomenon as ongoing (Peoples, 2021).

van Manen (2015) is a teacher interested in the lived experiences of children and educators who uses hermeneutic, or interpretive, phenomenology that is linked to the art of skilled observation in one's field. In hermeneutic phenomenology, writing is the process from which meanings of the shared, lived experiences of individuals who encounter a phenomenon are exposed or uncovered (van Manen, 2015). Hermeneutic phenomenology uniquely harnesses language to describe the inner life world of individuals, discovering the "possibility of being and becoming," and uses "modes of discourse" to make meaning distinguishable and recognizable (van Manen, 2015, p. xii-xiii). Heidegger (1927/2010) described "being there" in the term *Dasein* to describe the researcher's positionality within the hermeneutic circle (Peoples, 2021, p. 34). In this way, the researcher's skilled questioning, and the participant's sharing, work in tandem to uncover essential themes present in the lived experience of the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

In addition, the process of the hermeneutic circle for methodical and scientific understanding takes place by correcting researcher prejudices to create new "prejudgments"

(Moustakas, 1994, p. 10). The hermeneutic circle requires the researcher to work out pre-structured assumptions or conceptions of the data through scientific means, not based on popular trends or topics (Gadamer, 1960/2013). The interpretation of data must be on guard against habits of thought or preconceptions, and rather, focused on the phenomenon at hand. According to Gadamer (1960/2013), "the hermeneutic task becomes of itself a questioning of things" and to set aside one's initial and personal assumptions, including those that might interpret the text or data in a particular way (p. 281). The hermeneutic circle means viewing the parts and the whole simultaneously, where the text is assumed complete until an unintelligible gap is found that needs further probing to achieve resolution (Gadamer, 1960/2013).

The methodology and technique structure of van Manen (2015) involves settling on a phenomenon of interest, examining the lived experience of the phenomenon through data collection that always involves individual interviews along with other textual data, reflecting on essential themes of the phenomenon in triangulated data analysis, developing strong, rich, and deep descriptions of the phenomenon by way of participant voices through writing that is meaning-driven and interpretive, preserving a solid orientation to the phenomenon, and keeping a balance between the parts of the phenomenon and the whole. In fact, van Manen (2015) is careful to point out the necessary harmony of phenomenological questions and sensitivity in the field of education—that it is fundamentally a writing activity that is reflective and exploratory. He states that technique can often be "seductive," but that professional care and sensitivity require a method of "textual reflection" and openness (van Manen, 2015, p. 4).

A hermeneutic phenomenology was appropriately chosen for this study because the essence, or essential nature, of the lived experience of classical Christian educators who employ skolé and Sabbath practices was interpretive and pedagogical in nature, explicating meaning of

phenomena through “texts of life” and understanding the experiences and structured actions, or liturgies, one participates in daily that inform their teaching (van Manen, 2015). van Manen (2015) states that the pedagogy of teaching itself requires a phenomenological sensitivity to the life experience, but also requires aptitude to make meaning of the phenomenon to see the pedagogic implications in education (p. 4). Educators are frequently looking to probe deeper into their discipline, students, colleagues, and pedagogy for understanding. Plus, a phenomenological study is one that seeks to highlight meaning of the phenomenon, by allowing participant voices to come to the forefront to uncover themes, categories, and codes across the data, and a hermeneutic phenomenology, additionally, relies on the researcher to be the tool to make pedagogical sense, through narrative and analogy, for applicable and valuable practice (van Manen, 2015). Even further, van Manen’s (2015) description is heavily linked to the topic at hand when he speaks of “human science research itself if a kind of *Bildung* or *paideia,*” and “that hermeneutic phenomenology is a philosophy of the personal, the individual, which we pursue against the background of an understanding of the evasive character of the *logos* of *other,* the *whole,* the *communal,* or the *social*” (p. 7). What van Manen (2015) describes is a form of skolé and Sabbath forever linked with learning and teaching, expressed through hermeneutic phenomenology as an art and a science. A hermeneutic approach to the phenomenon of the lived experience of classical Christian educators who employ skolé and Sabbath, therefore, allowed for participant voices to shed light on the essential nature of the phenomenon and revealed implications for meaningful contributions to leisure practices that inform teaching pedagogy (Laverty, 2003).

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study and influenced data collection and analysis.

Central Research Question

What are the lived experiences of secondary classical Christian educators who develop skolé and Sabbath practices outside of the classroom?

Sub-Question One

What are the beliefs that influence the choice to pursue skolé and Sabbath practices in secondary classical Christian education teachers?

Sub-Question Two

How do the skolé and Sabbath practices of secondary classical Christian educators outside of the classroom influence their teaching?

Setting and Participants

The setting and participants will be sufficiently described to articulate the criteria for participation in the study and for repeatability and transferability for future research studies (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Further, the setting and participants articulate the specifics of the study and their relation to the problem and purpose of the study as presented (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Setting

Participants came from two classical Christian schools. According to the Association of Classical Christian Schools (ACCS) (2020) and the Society for Classical Learning (SCL) (2021), there are several hundred classical Christian schools across the United States and thousands of classical Christian educators. By including participants from classical Christian schools in the United States for the study, language used and experiences described from those of various backgrounds may further highlight similar themes related to leisure practice through skolé and

Sabbath. Moreover, since the study explored the lived experiences of classical Christian teachers' skolé and Sabbath practices outside of their work environment to understand how leisure in one's personal time influences their work and pedagogy, the comfort of an outside of work setting highlighted teacher skolé and Sabbath experience and description. Lastly, since one of the necessary data collection pieces in a phenomenology is the interview, interviews in a professional, neutral, but comfortable setting were sought (van Manen, 2015).

Individual, face to face interviews were conducted between each participant and the researcher on Microsoft Teams, an online communication platform. Additionally, two follow-up focus groups were conducted through Microsoft Teams for two reasons: participants were able to meet in one location and all participant's voices were heard by reliable audio, video, and transcription tools built into the software. Microsoft Teams is secure since outsiders cannot access the meeting without an invite. Because the data collected was the personal data of the participants and not archival data associated with an institution, such as a school or membership site, and no minors were included in the study, institutional permission of a site or guardian was not necessary (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Consequently, site permissions were not needed for this study since no organization was used to recruit participants nor was data collected at or from a site, but relied on snowballing, or word-of-mouth networking, where research participants assisted the researcher in identifying potential participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Participants

Ten secondary educators within classical Christian educational institutions were ultimately selected as the sample size due to the qualitative design of phenomenology being used, which can range from a few participants up to as many needed for saturation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Creswell & Creswell (2018) indicate that for a phenomenology, 3-10

participants may be adequate for saturation. It is necessary to have an adequate sample size to saturate, or fully develop, the themes that data collection produces and provide support for those themes and categories in qualitative research (Guest et al., 2020). Saturation, which occurs when no new themes or insights are gleaned in the data collection process, gives the researcher the go ahead to move to the next phase of the research plan (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Guest et al., 2020). Participants comprised of a mixture of various phases in their career, including newer and seasoned teachers. Gender, years of experience, and general location of participants was gathered with participant permission.

To fully explore classical Christian teachers' lived experiences of skolé and Sabbath and the impact on their teaching, participants were obliged to meet exact criteria. First, all participants are current employees of a brick-and-mortar CCSs, and hold a current position as a full-time, secondary (5^{th}-12^{th}), classical Christian educator or administrator. The school each participant is employed by had at least 100 students enrolled and in existence for 10 or more years, which provided teacher experiences from secure and stable school environments that are not in infancy. These CCSs identified as such and were not non-classical Christian schools or other parochial or independent schools, due to the unique understanding of combined Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian leisure practices found in classical and Church history. Second, participants were already exercising intentional skolé and Sabbath practices at least 4 times per week or 16 times per month, whether they were mixture of practices or one practice, lasting at least 15 minutes per session and were willing to describe the practice(s) fully. Third, participants all assented that they had been practicing intentional skolé and Sabbath practices for at least 3 months prior to participation in the study. In this study, leisure practices were defined as those outside of the classroom or work setting that fit Greek and Christian leisure activities of rest,

recharge, and lifelong learning incorporated into the individual daily or weekly life of the participant, such as reclamation of time, rituals or liturgies, artistic or musical practices, physical movement, intentionally restful outdoor activities, spiritual practices, or learning practices (Heintzman, 2000; Heintzman, 2005; Heintzman, 2017; Pieper, 1952; Samaras, 2017). Leisure activities in this study did not include attending a conference, seminar, or a one-time, employer-required professional development opportunity. Leisure activities included in this study did not include television watching, social media browsing, or video gaming. Leisure activities that included electronic or digital media used were in conjunction with a leisure activity outline above, such as using a computer to perform the leisure practice of writing or using a phone or web application to assist with daily prayer, sacred text reading, or musical activity. By meeting the above requirements, participants were selected through criterion sampling. Prior to contacting any possible participants and collecting data, Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval through Liberty University was obtained (see Appendix A).

After email recruitment of participants meeting the above criteria and screening questions, a follow-up email was sent to each participant to set up a meeting time on Microsoft Teams (see Appendix B and C). All participants acknowledged the above criteria, agreeing that they met all criteria outlined, and were voluntarily willing 5^{th}-12^{th} grade teachers from classical Christian school locations in the United States (see Appendix B and C).

Researcher Positionality

The motivation for conducting a study is imbedded in the researcher's interpretive framework and philosophical assumptions (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 2016). The interpretive framework and the philosophical assumptions leading to this proposed phenomenological study will be discussed in detail, highlighting the researcher's positionality

within the study (Berger, 2015). Centuries ago, Augustine of Hippo (427/1997) stated that all truth was God's, and hence, the Christian may use Christian philosophy and worldview as a lens from which to view and decipher the way in which His creation behaves and works (Bartholomew & Goheen, 2013). This allows the research scholar to fully embrace their discovery of new information, ideas, and findings as a connection to what is born out on the pages of inspired Scripture.

The Bible discusses the various gifts and talents given to humanity, stressing the importance of recognizing that not all individuals possess the same gifts, but that the body of Christ is made up of a variety of talents, all of which are valuable to the work of the gospel (*English Standard Version*, 2001/2021, 1 Corinthians 12:4-9; 12). Therefore, believers are encouraged to use their various gifts, perspectives, and abilities in service to others as "good stewards" of the gift they have been given so that God receives the glory (*English Standard Version*, 2001/2021, 1 Peter 4:10).

I view my work, both as a teacher and as a research scholar, as a noble profession in which I am tasked with serving others with integrity, to seek their good over my own or over an institution's gain. One of the main reasons I was drawn to qualitative research was due to the richness of participant voice and the interactions that the researcher may have with the participants through interviews and writing. As a researcher there is much I can learn from participants while simultaneously developing the ability to empathize, then performing self-appraisal, called reflexivity, to outline my position as the researcher to the study and allow the results of the research speak for itself (Berger, 2015). Research study came alive for me as soon as I was able to understand that it could be conducted professionally and scholarly through such approaches as phenomenology, qualitative narrative, or ethnography, for instance. This is the

work that I commit to the Lord, fixing my faith and work on Him, to run the race well in service for others (*English Standard Version*, 2001/2021, Colossians 3:23-24; Hebrews 12:2-3; Proverbs 16:3).

The famous Christian author, theologian, and literary professor at Oxford and Cambridge, C. S. Lewis, once reflected on the experience of writing: "I am sure that some are born to write as trees are born to bear leaves: for these, writing is a necessary mode of their own development. If the impulse to write survives the hope of success, then one is among these" (Latta, 2016, p. 134). This writing impulse for understanding and growth as a human being has been a foundational element of my own life experience since I was a young child. Meaning making, or, making sense of the world I inhabit, has always come through reading classical literature, listening to and playing classical music, reflecting on my own past experiences, understanding my social background and ancestry in relation to community and the world at large, and writing about it. van Manen (2015) reveals that the practice of writing about experience helps to make meaning recognizable and tangible. Language never fully describes one's experiences, but it is the medium that humans use to understand the collective experiences we all share (van Manen, 2015). As a Christian, my faith is an integral part of how I perceive, understand, and write about the world. Heidegger (1927/2010) exposed personal background as an unavoidable reality in one's work to make sense of the world. This is foundational to the core of who I am and matches Heidegger's (1927/2010) description that research scholars have a unique perspective on certain aspects of the life world because of their placement in certain contexts, backgrounds, and beliefs.

As a classical Christian educator who navigated the challenges before, during, and after COVID-19 pandemic teaching, I experienced my own personal and professional hurdles and witnessed colleagues who left the field, but most often noticed educators push through the

obstacles with a long-term sense of commitment and newly found resolve. Why and how this was occurring intrigued me. Prior to the pandemic, I researched teacher burnout and mental health, as I have a background in counseling and psychology, but I did not have a keen sense of what positive factors prevented such outcomes. As an academic and an educator, my desire is for students to thrive in a stable, robust learning community. As a classical Christian educator, I seek to model a holistic, integrated way of being within the world for my students, pointing them to a life of continued growth and curiosity rather than stagnation or stress. This involves the pursuit of innovative ideas, knowing that a natural part of learning is perseverance through failure, and restful practices stimulate contemplation and growth. This has led to an interest in the larger CCS teacher's experience, as mine is only one small, short snapshot that informed the questions and framework of this study and were bracketed and set aside to allow the life experiences and voices of classical Christian educators speak. In Heidegger's (1927/2010) descriptions of hermeneutic phenomenology, research scholars are trained to look for essences of being in phenomena that may be informed by one's encountering or recognizing a particular phenomenon themselves, but they set personal bias and beliefs aside for a thicker, richer description of the essence from multiple vantage points. These fore-conceptions or fore-understandings aid my inquiry into the phenomenon under study, but are recognized as much as possible, though I acknowledge that as the human instrument interpreting the essence of the phenomenon described, it is fundamentally connected to the research questions, exploration, and analysis (Heidegger, 1927/2010; Peoples, 2021; van Manen, 2015).

Interpretive Framework

I employ the social constructivism paradigm to my research, where it is understood that people pursue an understanding of their world of life and work, and desire to develop meaning in

their life's work and world (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Heidegger, 1927/2010). Social constructivism requires adherents to uncover complexities among individual views, rather than trying to fit data into tight or singular categories (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Therefore, participant's experiences, background, and social interactions are interrelated and directly influence how they make meaning of reality, or a social construction of cultural meaning (Heidegger, 1927/2010; Lincoln & Guba, 2016). This paradigm meshes particularly well with a classical understanding of education, where education is regarded as a passing on of a multifaceted cultural tradition shared within a community or society, rather than mere skill acquisition (Clark & Jain, 2019). Significance and meaning are forged through the passing down of values and interaction with others, and the researcher takes interest in the historical and cultural setting of participants to address a process of interaction with one's social background and context, and how their social interactions influence how they make meaning (Lincoln & Guba, 2016). Further, my own historical background and social context within classical education and Christianity is positioned within the research, influencing my insight into data collection and analysis procedures. However, it was important that I did not make assumptions about the language or meaning that participants used throughout data collection, but I used what Heidegger (1927/2010) referred to as lenses, or pre-understandings, to inquire and probe for fuller, more complete descriptions of the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Peoples, 2021; van Manen, 2015). My positionality as a human instrument in the study allowed participant voices to communicate and underscore their experiences of the world (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Philosophical Assumptions

In qualitative research, the scholar enters research inquiry with a holistic understanding that balances the whole with its various parts (Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 2015). As researcher

and scholar, I came to the study with a biblical worldview that posits one true reality through the lens of Scripture where:

> "Grand stories and worldviews are, as a result, always rooted at their deepest level in religious faith, whether that is in the living God, in human ability, in some other aspect of creation, in an impersonal spirit pervading the universe, or in any of the multitude of other idols that humans manufacture" (Bartholemew & Goheen, 2013, p. 16).

Therefore, I approached the phenomenological study with the understanding of Ecclesiastes 3:11: "He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end" (*English Standard Version)*. This eternity in the heart of humanity develops a longing for things true, beautiful, and good, though humanity often struggles to reconcile this longing with the lifeworld, and as the Scripture states, will never fully comprehend the mysterious nature of being and experience in this life, but we do so through a religious faith and community values to make sense of ultimate Reality (Bartholomew & Goheen, 2013; Gadamer, 1986).

The Christian worldview perspective I hold had implications for this phenomenological study, which aimed to be interpretive based on the philosophical assumptions outlined. A Christian, hermeneutic approach was an appropriate design for the study because I acted as the human instrument to interpret the essence of the lived experiences of classical Christian teachers experiencing the specific, shared phenomenon of skolé and Sabbath practices by exploring themes across participant voices that influenced pedagogical outcomes (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Gadamer, 1960/2013; van Manen, 2014; van Manen, 2015).

Ontological Assumption

The ontological philosophical assumption led me to a phenomenological, hermeneutical approach to qualitative research based on Creswell & Poth's (2018) statement that the ontological approach "embrace different realities, as do the individuals being studied and the readers of the qualitative study", reporting multiple realities and multiple forms of data (p. 20). Although I hold a traditional Christian understanding of one true Reality, God, I simultaneously believe that individual human interpretations of the nature of Reality are fallible and deficient to fully understand the nature of God and the universe (Lincoln & Guba, 2016). Therefore, a mixture of interpretations of human experience, and even Biblical scripture, exists and are often subjected and relative to personal experience and social background (Lincoln & Guba, 2016). This mixture of lived experiences allows for a vast array of data and the possibility of multiple themes and categories that organically come to the forefront during analysis, highlighting a truer description of Reality and the phenomenon under exploration (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Epistemological Assumption

The epistemological philosophical assumption led me to a phenomenological hermeneutical approach to qualitative research where knowledge about a phenomenon is evidenced by participant lived experience, and the researcher becomes an insider to "lessen the distance" between themselves and the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 20). The senses become the medium to which human beings experience reality and the world around them through community and language (Capobianco, 2014; Heidegger, 1927/2010; van Manen, 2015). Sensory experiences include inner dialogue and oral and written language, alongside personal interpretation, to make meaning and sense of the world (Gadamer, 1960/2013; van Manen, 2015).

