

DISSERTATION

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP STYLES: THEIR EFFECT ON THE GROWTH OF SOUTHERN
BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE WESTERN UNITED STATES

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ABSTRACT

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP STYLES: THEIR EFFECT ON THE GROWTH OF SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE WESTERN UNITED STATES

Eighty to eighty-five percent of protestant churches in America are stagnant or are in decline. The average church is not keeping up with the growth of their communities, and therefore cannot adequately meet either their spiritual or physical needs. This study looked at Southern Baptist Churches in eleven western states in the United States with a mixed methods design. The quantitative portion of the study used the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) from Kouzes and Pozner (2003) to see if any of the specific leadership practices were related to church growth between the years 2005 to 2010. Pastors were solicited via email and asked to take an on-line survey, self-reporting their leadership style. Among 131 pastors who responded, 88 met the criteria of the study and comprised the population. None of Kouzes and Pozner's leadership practices were shown to have any significant effect on the growth of the churches studied. The quantitative portion was followed by interviews of pastors in growing and also non-growing churches, and then results were compared. These interviews led to the conclusion that pastors who lead their churches to be intentionally active in their communities, and who make God the central theme of study tend to lead growing churches.

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Pastor: Spiritual leader of the church; the one chosen or designated to lead a local congregation. For this project, the pastor will be referred to in the masculine form because there are no female pastors in the Southern Baptist Convention in the Western United States.

Southern Baptist Convention: A group of Christians and Christian Churches bound together by similar beliefs. The Southern Baptist Convention is the largest, in number of members, protestant denomination in the United States and Canada.

Tenure: Number of years at the current job.

Western United States: For this study the Western United States consists of Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Christian churches, and specifically Southern Baptist churches, are not growing relative to population growth. This study will look for possible correlations between pastoral leadership styles and congregation growth. It will begin with background information on church growth and pastoral leadership. Statements of the problem and purposes of the research, followed by delimitations, limitations, and a conclusion will comprise this chapter.

Background

About one-third of all U.S. adults do not attend a church, according to a report by the Barna Research Group (2005). That ratio has not changed in the past five years, despite widespread efforts to increase church attendance. The group also noted that because population continues to grow, the number of “unchurched” Americans continues to grow by nearly a million people annually (Barna Research, 2005).

Another report produced by an arm of the Southern Baptist Convention, the North American Mission Board, *Comparison of Changes in Population, Southern Baptist Churches, and Resident Members by Region and State, 1990 to 2000*, revealed, “Growth in reported membership failed to keep pace with growth of churches (9.2%) and population (13.1%)” (Stanley, 2002, p. iii). The report showed that Colorado’s population grew by 30.6 percent during that same ten-year period, while the number of Southern Baptist Churches grew by 26.6 percent. The number of Colorado residents per Southern Baptist Church was 17,156 in 1990, and grew to 17,701 in 2000. However, even though the numbers of Colorado SBC churches grew (26.6%) in that ten-year period, the membership dropped from a total of 43,308 in 1990 to 43,061 in 2000, a 0.8 percent shrink (2002, Ritchie).

Southern Baptist churches in the U.S. are not growing, at least not as fast as the local population. Because many churches use their resources to meet the needs of the communities they exist in, as communities grow, church growth should be a stabilizing effect on society today. However, the reality is a lack of church growth and a lack of a stable society. Many Southern Baptist churches are working to house the homeless, feed the hungry, and educate people concerning the spiritual and physical aspects of their lives. For example, Ethne Church in Larkspur, Colorado, has the following statement of purpose on their website:

Our purpose is to provide a means by which believers can encourage and assist one another in fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) and to provide Christian love and service, both spiritual and material, to all people.

Ethne, though not a typical church, exemplifies the mission of Southern Baptist churches throughout Colorado and the U.S., which have a mission to meet the spiritual and physical needs of the people living in their respective communities.

A survey completed in 2011 by the Barna Research Group showed that the majority of Americans believe that churches have a positive influence on the communities where they are located (Barna, 2011). The report also said that even agnostics and atheists have at worst a neutral view of church, with only 14 percent of the total population having a negative view.

The lack of growth in Southern Baptist Churches, and other denominations of Christian churches, is causing a downturn in financial support and the ability to provide resources to assist in communities nationwide. One possible link is a lack of understanding by pastors of the role that their own leadership has on their congregation.

Pastoral Leadership

A ten-year study was conducted in Korea to determine what positively affects the growth of churches. Congregation sizes ranged from 200 to 10,000, and were grouped into ten

categories. Leadership was found to be the number one influencer of church growth in eight of those categories (Hong, 2004, p. 103-108).

Researchers have offered various suggestions on how pastoral leadership should look. Schwarz (2000) suggested that empowerment is one leadership quality that has a positive effect on the quality of the church, which would lead to growth. He stated that when the congregation is empowered and the pastor assists them in ministry, the church becomes a “quality” church, and quality leads to growth (p. 22-23). Hybels (2002) suggested another quality, “Vision is the fuel that leaders run on. It’s the energy that creates action. It’s the fire that ignites the passion of followers” (p. 31).

Forno and Merlone (2006) re-quoted a fifty-year-old article written by W. G. Bennis because it remains true today, “Of all the hazy and confounding areas in social psychology, leadership theory undoubtedly contends for nomination. And ironically, probably more has been written and less is known about leadership than about any other topic in the behavioral sciences” (p. 36).

Pastors are not provided information on what they, themselves, can do to better their leadership ability. In general, they are trained in the elements of theology only. Examples from business leadership can and should be inferred to the church and its leaders. However, they are generally not trained as researchers outside their field, or on the elements of the business office. Most would not understand how to do a simple GAP analysis or Strength Weakness Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis of their church, ministry, or their own lives.

Despite the fact that “there is little doubt that leadership in general and pastoral leadership in particular is a major factor in the church growth process” (Rainer, 1993, p. 185), in his article concerning leadership and administration courses in theological seminary, Frank (2006) said that

few seminaries even offer leadership courses, and they certainly do not make them a central theme in their educational packages. Cohall and Cooper (2010) stated:

Formal schooling and practical preparation for nontraditional leadership roles of clergy in seminaries have not kept up with the changing roles of parish ministers. Today, the individual pastor is not only a spiritual leader, but is also called on to play a complex role, especially in an urban context. Pastors often fail—or can quickly burn out—because of inadequate preparation for leadership and administration within and beyond the parish context. (p. 28)

Clearly, times are changing, but pastoral education has not caught up with the demands for leadership education.

Problem Statement

Pastoral leadership is vital to congregation growth. However, Southern Baptist pastors likely do not know about different leadership styles, what their own style is, and whether or not it has a positive or negative influence on the growth of their churches.

Purpose of the Research

King's (2007) dissertation made this statement, "Prior church-related studies [...] have not been able to consistently solidify a theory of leadership and the presumably desirable outcomes of larger, growing churches" (p. 7). The purpose of this research project is to determine what leadership attributes pastors exhibit that positively affect the growth of Southern Baptist Churches in the Western United States and to make recommendations to Southern Baptist leadership concerning pastoral leadership in their churches.

The research focused on the pastor and his role in church growth. This research looked specifically at the pastor's leadership traits as defined in the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) as developed by Kouzes and Posner (2003).

It is the intention of the researcher to be able to provide pastors with information about themselves that will help them to grow their churches. This researcher intends to present the

findings to denominational leaders in the states participating in the research, and throughout the Southern Baptist Convention should they desire to have that information. The findings of this study will also be made available to any Christian church or denomination that desires it as well.

The research was a mixed-methods study using a sequential explanatory design, with the majority of the study comprised of a quantitative study using the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), which was developed by Kouzes and Posner (2003). The LPI has been used widely across the leadership disciplines and has been tested and validated.

Following the quantitative portion was a qualitative element. With the help of the Baptist leadership in the Western U.S., and using the quantitative results, seven pastors were identified to interview. Four came from non-growing churches, and three from growing churches. The seven pastors were interviewed in an effort to identify why their churches were, or were not, growing.

Research Questions

The overall research question that drives this study is: What is the relationship, if any, between senior pastor leadership characteristics as measured by the LPI and the growth of his church? Sub-questions were developed as the research proceeds to statistically analyze if there is a correlation between self-reported pastoral leadership style and church growth.

Delimitations

This research project was delimited to the states of Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming, and to the Southern Baptist Convention. These limitations were put in place to keep the project manageable, since the Southern Baptist Convention has offices in thirty-nine states, covering all fifty states and the District of Columbia.

This study was limited to the eleven western states of Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, New Mexico, Montana, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. This limitation was put on the research to keep the project manageable. Other limits were put on the pastors. For example, pastors who answered the survey were to have been leading their churches for the period from Jan 2005 through Dec 2010. This limitation was in place because the study was designed to measure the pastor's leadership style over that five year period of time.

Limitations and Assumptions

A third limitation was inadvertently put into place because survey participation was only requested from pastors who had known email addresses. This reduced the possible survey respondents nearly in half. To the researcher's knowledge, this is the first study of protestant pastors to be completed entirely electronically.

The researcher cannot be certain if the results of this study will apply to all Southern Baptist pastors due to unknown attributes of cultures across the United States. The validity of the results may or may not transfer to other areas of the country. Further research will be required to validate the results of this study.

This study depended on pastors being open and honest in their answers and it depended on support from Southern Baptist leadership at the state level.

Significance of the Study

Effective leadership can be a positive on the growth and effectiveness of organizations in all aspects of society. The church is no different, and it relies on its leaders to provide strategy, vision, and guidance in the day-to-day operation of its ministries. Weems (1993) stated, "Obviously, the pastor is not the only leader in the life of the church. However, with the local

church the greatest variable from one church to another is the pastor and the quality of the pastor's leadership" (p. 27-28).

Greenleaf (2002), a non-theologian, said this about the church:

In addressing the subject of servant leadership and the churches, I am bringing to bear my wider concern for institutions and their service to society. Churches are needed to serve large numbers of people who need meditative help if their alienation is to be healed and wholeness of life achieved, but I regret that, for the most part, churches do not seem to be serving well. They can be helped to do much better. (p. 29)

Maxwell (2005) said, "If you want to succeed, you need to learn as much as you can about leadership before you have a leadership position" (p. 9). Much has been written concerning leadership in general, and specifically, how the pastor's leadership style affects the growth and effectiveness of his church. There have been studies concerning the pastors preaching style and how much he empowers the church members to do the work of ministry. However, nothing specifically directed at the research questions in this study, covering churches within the Southern Baptist Convention and specifically those in the Western United States, were found.

Many researchers agree that more research between church leadership and church growth should be completed (Bae, 2001; Stovall, 2001; King, 2007; Steen, 2008; Burton, 2010; Hagiya, 2011; Stewart, 2012).

Investigator's Perspective

My interest in the subject of the pastor's role in church growth is partially because I am a minister in the Colorado Baptist Convention, which is part of the Southern Baptist Convention. I have seen the research study figures that show our churches, as well as churches in other denominations, are plateauing or declining. I know the positive effect the church can have in communities. From my perspective, a growing church is a positive attribute for the community.

Several years ago, I was in a luncheon with Dr. John MacArthur, the pastor of Grace Community Church in Southern California for over forty years. He is also the president of The Master's Seminary. Dr. MacArthur is highly respected across the protestant spectrum in the U.S. In that meeting, Dr. MacArthur made a statement suggesting that 85 percent of the pastors in the U.S. do not have a seminary degree. I began to put those two ideas together, that churches are in decline and pastors lack formal education, and I wondered if there is a correlation between a pastor's education level and the effectiveness of his church.

In my studies, I have read books by H.B. London, another highly respected protestant leader. London suggests that the longer a pastor stays at his church, the more effective that church becomes. He says pastors become effective after five to seven years on the job, but the majority of pastors only stay at their current churches for approximately three years. I could not find any studies backing his statement, but like the idea Dr. MacArthur placed in my mind, this idea also began brewing, a pastor's tenure may have a correlation to the growth of the church.

These ideas then led to the general question, "What about a pastor has a positive or negative effect on the growth of his church?" This has all led to this research today, attempting to find something that I can give to pastors and denominational leaders showing them which of the leadership attributes in pastors can lead to church growth.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review will focus on three areas of leadership: leadership in general, leadership styles, and church leadership with an emphasis on how it relates to the growth of the church. A review of recent dissertations covering church leadership and growth will conclude the literature review.

Leadership

Many studies have been conducted on leadership over the years. The results have been far from conclusive. Warren Bennis, who has over sixty years of study in the field of leadership, said this about leadership in (1959):

Of all the hazy and confounding areas in social psychology, leadership theory undoubtedly contends for top nomination. And, ironically, probably more has been written and less is known about leadership than about any other topic in the behavioral sciences. (p. 259-260)

In 1972, Lieberman and O'Connor published the results of a study they completed that looked at leadership in 167 large corporations over a twenty-year period. They concluded that leadership had a minimal effect on the success of the organization and that the business environment was one of the key contributing factors to organizational performance. Salancik and Pfeffer (1977) substantiated Lieberman and O'Connor's findings, suggesting that the business environment or situational factors have more of an impact on organizational performance than any other variable.

Weiner and Mahoney (1981) disputed the findings of both of these studies based on methodological deficiencies. However, Thomas (1988) suggested that Lieberman and O'Connor were correct in their conclusions, and that Weiner's 1978 replication did not prove that Lieberman and O'Connor's methodology was deficient. Thomas backed the findings of

Lieberson and O'Connor, but also stated, "It is evident that it will require very considerable additional research before we can offer a general assessment of the impact of leadership on organizational performance" (p .399).

Hogan and Kaiser (2005) came to the conclusion after conducting a literature review that, among other factors, leadership does make a difference in organizational performance. This echoes Hogan and Hogan's (2001) conclusion that leadership makes a difference in organizational performance, but there simply is not enough research covering the topic and, specifically, not enough research from a psychology perspective.

Maxwell (2008) said that healthy leaders lead healthy people, and when the leader is unhealthy those who follow are also unhealthy; good leaders lead better organizations. He believed that leadership in organizations does have an impact and influence on the organization's performance. Maxwell stated, "Everything rises and falls on leadership" (2005, p. 269), which would also dispute the findings of Lieberman and O'Connor.

Bennis (2007) and Kouses and Pozner (2010) believed that leaders do have an impact on people and organizations. Kouses and Pozner (2010) said, "Leadership begins with you and your belief in yourself. Leadership continues only if other people also believe in you" (p.15). They added, "Leadership is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow" (p.16).

Definitions of Leadership

Perhaps, the multitude of different results about leadership comes, in part, from the many and sometimes divergent definitions of leadership.

Bass, in his (1960) book, *Leadership, Psychology, and Organizational Behavior*, gave a good working definition of leadership to those looking at Organizational Performance and

Change. He said, “Leadership involves a reordering or organizing, of a new way of acting, as well as the need to overcome resistance to change” (p. 83). Nearly fifty years later, Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson (1996) had this to say about the definition of leadership, “A review of other writers reveals that most management writers agree that leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation” (p. 91).

Definitions of leadership are wide and varied. Northouse (2004) broke leadership down into four components: influence, process, group context, and the attaining of a goal. He defined leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (2004, p. 3).

Maxwell (1993) summed up leadership with this simple yet profound statement, “Leadership is influence. That’s it. Nothing more; nothing less” (p. 1). Maxwell’s understanding will lead this study.

Leadership Styles

Leadership style is defined as the way the leader goes about affecting those who are set out to achieve the organizational goals (Northouse, 2004, p. 89). Discussions of leadership style in the research have centered on: which aspect of the process the leader focuses, the task or the person performing the task, or the traits inherent in the leader as they move their organizations towards the goal.

The study of leadership styles has shifted since the early 1900’s. Stodgill (1975), still famous for his work on the Ohio State Studies which will be discussed next, suggested that the early theories of leadership during the first two decades of the twentieth century centered on the process of leadership and did not leave much importance for the leader himself. Stodgill said

that in the 1920's, the thought shifted to the leader and his role in influencing the group. Researchers were looking at the traits of leaders. This thinking was prevalent until World War II, when researchers looked toward the situation in which leadership was practiced in order to see how a leader would lead (Stodgill, 1975, p. 4).

One of the seminal works in the study of leadership is known as the Ohio State University Studies completed in (1948). According to Schriesheim and Bird (1979), "The Ohio State University Studies, 1948, are important in any study of leadership. The importance of the Ohio State studies to the field of leadership derives in part from the quantity and quality of the research performed" (p.137).

The Ohio State University studies moved the leadership world from viewing leadership as a set of traits one has honed, to viewing leadership as a process based on situations and factors; thus, someone may be a good leader in one situation but not function as well in another. Not because of his or her leadership style, but because the situation demanded difference. The emphasis has now moved from psychological traits that leaders must or should have, to how a leader responds in the situation requiring leadership.

