

MENTORSHIP OF THE FEMALE WORSHIP LEADER

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, some evangelical churches have seen a rise in the number of females involved in worship ministry leadership. Despite the female worship leader's significant call to ministry, many challenges still exist in fulfilling God's call on her life. Some of these challenges include clarity of call, difficulties in a male-saturated work environment, and perceived lack of opportunities for ministry. Additionally, some female worship leaders feel marginalized by the reluctance of churches to ordain them to the ministries in which they already serve. Although this paper will not address the question of whether women should or should not be ordained, the issue contributes to the acceptance of women in various ministry roles. In order to address these challenges, this qualitative study will examine the need for mentoring relationships between young or novice female worship leaders and more experienced female worship leaders. Exploration of the relevant literature will focus on the biblical foundations for women in ministry leadership, the nature of mentoring relationships in general, and also the mentorship methods for worship leaders and women. The intention of this study is to show that the experienced female worship leader can address the unique challenges experienced by the young or novice female worship leader through modeling biblical principles, lifestyle worship and respect for authority.

Keywords: female mentorship, female worship leader, mentoring, worship leader, worship ministry leadership

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	5
Purpose of the Study.....	9
Significance of the Study.....	9
Research Questions	11
Core Concepts	12
Hypotheses	13
Methods	15
Research Plan	16
Definition of Terms	17
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	19
Biblical Principles of Women in Ministry Leadership.....	19
<i>Deborah</i>	20
<i>Huldah</i>	21
<i>Miriam</i>	22
<i>Priscilla</i>	23
<i>Junia</i>	24
<i>Mary</i>	25
<i>Conclusions</i>	26
Review of Available Literature	27
<i>Challenges Faced by Females in WML</i>	27
<i>Mentorship of Worship Leaders</i>	34
<i>Mentorship of Women</i>	36

<i>Other Related Literature</i>	40
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	43
Research Method	43
Research Questions	43
Hypotheses	44
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS	46
Answering the First Research Question	46
<i>Ambiguity Regarding Call to Ministry</i>	46
<i>Challenges Working in a Male-dominated Environment</i>	49
<i>Perceived Lack of Ministry Opportunities</i>	53
<i>Other Challenges Face by Women in WML</i>	55
Answering the Second Research Question.....	57
<i>Modeling Biblical Principles</i>	57
<i>Modeling Lifestyle Worship</i>	60
<i>Modeling Respect for Authority</i>	63
<i>Other Benefits of Modeling</i>	65
Conclusion	65
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS	67
Summary of the Study	67
Discussion of Findings	69
<i>Research Question 1</i>	69
<i>Research Question 2</i>	74
Implications for Future Practice	77
<i>Implications for the Experienced Female in WML</i>	78

<i>Implications for the Novice Female in WML</i>	81
Limitations.....	89
Conclusions	92
Recommendations for Future Research.....	94
BIBLIOGRAPHY	96

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the evangelical church has witnessed an increased number of females who have experienced a significant call to worship ministry leadership (WML).¹ This increase is somewhat surprising and significant because it follows several years of a conservative stance regarding women in ministry leadership within evangelical churches.² This stance was brought on in part by decisions of prominent evangelical denominations related to women in ministry leadership. In 1984 the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) passed a resolution opposing the ordination of women, saying, “we encourage the service of women in all aspects of church life and work other than pastoral functions and leadership roles entailing ordination.”³ Additionally, in 2000, the SBC amended the *Baptist Faith and Message* to state that the office of pastor should be limited to men.⁴

Although these resolutions and amendments were not intended to demean the role of women in ministry leadership, Dr. Randall Bradley suggests, “These statements were perceived by many to relegate the role of women to the home.”⁵ The ensuing effect was that many women who felt called to WML during this time period were conflicted regarding what their role in ministry should be. Bradley further states, “Since these women who were called and trained . . .

¹ Verna Mazak, “A Call to Excellence: Leadership Training and Mentoring Manual for Women in Ministry in the Twenty-First Century,” D.Min. diss., Liberty University School of Divinity, 2016, 5, accessed July 3, 2019, <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/1269/>.

² Randall Bradley, “Women in Baptist Music Ministry,” *Baptist History and Heritage* vol. 45, no. 2 (Spring 2010), 34-46, accessed July 3, 2019, <http://www.baptisthistory.org/>, 40.

³ “Resolution on Ordination and the Role of Women in Ministry,” SBC.net, accessed August 28, 2019, <http://www.sbc.net/resolutions/1088/resolution-on-ordination-and-the-role-of-women-in-ministry>.

⁴ “The Baptist Faith and Message,” SBC.net, accessed August 28, 2019, <http://www.sbc.net/bfm2000/bfm2000.asp>.

⁵ Bradley, 41.

were not moving into places of service, the next generation of women were not mentored or called out.”⁶ While the church is now experiencing an increased number of women in WML, the majority of these young women have had no role model or mentor to help them navigate through unique challenges such as how to discern their call to ministry, how to survive and thrive in a male-saturated work environment and inaccurate perceptions regarding opportunities for ministry and service.⁷

It is significant that the evangelical church now finds itself experiencing a rise in female WML. What this suggests is that the church is beginning to embrace and recognize the gifts of women in ministry leadership. Galatians 3:28 speaks to this, saying, “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”⁸ Additionally, Joel 2:28-29 offers a prophecy of end times that is also referenced by the Apostle Peter in Acts 2:18. Joel says, “I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.” God is calling both men *and* women to serve in significant roles within the church. Speaking of women experiencing a call to ministry, Lex Buckley says, “We need to choose to be confident in who God says we are, especially when the enemy speaks lies to us. Satan’s desire for us is to stay hidden, whereas God is calling us to step out and fully embrace all that He has created us to be.”⁹ The church has a

⁶ Bradley, “Women in Baptist Music Ministry,” 44.

⁷ Krissy Nordhoff, “Let’s Deal With the Challenges You Face as a Female Worship Leader” *Charisma Leader*, February 20, 2019, accessed July 25, 2019, file:///Users/Stage/Desktop/Thesis%20Research/Let’s%20Deal%20With%20The%20Challenges%20You%20ace%20as%20a%20Female%20Worship%20Leader%20-%20Charisma%20Leader.webarchive, 2-3.

⁸ Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the *New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Bible Publishers, 1984).

⁹ Lex Buckley, *Rise Up & Sing: Equipping the Female Worship Leader* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2010), 30.

responsibility to help raise up and train both men and women who are called to ministry leadership. This involves giving them opportunities to serve, providing constructive feedback and evaluation and pairing them with mentors who will help guide them in their journey of fulfilling God's call on their lives.

S. Joseph Kidder describes mentoring as, “an ancient practice that involves a relational process where experience and values pass from one generation to another.”¹⁰ Many experienced female worship leaders have a wealth of experience and have had the opportunity to develop mature values that can be invaluable to younger female worship leaders. Kristen Padilla writes, “You need someone who will speak truth into your life even when it is difficult to do so. You need someone who is committed to pray for you, to listen to you, to impart wisdom, and to teach you.”¹¹ The experienced female worship leader is uniquely equipped to mentor the young or novice female worship leader. “Mentoring goes beyond support and the transfer of knowledge. Mentoring seeks to promote significant movement in perspective, understanding, and behavior.”¹² Through mentoring relationships, young female worship leaders can find help in navigating challenges and obstacles to ultimately fulfill God's calling on their lives. “We need all capable hands on deck reaching out to the next generation, pulling them to the table, . . . teaching them the Bible, speaking words of wisdom to them, coming alongside them in leadership, and instilling confidence in them.”¹³

¹⁰ S. Joseph Kidder, “Mentoring: A Way of Life” *Ministry Magazine* (March 2017), accessed July 25, 2019, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2017/03/Mentoring-A-way-of-life>, 5.