Axiological Assumption

The axiological assumption led me to a phenomenological hermeneutical approach to qualitative research, which admits research is value-laden and biases exist, so the researcher must openly discuss the values that outline the narrative, merging their own interpretation in tandem with those of participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Heidegger, 1927/2010; van Manen, 2015). My experience as a classical Christian educator who has been teaching full time in a classical Christian school in central Virginia for over 9 years influenced my interest in the study and the results of the research. This positionality gives me rare perception into the classical Christian education field and the insights and practices that may have an impact on a vast array of educators from various backgrounds, pedagogies, institutional types, and regions. As a classical Christian educator I have the experienced ability to hone into specific vocabulary and conceptual understandings of this sphere of education, using the language and ideas within the classical Christian education community, and simultaneously setting aside my personal experiences and explanations of such experiences through self-reflective journaling that allowed each participant to describe their own life world and understandings that contributed to a clearer representation of the phenomenon (Berger, 2015).

Researcher's Role

In qualitative research, the researcher is the key instrument, collecting multiple and diverse forms of data in natural settings to form a holistic account and nascent design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell, 2004; van Manen, 2015). My personal background as a classical educator and traditional, liturgical Anglican led my inquiry interest into the ways in which a classical Christian approach to education, and the art of teaching, influences teacher intentionality in their work and longevity within the field of education. The experiences I have through my degree fields, including education, English, psychology, and counseling led to a love

of history, literature, and poetry that give voice to human experience throughout time, the human condition, and shared understandings, including self-reflection on philosophy and poetry.

As stated previously, I am a classical Christian educator who has taught for over 9 years in the middle grades at a classical Christian PreK-12 school in central Virginia, giving me a unique perspective while remaining professionally positioned as an empirical research scholar. None of the voluntary participants of the proposed study have a subordinate role to my own. Some participants were known to me as acquaintances or colleagues, but some were not known to me prior to the study and were be found through word of mouth or email recruitment because they are known classical Christian educators with public contact information or through associate referral.

I do have a known bias in favor of classical Christian education and its outcomes. Classical Christian education utilizes a historically rich background of Christianity, often linked to Catholic, Orthodox, or Anglican forms of piety, but the principles touch on human nature and are thus applicable across various teaching backgrounds (Clark & Jain, 2019; Pieper, 1952/2009). The leisure practices employed by classical Christian educators due to their unique perspectives and understanding of the benefits of such are of interest due to their possible wide ranging and diverse implications for educational pedagogy. I have unique insight into the employment of such understanding and practices, which in the hermeneutic circle is known as fore-sight or fore-conception, but recognize biases or judgments that were continually revised during data collection and analysis (Peoples, 2021). Interpretation is a constant revision of understanding the lifeworld because, according to Heidegger (1927/2010), it was not possible to bracket myself completely from the research since I am also a human being with sensory experience in the world with others (Peoples, 2021). Therefore, my own personal experiences, or fore-sight with such practices encountered in the study, were continually seen through a lens process—synthesizing the whole

with its parts to inform the research questions, data collection procedures, and analysis of participant lived experience of the phenomenon (Berger, 2015; Peoples, 2021).

In qualitative research, the process of reflexivity is the practice of the researcher outlining and taking note of their positionality in the research, and how one's positionality may affect the research process and outcomes (Berger, 2015). Reflexivity, or self-appraisal, affects the research in that the researcher acknowledges their access to a particular group because of their background (Berger, 2015). Participants may be more willing to share openly due to the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon or by the language employed, and the researcher may use their background to be able to probe further during data collection or interpret certain data during analysis in a particular way not known to another researcher (Berger, 2015). Heidegger (1927/2010) describes this as part of the hermeneutic circle, but rather than bracketing or suspending personal biases, those fore-sights or pre-understandings are crucial to uncovering the phenomenon and subsequent meanings (Peoples, 2021). The lenses that I brought to this research study were explicitly recognized and reflexively journaled as I began data collection and analysis (Peoples, 2021).This required the use of the hermeneutic circle to stay tuned into the phenomenon and participant voice while also using my perspective to enhance the quality and trustworthiness of the research (Berger, 2015; Heidegger, 1927/2010; Peoples, 2021; van Manen, 2015).

Procedures

The steps used to conduct the research study will be outlined below and allow for replication. First, approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Liberty University was acquired before any data collection or analysis took place. The Liberty University IRB describes written communication, interviews, and focus groups as human interaction, and therefore an IRB review was a necessary step to insure minimal risk to participants (Liberty University, 2022). To

receive IRB approval, a detailed submission of the study procedures, including recruitment, data plan, and analysis were included. The procedures discussed below were approved by Liberty University's IRB and include the documentation used for recruiting participants, participant permissions, data collection and data analysis plans, and a discussion about how the study achieved triangulation and trustworthiness.

Permissions

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was sought through Liberty University, which met the requirement to conduct ethical research with minimal risk to participants before data collection (see Appendix A). Only after IRB approval through Liberty University was required were recruitment emails sent to prospective participants for the study (see Appendix B). Site permissions were not needed for this study since no organization or institution was used to recruit participants nor data collected at a site, but relied on snowballing, or word-of-mouth networking, where research participants assisted the researcher in identifying potential participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Recruitment Plan

After IRB approval was granted, potential participants were contacted via email (see Appendices A and B). The sample pool consisted of interested colleagues and other classical Christian educators in the United States who teach at brick-and-mortal schools either as beginning, experienced, or master teachers. Participants were selected through snowballing, or word-of-mouth networking, where research participants assisted the researcher in identifying potential participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Participants were then selected for the study through criterion sampling, after meeting the screening criteria outlined in the previous participant section and included in Appendix D. Included in the recruitment email was the

informed consent document as an attachment (see Appendix C). After returning the signed informed consent, participants filled out the screening questions that detailed demographic information and the criteria for participants to be included in the study (see Appendix D)

After one week, I sent a brief reminder email to participants who I had not heard back from (see Appendix B). All participants who fit the criteria through the screening questions and agreed to participate in the study with demographic and criterion information are included in Table 1 in Chapter Four, with pseudonyms used to mask identity. The recruitment email and informed consent document noted that a $25 Amazon gift card would be provided to participants who completed the study as a token of appreciation for participation (see Appendices B and C). Before data collection, the researcher obtained the consent form from each participant prior to the open-ended response log or interview via electronic submission, held in a file under password protection to maintain privacy of all participants (see Appendix C).

Data Collection Plan

The proposed study involved three data collection sources of evidence: open-ended response logs, individual interviews, and two follow-up focus groups. After collecting informed consent, demographic information, and preliminary data on the participants' leisure practices (see Appendices C and D), data collection began with a an email that included the open-ended response log questions in a Word document (see Appendices E and F), followed by individual interviews (see Appendix G), and lastly, a focus group email (see Appendix H) was sent to selected participants to probe emerging themes that presented themselves in the open-ended response logs and during individual interviews that required further exploration (see Appendix I) (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Heintzman, 2017; Samaras, 2017; van Manen, 2015). The open-ended response logs allowed participants to describe and reflect on their relation to and understanding

of the phenomenon, particularly their understanding and experience of skolé and Sabbath and how they practice leisure (van Manen, 2015). Individual interviews followed the completion of the open-ended response logs as the primary form of data collection in hermeneutic phenomenology and other qualitative research approaches (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2015). Lastly, two focus groups probed thematic statements that needed additional exploration, and participants were able to build upon their understanding of leisure and the meaning of their experiences together in community (Heidegger, 1927/2010; van Manen, 2015). Through these three data collection procedures a description and interpretation of the lived experience of classical Christian educators who employ skolé and Sabbath practices outside of the classroom and their impact on teaching pedagogy took place.

Open-Ended Response Log Data Collection Approach

Open-ended written responses in log format are a valuable and insightful piece of data in a phenomenology, which allow for reflective writing and participant meaning making (Ireland, 2018; van Manen, 2015). In this way, writing provides participants with longer lengths of time to formulate, edit, and submit answers to questions and use language to construct and represent their experience more fully. It can allow stream-of-consciousness for a participant to work out sensory experiences as they relay it to another human being, the researcher, for understanding, and a log keeps the written responses from being tedious and overwhelming (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Ireland, 2018; Heidegger, 1927/2010). Lastly, by collecting response logs prior to the interviews, the researcher can gather preliminary data applicable to the research questions that allow researcher and participants to delve into deeper and lengthier questions during individual interviews (Ireland, 2018).

Participant self-reflective logs were the first method of data collection. In an email after the initial recruitment and screening, each participant received detailed instructions for answering the open-ended response log (see Appendices E and F). The open-ended response log questions were contained in a Word document attachment sent with the email (see Appendices E and F). The five open-ended questions with the log provided to each participant were designed to explore participant thoughts, ideas, and understanding of skolé and Sabbath and how they personally practice leisure in a log format for brevity (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2015). While there was not a word count requirement, participants were directed to submit their open-ended response log within two weeks after obtaining it by email. Additionally, participants were able to describe the experience of keeping a personal diary or a journal as a leisure practice in the response log, if applicable, but these were seen as two separate acts (one as personal leisure practice of the participant and one as merely part of the data collection and not a leisure intervention). The open-ended response log given by the researcher for this study was not considered a leisure activity or a therapeutic intervention.

Open-Ended Response Log

1. Describe your understanding of contemplative or intellectual (skolé) leisure. CRQ
2. Describe your understanding of Sabbath rest. CRQ
3. What specific skolé and/or Sabbath practices do you employ? (type into the log below) SQ1

Leisure Practice 1:	Beliefs preceding practice:	Description of the practice and experience:	Beliefs/result of doing the practice:

Leisure Practice 2: (if applicable)	Beliefs preceding practice:	Description of the practice and experience:	Beliefs/result of doing the practice:
Leisure Practice 3: (if applicable)	Beliefs preceding practice:	Description of the practice and experience:	Beliefs/result of doing the practice:
Leisure Practice 4: (if applicable)	Beliefs preceding practice:	Description of the practice and experience:	

4. For each of the practices outlined in question 3, what is the time commitment involved (minutes, hours, days)? How long (months, years) have you been practicing these leisure activities? SQ1
5. What is the relationship between your work and leisure? SQ2

Each of the open-ended response questions contained in the log are directly related to the central research question and sub-questions, and they were designed to explore themes and categories that further presented themselves during individual interviews (van Manen, 2015). Response log questions 1 and 2 confirmed the participant's understanding of leisure, particularly their insight into skolé and Sabbath (Clark & Jain, 2019; Parr & Schmalz, 2019; Perrin, 2004). Response log questions 3 and 4 were tied to research sub-question 1 and were concrete descriptions of chosen skolé and Sabbath practices of the participant and the time commitment involved (Blackshaw, 2016; Bruggeman, 2014; Datillo & Frias, 2021; Dubie, 2021; Perrin, 2021; Pieper, 1952/2009). Response log question 5 focused on how these outside of work practices directly impacted teaching pedagogy and classroom environment, exploring the connection

between personal well-being and health with meaningful and engaging work (Brandao et al., 2019; Carter, 2018; Kelly et al., 2020).

Open-Ended Response Log Data Analysis Plan

To analyze the open-ended response log textual data, a hermeneutic phenomenological data analysis approach, developed by van Manen (2015) was followed. Before the analysis, the response logs were organized and managed within a long-term and password protected digital file system (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Davidson, 2009; van Manen, 2015). To do this, each response log document submitted by participants was stored in a password protected file on the researcher's computer, masking identifying information through numbers. The written transcripts were loaded into the Delve software, which is designed to assist researchers in organizing transcriptions into codes and themes. The Delve software is designed for qualitative research and privately purchased so that only the researcher had access to the data. The Delve software was used throughout the data analysis process and aided the researcher in housing the textual data for reading, highlighting, and recording thematic statements and patterns. van Manen's (2015) sensitive, pedagogical approach to phenomenology guided the researcher's immersive, language analysis step-by-step (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The purpose of van Manen's (2015) data analysis process is to always consider the whole with its parts. Deep, extensive, repeated reflection on data texts and structures to uncover thematic meaning is the heart of the analysis process in hermeneutic phenomenology. All data collected followed van Manen's (2015) holistic approach, then the highlighting approach, followed by the line-by-line approach, arranging linguistic transformations throughout, determining incidental and essential themes, and then writing and rewriting to describe the essence of the phenomenon under study.

To begin, a reflective, holistic reading of each open-ended response log transcript was conducted to find and record one single statement or essential word, called the holistic phrase, that described the significance of the journal text as a whole (van Manen, 2015). Before analyzing the smaller parts of the text, including words and sentence clusters, the researcher viewed the entire text holistically (van Manen, 2015). Second, the highlighting approach required the researcher to read and re-read each response log transcript numerous times to circle, highlight, and underline emergent statements or phrases that exposed the experience or understanding described and recorded patterns (van Manen, 2015). This stage is closely related to the process of horizontalization in Moustakas' (1994) transcendental phenomenological approach, where significant expressions are recorded as codes. At this stage, reduction and elimination was conducted by removing incidental language, were applicable (examples: "ummm", "like", "you know", and repeated phrases) (Moustakas, 1994). Third, the line-by-line approach was performed, where the researcher immersed themselves into each and every sentence or sentence cluster to ask what it revealed about the phenomenon or experience described, and these revelations, known as "thematic statements," were recorded (van Manen, 2015, p. 92). This step was conducted carefully and thoughtfully, reviewing each sentence or sentence cluster systematically for similar words, phrases, and larger ideas to formulate thematic statements that later developed into essential themes (van Manen, 2015). Fourth, linguistic transformations, known as phenomenologically sensitive writings, were composed in note or paragraph form to develop thematic descriptions (van Manen, 2015). Fifth, essential themes were isolated and separated from incidental themes and tested for final identification through the method of free imaginative variation (van Manen, 2015). Next, the hermeneutic phenomenological writing was constructed. This step is considered a continuation of the research

process where the researcher sensitively listens and attunes themselves to language, looking for epistemological and ontological silence, and constructing anecdotal narratives (van Manen, 2015). The hermeneutic circle was incorporated into the data analysis of the individual interviews as van Manen (2015) necessitates to orient the researcher to the phenomenon.

Individual Interviews Data Collection Approach

In qualitative research and especially phenomenological research, individual interviews are the key component of data collection and analysis (van Manen, 2015). In large part this is due to van Manen's (2015) explanation that a phenomenology is always a "project" of a real person who is related to personal, social, and historical contexts (p. 31). Therefore, the individual participant's description of their lived experience with the phenomenon is the most pivotal data when it is pre-reflective. The second form of data collection was semi-structured interviews that were guided by the researcher, but followed the participant's lead (Moustakas, 1994).

Individual interviews of participants took place one time in a neutral, professional, private location previously agreed upon after the initial recruitment email and be audio and video recorded through Microsoft Teams. The researcher asked permission of each participant before recording began. Each interview lasted between 40-60 minutes and included 10 open-ended, semi-structured interview questions, guided by the researcher following Moustakas' (1994) general interview guide to develop broad questions that invite robust participant responses (see Appendix G). The interview questions were crafted to address the research study question and sub-questions and enabled analysis (Bogan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam, 2009; Moustakas, 1994). During the interviews, the researcher took field notes, known as a reflective journal, which was later used to aid in data analysis of the interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Individual Interview Questions

1. Describe your journey and background into classical, Christian education. CRQ
2. Can you describe the nature or importance of skolé and/or Sabbath practice in your life? SQ1
3. Can you give an example of an experience you have had that helped shape your pursuit of skolé and/or Sabbath? SQ1
4. What is the frame of mind required to participate in skolé and/or Sabbath? SQ1
5. What is the physical environment or atmosphere required to participate in skolé and/or Sabbath? CRQ
6. What challenges or obstacles arise when developing or partaking in skolé and/or Sabbath? CRQ
7. Can you talk about what happens when you are unable to participate in skolé and/or Sabbath and the impact that has on your teaching? SQ2
8. Can you talk about how participating in skolé and/or Sabbath positively impacts your teaching? SQ2
9. In what ways does teaching in a classical, Christian school influence your ability to practice leisure? SQ2
10. What else would you like to add to our discussion of your experience with leisure or teaching that we haven't discussed? SQ2

Each of the above questions were included in the interview protocol based on applicability to the central research question and sub-questions and follow Moustakas' (1994) general interview protocol that is open-ended, semi-structured, maintains a logical flow, and proven to be effective in hermeneutic phenomenology (Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell, 2004). Interview question

1 was a grand tour question, allowing participants to describe their wider experience in the field of classical, Christian education (Clark & Jain, 2019; Peoples, 2021). Interview questions 2, 3, and 4 explored the beliefs involved in selecting skolé or Sabbath practices and relate to research sub-question 1(Blackshaw, 2016; Datillo & Frias, 2021; Dubie, 2021). Further, interview questions 5 and 6 focused on the lived experience of the practices and related to the central research question (Blackshaw, 2016; Datillo & Frias, 2021; Dubie, 2021). Environment and bodily awareness directly correlate to skolé or Sabbath as they were actively experienced, including ease or difficulty (Codina & Pestana, 2019; Mullens & Glorieux, 2020; Wensley & Slade, 2012). Interview questions 7, 8, and 9 focused on research sub question 2, where the significance and impact of leisure on teaching and pedagogy were explored (Crain et al., 2017; Datillo & Frias, 2021). Lastly, interview question 10 allowed the participants to add anything of significance to the discussion they deemed necessary.

Individual Interview Data Analysis Plan

After each interview, the researcher reviewed the audiovisual recording to transcribe the interview verbatim using Microsoft Teams transcription software, loading each transcription into Delve software, and masked participant identity with a pseudonym (Creswell & Poth, 2018). At this stage of organization, the data was first filed and managed within a long-term and password protected in Microsoft Teams, followed by immersive, software transcription to aid in the line-by-line sentence examination necessary for phenomenological reflection that allowed for the inclusion of nuance and non-verbals (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Davidson, 2009; van Manen, 2015). After reviewing each interview transcription from Teams and removing time stamps, the textual data was copied to Delve, where several analysis procedures were followed.

van Manen's (2015) sensitive, pedagogical approach to phenomenology guided the researcher's immersive, language analysis step-by-step (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Both van Manen (2015) and his predecessor, Heidegger (1927/2010) concluded that phenomenology was complex, multidimensional, and multilayered, which requires the researcher to reflect extensively on the data of participant lived experience, particularly in viewing the whole (textual experience) in relation to the parts (essential themes) before synthesizing through writing before reviewing the whole and parts again for new understandings (Peoples, 2021). The purpose, van Manen (2015) explained "of phenomenological reflection is to try to grasp the essential meaning of something" and human science meaning can only be communicated through narrative or prose (p. 77). Deep, extensive, repeated reflection on data texts and structures to uncover thematic meaning is the heart of the analysis process in hermeneutic phenomenology. All data collected followed van Manen's (2015) holistic approach, then the highlighting approach, followed by the line-by-line approach, arranging linguistic transformations, determining incidental and essential themes, and then writing and rewriting to describe the essence of the phenomenon under study.

