LEADERSHIP STYLE AND ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH:
A CORRELATIONAL STUDY

by

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This research project explored the dynamic relationship between leadership style and organizational achievement in an ecclesiastical setting. The correlation between transformational leadership and growth within an organization has been proven in various industries, including government, education, and manufacturing, and it impacts constituent satisfaction, work effort, and performance. The correlation has not been explored in ecclesiastical communities above the individual congregational level. The ecclesiastical organization chosen for the research was the Church of the Nazarene, and the study specifically focused on the midlevel leaders that oversee the 80 geographical districts that encompass North America. Sixty-four district superintendents completed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Form 5X-Short (MLQ) that determined their perceived leadership styles; their scores were then compared to the growth statistics for their individual districts. The design of the research included using Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) and controlling for both time and population so that any correlation between leadership style and district growth could be elucidated. The resulting data showed that there was a positive correlation between perceived transformational leadership style and organizational growth. This correlation can inform the executive leadership of the organization under study concerning the recruitment, placement, and
development of district leaders. While these findings have not yet been proven to be causal, they should be informative to all enterprises that are interested in developing a participatory leadership style.
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother,

who left me too soon.

And yet,

she is with me each day

in the memory of her last smile.

She will always be

my inspiration.


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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The ecclesiastical world today continues to undergo seismic changes. As the world’s culture, technology, and knowledge morph, it is imperative that the Church (the universal body of Christians) continue to adjust, be relevant in its teaching, and support processes that enable personal, organizational, and societal transformation. All of this is necessary if the Christian denomination being studied, the Church of the Nazarene (COTN; also known as the Nazarene church), is to remain true to its mission of making Christlike disciples in the nations (Board of General Superintendents, 2011).

While cultural change has been present and is increasing with time (Heylighen, 2007; Kurzweil, 2001), there has been an astounding amount of cultural transformation just in the last five decades. Beginning with the sexual revolution in the 1960s, monumental cultural, technological, and societal changes have occurred. The Cultural Revolution, epitomized by the hippie movement in the 1960s, shocked the traditional church’s value system and questioned its authority. The Cuban missile crisis in 1962 brought deep anxieties that caused the Church to rethink its role and theological positions (Schloesser, 2006). Then in the mid-1960s, the cover of Time magazine picked up the words of Friedrich Nietzsche, a German philosopher, and boldly proclaimed the death of God (Elson, 1966). The 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s brought the questioning of behaviors
that had long disenfranchised African Americans, women, Native Americans, and Hispanic Americans (USA.org, 2011). The changes to laws and traditions defied values formerly held sacred and taught in the home, at school, and even by the government. The turn of the century introduced the horrors of 9/11 and forever changed the naivety of Americans. In 2006, at the first International Cross-Cultural Conference of Theological Ethicists, Antonio Papisca, then United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Chair of Human Rights, said,

> The grave dangers of the present hour include infinite war, permanent political destabilization in many regions of the world, the praxis of falsehood and cynicism, the insolent violation of the rule of law, homicidal and suicidal terrorism, the impudent practice of torture, indifference and even contempt vis-à-vis the poor, the destruction of the natural environment, and the deployment of dehumanizing biotechnologies. (as quoted in Keenan, 2008, p. 126)

In more recent days, the scandals associated with Wall Street and ecclesiastical hierarchies have continued the erosion of trust in American institutions, corporate executives, and ecclesiastical leaders. Even as this research was conducted, mobs of disenfranchised Americans were storming Wall Street, demanding change in the status quo by modifying systems, structures, and accountability (Tharoor & Rawlings, 2011). These crises and many more require a Church that is relevant to speak in ways that transform people and societies.

Over the past sixty years, the Church, with its message of love, forgiveness, hope, and transformation, has begun to doubt its ability to cope with change and provide a consistent set of values that transcends an ever-transforming culture. Some have
intimated that the Church has lost sight of its calling to raise people up, see them as they could be, and provide a community where all can be loved, challenged, enabled, empowered, trained, and even transformed (Keenan, 2008). Others have gone so far as to imply that the Church has an identity crisis, and its leaders have become fearful and sequestered inside the walls of their elegant buildings (Ross, 2008; Stone, 2003). True or not, the research shows that church attendance in mainline denominations in the United States and Canada is either declining or at least not keeping pace with the population growth (Barna, 2009; Hartford Institute, 2006; Kwon, 2009; Newport, 2010). This research study did not explore all of the causes and implications of these monumental changes; however, this empirical study did determine that the recent research concerning leadership styles, particularly transformational leadership, can be correlated with some organizational measures of growth in an ecclesiastical setting.

**Constructing the Problem**

Given the environment of fear and the retrenchment into the four walls of the church building, is it any wonder that the Church has an identity crisis? The Church is no longer leading but has become paranoid, anemic, and, some would say, irrelevant (Baldwin, 2009; Burkett & White, 1974; Lowndes, 2004). In this constantly changing social climate, Church leaders have not provided adequate foresight, have not created an environment conducive to growth, have not used appropriate collaborative processes, and have not set an example in such a way that the Church can provide appropriate guidance to enable its constituents to envision or create a meaningful future. Specifically, in the COTN many of the midlevel leaders, referred to as district superintendents (DSs), are
relying on mental models that they were taught in Bible college or seminary 30 years ago or that they learned by copying mentors who based their approach on the success dealing with the culture of 50 to 60 years ago.

The prevalent mental model used in ecclesiastical settings today is defined in research as a transactional style of leadership. Bass and Bass (2008) described this style:

Contingent reinforcement occurs when leaders arrange for followers to be praised, commended, or rewarded materially for successfully carrying out agreed upon assignments – or to be reproved, reprimanded, or disciplined for failure to do so. Responsiveness by followers to a leader is heightened by their expectation that satisfactory performance will be rewarded and unsatisfactory performance will be punished materially, socially, or symbolically. (p. 366)

The transactional leadership style relies heavily on the leader assuming that he or she knows the motivation of the followers. A transactional leader uses the appropriate transactions and authority to convince followers to accept his or her vision of the desired state. The underlying assumption with this transactional style is that the religious leader will receive direction from God and inform the followers concerning what they should do. It is questionable if this style of leadership was ever based on a biblical model; transactional leadership, with its focus on a leader dictating the actions of the followers and single-handedly mandating the direction of the organization, certainly is not as effective in today’s culture as it was when congregants were willing to accept formal authority without question in the mid-twentieth century (Gregory-Mina, 2009; Hung, 2007; Rowold, 2008). The cultural mindset has morphed from one that accepted the formal authority as legitimate to a mindset where followers expect to participate in the
visionary process, to be given a voice in how their contributions are utilized, and to have ownership in the brand. Today, there is not a conducive environment for the style of transactional leadership taught and practiced in the early or mid-twentieth century.

**Organization of Interest**

The COTN is an ecclesiastical organization made up of approximately two million members and 21,120 churches in 156 world areas (Nazarene Missions International, 2011). The organization was established in 1908 in Pilot Point, Texas, and is now headquartered in Lenexa, Kansas.

**History**

The COTN was intentionally designed to optimize what the founders believed were the strengths of both Congregational and also Episcopal forms of government. This strategic design was necessary to balance the abuses of power that were perceived to subsist in the denominational churches that were already in existence. This new hybrid organizational structure was intended to assure pastors and congregants that they would not be subjected to abuse by formal authority figures similar to what had been experienced in the Church of England, the Catholic Church, and the Methodist Church. The policies that were institutionalized in 1908 were meant to ensure that the congregants had a voice in the governance but were also meant to be flexible enough to allow for strong leadership and vision from the ordained elders and executive leadership (Cunningham, Ingersol, Raser, & Whitelaw, 2009). This is specifically reflected in the way that the midlevel leaders, called DSs in the COTN, have been chosen. In the Episcopal form of government, the executive leadership chooses a qualified person for
this position. In the Congregational form of government, this position is not required, and the role is not considered important to the mission. The compromise struck in 1908 was for the DS to be elected by a group of individuals representing the local congregations (Smith, 1962). A provision was included allowing for the executive leadership to appoint a DS in the event of death or other prescribed scenarios (Blevins, Crow, Downs, Thornhill, & Wilson, 2009).

**Growth.** The American Christian Church saw phenomenal growth during the nineteenth century. Methodism and other new vanguard groups in America grew at a rate that terrified the established denominations. The 1800 Christian ministers serving in 1775 swelled to nearly 40,000 by 1845, and the number of preachers per capita more than tripled (Hatch, 1989). By 1820, Methodist membership numbered a quarter million; by 1830, it was twice that number. Baptist membership multiplied tenfold in the three decades after the Revolutionary War; the number of churches increased from 500 to over 2,500. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Methodist and Baptist churches had splintered into a score of separate denominations, white and black (Hatch, 1989). During this time, the new Christianity exalted religious leaders short on social graces and education. These religious activists, who were considered unauthorized lay people, pitched their messages to the unschooled and unsophisticated. This was considered an extremely serious breach of ecclesiastical order by most clergy (Baker, 2005). However, these ministers offered the average American a marvelous sense of individual potential and a collective aspiration. The aspiration was that the Church and nation could invoke social justice and a Christlike unity that would bring to pass a new order (Kerwin, 2003). According to Hatch (1989), these enthusiastic Christians had a passion for equality:
Christianity was effectively reshaped by common people who molded it in their own image and who threw themselves into expanding its influence. Increasingly assertive common people wanted their leaders unpretentious, their doctrines self-evident and down-to-earth, their music lively and singable, and their churches in local hands. (p. 5)

This tide of optimism characterized many religious cultures in the nineteenth century. The swell of evangelical Christianity in this century is a story of success for the common people. They succeeded in leveraging their priorities so that the culture was reformed into Christian societies, connections, and denominations of self-governed peoples. With the rise of evangelical Christianity in the early republic, in some measure, common people succeeded in shaping the ecclesiastical culture after their own priorities (Kerwin, 2003).

This sentiment was reflected in a statement made by Tocqueville (1840), a French historian and nineteenth-century philosopher:

This same state of society has, moreover, engendered amongst them a multitude of feelings and opinions which were unknown amongst the elder aristocratic communities of Europe: it has destroyed or modified all the relations which before existed, and established others of a novel kind. The aspect of civil society has been no less affected by these changes than that of the political world. (p. v)

Church growth has been an expectation in the COTN as the leadership has strived to transform society and bring about the Kingdom of God on earth.

**Polity.** There were at least four complaints against the leaders of established church denominations during the mid-1800s. They were (1) endorsement of the status
quo, (2) tyranny concerning religious experience, (3) preoccupation with arcane dogma, and (4) clerical quest for control (Hatch, 1989). These, in part, drove the extensive debates concerning church polity during the formative years of the COTN (Purkiser, 1983).

It has become established practice to distinguish three forms of Christian Polity – the Episcopal, the Presbyterian, and the Congregational (Lynch, 2005). Episcopacy is the government of the church by prelates, that is, by clergy of a higher order. In this form of government, the authority descends through divine authoritarian hierarchy and apostolic succession. Perry (1944) stated, “Of this type of polity the papal Church of Rome is the most perfect expression” (p. 105). Congregationalism, on the other hand, is a government at the opposite extreme, where all ecclesiastical authority springs from the body of believers (Dana, 1945). When Congregationalism is practiced, the visible church is a collection of Christians who profess faith in Christ and organize themselves for the purposes of worship and edification. Presbyterian polity finds a middle ground where there is a strong priestly hierarchy but no claim of apostolic succession. It can be said that Episcopacy, Presbyterianism, and Congregationalism allow for an endless profusion of polity gradations.

Of these forms of government, two types are germane to this study: Congregationalism and Episcopalism. To be clear, in the Episcopal form of government, the executive leaders appoint pastors and all midlevel leaders based on criteria established exclusively by the executive leadership. In the Congregationalist government, the local congregation has full authority to choose its pastor, and the regional body selects the midlevel leaders if any exist. Both of these forms of
government have weaknesses and strengths. However, toward the end of the 1800s, there was strong reaction to the perceived excesses and abuses of the Episcopal style of government (Lynch, 2005). The mindset that had been the impetus for the American Revolution had finally spilled over into the ecclesiastical world in ways that were tangible. Hurn (2010) and Cunningham et al. (2009) made references to the excess, the expulsions, and the oppression experienced by these nineteenth-century Christians.

**Holiness movement.** Throughout history, optimism, fanaticism, enlightenment, discovery, and change have produced new movements that have caused the ecclesiastical community to coagulate on a variety of issues (Quanstrom, 2004). The ecclesiastical leaders of the early twentieth century perceived fanaticism as the driving force behind a movement that became known as the holiness movement. This movement fostered several new denominations and sects (Smith, 1962). The record shows that this new movement was not a breach of trust in the sense that individuals decided to wrest control of authority from the prevailing governmental structure in the ecclesiastical world. Rather, a significant number of individuals were “excommunicated” for beliefs and practices that were deemed inappropriate by the various ecclesiastical executive leadership teams (Purkiser, 1983). These individuals came from denominations with a variety of polities. Purkiser (1983) reported, by name, several individuals who were expelled from Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Quaker, and Advent Christian organizations. The resulting new movement came to be known as the holiness movement (Blevins et al., 2009).