It must be noted that researchers did not include leaders like Adolph Hitler, Jim Jones, or David Koresh in their studies or definitions of leadership. Generally, researchers felt that these people used coercion to achieve results, and although they led people, they were not considered to be leaders (Beyer, 1999, p. 582).

Research on leadership and the theories that came from it begin to fall into two categories. One category involves task orientation, and the other is oriented to the person or persons performing the tasks. There were several names and models in these two leadership styles, but they all showed similar concepts. Either the leader was concerned for the task at hand,

or s/he showed concern for the people doing the task, thus ensuring that the task was completed. For example, the according to Northouse (2004), University of Michigan Studies called these leadership behaviors: employee orientation and production orientation (p.67). Even Blake and Mouton's (Northouse, 2004, p.70-71) Managerial grid, now known as their leadership grid, has five separate management or leadership styles that boil down to: shows concern for the results, or shows concern for the people.

The difference between the theories is that the Ohio State and University of Michigan Studies showed the leadership styles as being on a single continuum. Concern for the task was on one end and concern for people performing the task on the other. Blake and Mouton showed that both poles could be addressed by leadership styles at different locations on the continuum simultaneously, thus, their continuum became a grid (Northouse, 2004, p. 67–70). Blake and Mouton saw five leadership styles, and by answering questions in a survey, a leader could plot his place on the grid. Those leadership styles are known by their position on the grid and are named. A brief synopsis is in Table 1.

Table 1
Blake and Mouton's Leadership Grid from Northouse, 2004, p. 70-71

Authority-Compliance (9,1)	Heavy emphasis on task, less emphasis on people
Country Club Management (1, 9)	Low emphasis on task, Heavy emphasis on people
Impoverished Management (1,1)	Low emphasis on tasks, Low emphasis on people
Middle of the Road Management (5,5)	Intermediate concern for tasks, Intermediate concern for people
Team Management (9,9)	Heavy emphasis on task, heavy emphasis on people

Another theory of leadership styles suggests that leadership is influenced by the situation the leader finds him or herself. This is called situational leadership, and several models exist. Fiedler's (1971, p. 128) contingency model suggested that leaders should be placed in situations that were conducive to their success, meaning that the situation would be favorable to the leader's style of leadership. The Path-Goal Theory suggests that the leader, working with a highly competent work crew, removes or manages obstacles on the path so the goal could be attained (Northouse, 2004, p. 123-124).

Vroom and Jago (2007), referencing their own work, had this to say about situational leadership:

The Vroom, Yetton, and Jago research (Vroom, 2000; Vroom & Jago, 1988; Vroom & Yetton, 1973) indicates the importance of incorporating the situation into the search for lawfulness rather than removing it. Their research, showing that situation accounts for about three times as much variance as do individual differences, underscores the important role that situational forces play in guiding action. But the lack of evidence for consistent individual differences should not be taken to mean that individual differences are largely irrelevant in leadership. It may simply mean that psychologists are looking in the wrong place for them! (p. 20, 22)

Two more recent leadership styles studied by researchers are transactional leadership and transformational leadership. According to Rowold (2008), transactional leadership is more orientated to the completion of tasks or assignments. Transformational leadership, on the other hand, allows for the leader to produce a vision to inspire followers (p. 404). One could come to the conclusion that the research and theories have come back to the concept of a leader being either task oriented or people oriented, but transactional and transformational leadership goes beyond that level. Transactional leadership does seem to follow the old task-oriented leaders; but in this case, the leader, who is trusted and purposeful, sets a vision that motivates subordinates.

Transformational leadership goes beyond simply being employee oriented. Research on transformational leadership centers on the following characteristics of the leader: idealized influence attributed; idealized influence behavior (vision, trustworthy and purposeful); inspirational motivation (the ability to motivate beyond what the followers expectations); and intellectual stimulation (values intellect, rejects status-quo, and listens to subordinates). These attributes have become known as “The Big Five” (Frey, Kern, Snow, & Curlette, 2009, p. 215-216).

A number of other leadership styles have been found and will be briefly touched. One of these is known as the laissez-faire leadership style. It is basically a hands-off approach to leadership, meaning the leader has little to no involvement in the people or the processes involved in the organizational goals.

Servant leadership is not a new style of leadership, but one that is getting recent reviews. Servant leaders put the overall good of the organization and the needs of those performing the tasks ahead of their own desires. They see leadership as an opportunity to serve and to emulate a leadership style that subordinates would want to follow. Greenleaf’s (1970) work put forth ten characteristics of the servant leader: capacity to listen; capacity to express empathy; capacity to heal; capacity to persuade; exercise awareness; foresight; conceptualization; commitment to growth of individuals; commitment to building community; and to act as steward of stakeholders resources (as cited in Vidaver-Cohen, Reed, & Colwell, 2010).

A charismatic leadership style is showing to be one of the most effective of all the styles studied. According to Fiol, Harris, and House (1999), charismatic leaders have positive effects on followers and organizations, and these results exceed the results of non-charismatic leadership styles (p. 450). They put charismatic leader, visionary leader, and transformational leader in the

same category and call them neo-charismatic leadership styles. They also put these styles together into one because they all have similarities with Weber's decisions in 1947 concerning charismatic conceptualization. The neo-charismatic leaders: articulate vision; offer innovative solutions; stand for radical change; and generally emerge and are more effective under conditions of social stress and crisis (p. 450). Fiol et al. also said that followers of charismatic leaders become highly motivated to the mission, tend to perform above their expectations, and do more than what they are called upon to do (p. 451).

Conger and Kanungo's (1988 and 1998) theory has five factors of charismatic leadership: look for opportunities to improve organizational processes, followers needs are evaluated, formulate an inspiring vision for the future, engage in unconventional behavior that demonstrates the importance of the articulated vision, and takes personal risk in order to motivate followers (Rowold & Laukamp, 2009, p. 604-605).

Kouzes and Posner's (1995) book, *The Leadership Challenge*, looked at five characteristics of effective leaders. These behaviors were: challenge the process, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, model the way, and encourage the heart. Simply put, Kouzes and Posner said that leaders should not accept the status quo. Leaders should be able to communicate a vision shared by the leader, follower, and organization. Leaders should give their followers the ability to make decisions and take action, or empower them to get the job done. Also, leaders should give their followers an example to follow and that the leader should be an encourager of those s/he is leading (p. 9-14). Kouzes and Posner developed an instrument called the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), which has been used thousands of times, to determine which of these five leadership practices a leader exhibits. The LPI is the instrument for this study as well.

A brief summary of the leadership traits or characteristics noted in this review is provided in Table 2. It should be noted that Warren Bennis is listed twice, in 2007 and in 2010. This was done to show the fluidity of the leadership studies being accomplished and the vastness of the leadership field in general. Bennis, obviously, was addressing different aspects of leadership when he put the two lists out.

Bennis seems to not be satisfied that the research surrounding leadership is any where near completion. He summed up what is known about leadership and leadership styles by saying:

To this day, psychologists have not sorted out which traits define leaders or whether leadership exists outside of specific situations, and yet we know with absolute certainty that a handful of people have changed millions of lives and reshaped the world. (Bennis, 2007, p. 3)

He also added, “Leadership is grounded in a relationship. In its simplest form, it is a tripod—a leader or leaders, followers, and the common goal they want to achieve. None of those three elements can survive without the others” (Bennis, 2007, p. 3-4).

Table 2
Leadership Competencies

Author	Year	Leadership Traits or Characteristics
Warren Bennis	2007	1 – Create a sense of mission 2 – Motivate others to join them on that mission 3 – Create an adaptive social architecture for their followers 4 – Generate Trust and optimism 5 – Develop other leaders 6 – Get results
Warren Bennis	2010	1 – The Management of attention (Vision) 2 – The Management of meaning (Communicate the Vision) 3 – The Management of Trust (Constancy) 4 – The management of self (Self knowledge A – Knows own strengths/weaknesses B – Give pace and energy to the workforce (Empowerment)
Black and Mouton	1964 (original) 1985 (Updated)	1 – Authority-Compliance 2 – Country Club Management 3 – Impoverished Management 4 – Middle of the Road Management 5 – Team Management
Greenleaf	1970	1 – Capacity to Listen 2 – Capacity to Express Empathy 3 – Capacity to Heal 4 – Capacity to persuade 5 – Exercise awareness 6 – Foresight 7 – Conceptualization 8 – Commitment to growth of individuals 9 – Commitment to building community 10 – Act as steward of stakeholders resources
Conger and Kanugo	1988/1998	1 – Look for opportunities to improve organizational processes 2 – Evaluate followers needs 3 – Formulate an inspiring vision 4 – Engage in unconventional behavior 5 – Take personal risk
Kouzes and Posner	1995	1 – Challenge the process 2 – Inspire a shared vision 3 – Enable others to act 4 – Model the way 5 – Encourage the heart.

This review of the vast documentation concerning leadership in general, and leadership styles specifically, has shown that understanding of leadership has evolved fairly steadily over the past 120 years. Researchers have built nicely on the works of those who preceded them. The understanding of leadership styles has shifted from personality traits, to task or worker orientation, to situational leadership, to visionary/charismatic leadership styles. Much work has been done, but no consensus has been reached about which leadership style is the best. This is most likely due to the fact that leadership is necessary in nearly all aspects of life, from family to social, to organizational to congregation settings, requiring different needs for leadership.

This section will conclude with more of the thoughts on the importance of leadership from Bennis (2007):

After reading the contributions of the five leadership scholars in this issue and rereading them a few more times, and then having the time to reflect on them, I am convinced more than ever of two things: The first is that we are learning more and more every day about this most important and urgent subject. The second is my heartfelt conviction that the four most important threats facing the world today are: (a) a nuclear or biological catastrophe, whether deliberate or accidental; (b) a world-wide epidemic; (c) tribalism and its cruel offspring, assimilation (all three of these are more likely than they were a decade ago); and finally, (d) the leadership of our human institutions. Without exemplary leadership, solving the first three problems will be impossible. With it, we will have a better chance. The noble hope of advancing the empirical and theoretical foundation of leadership—after all, we are all Pelagians at heart—could influence the course of leadership and, eventually, the quality and health of our lives. (p. 5)

In other words, without exemplary leadership we are in big trouble. This is why continuing to study leadership is so important.

Church Leadership

Larry Ingram outlined the basic and standard hiring process for Southern Baptist Pastors in a June (1981) article. The article is important to this study because it shows some of the issues Southern Baptist pastors face due to the fact that there is no formalized, accepted denominational process for becoming a pastor in a Southern Baptist church. Ingram, and others, stated that the

success of the church, as measured by the growth of the church, rests on the success of the pastor (1981, p. 120). In some other protestant denominations, the prospective pastor must complete his seminary education before he can be ordained, and must be ordained before he can assume the leadership role in one of the denomination's churches. Not so in the Southern Baptist church.

Here is how Ingram laid out the typical Southern Baptist hiring process:

The hiring process adds further reinforcement to the elevated status of the pastor and prepares the congregation to receive the candidate as one especially chosen for them. By hiring a pastor (shepherd) rather than a minister (servant), the church implies that it is seeking a leader. The selection process involves screening candidates much as one would do in any secular organization, only in this case the use of prayer gives an air of sacredness to the search. When a candidate is finally invited to preach a trial sermon, the vote of the congregation is taken as the will of God in the matter. If the vote is favorable, and a localized version of the call is issued, the church then vests the prospective pastor with its endorsement of his leadership ability. (1981, p. 121)

Carter (2009) explained that pastors are multi-faceted people, often performing many functions in the church, and they are responsible for the organizational development of the church. Pastors are administrators, counselors, preachers, fund-raisers and shepherds of the flock (Carter, 2009, p. 261). Carter also explained that when researching pastoral leadership effectiveness, spirituality must be considered. Carter concluded in her research that leadership style had a limited effect on pastoral effectiveness. She also stated that working with a limited sample size (N-93), might have hampered her study. She felt that larger sample sizes, between 100 and 300 participants, might have produced different results.

From studying King David, Charles Swindoll explained that church leaders should have three characteristics: spirituality, humility, and integrity (Swindoll, 1997, p. 6-8). Myra and Shelley (2005), discussing the leadership of Billy Graham, agree with Swindoll, in that spirituality, humility and integrity are keys to being a leader. They suggested that the furnaces of life, those hard lessons learned along life's path, are what bring forth leaders like Graham. They

said, “Leadership requires awareness of one’s own emotions and depths; awareness of multiple forces shaping perceptions and drives; awareness of the dark and light and the large consequences of one’s acts” (p. 34).

Rainer (1993), Schwarz (2000), and Hybels (2002) all agree that leadership in the church is the main catalyst to church growth.

Dissertations with Similar Research

A number of dissertations have looked at church leadership. This section will review several that are the most similar.

Bae (2001) looked at the relationship between transformational leadership and church growth in the Unity Church. The multifactor leadership questionnaire was used as the research instrument. Bae used both pastor and church members to assess the pastor’s transformational leadership style and the satisfaction of church members, church conflict, and the trustworthiness of the church leadership. Bae had a sample size of seventy-five pastors and two hundred twenty-five church members. Bae’s research did not show a correlation between transformational leadership and church growth, though it did show a relationship between transformational leadership and church member satisfaction, which raised more questions than were answered.

In Stovall’s 2001 study of church growth, or the lack of it in Texas, hard data from the Southern Baptist annual church profile was used to identify churches that were growing, not growing, growing erratically, or declining. Stovall was looking for contextual or institutional variables that could be identified showing a correlation between the variable and the growth of the church. A survey designed by Dr. Thom Rainer in 1996 was sent to all of the churches identified for the study. The survey focused on how the church viewed evangelism and their worship style. Stovall concluded that church growth is a multivariate issue and she could not

identify any one variable that could be singled out as a main contributor to church growth, though she did note that the worship style of the church might be a barrier to church growth.

King (2007) had a sample size of ninety pastors in Virginia and North Carolina, all part of the Willow Creek Association, an association that exists to help churches maximize their effectiveness. King sought to discover if the leadership practices from Kouzes and Posner's LPI had a positive bearing on church growth. King used the LPI as his instrument for a quantitative study. King concluded that three of the five leadership practices from Kouzes and Posner's LPI - model the way, encourage the heart, and inspire a shared vision - have a positive effect on church growth in the churches he studied.

King said, "This is the first known study to find a relationship between leadership and church growth. It is hoped that this study will encourage future targeted research regarding leadership and church growth" (p. 87). Although this researcher located other older studies, King's statement suggests there is a lack of research concerning this topic.

Steen (2008) studied the attitudes and leadership practices of senior pastors in the Conservative Congregational Christian Conference Churches in the United States and Canada. Steen had a sample size of 188 pastors. Steen also used the LPI as his survey instrument. Steen found that the pastor's age actually has a correlation with the growth of the church, with the younger pastors leading growing churches, while older pastors were more likely leading churches that are in decline. Steen concluded that the education level of the pastor did not have a bearing on the growth of the church. According to Steen's research, there was no connection with any of the five leadership practices in the LPI and church growth.

Burton (2010) studied the relationship between leadership practices and church growth in two denominations: the United Brethren in Christ, and the Missionary Church denomination. He

had a small sample size of only 76 pastors. Burton used the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) created by Kouzes and Pozner. Burton's research did not show any significant correlation between any of the five leadership practices categories in the LPI and the church growth. He did recommend that a similar study using a larger sample size should be accomplished.

Hagiya, in a (2011) dissertation for Pepperdine University, had a different result than either Steen or Burton. Hagiya studied high and low effective United Methodist Church clergy. Hagiya used a mixed-methods approach, using the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) for the quantitative portion of his study. When reviewing the quantitative study results, it must be noted that Hagiya found a significant correlation between two of the five leadership traits: challenge the process and enable others to act; those pastors were also found to be highly effective. Hagiya also found, from his qualitative research, that highly effective pastors tend to be transformational in their leadership styles. Highly effective pastors in this study were defined as having a ten percent or higher growth rate for three out of five years (or more) of ministry.

Four of the six dissertations reviewed had the Leadership Practices Inventory at their core, which is the instrument used in the current study as well. Those four research projects, having sample sizes ranging from 37 to 188, all came up with significantly different results. Two of the projects showed no significant correlation between the five leadership practices and church growth, while the other two showed some relationship between pastoral leadership practices and the growth of their churches. Table 3 provides a summary of these studies.