¹¹ Kristen Padilla, *Now That I'm Called: A Guide for Women Discerning a Call to Ministry*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018), 177.

¹² Lonnie Eloris Goodwin, “Effective Discipling of Women” D.Min. diss., Talbot School of Theology, 2016, 25.

¹³ Tara Beth Leach, *Emboldened: A Vision for Empowering Women in Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2017), 98.

In addition to the lack of experienced female worship leaders over the past several years, capable and experienced female worship leaders are sometimes reluctant to enter into mentoring relationships. John Maxwell writes about several reasons many people choose not to engage in mentoring, including insecurity, ego, inability to see potential in others, wrong ideas of success and lack of training. Insecurity can manifest itself in two ways. The first is the inability of a person to believe that they have anything of value to offer in a mentoring relationship. The second is the thought that the mentee could possibly become more successful than the mentor and become a career threat.¹⁴ Insecurity can become a significant challenge for the experienced female worship leader who has possibly faced some form of sexism or gender discrimination within the church. Discrimination can wear away at a person's confidence and cause them to doubt their own self-worth. "Sin takes on many forms, but one of its forms is to destroy another person's soul. The sexism experienced as a woman in ministry has that potential. It has the ability to seep through our defenses so as to get at and undo the center of who we are."¹⁵ Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth echoes this in her book, *Lies Women Believe: And the Truth that Sets Them Free*. "In many cases . . . we allow the opinions of others to determine our view of ourselves and our sense of worth. Sometimes the input of others is accurate and helpful. But not always."¹⁶ Additionally, Tara Beth Leach says, "Women in the church are consistently underestimating themselves and the gifts God has given them."¹⁷ This tendency to underestimate their own

¹⁴ John C. Maxwell, *Mentoring 101: What Every Leader Needs to Know* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2008), 4-5.

¹⁵ Karoline M. Lewis, *She: Five Keys to Unlock the Power of Women in Ministry* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2016), 149.

¹⁶ Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth, *Lies Women Believe: And the Truth that Sets Them Free* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2001), 67.

¹⁷ Leach, *Emboldened*, 43.

potential and influence can sometimes keep experienced women in WML from mentoring younger females in WML.

Maxwell suggests that another reason many people never pursue mentoring relationships is that they lack training and simply feel inadequate. Because of their past experience and the lies that women believe, many female worship leaders have difficulty really believing that they might have something to offer in a mentoring relationship. To counter this mindset, Maxwell writes, “You don’t have to be a remarkable or unusually talented person to mentor others. You can raise up people around you and teach them to fly.”¹⁸ Maxwell lists authenticity, servanthood, growth, and passion as some of the essentials for influencing others in a mentoring relationship.¹⁹ These qualities speak to the heart of a person, rather than to the skills and knowledge they have obtained in pursuing their respective leadership roles. The experienced female worship leader must begin to understand her value in encouraging and mentoring the next generation of female worship leaders.

Statement of the Problem

Although the female worship leader often experiences a significant call to ministry, many challenges exist in fulfilling God’s call on her life. Some of these challenges include uncertainty regarding clarity of call,²⁰ difficulties in a male-saturated work environment,²¹ and lack of

¹⁸ Maxwell, *Mentoring 101*, 23.

¹⁹ John C. Maxwell, *5 Levels of Leadership: Proven Steps to Maximize Your Potential* (New York, NY: Center Street, 2011), 209.

²⁰ Bradley, “Women in Baptist Music Ministry,” 43-44.

²¹ Nordhoff, “Let’s Deal With the Challenges You Face as a Female Worship Leader,” 2.

perceived opportunities for ministry.²² In the absence of proper support, such as mentorship, women who experience God's call on their lives to WML will continue to face significant challenges in fulfilling this call.

Many female worship leaders are confused regarding their call to ministry. This confusion results from conflicting thoughts and the lingering mindset related to the previously mentioned history regarding the acceptance of women in ministry within the SBC and other evangelical denominations. Various interpretations abound as to whether or not women should be permitted to lead in worship. Additionally, Eileen R. Campbell-Reed says, "The struggle for women called by God continues, and many women serve with authorization from their calling and education, yet without being ordained."²³ Although this paper will not address the issue of whether women should or should not be ordained, the issue contributes to the acceptance of women in various ministry roles. The intent in including the issue of ordination for women in this study is not to be divisive, to advocate for the ordination of women, or to contribute negatively to the debate. Rather, it is included because, for *some* women in particular denominations, it presents a significant challenge and possible roadblock in their pursuit of WML. In addition, this paper will also not address the various interpretations of complementarian and egalitarian viewpoints.²⁴

²² Bradley, 43-44.

²³ Eileen R. Campbell-Reed, "Changing Hands: The Practice of Ordaining Baptist Women," *Baptist History and Heritage* vol. 51, no. 1 (2016): 25, accessed July 3, 2019, [https://link.galegroup.com/apps.doc/A450505820/AONE?u=ic_liberty&sid=AONE&xid=3dff154e](https://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A450505820/AONE?u=ic_liberty&sid=AONE&xid=3dff154e).

²⁴ Please note that the author writes from a complementarian viewpoint and served joyfully and faithfully as a female in WML for more than fifteen years as a paid church staff member without pursuing ordination for herself. The denomination the author served within does not normally ordain women, but values women in a variety of leadership roles within the church and in church staff positions. The author was treated well and compensated fairly at a ministerial staff position level.

Kristy Nordhoff suggests that among all ministry positions in the evangelical church, less than twenty percent are filled by women.²⁵ A variety of issues arise for female worship leaders in this male-saturated work environment. Some of these include relating to male church staff members as the only female on staff²⁶ and the appropriate cultivation of the essential relationship between the senior pastor and the worship leader.²⁷ In addition, discrimination based on gender and even outright sexual harassment can be significant issues for the female in WML working in a male-saturated work environment.²⁸

Additionally, many female worship leaders have a skewed perception of what their potential areas of ministry could include. This perception is a holdover from the denominational messages of the past and the reluctance of churches to embrace the call of women to WML.²⁹ In addition, the lack of female worship leaders as role models has caused confusion over what types of ministry positions are appropriate and acceptable for female worship leaders. These issues contribute to the perception that ministry opportunities might not be available for the women in WML.

Understanding more about mentorship of female worship leaders would be helpful. However, there is a limited body of literature addressing this issue. A knowledge gap exists between mentorship of worship leaders, mentorship of women in general, and mentorship of the female worship leader. Verna Mazak's dissertation entitled, "A Call to Excellence: Leadership Training and Mentoring Manual for Women in Ministry in the Twenty-First Century," offers

²⁵ Nordhoff, "Let's Deal With the Challenges You Face as a Female Worship Leader," 2.

²⁶ Leach, *Emboldened*, 51-52.

²⁷ Buckley, *Rise Up & Sing*, 103-110.

²⁸ Lewis, *She*, 122-128.