First, a reflective, holistic reading of the transcript was conducted, and thematic phrases recorded (van Manen, 2015). This step required the researcher to look for a holistic phrase that captured the fundamental meaning of the text as a whole, with the holistic phrase of each interview transcript being recorded (van Manen, 2015). Second, the highlighting approach required the researcher to re-read each interview transcript, or textual source, several times to circle, highlight, or underline the statements or phrases that were revealing of the experience described (van Manen, 2015). At this stage, reduction and elimination was conducted by removing incidental language (examples: "ummm," and "like," and repeated phrases) so that the essence of the lived experience was uncluttered and forefront (Moustakas, 1994). Third, the line-

by-line approach was conducted, where the researcher looked at each and every sentence or sentence cluster to ask what it revealed about the phenomenon or experience described, and these revelations, known as "thematic statements," were recorded (van Manen, 2015, p. 92). These labeled thematic statements, or codes, organized the transcriptions to glean essential themes from incidental themes (Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 2015). Fourth, linguistic transformations, or phenomenologically sensitive writings were composed in note fashion as "a creative, hermeneutic process" to render thematic descriptions from the text (van Manen, 2015, p. 96). Fifth, essential themes were isolated and separated from incidental themes and tested for final identification and validation. This was done through the method of free imaginative variation to verify essential themes from incidental themes (van Manen, 2015). Next, the hermeneutic phenomenological writing was constructed. This writing should not be thought of as a final step to research but is a continuation of the research process where the researcher sensitively listens and attunes themselves to language, looking for epistemological and ontological silence, constructing anecdotal narratives (van Manen, 2015). The relation between writing and research is a process of re-thinking, re-reflecting, and re-writing, and a reflective journal was kept by the researcher throughout the data collection and analysis steps (van Manen, 2015). It should be noted that van Manen's (2015) hermeneutic phenomenological approach that stems from Heidegger (1927/2010) and Gadamer (1960/2013), including data analysis, is less structured than other approaches, but the phenomenological question must have clarity and power to illicit focus and descriptions full of experiential data that is concrete and vivid for substantial investigation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The use of Moustakas (1994) to develop clarity for hermeneutic phenomenology following van Manen (2015) has been established (Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell,

2004). The hermeneutic circle was incorporated into the data analysis of the individual interviews as van Manen (2015) necessitates to orient the researcher to the phenomenon.

Follow Up Focus Group Data Collection Approach

The collection of a myriad of data, including various language-oriented inclusions are a hallmark of hermeneutic phenomenology, and in a study of skolé and Sabbath practice, it was appropriate to analyze the practices and environments which evoke meaning for teachers and directly feed into teacher practice (van Manen, 2015). As with participant open-ended response logs and individual interviews, focus groups are a language-oriented data collection method in qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). However, focus groups go beyond individual experience and description to understand a circle of participants who have all experienced the phenomenon under examination, namely the impact of skolé and Sabbath practices on individuals and their teaching pedagogy (van Manen, 2015). This unique form of data collection allowed for participants to build upon one another's language to develop interpretive meaning to their leisure practice experiences and its direct relation to their teaching, thus, focus groups were a language-oriented data collection method (van Manen, 2015).

In relation to skolé and Sabbath practices, participant description of materials, possessions, ritual objects, spaces, places, and the experience of and meaning derived from skolé or Sabbath practice were explored through participant focus group discussion (van Manen, 2015). These descriptions included sensory feeling and memory when describing materials, supplies, instruments, artistic works, written diaries, books, music, and spaces that were out of doors or in an office or studio, for example (Heintzman, 2017; Samaras, 2017). In addition, focus group participants explored the salient themes of leisure and the impact on their teaching as a social group (van Manen, 2015). The focus group became an interpretive conversation guided,

observed, and recorded by the researcher, but led by participants, where both researcher and participants were able to ask what the experience was truly like (van Manen, 2015).

After all open-ended response logs were gathered and individual interviews were conducted, six participants were selected for the focus group based on initial reemergent themes, categories, and language pertaining to skolé and Sabbath practices (van Manen, 2015). A focus group recruitment email was sent to select participants whose interview responses reflect specific themes identified as needing further exploration, to set a time and date to meet on Microsoft Teams with other participants selected for a 45–60-minute discussion facilitated by the researcher (see Appendix H). Participants were instructed to bring an artifact or object relating to their leisure practice to the focus group, or a photograph on their phone or other device if necessary and unable to bring to the focus group due to size, location, or other reason (such as an outdoor space, cathedral, or museum) (Moustakas, 1994; Peoples, 2021; van Manen, 2015). Initially, all six participants planned on attending the focus group, but due to unforeseen last minute circumstances, only two participants showed up. The two participants were able to have a discussion about their leisure practices, but when it was clear that others were not going to be able to make the group meet up, it was necessary for the researcher to reschedule a second focus group meeting with the remaining four participants to have a varied discussion with multiple voices. Therefore, a group of two participants and a group of four participants were involved in two separate focus group discussions to round out the research, adding to the level of saturation and triangulation of data. The open-ended, semi-structured focus group questions are located in Appendix I.

Focus Group Questions

1. What is leisure and how does it apply to education? CRQ, SQ2

2. Can you shed light on the importance of self-reflection or contemplation in leisure practice? CRQ
3. Can you describe the object you have chosen to bring, or a photograph of a location, etc. and discuss its application or significance to skolé and/or Sabbath? SQ1
4. How has your experience teaching and developing your pedagogy been influenced by the skolé and/or Sabbath practices you employ? SQ2
5. How do(es) your understanding of leisure impact your work-life balance? SQ2

Each of the above questions were included in the focus group discussion protocol based on applicability to the central research question and sub-questions and follow Moustakas' (1994) general interview protocol that is open-ended, semi-structured, and maintains a logical flow, and proven to be effective in hermeneutic phenomenology (Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell, 2004; see Appendix H). Focus group question 1 was a grand tour question to allow participants to summarize their experience and understanding of leisure practice and their background as educators. The purpose of the question was to become more at ease or comfortable with one another, since some of participants in the focus group did not know one another (Clark & Jain, 2019; Peoples, 2021). Focus group question 2 further explored the lived experience of the practices, especially mindfulness, and related to the central research question (Brandao et al., 2019; Blackshaw, 2016; Datillo & Frias, 2021; Dubie, 2021; Kelly et al., 2020; Kruezfeld et al., 2022). Focus group question 3 explored the participants practices, allowing them to share and describe the direct correlation to skolé or Sabbath, which related to sub-question 1(Codina & Pestana, 2019; Mullens & Glorieux, 2020; Wensley & Slade, 2012). Lastly, focus group questions 4 and 5 explored research sub question 2, where the significance and impact of leisure

on teaching and pedagogy were investigated (Crain et al., 2017; Datillo & Frias, 2021). Experts in the field reviewed the above questions for their applicability to the study proposed.

Focus Group Data Analysis Plan

The focus group discussion was analyzed through the same data analysis approach as was used on the journal prompts and individual interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2015). The focus group discussion was organized and managed within a long-term and password protected digital file system, followed by thick, rich, language-oriented descriptions (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Davidson, 2009; van Manen, 2015). The focus group recording, password protected and transcribed in Microsoft Teams, was organized, edited for clarity, and individual identities masked. Next, the transcriptions were copied into the Delve software for analysis. All data collected through the focus group followed van Manen's (2015) holistic approach, then the highlighting approach, followed by the line-by-line approach, arranging linguistic transformations throughout, determining incidental and essential themes, and then writing and rewriting to describe the essence of the phenomenon under study, as was done for journal prompts and individual interviews.

First, a reflective, holistic reading of the focus group transcript was conducted, and a holistic phrase that captured the fundamental meaning of the text as a whole was formulated (van Manen, 2015). Next, the highlighting approach required the researcher to re-read the focus group transcript several times to circle, highlight, or underline the statements or phrases that were revealing of the experience described (van Manen, 2015). At this stage, reduction and elimination was conducted by removing incidental language (examples: "ummm," and "like," and repeated phrases) so that the essence of the lived experience was uncluttered and forefront (Moustakas, 1994). Then, the line-by-line approach was conducted, where the researcher looked

at each sentence or sentence cluster to ask what it revealed about the phenomenon or experience described, and these revelations, known as "thematic statements," or as codes in Moustakas' (1994) approach, were recorded (van Manen, 2015, p. 92). Next, the linguistic transformations were composed in note fashion to provide thematic descriptions (van Manen, 2015). The essential themes were then isolated and separated from incidental themes and tested for final identification and verification through free imaginative variation (van Manen, 2015). Afterwards, the hermeneutic phenomenological writing was composed, where the researcher sensitively listened and attuned themselves to the language of the text and constructed anecdotal narratives (van Manen, 2015). The hermeneutic circle was incorporated into the data analysis of the individual interviews as van Manen (2015) necessitates to orient the researcher to the phenomenon, using the process of re-thinking, re-reflecting, and re-writing (van Manen, 2015).

Data Synthesis

According to qualitative design, data synthesis requires the researcher to cull all data for themes found across data samples and types, including similar experiences through phrasing and explanation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 2015). The data, including the open-ended response logs, individual interviews, and the focus groups were then synthesized through a matrix tree (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Similar wording and experiences were drawn together and phrasing collected and combined into a rich, thick, descriptive collective narrative (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2015).

The researcher synthesized and triangulated the data after analyzing each piece of data separately by re-reading the transcripts, reflective journal notes, thematic statements, essential themes, and phenomenological writings for the relationship across all data to discover the essence of the phenomenological experience in a holistic approach which records the holistic

phrase (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2015). This is the re-writing stage of hermeneutic phenomenology where writing is a continual textual reflection on the essences of the phenomenon. Thematic statements across all data collected were recorded through highlighting and line-by-line reading of the phenomenological writings previously drafted. Next, linguistic transformations of the synthesized notes and writings were composed, allowing the researcher to reflect on the most persistent and essential themes of skolé and Sabbath leisure practice of classical Christian educators and the impact of such practices on their teaching (van Manen, 2015). The hermeneutic writing process, as described by van Manen (2015), is continually reflective, making the essence of the lived experience concrete and distinct by way of the researcher asking themselves how to communicate the pedagogical perspective of those who experience the phenomenon.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in qualitative research relates to the attributes of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, as outlined below (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These are necessary components of a research plan to understand the factuality, applicability, consistency, and neutrality of the findings (Lincoln & Gruba, 1985). The following attributes of qualitative research describe the actions to ensure a meticulous, professional, and scholarly study. Below, the issues of triangulation of heuristic questioning, descriptive richness, interpretive depth, distinctive rigor, multiple data sources, member checks, and researcher reflective journaling will be discussed (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2015).

Credibility

According to Lincoln and Gruba (1985), credibility refers to the assurance that the representation of participant views by the researcher are, in fact, the true views of the

participants and represent reality. Credibility was assured through member checks that verified researcher interpretation of the data, in what van Manen (2015) refers to as “interpretation through conversation” (p. 98). Participants were provided with researcher writings and interpretations before data synthesis to determine whether the themes identified are appropriate in describing skolé and Sabbath’s impact on teaching (van Manen, 2015). Input from participants was used for the final creation of the hermeneutic, textural description of the phenomenon, and participants were given the final description to respond to the interpretation and confirm its accuracy (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln & Gruba, 1985; van Manen, 2015).

In addition to member checks, credibility was assured through the triangulation of data, which is the confirmation that data obtained through the research process is corroborated (Lincoln & Gruba, 1985). By using multiple sources of data collection as evidence of the phenomenon under investigation, triangulation, and therefore, credibility was established (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln & Gruba, 1985). The multiple sources of data included participant open-ended response logs, face-to-face semi-structured individual interviews, and two follow-up focus group discussions of selected participants to corroborate the essential themes of the phenomenon under investigation. Additionally, as the researcher I was guided by a distinctive rigor to continually and critically self-reflect, orienting toward the phenomenon through prolonged interaction with participants, reading and re-reading of data, and writing and re-writing, which allowed for a strong orientation to the phenomenon to describe and interpret the essential nature of the phenomenon reflectively and informatively (van Manen, 2015). After transcription of response logs, interviews, and the focus group and analysis, participants were invited to read and review for corrections and perspectives. This process increased the triangulation and credibility of the study because participants could clarify or ask for changes in

the perspective and interpretation given (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2015). Lastly, researcher reflective journaling was used. By taking field notes while conducting interviews and focus group discussion as data collection occurs in real time, as well as debriefing while reading through transcribed response logs, interviews, and focus group discussion as a data analysis tool, writing assisted in credibility and triangulation (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2015).

Transferability

Transferability in qualitative research requires the researcher to responsibly provide thick, rich, thorough descriptions in order that the findings may be transferred to other settings and institutions with similarities, though transferability cannot be fully assured since that judgment is made by the reader of the final research product (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To that end, it is the researcher's responsibility to provide extensive descriptions. The hermeneutic phenomenological approach developed by van Manen (2015) requires holistic, selective highlighting, and line-by-line analysis followed by the development of essential themes through writing and re-writing that describe the experiences of classical Christian educators in relation to their skolé and Sabbath practices (van Manen, 2015). This data collection and analysis process provides the reader and other scholars and educators with thick, rich, and deep description of essential themes of the phenomenon (van Manen, 2015). Although there is virtually no insight into the transferability of classical education teachers' experiences and leisure practices at this point in time, this study offers an exploratory first step toward an improved understanding of leisure practices classical teachers employ that influence their teaching (Heintzman, 2017). According to van Manen (2015), attentive questioning techniques and rich description of the phenomenon and lived experiences allow for transferability and further original insight.

Dependability

The researcher's development of a logical, documented research plan provided descriptive detail so that the study may be comprehensively replicated if desired (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln & Gruba, 1985). The descriptions of the methods developed for the study based in the literature are made available to replicate in any population or setting (Creswell & Poth, 2015). The inclusion of heuristic questioning, descriptive richness, interpretive depth, rigor, meaning, experiential awakening, and inceptual epiphany demand self-critical questioning and original insights (Van Manen, 2015). To provide this extensive detail, I have developed a detailed record of the data collection and analysis plan that was thoroughly reviewed prior to the study and the creation of an inquiry audit trail after IRB approval was obtained. My research committee, including my chair and methodologist, thoroughly reviewed these procedures and deemed them sufficient to demonstrate best practice of the method as designed.

Confirmability

The methods used in this study safeguard confirmability, which relies on participant voices, not the bias or motivation of the researcher. Confirmability in research study refers to the researcher's objectivity to provide interpretations of findings and results that are grounded in the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Initially, a detailed audit trail was developed for the procedures, raw and analyzed data, and findings so that transparency was safeguarded (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Next, triangulation was developed through multiple sources of data in a layered, synthesized approach (van Manen, 2015). Lastly, I practiced reflexivity while taking on this study, positioning myself firmly into the process of data collection, analysis, and reporting of results.

Ethical Considerations

Before any data collection took place, an application to IRB was submitted for qualification of ethical human subject study (see Appendix A). Only after approval from IRB did data collection begin. Interviews were conducted in private, neutral settings through Microsoft Teams, at the convenience of the participant. All interviews and written correspondence with participants in these settings was recorded and archived (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Audiovisual recordings of the interview were taken for accuracy of transcription, review, and analysis purposes, with signed consent from participants to partake in the study and assent to recording for each and included in Appendix C (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Participant privacy is key for robust contribution without fear or coercion. Pseudonyms were used for all participants to protect their personal and professional identity and their specific schools and locations omitted in the final report. Identifying information for the researcher is kept under password protected computer software. Specific schools and cities are not disclosed to protect the privacy of participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018). The development of composite narratives protect the identity of participants and any negative impact honest participation may lead to (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018). As a researcher, I sought to present various perspectives of the larger, complex phenomenon/narrative to ensure more than just positive results were included (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data security was of utmost importance, backing up all computer files, copies, and scans and utilizing password protection on my computer. Additionally, the use of high-quality recording devices were used to ensure accuracy of transcriptions, and all data will be destroyed after 3 years (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Further, each $25 Amazon gift card was only for the sake of appreciation, and not an element of coercion or bribery in any form (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Summary

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to describe the essence of the lived experiences of 10 classical Christian secondary teachers and administrators who embrace Greek skolé and Christian Sabbath at classical Christian schools in the United States. At this stage in the research, Greek skolé will be generally defined as restful learning through meditation, cultivation of habits, and enjoyment of meaningful, personal growth in a conducive, interactive environment (Perrin, 2021; Samaras, 2017). The research methodology described follows a phenomenological, hermeneutic design in which the participant voices and experiences were analyzed and interpreted through the philosophical assumptions and interpretations proposed by the researcher (Peoples, 2021; van Manen, 2015). However, these assumptions and interpretations of the researcher recognized the unique voices of the participants through the hermeneutic circle and member checks, as is necessary in phenomenology, requiring bias of the researcher to be put aside through critical self-reflection (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Through open-ended response logs, individual interviews, and follow up focus group discussions, a rich, thick, and deep description of the essence of the phenomenon was given (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Peoples, 2021; van Manen, 2015). A fuller understanding of skolé and Sabbath practices was therefore highlighted and meaning developed for pedagogical approaches to teaching.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to describe the essence of the lived experiences of 10 classical Christian secondary teachers and administrators who embrace Greek skolé and Christian Sabbath at classical Christian schools in the United States. At this stage in the research, Greek skolé will be generally defined as restful learning through meditation, cultivation of habits, and enjoyment of meaningful, personal growth in a conducive, interactive environment (Perrin, 2021; Samaras, 2017). Chapter Four will present the results of the data analysis findings in three sections, starting with narrative descriptions of the participants. Then, the four essential themes and their sub-themes, identified through data analysis and triangulation of response logs, interviews, and focus groups, will be defined based on participant experience, thought, and perspective. Finally, the participants' responses to the central research question and sub-questions will be presented before a final summary of the chapter.