Table 3
Dissertations Focusing on the Relationship Between Church Leadership and Growth

Author	Year	Institution	Title	Sample Size	Research Tool	Emphasis	Conclusions
Bae	2001	Waldon	Transformational Leadership and its application in church organization	N=75 Pastors N=225 Church Members	Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)	Transformational Leadership as it relates to membership growth	No significant relationship between transformational leadership and membership growth
Stoval	2001	Southwestern Seminary	A study of the differences between growing, declining, plateaued and erratic growth southern Baptist churches in the state of Texas	N=2662	Data from annual church profile, Church Survey and SPSS	Looked at contextual, institutional variables and congregational influences.	Church growth is a multivariate issue
King	2007	Capalla	Relationship between pastoral leadership characteristics and church size and growth	N=90	Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)	Leadership practices and their relationship to church growth	Church growth is the product of a myriad of complex inter-related factors. Relationship between three of the five Leadership Practices and positive church growth.
Steen	2008	Biola	Leadership of Growing Churches: The Role of the Senior Pastor's Attributes and Leadership Practices	N=188	Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)	Pastoral and Church demographic characteristics – effect on church growth	No specific leadership practice is related to church growth
Burton	2010	Northcentral University	Examining the Relationship between Leadership Behaviors of Senior Pastors and Church Growth	N=76	Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)	Leadership practices and their relationship to church growth	None of the five leadership behaviors were significantly related to church growth
Hagiya	2011	Pepperdine University	Significant Traits, Characteristics, and Qualities of High Effective United Methodist Church Clergy	N=37	Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) and the BarOn Emotional Intelligence test	Key traits, qualities and characteristics of highly effective ministers	Significant correlation between two of five LPI categories and effective pastors

Due to the fact that all of the researchers concluded their studies with significantly different results, more research focusing on pastoral leadership and how that leadership affects church growth is needed. Church growth is the main quantifiable data leaders can use to measure effectiveness; therefore it should be the dependent variable in research going forward.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the research paradigm, methodology, the study instrument and how the study participants were chosen.

Research Paradigm

This study was a mixed-methods design. The overall purpose of the study was to determine what leadership attributes pastors exhibit that positively affects the growth of Southern Baptist Churches in the Western United States. This research focused on the pastor and his role in church growth. This research looked specifically at the pastor's leadership traits as defined in the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) developed by Kouzes and Posner described in chapter two.

The researcher took a pragmatic approach to the research project. Creswell (2009) suggested that the pragmatic worldview fits the mixed methods research model because then "researchers emphasize the research problem and use all approaches available to understand the problem (see Rossman & Wilson, 1985)" (p. 10).

Research Methodology

A mixed-methods methodology, with a sequential explanatory design was used in this study. The two portions of the study were completed in sequence; the quantitative portion first, then the qualitative portion. The qualitative portion of this study needed to follow the quantitative portion because the participants for the qualitative study were identified in the quantitative study (see figure 1).

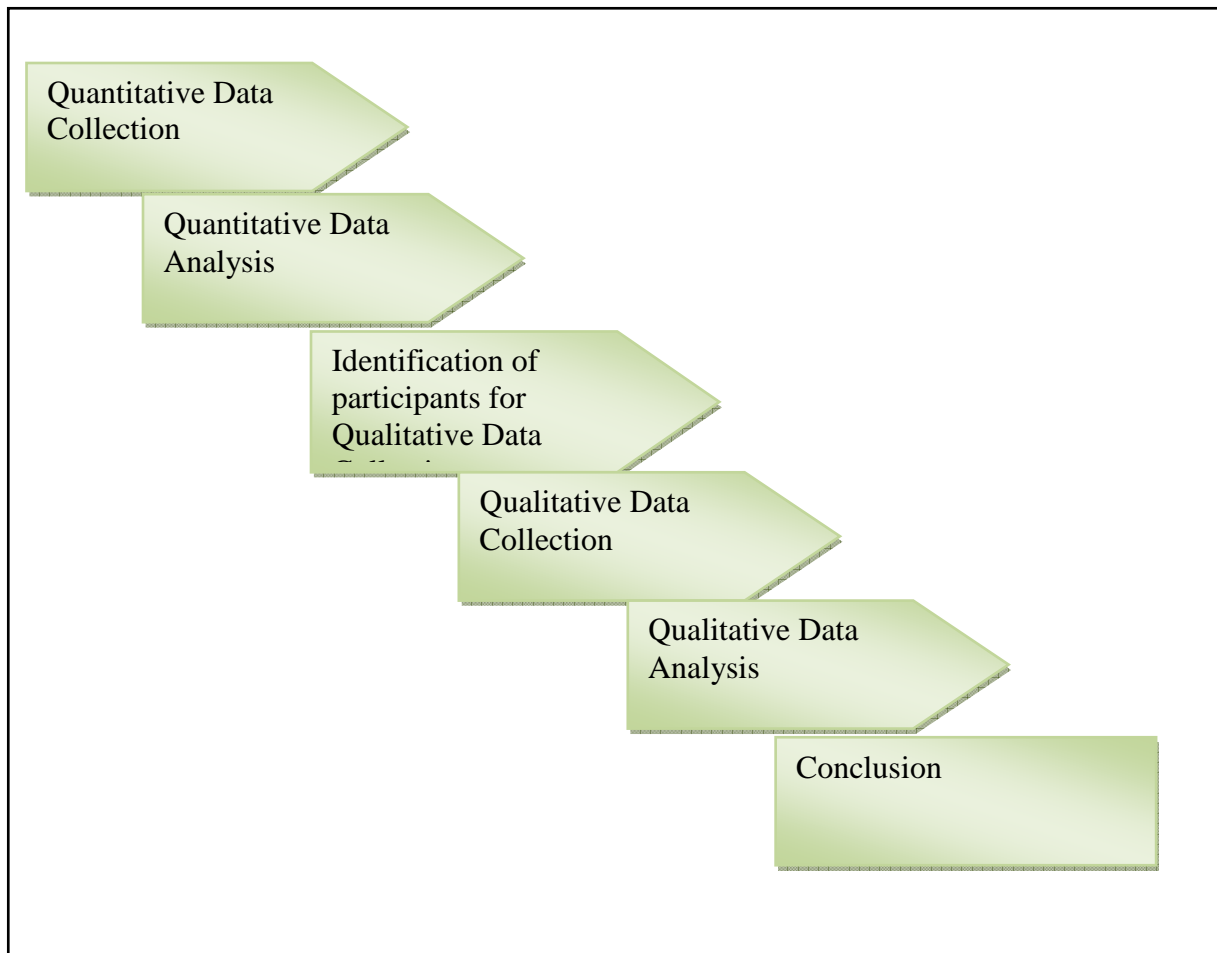


Figure 1: Research design.

This study's purpose was to determine if a relationship exists between the five pastoral leadership characteristics measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) and church growth. The LPI is a thirty-question survey using a ten-point Likert scale. It uses six questions for each of the five leadership areas. The variables measured by the LPI are: (1) Model the Way – Does the pastor set the example for others by his actions?; (2) Inspire a Shared Vision – Does the pastor put forth a vision for the church and then get others excited about seeing that vision become reality?; (3) Challenge the Process – Does the pastor look for better, faster, less expensive, more productive ways of doing things?; (4) Enable Others to Act – Does the pastor

delegate authority to other people and give them ownership of ministries?; Encourage the Heart – Does the pastor give praise to the people when due? Does he build them up with his words?

The study looked at basic demographic data, and church membership separated by five years. The first data set was the year 2005, and the second data set was the year 2010. The difference in the reported church membership between the first and second sets of data was the determining factor in church growth. Three categories of growth were established: growing, declining, and no change. The church was designated 'no change' if the membership numbers were within plus or minus five percent in the two data sets.

The basic demographic data included the pastor's age, length of tenure at his current location, length of time in ministry, and education level. These variables were used along with the data gleaned from the instrument to determine what factors have a positive effect on the growth of Southern Baptist Churches in the Western U.S. An attempt was made to use the data to identify variables that, when absent, result in lack of growth among the churches studied.

The independent variables of age, tenure, length of ministry and education level were also used to determine if they were related to the growth of the church. For example, do the Likert-scale results for 'enable others to act' go up with the age of the pastor?

A SurveyMonkey ® was developed to cover the questions in the LPI. The LPI has thirty questions with six questions pertaining to each of the five areas being measured. The average score for each of the five areas were loaded into the IBM SPSS Statistics, v. 20 tool.

Demographic responses were also loaded into the SPSS tool.

Two of the independent variables, church growth percentage and general population growth percentage, were determined by subtracting the figures from 2005 from the figures from 2010, then dividing them by the figures in 2005. For example, if a church reported membership

of 150 in 2005 and 200 in 2010, then the following formula was utilized to determine the percentage of growth: 200 minus 150 divided by 150. This would mean the church grew 33 percent. The general population, as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau for the zip code the church is located, was figured out using the same formula. Then, the two numbers, church growth and population growth, were compared.

The main independent variable, Church Growth Comparison, was identified as the Church Growth Percentage (ChurchGr%) compared to General Population Growth (GenPop%) and was determined by the following formula: Percentage of church growth minus percentage of population growth, equals Church Growth Comparison. The percentages were rounded up or down per normal mathematical processes. Church growth comparison was entered into the SPSS tool as:

- 1 = Negative Growth (anything that is less than -5%)
- 2 = Zero Growth (between -5% and +5%)
- 3 = Positive Growth (greater than 5%)

Education level was entered into the SPSS tool as:

- 1 = High School or less
- 2 = Some College
- 3 = Four year college degree
- 4 = Masters Degree from a secular university
- 5 = Masters Degree from a seminary
- 6 = Doctorate (Professional, i.e. DMin)
- 7 = PhD

All other data sets are numerical and were entered into SPSS as they are reported.

Population information was extracted from the U.S. Census Bureau for the zip code in which the church is located. Population numbers were gathered for the years 2005 and 2010, the latest numbers available. Where the church has only existed for less than five years, their information was not included in the research results.

The demographic data and survey results were entered into the SPSS tool for analysis. The analysis will be covered in more detail in Chapter Four.

The general research question for this study is: What is the relationship, if any, between senior pastor leadership characteristics as measured by the LPI and the growth of his church? The LPI questions are shown in Appendix A. Permission to use the LPI is shown in Appendix C.

The following null hypotheses will be the basis of the research questions:

H₀₁. There is no significant difference in positive church growth when any of the leadership practices, as defined by Kouzes and Pozner's Leadership Practices, are the dominate leadership practice as reported by the pastor.

H₀₂ There is no significant difference in positive church growth when any of the demographic data collected about the pastor, his age, his tenure at his church, his tenure in ministry or his education level increases.

H₀₃. There are no other factors outside of the pastor's leadership style that has an effect on church growth.

Measures

Instrument. The research was an exploratory mixed-methods study, with the vast majority of the study comprised of a quantitative study using the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI). The LPI has been widely used across the leadership disciplines and has been tested and validated numerous times. The LPI can be reviewed in Appendix A.

Telephone interviews were conducted with six pastors who were identified and agreed to participate in the qualitative portion of the study and one pastor was interviewed in person due to his proximity to the researcher. The leading question was asked "What do you believe are the

contributing factors to the growth or lack of growth for your church?” The researcher recorded the interview and entered the transcripts into the NVivo Tool for analysis.

Reliability and validity. In his article “Leadership Practices of Non-Traditional Seminary Students,” Hillman reported, “Internal reliabilities as measured by Chronbach alpha for the LPI-Self range from 0.75 (Enabling) to 0.87 (Inspiring and Encouraging) (Kouzes and Posner International, 2002a, p. 6). These reliabilities have been tested in a variety of settings by other statistical researchers (Kouzes & Posner, 2000, p. 1-3)” (Hillman, 2008, p. 62). Table 4, which was extracted from Hillman’s article (2008, p. 62), shows the reliability with multiple observers. This study is only concerned with the self-reporting, or self-column.

Table 4
Reliability of Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) Self and LPI Observer

Leadership practice	Self	(all)	Direct Manager	Co-Workers Report	Or Peer	Others
Challenge the process	0.80	0.89	0.89	0.90	0.88	0.88
Inspired a shared vision	0.87	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.91	0.91
Enabling others to act	0.75	0.88	0.86	0.89	0.87	0.88
Modeling the way	0.77	0.88	0.86	0.90	0.87	0.87
Encouraging the heart	0.87	0.92	0.92	0.93	0.92	0.93

Quantitative Study Participants

The participants for the quantitative portion of this study were Southern Baptist pastors from the Western United States. Pastors from the following states were included in this study: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. Each pastor was invited to participate in the survey and was requested to identify himself for follow-up study if he met the criteria established for the qualitative portion of this research project. All participants were assured of anonymity. Only the

researcher knew the identities of those who were identified to participate in the qualitative portion of the study. There were 3,404 (N) pastors who were eligible to be participants in the quantitative section of the study.

The quantitative portion of this study was completely electronically in nature, meaning that invitations to pastors to participate were sent via email, and the survey was established and completed on the Internet using SurveyMonkey as the collection portal.

Qualitative Study Participants

The participants for the qualitative portion of the study were identified from those who responded to the quantitative research questions and who said they were willing to be part of the qualitative study. The researcher identified four participants who lead non-growing churches (<5% growth), and three participants who lead churches with positive growth (>5% growth). Growth was measured in relationship to the zip code in which the church was located.

Summary

The Protestant church in America is in decline, meaning that the growth of the membership in the local church is not keeping up with the population growth of the community. For those who see the church as a positive influence on the community and as a source of physical, emotional and spiritual assistance, the trend of not keeping up with community growth is not good. Cohen (1990) said, "Leadership is the art of influencing others to their maximum performance to accomplish any task, objective, or project" (p. 9). With that in mind, and realizing the church is in decline, it behooves the Christian community to study church leadership as it relates to church success.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to determine if significant relationships exist between pastoral leadership styles and growth of the churches that the pastors lead. The study relied upon the pastors' self-analysis of their leadership styles. The theoretical basis for this study was the psychological construct of leadership as measured by the LPI developed by Kouzes and Posner (1997).

Research Problem and Instrument

The research problem investigates whether any of the five pastoral leadership characteristics as measured by the LPI, or demographic data concerning pastors (age, education, church tenure and ministry tenure) are related to the growth of his church.

The research was a mixed-methods study with the vast majority of the study comprised of quantitative analysis using the LPI (see Appendix A). Telephone interviews were conducted with six pastors who were identified and agreed to participate in the qualitative portion of the study. A seventh pastor was interviewed in person. The leading question asked, "What do you believe are the contributing factors to the growth or lack of growth for your church?" The researcher recorded the interviews and entered the transcripts into the NVivo tool for analysis.

Data Collection – Quantitative

The quantitative portion of this study began with the creation of a survey utilizing the web-based tool, SurveyMonkey. The questions from Kouzes and Pozner's LPI were entered into SurveyMonkey, along with the demographic questions. Once the survey was created, a letter outlining the requirements of the survey was sent to Southern Baptist Convention leadership in each state previously mentioned requesting that they pass it on to their respective pastors. The

quantitative portion of this study was completed entirely electronically, via email and the web-based survey tool.

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is organized to allow each church to be autonomous, while still working together with other churches through the organization. The SBC is organized at the national level, with individual states having their own convention offices that serve individual churches through more localized associations. Several state convention offices serve two states due to the lack of churches in those states. Utah and Idaho, for example, share a state office. The state convention leaderships covering the eleven states in this research project were helpful in getting the survey out to their respective churches. Without the assistance of the state leaderships, the response would have been nearly non-existent. State convention executives gave credence to the research efforts.

One week after the initial email to state leaderships, after seeing little to no response, 1,258 emails were sent to individual SBC pastors in the eleven western states involved in the study. Pastor's emails were manually retrieved from SBC State Convention web sites. Even though there were 3,404 active churches in Southern Baptist State directories at the time the research began, only 1,258 pastor emails were located by the research team. After another week, a second follow-up request was sent to state leaderships. This request was followed up with associational leaderships after another two-week period. An additional final email was sent out to individual pastors seven weeks after the initial request was sent.

A total of 3,404 pastors were eligible to take this survey, while only 131 responded. This provided for a response rate of four percent. Forty-four survey responses had to be excluded because some of the churches had zero population in 2005, which would classify it as a church plant, which meant that the church was new and was not an existing church at the time. Other

responses were excluded from the study because the pastor did not have enough tenure. Of those excluded, sixteen were excluded due to zero 2005 population and twenty-seven were excluded due to insignificant tenure of the pastor. An additional response was excluded because the pastor informed the research team that shortly after he became pastor of his church, he performed a membership purge, removing members of the church from the rolls due to excessive inactivity. That pastor felt that his numbers were skewed because of his actions, and the research team agreed. After excluding these survey response sets, a total of 88 usable responses remained (N=88).

Using year 2000 and 2010 census data for the zip codes provided by survey respondents, along with year 2005 and year 2010 census data for the counties each church resides in, individual church growth percentages were compared with the overall census data for the areas. These were also converted into growth percentages. Churches with growth rates of negative five percent or more, when compared with census data growth rates, were placed into category one, decline. Churches with growth rates between negative and positive five percent compared to census data growth rates were placed into category two, no change. Churches with growth rates above five percent compared to census data growth rates were placed into category three, growth. There were 32 churches placed into category one, ten churches placed into category two, and 46 churches placed into category three.