This dynamic movement was the catalyst for creating the COTN in 1908, as well as many other denominations and independent churches. The movement took many
forms, expressions, and polities. However, the essence of the debate was centered on the ability of men and women to be cleansed from their original sinful nature and be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. This power would allow people to live in harmony, treat others as equals, and allow self-governance (Smith, 1962). In short, the individuals of the holiness persuasion believed that this experience of grace empowered people to be transformed so that they could please their Creator rather than living to please themselves (Lynch, 2005). The outward sign of this inward transformation was believed to be evidenced in many different manners depending on the specific organization’s teaching (Cunningham et al., 2009). It appears that the different expressions, the distrust of authorities, and the lack of support for individual spiritual formation in the authoritarian churches fostered a climate conducive to the birth of the COTN (Smith, 1962).

The COTN has a long and storied history of growth and performance, dating back to its beginning in 1908 in Pilot Point, Texas (Quanstrom, 2004; Smith, 1962; Purkiser, 1983). It was here that the confluence of several organizations coalesced to become what would be known as the Church of the Nazarene. As has been mentioned, the perceived abuses by the mainline denominational churches caused great concern and fostered extensive debates in the months leading up to the consummation of the merger at Pilot Point. Individuals were debating what polity could give the best opportunity for checks and balances in the new church organization similar to what they were experiencing in their country (von Heyking, 2004). The various groups that came together at Pilot Point, Texas, had disagreed on this issue vehemently in several forums. In particular, there was a gathering of several groups in 1907 in Chicago where this and other differences were discussed. Some compromise was made, but the polity issue remained (Cunningham et
Finally, ecclesiastical polity and policy were established in the Compromise of 1908 that took the perceived good characteristics from both Episcopal and Congregational forms of government and layered that with additional checks and balances.

Of particular interest to this study was the agreement concerning leadership placement. The newly formed COTN provided for a DS to be elected by delegates from churches in the geographical region. The number of delegates from each church was to be determined by the quantity of members in the local church. However, provisions were included that allowed for executive leadership to appoint DSs when specific circumstances were present such as the death, promotion, or removal of the DS (Blevins et al., 2009). The system has been in place and has remained unchanged ever since 1908 (Ingersol, 2011). The current 2009-2013 COTN Manual provides the following information:

The merging groups agreed upon a church government that balanced the need for a superintendent with the independence of local congregations. Superintendents were to foster and care for churches already established and were to organize and encourage the organizing of churches everywhere, but their authority was not to interfere with the independent actions of a fully organized church. (Blevins et al., 2009, p. 19)

Additional guidance concerning this topic is provided in the COTN Manual.

**Policy Issue**

As the COTN became increasingly international and cross-cultural, voices within the organization began calling into question the effectiveness of the policies established
more than 100 years ago concerning leadership. One of these specific policies under question was the policy by which ordained elders are selected for the DS role. The COTN has three levels of leaders. The first level is the pastor of the local congregation, the second level is the DS of a geographical region, and the third level is the general superintendent (GS) of a world area (Blevins et al., 2009). By this policy, the second level leader, the DS, is to be elected by representatives of the district at an annual meeting. However, in cases where the office is vacated by death, promotion, or resignation, the GS may appoint a replacement. It can be argued that the culture has changed significantly in the intervening 103 years since the birth of the COTN, and the district representatives no longer know the individuals they are electing, causing a dearth of excellent leaders in the DS position.

**District Leader Effectiveness**

Debates concerning leadership definitions, styles, and characteristics have been ongoing for decades (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Burns, 1978; Sorenson & Goethals, 2004). In this study, an attempt was not made to sort through all of the issues of leadership style, nor through the multitude of definitions. Rather, the author analyzed the metrics for leadership espoused by the executive leaders in the COTN and accepted them as the critical ones for this organization at the time the study was conducted. Three specific metrics evaluate the success of the district leader: district church membership, district worship attendance, and district new church starts (Hurn, 1989). Since the founding of this organization, the purpose and role of the DS has been described in terms of organizational growth. The district leader has had many tasks and responsibilities, but planting new churches and enabling the growth of current
churches have been the fundamental drivers behind establishing the position (Blevins et al., 2009).

While the organization’s training materials, industry research (McKenna & Eckard, 2009), and other documentation acknowledge that the role of DS is more complex than these measures imply, the above metrics are the ones that are representative of the outcomes desired. Annual training, personal coaching, and other communication approaches are utilized to enable the DS to deliver on these outcomes. Thus, these three metrics (church membership, worship attendance, and new church starts) are the gold standard for evaluating a DS’s performance.

The COTN is structured in such a way that the DS has an extreme amount of latitude in advocating new methods, creating growth environments, and providing for skill development. In fact, once the DS has been appointed or elected, he or she is not accountable to anyone for a minimum of two years (Blevins et al., 2009). Assuming that there are no moral, ethical, or financial disparities, a DS rarely faces a real challenge to his or her re-election. The issue for analysis then is effectiveness or noneffectiveness as determined by the three growth statistics mentioned above.

**District Superintendent Term**

The DSs in the COTN are normally elected at the district’s annual meeting. Their term of office is articulated in the COTN Manual and is included here for clarity:

The initial term of office for a DS who is elected at a district assembly begins 30 days after the adjournment of the district assembly. It runs for two full assembly years ending 30 days after the adjournment of the assembly that marks the second anniversary of the election. At the time of said assembly the superintendent may
be reelected or a successor elected or appointed and qualified. The initial term of office for a superintendent who is appointed by the general superintendent in jurisdiction begins at the time of appointment, includes the remainder of the church year in which the superintendent was appointed, and extends through the two following church years…. If for any cause a vacancy shall occur in the interim of sessions of the district assembly, the general superintendents, jointly and severally, may fill the vacancy…. (Blevins et al., 2009, p.119)

Once a DS is appointed or elected, it is very unusual that any proceeding is successful in dislodging him or her from office. The exception is when there is a moral or ethical failing as judged by the COTN Covenant of Christian Conduct. A DS’s term of office is ended the assembly year after the DS turns 70 years old (Blevins et al., 2009).

**District Superintendent in Modern Times**

Referred to as DSs in the COTN, the midlevel ecclesiastical leaders that were evaluated by this study deal with issues of declining churches and attendance routinely. The consequences of this reality impact the ability of these leaders, as well as the pastors of the churches within their districts, to accomplish their mission: to make Christlike disciples in the nations (Board of General Superintendents, 2011). The financial implications of churches with declining attendance that cannot meet their obligations or keep their facilities in good repair, as well as the toll associated with pastors who have allowed church financial difficulties to complicate their personal finances and physical well-being, are at times overwhelming to the DS (Rowell, 2010). In this context, the DS’s responsibility, as indicated in his or her job description, is to initiate new churches and attend to the health of the existing ones (Hurn, 2010). The assumption that informed
this research was that the culture of our society has changed drastically since the
initiation of the DS position in 1908 and that the leadership styles and techniques of
many Nazarene DSs have not kept pace with the expectations of the parishioners
(Framing Leadership Research, 2006). This deficiency, it will be argued, impacts this
ecclesiastical organization’s ability to grow.

**Theoretical Framework**

Research concerning leaders, followers, and the relationship between the two,
often called leadership, has been ongoing for several decades (Rost, 1993). However,
this current research study utilized the full range leadership model developed by Avolio
and Bass (2004). This model was built on the fundamental concepts proposed by Burns
(1978), supplemented by Bass (1985), and expanded on by many others. In Burns’
conception of leadership, a continuum was articulated as having a transformational style
at one extreme and a transactional style on the other.

The transformational leadership style is characterized by the leader’s preference
of leading by charismatic use of empowerment, inspiration, and focus (Barker, 2007;
Bass & Avolio, 1990). The transformational leader prefers to focus attention, resources,
and ideals on followers by appealing to the follower’s sense of purpose.
Transformational leaders also strive to elevate the individual’s contribution to the
organization by providing an environment of trust, respect, and purpose (Bowman, 2005;
Gialamas & Pelonis, 2009; Wis, 2002).

The research and professional discussion with peers led Bass to speculate that
rather than leadership being a dichotomous variable, it was possible to exhibit
characteristics of both the transformational leadership style and the transactional leadership style at the same time. Bass (1985) operationalized the construct, and Bass and Avolio (1994) developed a full range model to encompass the wide spectrums of behaviors they observed in their research.

The model by Bass and Avolio (1994; see Figure 1) highlights nine factors that these researchers developed and operationalized with an instrument called the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Form 5X-Short (MLQ). Some of these nine factors will be covered in detail in a later chapter. The nine factors are (a) attributed idealized influence, (b) behavioral idealized influence, (c) inspirational motivation, (d) intellectual stimulation, (e) individualized consideration, (f) contingent reward, (g) active management-by-exception, (h) passive management-by-exception, and (i) laissez-faire leadership. The model also includes three scales to measure extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction (Avolio & Bass, 1995b).

The MLQ is the most widely employed instrument for researching transformational leadership today (Avolio & Bass, 2004). This framework and instrument were utilized in this study to measure each DS’s transformational leadership style and to explore the correlation between transformational leadership style and district organizational growth.
Purpose of the Study

From the onset, the COTN established midlevel leaders called DSs to oversee and shepherd the health and growth of the various geographical areas of North America (NA).
Currently, there are 80 DSs serving the COTN in NA. The standard by which these leaders are to be evaluated is organizational growth, as measured by new church starts and numerical growth in local churches (Hurn, 2010). The gold standard established in 1908 has served the church admirably throughout the twentieth century and into the first decade of the twenty-first century. From the organization’s auspicious beginning in Pilot Point, Texas, the denomination has grown to be the largest Wesleyan-Holiness denomination serving NA (Church of the Nazarene, 2011). In 2010, leaders at the denomination’s headquarters in Lenexa, Kansas, reported that the COTN had organized churches in 156 world areas and that membership had grown to 2,059,261 (Church of the Nazarene, 2011). However, the region of interest for this study, NA, reported the following statistics for the first decade of the twenty-first century: The number of organized churches decreased by eight percent (see Figure 2), membership grew slightly less than one percent (see Figure 3), and worship attendance declined 2.7% (see Figure 4; International Church of the Nazarene, 2011).
Figure 2. COTN organized churches as reported in the NA Composite Index – 2010.

Figure 3. COTN church membership as reported in the NA Composite Index – 2010.
While Nazarene churches have fared better than churches in other denominations (Hartford Institute, 2006; Kwon, 2009), these numbers are a cause for considerable concern when reviewing the overall population growth in North America. As reported in the census for the first decade of the twenty-first century, the population in the United States grew just slightly more than nine percent (International Church of the Nazarene, 2011). The executive leadership of the COTN recognized that the general population growth far exceeded the attendance growth of local churches and is currently searching for adequate improvements to allow the church to return to a healthy growth rate. In the interim, the executive leadership continues to use the gold standard criterion as part of the training for DSs and for evaluating their individual contribution to the global COTN. District and individual church records have been used extensively over the years to study the organization, test hypotheses concerning growth, and to illuminate best practices.
Data concerning various aspects of the organization are maintained in the COTN archives and are available for research purposes for the years 1908-2011.

While the growth of this global organization is impressive, during the past decade, the majority of this denomination’s growth has come from countries outside NA. A review of the Nazarene Global Missions Web page (Nazarene Global Missions, 2011) revealed that Africa, South America, and Eurasia accounted for 71% of the growth since 2000. Kwon (2009) found that most church organizations in NA were in a state of decline. Various research studies have been initiated and presented through the Association of Nazarene Sociologist and Researchers (ANSR) in an attempt to understand, explain, and suggest adjustments that would improve the COTN’s situation in the NA. These studies have included topics concerning retention of local pastors (Crow, 2010; Green & Hunter, 2010; Rowell, 2010), preparation of successful pastors (Crow, 1991; Stipp, 2010), wellness (Crow & Crow, 2003), impact of the general church polity (Harvey, 2010; Houseal, 2003), and church growth (Crow, 2007; Jones, 2001; LaFountain, 2005; Sullivan, 2005). However, there is no record of research being conducted to establish if there is a relationship between the DS’s leadership style and the regional organizational growth.

The purpose of this study was to determine if transformational leadership style and district organizational growth were correlated in a North American ecclesiastical setting. The research questions addressed this gap in the understanding by controlling for time and population while exploring the relationship between a midlevel leader’s perception of his or her leadership style and the available evidence concerning growth. Transformational leadership style was the independent variable, and worship attendance,
church membership, and new church starts were the dependent variables. These terms will be defined later in the chapter. Higher transformational leadership scores, using the MLQ, correlated positively with two of the three organizational growth statistics.