Participants

Recruitment of potential participants began by emailing 19 classical Christian educators and 10 classical Christian schools from across the United States located in Colorado, Idaho, Kentucky, Maryland, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. From those initial emails, 12 teachers desired to participate, but only 10 fit the criteria and completed the informed consent. Through snowball sampling, three more potential participants were identified and emailed by the researcher. However, three potential participants did not respond, and only the initial 10 participants took part in the study. The 10 participants in this study were from two separate classical Christian schools on the east coast of the United States. Eighty percent of participants

were female, and 20% of participants were male. Further, 90% of the participants identified as teachers and 10% identified as administration, with an average of 13 years teaching experience between all participants. In addition, 40% of participants taught high school students, 50% taught middle school students, and 10% were administrative. All 10 participants produced open-ended response logs and contributed to one-on-one interviews conducted with the researcher, and saturation occurred a little over halfway through the individual interviews. The first focus group consisted of only two participants because two participants had unforeseen circumstances arise. Therefore, a second focus group was formed with four participants as outlined in the research plan. Both groups were chosen based on the need to explore developing essential themes and availability in scheduling. Pseudonyms are assigned to each participant in the participant table below (see Table 1):

Table 1

Study Participants

Teacher Participant	Years Taught	Highest Degree Earned	Content Area	Grade Level
Nikki	16	Masters	Math and science	5^{th} – 6^{th}
Melissa	12	Bachelors	English	9^{th} – 12^{th}
Diane	33	Masters	Administration	K – 8^{th}
Eloise	12	Masters	Latin	9^{th} – 12^{th}
Vera	13	Bachelors	English, history, math, Bible	7^{th} – 8^{th}
Nikolas	3	Masters	Latin	5^{th} – 7^{th}

Thomas	12	Masters	Latin, logic, Bible, math assistance	6^{th} – 8^{th}
Nina	5	Bachelors	Physical Education	K – 8^{th}
Alice	21	Masters	English, rhetoric	9^{th} – 12^{th}
Jennifer	6	Bachelors	Humanities, Latin	8^{th} – 12^{th}

Each participant was open and engaged as they talked about their understanding of skolé and Sabbath, and all mentioned their interest in the outcomes of the research study. Drawing from their wealth of teaching experience, participants were able to converse at length about leisure's impact on their wellbeing and their work as teachers. Some were more nervous than others as they began talking about their experiences, and many described themselves as introverted, despite being classroom teachers. However, each participant spoke about their enjoyment of leisure and its necessity. Ultimately, the focus groups were perceived to be relational and enjoyable for the participants as they contributed to one another's understanding of skolé and Sabbath, asking each other questions and listening to one another with reciprocity and curiosity. Each participant was open to hearing what other participants' experiences were to glean insight.

Participant narrative descriptions are a key aspect to phenomenological research to explore the phenomenon first-hand and highlight participant familiarity with the phenomenon through vivid, powerful experience (van Manen, 1990). The following narrative descriptions allow the reader to encounter the individual more fully and to better understand the "what", "how", and "why" of the phenomenon. A brief biography of each participant is given below, using pseudonyms for each.

Nikki

As a 49-year-old female with over 16 years of teaching experience, Nikki is passionate about student success and improving the school she currently teaches at. She spends her leisure time focused on strength training and cardiovascular exercise, reading academic and non-academic material, and participates in a monthly book club. Nikki described skolé as, "activities driven by intellectual interests," and that her intellectual interests have been positively influenced by her coworkers and friends. Nikki has found that intentionality helps her to experience "mind-body refreshment" in intellectual pursuits that are not obligatory or forced. Her exercise routine has spanned over 25 years, academic and non-academic reading has been in place for over 10 years, and her book club has met for over three years.

Melissa

Teaching literature and rhetoric is a passion of Melissa's, who is a 34-year-old female in her 12th year of teaching. Her teaching career has bridged multiple schools. She is currently a high school teacher at a classical Christian school and her regular skolé practices consist of nature walking and cooking. Since Melissa has a small child, her leisure also includes quality family time, but she looks for solitude to experience growth in her practices. She has been nature walking for three years and enjoys planning, preparing, and creatively presenting meals that her family can enjoy, several times a week.

Diane

Diane, a 67-year-old female, is a veteran educator and innovative leader in the field, having taught for 33 years over the course of her wide-ranging career. She is currently an administrator leading a team of teachers and meeting the demanding schedule of student recruitment, testing, and admissions. Diane stated that her leisure is extremely important to her:

"I am more effective at work when I am regular in these practices. My job requires a good amount of emotional investment as well as mental and physical labor. I don't believe that I could continue to function at work without taking the restorative times I'm regularly taking," which include morning yoga, scripture reading and prayer, and playing the violin. These skolé practices are a "luxury" to Diane, and she describes it as "uninterrupted time to think thoughts all the way through and to come to new understandings of self and others."

Eloise

A seasoned language teacher, Eloise has spent 12 of her 35 years in the teaching profession. She is enthusiastic about languages and currently teaches Latin to high school students. Since her childhood, Eloise has developed her journaling in multiple forms: scripture and prayers, research notes, fictional writing notes, and scrapbooking in several lined and bullet journals. In addition to her journaling practices, Eloise regularly reads to "refresh the mind" through physical and digital books, as well as digital articles. Further, she counts a "day of rest" as a Sabbath practice and an integral part of her weekly leisure. Although leisure practices "can help one in their professional lives, that is not the direct aim, but rather an opportunity for learning for the sake of enjoyment and refreshing the mind and spirit," she shared.

Vera

Like many of her fellow participants, Vera has been teaching for several years and revealed that when she was a new teacher she was, "very fresh, but very impressionable. I wasn't set in any ways, any styles of anything," and she warmly describes being able to absorb the methods, structure, and history of classical education and pedagogy on the job. Vera is 37 years old and has been teaching for 13 years. Biblical literature, such as devotional passages and scripture reading and prayer, are a regular part of her skolé and Sabbath practice. She also enjoys

jogging and reading fiction for pleasure. She considers her leisure pursuits not only invigorating to herself, but a duty to model leisure practices seriously: “It allows me to pursue my interests in a way that help me be a better person,” and, “I think also, then, in pursuing that in the growth in myself, I’m also modeling something for all the little people who are around me all the time, for my students, for my kids, that downtime doesn’t have to be mindless.”

Nikolas

Nikolas, a 26-year-old male, has taught Latin for three years and centers his skolé and Sabbath practices around reading, writing, and prayer, which have all been a part of his life for a number of years. His reading takes many forms: spiritual readings, theology, philosophy, history, fiction, and poetry. This is true of his writing as well; Nikolas enjoys writing fiction and poetry. In reference to his writing, Nikolas says, “I believe regular writing has helped me to learn to respond to beauty in the world. I perceive and appreciate and want to help others appreciate the beauty of people, places, events, etc. The world feels richer.” To help facilitate work-life balance, Nikolas listed intentionally limiting time spent on work tasks as a leisure practice that “grants space” because, “without this practice much of the interior space of the soul I enjoy would not be possible.”

Thomas

Thomas’ tenure as a teacher expands over 12 years. At 37 years old, he can be mindful and compassionate toward his students, he stated, because he is able to reflect on his own life and make connections to things that adolescent students may be struggling with, such as academics, motivation, responsibility, and relationships with peers, family, and others. Thomas’ skolé and Sabbath practices include dedicated reading for “a greater understanding of human beings through ideas, history, economics, and science.” In addition to this reading, Thomas

practices meditation and contemplation through “mindful walking, mindful breathing” and “contemplation of an object, sound, passage, or theme” to understand and become “more aware of subtle emotions and responses,” and to be able to “recognize limits and personal needs” to such a degree as it becomes a “mystic experience.” Additionally, Thomas uses reflective writing to summarize the books and articles he reads to work through his thoughts and observations. This also includes “poetic ramblings,” and he states that after this practice he is “more in tune with my own beliefs and assumptions” and able to realize “more objectivity.”

Nina

Nina is a 31-year-old female who teaches both elementary and secondary students. As a physical education teacher, she spoke about the importance of teaching students to honor God with their physical health and to enjoy movement. Although she knew little about classical Christian education before working at the school she is currently employed, she appreciates the freedom to help students academically and spiritually. Nina outlined Bible reading and prayer as an integral part of her daily leisure practice, and she described skolé as “participating in activities that are meant to stimulate the brain but are also relaxing to the person participating.” She also included getting out of doors to walk her dog as a respite in her day that gives her “mental space to breathe, enjoy the weather, and process,” and this is also done by exercising at the gym. Additionally, she enjoys winding down at night with a puzzle: “I like the challenge that also doesn’t have any pressure to it. I can also kind of zone out and relax.”

Alice

Alice’s teaching career was one that she did not originally seek out, but now feels she “was born to do,” and after 21 years as an educator she digs deep into the English language, poetry, and literature that she teaches her high school students. Alice immediately described

skolé as “restorative rest.” In addition, Alice linked skolé and Sabbath as two sides of the same coin, calling them “cousins.” Alice outlined her leisure practices as reading literature, walking outside, and writing that work in tandem together. Alice stated that she has practiced reading and writing for most of her life, and meditative walking over the course of the last four years. She shared that “when I safeguard these leisure moments” she is a better teacher and colleague; when she does not prioritize them, she can become “a less attentive teacher,” but the “practices habituate me to receive what God sends to me. This posture of reception makes me better (not perfect) in all areas of my life.”

Jennifer

Jennifer is also a product of classical Christian education and spoke highly of her experience as a student and her greater depth of understanding and appreciation as a teacher. At 26 years old, Jennifer has already spent 6 years teaching humanities and Latin to upper middle and high school students. To her, skolé activities “are those which fulfill an active, edifying purpose,” where an individual may choose to enter educational activities for personal enrichment and “are not done at the prompting of or for the sake of material (monetary/career) gain.” Jennifer listed scripture reading, walking outdoors, and participating in two separate choirs, one at her church and another community ensemble, and museum visits. She works to integrate her work and leisure, balancing between solace and meditation with sharing what she learns to colleagues and students in appropriate contexts, and seeking opportunity through her enjoyment of leisure.

Results

All participants were asked the same open-ended response log questions and interviews questions. After a detailed, hermeneutic data analysis of response logs and interview transcripts, several initial, or preliminary, themes emerged. Each response log and interview transcript were

read as a whole, then re-examined multiple times to highlight and organize words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. After reading through each open-ended response log, 49 key words and phrases emerged from across the transcripts. Then, each of the individual interview transcripts were read as a whole before a re-examination of words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. Each of the interview transcripts revealed similar or exact key wording or phrasing as the initial 49 found in the response logs, and by the seventh interview transcript, full saturation was achieved, and preliminary themes began to emerge. Next, six participants were interviewed in two separate focus groups. The first group consisted of two participants and the second group consisted of four participants. The thematic saturation of words, phrases, and sentences were then categorized by type or similarity. Initial key word and phrase saturation, ultimately leading to thematic saturation, is shown below in Table 2 (Guest et al., 2020; Spencer, 2022).

Table 2

Thematic Saturation

Participant Number	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
# of new key words/phrases per log	20	5	8	5	1	4	5	0	1	0
# of new key words/phrases per interview	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
# of new key words/phrases per focus group	0	--	--	0	--	0	0	--	0	0

Note: A Simple Method to Assess and Report Thematic Saturation in Qualitative Research (Guest et al., 2020).

All participants were given a copy of the interview transcripts, focus group transcript if applicable, and the collective narrative as a form of member checking. After the focus groups

met, the focus group transcripts were read as a whole, and re-examination found similar words, phrases, and sentences as the original, preliminary themes from the logs. By using the hermeneutic circle, repeated examination and merging of key words gave a clearer picture of participant lived experience of the phenomenon. Each of the 49 preliminary themes were organized by overarching category and checked to ensure accuracy for category. For example, the key words and phrases involving "work/life balance," "habits/discipline," and "prioritizing" were merged into the larger essential theme, "intentional boundaries," because these were the ways in which participants talked about marking their work versus leisure. When examining key words like "growth," "trust," or "learn," these types of words and phrases were used when talking about an attitude, or willingness, to change and gain insight or feedback in their particular pursuits, and these were merged into the essential theme, "posture of receptivity," because it was clear that not all saw leisure as some form of knowledge opportunity, though it could be, but it was more succinctly defined as a desire to become a more well-rounded individual. Within the hermeneutic circle, the researcher's continued analysis uncovered four essential themes from the preliminary key words and phrase categorization: intentional boundaries, activity or practice as a medium for contemplation, the human element, and posture of receptivity. Table 3 shows the essential themes demonstrated by participant.

Table 3

Essential Themes by Participant

Intentional Boundaries = individually planned protection of leisure through rhythms, routines, and habits of discipline										
Participant	*Nikki*	*Melissa*	*Diane*	*Eloise*	*Vera*	*Nikolas*	*Thomas*	*Nina*	*Alice*	*Jennifer*
	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activity or Practice as a Medium for Contemplation = leisure activities or practices that ultimately aid the individual in meditation or process thought										

	Nikki	*Melissa*	*Diane*	*Eloise*	*Vera*	*Nikolas*	*Thomas*	*Nina*	*Alice*	*Jennifer*
	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Human Element = the distinctiveness of skolé and Sabbath to awaken and restore creativity and joy that is uniquely holistic and human										
Participant	*Nikki*	*Melissa*	*Diane*	*Eloise*	*Vera*	*Nikolas*	*Thomas*	*Nina*	*Alice*	*Jennifer*
	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Posture of Receptivity = refers to the participants' willingness and openness to new ways of being or growth through leisure.										
Participant	*Nikki*	*Melissa*	*Diane*	*Eloise*	*Vera*	*Nikolas*	*Thomas*	*Nina*	*Alice*	*Jennifer*
	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

In addition to the essential themes, several sub-themes were identified through hermeneutic analysis. For the essential theme of intentional boundaries, the two sub-themes included a) time, and b) environment. The essential theme, the human element, produced two sub-themes, a) body-soul connection, and b) meaning-making or creativity. Lastly, the final essential theme, posture of receptivity, also revealed two sub-themes, listed as a) humility, and b) mystery or beauty. Each of the essential themes and their sub-themes are defined and the findings shared below.

Intentional Boundaries

The theme of intentional boundaries is defined as individually planned protection of leisure through rhythms, routines, and habits of discipline. As an essential theme, intentional boundaries included participants' desire to develop routines and habits, and in some instances, schedule, to practice and separate leisure from work or other responsibilities. Participants described this boundary as "necessary" and "a form of self-care" that "restored the mind, body,

and soul." This intended leisure protected participants in order to "recharge," develop "work/life balance," and avoid "burnout."

Planned protection of leisure began by creating boundaries around external obstacles, such as work, other responsibilities, and family or social obligations. Nikolas began, "Leisure is sort of carving out time, which is making space and that's got to be done pretty actively," adding, "I have been warned against giving too much time to email and been encouraged to leave work at work." The reason for this was because of the nature of teaching itself, which Thomas described as "ministerial" in many ways, because work and leisure could "mix" together very easily. Nikki stated, "I find that if I'm not purposeful about incorporating that in some fashion I'm going to go crazy, and I'm not going to be my best in the classroom or as a coworker or as a friend, or a mom or a daughter, or in my graduate school classes, if I don't have time to mentally and physically rest and recharge," and that "rhythm" and "habit" helped her to "naturally pick them up again" after times of busyness. Diane discussed that the pandemic, "was a great eye opener to me as to what a less busy schedule might look like and what it might do for me as a person." In a similar vein, Jennifer commented that intentionality, "could be, too, that part of the solitude is choosing your own company very carefully, because we all spend a lot of time with people we don't necessarily choose to be around," such as "who we work with or who we teach," so it is important to develop one's leisure with deliberateness. To further mark that boundary, Melissa stated, "You know, you can't grade everything. And, so, one of the things he [mentor] said was just to make it a rule. He always told me, 'Listen, I don't take any work home to grade.'" This was a watershed moment for her to develop a boundary between work and out-of-work expectations that could present an external burden. She continued, "I try to actively avoid, you know, scheduling the deadline of a paper to be due right before a break." She also shared

that this boundary was supported at her school, “It’s very rare that I would be called into lots of meetings, or, you know, it would be very rare for me to have a scheduled meeting every day or every week, even during that protected planning time.” Eloise’s thoughts mirrored Melissa’s sentiment, “I think, too, when I have schedules where I have a lot of new courses that I’m teaching, I inevitably drop leisure,” and “sometimes I think that if I could just be a little more efficient with my job itself, then I would have more time with leisure.” Alice also felt that the necessity to create an awareness about boundaries was present when she said, “I’m just wondering if we have to make room for skolé in our day-to-day lives because we get caught up in busyness.”

Secondly, participants talked about the necessity of boundaries to overcome internal obstacles such as exhaustion or lack of desire in the moment. Diane shared, “I guess the kind of leisure we’re talking about also involves at least some degree of self-discipline, right? And since we only have so much willpower, I think anytime you can set up routines and environments that support what you want to do, it’s good.” She also noted that, “nobody’s going to do it for you.” Eloise commented that “the Sabbath one is probably harder to hold to because it’s hard to section off an entire day of the week where you’re not doing things that you feel are productive and you’re just resting like you’re supposed to.” Thomas mentioned the dedication to leisure, “I think it’s really committing to a discipline toward a particular end. And so, knowing that the internal obstacles, whatever they may be, it’s the discipline in that, commitment to the discipline, that carries you through. And the obstacles are necessary because they also, in some ways, develop that type of perseverance and virtue that you’re looking to achieve.” Nikki also added that she is “purposeful about building” leisure and, “trying to resist the urge to not do it.” Intentional boundaries revealed participants’ desire to prioritize and mark off areas of life, even

when difficult, that could "refresh" them, and reestablish "peace" to their lives through developed "habits and disciplines." To actualize the protection of leisure with self-induced boundaries, two-sub themes of time and environment were both described as necessary.

Time

The first sub-theme of intentional boundaries was time, which refers to the participants' need for periods or moments to fully engage in leisure that are not interrupted by other demands (see Table 4). Every participant discussed the necessity for "quiet," uninterrupted time to truly experience a sense of "restoration." Even when participants described a leisure activity, either skolé or Sabbath, solitary or communal, it still required a sense of singularly focused, uninterrupted time. Interestingly, the amount of time was not considered fixed by participants. Most attempted to plan their leisure daily or weekly, but they did not fixate on the number of minutes, hours, days, or frequency. It was a loosely thought of demarcation, which could be scheduled one week and not necessarily the next, but when the opportunity presented itself. For example, Vera stated, "when I'm reading a novel or a story, I'll usually just pick a time where it's quiet," and Nikki noted, "the frequency changes based on life, when we're in the midst of the school year and I'm in the midst of a graduate school class. I probably have less time for leisure, obviously, during those times." Nikolas shared, "in terms of daily practice, I fit it in where I can," and added, "spiritual reading happens early in the morning or late at night (when kids are least likely to interrupt), and other reading happens during the day," but also admitted, when speaking of writing that "sometimes I may go for dry for months when I only spend ten or twenty minutes or so a week on writing, but other times I have great fervor, especially when beginning a new project, when I may spend an hour or two each day, fitting my writing into any lull of the day." The pockets or moments that could be scheduled, or even taken advantage of,

had to be meaningfully partitioned, as Diane shared, “the only time you really control is between 4:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m and the rest of it is kind of up for grabs. You know, people need stuff, have duties. There’s only so much time in the day.”