²⁹ Bradley, "Women in Baptist Music Ministry," 43-44.

general principles for the mentorship of women in ministry positions but fails to specifically address the challenges of women in WML.³⁰ Lonnie Eloris Goodwin has written a dissertation on “Effective Discipling of Women.”³¹ Although helpful, this dissertation fails to address the unique challenges of women called to WML. Several books also come close to the topic without actually fully addressing it. *Rise Up & Sing: Equipping the Female Worship Leader*, by Lex Buckley offers an overview of the necessary qualities and responsibilities of the female in WML but focuses more on the practical and musical aspects of leading worship.³² *Emboldened: A Vision for Empowering Women in Ministry*, by Tara Beth Leach addresses the issues faced by women in ministry without specifically addressing women in WML.³³ *Now That I’m Called: A Guide for Women Discerning A Call to Ministry*, by Kristen Padilla offers information regarding the calling of women in the Bible and contains a chapter specifically devoted to the topic of mentorship.³⁴ Again, this book does not address the specific needs of women who are called to WML.

This study addressed the specific and unique needs of women serving in WML. In addition, it focused on the need for and the benefits of mentoring between experienced female worship leaders and younger or novice female worship leaders. By studying the unique challenges that women in WML experience and also the effective strategies for mentorship of worship leaders and mentorship of women, the previously mentioned literature gap was addressed.

³⁰ Mazak, “A Call to Excellence.”

³¹ Goodwin, “Effective Discipling of Women.”

³² Buckley, *Rise Up & Sing*.

³³ Leach, *Emboldened*.

³⁴ Padilla, *Now That I’m Called*.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative historical study was to examine the need for mentorship of the female worship leader and to develop a strategy to assist in motivating and equipping the experienced female worship leader in mentoring the young or novice female worship leader. This study included literature relevant to the issues faced by females in WML. In addition, the study included literature related to mentorship of the worship leader and mentorship of women. These areas of study were then logically extended to mentorship of females in WML. By identifying the challenges faced by women in WML and applying methods for mentoring of both worship leaders and women, this study effectively bridged the literature gap that existed in the area of mentorship of the female worship leader. Ultimately, the purpose of this study is to encourage women experiencing a call to WML to pursue and fulfill their calling, despite the obstacles and challenges they might face. There are viable roles for women in WML in a variety of denominations, churches and other ministry settings that were not available just a decade or two ago, and the purpose of this study is to encourage gifted, talented and called women to pursue these positions.

Significance of the Study

This study is critical to the growth and development of a new generation of women in WML. Without mentorship, many females called to WML may continue to experience significant obstacles in fulfilling God's call on their lives. Dr. Randall Bradley writes, "Women and girls must be nurtured and encouraged to pursue their call to music ministry."³⁵ In addition,

³⁵ Bradley, "Women in Baptist Music Ministry," 44.

the church must “Find ways to encourage women as worship leaders in every capacity.”³⁶ This study offers suggestions to encourage and nurture women who feel called and desire to serve in WML.

Evangelical churches and pastors have a responsibility to care for and disciple the people on their staff.³⁷ With the increased numbers of females in WML in recent years, many evangelical churches may already or might soon have female worship leaders serving on their church staff. Knowing the unique challenges facing women in WML will be important in caring appropriately for these female staff members. In addition, evangelical churches and pastors have an interest in equipping and helping their worship ministry leaders succeed in effective and meaningful ministry. When the unique challenges faced by females in WML are ignored or marginalized, the risk of ineffectiveness in ministry is greater. Churches and pastors must recognize and deal with problems quickly and effectively in order to maintain staff motivation and effectiveness.³⁸

This study is also significant for current worship ministries within the 21st-century evangelical church. Women can offer a different perspective to worship from men, and their voices are important in reaching out to a diverse congregation.³⁹ “Men and women have both been created in the image of God to reflect different aspects of His heart and character.”⁴⁰ When

³⁶ Ibid., 45.

³⁷ Jonathan W. Jarboe, “An Investigation into Five Essential Discipleship Characteristics for Church Staff Members,” D.Ed.Min. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2013, 5.

³⁸ Maynard Farnol Hatch II, “A Study of Professional Church Staff Relationships,” Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1973, 65, accessed July 29, 2019, <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/302690875?pq-origsite=summon>.

³⁹ Nordhoff, “Let’s Deal With the Challenges You Face as a Woman Worship Leader,” 4.

⁴⁰ Buckley, *Rise Up & Sing*, 28.

women are absent from WML, the church is missing an important aspect of the heart and character of God.

Finally, this study is significant for future generations of women in WML. According to Randall Bradley, an entire generation of women in WML has been lost due to the negative associations against women in ministry from denominational organizations.⁴¹ Mentorship of the female worship leader is important in raising up a new generation of females in WML who can and will fulfill their calling to WML.

Research Questions

Research questions for the problems facing a new generation of females in WML should address the challenges commonly faced by women in WML. The research questions for this study were:

Research Question 1: What challenges are commonly faced by the female worship leader within the 21st-century evangelical church?

Research Question 2: In what ways could an experienced female worship leader address the challenges faced by the young female worship leader?

Females in WML experience challenges that are unique from those experienced by worship leaders in general. Some literature exists regarding the role and equipping of the worship leader. However, this literature is not specific to the challenges faced by women in WML. These challenges are important to address in order to encourage the female worship

⁴¹ Bradley, "Women in Baptist Music Ministry," 44.

leader in fulfilling God’s call on her life and to aid in cultivating effectiveness and longevity in ministry. In addition, answering these questions will provide understanding regarding how these challenges can be addressed through mentoring relationships. Mentoring relationships can be an important factor in helping young female worship leaders find their place in ministry and fulfill God’s calling on their lives.⁴² Because there is little research available regarding mentorship of females in WML, the seasoned female worship leader may be unsure as to the most effective mentoring strategies for use in mentoring young or novice female worship leaders. This study attempts to provide strategies for mentoring young or novice females in WML. A qualitative historical study was used to develop these strategies for mentorship of females in WML.

Core Concepts

A biblical foundation for the role of women in ministry leadership is a core concept of this study. Understanding what the Bible says about women in ministry leadership is essential and provides the foundation for all other aspects of the study. The Bible contains many examples of women serving in ministry leadership positions both in the life of the Israelites and in the early church. Women such as Miriam, Deborah, Mary, Priscilla, and Lydia experienced a significant call from God to a specific ministry or task.⁴³ This study explored the role of biblical women in ministry leadership to provide a foundation for the appropriateness of women in WML.

Calling can be defined in different ways depending on the context. The most common example of calling in the Bible relates to God’s calling to all humanity into a relationship with

⁴² Bradley, “Women in Baptist Music Ministry,” 44-45.

⁴³ Padilla, *Now That I’m Called*, 67-103.

Himself.⁴⁴ The concept of calling within this paper refers to the believer's distinct impression from the Holy Spirit toward a particular action or life direction for the benefit of the body of Christ.⁴⁵ Many women in WML have experienced a significant call from God to pursue their role in WML.

The final core concept of this study is respect as it relates to a woman's understanding of the biblical roles of men and women. Women in ministry are most effective when they understand these roles and fulfill their calling within God's ordained authority structures. Kristin Padilla writes, "Submit to those in authority over you. Live a life of holiness, humility, and modesty, showing respect to our brothers in ministry."⁴⁶ Regardless of one's gender, submitting to authority and respecting those in leadership is a biblical mandate and essential for the success of any church staff member, including those in WML. Ephesians 5:21 says, "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." Although this verse refers to men and women in a marriage relationship, this principle is found numerous places in the Scriptures and is certainly relevant for those who serve the local church, in staff positions, and in WML. Therefore, women in WML positions should submit, honor and respect their pastors and those in authority over them in the local church.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses for this study will answer the research questions as follows:

⁴⁴ Ibid., 13.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Padilla, *Now That I'm Called*, 126.