**Research Questions**

The research questions addressed the relationship between the transformational leadership style of district leaders and the district organizational growth in a NA ecclesiastical environment. This research identified how the DSs perceived their transformational styles and determined the correlation between their perceived styles and district organizational growth after controlling for time and population. When the study was initiated, there was very little empirical research concerning this correlation in the ecclesiastical setting. The study was based on the assumption that obtaining a higher transformational leadership score on the MLQ would correlate positively with increased organizational performance. In fact, perceived transformational leadership scores did translate into higher worship attendance and more church members, but did not translate into an increased number of new church starts. The research questions for the study were as follows:

1. Do DSs with higher transformational leadership scores obtain greater worship attendance growth?

2. Do DSs with higher transformational leadership scores obtain greater church membership growth?

3. Do DSs with higher transformational leadership scores obtain a greater number of new church starts?
**Significance of the Study**

Murphy (2002) indicated that across the denominations over 7,000 North American churches were closing each year, and only 4,000 new ones were being initiated. Some research has shown that the number of persons attending worship on a given Sunday continues to decline as a percent of population (Barna, 2009; International Church of the Nazarene, 2011). Other researchers have found that there is very slight growth (Newport, 2010). This North American reality is in stark contrast to the growth that is taking place in Africa, South America, and Eurasia (Nazarene Global Missions, 2011). In general, North American churches in most denominations are strapped for resources and must find a way to be more efficient at accomplishing their mission and more effective at adding members (Menzie, 2011). If there is a correlation between leadership style and organizational growth, then many systemic changes must be contemplated in the education, recruitment, and professional development of Nazarene DSs.

Even though this particular study did not address the other aspects of organizational performance found in research across disciplines, it initiates the discussion and opens the possibility for that research to happen in the future. For example, other industries have found that transformational leadership helps with constituent retention (Drake, 2010), satisfaction (Vecchio, Justin, & Pearce, 2008), attitudes (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996), well-being (Nielsen, Yarker, Brenner, Randall, & Borg, 2008; Zopiatis, 2010), citizenship behavior (Boerner, Eisenbeiss, & Griesser, 2007; Purvanova, Bono, & Dzieweczynski, 2006), commitment (Leithwood & Sleegers, 2006; McGuire & Kennerly,
2006), effectiveness (Pounder, 2008), performance (Wang, Oh, Courtright, & Colbert, 2011), and effort (Rowold, 2008; Webb, 2007), in addition to improved financial performance (Rose & Kumar, 2006; Yang, Watkins, & Marsick, 2004).

This research helps illuminate the pathway for midlevel church leadership in the COTN to become more relevant in a culture that threatens to leave the Nazarene church behind and make it unproductive and ineffective at a time when the constituents desperately need a strong beacon of relevant values and a compass for guidance. The Church has been at the forefront of social change from time to time in history and can be at the forefront again if the values espoused are operationalized in the style of leadership evident in the practice of the polity (Maritain, 1947; Neuhaus, 1984; Tocqueville, 1840). The espoused values of forgiveness, hope, opportunity, and fulfilled potential can be a reality with the proper leadership.

Limitations of the Study

First, if leadership can be taught and leaders can know their personal leadership preferences, then leaders can change. The research was accomplished with the assumption that, during the years studied, the Nazarene DSs did not have a significant style change. In fact, while the data utilized for evaluating the district growth was longitudinal, the survey data capturing the DS’s leadership style was cross-sectional. An attempt was made to mitigate this concern by limiting the duration of the study. Data was utilized from a maximum of seven years. This time span was chosen after consultations with the University of Colorado Springs statisticians in an attempt to maximize the validity of the growth statistics and minimize the potential for leadership
style change to confound the conclusions. In addition, the design of the research was crafted so that this time dependency would be captured by controlling the time variable. A literature search did not discover any research that had been conducted concerning the phenomenon of leadership style change. In fact, much of the literature had an underlying assumption that leaders can and do change (Framing Leadership Research, 2006; Ireh & Bailey, 1999). The authors discussed interventions and argued for what the best and most efficient methods were in the diverse industries (Sanders & Davey, 2011; Cangemi, Davis, Sand, & Lott, 2011). However, a framework-based research approach with instruments administered before and after the proposed interventions appeared to be lacking. This seems to be a substantial gap considering all of the years and thousands of studies concerning leadership style and its development.

Second, this was a correlational study and not a causal study; therefore, the findings should not be extrapolated beyond the population sampled. It is quite possible that the COTN culture initiated in 1908, complemented by the expectations articulated in the job description for DSs, could be contributors to the findings.

Third, the sample size was not as large as one would have liked. Because of the limited number of current and former DSs that met the design criteria, there were only 97 individuals from which to solicit participation. The survey return rate was very good at 66%, but a larger sample would have been desirable. A minimum sample of 60 participants was deemed necessary for this design; the number of usable samples was 64.

Fourth, the data collected concerning leadership style was self-reported. It is assumed that there is bias associated with this self-reporting (Avolio, 2011). Therefore, all conclusions were limited to the direction of correlation rather than absolute values of
change. The magnitude of impact should be used with caution and the research replicated for other populations.

**Terminology**

The terminology surrounding the concepts and framework of leadership continues to be problematic. Leadership has at various and different times been defined as influence, power, or control. Bass and Bass (2008) quoted the Globe Project team: “Leadership is the ability to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute to the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members” (p. 23). Bass and Riggio (2006) built on that definition of leadership:

Transformational leaders … are those who stimulate and inspire followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity. Transformational leaders help followers grow and develop into leaders by responding to individual followers’ needs by empowering them and by aligning the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leader, the group, and the larger organization. More evidence has accumulated to demonstrate that transformational leadership can move followers to exceed expected performance, as well as lead to high levels of follower satisfaction and commitment to the group and organization. (p. 3)

Bass and Riggio (2006) explicated Burns’ (1978) concept of pseudo leadership when they said:

Pseudotransformational leaders … are personalized in outlook. They use their power to reward and punish in arbitrary ways to dominate their followers. They
tend to be authoritarian in attitude, self-aggrandizing, and exploitive of their followers. Manipulation, threats, and promises are used to induce compliance. Punishments may be capricious and noncontingent. They can be pseudotransformational in that followers fear loss of support from the powerful figures. Such tyrants are narcissistic, impetuous, and impulsively aggressive. They bring about obedience and compliance in followers, but it is less likely to be internalized. Commitment is public but not private. Commitment, involvement, and loyalty derive from dependence on the leader, resulting from fear of punishment or loss of the leader’s affection. (p. 40)

For the purposes of this research, these definitions of leadership by Bass and colleagues will be utilized. In addition, the following definitions may be helpful in the comprehension of the problem, research questions, discussion, and conclusions:

**Ecclesiastical organization** – This term is synonymous with church and denomination. It is intended to reflect an organization that is larger in geographical area than a local church. It is understood to be an organization in which there are levels of authority and prescribed processes and polity that govern the ongoing operations.

**District** – This refers to an established geographical area defined by the general assembly of the COTN. The COTN currently has 80 districts encompassing Canada and the United States. Each district is responsible for officially organizing preaching points, new groups of congregants (new church starts), and satellite locations into churches. The district officially recognizes the local organization and provides for its various rights, privileges, responsibilities, and protections.
District Superintendent – This is the midlevel leader in the COTN responsible for the oversight of a district. This person is appointed or elected with the express purpose of growing the district in terms of the number of churches, number of church members, and number of worshipers.

Church – Once a local congregation is organized by the district, it is called a church.

New Church Start – When new congregants come together for the purpose of worship and express the intent to join themselves together with the district and general organization, they are afforded certain privileges and protections but remain unencumbered by the financial assessments associated with supporting the global endeavor of the COTN. This relationship continues until the congregation officially becomes a church.

Church Membership – This is a specific relationship between a person and a church. In the COTN, this classification allows the member to participate in official responsibilities and to be eligible for election to specific offices. It also requires the member to claim allegiance to the tenants of the COTN.

Worship Attendance – This is a specific definition established by the COTN that articulates the methodology for counting the worshipers present for the local church gathering.

Time – The first year of data included in the research was considered time zero, and each subsequent year was increased by one year. For example, if a DS was elected to the position in 2003, the first year of results in 2004 was considered time zero, the second year of results in 2005 was considered time one, the third year results in 2006 were
considered time two, and so forth. In this instance, there were seven time periods (the maximum allowed based on the criterion established to mitigate for leadership style change). Another example was if a DS took office in 2008, time zero was 2009, time one was 2010, and time two was 2011. This second example represents a situation that showed the minimum number of data points for the growth criteria. The number of data points for each dependent variable varied from three years (time zero to time two) to seven years (time zero to time six). This nomenclature was established to simplify the interpretation of the Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) results.

Variables

The variables included in the final HLM models were time, population, transformational leadership score, church membership, worship attendance, and new church starts. The definition and symbol for each variable utilized in the results tables are as follows:

- Time (TIME) – Time zero is the year immediately following the DS’s appointment or election. It varied from zero to six in the analysis and represented up to seven years of ensuing data. In the HLM models, this variable is included in Level-1 and is uncentered.

- Population (POP) – Population is the population from the United States and the Canadian census mapped to the 80 districts of the COTN by cell block. It varied by year based on the census data of the cell block. In the HLM models, this variable is included in Level-1 and is grand centered.
• Membership (MEMBER) – This is a dependent variable that the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) or HLM model predicted. It is the total church membership of all churches within a district for a given year.

• Worship Attendance (WORSHIP) – This is a dependent variable that the SPSS or HLM model predicted. It is the total Sunday morning worship attendance of all churches within a given district for a given year.

• New Church Starts (NEW) – This is a dependent variable that the SPSS or HLM model predicted. It is the total new church starts within a given district for a given year.

• Transformational Leadership Score (TOTAL) – This is the Level-2 variable that represents DSs’ perceptions of their leadership styles. In the HLM models, this variable is grand centered.

Population Mapping

One of the largest challenges in dealing with organizational growth statistics is to understand the impact of population growth. It is helpful to understand if an organization is growing; however, as it relates to the organization’s mission or purpose, it is even more important to understand how the organization is performing relative to population growth or decline. The challenge is to map the census data to the area of concern. For this study, the U. S. Census Bureau block data from the 2000 and 2010 censuses were used for COTN districts in the United States (Jones, 2011). The Canadian Census Bureau block boundary files from the 1996 and 2006 censuses were used for the COTN districts in Canada (Jones, 2011). The block data was mapped to the official boundaries. On the
rare occasion when the block group straddled a boundary, the group was assigned to the
district that the COTN research center in Lenexa, Kansas, believed held the bulk of the
population (Jones, 2011). In addition, the decadal data from the census was used to
estimate the population for each year by district. This was done using a linear projection
from 2000 to 2010 in the U.S. and from 1996 to 2006 in Canada. It was necessary to
extrapolate the population growth for the years 2007 through 2011 for the Canada
districts and for the year 2011 for the U.S. districts.

Summary

This research elucidated the correlation between the leadership style of midlevel
ecclesiastical leaders (Nazarene DSs) and organizational growth statistics (from the North
American districts in the COTN). The study was important because leadership style has
been shown to influence employee retention, work effort, and outcomes in several
industries but has not been studied above the parish level in the ecclesiastical setting.
The correlation can inform the executive leadership concerning selection policies,
training activities, and professional development for DSs in NA. This may enable the
denomination to improve the growth trends in membership and worship attendance, thus
enhancing the vitality of the COTN’s strategic base of operation in NA. Beyond the
immediate context, there may be even more implications for other nonprofit and profit
organizations. This research does, in fact, show that there is a correlation between
leadership style and organizational growth as measured by the MLQ and the gold
standard of the COTN.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A lack of empirical research exists concerning transformational leadership and organizational growth in the ecclesiastical community. The research that has been done focused on the impact at the individual church or parish level of the organization (Carter, 2009; Johnston, 2011; Rowold, 2008). The importance of having transformational leadership at the midlevel or pastoral oversight position has not been studied.

On a larger scale, understanding the correlation between leadership style and organizational growth provides great opportunity for adjusting the educational processes at ecclesiastical colleges and universities across all denominations. On a smaller scale, it also provides opportunities for the general church leadership within the Church of the Nazarene (COTN) to modify the selection criteria for district superintendents (DSs), revamp the DS orientation process, and provide professional leadership development for DSs. Based on this correlation, policies and support structures can be updated to enhance the mission of the ecclesiastical organization under study.

Results of the Literature Review

The literature review first covers transformational and transactional leadership, the foundational and theoretical frame of the proposed research study. The focus then
turns to the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Form 5X-Short (MLQ) and its pertinent characteristics as highlighted by prior research and use. Next, a section is devoted to transformational leadership in the ecclesiastical community. The literature review concludes with a section concerning transformational leadership and growth in various industries.

Any review of the literature must conclude that leadership is a complex and multifaceted issue (Barker, 2001; Kozel, 2009; Prieto, 2009; Stebbibs, 2010; Stewart, 2006; Sugrue, 1998). From the moral issues surrounding good versus bad leadership to the discussion of whether leaders are born with innate ability or developed by circumstances, training, mentoring, and coaching, the concepts are not especially well-articulated or agreed upon (Abramson, 2007; Cangemi et al., 2011; Goethals, 2005; Gregory-Mina, 2009; Rhodes et al., 2004). What has been determined in the research is that leadership style impacts followers to the degree that the followers’ behaviors are modified (Boerner et al., 2007; Johnston, 2011; Leithwood & Sleegers, 2006).

**Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership was used as the theoretical framework for this study and was the independent variable of interest. The concept of transformational leadership was first developed by J. M. Burns in 1978. Since that introduction, thousands of research studies have been completed concerning the topic.