In addition, a specific amount of time with an end-point was a relief during Nina’s hour-long gym class workouts:

> “I know that there’s this limit [an hour] to it and I’m safe within this limit. I don’t know, it’s kind of weird, but it feels like I can relax. It’s like I don’t have to look at the clock. I don’t have to look at my phone. I just know I’m here for the next hour and I even have on the board what I’m supposed to do, you know? And then I’m just going through that, and it’s super hard! There are times when I want to quit. But there’s something about challenging myself, but within this time period, I feel like it’s really refreshing. I really like it in the mornings, but even if I have to go after school or something, that’s still, I find that refreshing and my mind is more clear and, I think, so restful in that sense, and then also even just more healthy mentally.”

Nina also stated that she takes “chunks of time” to walk the dog and process her day, and Alice similarly shared of getting outside, “even if that is a short amount of time,” it was important “to take what you can get” in “pockets,” and often for her it needed to be “open-ended.” Time was also described as intentional in quality, according to Melissa,

> “Growing up, Sabbath meant Sunday, we didn’t really take it a whole lot further than that. It was, we rest, we don’t go to work, we don’t go to school on these days. We set time aside just to study and meditate and enjoy scripture and church together. And while that entity has absolutely remained the same even after getting married and having a child, it’s also making sure that the time we do spend together is productive. It’s not

quality-time adjacent, or like we're all in one room but we're not doing anything together. And so that's, sort of a protected family time, is what I think about now and just making sure that the quality of the time is there."

Therefore, these moments or periods could be planned for, but more often than not participants referred to the time boundary as one they had to be flexible with. For example, Thomas indicated, "sometimes in adult life, depending on it, you're not going to be afforded how much you want, all the time that you think you require." The time sub theme is shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Time Sub Theme

Time = refers to the participants' need for periods or moments to fully engage in leisure									
Nikki	*Melissa*	*Diane*	*Eloise*	*Vera*	*Nikolas*	*Thomas*	*Nina*	*Alice*	*Jennifer*
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Environment

The second sub-theme of intentional boundaries was environment, which refers to participants' need for a particular space or atmosphere to fully engage in leisure, which was boundaried away from other types of places or environments (see Table 5). Environment included the level of noise, outdoor or indoor location and type, and the feel or atmosphere of the room or space that made leisure much easier to settle into. For example, Thomas stated, "what I enjoy most and where I feel most alive, or more like myself, is out in nature and I guess that's when thoughts can naturally emerge." Nikki shared that she loved reading during, "a super quiet time. My favorite time to read is in the morning when no one else is up and it's quiet in the house and I can curl up with a cup of coffee on my couch and a blanket and just read. Stop. Think. Ponder on what I've just read."

Alice noted a difference in the types of environments she required for different leisure activities when she shared, “I journal in quiet and in nature, but when I am actually trying then to form it into something, I do better if I have noise behind me,” such as “in a coffee shop” full of people. Vera also talked about different environments, but in reverse, such as jogging on a treadmill versus outdoors. When jogging on the treadmill because of poor weather, she described “getting through it” and needing to listen to music, but that she “never wears earbuds” when she is outdoors jogging, where she is able to “take in” the nature around her. Eloise even “noticed the empirical link” between her leisure, mood, and the seasons, where “over the years I’ve also kind of watched that, tracked that sort of thing, both in the winter and year round,” making note that she is more active in leisure during the warmer months.

Interestingly, nature was not the only environment that was discussed. Nina said, “I’m definitely more introverted and so when you’re asking what type of environment, I’m very, I can get very overstimulated. Which is funny because I work in a very loud environment. I think that’s why I come home exhausted,” adding, “a more quiet environment is definitely helpful in having, feeling like I’m truly resting or recovering,” when she was discussing down time with a puzzle or with her family. Diane stated, “I do have a place and a time where I play the violin and a place and a time where I read,” noting that, “if I didn’t have that, it would be much harder to do. It’s harder when I have a lot of people in the house to get to any of those kinds of things, to pull away and take that time to do those things is hard when you have lots of company.” Melissa talked about walking “outside” for “meditating on Scripture or meditating on something I read recently and just allowing myself to decompress,” but that “when I’m cooking and being creative and working with my hands, I don’t mind other people being there.” Jennifer also shared that

outdoor walks, on a weekly basis, were leisurely for her. See the environment sub theme in Table 5 below.

Table 5

Environment Sub Theme

Environment = refers to the participants' need for a particular space or atmosphere to fully engage in leisure									
Nikki	*Melissa*	*Diane*	*Eloise*	*Vera*	*Nikolas*	*Thomas*	*Nina*	*Alice*	*Jennifer*
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Activity or Practice as a Medium for Contemplation

The essential theme, activity or practice as a medium for contemplation, is defined as leisure activities or practices that ultimately aid the individual in meditation or process their thoughts. This was done in a variety of different ways, such as physical exercise at the gym, jogging outside, building a puzzle, reading, meditative walking or hiking, writing or journaling, and even visits to the museum or practicing music. However, the similarity or thread across all practices chosen and enjoyed by participants was that they worked as a medium for a deeper aim, which was contemplation and even self-reflection. Therefore, the leisure activity itself could vary from person to person, dependent on interest and personality, as long as participants experienced contemplation, and a sort of "digging" into thought, as Nikki worded it, "steeping," according to Alice, and "reflection," in Thomas' view. These activities ranged from lesser to greater physical exertion, but all participants' physical exertion in the activity aided their contemplation that led to focus, clarity, and renewal through thoughtful examination that was not found in entertainment or distraction. Table 6 shows how each of the activities or practices of participants fall into the categories of lesser or greater physical exertion, and participants used a combination of these physical activities to contemplate or process information, knowledge, and events.

Table 6

Process/Contemplate through Activity or Practice Type

Type of Activity	Reading (spiritual/ other)	Creative (write/ journal/ puzzle)	Prayer (individual)	Music (instrument or vocal)	Outdoor Movement (walk/jog/ historic sites)	Indoor Movement (yoga/gym/ cook/ museum)
Lesser physical exertion	X	X	X			
Greater physical exertion				X	X	X
Process and Stimulation	X	X	X	X	X	X

As can be seen in the lesser and greater physical exertion examples (see Table 6), participants used output and movement to process, meditate, and gain personal awareness. Rather than using their leisure activities to be merely sedentary or to zone out, all participants spoke of minor or major movement in activity as stimulating, furthering their knowledge, skill, or understanding of themselves within the world. It was observed that various activities that were included in skolé and Sabbath were defined by the ability to process and contemplate over and above the activity itself.

When discussing types of activities, Nikolas pondered,

> "Can we really say that there's, with any absolute certainty, this is leisure and this is not? Because one of the most enjoyable, I would say, leisureful things for me, because I'm a nerd who was raised in classical education, is just reading really, really dense and dry stuff. I just love it. It's just the best, right? But my wife, who has really acute

> dyslexia, that would be the worst, that would just be nails on a chalkboard for two hours straight."

Likewise, Nikki stated,

> "I don't journal a lot in terms of my own thoughts, but I like to commonplace about things I've read. So sometimes that leads me to then want to document what I'm reading so that I can refer to it later, or at least just the practice of writing it down sometimes helps solidify them in my mind. Sometimes it can be not necessarily prayer, but just sitting there in the quiet and just kind of thinking through what I just read or thinking through, how would it apply to my work life or my personal life."

Melissa processed her thoughts by walking outdoors, along with Thomas, Jennifer, Vera, Alice, and Nina. All participants processed or spent time in contemplation through reading, writing, or another creative outlet. No matter the number of leisure practices, whether skolé or Sabbath, participants talked about the practices they chose as a means to think through their thoughts and to reason.

Nikolas further examined leisure by stating, "There is something in leisure that is almost kind of weighty. I don't know that I would say that it takes effort in the sense that you're struggling at it. I think if you are struggling and straining, you're probably doing it wrong," then added, "I think that entertainment is, when we're talking about entertainment that's in a Venn diagram, it is very much in the "not leisure" category. I think that it's primarily diversionary. I think that's primarily distracting." Melissa discussed her walking routine as one that allowed her to "meditate" and "have found truly holistic healing in the experience." Jennifer shared, "I've come to realize that walking is often a source of adventure, but at other times is deeply meditative." Likewise, Vera noted, "We've lost any place in our lives for leisure, skolé,

contemplation. And we don't value it." Jennifer spoke of contemplation being possible when it was "completely quiet" and "not trying to think about something and not trying to have a particular output, then I end up being able to process things that either I didn't realize that I needed to process, and some sort of different idea or revelation will come without me looking for it."

> Speaking about the reason why contemplation in leisure was beneficial, Eloise stated, "I would just say that for me, I think that one of the biggest things I've had to combat over the years and trying to incorporate leisure activities is, I think in our country we focus a lot on the end product of things and getting things done, done, done, done, done, done, done, done. And we do sort of shame ourselves for not having something to show for a lot of work. So I think sometimes it's important to slow down and remember that. You know, a love of learning doesn't mean you have to show off everything you've learned…I think it's kind of countercultural these days, especially with so many influencers telling you how to be more productive and how to hustle and do all these things...And I think it's wonderful if you can make money doing something you enjoy. I mean, none of us would be teachers if we didn't enjoy this. But we also are in part doing it to make money because we, unfortunately, need to survive [laughing]…But I think that there's something to be said also for keeping some things sheltered away from that."

The ability to slow down and develop a practice of contemplative, holistic awareness through the active, physical movement, great or small, was found across participants.

The Human Element

The essential theme of the human element is defined as the distinctiveness of skolé and Sabbath to awaken and restore creativity and joy that is uniquely holistic and human. Rather than

viewing leisure as a means to an end, such as later productivity or efficiency, leisure was discussed as a way to fully experience human flourishing, an end in itself. Diane shared that, "I mean, if we go out[side], if we go to matins [prayer service], if we occasionally go to a chapel service or maybe even weekly go to a chapel service with the kids, if we have time with a group of kids and a piece of literature that we love, to me that's restful, that's restorative, and it's communal too," and that, "part of what makes me not experience high stress is sometimes is the leisure we have woven into our communal life here." Melissa stated, "I think that focus during the summer, at least from our administration, is just focus on your personal growth," which was echoed by Eloise's thought that leisure is "very much trying to get at the heart of, you know, what being human means." Nikolas described it as, "many factors" trying to "pull us away from our humanity, and there I would tie that back into the sacramental understanding of humans as souls and bodies, and so to the extent that we're surrounded by things that are trying to attack, I think both soul and body, either at the same time or separately, there's a need for practices and habits and modes that help you to recognize and push back against those."

This view of the whole person was not only applied to the participants' leisure, but also in how they approached their role as educators, and how they cared for their students. Eloise talked about encouraging anxious students not to "run away from the thing that is scaring you," such as a bad grade or a looming deadline, and that, "our self-worth" didn't have to be "attached" to our academic output. Rather, a humane approach in education put grades in their proper place, as Nikolas shared how he talked to his students: "to one degree, grades matter a lot because I want to know that you're learning this thing that I'm teaching you, and on the other hand, they don't really matter to me at all," meaning in "one respect because I care so much more about you becoming a disciplined person that's part of this whole constitution of being, of

being a good human." Within the human element essential theme, two sub-themes were identified: connection of body and soul and the desire to make meaning of one's life and experiences through creativity and joy.

Body and Soul

The first sub-theme of the human element was the body and soul, which refers to participants' lived experience of leisure that feeds their soul through physical, bodily participation (see Table 7). Participants talked quite extensively about leisure being an experience of the body, including the mind, in conjunction with the soul as a "holistic" encounter, as Melissa described it. Additionally, Diane said, "I think that music and faith, for me, are integrated in a kind of funny way. Maybe that's not true for everybody, but those two are together for me," where she physically connected faith or spiritual experience to her physical playing of the violin. Thomas shared an example of "removing his shoes" when walking on the grass in a cemetery to more fully "contemplate" such ideas as brevity of life. Vera, Nina, and Nikki talked at length about how their physical discipline to exercise not only "cleared" their "mind," positively influenced their "mental health," and made them physically "healthy," but that those physical practices also were "invigorating," according to Nikki, brought "clarity," to Vera, and the ability to "think about something carefully by myself or pray." Nikolas summed up this thought by saying,

> "when you think about rest or leisure and you think about being human and when you think about spirituality as its all at bottom coming from the same, you know, the same package. Because if you understand, the human person is, you know I could get really sacramental and talk about the body-spirit congruency and how it all has to fit together. The way that you rest your body and your spirit, that's part of being human, I think."

This same idea of congruency between one's physical body and connection with the soul was shared by Nina when she said, "I mean, we value, and most [of our] teachers themselves consider exercise of some kind or another important, so the formation of the person as a whole is important to us—body, mind, and soul." Nikolas talked about the connection between "grounding" his soul and writing with ink and paper, whereas Nikki spoke of physical comfort when reading to feel "warm" and "refreshed" in her reading. Participant's experience of the body and soul sub theme is further shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7

Body and Soul Sub Theme

Body and Soul = refers to participants' lived experience of leisure that feeds the soul through physical participation									
Nikki	*Melissa*	*Diane*	*Eloise*	*Vera*	*Nikolas*	*Thomas*	*Nina*	*Alice*	*Jennifer*
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Meaning making

The second sub-theme of the human element was meaning-making, which refers to the innate desire of participants to use their leisure practices to make or find meaning in their lives through formation of the self and joyful experiences (see Table 8 below). Each of the participants talked about their leisure practices as something they were either drawn to or loved. Melissa shared that taking a summer off to "find the joy in reading and writing," to reaffirm what she "loved about literature and writing," and how they "inspired" her. Eloise talked about not having "pressure" to be good at a hobby or leisure practice, but to just "enjoy it" for its own sake, and Thomas used the description of "pleasure or delight" in leisure. Jennifer added that she would ask students how their weekends were and talk about examples of leisure with her students "so that we can share what it's like to enjoy life on our own terms." Alice used the word "savor" to describe the joy of leisure, and Nina, Vera, Melissa, and Eloise repeatedly used the word

"enjoy." Diane shared that a "love of learning," even in leisurely, contemplative activities, had "its own rewards," and teachers show students a "love of learning for its own rewards, and not just for the grade."

In addition to joy, creativity and meaning were a repetitive undercurrent and understanding to meaning making that humans could participate in. When speaking about her leisure practices, Alice spoke of making sense of her days and life: "I just want to see the meaning of these things, and for me, so I brought one of my journals, but sometimes it's a more artful entry and some days I don't have a lot of time, so it's just jotting down different parts of my day, different things that happened, and it's, for me, just seeing it, working it out in writing." Eloise added, "whatever it is that you want to create," could be actualized in leisure, where she recognized a "knowledge floating through creativity, allowing yourself some room to breathe." Melissa found creativity in her cooking, and noted that there the "creativity with teaching is very different than creativity with cooking," because "with cooking, it's something that I'm doing that I'm creating for myself." Alice's thoughts on meaning through duration came from a Ken Burn's quote she liked and shared that "crafting lines of poetry and then assembling them into a meaningful collection" helped her to "glean meaning." Nikki even shared the connection of "new ideas" with inspiration and "encouragement" from colleagues. Diane summed creativity, meaning, and joy up by stating, "spending time in reading, thinking, imagining, praying, and writing about Scripture is a luxury," along with "the struggle to create beautiful sound" on her violin "is real, but the experience of reaching for it is golden." Participant experience of meaning-making is shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8

Meaning Making Sub Theme

Meaning Making = refers to the innate desire of participants to use their leisure practices to make or find meaning in their lives through formation of the self and joyful experiences.									
Nikki	*Melissa*	*Diane*	*Eloise*	*Vera*	*Nikolas*	*Thomas*	*Nina*	*Alice*	*Jennifer*
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Posture of Receptivity

The essential theme, the posture of receptivity, refers to the participants' willingness and openness to new ways of being, or growth, through leisure. All participants shared that they participated in their leisure practices, not because they were masters of a particular craft, but because it was good for their own growth and grounding, and that the practices themselves could work on them. Jennifer spoke of "learning about other cultures" and people "throughout history," to have a "window into the past and it kind of pulls you out of the present and gives you a little bit of a bigger perspective," and to "receive the gifts that God has given us." Alice shared that an "awareness of life for, or, receiving something good and sweet" often came through contemplative leisure. Nikki spoke of the "formation" of herself through leisure, and Thomas indicated that people can "receive in a communal sense," as well as cultivate a "willingness," which matched Eloise's comparison of leisure to "exploration" and a "willingness" to see where leisure led. Nikolas described this as "attunement" and Vera used the word "perspective" to describe being "more aware, more self-less, more thoughtful." Nikki explained that the way she previously viewed leisure years ago was always "disconnected activities I found refreshing" but that skolé and Sabbath were like "one more brick" that was "continuing to form me into a better person, into the person God created me to be." This open willingness to receive, known as the posture of receptivity, had two sub themes, defined as humility and mystery or beauty.

Humility

The first sub-theme of posture of receptivity was humility, which refers to participants' understanding that they had to approach skolé and Sabbath with a sense of modesty and teachability (see Table 9 below). Participants did not consider themselves experts of skolé and Sabbath, but as "life-long learners," according to Nikki, who are "reminded" to "feast our minds and our hearts and our activities" on the "actions and the words and the conversations" of what is "true and good and beautiful." Leisure actually became a way for the participants to be awakened to new ideas and a "mode of being" according to Alice. Melissa reflected this teachability when she spoke about learning or "trying things from other cultures," in her cooking. Diane, Eloise, and Jennifer used the word "edifying" to describe encouraging, growth-induced leisure where one learns from others around them or from writings and experiences themselves. Vera talked about submitting herself to difficult pursuits such as the "discipline" of jogging, where she finally "craved" the practice, and Alice described leisure as a "discovery" of what one is willing to learn. Thomas concluded that one needed "courage" to confront "what you learn" about the self. The experience of humility by participant is shown Table 9 below.