Hypothesis 1: Challenges commonly faced by the female worship leader within the 21st-century evangelical church may include clarity of call, difficulties in a male-saturated work environment and lack of perceived ministry opportunities.

Hypothesis 2: The experienced female worship leader can address the challenges faced by the young female worship leader by modeling biblical principles, lifestyle worship and respect for authority.

Although the female in WML often experiences a significant call to ministry, many challenges exist in fulfilling God's call on her life. Some of these challenges include clarity of call,⁴⁷ difficulties in a male-saturated work environment,⁴⁸ and a lack of perceived opportunities for ministry.⁴⁹ Many female worship leaders are confused regarding their call to ministry. This confusion results from conflicting thoughts and information related to the previously mentioned history regarding the acceptance of women in ministry within the SBC and other evangelical denominations. Additionally, among all ministry positions in the evangelical church, less than twenty percent are filled by women.⁵⁰ A variety of issues arise for the female in WML in this male-saturated work environment. Finally, many female worship leaders have a skewed perception of what their potential areas of ministry could include. This perception is a holdover from the denominational messages of the past and the reluctance of churches to embrace the call of women to worship ministry.⁵¹ In addition, the lack of female worship leaders as role models

⁴⁷ Bradley, "Women in Baptist Music Ministry," 43-44.

⁴⁸ Nordhoff, "Let's Deal With the Challenges You Face as a Female Worship Leader," 2.

⁴⁹ Bradley, 43-44.

⁵⁰ Nordhoff, 2.

⁵¹ Bradley, 43-44.

has caused confusion over what types of ministry positions are appropriate and acceptable for women worship leaders.

The experienced female worship leader is in a unique position to help address the challenges faced by young female worship leaders. Because of her experience and maturity, the seasoned female worship leader is able to offer helpful guidance and wisdom to younger females in WML. Modeling biblical principles and lifestyle worship are ways for the experienced female in WML to pass on values to the next generation of worship leaders.⁵² In addition, women in ministry are most effective when they understand the biblical roles of men and women and fulfill their calling within God's ordained authority structures. Rather than fighting for women's rights in ministry, Kristin Padilla encourages women in ministry to submit to the authority God has placed in their lives and serve with humility and respect instead of causing division in the body of Christ.⁵³ The purpose of this study is not to fight for women's rights in ministry, but to encourage women to submit to the authority God has placed in their lives and pursue their calling to WML.

Methods

A qualitative approach is appropriate for this study because, according to Creswell, it involves, "a concept or phenomenon [that] needs to be explored and understood because little research has been done on it."⁵⁴ Although much literature exists regarding mentorship of the worship leader and mentorship of women, little exists regarding mentorship of the female

⁵² Kidder, "Mentoring: A Way of Life," 5.

⁵³ Padilla, *Now That I'm Called*, 126.

⁵⁴ John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2018), 19.

worship leader. A historical approach was used for this study because it included an effort to understand “challenges arising from new discoveries about the past.”⁵⁵ Using a qualitative research method with a historical design, this paper explored the challenges and obstacles faced by females in WML. In addition, research was conducted related to established successful mentoring techniques for females in WML.

The study sought to establish an understanding of the challenges faced by females in WML. Furthermore, the study explored successful mentoring techniques and strategies related to worship ministry and women in general. Conclusions were drawn regarding effective strategies and successful practices for mentoring relationships between experienced and young or novice female worship leaders. By effectively applying these techniques and practices to the challenges faced by females in WML, a strategy was developed to aid in the mentorship of females in WML.

Research Plan

In order to address the research questions, an examination of women in the Bible serving in ministry leadership roles was completed to gain an understanding of biblical principles concerning the role of women in ministry leadership. Understanding these principles provided the foundation for all other aspects of this study. The challenges faced by females in WML in the evangelical church was also a foundational topic of research. These challenges must be understood to gain a full understanding of the issues surrounding women in WML. Although not all women in WML experience every challenge detailed in this paper, many women in WML

⁵⁵ Edward Hallett Carr, *What is History?* (New York, NY: Random House Inc., 1961), 35.

experience some of the challenges mentioned. More general areas of research included mentorship of the worship leader and mentorship of women. Many of these findings can be transferred over to the more specific area of mentorship of the female worship leader. In researching these topics, an attempt was made to bridge the gap within the literature regarding mentorship of the female worship leader. Suggestions were offered to aid the experienced female worship leader in mentoring the young or novice female worship ministry leader and to encourage the novice female worship leader in pursuing God's call on her life. In addition, suggestions were made to training institutions and churches in how they can help the female in WML deal with the unique challenges she faces. These suggestions are offered as part of Chapter Five.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined to help the reader understand the context of each concept in this study:

Calling: a distinct impression received from the Holy Spirit of God toward a particular action or life direction involving service to God, most often within the church or in order to benefit God's people⁵⁶

Mentoring: a relational process in which experience, values and wisdom pass from one generation to another through both formal and informal means⁵⁷

Worship ministry leadership (WML): facilitation of the various aspects of the worship ministry within an evangelical church, including leading congregational worship, rehearsing

⁵⁶ Padilla, *Now That I'm Called*, 13.

⁵⁷ Kidder, "Mentoring: A Way of Life," 5.

various ensembles and groups, administration of the worship ministry, teaching and encouraging others in their spiritual walk, and shepherding the people within the worship ministry and the church at large.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Bob Kauflin, *Worship Matters: Leading Others to Encounter the Greatness of God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 54-55.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter has a two-fold purpose. First, in order to address the research questions, an examination of women in the Bible serving in ministry leadership roles was necessary for the purpose of gaining an understanding of biblical principles concerning the role of women in ministry leadership positions. This examination is necessary to provide the basis for which women serve in ministry leadership. Second, a literature review was conducted of the available literature regarding the challenges faced by women in worship ministry leadership, the mentorship of worship leaders, and the mentorship of women. By researching these three areas of the existing literature, the challenges faced by females in WML can be better understood, as well as the need for mentoring and suggestions for best mentoring techniques for women in WML.

Biblical Principles of Women in Ministry Leadership

The Bible contains many examples of women serving in ministry leadership positions. Both the Old and New Testaments offer examples of God calling and using women to accomplish His purposes of salvation for mankind. The Old Testament provides the accounts of Deborah, Huldah, Miriam and others who were ministry leaders. The New Testament includes the accounts of Priscilla, Junia and others who were ministry leaders. In addition, the New Testament provides the account of God's call on the life of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Each of these women were chosen and called by God to minister to His people and/or to contribute to His accomplishment of the salvation of mankind. Some of these women served in roles that were customarily, culturally and traditionally filled by men. By examining each of these biblical

accounts, important principles can be gained regarding women serving in ministry leadership roles.