Leaders who utilize the transformational style empower and inspire their followers (Barker, 2007; Bass & Avolio, 1990). As previously stated in the theoretical framework in Chapter 1, transformational leaders give more attention to followers, and
resources are utilized to ensure that the needs of followers are met. By providing an environment of trust, respect, and purpose, the transformational leader appeals to the follower’s desire to feel needed, which, in turn, elevates the individual’s contribution to the organization (Bowman, 2005; Gialamas & Pelonis, 2009; Wis, 2002). The transformational leader is concerned with helping the follower reach his or her potential by coaching him or her to grow personally in the context of the organization’s vision and goals (Marchionni & Richie, 2008). It has been shown that this approach is effective in improving organizational performance (Vecchio et al., 2008).

Research by Sellgren, Ekvall, and Tomson (2006) and Webb (2007) has identified four factors to explain the theory of transformational leadership: (a) inspirational motivation, (b) idealized influence, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration. This classification of factors is useful as an outline to discuss the literature for this leadership style. It should be noted that Avolio and Bass (1995b) used this same classification but further subdivided “idealized influence” into “idealized attributes” and “idealized behaviors” when they created the MLQ. This resulted in five factors added together to obtain a total transformational leadership score for analysis in the results section.

**Inspirational Motivation**

Inspirational motivation is said to be characterized by followers who are enthused about the mission, purpose, and goals of the unit because they have been provided meaningful and challenging work (Bass & Riggio, 2006). This concept is expressed in the literature as authors discuss team spirit (Stebbins, 2010), actions that exhibit commitment to the cause (Karadag, 2009; Leithwood & Sleegers, 2006), actions that
elucidate purpose (Bowman, 2005; Cross, 2003), and actions that demonstrate going above and beyond the requirements of the position to accomplish the specific objective (Pounder, 2008; Rowold, 2011). Bally (2007) argued that mentoring is one way in which leaders express this characteristic and build motivation. The transformational leader is assumed to have enhanced the motivation of followers or at least to have provided the environment in which these types of responses are possible (Thoman, 2011).

**Idealized Influence**

Idealized influence is characterized in the literature as admiration for and trust in the leader (Gregory-Mina, 2009; Holtz & Harold, 2008; Wis, 2002). The literature review presents information about both the behaviors and the attributes of the leaders contributing to the phenomenon that builds this confidence and trust (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Purvanova et al., 2006). Some authors framed this concept in terms of instilling pride and worth in the psyche of the followers and improving personal well-being (Nielsen, Yarker, Brenner, Randall, & Borg, 2008). This factor reflects the feelings of admiration the followers have for their leader and tends to develop more dedicated and motivated followers (Barker, 2001; Purvanova et al., 2006; Webb, 2007). The essence of this factor is that leaders tend to develop more passionate and dedicated followers as they lead with transparency and authenticity (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Bowling, 2000; Gialamas & Pelonis, 2009; Stanley, 2008).

**Intellectual Stimulation**

Intellectual stimulation refers to the environment a leader establishes that encourages followers to think outside the box and question the very basic fundamentals
of the team’s action (McCallum & O’Connell, 2009; Prieto, 2009; Purvanova et al., 2006). This is evidenced in the resources allocated for continuing education, the questions that the leader asks, and the consideration given to increasing the competencies and capacities of the team (Sugrue, 1998). In short, this factor establishes the parameters that research shows are necessary for there to be a learning organization (Amitay, Popper, & Lipshitz, 2005; Amy, 2008; Avolio et al., 1999; Goh & Richards, 1997). This approach allows for rational thinking and creative problem solving as opposed to just getting through another day and meeting the minimum standards for existence (Barker, 2001; Bass & Avolio, 1990). This factor of leadership presumes that inspiration and stimulation often come from sources outside of the system and encourages individuals to strive for personal improvement and to explore new territory while accomplishing the highest quality output possible (Ackoff, 1999; Hung, 2007).

**Individualized Consideration**

Individualized consideration describes the concept of respect for the individual. This genre of behavior assumes that every person is unique and has personalized dreams, hopes, and aspirations (Bass & Avolio, 1990). The transformational leader will invest in the activities necessary to understand the followers and will coach, mentor, or inspire followers to reach their whole person potential (McCallum & O’Connell, 2009). This implies that the style of leadership does not compare, contrast, or deride persons through the use of internal competition. Raup (2008) showed that followers rated their leaders based on the amount of time the leader invested in personally facilitating, mentoring, and coaching them. Failla and Scticher (2008) found that the ability and practice of showing appreciation for improvement and the attainment of objectives was an important aspect of
individualized consideration. Individualized consideration is the ability of the leader to make followers feel special and to invest in their personal development such that followers want to reciprocate with increased effort to the cause (Pounder, 2008).

Bass and Avolio (1994) summarized transformational leadership in this description:

Transformational leadership is seen when leaders:

• Stimulate interest among colleagues and followers to view their work from new perspectives,

• Generate awareness of the mission or vision of the team and organization,

• Develop colleagues and followers to higher levels of ability and potential, and

• Motivate colleagues and followers to look beyond their own interests toward those that will benefit the group. (p. 2)

This is the same high ideal that leaders in the ecclesiastical world should strive for as they endeavor to raise people up to new levels of achievement and service through the transforming power of Christ. The visible structure for this activity is the body of believers that makes up the Christian Church.

**Transactional Leadership**

Bass and Avolio (1990) viewed transactional leadership as an exchange of services between the leader and follower. Burns (1978) observed that “leaders approach followers with an eye to exchanging one thing for another: jobs for votes, or subsidies for campaign contributions” (p. 4). Bass and Riggio (2006) stated, “Transactional business
leaders offer financial rewards for productivity or deny rewards for lack of productivity” (p. 3). With the transactional leadership style, leaders perform transactions with followers in such a way that personal needs or aspirations are met in return for doing what the leader requires. Some view this style of leadership as essentially rewards for perceived good behaviors and punishment for perceived inappropriate behaviors (Koslowsky & Stashevsky, 2005; Laohavichien, Fredendall, & Cantrell, 2009). Rewards take many forms, depending on the industry, but can include recognition, praise, increased compensation, expanded responsibility, and perks (Groves & Larocca, 2011; Ivey & Kline, 2010). These rewards may be lavished on the follower or withheld, depending on the leader’s perception of the follower’s behavior. Rewards may include praise, recognition, honors, or promotions, to name a few.

This transactional style of leadership is often discernible by the overt contracts and the various accountability mechanisms initiated to maintain an ethical and fair environment (Houghton & Yoho, 2005). Additionally, the task-driven culture may be characterized as rigid with a strict hierarchy and detailed work instructions (Sellgren et al., 2006). The chain of command is extremely important but may limit the creativity and contributions of the followers. This style has been the predominate one taught in business schools as a result of the American Industrial Revolution and has led to what some have called the cult of efficiency (Callahan, 1962; Hung, 2007). Bass and Avolio (1994) stated, “Transactional leadership occurs when the leader rewards or disciplines the follower depending on the adequacy of the follower’s performance” (p. 4). It is doubtful that this style of leadership is the most effective for use in an organization that espouses collaborative effort.
Transformational Versus Transactional Leadership

Since Burns first introduced transformational leadership in 1978, there have been hundreds, if not thousands, of studies that have attempted to validate, repudiate, or further enhance the concept. Researchers have studied which leadership style is most prevalent in various industries (Ivey & Kline, 2010), which style followers prefer (Pounder, 2008), which style leaders believe they exhibit (McGuire & Kennerly, 2006), if leaders’ perceptions are supported or refuted by their followers (Barbuto, 2005), if one leadership style is appropriate for every situation (Boerner et al., 2007), and if a leader can exhibit more than one style concurrently (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

All of these studies have been enhanced by the work done by Avolio and Bass (1995a) as they developed the MLQ. This instrument is believed to be reliable and repeatable. Utilizing this tool, researchers have concluded that transformational leaders are more exciting to follow (Bass & Riggio, 2006); can articulate a more attractive future for followers (Nicholson, 2007); are more apt to display integrity, creativity, and accomplish their goals (Webb, 2007); and are more satisfying to work for than leaders exhibiting other types of leadership styles (Rowold, 2011). It has also been found that the qualities of transformational leaders tend to produce better results for various types of organizations, including government, education, and manufacturing (Amitay et al., 2005; Johnston, 2011; McGuire & Kennerly, 2006; Pounder, 2008; Purvanova et al., 2006). This particular finding of improved organizational performance has not been researched in the ecclesiastical community.
Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

Researchers in many disciplines have used the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Form 5X Short (MLQ) to measure transformational and transactional leadership, including Rowold (2008) and Webb (2007), who have used this instrument in ecclesiastical settings. The MLQ was developed by Bass and Avolio (1990); their latest version was published in 1995 and has become the most widely utilized instrument for measuring transformational leadership (Avolio & Bass, 2004), as the internal consistency of the instrument is reported to be between 0.69 and 0.85 (Avolio & Bass, 2004). This most recent version utilizes nine leadership dimensions and three constructs that help identify various leadership styles: (a) attributed idealized influence, (b) behavioral idealized influence, (c) inspirational motivation, (d) intellectual stimulation, (e) individualized consideration, (f) contingent reward, (g) active management-by-exception, (h) passive management-by-exception, and (j) laissez-faire leadership. Each of these nine dimensions is assessed by evaluating four standardized items. For the purposes of the research questions identified in this study, only the measures directly associated with transformational leadership will be utilized: (a) attributed idealized influence, (b) behavioral idealized influence, (c) inspirational motivation, (d) intellectual stimulation, and (e) individualized consideration. To further explain, the metrics associated with transactional leadership (contingent reward and active management-by-exception) and those associated with laissez-faire leadership (passive management-by-exception and laissez-faire) will not be utilized. Because the scores for these three styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) are tallied and reported separately, it is possible to ascertain the transformational style score for the purposes of this study.
According to Bass and Riggio (2006), the resulting scales provide measures of effectiveness, of satisfaction with the leader, and of the extent to which followers exert extra effort because of the perceived performance of the leader. Avolio and Bass (1995b) have developed two forms to measure transformational leadership attributes and behaviors. One, called the Leader Form, may be used by the leader to establish a perspective of his or her own leadership style; the other, called the Rater Form, is utilized to gather perceptions of the leader through the eyes of the followers.

Some research has indicated that a leader may be biased concerning his or her own style (Bass & Riggio, 2006). However, the research indicates that when there is a bias, it appears that the leader’s perception is inflated toward the transformational style as compared to the follower’s perception (Bass & Yammarino, 1991; Brown & Reilly, 2009). Some researchers have found no significant bias (Barbuto, 2005). For the purposes of this research, it was acknowledged that there may be a bias; this is noted in the list of limitations and considered in the research design. However, this study focused on determining the correlation between leadership style and organizational growth and the direction of that correlation. The Leader Form was utilized to obtain the DS’s perception of his or her behaviors and attributes. A five-point Likert-type scale was utilized to measure the extent to which each leader perceived himself or herself to be transactional or transformational.

**Transformational Leadership and the Ecclesiastical Community**

Ecclesiastical leaders appear to be appropriately positioned to be the model for the transformational style of leadership. The values taught in the Holy Scriptures such as
love, forgiveness, hope, and transformation seem to be perfectly aligned with the theories, concepts, and framework espoused by transformational leadership and propagated by Burns (1978), Bass and Avolio (1990), Avolio (2011), and others. One can only assume that the cultural influence of the Industrial Revolution has molded ecclesiastical organizations as Callahan (1962) argued it has the education community. While the Church calls itself a ministry and takes exception to those who would seek to impose a business model on its structure, it does need to learn from other industries and communities concerning what methods and processes work. This is not, however, to suggest that the Church’s message should change.

Additionally, the transactional leadership model that is most widely utilized in the ecclesiastical community has been modeled after the best practices of Moses as articulated in the five books of the Pentateuch (Wright, 2003). This model, according to Scripture, was partly given to Moses by God and then modified by Moses’ father-in-law, Jethro (Exodus 18: 14-24; Oduro, 2004). It is clearly a transactional style of leadership.

The situation for which this model was proffered was markedly different than the one the COTN finds itself in today. The Pentateuch states that Moses led nearly 2 million Israelites out of Egypt, and God gave him specific instructions for forming a nation and setting up ecclesiastical, social, and moral law (Exodus 1-20). Because there were no best practices or lessons learned that were articulated in any written form, this one-on-one intervention was necessary, with Moses receiving direction from God and then commanding the Israelites what to do (Wright, 2009). Some in the ecclesiastical community believe that Moses’ style of leadership is still the preferred, if not the only, method for the Church’s operations in the twenty-first century (Pava, 2003). This
transactional style of leadership, according to research, is not optimal when attempting to maximize effort, satisfaction, and performance (Rowold, 2008; Vecchio et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2011; Webb, 2007).

Transactional leadership also lends itself to the hierarchical structure of church leadership utilized by the majority of Christian denominations and organizations. Prior to the Protestant movement from the days of Martin Luther, the general belief was that only the officially appointed leaders of the Church could have a special relationship with God and had the right to speak for God as they were leading the Church. However, the New Testament scriptures teach that all people can have a close relationship with God made available through the death and resurrection of Christ (Hebrews 3:1-6; Russell, 1995; Moltmann, 1974). After the Protestant Reformation, church denominations began to recognize that no man should tell another what action must be taken to be in proper relationship with God. The Church should act as one body with no one person being specially called to speak for God (Romans 5:11; Sanders, 1981). The transition away from the transactional leadership style was slow in coming; leaders using a transactional style that mandated the actions of the congregation and utilized a reward and punishment system to control their followers still predominated in many church denominations.