Descriptive Statistics, Skew, and Kurtosis

Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics for the variables utilized in this study. Skewness and Kurtosis are visual indications of how the variables are distributed. Morgan et al. (2007) suggested that skewness and kurtosis should be checked to ensure that there is a normal or near

normal distribution of the variables (p. 50-51). This is important when determining which analysis tests to run.

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics for the Variables (n=88)

Variable	Min	Max	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Church Tenure	32	76	55.81	9.27	-.18	1.12
Ministry Tenure	5	58	25.30	12.29	.10	-.90
Education	2	6	4.89	1.10	-.89	-.52
Growth	1	3	2.05	1.01	-.09	-2.04
Model	6.33	10	8.38	.81	-.65	.60
Inspire	4.17	10	7.97	1.17	-.79	.52
Challenge	3.83	9.67	7.60	1.28	-.77	.31
Enable	7	10	8.59	.66	-.08	1.45
Encourage	5.33	10	8.26	1.09	-.74	.03

The variables: age, ministry tenure, education, population change, growth, model, inspire, challenge, enable, and encourage; all had skewness (Skew) that was in the range between -1.0 and 1.0. Thus, they are considered approximately normally distributed and considered normal (Morgan, Leech, Gloeckner, & Barrett, 2007, p. 59).

The variables church tenure and church change, with a skewness of 1.225 and 3.987, respectively, are not normally distributed. These variables were tested as ordinal, versus nominal or scale. Further review by using box plots to provide a visual rendering of the distribution of variables proved interesting as well. The independent variables provided by the LPI were reviewed separately from the demographic variables.

Figure 2 shows a box plot of the independent variables: model, inspire, challenge, enable and encourage. Normally, outliers are an indication that the responses are not normally distributed. However, because there are so few outliers (e.g., a maximum of four for the variable “challenge” out of 88 responses), the whiskers are nearly the same size on the top of the boxes as

they are on the bottom, and because the visual line is close to the middle of all the boxes, these variables are assumed to be approximately normally distributed (Morgan et al., 2007, p. 63).

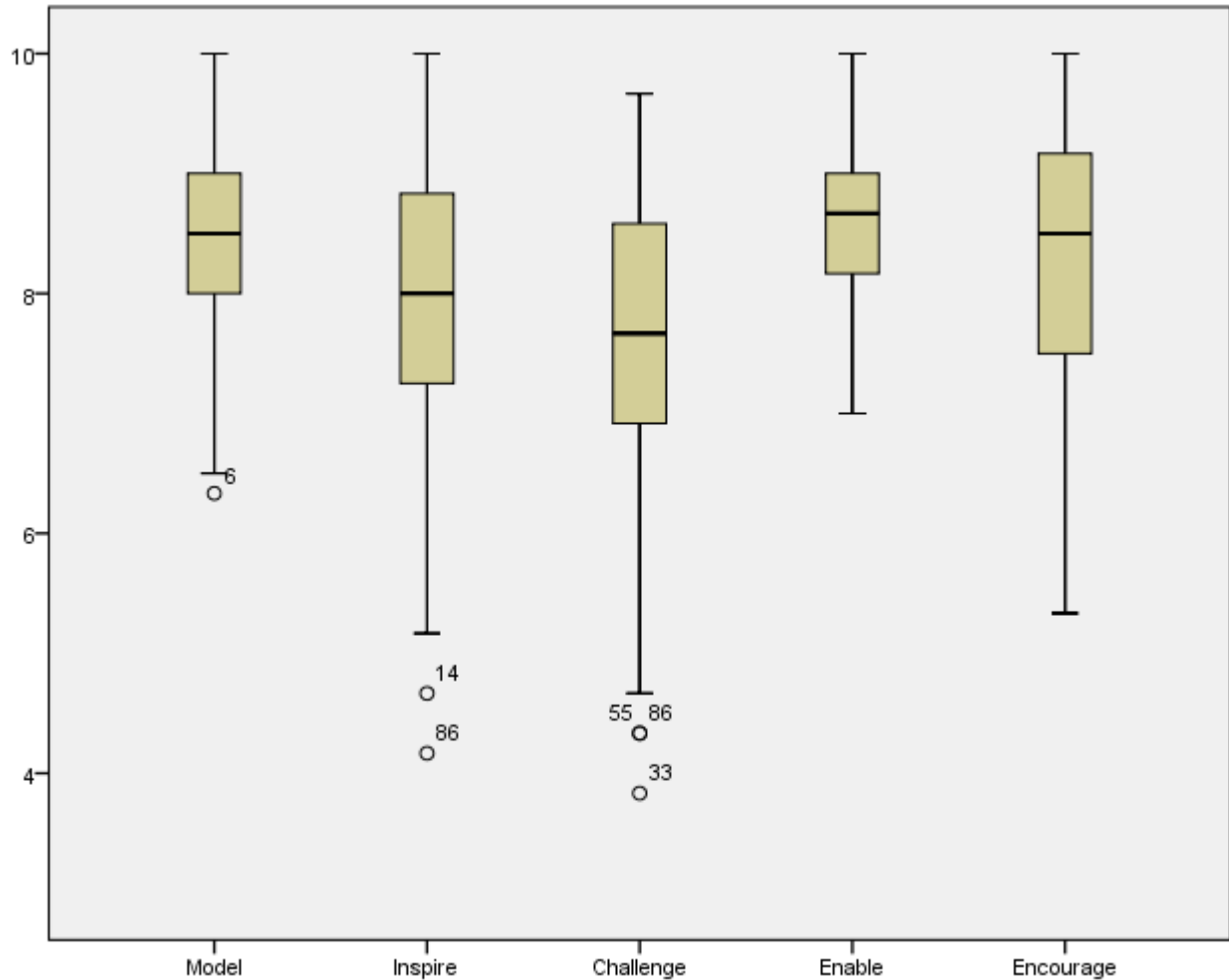


Figure 2: Box plot of LPI variables.

Figure 3 shows a box plot of the demographic variables: age, ministry tenure, church tenure and education; the independent variable is church change. Even though only two variables, church tenure and church change, have skewness outside of the normal (-1 to 1) range and will be considered ordinal, the variable 'education' will also be considered as ordinal based on the visual representation in the box plot in Figure 4. Multiple regression tests, and a

nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis test were conducted to ensure all variables were appropriately tested.

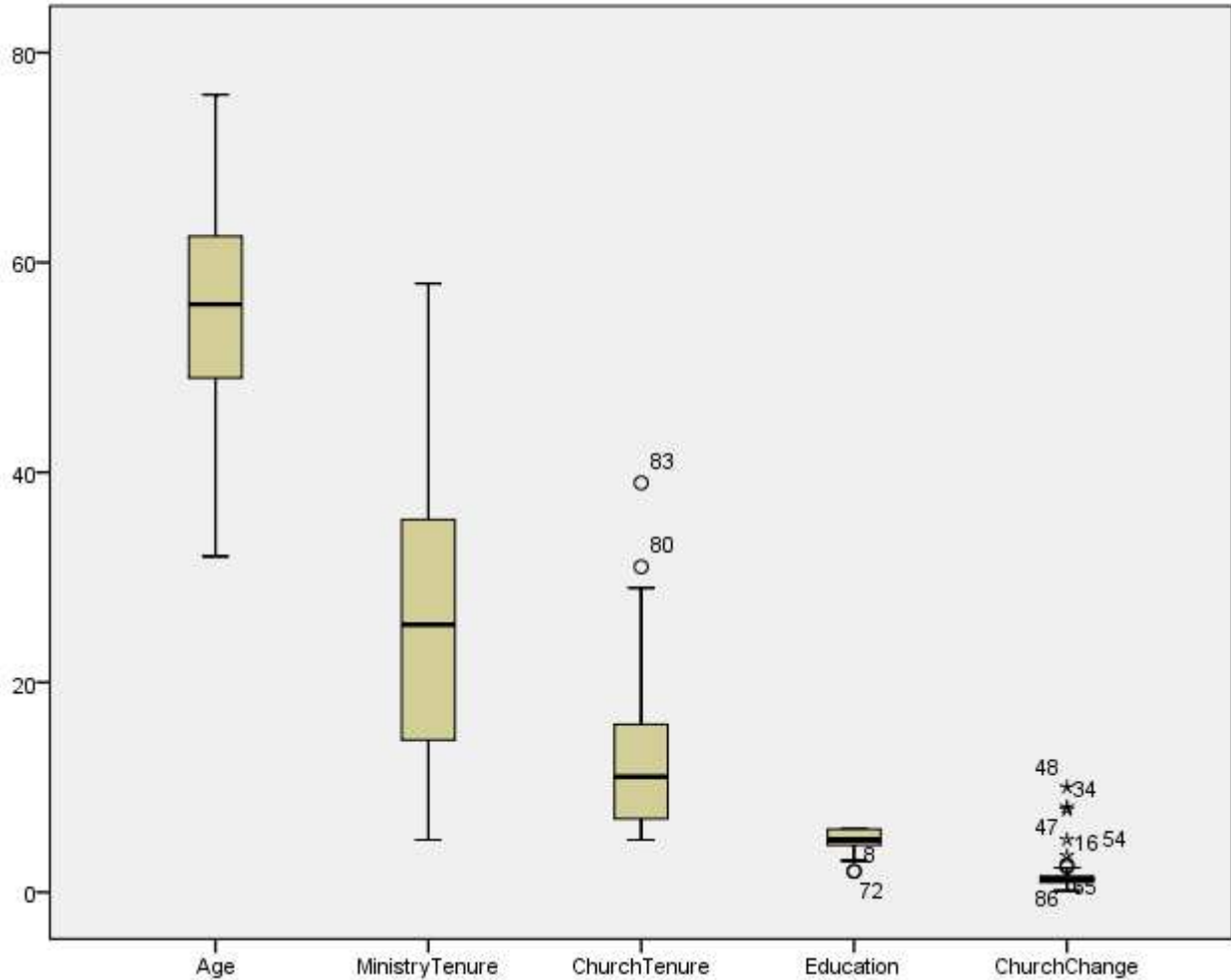


Figure 3: Box plot for demographic variables.

As shown in the three following figures, the independent variables ‘ministry tenure’ and ‘church tenure’ have negative skews, and ‘education’ has a positive skew. Because of these frequency distributions, these three variables were treated as ordinal, instead of nominal data for all of the other variables.

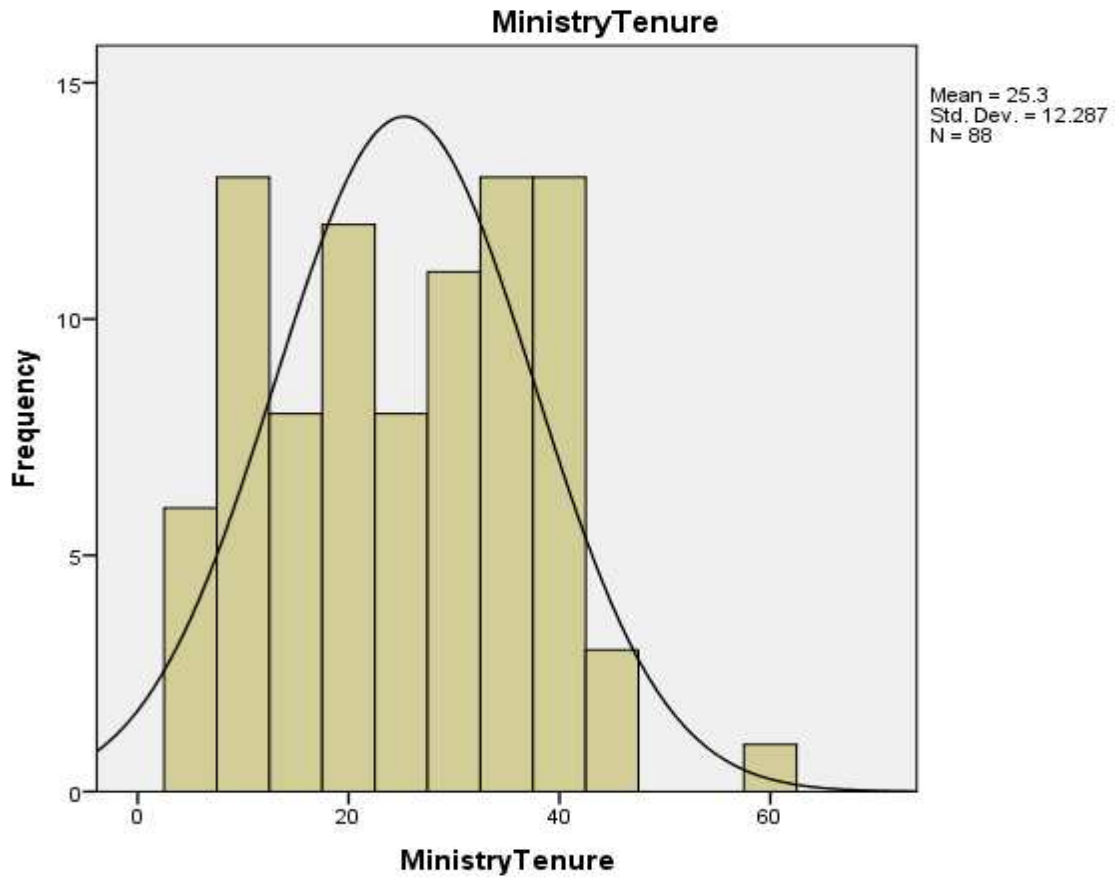


Figure 4: Frequency distribution of ministry tenure.

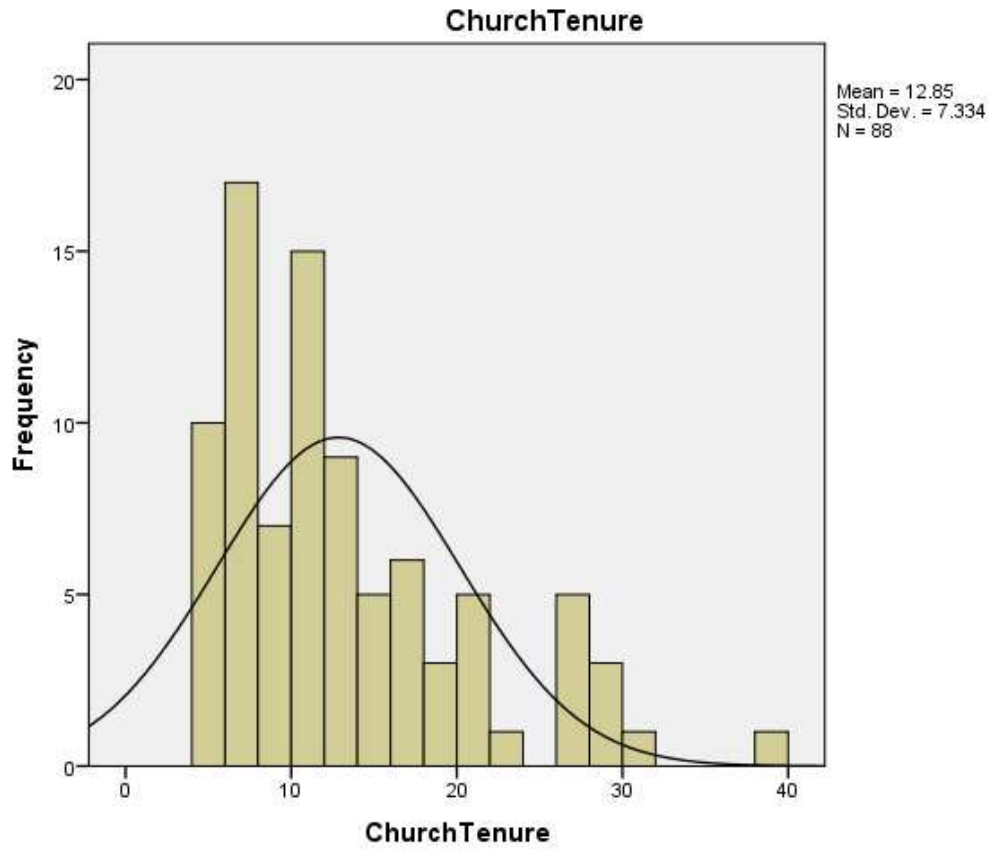


Figure 5: Frequency distribution of church tenure.