Deborah

The story of Deborah occurs in chapters four and five of the book of Judges. An interesting fact about Deborah's story is that she is the only female judge mentioned throughout the history of the people of Israel. In addition, she is one of only two *prophetic* judges mentioned in the Bible, the other being Samuel.⁵⁹ The judges ruled in Israel during the time before the Israelites cried out to God for a king. They served as spiritual advisors and leaders for the nation of Israel. During this time, the Israelites were often rebellious against God and incurred God's judgment for their sin, usually by being put into submission by an oppressive foreign ruler. When they finally realized their plight, they would cry out to God, who would send someone to rescue them—typically in the form of a judge. Although we are not told the specifics of how Deborah came to her position as judge, we know from biblical history that she was called by God to this position.⁶⁰

Many judges who were raised up by God during this time were heroic warriors, who led the people of Israel to battle against the oppressive forces ruling over them. Although Deborah is not a warrior, she speaks for God in calling the warrior Barak to assemble the Israelite troops and march into battle to free the Israelites. Barak seems uncertain about heading into battle without Deborah. "He [Barak] will not enter the fray unless he has this woman beside him holding his hand. And this impression is reinforced by Deborah's response. But at a deeper level the

⁵⁹ Padilla, *Now That I'm Called*, 70.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

objection reflects a recognition of Deborah's status. The request to be accompanied by the prophet is a plea for the presence of God."⁶¹ Deborah agrees to accompany Barak to the battle, signifying that the presence of God will be with him. "Deborah clearly had a divinely inspired imagination for her role among the people of God, which was supernaturally inspired, and Barak freely embraced her role."⁶²

The account of Deborah's life reveals that God is not averse to appointing women to ministry leadership roles, even when those roles are typically and even culturally held by men.⁶³ In addition, Deborah's story also reveals that God uses women to impart divine speech. Judges 5 contains the song that Deborah and Barak sang upon the victory of the Israelites. Deborah sings, "Hear this, you kings! Listen, you rulers! I, even I, will sing to the Lord; I will praise the Lord, the God of Israel, in song." These words from the mouth of Deborah have been recorded in God's Holy Scriptures for the inspiration of all mankind. "Not only did God inspire her words for purposes during her time, but he inspires her words to be part of Holy Scripture for the edification of the church until Jesus returns."⁶⁴ Deborah was called and used by God to accomplish His divine purpose.

Huldah

The story of Huldah, the prophetess, is found both in 2 Kings 22:14-20 and 2 Chronicles 34:22-28. Huldah's story occurs during the tumultuous period after the death of King David and

⁶¹ Daniel Isaac Block, *Judges, Ruth*, vol. 6, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 199.

⁶² Leach, *Emboldened*, 64.

⁶³ Padilla, *Now That I'm Called*, 70-72.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 74.

King Solomon. The nation of Israel is divided, and many of the succeeding kings are evil and do not follow the laws of God. However, King Josiah desires to follow God and begins a reform process that involves cleaning up the temple and restoring the worship of God. In this process, the law of God is located and read to King Josiah. The King is convicted and immediately humbles himself and seeks out someone who can speak to God on behalf of the Israelites and help to interpret God's law for them. Although the most well-known prophets of this day, Jeremiah and Zephaniah, were male, Josiah's envoys seek out the prophetess Huldah to inquire of God for the King. Huldah interprets God's Word and also offers a word from God for Josiah.⁶⁵ Just as in Deborah's story, Huldah's words are recorded in the Holy Scriptures for the inspiration of all mankind.⁶⁶ Through the life of Huldah, the principles learned earlier are reinforced. God calls women to ministry leadership roles, even those typically held by men, and God uses women to impart His Word for all of mankind.⁶⁷

Miriam

Miriam provides a biblical example of a female worship leader. In Exodus 15, the Israelites are celebrating their deliverance from the Egyptian army at the Red Sea. The Song of Moses and Miriam praises God for His deliverance and tells the story of the Israelites crossing the Red Sea on dry ground. Exodus 15:20-21 says, "Then Miriam the prophet, Aaron's sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women followed her, with timbrels and dancing. Miriam sang to them: 'Sing to the Lord, for he is highly exalted. Both horse and driver he has hurled into

⁶⁵ Paul R. House, *1, 2 Kings*, vol. 8, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 385.

⁶⁶ Padilla, *Now That I'm Called*, 74-76.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 77.

the sea.” Miriam teaches the song to all the women, so that the story will be remembered from generation to generation. “Moses had authored this great victory song; Miriam now popularized it among all the women so that it would be known and sung in every family, every home. The result was that every Israelite . . . would know by heart the story of the great divine deliverance of God’s people at the sea.”⁶⁸ Miriam’s story once again reveals that God uses women in ministry leadership, and even uses their words in Scripture for the generations to read.

Priscilla

Priscilla and Aquila are a ministry couple who are mentioned many times throughout the New Testament. In Acts 18, the two help a fellow believer, Apollos, to more fully understand the Gospel. Acts 18:24-25 tells us that Apollos was, “a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John.” Priscilla and Aquila invited Apollos to their home and instructed him in the full truth of the gospel story. In addition, 1 Corinthians 16:19 explains that Priscilla and Aquila host a church in their home. Paul calls both of them co-workers in his ministry.⁶⁹

What is interesting to note about Priscilla and Aquila is that five of the seven times that the couple is mentioned in Scripture, Priscilla’s name is listed first before her husband’s. This might not seem significant, but in the patriarchal society in which they lived, this would have been highly unusual. Men’s names were always listed first. Although it is difficult to be certain,

⁶⁸ Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, vol. 2, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006), 364.

⁶⁹ Padilla, *Now That I’m Called*, 94-95.

perhaps this indicates that Priscilla played a more significant role in the work of Paul's ministry. One of these listings is in the context of teaching Apollos. "It is noteworthy that Priscilla took an equal role with her husband in further instructing Apollos."⁷⁰ The fact that Priscilla is named first indicates that she may have been the primary instructor of this knowledgeable and learned man. "Paul gave visibility to Priscilla, and although we will never fully know the reason, it is likely because she had a notable leadership role in Paul's network."⁷¹ The story of Priscilla and Aquilla once again reveals that God calls women to ministry leadership positions within the church and allows them to participate in the spread of the gospel to the nations. In fact, He even uses women in instructional roles with men.⁷²

Junia

Junia is a lesser known female character mentioned in Romans 16:7. "Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Jews who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was." This passage of Scripture seems to indicate that Junia is an apostle, and in fact, the only woman apostle mentioned in Scripture. Padilla describes an apostle as "someone who has seen the resurrected Jesus and has received from him the commission to take the gospel to others."⁷³ Historically, there has been some argument regarding whether or not Junia was male or female. Padilla suggests that sufficient evidence has been offered proving that Junia was in fact female. In addition, some have interpreted the verse to say

⁷⁰ John B. Polhill, *Acts*, vol. 26, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 397.

⁷¹ Leach, *Emboldened*, 170.

⁷² Padilla, *Now That I'm Called*, 95-96.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 97.

that Junia was held in high regard *by* the apostles instead of outstanding *among* the apostles. If it is assumed that Junia is a female, whether or not she was an apostle or rather held in high regard by the apostles is inconsequential. “Since the term ‘apostles’ here should be understood in the wider sense of those who served as missionaries and evangelists, the passage really contributes little to the debate.”⁷⁴ Junia’s story again reveals that God uses females for His purposes in the spread of the gospel.⁷⁵

Mary

Although Mary, the mother of Jesus is not a ministry leader such as would be seen in the modern-day church, she experiences a significant call from God on her life and plays a vital role in the gospel story and in salvation history. Mary receives a visit from the angel Gabriel, who tells her of God’s plan for her to be the mother of His Son. Gabriel tells her that the Lord is with her and in Luke 2:35 that, “the Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.” Mary has questions, but her answer to Gabriel is positive. Luke 2:38 records Mary’s response. “‘I am the Lord’s servant,’ Mary answered. ‘May your word to me be fulfilled.’” What is interesting is that Mary experiences the power and presence of the Holy Spirit long before the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit is bestowed on all other believers. Mary’s song, recorded following her visit to see Elizabeth, is another example of the words of a woman included in the divinely inspired Word of God. In addition, Mary’s simple answer to Gabriel in

⁷⁴ Robert H. Mounce, *Romans*, vol. 27, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 275-276.