Over time, however, more and more Church leaders are adopting a different approach to leadership, reflecting the goals of collaboration, trust, and mutual purpose that allow for leaders to inspire and motivate their congregations (Milofsky, 2000). Research of the literature does not disclose any other style that more closely aligns with these values than transformational leadership. While transactions are part of any human
dealings, they do not need to be based on a power structure that offers someone salvation, acceptance, forgiveness, or reward based on the approval of another human.

**Summary**

As has been seen in this review, a vast amount of research exists on the topic of transformational and transactional leadership. However, very little empirical data is available concerning the applicability of this concept for organizational growth in the ecclesiastical community. It has been proven within other industries that there is a correlation between transformational leadership style and improved organizational outcomes. This study focused on adding new knowledge to the field by providing evidence of this same phenomenon as it related to ecclesiastical growth in the Church of the Nazarene in North America.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This quantitative research study provided new knowledge concerning the gap in current professional literature on the relationship between transformational leadership style and organizational growth in an ecclesiastical setting. The new knowledge can inform policy development and adjustment in the selection and education of district superintendents (DSs) within the Church of the Nazarene (COTN). This study identified how DSs in the North American region perceived their own leadership styles and then correlated that information to the organizational growth in each DS’s geographical region of responsibility. The findings showed that perceived leadership style does, in fact, correlate with improved organizational growth for worship attendance and church membership but not for new church starts. New church starts were not statistically significant because of an issue associated with gauge discrimination discovered in previous research. The gauge discrimination issue was caused by the relatively few number of Nazarene churches started in the North American region. Prior unpublished research indicated that a metric with more variation and a higher number of events was necessary to determine if a correlation existed (Church, 2011). The remainder of the chapter will discuss the research design, population and sample, procedure, data collection, and the protection of human rights.
The following research questions addressed the correlation between the dependent variables or outcomes and the perceived style of leadership:

1. Do DSs with higher transformational leadership scores obtain greater worship attendance growth?
2. Do DSs with higher transformational leadership scores obtain greater church membership growth?
3. Do DSs with higher transformational leadership scores obtain a greater number of new church starts?

The study shows that there is a correlation between outcomes and transformational leadership style scores.

The research was accomplished using quantitative methodology. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to elucidate the subject. The MLQ responses were evaluated utilizing the theoretical framework of transformational leadership, and the participants’ demographic data was used to explore various potential mitigating factors.

To find the correlation between the transformational leadership score on the MLQ and organizational growth after controlling for time and population, Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) was used.

**Research Design**

A quantitative, nonexperimental design using HLM was particularly suited for this study because of the nesting characteristics of HLM and the variation in the amount of panel data available for each DS (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010). HLM was useful as the primary analysis tool because it allowed for an unequal number of data points and
minimized the risk of inflated error terms that could lead to improper interpretations of the findings (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). This particular approach allowed the author to determine the correlation of transformational leadership style to the organizational outcomes (Cameron & Trivedi, 2005). This study did not intend to determine causality but rather to provide insight into the directional relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The findings were informative for the executive leadership of the ecclesiastical organization under study, the COTN. The new knowledge may inform policy and practice as the executives seek to adjust the deployment of resources.

A nonexperimental design was utilized because the researcher was attempting to ascertain the relationship between variables and events that have already occurred (Babbie, 2007). Polit and Beck (2008) indicated that this approach is generally recognized as credible and that it is a good method for understanding extensive data and for performing problem solving. Yet, there are two limitations to this type of design: the inability of this technique to prove causal relationships and the confounding issues associated with utilizing existing groupings (Polit & Beck, 2008). Babbie (2007) determined that association is only one criterion for determining causality.

The quantitative data was obtained from two sources. The first source was the COTN National Data Base. The second was the MLQ Survey. These are explained in detail below.

**COTN National Data Base**

The data base utilized for this study is housed in Lenexa, Kansas, and is owned and maintained by the COTN. The historians, archivists, and statistical research team have established this data base that includes annual statistics for every registered church
and district in the global COTN, beginning with those churches established in 1908. The data collected have varied over time but include a wealth of information based on the annual reports required from all pastors every year (Lance, 2011). The district journal definitions have been coordinated by the General Secretary in an effort to maintain a common operational understanding of the key statistics. The current annual report required from pastors in North America includes multiple statistics concerning church membership, worship attendance, various statistics concerning property, and voluminous statistics concerning finances. This data base currently houses information pertaining to 43,378 churches and 578 districts.

**Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Form 5X-Short**

To obtain the second set of data, an in-depth literature search was conducted to determine the instrument best suited to identify transformational leadership style. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Form 5X-Short (MLQ) was found to be the most widely accepted instrument utilized for scholarly research on leadership style, and it provided acceptable validity and reliability attributes (Avolio & Bass, 1995b). In this study, the MLQ survey was administered to the survey population without any modifications to questions or sequence.

Avolio (2011) reported that the MLQ has been validated repeatedly. He also claimed that it is a strong predictor of leadership performance. Reliability of the MLQ for each leadership factor scale ranges from 0.74 to 0.94 (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Avolio and Bass (2004) reported internal consistency reliability on Cronbach’s alpha ranging from 0.69 to 0.85 on the MLQ. Other researchers have tested the face, construct, and content validity and have found the instrument to be appropriate for evaluating leadership
style (Avolio & Bass, 2004; Antonakis, Avolio, & Sivasubramaniam, 2003). Because the instrument was used in the exact configuration as provided by the publisher, this investigator speculated that the reliability would remain trustworthy. As expected, the reliability of the MLQ transformational score for the sample used within this study was acceptable at 0.88 (Nunnally, 1978).

The MLQ was designed to test what Avolio and Bass (2002) called a full range of leadership styles. This instrument contains 45 items that purport to measure a full range of leadership behaviors and styles. The scale ranges from highly transformational behaviors at one extreme to laissez-faire behaviors depicting avoidant tendencies at the other extreme. The instrument utilizes four items to elucidate nine leadership factors: (a) attributed idealized influence, (b) behavioral idealized influence, (c) inspirational motivation, (d) intellectual stimulation, (e) individualized consideration, (f) contingent reward, (g) active management-by-exception, (h) passive management-by-exception, and (i) laissez-faire leadership. These nine factors inform researchers concerning the three leadership scales: satisfaction, extra effort, and effectiveness. A five-point Likert scale is utilized to indicate the frequency of occurrence. Scores on this scale range from 0 (not at all) to 5 (frequently, if not always). For this research, the entire 45-question survey was administered, but only the five factors representing the transformational construct were compiled: (a) attributed idealized influence, (b) behavioral idealized influence, (c) inspirational motivation, (d) intellectual stimulation, and (e) individual consideration. A total transformational score was determined for each participant by tallying the results of the 20 questions representing these five factors.
The license to administer the MLQ was purchased from Mind Garden, Inc., and the permission statement is included in Appendix A. Because the instrument is copyrighted, it was not possible to include the entire survey in an appendix; thus, a sample of five questions is located in Appendix B. This instrument was augmented to capture demographic information that was important for the analysis concerning leadership style and organizational outcomes; as will be seen later, none of these independent variables proved to be significant predictors. The demographic information gathered included the participant’s age, level of education, years of full-time ministry, and race. In addition, it verified that the DS had been in office for a minimum of three years during the most recent decade. Thus, five demographic questions and a consent form were added to the survey (see Appendix C). In an effort to ensure that these questions were clear, prior to the distribution of the survey to actual study participants, the entire survey was administered to six volunteers who agreed to report any inconsistencies, lack of clarity, or issues with the survey. These comments were reviewed, and the five demographic questions were modified as necessary.

The MLQ measured each DS’s perception of his or her transformational leadership style in addition to his or her transactional and laissez-faire styles. By utilizing this survey, the data was gathered from DSs across North America (NA) at a reasonable cost and with minimal effort (Brewerton & Millard, 2002). This part of the design was cross-sectional, with the perceptions of the DSs only being elicited once during the time frame of the research.

Survey Monkey, an Internet provider of survey services, was retained to administer the instrument, coordinate the participation requests, and assemble the data.
into a usable format. Four iterations of e-mails were utilized during the data collection period to solicit the participation of the DSs in the North American region of the COTN. The first e-mail, representative of the four, is provided in Appendix D. All solicitations for participation were delivered and responses were received in the 3-week period from January 4, 2012, to January 24, 2012. Confidentiality was maintained since no one other than the primary researcher had a coding key to match each DS’s survey results with district growth statistics.

Creswell (2009) advocated self-administered surveys because they are efficient, reasonably priced, and allow the participants to address delicate issues anonymously. According to Creswell (2009), this provides more reliable data. However, one limitation to the use of this instrument was suggested by Babbie (2007): Online surveys may have difficulty representing the population because the sample only includes individuals with computer access during the time the sample is collected. This issue will be addressed in the sampling design and discussed in the following section. Gathering three to seven years of growth statistics for each DS from the national data base and correlating his or her transformational leadership style score from the MLQ provided insight to inform future actions. The findings will enable the COTN to establish more comprehensive plans for DS selection, initial development, and personal growth in transformational leadership styles.

**Population and Sample**

The sample population for this research included current and former Nazarene DSs in NA who were in office between the years of 2002 and 2011. Because the research
dealt with growth statistics, it was necessary to limit the population to DSs for whom at least three years of growth statistics were available (Croninger, 2008). Additionally, in an attempt to minimize the impact of leadership style change over time, the maximum years of data utilized for each DS was restricted to seven. This decision was made after consultations with the statistical experts and coaches at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. In all cases, the most recent data available was utilized. Also, the logistics associated with time, money, and availability restricted the sample by requiring the participants to have e-mail access and to have the capacity to respond in a three-week time frame. Some of the retired DSs were inaccessible or incapacitated to the extent that their contributions were not realized.

**Sample Selection**

The ecclesiastical organization studied was the North American region of the COTN. This is a subset of the global COTN and was the area identified for specific study. This area is made up of 80 districts enveloping the United States and Canada (see Figure 5). For the purposes of this study, all 80 districts’ records were scrutinized to determine which DSs met the requirements of the sampling plan. The population of DSs pertinent to this study included the DSs who held office between the years of 2002 and 2011 (120 individuals). The sampling from this population was only modified for reasons associated with insufficient data.

There were three categories of insufficient data causing DSs to be eliminated from the study. The first and largest issue was that 20 DSs were not in office for the minimum of 3 years as required for adequate growth statistics to be accumulated. This 3-year requirement was necessary because the study utilized the HLM software and needed to
include appropriate data to identify a pattern of growth (Croninger, 2008). The second reason for excluding DSs was that contact information was not available. There were three DSs in this category. In this case, the data in the COTN national archives was deficient, and these DSs could not be contacted. Efforts were made to minimize this category by using the tight-knit communication network between past and present DSs. The third issue was that some DSs were not assessable during the time frame that the survey instrument was available for completion by the DSs. This category included those who were traveling outside the United States, those who were no longer physically capable of participation, and some who were not sufficiently computer literate to participate. Extensive efforts were expended to include as many DSs as possible in the sample. Actions included, but were not limited to, follow-up with the COTN data base administrator and a snowball type exploration to obtain current contact information when there was obsolete information in the archives.
To summarize, there were 120 current or retired DSs who met the requirements established. Of these, only 67 were currently DSs during the time of the study, and their e-mail information was known to be current. Of the remaining 53, twenty DSs were not contacted because they did not meet the minimum requirement for number of years in office, three did not have contact information available, and at least two were traveling outside of the U.S. during the data gathering period.

In all, the survey instrument was sent to 97 potential participants. In the intervening three weeks, 69 individuals opened the survey. Of those, two potential participants did not accept the consent statement, and three others accepted the consent
statement but did not answer any questions. There were a total of 64 \((n = 64)\) completed responses, for a return rate of 66%. The high survey return rate was expected since worship attendance and membership growth is perceived by most DSs to be a relevant topic and since the history showed a high propensity for DS collaboration in denominational research. Of the 64 participants, 22 were former DSs, and 42 were current DSs. All of these individuals had held the office of DS for a minimum of 3 years.

Of the 64 returned surveys, three had missing data. These three persons skipped at least one question, but no one skipped more than three questions. In total, there were seven instances of missing data out of 1,280 possible. A Little’s Test was performed to determine that the data were missing completely at random. A \(p\) value of 0.05 was utilized to make this determination.