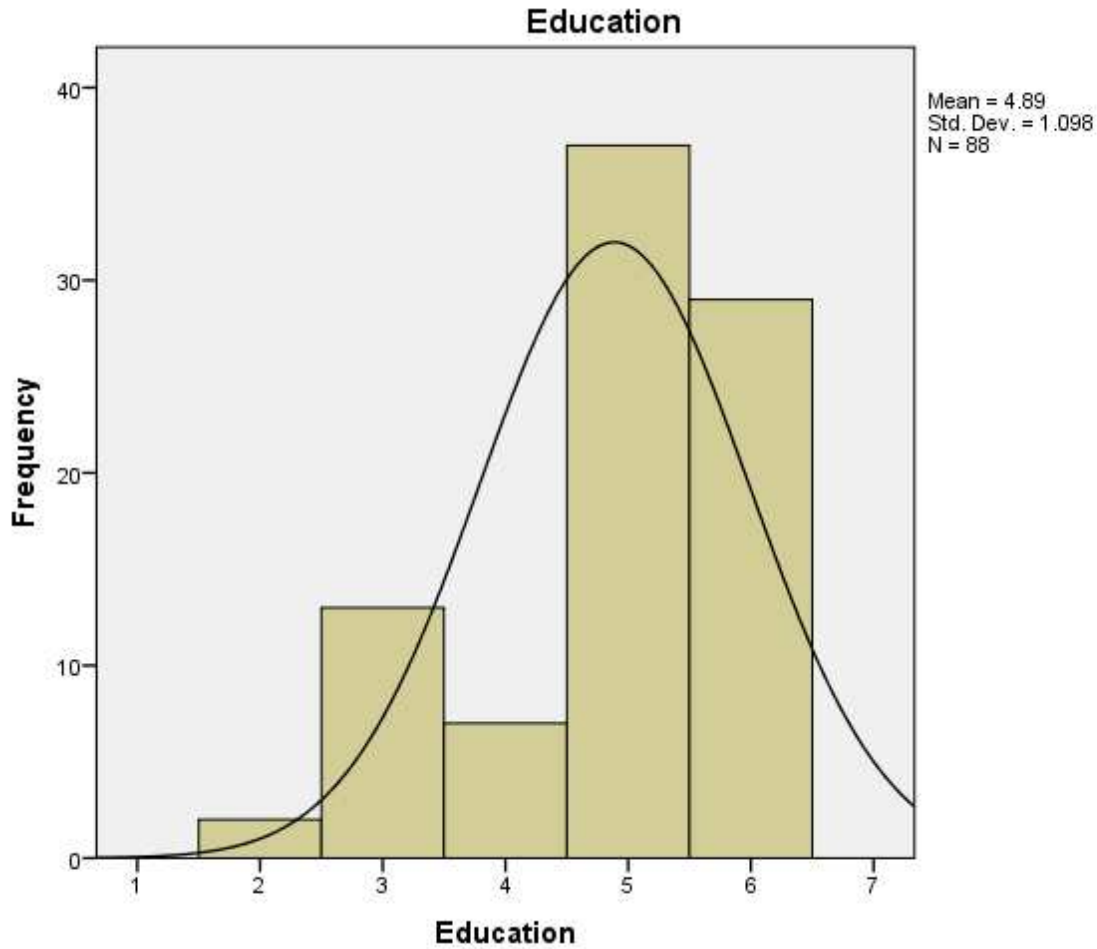


Figure 6: Frequency distribution of education.

The figure below shows that the variables, 'age' and 'encourage' have relatively normal skewness and kurtosis. 'Ministry tenure' and 'church tenure' are skewed negatively, and the variable 'challenge' has a positive skew. The kurtosis for these five variables appears to be relatively normal. Variables 'education' and 'enable' show leptokurtic kurtosis because there are large numbers of variables above the normal curve.

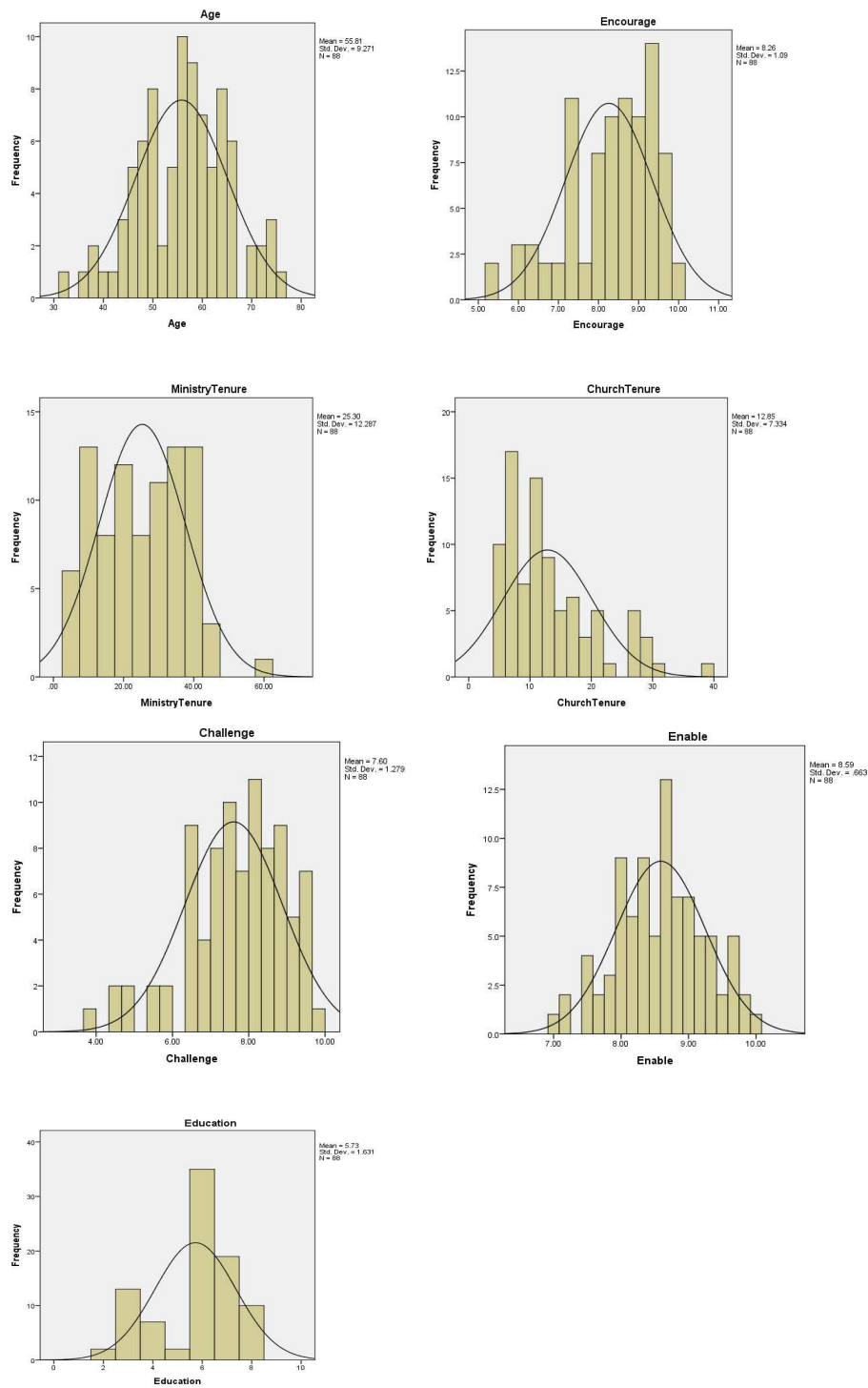


Figure 7: Histograms showing skewness and kurtosis.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables for this study were the variables associated with the growth category of each independent variable. The number '1' represents churches with growth rates of negative five percent or more. Thirty-two churches fit this category and are known as 'declining' in this survey. The number '2' was used to show churches with growth rates between negative five percent and positive five percent. Ten churches fit this category and are considered 'no growth'. The number '3' was utilized to show churches with growth rates above five percent, which are called 'growing' churches. This category of growing churches was the largest category with forty-six churches.

Table 6
Growth Variable Descriptive (n=88)

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	1	32	36
	2	10	11.2
	3	46	51.7
Total		88	100

The church with the largest decline between 2005 and 2010 saw its membership drop by 86 percent. The second largest decline in the same period was a drop of 75 percent. The church with the largest increase in membership over this time period grew by 1,000 percent. This church was near closing with only ten members, but the pastor was able to grow it to 100 during the period of the study. The second fastest growing church grew 812 percent, growing from 101 members to 820.

In order to simplify testing, and because growth variable '2' shows churches with no growth, it was merged with variable '1' into 'non-growing' churches. Therefore, only variables '1' and '3' were used for statistical comparisons in this study.

Table 7
 Modified Growth Variable Descriptive (n=88)

	Frequency	Percent
Non-Growing '1'	42	47.7
Growing '3'	46	52.3
Total	88	100

Independent Variables

The independent variables in this study are the five leadership practices as identified by Kouzes and Posner (2003), these are: model the way (model), inspire a shared vision (inspire), challenge the process (challenge), enable others to act (enable), and encourage the heart (encourage). Along with these five independent variables, the following independent descriptive variables were added: pastor's age, pastor's education level, pastor's ministry tenure and pastor's church tenure.

Figure 8 shows the nine independent variables. The figure shows that the growing churches scored higher on all independent variables, except church tenure, than non-growing churches. However, the difference is not statistically significant in any of the variables.

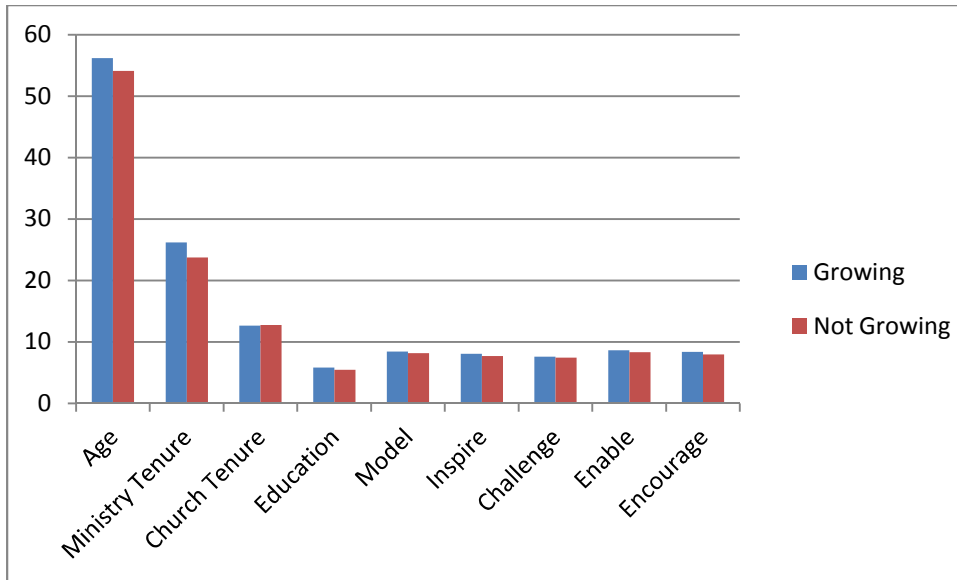


Figure 8: Independent variable comparison among pastors.

As shown in Tables 8 and 9, there are no statistically significant differences between growth and any of the independent variables. Table 8 shows the results for the independent variables that were approximately normally distributed. For these variables, the Pearson's nominal statistic was used.

Table 8
Variable Correlation Between Dependent Variable 'Growth' and the Nominal Independent Variables (n=88)

	Growth			
	Pearson Correlation	Sig . (2-tailed)	Sum of squares and cross products	Covariance
Age	.04	.68	35.88	.41
Model	.04	.73	2.64	.03
Inspire	.07	.54	6.79	.08
Challenge	-.01	.94	-.92	-.01
Enable	.12	.29	6.65	.08
Encourage	.11	.30	10.64	.12

Table 9 records the skewed independent variables that were tested using Spearman’s rho ordinal statistic. With the measure of $p < .01$ showing significance, none of the independent variables showed statistical significance.

Table 9
Variable Correlation Between Dependent Variable ‘Growth’ and the Ordinal Independent Variables (n=88)

	Growth	
	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)
Ministry	.07	.54
Tenure		
Church Tenure	-.03	.76
Education	.00	.98

Reliability and Validity

As discussed in the literature review, Hillman’s (2008) article was significant to the formulation of this study. His reported findings were:

Internal reliabilities as measured by Chronbach alpha for the LPI-Self range from 0.75 (Enabling) to 0.87 (Inspiring and Encouraging) (Kouzes & Posner, 2002a, p. 6). These reliabilities have been tested in a variety of settings by other statistical researchers (Kouzes & Posner, 2000, p. 1–3). (p. 62)

Table 10, which was extracted from Hillman’s article (2008, p. 62), shows the reliability with multiple observers. This study is only concerned with the self-reporting, or self-column.

Table 10
Reliability of Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) Self and LPI Observer from Hillman (2008, p.62)

Leadership Practice	Observers			Direct Report	Co-Workers	
	Self	(all)	Manager		Or Peer	Others
Challenge the process	0.80	0.89	0.89	0.90	0.88	0.88
Inspired a shared vision	0.87	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.91	0.91
Enabling others to act	0.75	0.88	0.86	0.89	0.87	0.88
Modeling the way	0.77	0.88	0.86	0.90	0.87	0.87
Encouraging the heart	0.87	0.92	0.92	0.93	0.92	0.93

Chronbach's Alpha analyses were conducted separately on each of the independent variables as provided by the LPI for this study. The results are shown in Tables 11-13. According to the Chronbach Alpha website, alpha scores of .61 for 'encourage' and .65 'model' are considered questionable (Chronbach's Alpha, 2013). The same website also explains that higher values indicate good internal consistency. Chronbach's Alpha results of .78 for 'challenge' is considered adequate, while results of .85 for 'encourage' and .82 for 'inspire' are considered good.

Table 11
Chronbach's Alpha Summary for LPI Variables

Variable	Cases	N	Percentages
Model	Valid	87	74.4
	Excluded	30	25.6
	Total	117	100.0
Inspire	Valid	85	72.6
	Excluded	32	27.4
	Total	117	100.0
Challenge	Valid	87	74.7
	Excluded	30	25.6
	Total	117	100.0
Enable	Valid	86	73.5
	Excluded	31	26.5
	Total	117	100.0
Encourage	Valid	87	74.7
	Excluded	30	25.6
	Total	117	100.0

Table 12
 Chronbach's Alpha Reliability Statistics for LPI Variables

Variable	Chronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
Model	.65	.68	6
Inspire	.82	.82	6
Challenge	.78	.77	6
Enable	.61	.63	6
Encourage	.85	.86	6

Table 13
 Chronbach's Alpha Inter-Item Correlation Matrix for LPI Variables

	Model	Inspire	Challenge	Enable	Encourage
Model	1	.51	.56	.67	.63
Inspire	.52	1	.75	.42	.45
Challenge	.59	.75	1	.53	.45
Enable	.67	.42	.53	1	.68
Encourage	.63	.45	.45	.68	1

Power Analysis

An online tool at the University of Iowa's web site (Lenth, R.) was utilized to test the strength of the results of this study. A power analysis result of .80 or higher would indicate that the sample size (n) was large enough to provide reliable results. With a sample size of 88, the power result was .47. To reach power of .80 a sample size of 194 would have been required. The power analysis was completed after the study was complete and should have been completed prior to the research so the researcher would have known how large a sample size was required to avoid hypothesis testing errors.

Principal Axis Factor Analysis

Principal axis factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted to assess the underlying structure for the thirty questions from Kouzes and Pozner's LPI survey. Five factors were requested based on the fact that there are five leadership practices in the LPI.

A principal axis factor analysis was conducted using each of the dependent variable for growth. For growing churches, the first factor showed a combination of ‘inspire’ and ‘challenge’ accounted for 29.3 percent of the variance. The second factor indicated ‘model’ accounted for 8.9 percent of the variance. The third factor indicated ‘encourage’ accounted for 7.4 percent of the variance. The fourth factor loaded heavily toward ‘inspire’ and accounted for 4.9 percent of the variance, and the fifth factor loaded heavily toward ‘challenge’ and accounted for 4.1 percent of the variance. These results suggest that pastors who both inspire a vision for their church members and challenge the process may be the ones leading growing churches. With tradition being a main component of many protestant churches, challenging the process could be difficult for many pastors as a normal way of leading their churches.

However, due to the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy results, the KMO test for growing churches is inadequate. The analysis for the growing churches produced a KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy score of .52, which is considered miserable. This means that none of the variables tested can be predictors for growth of a church. These results are recorded in Tables 14 and 15.