⁷⁵ Padilla, *Now That I’m Called*, 97-99.

Luke 2:38 has inspired the obedience of countless men and women in surrendering to God's call.⁷⁶

Another principle revealed in the account of Mary's calling is that when God calls an individual, He always promises that His presence will be with them. This principle is evident in the calling of others in the Bible as well. In Exodus 3:12, God says to Moses, "I will be with you." In Joshua 1:9, God tells Joshua, "Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." In Jeremiah 1:8, God says to Jeremiah, "Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you." God's call on a person's life always includes His promise to go with them and empower them with His Spirit to do the work He has called them to do.⁷⁷

Conclusions

From these examples of women in the Bible who served in ministry leadership, it is evident that God often chooses to use women to accomplish His purposes. These women filled various roles of ministry leadership, and they are not the only biblical examples available. The Bible also speaks of Phoebe the deaconess, Tryphena, Tryphosa and Persis who were commended by Paul for their hard work in the Lord in Romans 16:12, Euodia and Syntyche who contended at Paul's side for the gospel cause, not to mention Rahab, Tamar, Esther, Ruth, and Abigail, who were mightily used by God to accomplish His purposes. The study of these women reveals that when assigning roles, God sometimes acts in ways that are surprising and somewhat counter-cultural. Sometimes He assigns women to roles that are traditionally held by men.

⁷⁶ Padilla, *Now That I'm Called*, 87-90.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 87.

Sometimes He allows women to speak His inspired words for the inspiration of all mankind. The important thing to remember is that in several places in the Bible, God chooses women to serve in ministry leadership roles. “God calls women and employs them in his service. His plan has always included women, not merely as recipients of grace or mere spectators but as active participants. He’s been doing it since the beginning with Eve. She was the suitable helper God knew Adam needed.”⁷⁸

Review of Available Literature

For the purposes of this study, the available literature was examined regarding the following topics: challenges/issues faced by females in WML, mentorship of worship leaders, and mentorship of women. These three areas were important in gaining an understanding of the challenges faced by females in WML and the need for mentoring and best techniques for mentoring women in WML.

Challenges Faced by Females in WML

Women in WML face a variety of challenges in succeeding in their roles. Several books, articles and dissertations address these challenges. Although the early years of WML showed great promise for women’s involvement in ministry, the previously mentioned cultural climate within the SBC and other denominations led to the marginalization of women in music ministry. The scarcity of female role models in worship ministry leadership during this time period caused confusion and uncertainty regarding the young female’s call to WML. Some of this confusion

⁷⁸ Padilla, *Now That I’m Called*, 100-101.

and uncertainty still exists today, as young women are sometimes unable to recognize the possible ministry opportunities that are available to them.⁷⁹ Although women may feel a significant call from God to a life of ministry, they are sometimes uncertain about whether or not opportunities in the area of worship ministry will be open and available to them. This uncertainty can cause some women to abandon their call or to seek ministry positions in other areas.

The challenges in worship leadership are many, but there are some that are particular to women in WML. A common challenge involves the lack of worship songs written for a female voice and from a female perspective. Nordhoff suggests that because the majority of Christian song-writers are male, “a very high percentage of male perspective and heart are woven through the worship songs used in our churches.”⁸⁰ In addition, some women in WML working in male-saturated work environments feel that they are not taken seriously, a situation partially due to the tendency of some female worship leaders to be apologetic about their leadership gifts. Women’s issues such as carrying the bulk of the domestic responsibilities at home also create challenges faced by women in WML.⁸¹ The lack of female worship leader role models and mentors is another significant challenge for women in WML.⁸²

There is also a disparity between what church leaders say about the inclusion of women in ministry leadership and the reality of how women are included in ministry leadership.⁸³ Although many churches might say they are open to the hiring of women for ministry leadership

⁷⁹ Bradley, “Women in Baptist Music Ministry,” 42-43.

⁸⁰ Nordhoff, “Let’s Deal With the Challenges You Face as a Female Worship Leader,” 2.

⁸¹ Lila Schochet, “The Childcare Crisis is Keeping Women Out of the Workforce,” Center for American Progress, March 28, 2019, accessed October 15, 2019, <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/early-childhood/reports/2019/03/28/467488/child-care-crisis-keeping-women-workforce/>.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Elizabeth Flowers, “‘In My Mother’s House,’: A Glimpse of Baptist Women in Ministry on its Twenty-Fifth Anniversary,” *Review and Expositor*, 110 (Winter 2013), 110-111.

positions, the reality shows that very few of them follow through and actually consider hiring women to their ministry leadership staff. This disparity contributes to the female worship leader's perspective on the availability of ministry positions that may or may not be open to them.

Scholarly sources regarding the challenges faced by females in WML are somewhat rare and difficult to find. However, some literature speaks to the wide array of challenges faced generally by women in ministry. These challenges are faced by women in various ministry leadership roles, including worship leadership. On a surface level, but still significant, women in ministry leadership roles face challenges related to their choice of hair, makeup and clothing styles.⁸⁴ Women in ministry leadership also experience challenges related to an insecurity regarding theological knowledge.⁸⁵ Some women in ministry leadership simply defer to the tenets of their denomination instead of studying and knowing the truth for themselves. Revealing your theological beliefs requires a vulnerability that can make some women fear being rejected. "In your teaching, preaching, and pastoral care, you are revealing who you are as a theologian for all the world to see. What if they disagree with you? . . . What if they leave the church because of you? These fears then get personalized . . . into a fear of rejection."⁸⁶ Rather than risk rejection from those who might disagree, these women lean on the official position of their denomination instead of revealing their true thoughts on difficult issues.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Lewis, *She*, 67-75.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 54-57.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 55-56.

Some women in ministry leadership positions experience *imposter syndrome*,⁸⁸ and underestimate their potential to be successful in their role.⁸⁹ In addition, many women in ministry leadership feel uncertain about how to show emotion and affection in a male-saturated workplace.⁹⁰ Depending on the individual church culture, some women in ministry leadership positions face blatant opposition by those who do not believe women should be allowed to lead in the church.⁹¹

Many women in ministry leadership positions deal with an internal struggle of understanding their call in light of Scripture passages that seem to prohibit women from leading in the church, such as 1 Timothy 2:11-15.⁹² “A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived, it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.” This Scripture passage seems to suggest that a woman should not be in a position of leadership in the church, especially one that would place her in authority over men. Another challenge faced by women in ministry leadership positions is navigating the fine lines between taking initiative and being perceived as domineering or aggressive.⁹³ Women who are quick to assume leadership are sometimes labeled with having unsavory traits, such as being too aggressive or even masculine.⁹⁴

⁸⁸ Leach, *Emboldened*, 33-50.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 70-86.

⁹² Padilla, *Now That I'm Called*, 113-124.