Of the 64 returned surveys, one was completed by an African American female, two were completed by Hispanic males, one was completed by a Native American male, and 60 were completed by Caucasian males. One DS had a high school diploma, six had bachelor’s degrees, 31 had master’s degrees, 20 had Doctor of Ministry degrees, and six had PhDs. Years of full-time ministry service included one respondent with 11 to 20 years, 12 with 21 to 30 years, 26 with 31 to 40 years, and 25 with more than 40 years. As has been stated previously, all had at least three years of service in the DS position; 31 had held the position for 3 to 10 years, and 33 had held the position for more than 10 years.
Procedure

A tailored design (Dillman, 2007) was utilized to ensure that the industry best practices were included in the survey. This effort was intended to create trust, to improve the perceived value, and to minimize perceived risk to the respondents. According to Dillman (2007), this approach also leveraged the technology used and attempted to minimize survey error. One of the suggestions that was utilized from Dillman’s best practices included making the respondent questions friendly, clear, and easily understood. This technique was utilized on the demographic questions since the copyright nature of the MLQ prohibited the researcher from changing the leadership style questions. Also, multiple contacts of study participants maximized the participation rate.

The DSs that met the study criteria were e-mailed a memo two days prior to the survey being delivered via Survey Monkey. This initial memo introduced the primary researcher, explained the purpose of the research, highlighted the value to the NA organization as a whole and to the DS personally, encouraged participation in the study, and listed the denominational support from the COTN executive leaders in Lenexa, Kansas. This letter also encouraged the potential participants to contact the researcher with any questions or concerns about the purpose of the project, about the security of their information, and about their rights concerning the research (see Appendix E).

Two days later, the survey was activated online using Survey Monkey. At this time, another e-mail was sent to participants that included a link to the survey (see Appendix D). All participants were provided with a consent form (see Appendix F). Once the consent form was accepted by highlighting the required area and intentionally clicking the symbol, another question was provided that confirmed their eligibility per the
sampling procedure. These two items then allowed the MLQ 5X to be accessible. When the MLQ was completed, a submit button allowed participants to register their responses. The survey period was open for 3 weeks, with a reminder going out to those who had not completed the questionnaire at various time intervals. At the end of the allotted data collection period, a thank you was sent to all who participated.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were summarized to capture the characteristics of the participants. HLM was utilized to evaluate the data for two reasons. First, the number of years that each DS had held his or her office varied from 3 to 7 years. All participants were required to have been in office for at least 3 years so that growth data could be evaluated. The maximum number of years utilized was capped at 7 years, with the most recent 7 years being analyzed. HLM was especially suited for this analysis because it processes information that has an unequal number of data points (Cameron & Trivedi, 2005; Schonfeld & Rindskopf, 2007). HLM was also initially constructed for research projects that have nested data (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010). The design of HLM allowed this issue to be dealt with while minimizing the effects of clustered errors (Chaplin, 2003; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002).

Statistical Techniques

Based on information from the literature review and consultation with statistical advisors in the College of Education at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, it was determined that the statistical technique that best suited the nesting situation and allowed for the most conservative error estimates was HLM (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002).
The national COTN data base that was accessed in this study had time variant variables that were utilized to analyze the research questions but had no time invariant variables. The time variant variables available were time and population. The only time invariant variables to be explored were leadership style and education level of the DS. Other statistical tests were performed as necessary to elucidate the findings for each outcome.

**Protection of Human Rights**

Prior to the participants being contacted, Internal Review Board approval was obtained from the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. Throughout the research process, the primary researcher was the only person with information concerning the participants. Any data that were shared with statisticians and advisors were coded to maintain participant confidentiality.

The introductory memo and all subsequent contacts with the participants stated that participation was voluntary. DSs were informed that they could exit the survey at any time should they decide that they no longer wanted to participate. An Internal Review Board request was submitted to the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, and a protocol numbered 12-111 was granted on December 19, 2011 (see Appendix G). The license for use of the MLQ 5X was granted by Mind Garden, Inc. (see Appendix A).

**Summary**

DSs have a great influence on organizational performance. The industry data shows that individuals working in government, education, and business environments with a transformational leader are more committed (Leithwood & Sleegers, 2006;
McGuire & Kennerly, 2006), satisfied (Vecchio et al., 2008), and effective (Pounder, 2008). They also demonstrate better citizenship behavior (Boerner et al., 2007; Purvanova et al., 2006), performance (Rose & Kumar, 2006; Wang et al., 2011; Yang et al., 2004), attitudes (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996), and effort (Webb, 2007). Since the finding of enhanced performance based on the transformational leadership style of the DS in the ecclesiastical setting has been validated by this study, executive leadership in the COTN can modify policies, establish learning outcomes for Nazarene educational institutions, and develop appropriate in-service training for DSs and those who aspire to become DSs. This study demonstrated that a correlation exists between leadership style and ecclesiastical organizational growth. The magnitude of the growth will need to be confirmed with further study. Chapters 4 and 5 will discuss the research findings and the implications of this study for the COTN, will recommend areas for future study, and will suggest applications.
CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS

The purpose of the study was to determine if there is a correlation between transformational leadership style and organizational growth in an ecclesiastical setting. Transformational leadership behavior was identified by Burns (1978) and was shaped into a theoretical framework by Bass (1985) and others. This paradigm has been enhanced by the development of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Form 5X-Short (MLQ; Avolio & Bass, 1995b), a tool that enables researchers to expand the understanding of a full range of leadership behaviors. The MLQ capitalizes on concepts like democratic versus autocratic behaviors, participative versus directive behaviors, and relational versus task-oriented behaviors, as well as provides a reliable and validated instrument for ongoing research. In this research, the MLQ was used to measure the perceived transformational leadership style of district superintendents (DSs) in the Church of the Nazarene (COTN) and was used to compare their scores to the growth of the district organization. The three research questions explored the impact that leadership style had on church membership, worship attendance, and new church starts. This chapter provides the quantitative findings from the research, organized to highlight the relationship between leadership style and each of these three growth metrics.
Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using SPSS version 18.0.0 and HLM student version 7. All respondents included in the analysis had been a DS for at least 3 years in the most recent decade (2002-2011). The descriptive statistics for the variables included in the research can be seen in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1

*HLM Level-1 Descriptive Statistics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Name</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Membership</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>8231.72</td>
<td>4348.13</td>
<td>928.00</td>
<td>18967.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worship Attendance</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>6565.14</td>
<td>3713.58</td>
<td>647.00</td>
<td>15312.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Church Starts</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>13.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>5147047.48</td>
<td>4409574.85</td>
<td>659286.00</td>
<td>21336647.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>59.08</td>
<td>6.40</td>
<td>43.00</td>
<td>71.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years as DS</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of Ministry Experience</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>6.00</td>
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</table>

Table 2

*HLM Level-2 Descriptive Statistics*

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<tr>
<th>Variable Name</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>87.14</td>
<td>7.44</td>
<td>65.00</td>
<td>99.00</td>
</tr>
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<td>Educational Level</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>7.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
These statistics will be referred to in the following two sections.

**Representative DS**

The transformational leadership score was based on the DS’s perception of his or her leadership behaviors and attributes. The DS represented by the grand centered (HLM nomenclature) process was a 59-year-old Caucasian male with a master’s degree, with at least 31 years of full-time ministry service, and with at least 3 years of service as a DS, who earned a transformational score of 87 out of a possible 100. This averaged score was higher than self-rated scores in other industries. The industry self-reporting average is 80 (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The individual scores for the DSs ranged from 65 to 99.

**Representative District**

The district represented by the grand centering process had an annual church membership of 8,232 people and a worship attendance of 6,565 people each Sunday. This representative district started 1.33 new churches each year and had a population of just over 5.1 million people. The average district included in the research experienced a 9% increase in overall population during the decade of study.

**Transformational Leadership Score**

Using the MLQ manual instructions (Avolio & Bass, 2004), the total transformational leadership score was computed for all participants by adding the subscores for the four survey questions in each of the five subcategories: idealized attributes, idealized behaviors, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and contingent reward (see Table 3).
Table 3

Transformational Leadership Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant ID #</th>
<th>Idealized Attributed</th>
<th>Idealized Behavior</th>
<th>Inspirational Motivation</th>
<th>Intellectual Stimulation</th>
<th>Individualized Consideration</th>
<th>Total Transformational Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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</table>
This process allowed for a maximum transformational score of 100 and a minimum of 0. These total scores were later used in Level-2 of the HLM model to determine if there was, in fact, a correlation between transformational leadership and the outcome variables.

**Variable Screening and Results**

A basic screening of the independent variables was performed to determine if the values met the criteria for normality. No variables required transformation as a result of this screening process. This result was obtained by testing each parameter for skewness and accepting any variable as essentially normal if the skewness coefficient was between +/- 2.0 (Nelson, 2012). SPSS version 18.0.0 was used for the skewness test; the test was based on an equation established by Bliss in 1967 (UCLA Academic Technology Services, 2011). HLM was utilized to determine the best model for each outcome variable. The results for each outcome variable (church membership, worship attendance, and new church starts) follow.

**Church Membership.** The HLM model for church membership was initially run with all the time variant variables in Level-1 and the time invariant variables in Level-2. For the purposes of this research, a $p$ value of less than 0.05 was considered significant, a value of 0.05 to 0.1 was considered borderline, and a value greater than 0.1 was considered insignificant (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010). Borderline and insignificant results were not included in any of the final models. Error terms in Level-2 of the HLM models were toggled on or off as required to allow the models to iterate appropriately. Where possible, error terms were included in the model. The final models for church membership used in HLM Level-1 and Level-2 are noted in Figure 6.
Figure 6. Summary of the HLM models for church membership.

The HLM results that were attained by running these models are displayed in Table 4.
Table 4

Final Estimation of Fixed Effects (Church Membership)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fixed Effect</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard error</th>
<th>t-ratio</th>
<th>Approx. d.f.</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For INTRCPT1, $\beta_0$</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRCPT2, $\gamma_{00}$</td>
<td>8101.343150</td>
<td>581.312859</td>
<td>13.936</td>
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<td>&lt;0.001</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL, $\gamma_{01}$</td>
<td>58.747727</td>
<td>78.737515</td>
<td>0.746</td>
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<td>0.458</td>
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<td>For TIME slope, $\beta_1$</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>INTRCPT2, $\gamma_{10}$</td>
<td>28.581827</td>
<td>8.417327</td>
<td>3.396</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL, $\gamma_{11}$</td>
<td>2.945734</td>
<td>0.964885</td>
<td>3.053</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For POP slope, $\beta_2$</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRCPT2, $\gamma_{20}$</td>
<td>0.000185</td>
<td>0.000091</td>
<td>2.029</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>0.043</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The reliability estimate for the main intercept was 0.999.

It was not possible to obtain a true R-squared value to explain the variance component in HLM. Therefore, a pseudo R-squared methodology was employed. Using this pseudo R-squared value from the Church Membership HLM Level 2 model, it was determined that the amount of variation accounted for once the Level 1 variables were controlled was improved by 5.89%.

Two results in Table 4 are noteworthy. First and most important, once time and population were controlled, and because of the total-time interaction (see the mixed model in Figure 6), an increase of one point on the transformational scale resulted in an annual increase of 2.95 church members per year. This was in addition to the time slope intercept of 28.58 (see Table 4). The result of this finding is that, for the decade studied, the represented district had the potential to grow church membership approximately 8% faster than the population if transformational leadership behaviors were utilized. Figure 7 provides a visual representation of the addition effect of the interaction. Second, as population grows, for every one million additional people in a district, an estimated 185 people will become new members in the COTN. Both findings are significant at the $p =$
0.05 level. It should also be noted that the three time-variant factors (age, years as a DS, and total years of full-time ministry) were not significant in predicting church membership growth. The results also indicated that the time invariant variable of education did not significantly mitigate church membership once time and population were controlled. The implications of these results will be highlighted in Chapter 5.

![Projected Decadal Potential for a Representative District](image)

*Figure 7. Projected decadal potential for a representative district (church membership).*

**Worship attendance.** The HLM model for worship attendance was initially run with all the time variant variables in Level-1 and the time invariant variables in Level-2. The criteria for significant findings remain as listed for church membership. As was the case with church membership, error terms in Level-2 of the HLM models were toggled on or off as required to enable the models to iterate appropriately. Where possible, error
terms were included in the model. The final models for worship attendance used in HLM Level-1 and Level-2 are detailed in Figure 8.

![Diagram of HLM models](image)

Figure 8. Summary of the HML models for worship attendance.

The HLM results that were attained by running these models are displayed in Table 5.
Table 5

*Final Estimation of Fixed Effects (Worship Attendance)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fixed Effect</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard error</th>
<th>t-ratio</th>
<th>Approx. d.f.</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For INTRCPT1, $\beta_0$</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRCPT2, $\gamma_{00}$</td>
<td>6616.821569</td>
<td>495.151363</td>
<td>13.363</td>
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<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL, $\gamma_{01}$</td>
<td>32.173188</td>
<td>67.075188</td>
<td>0.480</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>0.633</td>
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<tr>
<td>For TIME slope, $\beta_1$</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRCPT2, $\gamma_{10}$</td>
<td>-26.896628</td>
<td>9.091860</td>
<td>-2.958</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL, $\gamma_{11}$</td>
<td>3.428666</td>
<td>1.078224</td>
<td>3.180</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For POP slope, $\beta_2$</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRCPT2, $\gamma_{20}$</td>
<td>0.000148</td>
<td>0.000088</td>
<td>1.695</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>0.091</td>
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</table>

*Note: The reliability estimate for the main intercept was 0.999.*

As explained in the previous section, it was not possible to obtain a true variance component in HLM. Therefore, a pseudo R-squared methodology was employed. Using this pseudo R-squared value from the Worship Attendance HLM Level 2 model, it was determined that the amount of variation accounted for once the Level 1 variables were controlled was improved by 4.96%.