Table 14
KMO and Bartlett's Test for Growing Churches

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.52
	Approx. Chi-Square	814.82
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	435
	Sig.	.000

Table 15
Rotated Factor Matrix for Growing Churches - Variable Responses

	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
I appeal to others to share an exciting dream of the future	.83			.42	
I spend time and energy making certain that the people I work with adhere to the principles and standards we have agreed on	.71	.32			
I talk about future trends that will influence how our work gets done	.69				.35
I challenge people to try out new and innovative ways to do their work	.69	.33			.47
I describe a compelling image of what our future could be like	.67			.31	
I show others how their long-term interests can be realized by enlisting a common vision	.65			.50	
I search outside the normal boundaries of my organization for innovative ways to improve what we do	.56				
I make certain that we set achievable goals, make concrete plans, and establish measurable milestones for the projects and programs that we work on	.52	.44	.31		
I seek out challenging opportunities that test my own skills and abilities	.43				.32
I publically recognize people who exemplify commitment to shared value		.79	.33		
I give people a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work		.76			
I build consensus around a common set of values for running our organization		.71			
I find ways to celebrate accomplishments		.61			
I make sure that people are creatively rewarded for their contributions to the success of our projects	.45	.53			
I ensure that people grow in their jobs by learning new skills and developing themselves	.47	.48			
I ask for feedback on how my actions affect other people's performance		.47	.41		
I follow through on promises and commitments I make		.42			
I set a personal example of what I expect of others		.38			
I praise people for a job well done			.87		
I give members of the team lots of appreciation and support for their contributions			.83		
I make it a point to let people know about my confidence in their abilities			.70	.31	.42
I develop cooperative relationships among people I work with			.55		
I treat others with dignity and respect			.47		
I ask "What can we learn?" when things don't go as expected			.44		
I paint the "big picture" of what we aspire to accomplish				.76	
I am clear about my philosophy of leadership				.54	
I speak with genuine conviction about the higher meaning and purpose of our work			.37	.50	
I actively listen to diverse points of view	.30			.35	
I support the decisions people make on their own					.66
I experiment and take risks, even when there is a chance of failure					.45

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

- a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.
- b. Only cases for which GROWTH = 3 are used in the analysis phase.

Mann-Whitney U Test

Due to the fact that some of the variables are ordinal, a Mann-Whitney test was conducted via SPSS (v. 20), in place of an independent t-test, in order to determine if any of the independent variables had an effect on the dependent variable of growth. Growth and non-growth were the dependent variables and were indicated by the numbers '3' and '1', respectively. The results of the tests for significance and the Mann-Whitney tests are reported in Table 18 and 19, respectively. They show no significant correlation between any of the independent variables and the dependent variable of church growth.

Growing churches showed a slightly higher mean rank (45.93) than non-growing churches (42.93) when the pastor's age was compared ($U=900$, $p=.58$, $r=-.06$), which is a small effect size. Similarly, the growing churches showed a slightly higher mean rank (46.11) compared to non-growing churches (42.73) when ministry tenure was the independent variable ($U=892$, $p=.536$, $r=.07$), which is also a small effect size. Church tenure was the only demographic independent variable that showed a higher mean rank among non-growing churches (45.38) when compared to growing churches (43.70), ($U=929$, $p=.757$, $r=.03$), showing another small effect size. The mean rank was nearly the same when education was compared, with growing churches having a slightly higher mean rank (44.55) compared to non-growing churches (44.44), ($U=964$, $p=.982$, $r=.00$), the smallest possible effect size. The independent variable of 'model' was also nearly equal with growing churches (44.82) compared to non-growing churches (44.15), ($U=952$, $p=.903$, $r=.01$), another small effect size. Growing churches had a slightly higher mean rank (45.91) when compared to non-growing churches (42.95) when the independent variable 'inspire' was tested, ($U=901$, $p=.587$, $r=.06$), which is also considered a small effect size. The independent variable 'challenge' was the second of two

independent variables that had a higher mean rank in non-growing churches (45.11) than growing churches (43.95), ($U=941$, $p = .831$, $r = .02$). ‘Enable’ showed a mean rank in growing churches of (46.66) compared to non-growing churches (42.13), ($U= 867$, $p = .404$, $r = .09$), which also is considered a small effect size. Finally, the independent variable of ‘encourage’ had the largest mean rank difference between growing churches (47.03) compared to non-growing churches (41.73), ($U=850$, $p = .330$, $r = .10$). This had the largest effect size of all the variables, but is still considered small and not statistically significant. Therefore, none of the independent variables, when subjected to the Mann-Whitney Test, showed any statistically significant effect on church growth. It is noted that ‘encourage’ and ‘enable’ were at the threshold of showing significance, but are still not significant enough to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 16
Mann-Whitney Test Results (n = 88)

	Growth	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Age	Non-Growing	42	42.93	1803.00
	Growing	46	45.93	2113.00
Ministry Tenure	Non-Growing	42	42.74	1795.00
	Growing	46	46.11	2121.00
Church Tenure	Non-Growing	42	45.38	1906.00
	Growing	46	43.70	2010.00
Education	Non-Growing	42	44.44	1866.50
	Growing	46	44.55	2049.50
Model	Non-Growing	42	44.15	1854.50
	Growing	46	44.82	2061.50
Inspire	Non-Growing	42	42.95	1804.00
	Growing	46	45.91	2112.00
Challenge	Non-Growing	42	45.11	1894.50
	Growing	46	43.95	2021.50
Enable	Non-Growing	42	42.13	1769.50
	Growing	46	46.66	2146.50
Encourage	Non-Growing	42	41.73	1752.50
	Growing	46	47.03	2163.50

Binary Logistic Regression Test

After consolidating the two dependent variables negative growth and no growth into one variable, no growth, the dependent variables became dichotomous and as such required a Binary Logistic Regression be run to determine if any of the independent variables had an effect on church growth.

As with all other tests, the logistic regressions showed that none of the independent variables had any significant effect on church growth. Table 17 shows the results of the Binary Logistic Regression Test.

Table 17
Binary Logistic Regression Test Results (n = 88)

Variables in the Equation						
	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Age	.01	.03	.12	1	.73	1.01
MinistryTenure	.01	.03	.05	1	.83	1.01
ChurchTenure	-.03	.04	.74	1	.39	.97
Education	.12	.22	.30	1	.59	1.13
Model	-.24	.423	.31	1	.58	.79
Inspire	.31	.30	1.06	1	.30	1.36
Challenge	-.37	.29	1.59	1	.21	.69
Enable	.61	.567	1.15	1	.28	1.83
Encourage	.09	.32	.08	1	.78	1.09
Constant	-4.47	4.03	1.24	1	.27	.01

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: Age, MinistryTenure, ChurchTenure, Education, Model, Inspire, Challenge, Enable, Encourage.

To be able to identify any of the leadership practices or other independent variables as leading to church growth the statistical significance from the binary logistic regression test would have had to have been $> .05$. The results showed that none of the variables approached the statistical significance required to overturn the null hypothesis. In this test there were there leadership practices which began to show significance; Challenge the process at .21, Enable

other to act with a .28 and inspire a vision at .30. Further research would be required to determine if these leadership practices, when employed by pastors actually has an influence on church growth or not.

To further test the possibility that church tenure may have an effect on church growth, a Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted using the SPSS tool. The variable ‘education’ was included in this test because it was also considered to be ordinal. The Kruskal-Wallis test showed no statistical significance between the ordinal variables (church tenure and education) and the dependent variable (church growth percentage). With variables given significance at $< .05$, testing showed a result for church tenure of $p = .347$, which is not statistically significant.

Table 18
Kruskal-Wallis Test with ‘Church Change’ as the Grouping Variable

	Church Tenure	Education
Chi-Square	7.55	3.85
df	7	7
Asymp. Sig	.374	.797

Summary of the Quantitative Data Collection

The researcher utilized multiple other tests to determine if there was any possible correlation between the leadership practices of Kouzes and Pozner, and the growth of churches. The quantitative data collection and testing showed no statistical significance between any of the independent variables and the growth of these churches.

Data Collection – Qualitative

Seven interviews were conducted with pastors who indicated a willingness to participate in an interview to measure other factors that may or may not affect the growth of their churches. Two pastors from each of the three growth categories (declining, no change, growing) were interviewed via telephone. A seventh pastor with a growing church was interviewed in person

due to his proximity to the researcher. As stated earlier, the declining and no change categories were combined into a non-growth category for comparison with growing churches. Therefore, four pastors in the non-growth category were compared with the responses of three pastors in the growth category. Six interviews were conducted over the telephone; the seventh interview was conducted in person. All interviews were recorded.

The following four questions were asked to each pastor:

1. What external factors, those outside of your church, do you believe have had an influence on the growth or lack of growth of your church?
2. What internal factors, those inside the church, do you believe have had an influence on the growth or lack of growth of your church?
3. What about you do you believe has had an influence on the growth or lack of growth of your church?
4. Is there anything else you can think of that may have had an influence on the growth or lack of growth of your church?

The recordings were reviewed and key words were pulled from each participant. Those key words were then entered into the NVIVO 10 data analysis tool. Words were then analyzed in NVIVO 10 to determine patterns or usage in an effort to see if any of those words could lead to patterns concerning church growth. A chart of the key words entered into NVIVO 10 is shown in Appendix D. Figures 9 and 10 show the comparison of the word usage between pastors at growing churches compared to non-growing. Larger words in the figure indicate it was used more frequently.



Figure 9: NVIVO word frequency of pastors with growing churches.

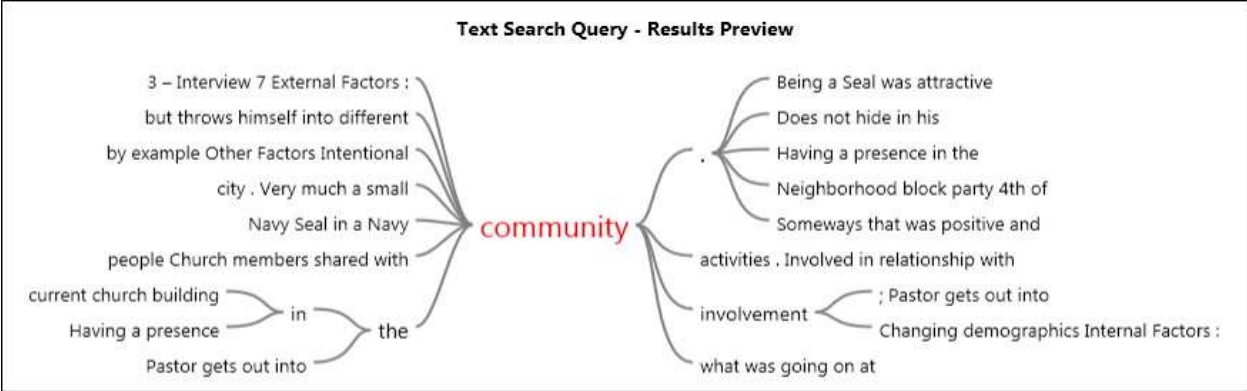


Figure 11: NVIVO text search query of ‘community’ from pastors at growing churches.

Figure 12 shows a positive relationship between the word ‘community’ and how the pastor sees the community. One pastor said, “It is about relationships and connecting with people.” Another pastor made this statement, “Church members shared with community what was going on at the church.” From the growing church pastors, it appears that when the church sees itself as an active part of the community, the church grows.

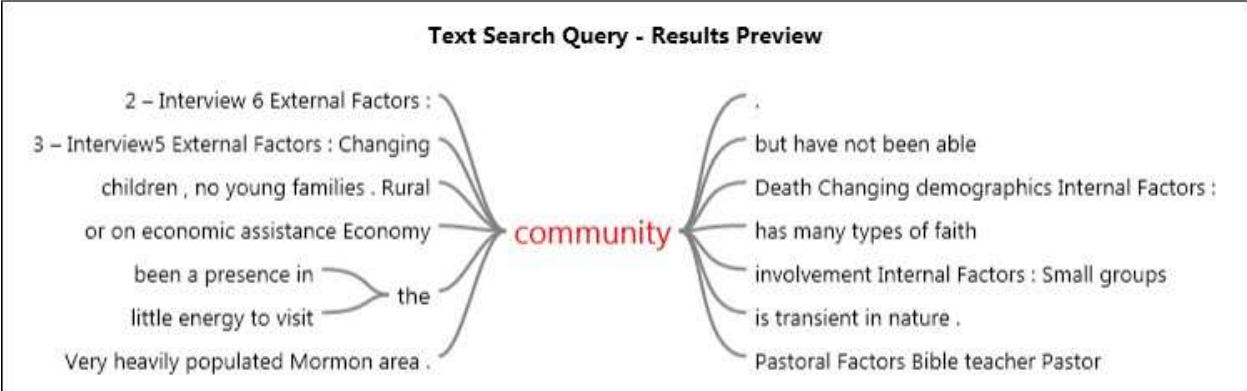


Figure 12: NVIVO text search query of ‘community’ from non-growing churches.

Figure 13 shows a negative relationship between the word ‘community’ and how the pastor at a non-growing church sees the community. It would appear that the non-growing church pastor sees the community as one of the reasons the church is not growing.

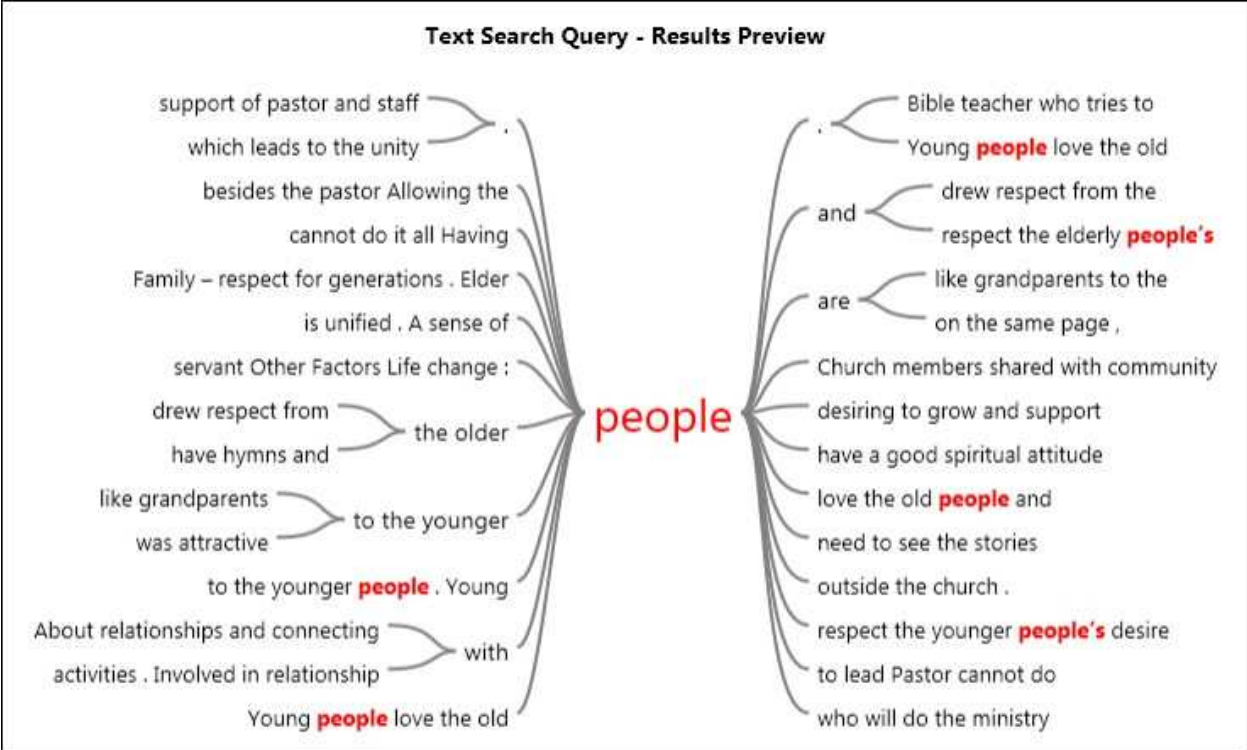


Figure 13: NVIVO text search query of ‘people’ from pastors at growing churches.

Likewise, reviewing text search query results for the word ‘people’ in growing churches shows a positive relationship to the pastor’s statements. When people love and support each other and the pastor, it appears to have a positive effect on the growth of the church. Compare this to the same search query from pastors with non-growing churches in Figure 14.