Table 9

Humility Sub Theme

Humility = refers to participants' understanding that they had to approach skolé and Sabbath with a sense of modesty and teachability.									
Nikki	*Melissa*	*Diane*	*Eloise*	*Vera*	*Nikolas*	*Thomas*	*Nina*	*Alice*	*Jennifer*
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Mystery or Beauty

The second sub-theme of posture of receptivity was mystery or beauty, which refers to the inexpressible experiences that leisure brings. Receiving gifts, including the mysterious that could not be put into words, and the beautiful, which were sensory and sometimes unexplainable experiences, where part of a posture that participants had to be open-handed. Diane opened up

about this experience when she explained, “He [violin teacher] can make it sound so mournful and sweet […] so he played something. It just struck me that it was just so beautiful. And I didn’t know him. I just want to. But I said to him, ‘That was so beautiful. I didn’t know it could be like that.’ And he said, and there was no gap there, he said, ‘I will teach you.’ It is intimidating, it’s definitely…if it was a spiritual discipline it would be one that produced humility. I’d say that it really does…learning violin did not come relatively easy to me.” She added, “Then there’s just the incremental growing in something that has its own rewards.” Nikolas shared, “I believe regular writing has helped me to learn to respond to beauty in the world.” Thomas said, of being outdoors and in nature, “there’s something about it which encourages a prayerful and again receptive attitude on my part, and something that also awakens in my heart a sense of beauty.” Jennifer reflected, “when we have the opportunity to lean into the beauty and lean into the rest, then that’s a gift that we take hold of.” Melissa indicated “surprise” in building community through leisurely reading, and Alice and Vera also alluded to the mysterious nature of their leisure practices when they couldn’t find words to describe certain aspects of them, but knew that they wanted them. The mystery or beauty sub theme is shown below, in Table 10.

Table 10

Mystery or Beauty Sub Theme

Mystery or Beauty = refers to the inexpressible experiences that leisure brings.

Nikki	*Melissa*	*Diane*	*Eloise*	*Vera*	*Nikolas*	*Thomas*	*Nina*	*Alice*	*Jennifer*
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Research Question Responses

The analysis of teachers’ skolé and Sabbath practices was designed with one central research question and two sub-questions in mind, designed to understand the lived experience of classical Christian educators’ leisure practices and how they impacted their roles as teachers.

After identifying the four essential themes, this section will link the themes with the suitable research question.

Central Research Question

What are the lived experiences of secondary classical Christian educators who develop skolé and Sabbath practices outside of the classroom? The participants of this hermeneutic phenomenological study described their lived experience in various ways, with uniquely individualized perspectives, but in such a way as was universal. The experiences overlapped and were interleaved, creating a woven, layered, human experience. For example, Nikki described her understanding of skolé as an "intellectual pursuit," and similarly Nina described skolé as "an activity through the lens of it being intellectual," whereas Vera wrote that it was "meaningful and mindful," and "promotes refreshment through a practice that strengthens you physically intellectually, spiritually, etc." This was also echoed by Jennifer, who described skolé as "an active, edifying" pursuit, "like learning or practicing practical or artistic skills, pursuing educational activities, or seeking deliberate means of personal enrichment." Thomas explained skolé as "dedicated time to consider the nature of things, to reflect on experience" and to "pursue intellectual work" that would "cultivate a love of wisdom."

In addition to the similarities in participant description of skolé was a similarity in the description of Sabbath. Thomas said, "Sabbath has within it a disposition of trust, submission, gratitude, and silent contemplation," and Alice indicated that Sabbath was an opportunity to "glorify God and to give thanks for the gifts He has given us." Likewise, Nikki shared that Sabbath was to "deliberately set aside weekly work and social activities and replacing them with activities that support prayer and contemplation." Vera also marked Sabbath as a time to "spend time with the Lord," and Nina used the phrase, "time to meditate on the gospel and how we can

rest in the finished work of Jesus." When probed, Alice stated that she viewed skolé and Sabbath as "cousins" but the participants talked about them separately, where Sabbath was specifically religious or spiritual, but Thomas, Jennifer, Alice, and Nikki all agreed that intellectual contemplation was "not a prerequisite" to intellectual leisure.

Sub-Question One

What are the beliefs that influence the choice to pursue skolé and Sabbath practices in secondary classical Christian education teachers? Participants spoke of various beliefs in their choice of intellectual leisure or restful practice. For example, Nina indicated that even when she was tired, she "knew that it was important" to "enjoy," and "refresh," and Diane wrote that "grounding in scripture brings growth and peace into my life." Eloise shared that her leisure practices helped her to "focus and bring clarity," which included "recording" her days and taking a "healthy break from reality" to build "empathy and virtue," through her chosen practices. Nikolas described a desire to express his "perception of beauty," and the desire to "help others appreciate the beauty of people, places, events, etc." Additionally, Nikolas stated that leisure was "what gives me a good life" and "grants space." Alice stated that she doesn't necessarily have a "belief" about her leisure practices but describes it as a "realization from experience" that "slows me down and gives me the white space and the silences into which the random things I've read or heard can assemble themselves into a meaningful whole." All participants talked about their thoughts concerning leisure practices, but they spoke of them in differing ways and made distinction between one another.

Sub-Question Two

How do the skolé and Sabbath practices of secondary classical Christian educators outside of the classroom influence their teaching? Participants spoke of skolé and Sabbath

practices in an individual, personal sense, but recognized a direct connection to their influence on teaching and classroom pedagogy. Melissa said that when she had personal leisure, she was "rested and ready for the upcoming week" and that it was "easier to handle the distractions" that came with teaching. Nikki spoke about being a "better teacher" and "better in the classroom" when she had regular leisure that she protected. Both Jennifer and Vera discussed "modeling" life-long learning the pursuit of leisure to their students, with Vera even adding in her own children as witness to her practices. Nina and Nikolas spoke of a clear distinction, or "separating" between work time and out of work leisure. Nikolas also spoke of "guarding leisure." Additionally, Eloise and Jennifer talked about their conversations with students to get to know them better and encourage them to develop their own joyful, leisurely practices. In the examples given, teaching pedagogy and influence in the classroom was a natural outcome of skolé and Sabbath practice, indirectly.

Summary

Chapter Four reported the findings of the study in three sections. First, Chapter Four began with narrative, descriptive biographies of the 10 participants who identified themselves as classical Christian educators who understood and practice skolé and Sabbath. Each of the participants were able to talk at length about their practices, why they chose them, their experience participating in leisure, and how this way of living or being impacted who they were, including how they approached their role as educators.

Next, the first essential theme of intentional boundaries was defined, which included two sub-themes: time and environment. Intentional boundaries refers to individually planned protection of leisure through rhythms, routines, and habits of discipline. Participants each described the necessity of personal and professional boundaries to keep their lives in order to

recognize and value their work and personal leisure pursuits. Although this may have seemed counterintuitive, each spoke about being better versions of themselves when they prioritized skolé and Sabbath. To fully engage in skolé and Sabbath, participants all discussed the need for time, defined as periods or moments to fully engage in leisure that are not interrupted by other demands, and for specific environments, which is defined as a particular space or atmosphere to fully engage in leisure that was separate from other types of environments. To set boundaries around leisure and protect it, time and environment were both considered paramount factors.

The second essential theme, activity or practice as a medium for contemplation, was defined as leisure activities or practices that ultimately aid the individual to meditate or process thought. Each participant in this study listed their current leisure practices. Some leisure practices were identical or similar to other participants, some where not; a range of practices were shared that included both indoor and outdoor activities and differing levels of physical movement. However, all practices were seen as the means to reach for contemplation, or to process their day and thoughts. Although some talked about processing their thoughts through high levels of movement such as exercise, others focused on smaller movements such as quietly reading, writing, and meditating. As unique individuals, each participant felt drawn to certain leisure activities that were self-defined and sought after, but their similarity was the desire to participate in them for contemplation, self-awareness, and reflection.

The third essential theme, the human element, was defined and included two sub-themes: body-soul connection and meaning-making. The human element refers to the distinctiveness of skolé and Sabbath to awaken and restore creativity and joy that is uniquely holistic and human. Rather than viewing leisure practices as mere, disconnected, instinctually necessary activities to reboot or recharge for getting back to efficient and productive work, participants talked about

their skolé and Sabbath activities as a good in and of themselves. Although participants recognized that a natural outcome of their leisure was that they hoped to be more well-rounded and effective at their differing roles in life, they did not speak of skolé and Sabbath as a coping mechanism or intervention. Skolé and Sabbath practices were seen as a unique gift that developed an awareness of the connection between the body and soul, where participants' lived experience of leisure fed their soul through physical, bodily participation, and also provided an outlet for meaning-making, which refers to the way in which participants use leisure practices to find meaning in their lives through formation of the self and joyful experiences.

The fourth essential theme of posture of receptivity was defined adn included two sub-themes: humility and mystery or beauty. Posture of receptivity refers to the participants' willingness and openness to new ways of being or growth through leisure. This essential theme differs from formation of the self, as contained in the meaning-making sub-theme just described. Whereas meaning-making recognized participants' desire to find purpose in their lives and who they wanted to be or become, the posture of receptivity refers to the participants' willingness and openness to stretch themselves, and admit they did not always have the answers. They were willing to explore differing possibilities and to confront their misconceptions and be taught, which required humility and to look for mystery and beauty in their skolé and Sabbath experiences. The sub-theme of humility refers to the participants' understanding that they had to approach skolé and Sabbath with a sense of modesty and teachability, which meant that their formation of self could look very different to what their original idea was. By being open to mystery and beauty in leisure, participants were formed through their habits, routines, and rhythms without particularly seeking out a certain end. They were willing to listen or receive inspiration and body-soul experiences as they presented.

The essential theme findings were defined and supported at length through rich, descriptive participant voice. The essential themes identified in this study were intentional boundaries, activities or practices as a medium for contemplation, the human element, and posture of receptivity. Lastly, Chapter Four included the association of the essential theme findings to the central research question and the two sub-questions.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Overview

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to describe the essence of the lived experiences of 10 classical Christian secondary teachers and administrators who embrace Greek skolé and Christian Sabbath at classical Christian schools in the United States. At this stage in the research, Greek skolé will be generally defined as restful learning through meditation, cultivation of habits, and enjoyment of meaningful, personal growth in a conducive, interactive environment (Perrin, 2021; Samaras, 2017). The purpose of the study was to determine how the participants of this demographic viewed and discussed leisure practices and how their understanding of leisure ultimately impacted their well-being and teaching. Chapter Five is a discussion of the interpretations and implications of the study, beginning with researcher interpretations through the lens of the essential themes that were uncovered in data analysis. Next, implications for policy and practice will be discussed, followed by theoretical and empirical implications. Lastly, Chapter Five concludes with limitations and delimitations of the study, culminating with recommendations for future research.

Discussion

Numerous studies have focused on occupational burnout across professional fields, including consequent turnover rates of educators (Bodenheimer & Shuster, 2020; Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Burke & Greenglass, 1993; Friedman, 1991; Kariou et al., 2021; Kokkinos, 2007; Kyriacou, 1998; Lauermann & Konig, 2016; Madigan & Kim, 2021; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Mojsa-Kaja et al., 2015; Ozturk et al., 2021; Schaufeli et al., 2009; Schonfeld, 2001; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). In addition, there are an abundance of recent studies emphasizing the necessity of leisure for work-life balance and coping with occupational stressors and mental health

(Brando et al., 2019; Kelly et al., 2020; Lauerman & Konig, 2016; Mullins & Glorieaux, 2020; Redding et al., 2019; Zarate et al., 2019). However, very little empirical research has uncovered modern iterations of positive, intentional leisure practices of educators outside of their work, and none are known to have explored skolé and Sabbath leisure practices of educators or other professionals. Therefore, very few studies have looked at the benefits of skolé and Sabbath practices in general, and no theoretical or empirical research is known to have been conducted on skolé and Sabbath practices of teachers and administrators in the education field and the ensuing impact on research, policy, and practice. This study may be the first to fill a gap in the literature.

A thematic analysis was conducted on the collected data, which were open-ended response logs, individual interviews, and focus groups. Four essential themes were identified that supported skolé and Sabbath leisure theory, described by Samaras (2017), Heintzman (2017), Pieper (1952/2009), Heschel (1951/2005), and Brueggeman (2014). The subsequent sections will address the interpretation of the identified essential themes discussed in Chapter Four. Then, an examination of the implications for policy, practice, and theoretical and empirical implications will be discussed. Next, limitations and delimitations will be considered, concluding with recommendations for future research.

Interpretation of Findings

This section begins with a brief summary of four essential thematic findings from the three data sources, as discussed in Chapter Four, followed by a series of significant interpretations of the essential themes. The most significant interpretations are that leisure approach is guided by an understanding of human learning and growth, skolé and Sabbath leisure lead to mindfulness through contemplation, solitude in leisure leads to more positive

relationships and interactions in community, and the order and discipline associated with leisure transfers to teaching.

Summary of Thematic Findings

In Figure 1 (below), the four essential themes identified from data analysis of the open-ended response logs, individual interviews, and focus groups are given, along with their related sub-themes. The essential themes and sub-themes are important because they were identified and derived from the three data sources collected and analyzed, and they will be the basis for my interpretations.

Figure 1

Summary of Essential Themes and Sub-Themes

Leisure theory guided this study, specifically the understanding of Sabbath as described by Heschel (1951/2005) and Bruggeman (2014), Christian leisure as defined by Pieper (1952/2009) and Heintzman (2017), and the traditional, Greek philosophy of skolé as defined by Samaras (2017). Leisure theory provided a beneficial framework for the study and permitted me to use my expertise to identify and expose participant experience and ultimately apply significant interpretations to the findings. First, participants' approach to leisure mirrored the classical education process in action and outcome. Second, skolé and Sabbath practices led to holistic mindfulness for participants, including an awareness of possible burnout that was alleviated by contemplation and physical activity. Third, solitude in leisure practice led to quality relationships and community interaction. Lastly, skolé and Sabbath practices led to measurable order and discipline qualities that were transferable to teaching.

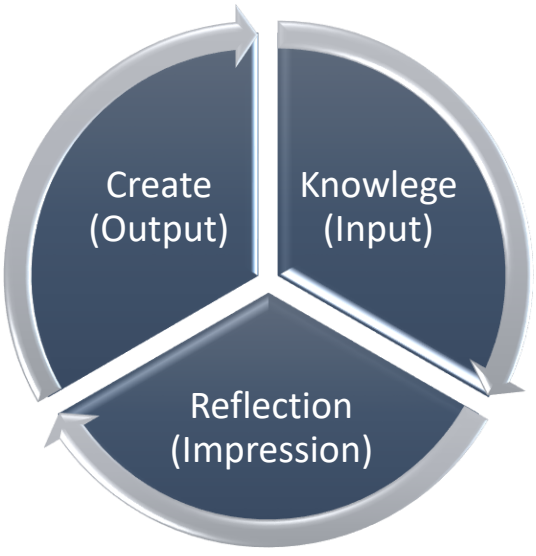
Perspective of human growth impacts understanding of leisure approach.

Participants' perspective on human learning and growth impacted their approach to leisure and choice of activity. Analysis across the data revealed a clear pattern of leisure: intake of chosen knowledge or skill acquisition, a period of reflective, contemplative thought, and an output of creativity, or action. Oftentimes, these were connected practices in the cycle, sometimes they were completely separate, but each of the multiple participants' recorded practices had some degree of intake, process, and/or output. In addition to this, without being prompted by the researcher, each participant outlined a restorative, linked progression where their leisure activities created a circular, ongoing growth pattern in which intake, reflection, and output were either intentionally or unintentionally seen as a step-by-step process in the formation of the self (see Figure 2 below). Consequently, the three-step process gave participants clarity and allowed them to tweak their perceptions of leisure and adapt to obstacles and stressors. This active

learning process mirrors the classical model of education, namely the trivium, which views modes of learning as the grammar of a subject (initial knowledge, vocabulary, foundational concepts), followed by logic (ordering, categorizing, questioning), and rhetoric (interpretation, opinion, original thought). This finding indicates that participants' understanding of leisure and approach to it, such as the choice of skolé and Sabbath practices and activities versus other approaches to leisure, was linked to the participants' understanding of how human beings learn and grow, not only in formal academic settings, but also in informal, personally chosen settings for refreshment and development. Participants had a whole-person view of leisure where their outside of work time was congruent with their workday, and they worked in tandem, or in rhythm together. Therefore, personal leisure practices that have positive, whole person outcomes may first begin with an individual's understanding of human learning and growth, and how leisure is supposed to act upon them.

Figure 2

Cycle of Knowledge, Reflect, Create in Leisure



Skolé and Sabbath lead to mindfulness through contemplation. Through the exploration of participant lived experience for greater understanding of skolé and Sabbath practice and outcomes, mindfulness of participants was observed in several ways. Mindfulness is defined as "keenly aware of what we are experiencing in the present moment and being nonjudgmentally accepting of what we observe" (Zimmerman, 2018, p. 58). Particularly, there is an interest in clarity of mind, awareness, and resilience of teachers to mitigate burnout and attrition (Zimmerman, 2018). The mindfulness observed in this study included participants' acute ability to recognize internal and external stressors that could lead to burnout, their deliberate incorporation of skolé and Sabbath into their routines despite their full lives for self-formation, the pairing of physical activity with contemplation and processing of thought, and participant intentionality to unify their personal and professional development through physical and mental activity. Each of these mindfulness observations tie back to the themes of drawing intentional boundaries, developing activities or practices as a medium for contemplation, recognizing the importance of the human element, and employing a posture of receptivity, as identified in Chapter Four.

Mindfulness has been associated with leisure activity in recent leisure scholarship, particularly those activities that are undistracted or include some form of movement, such as the benefits of being in nature or processing thought and gaining awareness through writing (Crain et al., 2017; Dunlap & Harmon, 2021; Hayes et al., 2019; Heijnen et al., 2021; Kelly et al., 2020; Lovelock et al., 2019; Matiz et al., 2020; Veledo et al., 2018). Human flourishing and well-being, both physical and mental, over and above total work approaches, have a positive impact on teachers' ability to perceive possible burnout and engage in contemplative leisure (Datillo & Frias, 2021; Kreuzfeld et al., 2022). Although the current study did not record or measure

participant physical health through such metrics as body mass index, participants discussed physical movement and activity in association with contemplation and reduced burnout or assistance in avoiding burnout. The mindful disciplines, habits, and routines established by participants included lesser or greater physical movement that promoted awareness and growth, stemming from the human element theme and sub-theme of body-soul connection, as well as the theme of posture of receptivity to take in new information for change and growth.