One result from the data on worship attendance from Table 5 was noteworthy in addressing the second research question. Once time and population were controlled, and because of the total-time interaction in the mixed model (see Figure 8), an increase of one point on the transformational scale resulted in an annual increase of 3.43 people attending worship in the district per year. This is in addition to the time slope intercept of -26.90 noted in Table 5. The result of this finding is that, for the decade studied, the represented district had the potential to grow worship attendance approximately 3% faster than the population if transformational leadership behaviors were utilized. Figure 9 gives a visual representation of the addition effect of the interaction. This finding is significant at the $p = 0.05$ level. It should also be noted that the three time variant factors (age, years as a
DS, and total years of full-time ministry) were not significant in predicting worship attendance growth. The results also indicated that the time invariant variable of education level did not significantly mitigate worship attendance once time and population were controlled. The implications of these data findings on worship attendance will be highlighted in Chapter 5.

![Projected Decadal Potential for a Representative District](image)

*Figure 9. Projected decadal potential for a representative district (worship attendance).*

**New Church Starts.** As was mentioned in Chapter 3, the researcher was not expecting to obtain significant results associated with new church starts based on previous research findings. The issue of gauge discrimination found in other research studies conducted using the COTN district new church start data in 2011 was an issue for this research as well (Church, 2011). In fact, the issue was severe enough that various
attempts at including and excluding error terms, changes to centering of variables, and including or excluding variables predicted to impact this outcome did not enable the student version of HLM to run a reasonable model. The gauge discrimination issue was caused by the relatively few number of Nazarene churches started in the North American region. This issue was exacerbated by the fact that the total number of new churches started in the researched districts had declined 17% over the last decade. Further discussion of this result will be undertaken in Chapter 5.

**Five Factors Analysis.** As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the entire MLQ was administered to the participating DSs, and the five factors representing the transformational leadership construct (idealized influence, idealized behavior, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration) were compiled. Although not the focus of this research, it is important to know which of the five factors significantly contributed to the total transformational score’s correlation with district church membership and district worship attendance. An analysis was performed for each of the five factors separately. In addition to the data from the five factors, the items of interest (fixed effects for time slope) are repeated from Tables 1 and 2. This information is presented in Table 6.
Table 6

Final Estimation of Fixed Effects (Total and Five Factors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Name</th>
<th>Fixed Effect</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>p-value</th>
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<tr>
<td>Church Membership</td>
<td>For Time slope, $\beta_i$</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score, $\gamma_{11}$</td>
<td>2.945734</td>
<td>0.002</td>
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<td>Idealized Influence</td>
<td>10.104458</td>
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<td>Idealized Behavior</td>
<td>11.299448</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inspirational Motivation</td>
<td>7.387296</td>
<td>0.065</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intellectual Stimulation</td>
<td>5.62684</td>
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<td>Individual Consideration</td>
<td>10.77437</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Worship Attendance</td>
<td>For Time slope, $\beta_i$</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score, $\gamma_{11}$</td>
<td>3.428666</td>
<td>0.002</td>
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<tr>
<td>Idealized Influence</td>
<td>14.224716</td>
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<tr>
<td>Idealized Behavior</td>
<td>3.893855</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inspirational Motivation</td>
<td>14.694098</td>
<td>0.001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intellectual Stimulation</td>
<td>6.34547</td>
<td>0.130</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Consideration</td>
<td>9.611525</td>
<td>0.020</td>
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</table>

Note: The reliability estimate for each main intercept was 0.999

These results identified idealized influence, idealized behaviors, and individual consideration as being significant factors for church membership growth. Idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration were significant factors for improving worship attendance. While not the focus of the research, this information should be helpful in prioritizing the action items for executive leaders in the
COTN as they consider implementing the recommendations proposed in the final section of this dissertation.

**Limitations of the Study – Updated with Analysis**

The perceived limitations for this study were outlined in Chapter 1 (page 24). However, the research results confirmed some of the limitations and explicated others. Each of the four limitations discussed in Chapter 1 is included here with additional information or discussion.

First, the limitation concerning leadership change was addressed by the time span chosen and the design of the study. This approach was successful in that time was indeed controlled and the results found to be significant; however, this approach did not go far enough to minimize the impact of the biases associated with the cross-sectional nature of the survey instrument. It would be useful to replicate the study using longitudinal MLQ data from these same participants.

Second, because of the nonexperimental design of the study, the author found it difficult to focus only on the correlation between the dependent and independent variables. The temptation to attribute cause and articulate the extent of the impact was difficult to resist. This study should be replicated in a larger ecclesiastical community where sample sizes are not a constraint so that a randomized design could be incorporated. The research was effective in providing new knowledge but could be improved with another iteration and an enhanced research design.

Third, the sample available for the chosen organization was borderline with only 99 persons meeting the sampling criterion. However, the return rate of 66% was
excellent and resulted in a sample size of 64. The author knows of no known techniques that could have further minimized the impact of this limitation. It is an acceptable sample but disappointing nonetheless.

Fourth, the biases associated with self-reporting were not intended to be explicated with this study. However, the research could be augmented by peer assessments of each participant’s leadership style. The fact that there was a significant scale compression associated with this particular sample insinuates that further study could illuminate the nuances associated with self-reporting in the ecclesiastical community. The vocabulary of the survey could possibly conflict with the terminology of the clergy profession and, therefore, would be a complicating factor.

Summary

HLM software was utilized to determine if there was a correlation between ecclesiastical organizational growth and leadership style (as perceived by DSs in the NA region of the COTN). The results showed that there was, indeed, a significant correlation between perceived transformational leadership style and two of the three outcomes. Both church membership and worship attendance are positively correlated with perceived transformational leadership scores. The independent variables of age, total years of ministry experience, years of DS experience, and level of education did not prove to be significant factors. Chapter 5 will present a discussion of the results and elucidate potential implications.
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The literature review highlighted the fact that there is a correlation between transformational leadership and organizational growth in several industries, including government, education, and manufacturing; however, this correlation had not been explored in the ecclesiastical community. This gap is unfortunate because the ecclesiastical community touches most individuals at some point in their lives. As was mentioned earlier, the efficiency and effectiveness of this community is important so that resources can be leveraged to increase love, forgiveness, hope, and transformation in society at large and, specifically, within individuals. This research was designed to answer three questions crafted to close the gap in the research concerning the relationship between leadership style and ecclesiastical organizational growth in the areas of church membership, worship attendance, and new church starts. The study found that there was a correlation between the self-perceived transformational leadership style of midlevel leaders in the Church of the Nazarene and two of the three growth metrics (church membership and worship attendance). This chapter will discuss the results, implications, and recommendations for each of the research questions.
Discussion and Implications

The premise of this research was based on the assumption that the North American culture has changed substantially since the COTN was established in 1908. It was postulated that the leadership styles taught and modeled for the current midlevel leaders, called district superintendents (DSs) in the COTN, was based on a transactional style of leadership; however, recent research has indicated that transformational leadership behaviors much more effectively increase constituent satisfaction, work effort, retention, and performance. This quantitative study focused on organizational performance. The following discussion will illuminate the results articulated in the previous chapter by expounding upon the three metrics deemed most important by the COTN to measure district growth and DS success.

Church Membership

The key finding listed in Chapter 4 concerning church membership was that, once time and population were controlled, the represented district had the potential of growing church membership 8% faster than the overall population. This finding is significant for the COTN and, perhaps, for other nonprofit and parachurch organizations. As the leader perceives that his or her transformational leadership attributes and behaviors increase, the organization tends to grow more quickly. As has been shown, some North American church denominations are in a state of decline in regard to their membership numbers. The COTN is not. However, the COTN membership growth is not keeping pace with the overall population growth in North America (NA). The research shows that the districts studied have had an average overall population growth of 9% in the last decade. These
same districts have only grown 0.54% in Nazarene church membership during this same decade. The good news is that this trend can be changed. The growth statistics shown in Chapter 4 are not just for church membership growth compared to previous years but rather membership growth compared to district population increases. This means that increasing transformational leadership behaviors could result in returning the COTN membership to healthy growth rates (i.e. membership growth that exceeds the population growth). Figure 10 provides a visual representation of this potential based on the most recent decade of COTN church membership statistics in NA.

![COTN Church Membership Versus Projected Potential - NA](image)

*Figure 10. COTN church membership versus projected potential – North America.*

This finding is particularly impressive given the scale compression present in the transformational leadership style score. As was seen in Chapter 4, the representative DS
had a transformational score of 87. This is significantly higher ($p < 0.05$) than the normative scores provided for self-reporting leaders in other industries (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The normative score for the industry is 80, with a standard deviation of 2.46. When the scores are compared on a standardized scale, the representative DS has a Z score of 2.73. This would indicate that there is more than a 99% chance that DSs are different from the average leader taking this survey from various industries.

It is not clear from this research if these inflated scores are a result of an actual difference or a vocational bias. This is a matter for further research. Regardless of why the scores are higher for DSs in the COTN, the scale compression increases the difficulty in discerning a correlation between leadership style and the outcome of interest (church membership) at a statistically significant level. The fact that a 1-point increase in a DS’s transformational score is found to be significant in the ecclesiastical community is important. The fact that this finding is significant in increasing church membership in spite of the scale compression is astounding.

If the COTN is to accomplish its mission of making Christlike disciples (Board of General Superintendents, 2011) and of transforming lives so that they emulate the life of Christ, then clearly a change from the transactional leadership approach of the past to a more transformational style of leadership is warranted and desirable. This study shows that as DSs move in the direction of possessing and practicing transformational leadership attributes and behaviors, the organization responds positively and grows in church membership.

It is noteworthy that the other variables which were postulated to have been important in predicting church growth (age, years of service as a DS, total years of full-
time ministry, and level of education) were not found to be significant. It was speculated that these variables might be important contributors in a regression equation predicting district membership growth. This was not the case. The research showed that none of these variables was significantly correlated with district-wide church membership growth.

One caveat must be noted concerning years of experience as a DS. The initial research design intended for years of experience as a DS to be used exclusively to screen DSs for inclusion in the survey sample. For this reason, the variable was envisioned and crafted as a dichotomous variable. In retrospect, this was not an efficient plan. This variable should be reconfigured as a continuous variable, and a replication study should be performed to elucidate the impact of longevity in the DS role on the desired outcomes (church membership, worship attendance, and new church starts).

This research is not insinuating that DSs need to completely change their approaches to leadership or change their basic message. Rather, the research intimates that there are specific attributes and behaviors that correlate with district growth. As the DS increases his or her propensity to utilize these behaviors and increasingly acquires the attributes associated with transformational leadership, he or she is much more likely to see this metric of church membership growth rise to levels exceeding the population growth. The recommendations to enhance these findings in specific and implementable ways will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

**Worship Attendance**

The key finding listed in Chapter 4 concerning worship attendance was that, once time and population were controlled, the represented district had the potential of growing
worship attendance 3% faster than the overall population. This finding is significant for the COTN and may be informative for other nonprofit and parachurch organizations. The results showed that as a midlevel leader in the COTN perceives his or her transformational leadership behaviors to increase, the district for which he or she is responsible grows more quickly. The data revealed that overall worship attendance in the 80 North American districts of the COTN has declined 2.7% during the most recent decade (2002 to 2011), and the worship attendance for the Nazarene districts researched for this study has declined 2.8%. During the same decade, the population in the districts studied has grown 9.0%.

This study found that a self-perceived increase in the occurrence of transformational leadership attributes and behaviors is correlated with growth. The worship attendance results presented in Chapter 4 confirmed that as the DSs’ perceptions of their transformational behaviors and attributes increased, worship attendance also grew. This growth is not just year-to-year growth with the total worship attendance showing miniscule improvement; rather, this is real growth that exceeds the population growth. This new knowledge has the potential to radically change the paradigm for DS selection and development. Figure 11 is a visual representation of the impact that transformational leadership could have on the COTN worship attendance.
In the previous section on church membership, the issue of scale compression was presented. This concept applies to worship attendance, also. The argument will not be repeated here; however, it is noted that in light of the scale compression, the finding of a statistically significant correlation between leadership style and worship attendance is extraordinary. This knowledge allows the executive leadership of the COTN to have a theoretical framework from which to develop a viable, strategic plan for returning the NA region of the denomination to robust growth rates. As has been shown in Chapters 1 and 2, this knowledge complements the teaching, if not the practice, of the New Testament scriptures. The confirmation that attributed idealized influence, behavioral idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration behaviors correlate with organizational performance in this ecclesiastical
community may be the impetus required to rethink the theories and strategies taught and implemented that mirror the business community’s cult of efficiency (Callahan, 1962). The understanding of this correlation will enable thoughtful individuals to change the systems and processes by which DSs are selected and developed. Perceived transformational leadership style is positively correlated with worship attendance, and the potential is present to return the COTN to healthy growth.