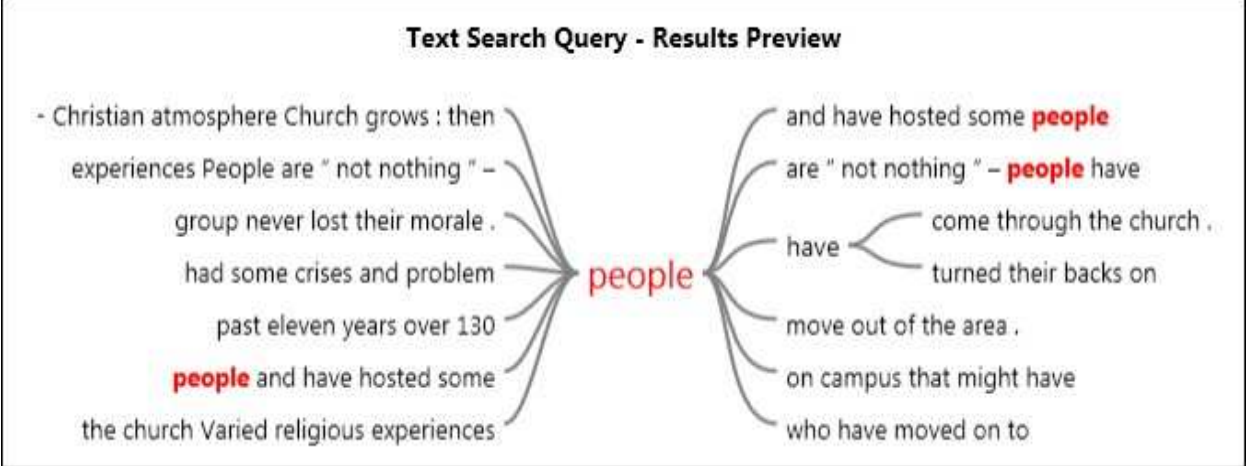


Figure 14: NVIVO text search query of ‘people’ from pastors at non-growing churches

The figure shows a negative relationship between the word ‘people’ to the pastor’s associations. These pastors believed that when people in the community have varied religious experiences or no religion at all, the church tends to have difficulty growing.

Reviewing the word ‘God’ showed the same pattern. Pastors at growing churches showed positive associations and the word (Figure 15). Whereas, pastors at non-growing churches had more negative associations (Figure 16). This seems to indicate that when God is central to the teachings of the churches, and pastors understand their relationship to God, churches grow. It is interesting that the only reference to God in the non-growing churches showed that the pastors believed people are not looking for God or they have turned their backs on God. Whereas, pastors from growing churches mentioned God more frequently and had more positive associations.

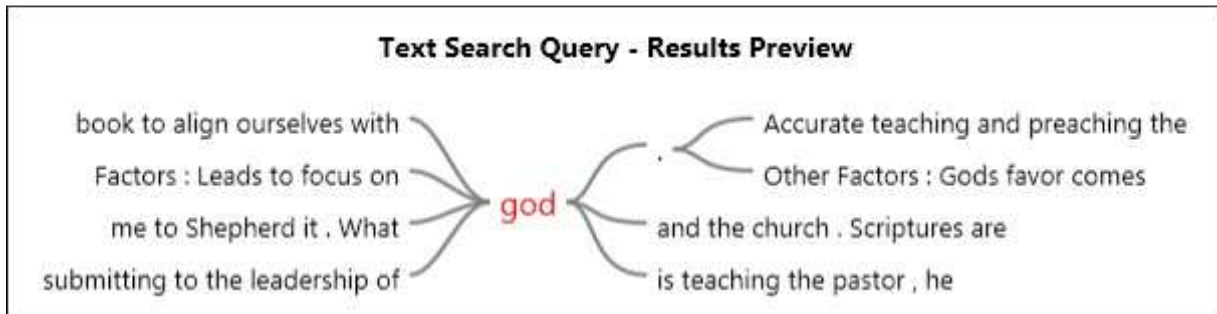


Figure 15: NVIVO text search query of ‘God’ from pastors at growing churches.

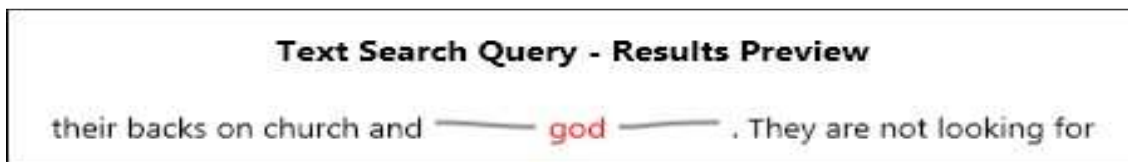


Figure 16: NVIVO text search query of ‘God’ from pastors at non-growing churches.

Two additional text search queries showed interesting results that could contribute to this study. Pastors of growing churches mentioned the word ‘leadership’ a number of times (Figure 17), and tended to make statements around humbleness and having strong relationships. Perhaps

tellingly, the word ‘leadership’ did not show up in the key word inventory of pastors at non-growing churches. Also, pastors of non-growing churches mentioned the economy as one of the reasons their churches were not growing (Figure 19). Pastors of growing churches, however, did not mention the word ‘economy’.



Figure 17: NVIVO text search query of ‘leadership’ from pastors at growing churches.

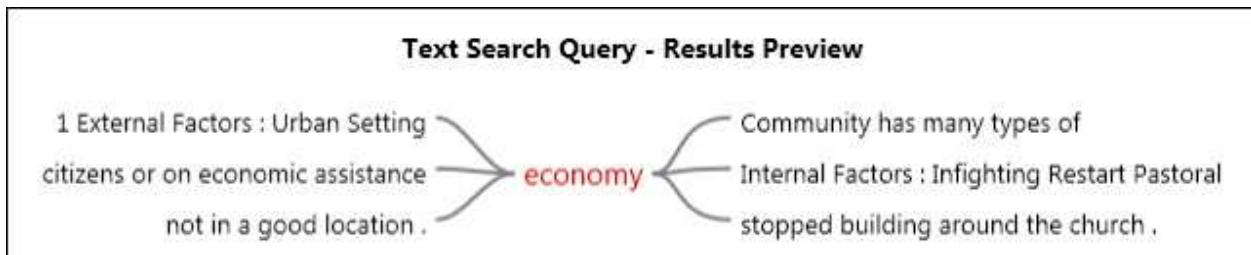


Figure 18: NVIVO text search query of ‘economy’ from pastors at non-growing churches.

Another interesting result that came from the qualitative interviews is that two of the four pastors at non-growing churches identified themselves as bivocational pastors, meaning that they also maintain full-time secular positions while pastoring their churches. Though not relevant for this study, the bivocational status of pastors and how that affects their overall effectiveness should be studied to see if there is any significant effect on the growth and or the effectiveness of churches.

Pastor Interview Highlights

The seven pastors who participated in the qualitative portion of this study were promised anonymity. Therefore, each pastor will be identified with a letter designation, A through G, in order to gain further depth of understanding into his responses. Pastors A, B, and C come from growing churches, while pastors D, E, F, and G are from non-growing churches.

Pastor A is 42 years old, with eight years of ministry experience. He pastored his church during the entire five-year period covered in the study. When asked about the external factors affecting the growth of his church, he said, “We moved from a school building to our current building on a corner in a densely populated area, and that I think made a big difference, having a definite presence in the community.” Regarding if there was anything about him that affected the church growth, he responded in this paradoxical way, “It is 100 percent about me, and 100 percent not about me. Here is why. God is using this church to teach me about being a leader.” In other words, this pastor recognized that his leadership was key to the church's growth, but he believed that due to the spiritual nature of his work and because God was the "real pastor," all of the glory for the results should be given to God not to him.

Pastor B is 37 years old and has seven years of ministry, all at his current church. Pastor B leads the church that had the most growth in this study. The church experienced a tenfold expansion of membership over the five-year period. He spoke of connecting where he could connect, and developing relationships in the community. He said:

Trying to throw myself into different things over time, like serving on the community cemetery board to serving on Kiwanis; I am a sheriff's chaplain....I really have tried to involve myself with relationships with those outside the church. By being intentionally out in the community I have built relationships with a lot of people in town.

Pastor C is 58 years old and has seven years ministry experience, all at his current church. He said that demographic changes around his church were a positive because the church

embraced the changes. He said, “It is always a challenge of leadership to get the members to adjust and finds ways to connect with a changing community.” Pastor C explained that there is unity in the leadership of his church from lay leaders to the ministry staff and this unity is important, “People on the same page, spiritually, relationally and missionally is definitely essential.”

Among the non-growing churches, Pastor D is 55 years old and has 33 years of ministry experience. Pastor D was at the church under review for two years of the five-year period and continues to pastor that church. When asked about the external factors leading to the membership decline, he said, “The urban setting and the economy” were two of the major external factors leading to decline. Regarding internal factors, he said, “This is a restart of a church and there had been infighting and some difficulty with the previous pastor.” When asked “What about you has had an influence on the growth of your church?” he stated, “A renewed vision, positively, a renewed vision of what the church can accomplish and the hope that the church did have a reason to in fact keep the doors open.” He said other factors affecting the lack of growth in the church were:

The area around the church that I am in there is a cynicism about church, and there is a lot of spiritual, um, people will tell you they are spiritual but not religious, they have a varied religious experience, going from one denomination to another, so there is a mixture of doctrine and beliefs, and or else there are just “not nothing” [i.e., no church background], they have turned their back on church and on God. They are not looking for spiritual answers; they are not looking for the church to add anything of value to their lives.

Pastor E, is 41 years old, with 22 years of ministry experience. He pastored his non-growth church for the five years of the study. Some of the problems he mentioned were, “We are in a terrible location...whenever anybody in the area asks where the church is, you give them the address, they ask where the heck is that.” He also said, “We live in a very depressed area

where people are um, the majority of our population is retired senior citizens who have come into the area to quit, or they are people who are basically on some kind of assistance.”

Pastor F is 57 years old, with 37 years of ministry experience, and has been with his church for 16 years. When asked about external factors affecting the growth of his church, his response was:

Our story has been one of decline for a number of years, the fact that it has to do with the changing community that we decided to embrace. In embracing that we were turning our backs on some of the programmatic things that have been traditional in Southern Baptist life. I think that in some ways we became a little less attractive to our more stable families.... We had a number of deaths over the years.

Pastor F talked about sharing his campus with other ministries, which spoke about growth perhaps being measured in other ways, then he spoke about the membership of the Southern Baptist churches on the campus, “We have been very effective in the community and very engaged in the community; however, our ability to effect growth in our core group has not been that strong.” He also stated:

The fact that we have four or five hundred people on campus, though our core group has grown to about 20, is because we have had to reimagine it, we have had to think that God has placed us as stewards of this property and nobody else I have brought onto the property has a full grasp of God’s vision for this property. It is a mission center and a place for birthing new churches, encouraging young churches and creating new ministries, we just have a lot of people every day except Monday. Every weekend we have four to five hundred people worshipping but they are not our core group. I have become the campus pastor and a pastor to the other pastors meeting on our campus. We have four established churches and two that are just getting started.

Pastor G, is 57 years old and has seven years of experience. He pastored his church for all five years of this study. Regarding external factors, Pastor G spoke of community as well, he said, “How much you can make the church known within the community by doing community projects, to make people realize that you are there and what you are doing for the community.” He spoke of intentional bible teaching, taking people deep into the bible in small groups, as

having a positive effect on the growth of his church as well. He suggested that the community involvement and intentional bible study were positives in his congregation, and may have kept the church from declining in numbers. His church was one of the no-growth churches that was defined as stagnant. Pastor G discussed being bivocational, having a full-time job while also being a pastor, and he attributed that status as having a negative effect on his church growth efforts. He also mentioned that the location of his church is not conducive to growth. He said construction of new homes ceased during the study period due to the economy.

Summary of Qualitative Results

The pastoral interviews provided rich qualitative data. Unfortunately, the sample size was very small, with only seven pastors being interviewed, which make overall conclusions about the sample population not possible. Four of the pastors were leading non-growing churches; the other three were leading churches with a growth rate of five percent or more compared to the communities they were located within.

The results of these interviews showed that how pastors looked at the community was a great factor in whether the church grew or not. Pastors of growing churches tended to see their communities as opportunities for service, while the pastors of non-growing churches blamed the community for their lack of growth. The three pastors of growing churches, and one from a non-growing church, spoke of being intentional in reaching out and meeting community needs, while at the same time ensuring that the community knew the church was a resource.

The pastors of the growing churches exhibited a humility that was either not mentioned or not evident in the interviews of the pastors from non-growing churches. This is supported by the literature review, which also suggested that humility is a characteristic of Christian leaders who are held in high esteem by the Christian community. Pastors of growing churches also

mentioned their dependence on God and the centrality of God and the Bible in the teachings of their churches.

Null Hypotheses Results

The general research question for this study was: What is the relationship, if any, between senior pastor leadership characteristics as measured by the LPI and the growth of his church?

This was tested by the following null hypotheses:

H₀₁. There is no significant difference in positive church growth when any of the leadership practices, as defined by Kouzes and Pozner's Leadership Practices are the dominate leadership practice as reported by the pastor.

H₀₂ There is no significant difference in positive church growth when any of the demographic data collected about the pastor, his age, his tenure at his church, his tenure in ministry or his education level increases.

H₀₃. There are no other factors outside the pastor's leadership style that has an effect on church growth

None of these null hypotheses could be rejected from the quantitative results. However, some interesting insights were gained, such as the following. The leadership practice 'challenge the process' was the least prominent among all of the pastors' self-reported leadership practices. Additionally, though not statistically significant, 87 percent of pastors with growing churches had a master's degree or doctorate, while only 79 percent of pastors at non-growing churches had achieved the same educational level. While H₂ could not be rejected quantitatively, based on the results of the qualitative interviews, how the pastor views his church's place in the community in which it exists has a significant impact on church growth. The view the pastor has of himself

and the centrality of biblical teaching also had an impact on church growth. Therefore, the H_{03} null hypothesis is rejected after qualitative analysis.

Additionally, Figure 19 shows significant growth when the pastor has been at a church between five and ten years, and then a drop-off of growth after year eleven. All results, positive and negative growth rates were combined and averaged out and showed that in this study the pastors who were at their churches between five and ten years had an average of 197% growth, while pastors who were leading their churches for more than ten years could expect much less growth. While this result does not have statistical significance between church tenure and church growth, it is still interesting that church growth leveled off after the eleven-year tenure point and could merit further research.

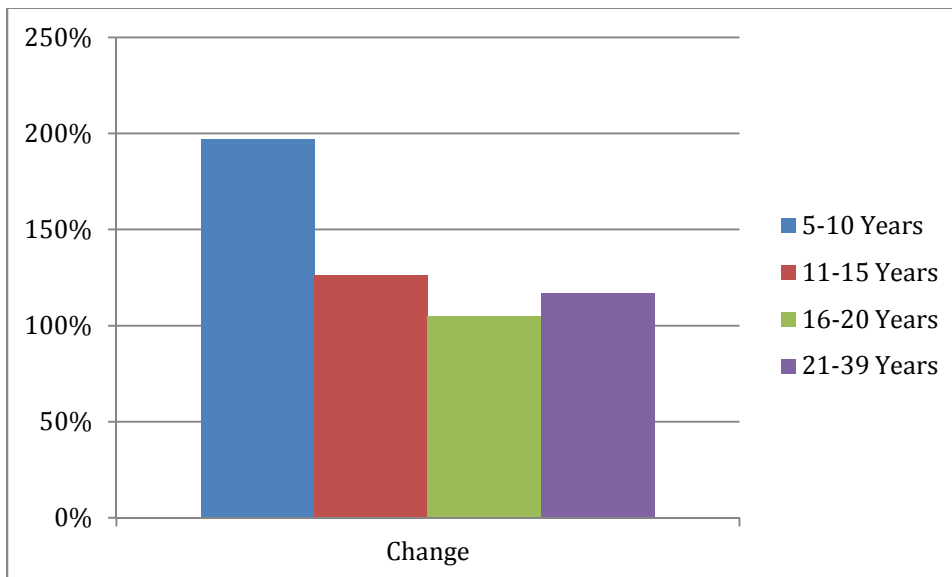


Figure 19: Relationship between pastor's tenure and percentage of church growth.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY

This study was inspired by a luncheon the researcher had with Dr. John MacArthur, pastor of Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, California, and founder and president of The Master's Seminary also in Sun Valley. He planted the thought that if a pastor's education level increased, then perhaps his level of effectiveness would increase. The only known quantitative data to show pastoral effectiveness is church growth. Other measures may be possible, such as spiritual growth of church members or the influence of the church on the lives of individuals or the community as a whole, but those concepts would be difficult to quantify.

Further inspiration was provided by the Rev. H.B. London, then a pastor to pastors at Focus on the Family, a Christian ministry located in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Rev. London suggested that the longer a pastor stayed at his church, the more effective he became in ministry. The research began with these two ideas, and a desire to help pastors become more effective in their ministries.

Interestingly, neither the pastor's education level nor how long he stayed at his church appeared to have any effect on his church's growth in this study.

Summary

The leadership practices inventory developed by Kouses and Pozner has been utilized thousands of times since its inception and was also used as the instrument here. In this study, no statistically significant findings showed that any of the five leadership practices identified by Kouses and Posner had any effect on the growth of Southern Baptist Churches in the Western United States.

In the abstract of Stovall (2001), she suggested that church growth is a multivariate issue and therefore could not be accounted for by a single cause, e.g., pastoral leadership styles. King (2007) found, “Organizational growth and development are the products of a myriad of complex, inter-related factors” (p.86). Additionally, Carter (2009) said, “Identifying variables that contribute to pastoral effectiveness is challenging because things such as leadership style, personality, ability to preach a good sermon, knack for increasing membership and revenue, and interpersonal skills seemingly all play an important role” (p. 261). Carter also reported what could be the greatest problem researchers will have when attempting to study leadership in the church, “Leadership theories are useful in understanding the complexity of evaluating leadership effectiveness. However, when examining pastoral leader effectiveness, spirituality must also be considered” (2009, p. 263).