All participants referenced the importance of holistic, body-soul connection as part of skolé and Sabbath practice. More than half of participants (80%) included physical exercise, such as walking, hiking, jogging, or gym workouts, as an integral part of their leisure, and those who did not referred to the connection between the internal soul and the physical body in leisure practice, and those physical practices influenced the mind and soul. Not all participants considered physical exercise as skolé and Sabbath, that is, restful and contemplative, but it does not mean that they did not include physical exercise in their lives. However, the 20% that did not include physical exercise in their current list still included types of movement, such as writing. What was of note was all 10 participants talked about contemplation including physical movement in conjunction with processing thought and creative output.

In regard to mindfulness, an awareness of occupational burnout and the active leisure to avoid it or reduce it existed across all 10 participants. Although occupational burnout in the education field is at an all-time high, each of the 10 participants in this study talked fondly and passionately about their work as educators, and less so about daily work stress. It did not mean that the participants did not encounter stressors. In fact, each discussed, in slightly different ways, stressors they encountered such as seasonally affected moods, anxiety, self-doubt, and frustrations of various kinds, but these were largely relegated to personal reflection of themselves

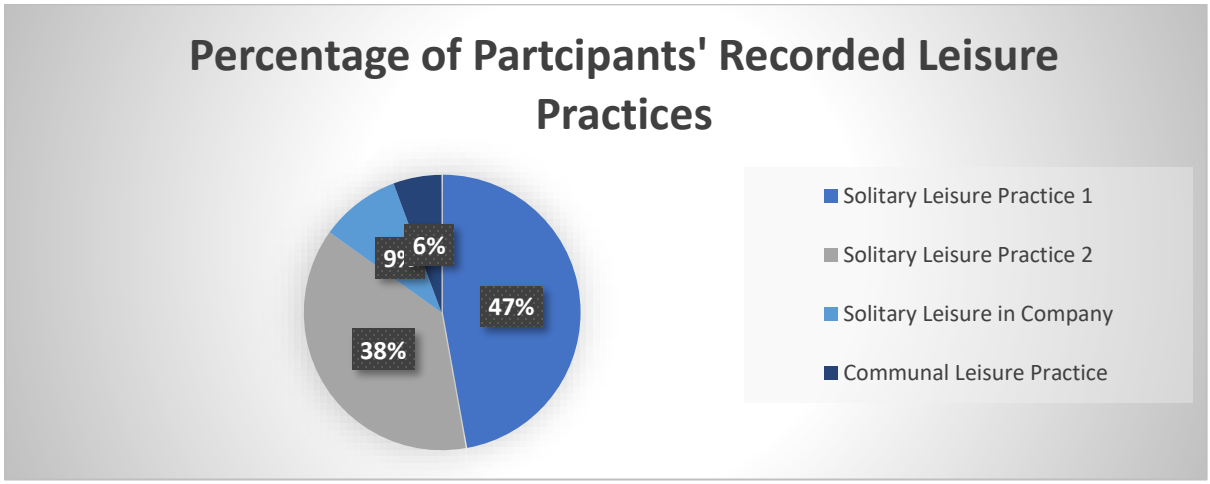
and the desire to develop as individuals and as teachers. When speaking directly about the stressors present in their role as educators and mentors, many mentioned the emotional load required of teaching, or the amount of grading and planning. Nevertheless, participants subsequently indicated support, inspiration, and mentorship they received from colleagues and administration. They largely spoke of administratively protected policies, such as the encouragement by their school leadership to shut off email at the end of the school day and leave grading at their desk, if possible, and that administration also intentionally valued their planning periods and therefore did not over-burden them with meetings and other requirements. Participants did not feel that drawing firm boundaries between work and out-of-work time put their jobs on the line. None of the participants talked about the difficulty of practicing leisure because of their schools' expectations.

One thing to note was that when asked directly if contemplative, intentional leisure, such as skolé and Sabbath practices, could only be understood and observed by those who were religious or spiritual, participants largely pushed against this idea. Although every participant in this study identified themselves as Christian, they agreed that it was not a prerequisite to practicing leisure; leisure was foundational to human flourishing and not exclusionary due to religiosity. Participants believed it was available to those who desired to pursue it and prioritized its inclusion in their lives. Further, contemplative leisure and protected leisure time was not considered a coping mechanism as much as it was considered a way of viewing life and developing as a human being. Leisure practices that include the four essential themes identified in Chapter Four and summarized in Figure 1 in Chapter Five have potential for other types of religious, spiritual, and non-religious demographics as a way of being in the world, and therefore it can be interpreted to benefit physical and mental health.

Solitude leads to greater interactions in relationships and community. This study also showed that solitary leisure practices that are, for the most part, uninterrupted and avoid multitasking, ultimately lead to greater relationships and interactions in communal settings. Interestingly, every participant included solitary leisure practices, but not all participants included communal leisure practices. Each of the 10 participants recorded at least one solitary leisure practice for contemplation, 80% mentioned more than one solitary leisure practice, and the other 20% mentioned a solitary practice that they could peacefully participate in with family quietly around. Further, 40% of participants included communal leisure practice in their list. Out of these four types of recorded practices, solitude was recorded most often, sometimes in up to three or four practices, representing 85% of all leisure practices listed. In contrast, communal leisure that was intentionally spent interacting with others in relationship reflected just 6% of all recorded leisure practices (see Figure 3 below).

Figure 3

Solitary and Communal Leisure



Despite only 40% of participants including communal leisure practices in their recorded list, accounting for 6% of all leisure practices recorded, all participants discussed the necessity for solitude and individual leisure to re-engage in relationships or community groups.

Engagement in community and relationships included several relational spheres: family, friends, students, parents, colleagues, and administration. Some participants referred to rhythms and patterns of leisure that they incorporated into their classrooms, such as quiet periods, outdoor time, or prompting specific thoughts or behaviors, and how the school culture benefited. They also used their role as a teacher to model refreshment and joy in the learning environment. It was noted by the researcher that participants displayed a level of self-awareness in their open-ended response logs, interviews, and focus group (if applicable) that equated to greater attunement to student, parent, and colleague needs and interactions. As a whole, solitary refreshment in skolé and Sabbath practice impacted participant ability to engage in respectful exchanges and dialogue, display empathy and understanding of others, and to experience reciprocity and support.

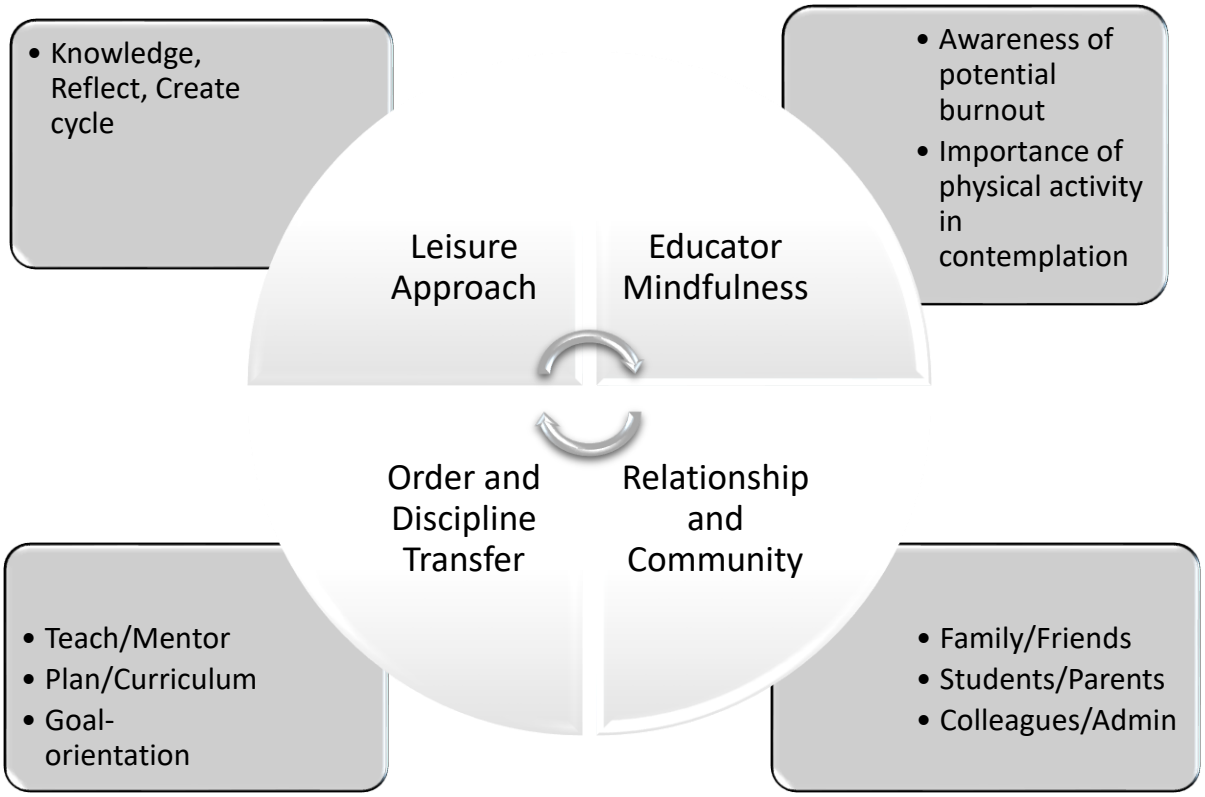
Skole and Sabbath practices lead to measurable order that transfers to teaching.

The essential themes identified during data analysis revealed a clear order and disciplined structure that participants self-crafted to fit their specific needs and lifestyle. Several participants discussed the necessity for grit and perseverance to engage in the regularity of leisure, especially some forms of leisure that required physical endurance through exercise or intellectual pursuits like complex reading and thoughtful writing. All participants had some element and degree of planning and preparation required to participate in their chosen skolé and Sabbath activities. The order and discipline that was set by each participant not only allowed them to sink into leisure and find refreshment and enjoyment, but the practiced discipline and order required to remain consistent in leisure activities despite their full schedules and demanding roles transferred to their work. A disciplined and orderly perspective developed from a goal-oriented way of interacting with stimuli and stressors. This had a future-orienting affect on teacher who found it important to model and establish stability and compassion for their students. Participants relied

on this pattern of order and discipline, developing consistency and perseverance, to engage in the daily tasks associated with teaching, such as lesson planning, curriculum selection, participating in and shaping school culture, and connecting with students in their learning experiences including student behavioral management and classroom management strategies. In conclusion, Figure 4 below displays the four interpretations of this study together, based on the four essential themes identified in data analysis of the open-ended response logs, interviews, and focus groups.

Figure 4.

Four Interpretations of the Study



Implications for Policy or Practice

Based on the findings and significant interpretations of this study, it is appropriate to include specific recommendations for various stakeholders, such as policymakers, administrators, and teachers. In the following section, implications for policy will be discussed

first, referring to policy decisions about school culture, rhythms and routines, in-work protection of planning periods and work load, and the protection of teacher out-side-of-work time by administration. This will be followed by implications for practice, which include teacher self-guided practice that may create space to allow for leisure and positively impact physical and mental health.

Implications for Policy

Implications for policy and regulations are those to be reviewed by the school district or by school administration and leadership. As noted in the interpretation of participants' well-being, the noticeable awareness and ability to actively decrease occupational burnout among the 10 participants of this study may be worth noting by school administration and district leaders. Consideration may be taken on how to incorporate protected, contemplative leisure that could promote positive outcomes for teacher physical and mental health, and ultimately job performance.

First, school administration and leadership should consider the rhythms, routines, structure, and culture of their schools in regard to leisure. By ensuring that routines for students and teachers are in place, such as structured schedule, rules, and consequences, educators can engage in meaningful interactions with students through lessons and organic conversation. For example, scheduled down time in the school day that is quiet, restful, and serene can help students and teachers to reorient themselves, slow down, and enjoy things as simple as nature, a book, or drawing, where the physical activity becomes a medium to process and contemplate afforded by intentional boundary. In addition to down time that is carved out daily or weekly, the necessity for it to be void of screens and other distractions may give teachers opportunity to tailor this time to class interest and need, where contemplation is possible. Rhythms and routines

may also include student gatherings and school-wide community groups that develop a sensibility for students to learn and observe teachers as they model contemplative leisure. This would need to be taught into the school day, but requirements to create margin in the day for teachers and students may be an initial first step to protecting mental and physical well-being through mindfulness.

Secondly, school administration and district leaders should consider the time and environment protection they ensure for their educators to perform their jobs effectively and come back to work refreshed each day. For example, planning periods that are dedicated to planning and grading only, and limited meetings with colleagues or departments, may actively protect and support educators and create an awareness of emotional or physical exhaustion that may lead to burnout. Additionally, it may be that taking excessive expectations off the table, such as overabundant paperwork and additional requirements outside of teaching, would improve their ability to seek restful, contemplative leisure and gain time wealth, which has been found to be a key component in this study and others (Kreuzfeld et al., 2022; Mullens & Glorieux, 2020). Further, encouraging educators to leave their work at the end of the school day and turn off work email to invest in their personal lives would allow teachers, who are often overworked and feel the need to do more to please their administration and retain their jobs, the space to recharge and refresh through creativity, meaning making, and a posture of receptivity. It is well understood that implementing these policies requires a re-examination of education, its mission and aims, in accordance with the school setting. However, this is a long-term consideration and while it may take time to fully implement a change in policy, small changes could be made to protect teacher work-time and their expected routines within and outside of the work day. Moreover, teachers could benefit from collaboration to this end.

Third, school admissions and district leaders may consider ways that a certain amount of professional development could be funded for educators to pursue passions that are related to teaching and mentoring, but open to choice and fit within the school budget. For example, giving choice to educators about what they desire to pursue for professional development within budgetary limits and pedagogical scope, and to become freer in their pursuit of artistic or intellectual courses, could improve well-being through contemplative activity involving knowledge, process, and creative output. Further, choice may have positive implications that directly benefit the classroom environment and student experience. This could not be a regulation in which teachers are required to report their leisure time or practices, as it would merely become another expectation and requirement. Autonomy, within set parameters, should be given to educators and their time and space protected by administration as policy for human flourishing that taps into the human element found in this study, including the body-soul connection and meaning-making. This in turn may not only refresh and restore teachers intellectually and physically through leisureful pursuits that are tied to occupational passions, but administration and school leadership may increase trust among their teachers.

Implications for Practice

While it is clear that contemplative leisure practices were beneficial to the 10 participants of this study both personally and occupationally, they may also be effective for teachers across school settings. Although school demographics and settings vary widely, and educators may not always have the support from administration and policy as outlined above, teachers may develop and implement their own contemplative leisure at little to no cost for positive benefits: physical and mental health to recognize potential burnout and the importance of physical activity in leisure, positive engagement in chosen and mandatory communities, and development of

disciplines or skills that may transfer to teaching. Personal leisure practices require an awareness of the need, the desire for change and growth, and a willing, active participation.

First, teachers may not have much margin in their lives with which to explore contemplative leisure. Yet, small changes to their day or week may allow for 10-15 minutes of meditation, breathing exercises, or a quick walk that is distraction free or without smart devices. As these consistent habits develop into daily and weekly routines, teachers may find more opportunity to re-engage in their passions, or develop new ones. These often require family, spousal, and/or partner support if at-home and other out-of-work roles demand attention. However, viewing contemplative leisure as part of one's healthy lifestyle and treatment may offer a shift in our desire to acquire it.

Secondly, educators may consider their own schedules and demands on their time in order to prioritize contemplative leisure, and ultimately their health and well-being, over less necessary roles and responsibilities. As caretakers and caregivers, educators often put others' needs before their own, including their own well-being, because of their altruistic drive and desire to help and fill in the gaps at work, home, or other. Teaching and mentoring is a noble and often thankless profession, but teachers notoriously have stories about why they wanted to enter the field and impact the next generation. However, educators become less effective in their homes and places of employment if they themselves are run-down and prone to carry stress and burnout long-term. For example, limiting family outings to those the family truly enjoy, or limiting the number of week-night commitments to free up daily and weekly schedules, builds margin back into the educator's life and gives control to them as individuals to participate in and relish leisure in a posture of receptivity, as described by participants of this study. This requires prioritization and selection on the part of the individual, including intentional boundaries and

choice of leisure activity. Leisure does not have to be solitary for those that are unsure where to start, but may include a friend, child, or partner in a designated activity that gets them outside or away from the busy demands of life, such as work, schoolwork, or household duties.

Theoretical and Empirical Implications

The purpose of this section is to address the theoretical and empirical implications of the study. The theoretical framework used for the study was leisure theory, specifically Sabbath as described by Heschel (1951/2005) and Bruggeman (2014), Christian leisure as defined by Pieper (1952/2009) and Heintzman (2017), and the traditional, Greek understanding of skolé as defined by Samaras (2017). These descriptions acted as the framework due to the lack of precision among scholars in leisure scholarship and the subsequent desire to extend or define leisure for future research (Parr & Schmalz, 2019; Payne et al., 2018; Spracklen et al., 2017). The empirical implications will also be considered, namely, the methodology used.

Theoretical Implications

This study fills a gap in the literature in several ways. First, this study extends traditional approaches to leisure, known as skolé and Sabbath, to address the desire for theory development and growth, since there has been little research on Greek philosophical views of leisure and Christian leisure theory of Sabbath and contemplation (Bruggeman, 2014; Heintzman, 2017; Heschel, 1951/2005; Pieper, 1952/2009; Samaras, 2017; Snyder, 2018). Second, this study not only confirmed and extended traditional skolé and Sabbath leisure theory as defined by Bruggeman, 2014; Heintzman, 2017, Heschel, 1951/2005, Pieper, 1952/2009, but it also diverged from modern leisure research's focus on leisure as transaction, leisure to work more efficiently in the economy, leisure as a mere coping mechanism, and a monetary evaluation of leisure (Codina & Pestana, 2019; Rooisen, 2021). Some scholars of modern leisure theory have

been desirous of a firm grasp on definitions and activities for consistency and agreement among researchers (Rooisen, 2021; Parr & Schmalz, 2019; Payne et al., 2018; Spracklen et al., 2017). This study may provide insight to leisure scholars who are desirous to dissect skolé and Sabbath theory and re-incorporate it into a humane definition of leisure that would benefit diverse people groups and backgrounds.