⁹³ Padilla, *Now That I'm Called*, 116-119.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 118-119.

Many sources address the reality of the lack of mentors available for women in ministry leadership. “They [women leaders] have few female peers, and even fewer female role models, which is why many women harbor an unmet desire for mentoring.”⁹⁵ Because of the lack of seasoned mentors in WML, many women have turned to nonconventional modes of mentoring, such as personal mentoring by an older woman without ministry experience, mentoring through books and DVD’s and mentoring from male role models or married couples. Some participate in *piecemeal mentorship*, or mentorship from several different sources or individuals who have expertise in various areas.⁹⁶

The debate surrounding women and ordination is a significant challenge for some women in ministry leadership. The issue of whether or not to ordain women continues to be controversial among conservative evangelical churches.⁹⁷ Depending on the particular church culture, some women find themselves in the middle of a philosophical battle that they did not anticipate or seek out. “The Church is still divided over the matter of whether women can be ordained as Christian ministers, and particularly whether women should be permitted to teach and minister to men. The debate is unlikely to be resolved any time soon.”⁹⁸ Campbell-Reed explains the difficulties between the two sides of this controversy:

To biblicist-conservatives, ordained women are cultural symbols of all that is troubling in Baptist life and with humanity. Thus women seeking ordination are symbols of a violation of God’s “delegated order” in families, ministry and society (God the head of

⁹⁵ Sharon Hodde Miller, “The Struggle to Find a Mentor,” *Christianity Today*, December, 2015, Accessed September 12, 2019, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/women-leaders/2015/december/struggle-to-find-mentor.html>, 1.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁹⁷ Although this is a significant issue for many women, others serve humbly, faithfully and joyfully without giving thought to the fact that they are not ordained. This paper is not intended to be a debate regarding the ordination of women. Rather, the issue is included in the discussion because it presents a challenge for *some* women in WML.

⁹⁸ Jennifer Anne Cox, “New Testament Prophecy and Its Implications for the Ministry of Women,” *Feminist Theology* vol. 25, no. 1 (2016), 2, accessed September 12, 2019, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0966735016657705?journalCode=ftha>

man, man the head of women, parents the head of children, etc.). To autonomist-progressive Baptists, ordained women are symbols of “freedom and autonomy” and upheld as positive examples of God’s incarnational presence and calling. These views turn women’s ordination into a clash of cultural symbols, signifying conflict and contention.⁹⁹

For many women, ordination is a symbol of women’s equality with men in the ministry profession. The conflicts surrounding the ordination of women present an obstacle to their perception of being valued for their work in ministry.¹⁰⁰ The debate over the ordination of women to ministry leadership is also evidence of another challenge for women in ministry leadership positions. Sexism, or discrimination based upon gender, is still alive and thriving in conservative evangelical churches today.¹⁰¹ Women in ministry leadership are often discriminated against and face opposition simply because of their gender.

Many women who experience a call to ministry leadership struggle with their perception regarding available ministry positions. They have a difficult time believing that ministry opportunities will actually be available to them. In addition, some women in ministry leadership struggle to have their voices heard. They want to participate in the decisions that ultimately affect their ministries, but sometimes feel that they are left out. Many of these decisions are made by boards or committees made up of men, with decisions to be implemented simply handed down as an edict.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Campbell-Reed, “Changing Hands,” 24-25.

¹⁰⁰ J. Stacy Houser, “A Biblical Foundation and a Mentor’s Manual for Women Ministry Students,” D.Min. diss., Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary (1998), 61-62, accessed July 29, 2019, https://liberty.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/openurl?institution=01LIBU_INST&rft_id=info:sid%2Fsummon&rft_dat=ie%3D51152699330004916,language%3DEN&svc_dat=CTO&u.ignore_date_coverage=true&vid=01LIBU_INST:Services.

¹⁰¹ Campbell-Reed, 25.

¹⁰² Houser, “A Biblical Foundation and a Mentor’s Manual,” 61-62.

The secular business world recognizes the struggles faced by females within a male-saturated workforce. Many of these struggles also apply to women in WML. Women in male-saturated situations sometimes lack the confidence and self-advocacy needed to stand up for themselves when needed. Speaking out in male-saturated meetings is sometimes intimidating for a woman who is the only female voice in the room. Mentoring and modeling by a successful woman in the same field is often valuable for female leaders as they attempt to overcome these challenges and develop the necessary leadership skills to be successful.¹⁰³ Unfortunately, these mentors can be difficult to find within a male-dominated workplace. When women are unable to see other women succeeding in their field, they tend to develop a lack of confidence in their own abilities to succeed.¹⁰⁴

Another challenge females face in male-dominated workplaces is that of a lack of authentic inclusion. Although the hiring of women in male-dominated workplaces is politically correct in today's world, the reality is that many women experience *tokenism*, or inclusion simply because it is expected, rather than true, authentic inclusion.¹⁰⁵ Although the female has a position, she is not really considered one of the team.

¹⁰³ Crystal Turner-Moffatt, "The Power of Mentorship," *Professional Safety*, vol. 54, no 8, (August 2019), 17-18, accessed September 12, 2019, https://www.assp.org/docs/default-source/psj-articles/bp_turner_0819.pdf?sfvrsn=0

¹⁰⁴ Sianne Alves and Jane English, "Female Students' Preparedness for a Male-Dominated Workplace," *Journal of Engineering, Design and Technology*, vol. 16, no. 4 (2018), 588-591, accessed September 12, 2019, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327211412_Female_students'_preparedness_for_a_male-dominated_workplace.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

Mentorship of Worship Leaders

The mentorship of worship leaders is another area of interest for this study. There is a small body of literature available regarding the mentorship of the worship leader in general. Mentorship can be an important factor for the successful development of worship leaders. “For the church to effectively and intentionally develop more and better worship for this generation, more mature worship leaders *must* invest intentionally into the lives of younger or less-trained worship leaders.”¹⁰⁶ This discipleship/mentorship process is most effective when it includes an emphasis on the clarification of and response to the worship leader’s call to ministry. In addition, a focus on spiritual formation and the development of spiritual attributes is also important. Mentoring relationships must include encouragement for the worship leader’s commitment to the spiritual disciplines of daily prayer, scripture reading, service to the church, and a lifestyle of personal worship.¹⁰⁷

Mentoring involves opening one’s life to another person for the purpose of both personal and professional growth. “The mentor may play the role of spiritual director, helping the mentee sort through faith questions and discern a path for the future. It will certainly include the mentor identifying and naming gifts in the mentee, encouraging the mentee’s innate talents to blossom into skills and providing the mentee a model of the faithful Christian life.”¹⁰⁸ Some mentoring programs for the worship leader begin with a gifts assessment. After a period of getting to know the mentee’s gifts and abilities, it is recommended that the relationship follow a four-step process

¹⁰⁶ Byron L. Spradlin, “Discipling Worship Leadership: Biblical and Theological Rationale for Discipling Worship Leaders,” D.Min. diss, Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012, 118.

¹⁰⁷ Spradlin, “Discipling Worship Leadership,” 118-120.