This study seems to support Stovall, King, and Carter’s statements, finding causes for church growth are apparently far more complex than simply finding one (or several) effective leadership style. However, from the qualitative findings this study did find that pastors of growing churches see their churches as active members of the community. They also see their role being the ‘under shepherd’, while allowing God to be the shepherd of that local flock. These findings support the literature review; the most effective pastors are humble, spiritual men.

Limitations and Observations

This study had several issues and problems. First, the population size was over 3,400 pastors, but only 131 responded to the survey. This low number is not a good representation of the population, and therefore, further research with a larger sample size should be conducted that would be a more representative cross section of Western States Southern Baptist pastors. Because research was begun with the assistance of Southern Baptist State Executive Directors, it

was expected that more pastors would participate. The researcher is thankful for the assistance provided and wishes to thank each state denomination executive director directly for his assistance. However, higher participation numbers would have raised the study's validity.

One of the reasons for the low participation was that survey participation was only requested from pastors who had known email addresses. This reduced the possible survey respondents by nearly half. To the researcher's knowledge, this is the first study of protestant pastors to be completed entirely electronically. Hindsight shows this most likely had a negative impact on the study because it left many potential participants out of the process.

Another important limitation was the reliability of the self-reported data. It is likely that pastors were inconsistent with their self-scores, thereby, limiting the data's usefulness. This problem will be elaborated on in the recommendations for future research section.

Despite the limitations, several interesting observations were made. The study showed that the leadership practice of "challenge the process" was the least evident among responding pastors. With an average reported score of 7.6 out of 10, in both growing churches and non-growing churches, this leadership practice was far behind the other practices. This raises the question: do pastors simply prefer the status-quo or do they fear that if they challenge the way things have been done for a long time that they could lose their job?

Further, while looking at church tenure and growth, another interesting fact was seen. After the eleventh year on the job, both in growing and non-growing churches, growth numbers nearly flat lined. In other words, after eleven years leading a church, the pastor could expect to see either the growth of his church to level off, or if he was leading a declining church, he could expect to see the decline level off as well. While it is far from clear why this is the case, it should be explored in future studies to see if it is found again or if this was just an anomaly

among this research group. If it is found again, investigating this phenomenon could greatly help Southern Baptist preachers and church growth. It may also be related to the question posed above.

Conclusions

The overall purpose of the study was to determine what leadership attributes pastors exhibit that positively affects the growth of Southern Baptist Churches in the Western United States, and to make recommendations to Southern Baptist leadership to help pastors become more effective leaders in their churches. This research focused on the pastor and his role in church growth. It looked specifically at the pastor's leadership traits as defined in the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) developed by Kouzes and Posner (2003).

A pragmatic approach was taken for the research project. Creswell (2009) suggested that the pragmatic worldview fits the mixed-methods research model because research completed under the pragmatic worldview allows "researchers [to] emphasize the research problem and use all approaches available to understand the problem (see Rossman & Wilson, 1985)" (p. 10).

While the quantitative data did not allow for rejecting any of the null hypotheses, the qualitative portion of the study showed that pastors who are leading growing churches are intentionally active in their communities and make God the central teaching theme of their churches. This study, while not providing definitive conclusions, has added to the existing research concerning church growth, and especially the pastor's role in the growth of his church as stated in the previous sentence. These results support the notion that the phenomenon under review is complex and likely has a number of inter-related factors. This study confirms the need for future research and also contributes to future researchers by showing what parts of the methodology were, and were not, successful.

Implications for Denominational Leadership

The results of this study are not concrete; however, they suggest that pastors should remember that the church belongs to God, and the church should be an active, welcome member of their communities. The results suggest that training should be provided to pastors on how to be intentional in reaching into their communities. Being intentional in the community, or becoming an active part of the community, was the leadership attribute that seemed to be the number one reason churches are growing. Theodore Roosevelt reportedly said, “Nobody cares how much you know until they know how much you care” (Brainy Quotes, n.d.). This appears to be true for churches as well; in other words, being in the community is showing the community that the church cares, thus drawing community members into the church. A second reminder that God and the Bible should be the central themes of Southern Baptist churches may also help keep some pastors on track and help their churches to grow.

Southern Baptist Denominational leadership may want to look at how success is measured in churches. For this study, church growth was that measurement because it is a quantifiable measure. This researcher suggests that instead of numerical growth there are other ways to measure pastoral success as well as church success, though these are not quantifiable measurements. The effectiveness of churches should be measured by how many lives have been changed because the church exists and how much spiritual growth has occurred within the membership of the church.

Recommendations for Further Studies

King (2007) said:

There has been considerable research and theorization concerning the effects of leadership on organizations. A small subset of the research considers not-for-profit organizations and a still smaller subset considers churches. These prior church-related

studies.....have not been able to consistently solidify a theory of leadership and the presumably desirable outcomes of larger, growing churches. (p. 7)

While this study attempted to accomplish this goal, it was also unable to solidify a theory of leadership related to growing churches. However, several important lessons were learned and recommendations can be made for future research. First, future studies should be completed without relying on self-reporting. For example, the pastor with the largest decline in his church membership, who lost seventy-five percent of his membership over the five-year period, answered all of the questions as either nine or ten, which are the best possible answers. His average answer scored a 9.43 out of ten. On the other end of the spectrum, the pastor with 1,000 percent growth had average answers of 7.2 out of ten. It is possible that one could exhibit all five of the leadership practices to a nearly perfect ten and still lose that many church members, but the probability of that happening should be questioned. The pastor with 1,000 percent growth showed humility and self-scored lowly. Therefore, with self-reported scores, humbleness, which seems to be one of the leadership qualities of great protestant leaders of today, likely corrupts the reliability of leadership data scores. Perhaps contradictorily, the best leaders may rate themselves as the worst leaders.

Due to the obvious self-perception problems stated above on both sides of the spectrum, it is recommended that the same survey tool be utilized; however, the respondents should be the pastor and other senior leadership at the church. All respondents would evaluate the pastor's leadership practices, and the results could be analyzed together and separately, analyzing the pastor's responses against the responses of his key staff members or volunteer leaders.

A replication of this study is highly recommended to the Western States Baptist Convention leadership. This study should be financed by the state conventions and utilize the postal service rather than email and include the additional recommendations to raise validity. Subsequent

studies across the United States, within the Southern Baptist Convention, is recommended and may show regional differences. Similar studies in other denominations are suggested as well.

Several additional future research possibilities have been raised from this study. In particular, studies should be designed to look at why church membership numbers leveled-off after the eleventh year of a pastor's ministry. Other studies could look at why "challenge the process" is by far the lowest leadership practice reported by pastors, but one of the leadership practices which shows potential as being a factor leading to church growth. Finding answers to either would significantly help the understanding of pastor leadership and church growth in Southern Baptist churches. Though not relevant for this study, the bivocational status of pastors and how that affects their overall effectiveness should be studied to see if there is any significant effect on the growth and or the effectiveness of churches.

In hindsight, more time and energy should have been spent on the qualitative portion of this study. The interviews completed with the willing pastors were rich with information, and much more information could have been gleaned if the number of interviews were doubled or tripled.

This researcher echos the words of McKenna and Eckard (2009) when they wrote:

The fact remains that as church organizations grow, even to a modest level, the need for organizational structures for volunteers, staff hiring, pastoral accountability, and congregational health becomes impossible to ignore. While effectiveness for the sake of effectiveness may not be the goal, a clearly stated mission, and clear statements and resource allocation provides pastors, staff, and congregational members the necessary accountability and motivation, feelings of integrity and trust in the church, and a means by which to make future decisions. The fact is that churches, like other organizations, are often challenged in making these criteria explicit. While church boards, denominations, and pastors have these effectiveness measures in mind, an open process of identifying and prioritizing them is a necessary first step and ongoing process. An annual assessment of the core priorities and their associated activities maintains a natural connection between the ministry of the church and the delivery of that ministry. (p. 312)

Churches are organizations, and like all other organizations, they require leadership. The leadership problems in Southern Baptist churches may be compounded because of the spiritual nature of being a pastor, like Carter (2009) suggested. The problems may also stem from not having enough leadership training in bible colleges and seminaries, as suggested by Cohall and Cooper (2010). Like the multivariate nature of church growth (Stovall, 2001), it is suggested that church leadership has its own multivariate nature and requires much more study.

This study has added to the research concerning how pastoral leadership attributes effect the growth of their churches. This study may have concluded with an important negative result, that being that there is no one specific leadership practice which can be attributed to church growth. While the study has added to the knowledge base, more needs to be done. While remembering the statement of Dr. Thom Rainer, a Southern Baptist Seminary Professor, “there is little doubt that leadership in general and pastoral leadership in particular is a major factor in the church growth process” (Rainer, 1993, p. 185), let us all be encouraged to study church leadership to find out exactly the pastoral attributes that lead to effective, growing churches.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS USED ON THE LEADERSHIP PRACTICES INVENTORY

The ten point Likert scale values:

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1: Almost Never | 6: Sometimes |
| 2: Very Rarely | 7: Fairly Often |
| 3: Almost Seldom | 8: Usually |
| 4: Once in a while | 9: Frequently |
| 5: Occasionally | 10: Always |

Questions:

1. I set a personal example of what I expect of others
2. I talk about future trends that will influence how our work gets done
3. I seek out challenging opportunities that test my own skills and abilities
4. I develop cooperative relationships among people I work with.
5. I praise people for a job well done.
6. I spend time and energy making certain that the people I work with adhere to the principles and standards we have agreed on.
7. I describe a compelling image of what our future could be like.
8. I challenge people to try out new and innovative ways to do their work.
9. I actively listen to diverse points of view.
10. I make it a point to let people know about my confidence in their abilities.
11. I follow through on promises and commitments I make.
12. I appeal to others to share an exciting dream of the future.
13. I search outside the normal boundaries of my organization for innovative ways to improve what we do.
14. I treat others with dignity and respect
15. I make sure that people are creatively rewarded for their contributions to the success of our projects.

16. I ask for feedback on how my actions affect other people's performance.
17. I show others how their long-term interests can be realized by enlisting a common vision
18. I ask "What can we learn?" when things don't go as expected.
19. I support the decisions people make on their own.
20. I publically recognize people who exemplify commitment to shared values.
21. I build consensus around a common set of values for running our organization.
22. I paint the "big picture" of what we aspire to accomplish.
23. I make certain that we set achievable goals, make concrete plans, and establish measurable milestones for the projects and programs that we work on.
24. I give people a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work.
25. I find ways to celebrate accomplishments
26. I am clear about my philosophy of leadership
27. I speak with genuine conviction about the higher meaning and purpose of our work.
28. I experiment and take risks, even when there is a chance of failure.
29. I ensure that people grow in their jobs by learning new skills and developing themselves.
30. I give members of the team lots of appreciation and support for their contributions.

The following is a list of Question Numbers and the variable they relate to

1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26	Model the Way
2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27	Inspire a Shared Vision
3, 8,, 13, 18, 23, 28	Challenge the process
4, 9,14, 19, 24, 29	Enable others to act
5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30	Encourage the Heart

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONS USED FOR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

1. What external factors, those outside of your church, do you believe have had an influence on the growth or lack of growth of your church?
2. What internal factors, those inside the church, do you believe have had an influence on the growth or lack of growth of your church?
3. What about you do you believe has had an influence on the growth or lack of growth of your church?
4. Would there be anything else you can think of that may have had an influence on the growth or lack of growth of your church?

APPENDIX C

PERMISSION TO USE LPI

Henry Luckel
6555 Roubideau Creek Way
Colorado Springs, CO 80923

Dear Mr. Luckel:

Thank you for your request to use the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) in your dissertation. We are willing to allow you to **reproduce** the instrument in written form, as outlined in your request, at no charge. If you prefer to use our electronic distribution of the LPI (vs. making copies of the print materials) you will need to separately contact Lisa Shannon (lshannon@wiley.com) directly for instructions and payment. Permission to use either the written or electronic versions requires the following agreement:

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If the terms outlined above are acceptable, would you indicate so by signing one (1) copy of this letter and returning it to me either via email or by post to; 1548 Camino Monde San Jose, CA 95125. Best wishes for every success with your research project.

Cordially,

Ellen Peterson
Permissions Editor
Epeterston4@gmail.com

I understand and agree to abide by these conditions:

(Signed) _____ Date: 24 OCT 2011

Expected Date of Completion is: 20 APR 2012

APPENDIX D

KEY WORD CHART

Cat	External	Internal	Pastoral	Other
1	Urban Setting	Core group never lost their morale. People who have moved on to other churches stay in touch.	Pastor decided to reclaim his health. Renewed energy	Have been a presence in the community but have not been able to turn that into church growth
1	Economy	Not much internal conflict.	Always worked hard, but not always worked smart	Re-imagined their existence
1	Changing community	Have had some crises and problem people and have hosted some people on campus that might have affected the mood of the church. We live on the edge. Hosted 20 recovering addicts at one time who had been evicted and needed place.	Renewed vision for the church	Sharring their property
1	Death	Infighting		Birthing new churches
1	Changing demographics	Restart		Anti-Church attitude from those around the church Varied religious experiences

2	Terrible location: address is not recognizable	Started in 1977	Preaches expository, going through the bible book by book	Pastor has missed opportunities to provide proper leadership
2	Locals are retired senior citizens or on economic assistance	One time a very active church	Believes that may limit his growth because he is in Las Vegas where the “show” seems to be important	Pastor is bi- vocational and has very little energy to visit the community.
2	Economy	Nice facility; seats 120. Not facility, but almost 20 years ago the church went through a negative time with a very negative combative pastor	Not bending to the show mentality.	Location is not in a good location
2	Community has many types of faith groups	Went through a period where pastors were there for one to three years	Bivocational pastor believes being Bivocational limits the growth somewhat	Economy stopped building around the church
2	Anti-Government atmosphere	When current pastor took over most of the church were senior citizens	Bible teacher	Very heavily populated Mormon area.
2	Anti-Christian atmosphere	No children, no young families	Pastor has boundaries – he is there to be pastor, teacher, and preacher	Community is transient in nature

2	Church grows: then people move out of the area. In past eleven years over 130 people have come through the church. Fluid environment.	Rural community	His job is to equip the church members to do their ministries Assists helps and encourage – not his job to do all the ministries of the church.
2	Community involvement	Small groups which are bible centered where bible is taught. Deep level Bible Study.	
3	Relocation from school building to the current church building in the community	Personality and relationships	My leadership has everything to do with the church's success and absolutely nothing to do with it. Life change: people need to see the stories of transformation in people's lives.
3	Having a presence in the community	Strong committed leadership besides the pastor	This is God's church and He has chosen me to Shepherd it. Intentional community involvement; Pastor gets out into the community. Does not hide in his office but throws himself into different community activities. Involved in relationship with people outside the church.

3	Neighborhood block party	Allowing the people to lead	What God is teaching the pastor, he is passing on to the church.	Gods favor comes on those who lead with an attitude of trust in Him.
3	4 th of July party with fire truck from local fire station	Pastor cannot do it all	Pastor is a humble servant	
3	Suburb of larger city. Very much a small community. Some ways that was positive and some ways it was negative.	Having people who will do the ministry without regard to the paycheck	Pastor is a former Navy Seal in a Navy community. Being a Seal was attractive to the younger people and drew respect from the older people. Bible teacher who tries to make the bible three dimensional and relevant to the congregation. Emphasis on bible teaching.	
3	About relationships and connecting with people	Celebrating the wins		
3	Church members shared with community what was going on at the church	Our church also houses a school. Our church provided over 10% of the school supplies for the students.	Pastor leads by example	

3	Community involvement	We provided Thanksgiving for thirty families which would not have had Thanksgiving dinner had we not showed up.	Leads to focus on God and the church. Scriptures are the text book to align ourselves with God. Accurate teaching and preaching the Bible.
3	Changing demographics	Church was poised, 7 acres of land, newer building	Ministers through the personal interactions of the staff and lay leadership. Leads by example
3		Church knew that the reality they were going to have to close the doors hit the members; gave pastor the latitude to run and do as he saw fit. Pastor become the leader and was granted the authority to lead.	Pastor is humble servant, submitting to the leadership of God.
3		Restart	
3		Family – respect for generations. Elder people are like grandparents to the younger people.	

3

Young people love the old people and respect the elderly people's desire to have hymns and the older people respect the younger people's desire for contemporary music

3

Lay leadership is unified. A sense of people desiring to grow and support of pastor and staff.

3

People have a good spiritual attitude which leads to the unity. People are on the same page, spiritually, relationally and missionally.