Empirical Implications

Empirically, this study contributed new findings to leisure scholarship, extending the understanding of contemplative and spiritual leisure practices and their implications for future research and methodology. This study extended leisure scholarship that focuses on the trends of a specific group or demographic, the benefits of out of doors leisure, and how chosen leisure is dependent on one's culture (Davidovich, 2017; Hewitt & McEvilly, 2021; Lee & Lee, 2021; Lepp et al., 2021; Lovelock et al., 2019). This study also extended Christian leisure scholarship and spirituality in leisure studies, since they are not widespread (Heintzman, 2016; Heintzman, 2017). In addition, this study extends the scholarship on mental health benefits of mindfulness and its relationship to one's work, intentionality of leisure choice, and the impact on anxiety, depression, and stress (Brando et al., 2019; Mullens & Glorieaux, 2020; Zarate et al., 2019). It also extends the scholarship on administrative support in school settings for teachers to mitigate burnout and attrition, and how professional context and culture has great influence on well-being (Redding et al., 2019).

This study also contributed empirically to methodology in study design. By using open-ended response logs before conducting individual interviews, participants were able to gather their over-arching thoughts on leisure, particularly skolé and Sabbath definitions, before discussing them at length with the researcher. This was done intentionally by the researcher to

avoid teacher burnout by participating in the study. By recording their list of current leisure practices in a log format, participants were prepared for the individual interviews without taking an extensive amount of time or commitment to lengthy writing. This way, participants did not feel "on the spot" trying to answer interview questions, because they spent time gathering their thoughts previously. The open-ended response log asked preliminary questions and the longer, experiential questions that asked for participant narrative examples, emotions, and processing were asked in the interviews to save participants from laborious and time intensive writing. This sequence worked very well to comprehend a baseline of participant understanding and to give the researcher introductory information on participant leisure practices that could be specifically teased out more fully in the hermeneutic circle. If another phenomenology or mixed-methods study was conducted to replicate the current study, this sequence should be taken into consideration to mitigate excessive time commitment for educators.

Limitations and Delimitations

A limitation of this study is that it did not include a wide range of participant voices from multiple, various regions across the United States and should be noted. Participants were from the east coast of the United States only, and therefore the findings and results cannot be generalized across regions.

Delimitations of the study include the snowball sampling method and the hermeneutic phenomenology design. This was an exploratory first step in a demographic familiar to the researcher, and therefore a hermeneutic phenomenology was intentionally chosen over a quantitative or a mixed-methods study design with a large sample size, and therefore acts as an initial building block for future, varied research on the topic of the contemplative leisure practice and of educators and subsequent outcomes. The researcher made a purposeful decision to limit

the sample to classical Christian educators because this demographic had not been empirically studied in depth and it was hypothesized the demographic would have a unique understanding of leisure that may have new implications and shed light on future research. Additionally, phenomenological research is limited in the number of participants by design and therefore cannot be generalized to the population at large.

Recommendations for Future Research

In consideration of the study findings, limitations, and the delimitations, multiple recommendations and directions for future research are presented. First, future research may seek to replicate the study either as a phenomenology, hermeneutic or transcendental, or case study, within a classical Christian school setting in another region of the United States to compare findings, or in a larger public or private school setting with a more varied, diverse sample. Repeating the study with a different demographic by location, school type, or school population to see if the results are repeatable and consistent, such as public, private/independent, or hybrid/remote may be beneficial to extend the current scholarship on contemplative leisure practices of educators.

Moreover, future quantitative and mixed method research on educator mental health, physical health, and contemplative leisure in the classical Christian demographic, as well as in other private and public settings, could reveal a relationship between teacher burnout, physical and mental health, administrative policy, and teacher perspective and practice of leisure. Physical and mental health of participants were highlighted in this study, but levels of burnout and physical health metrics should be explored in greater depth in future research. According to the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, more than two in five adults in the United States, or 42.2%, are obese, and 1 in 11 adults, or 9.1%, are morbidly obese (NHANES, 2021;

NIDDK, 2021). Although the current study did not record or measure participant physical health through such metrics as body mass index, mobility, other physical markers, all participants discussed the connection between physical movements, awareness, contemplation, and self-formation, and researcher observation noted physical movement in conjunction with contemplation and mindfulness to lessen or avoid burnout (see Table 6). Therefore, future research may explore the possible connection between physically active, contemplative leisure like skolé and Sabbath to see if there is a relationship to physical and mental health. It may also be beneficial to study the classical Christian student demographic, who may already have a grasp on contemplative leisure and cultural time reclamation practices such as Sabbath their outside of school leisure practices, which could be explored alongside their reported mental and physical health.

Lastly, contemplative leisure interventions for educators could be developed and implemented to find a correlation between leisure and occupational burnout over a period of time. Due to the gap in the literature on this subject, many iterations of the study may be conceived to explore and understand the relationship between outside-of-work, contemplative leisure practices of educators, their satisfaction with work and subsequent mental health.

Conclusion

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to describe the essence of the lived experiences of 10 classical Christian secondary teachers and administrators who embrace Greek skolé and Christian Sabbath at classical Christian schools in the United States. At this stage in the research, Greek skolé will be generally defined as restful learning through meditation, cultivation of habits, and enjoyment of meaningful, personal growth in a conducive, interactive environment (Perrin, 2021; Samaras, 2017). Leisure theory provided the framework

for this study, specifically traditional depictions of leisure according to skolé and Sabbath understandings. The objective was to fully understand classical Christian educators' unique understanding of contemplative leisure, their specific practices, and how it impacted their well-being and work in the education field. The findings of the study confirmed the unique, humane approach of contemplative leisure for educators, specifically skolé and Sabbath practice.

The findings of the study revealed four essential themes based on hermeneutic phenomenological data analysis as outlined by van Manen (1994). Intentional boundaries (time and environment), activities and practices as a medium for contemplation, the human element (body-soul connection and meaning-making), and a posture of receptivity (humility and mystery or beauty) furthered leisure scholarship and opened a gap in the literature for future exploration.

The most significant finding of this study was the connection between leisure activities and undistracted contemplation, leading to mindfulness that integrated participants' personal lives and work. Another significant finding was that educators' understanding of human learning mirrored their understanding of leisure that led to formation of the self, positive relational and communal interactions, and the transferability of order and discipline to teaching. Based on leisure theory, especially skolé and Sabbath definitions, and the findings of this study, participant lived experiences were shown to be meaningful and important to education and leisure scholarship.

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Appendix A

Liberty University IRB Approval

November 10, 2022

Erin Uminn
Andrea Bruce

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY22-23-221 SKOLE AND SABBATH AS A WAY OF BEING IN CLASSICAL EDUCATORS: A HERMENEUTIC PHENOMENOLOGY

Dear Erin Uminn, Andrea Bruce,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:
The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,
G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office

Appendix B

Participant Email

Dear [Recipient]:

As a student in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a PhD degree. The purpose of my research is to explore the leisure practices of classical, Christian educators and how those practices influence teaching and pedagogy, and I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be 18 years old or older, hold a bachelor's degree or higher in a teaching discipline or in education, and must be currently employed as a secondary teacher (5^{th}-12^{th} grades) or administrator of a classical, Christian school. The school must have a minimum of 100 students enrolled and in existence for 10 or more years. The classical, Christian school must be a brick-and-mortar school, and not an online or homeschool group. You must currently practice skolé (contemplative) and/or Sabbath (restful) leisure practice(s) at least 4 times per week *or* 16 times per month for at least 15 minutes each session and have been practicing such for at least the last 3 months. The skolé (contemplative) and Sabbath leisure activities you currently exercise should be self-defined, regularly practiced contemplative, stimulating leisure activities that may include but are not limited to art, music, outdoor activities, reading, writing, prayer, journaling, structured dance classes, etc. Participants, if willing, will be asked to fill out an open-ended response log (30 min.), participate in an interview (45-60 min), selected to participate in a focus group (45-60 min), and member checks (15-30 min.).

Names and identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but all information will remain confidential.

To participate in this study, please contact me at (XXX)XXX-XXXX or (redacted email).

A consent document is attached to this email. The attached consent form provides detailed information about procedures, expectations, data collection, and protection. If you choose to participate, you will need to download the consent form, sign it electronically or by hand, and return it by email to me at (redacted email) within two weeks of obtaining the consent form.

As a token of my appreciation, all participants who qualify and remain in the study through completion will be given a $25 Amazon gift card at the end of the study.

Thank you for considering participating in the research study!

Most sincerely,
Erin H. Uminn
Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University, School of Education
(Redacted email)

Appendix C

Consent Form

Title of Project: Skolé and Sabbath as a Way of Being in Classical Educators: A Hermeneutic Phenomenology
Principal Researcher: Erin H. Uminn, Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University

Invitation to Participate in a Research Study
You are invited to participate in a research study designed to explore leisure practices of classical, Christian educators and how those practices influence teaching and pedagogy. To participate, you must be at least 18 years old, you must hold a bachelor's degree or higher in your teaching discipline or in education, and you must be currently employed as a secondary teacher (5^{th}-12^{th} grades) or administrator of a classical, Christian school. The school must have a minimum of 100 students enrolled and in existence for 10 or more years. The classical, Christian school for which you teach or perform administrative duties must be a brick-and-mortar school, and not an online or homeschool group. You must currently practice skolé (contemplative) and/or Sabbath (restful time) leisure practice(s) at least 4 times per week *or* 16 times per month for at least 15 minutes each session and have been practicing such for at least 3 months. The skolé (contemplative) and/or Sabbath leisure activities you currently exercise are self-defined, regularly practiced contemplative, stimulating leisure activities that may include but are not limited to art, music, outdoor activities, reading, writing, prayer, journaling, structured dance classes, etc. Taking part in this research study is voluntary.

Study Purpose and Background
The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study will be to describe the essence of the lived experience of classical Christian secondary teachers and administrators who embrace Greek skolé and Christian Sabbath and to explore the impact of such habits on their teaching. More specifically, the study will be used to understand the desires, motivations, and outcomes of the unique leisure practices of classical, Christian educators and the outcomes of such practices on the educator's teaching experience and pedagogy.

Procedures
If you agree to this study, I will ask you to do the following:

1. Provide written responses to 5 open-ended questions/log before the completion of an individual interview. The open-ended response log will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.
2. Participate in an audio and video recorded interview. The interview will take approximately 45-60 minutes. In-person interviews will be conducted and recorded on Microsoft Teams.
3. If selected, participate in an audio and video-recorded focus group. Not all participants will be required to participate in the one-time focus group. The focus group session will consist of approximately 5-6 participants that you may or may not know from classical, Christian education circles, such as by school, conference association, or membership affiliation. The focus group should take about 45-60 minutes.
4. Check the transcripts for accuracy (approximately 30 minutes).

Benefits
Participants should not expect to receive a personal or direct benefit from participation in this study. However, benefits to classical, Christian community and society at large include raising awareness about skolé and Sabbath practices of classical, Christian educators and the influence on teaching and pedagogy. In addition, participant reflection on leisure practices throughout the study may or may not impact further practices and personal awareness.

Risks
The risks involved in this study are minimal and are equal to the risks encountered in everyday life. Please be aware that if you mention anything regarding child abuse, child neglect, elder abuse, or intent to harm self or others, I am a mandatory reporter and will have to report it.

Protection of Personal Information
The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Data collected from you may be shared for use in future research studies or with other researchers. If data collected from you is shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed before the data is shared.

- Participant responses will be confidential. Any personal identifying information reported or shared in the research study will be replaced with a pseudonym in any reported data or publications. Interviews will be conducted in neutral locations, but where privacy is maintained and others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on my personal, non-work issued computer and password protected. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Response logs will be saved in Word format to a password protected file. Interviews and focus groups will be recorded and transcribed with Microsoft Teams software. Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer and then will be erased after three years. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.
- Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in focus group settings. While all participants are discouraged from sharing information from the focus group, the researcher cannot guarantee that information shared in the focus group will not be shared outside of those in the focus group.

Compensation
Participants will be compensated for participation in this study by receiving a $25 Amazon gift card as a token of appreciation. Gift cards will be sent upon completion of response log, interview, and, if applicable, focus group. If a participant does not complete the study, no compensation will be issued.

Voluntary Nature of Research
Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University and does not have bearing on your employment. If you participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw
If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact me at the email address included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study. Focus group data will not be destroyed, but your contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study should you choose to withdraw.

Contact Information
The researcher conducting this study is Erin H. Uminn. You may ask questions about the study before committing to the research study, during the research study, or afterward by emailing Erin H. Uminn at (redacted email). You may also contact the researcher's faculty chairperson, Dr. Andrea Bruce, at (redacted email).

Questions and Concerns about this Study
If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to contact someone other than the researcher or their faculty chairperson, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or by email at irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent
By signing this document, you are agreeing to participation in this study as outlined above. Make sure that you understand what the study is about and the procedures required of you before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy of this consent form with the research study records. If you have any questions about the study after signing this document, you may contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

☐ The researcher has my permission to video and audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

_____
Printed Participant Name

_____
Signature of Participant Date

Appendix D

Screening Questions for Participants

Please answer the following questions.

Indicate if you are an administrator, teacher, or another position:

Grade(s) taught, if applicable:

Degree(s) held:

Is the school that you are employed by at least 10 years old, and have at least 100 students enrolled? YES/NO

Are you currently employed as a teacher or administrator in a classical, Christian school (CCS)? YES/NO

Do you affirm that the skolé (contemplative) and Sabbath leisure activities you currently exercise are self-defined, regularly practiced contemplative, stimulating leisure activities that may include but are not limited to art, music, outdoor activities, reading, writing, prayer, journaling, structured dance classes, etc.: YES/NO

Have you practiced the above leisure activities on your own personal time (not a requirement of your job) for 3 months or more? YES/NO

Do you practice these leisure activities at least 4 times per week (OR 16 times per month) for at least 15 minutes each session? (Note: This may be a combination of practices up to 4 times per week OR 16 times per month. For example, contemplative prayer two times per week for 15 minutes each time, reflective writing once per week for 10 minutes, and Sabbath dinner gatherings twice per month, alternating with forest bathing or fine art gallery viewing alternate weeks per month lasting over 15 minutes.) YES/NO

Do you affirm that the leisure practices outlined above do not include television watching, social media browsing, or video-gaming? YES/NO

Do you affirm that if you use electronic media to assist in the leisure practices above, it is used in conjunction with contemplative, restful leisure aligned with skolé or Sabbath, such as using a laptop to write reflectively or a digital app to assist with musical practice or contemplative prayer? YES/NO

Do you affirm that the leisure activities outlined above are self-sought and do not include required professional development, a conference, or seminar? YES/NO

Please include demographic information for inclusion in the study:

Age:
Gender:
Number of years teaching and/or in administration:
Name or location of school currently employed:
Subject or discipline taught:

Appendix E

Open-Ended Response Log Email

Dear Participant,

Thank you again for taking time out of your schedule to take part in this research study. Attached you will find the preliminary, open-ended response questions/log. Please download the Word document, type your answers directly into the document, save a copy, and email as an attachment back to me at (redacted email). The document will be retained in a password protected computer file and all personal identifying information removed.

There are 5 questions, including a practice log, that should each take approximately 10 minutes to complete or less, depending on how detailed or concise you choose to answer each question. Please respond by email with completed responses within 2 weeks from the date of this email. Upon completion of the open-ended response log, an individual interview will be scheduled.

Thank you very much for your continued participation in this research study and commitment to the process.

Most sincerely,
Erin H. Uminn
Doctoral candidate, Liberty University

Appendix F

Open-Ended Response Log

1. Describe your understanding of contemplative or intellectual (skolé) leisure. CRQ
2. Describe your understanding of Sabbath rest. CRQ
3. What specific skolé and/or Sabbath practices do you employ? (type into the log below) SQ1

Leisure Practice 1:	Beliefs preceding practice:	Description of the practice and experience:	Beliefs/result of doing the practice:
Leisure Practice 2: (if applicable)	Beliefs preceding practice:	Description of the practice and experience:	Beliefs/result of doing the practice:
Leisure Practice 3: (if applicable)	Beliefs preceding practice:	Description of the practice and experience:	Beliefs/result of doing the practice:
Leisure Practice 4: (if applicable)	Beliefs preceding practice:	Description of the practice and experience:	

4. For each of the practices outlined in question 3, what is the time commitment involved (minutes, hours, days)? How long (months, years) have you been practicing these leisure activities? SQ1
5. What is the relationship between your work and leisure? SQ2

Appendix G

Individual Interview Questions

1. Describe your journey and background into classical, Christian education. CRQ
2. Can you describe the nature or importance of skolé and/or Sabbath practice in your life? SQ1
3. Can you give an example of an experience you have had that helped shape your pursuit of skolé and/or Sabbath? SQ1
4. What is the frame of mind required to participate in skolé and/or Sabbath? SQ1
5. What is the physical environment or atmosphere required to participate in skolé and/or Sabbath? CRQ
6. What challenges or obstacles arise when developing or partaking in skolé and/or Sabbath? CRQ
7. Can you talk about what happens when you are unable to participate in skolé and/or Sabbath and the impact that has on your teaching? SQ2
8. Can you talk about how participating in skolé and/or Sabbath positively impacts your teaching? SQ2
9. In what ways does teaching in a classical, Christian school influence your ability to practice leisure? SQ2
10. What else would you like to add to our discussion of your experience with leisure or teaching that we haven’t discussed? SQ2

Appendix H

Focus Group Email

Dear Participant,

You have been selected as a member of the research study focus group. Out of the following possibilities, please indicate the day and time that is most suitable to your schedule. You will need to have internet access to participate in Microsoft Teams with 5-6 other participants and a private location to assure all focus group participants' privacy. The focus group will be led by the researcher and will be audio and video recorded for accurate transcription.

[Days/Times listed here]

Additionally, please select a meaningful artifact (object) that relates to your skolé or Sabbath practice to share in the focus group. This may be something such as a musical instrument, prayer book, art supplies, or another tangible item. Or, you may choose to photograph a location, space, or environment to bring to the focus group, such as an outdoor space, cathedral, or museum that is related to your leisure practice.

I will be following up with you on the date and time of the focus group after reviewing all participant availability and sending the link to Microsoft Teams.

Most sincerely,
Erin H. Uminn
Doctoral candidate, Liberty University

Appendix I

Focus Group Questions

1. What is leisure and how does it apply to education? CRQ, SQ2
2. Can you shed light on the importance of self-reflection or contemplation in leisure practice? CRQ
3. Can you describe the object you have chosen to bring, or a photograph of a location, etc. and discuss its application or significance to skolé and/or Sabbath? SQ1
4. How has your experience teaching and developing your pedagogy been influenced by the skolé and/or Sabbath practices you employ? SQ2
5. How do(es) your understanding of leisure impact your work-life balance? SQ2