Other variables that were thought to be predictors of worship attendance were found to be insignificant. These included age, years of service as a DS, total years of full-time ministry, and level of education. The recommendations to augment these findings and optimize the impact on the COTN will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

**New Church Starts**

As was stated in Chapter 4, the researcher was not expecting to obtain significant results associated with new church starts. Previous research has shown that there is insufficient data to provide statistically significant findings and that the gauge discrimination for new church starts is inadequate. The concern of gauge discrimination raised in research conducted using the COTN district new church start data in 2011 is an issue for this research as well (Church, 2011). The gauge discrimination problem was caused by the relatively few number of Nazarene churches started in the North American region; however, there are at least two ways to address the lack of gauge discrimination for this metric. First, an exploration could be made of the new church start process in order to identify a variable with more dispersion and volume of data to use as a pseudo variable for new church starts. This could be something such as the number of district
preaching points initiated each year, the number of funding requests for district home
mission endeavors, or the number of small group discipleship groups initiated. The
second opportunity would be for the previous two metrics (church membership and
worship attendance) to be improved to at least match the population growth.

Improvement in these two metrics would, presumably, increase the number of
new starts and create more data and dispersion of data for research purposes. Either of
the two above solutions could be useful to illuminate any correlation that might exist
between transformational leadership style and new church starts. This gauge
discrimination dilemma will have to be dealt with in future research. Recommendations
for this metric will not be addressed in this report directly. Rather, it is assumed that if
the recommendations associated with church membership and worship attendance result
in organizational growth, this metric will emanate as a natural result.

**Recommendations**

The following recommendations are respectfully proffered with the understanding
that all organizations are systems and that the author is not cognizant of all of the details
and intricacies of the COTN general organization or the interworkings of the district
organizations.

1. Inform all 80 Nazarene DSs in North America about this new information and
   provide details concerning transformational leadership attributes and
   behaviors.

2. Assemble a group of DSs with exemplary scores on the self-rated
   transformational leadership scale for a brainstorming session concerning how
this knowledge could be leveraged within the COTN.

3. Consider authorizing research to determine if the correlation established by this research is actually a causal effect.

4. Commission a study to determine if there is a correlation (better yet causation) between transformational leadership style and organizational growth at the congregational level.

5. Present the findings to the appropriate pastoral leadership program directors at the nine Nazarene liberal arts universities and the two Nazarene national education entities in North America.

6. Present this information at NA forums, such as the Association of Nazarene Sociologists, so that other researchers and practitioners can be stimulated to research the implications and recommend avenues for leveraging these findings concerning the benefit of transformational leadership.

7. Prepare materials to intentionally train, coach, and mentor future DSs in the attributes and behaviors associated with transformational leadership to increase the likelihood of developing more transformational leaders.

8. Specifically and intentionally change the new DS information and training package to provide an assessment of each new DS’s transformational leadership style, and implement processes to support ongoing change toward increasing transformational behaviors.

9. Leverage the existing channels of education by providing the results to church consulting firms that collaborate with the Nazarene church.

10. Commission a refresh of this study with a design that eliminates self-
reporting biases.

11. Share findings with the Center for Creative Leadership – Ecclesiastical Division.

12. Commission a study to determine if the findings in other industries concerning follower retention, satisfaction, and extra effort are replicated in the ecclesiastical community.

13. Replicate this research using a continuous variable for years of DS service.

**Conclusions**

This research has verified in an ecclesiastical setting what is already known in the government, education, manufacturing, and other industry settings: Transformational leadership style, as perceived by the leader, is correlated with organizational growth. Specifically, it was determined that there is certainly a correlation between district superintendents’ perceptions of their leadership styles and organizational growth as measured by church membership and worship attendance in the North American districts of the Church of the Nazarene (COTN). This finding is extraordinary because it provides a mechanism for the COTN to return to vigorous expansion that exceeds the population growth. This new knowledge can be utilized to rejuvenate COTN strategic plans focused on organizational growth. While this research is not a causal study, the findings should also stimulate additional research concerning transformational leadership style in other ecclesiastical communities.
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

MULTIFACTOR LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE
FORM 5X-SHORT LICENSE

For use by David Church only. Received from Mind Garden, Inc. on October 24, 2011

mind garden
www.mindgarden.com

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to grant permission for the above named person to use the following copyright material:

Instrument: Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

Authors: Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass

Copyright: 1995 by Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass

for his/her thesis research.

Five sample items from this instrument may be reproduced for inclusion in a proposal, thesis, or dissertation.

The entire instrument may not be included or reproduced at any time in any other published material.

Sincerely,

Robert Most
Mind Garden, Inc.
www.mindgarden.com

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Published by Mind Garden, Inc., www.mindgarden.com
APPENDIX B

MULTIFACTOR LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE FORM 5X-SHORT
SAMPLE QUESTIONS

MLQ Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire
Leader Form (5x-Short)

My Name: ___________________________ Date: ____________
Organization ID #: __________________ Leader ID #: __________________

This questionnaire is to describe your leadership style as you perceive it. Please answer all items on this answer sheet. If an item is irrelevant, or if you are unsure or do not know the answer, leave the answer blank.

Forty-five descriptive statements are listed on the following pages. Judge how frequently each statement fits you. The word "others" may mean your peers, clients, direct reports, supervisors, and/or all of these individuals.

Use the following rating scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Once in a while</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Fairly often</th>
<th>Frequently, if not always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I provide others with assistance in exchange for their efforts ........................................ 0 1 2 3 4
2. I re-examine critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate .......................... 0 1 2 3 4
3. I fail to interfere until problems become serious .............................................................. 0 1 2 3 4
4. I focus attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from standards. ........ 0 1 2 3 4
5. I avoid getting involved when important issues arise .......................................................... 0 1 2 3 4
APPENDIX C

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

**Question 1:**
Are you currently or have you been a District Superintendent in the Church of the Nazarene?

**Question 2:**
How many years were you or have been a District Superintendent in the Church of the Nazarene?

  __ Less than 3 years  __ 3 to 10 years  __ More than 10 years

**Question 3:**
What is your current age?

**Question 4:**
How many years of full-time ministry have you contributed?

**Question 5:**
What is your highest level of education (Not including Honorary Degrees)?

  __ High School Diploma  __ Bachelor’s Degree  __ Master’s Degree  __ D Min.
  __ PhD  __ None of the above  __ Prefer not to say

**Question 6:**
What is your race?

  __ African American  __ Caucasian  __ Hispanic  __ Native American  __ Other
APPENDIX D

INITIAL SURVEY REQUEST – JANUARY 4, 2012

To: [Email]
From: "dmchurch@nbc.edu via surveymonkey.com"
Subject: Leadership Style and Organizational Growth Research Study - David M. Church

Body: [LastName], David M Church has contacted you and requested your participation in the following survey, your response would be appreciated.

Here is a link to the survey:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx

This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address. Please do not forward this message.

Thank you for your participation!

Please note: If you do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.
https://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx
APPENDIX E

SURVEY INTRODUCTION E-MAIL

Dear [Name], you are invited to take part in a research project titled – Leadership Style and Organizational Growth.
This study is being conducted by a researcher named David Church who is a doctoral student at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. David is an ordained elder in the Nazarene church and has the full support of Dr. Broadbooks, the Regional Director for the Church of the Nazarene in North America.

Background Information:
The purpose of this study is to identify if there is a correlation between District Superintendent’s leadership styles and district growth. Other industries have found that this correlation exists and it has been helpful in informing leaders concerning their personal style and introducing them to new vocabulary, concepts, and behaviors.

Procedures:
If you agree to be a part of this study, you will be asked to:
5. Complete a 45-item Multiple Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ5x), which should take no more than 12 minutes.
6. Answer 6 demographic questions, which will take approximately 3 minutes.

Nature of the Study:
Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision to participate, or not, will be respected. If you decide to participate you may still change your mind and excuse yourself at any point during the survey. You may skip any questions which you believe are too personal or intrusive.

Timeline:
A few days from now you will receive an e-mail which includes an informed consent document and directions for completing the survey. If you agree to participate you will click on the survey button and begin responding to the survey questionnaire. An opportunity will be provided for you to learn more about your leadership style.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support in this endeavor to further understand the complexities and nuances of district level leadership.

Dave
Rev. David M. Church
Director Leadership & Ethics Program
Nazarene Bible College
Office - 719-884-5095
Cell - 719-440-9691
"Delivering Confidence for Ethical Leadership"
Leadership Style - Multifactor Leadership

Questionnaire - 4 Jan 2012

Consent to be a Research Subject - UCCS Required Content

Title: Leadership Style and Organizational Growth
Principal Investigator: David M. Church (Faculty advisor: Corinne Harmon)
Funding Source: None
Introduction:
You are being asked to participate in a research project titled – Leadership Style Versus Organizational Growth.
You have been chosen because you have been a District Superintendent in the Church of the Nazarene sometime during the last ten years. The research is being conducted by David Church, a doctoral student at the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs. Permission for this study has been granted by the North America Region of the Church of the Nazarene. This consent form is designed to tell you everything you need to think about before you decide to consent (agree) to be in the research study. It is entirely your choice. If you decide to take part, you can change your mind later on and withdraw from the research study without any penalty. You can skip any questions that you do not wish to answer.
Study Overview and Procedures:
The purpose of this study is to identify if there is a correlation between a District Superintendent’s perception of his/her personal leadership style and district growth. If you agree to be a part of this study, you will be asked to:
1. Complete a 45-item Multiple Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ5x), which should take no more than 20 minutes.
2. Answer six demographic questions, which will take approximately 5 minutes.
Risks and Discomforts:
The risks associated with your participation are perceived to be minimal. All information that you provide will be held in strict confidence by the primary researcher, David Church, and all other personnel will only be provided coded data that does not include any information that could be tracked back to you.
Reports and conclusions will be provided in such a way that no person can be identified.

Benefits:
The direct benefit will be that you become more aware of your leadership style.

Compensation:
There will be no compensation provided to participants of this study.

Confidentiality:
Certain offices and people other than the researchers may look at study records. Government agencies and UCCS employees overseeing proper study conduct may look at your study records. These offices include the UCCS Institutional Review Board, and the UCCS Office of Sponsored Programs. UCCS will maintain the privacy of any research records we create to the extent we are required to do so by law. A study number rather than your name will be used on study records wherever possible.

Study records can be opened by court order. They may also be produced in response to a subpoena or a request for production of documents.

In addition, your individual privacy will be maintained in all publications or presentations resulting from this study. All information from your survey will be immediately coded by the primary researcher, David Church, and only coded data will be available to statisticians and other persons consulted in the evaluation of the data.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal from the Study:
You have the right to leave this study at any time without penalty. You may refuse to do any procedures you do not feel comfortable with, or answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. If you withdraw from the study, you may request that your research information not be used by contacting the researcher(s) listed above.

Contact Information:
Contact David Church at 719-884-5095 or by e-mail DMChurch@nbc.edu
- if you have any questions about this study or your part in it,
- if you have questions, concerns or complaints about the research, or
- if you would like information about the survey results when they are prepared.

Contact the Research Compliance Coordinator at 719-255-3903 or via email at irb@uccs.edu:
- if you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or
- if you have questions, concerns or complaints about the research.

*  

1. Electronic Consent:
Please check the appropriate box below if you agree to be in this study. By doing so, you will be signing this consent form electronically. The
date and time of your consent will be recorded electronically. By signing this consent form electronically, you will not give up any of your legal rights. You may print a copy of this consent form to keep.

☐ Electronic Consent: Please check the appropriate box below if you agree to be in this study. By doing so, you will be signing this consent form electronically. The date and time of your consent will be recorded electronically. By signing this consent form electronically, you will not give up any of your legal rights. You may print a copy of this consent form to keep. Clicking here indicates that I have read the description of the study, and I agree to participate.

☐ Clicking here indicates that I have not read the description of the study, and/or I do not agree to participate.
APPENDIX G

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO COLORADO SPRINGS
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of human Subjects

Date: December 20, 2011
Institutional Review Board Approval

IRB PROTOCOL NO.: 12-111
Protocol Title: Leadership Style Versus Organizational Growth
Principal Investigator: David Church
Type of Review: Expedited

Approval Expires December 19, 2012
Note, if exempt, if there are no major changes in the research, protocol does not require
renewal on a continuing basis by the IRB.

If externally funded:
OSP #: Sponsor:

Dear Rev. Church,

Thank you for submitting your Request for IRB Review. The protocol identified above has been reviewed and approved according to the policies of this institution and the provisions of applicable federal regulations. The review category is noted above, along with the expiration date, if applicable.

Once human participant research has been approved, it is the Principal Investigator’s (PI) responsibility to report any changes in research activity related to the project. The PI must provide the IRB with all protocol and consent forms, amendments, and revisions. The IRB must approve these changes prior to implementation. All advertisements recruiting study subjects must also receive prior approval by the IRB. The PI must promptly inform the IRB of all unanticipated serious adverse events (within 24 hours). All unanticipated adverse events must be reported to the IRB within 1 week (see 45CFR46.103(b)(5)). Failure to comply with these federally mandated responsibilities may result in suspension or termination of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Mike Sanderson in the Office of Sponsored Programs at 719-255-3903 or michael.sanderson@uccs.edu or ibr@uccs.edu

Thank you for your concern about human subject protection issues, and good luck with your research.

Sincerely yours,

Jennae P. Nelson
Jennae P. Nelson, PhD
IRB Chair