¹⁰⁸ Greg Scheer, *Essential Worship: A Handbook for Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2016), 275.

summed up by the following statements, “I do, you watch,” “I do, you help,” “You do, I help,” “You do, I watch.”¹⁰⁹

Some literature also addresses the responsibility of the worship leader to mentor those within the worship ministry. A successful worship ministry involves developing others to become worship leaders themselves. “Being successful in your mission will require training, teaching, coaching and mentoring. . . . As worship leaders, we have the most amazing opportunity to point people to Christ through song and praise. We also have the responsibility to help people grow in their calling as believers when they serve in our ministry teams.”¹¹⁰ Mature worship leaders have the responsibility to encourage the development of younger, less experienced worship leaders. These mentoring relationships can originate from within the church body, and can occur when worship leaders take the time to cultivate and invest in relationships with younger worship leaders. “We should also be looking for and cultivating writers and leaders from within, constantly mining for them, even if it takes years to see results.”¹¹¹

Discipling and mentoring are very similar. Discipleship focuses mainly on a person’s spiritual growth and the development of their Christian lifestyle and relationship with God. Mentoring in a Christian context includes discipleship, but also focuses on the development of a particular skill set or achieving success in a particular field of ministry. Some literature focuses on the discipleship of the worship leader. According to Brown, there are five areas that are important in the discipleship and development of the worship leader. Brown titles these areas *the power of lists* (organizational strength), *the power of learning* (gaining theological education),

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 277.

¹¹⁰ Marc Millan, *Leading Worship: Ten Simple Truths* (San Bernardino, CA: Marc Millan, 2019), 78.

¹¹¹ Tom Lane, *The Worship Band Book: Training and Empowering Your Worship Band* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Books, 2012), 70.

the power of lunch (connecting with those in the congregation), *the power of love* (experiencing God's love and sharing it with others), and *the power of legacy* (making preparations for ministry after you are no longer there). These principles can provide a foundation for the mentoring process for worship leaders. Furthermore, the power of legacy reminds experienced worship leaders that they have a responsibility to mentor the younger generation. "Mentoring develops future leaders. Worship leaders will not serve forever. Either by life choices, church decisions, or simply growing old, the worship leader will move on."¹¹²

Discipleship for worship leaders and other church staff members should also focus on spiritual formation. Instead of the discipling/mentoring relationship emphasizing the immediate concerns of completing the daily tasks of ministry, the relationship should focus on developing essential spiritual disciplines, such as humility, integrity, servanthood, discipline and spiritual passion. As the mentee grows in each of these spiritual disciplines, their potential for success in the daily tasks of ministry will also grow. These critical areas of spiritual formation serve to enhance every aspect of the staff member's job performance.¹¹³ Mentoring must include an emphasis both on developing practical skills and spiritual formation.

Mentorship of Women

A great deal of literature also addresses the best techniques for the mentorship of women. This area is also an important area of research for the mentorship of the female in WML. "Women are the greatest untapped resource in local communities and in the church. However,

¹¹² Stacey N. Brown, "5 Principles to Empower the Worship Leader," DWS diss., Liberty University School of Music, (2016), 132.

¹¹³ Jarboe, "An Investigation Into Five Essential Discipleship Characteristics for Church Staff Members," 10-12.

God has given various gifts to the Church. Each person has something to offer and offering that is part of their growth and discipleship. Disciple making is the Word of God shaping men and women within life on life relationships.”¹¹⁴ An important aspect of the discipleship/mentoring process for women is that of the mentee being able to see someone model the desired character traits, skills and abilities through the mentoring process. “Today women of all ages and various walks of life are looking for mothers, another woman who can walk with them, and guide them in the best ways to travel their particular road.”¹¹⁵

Mentoring of women in ministry leadership can help to bridge the gap between educational knowledge and practical application. Gaining a theological education is important, but can sometimes leave women feeling unequipped to handle the challenges faced in a real-life ministry situation. Mentoring provides an avenue for the novice female ministry leader to build on her education by receiving the advice and wisdom of someone who has practical experience in her field. In addition, mentoring can benefit the female ministry leader in the areas of recognizing and pursuing her call to ministry and in gaining the confidence needed to feel secure in stepping out and leading.¹¹⁶ The experiences of ministry are vast and varied. Education cannot possibly address all of the challenges faced by women in ministry leadership. “Mentoring bridges the gap between academia and the church. Through the experiences of the mentor, the mentee is encouraged to become successful in navigating the challenges and obstacles in ministry.”¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ Goodwin, “Effective Discipling of Women,” 160.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 173-174.

¹¹⁶ Mazak, “A Call to Excellence,” 87.

¹¹⁷ Deseree Newkirk and Bruce S. Cooper, “Preparing Women for Baptist Church Leadership: Mentoring Impact on Beliefs and Practices of Female Ministers,” *Journal of Research on Christian Education* 22, no. 3 (December 2013), 340, accessed September 12, 2019, <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1031504>.

A focus on spiritual development is also important for the mentoring of women in ministry leadership positions. Focusing on spiritual formation *as well as* developing the necessary skill sets for ministry are both equally important aspects of mentoring women in ministry. “Primarily, mentoring is a spiritual journey, yet we must also give focused attention to the development of the skills necessary for ministry effectiveness. We must not over stress one area to the neglect of the other.”¹¹⁸ Neglect of the spiritual aspects of mentoring erodes the foundation for success in ministry. Likewise, neglect of the development of the necessary skills for success in ministry contributes to ineffectiveness. Both are equally important and valuable in the mentoring process.¹¹⁹

Female mentoring relationships must be intentional. “Mentoring is more than friendship or giving advice. Our purpose is to help young women follow Christ and be transformed into His image. Intentionality in the relationship allows us to move in this direction.”¹²⁰ Intentionality is achieved through active listening to the mentee for the purpose of developing trust. In addition, conversations must go beyond the surface details of a situation. Mentors can help to steer conversations away from the unimportant surface details and toward the more important biblical truth involved in dealing with or solving life problems. Focusing on viewing stressful or difficult life situations through the lens of scripture can help the mentee to grow in her walk with Christ and to learn to trust God through the situation.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Deborah Kerner Rettino, “Mentoring Saddleback Church Staff Women for Increased Ministerial Excellence,” D.Min. diss, Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary (April, 2010), 29, accessed September 12, 2019, <https://www-tren-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/e-docs/search.cfm?p116-0025>.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Sue Edwards and Barbara Neumann, “Mentoring With Intention: It’s More Than Just Hanging Out,” *Christianity Today*, womenleaders.com, (November 2014), 1, accessed July 25, 2019, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/women-leaders/2014/november/mentoring-with-intention.html>.

¹²¹ Edwards and Neumann, “Mentoring With Intention,” 2-3.

The literature reveals that the postmodern woman is most interested in a mentor who demonstrates the characteristics that she herself admires. Finding a mentor who embodies these characteristics is often more productive than being paired with a mentor through a matching process. In addition, the postmodern woman tends to question her own importance to the older women who possess these characteristics. “Younger women need assurance that they matter, they belong, and they are worthy of an older woman’s time and love.”¹²² In addition, the postmodern woman needs to see biblical truths modeled in real life in order to adopt them into her own patterns of behavior. “Postmoderns are more responsive to deeds and actions than words. It is not enough to simply tell them the truth; they need to see it lived out before they embrace it.”¹²³

Additional characteristics of successful mentoring relationships for women are discovered through a search of the literature. Both the mentor and mentee must make a commitment to being present with God and with others. Living in community with other Christians is where true mentorship/discipleship takes place. The mentor must commit to living a disciplined life, exhibiting Christlike attitudes and actions and modeling them not just for the sake of the mentee, but as a life habit. In addition, the mentor must be committed to God’s mission in the world and to His work through the church. The mentor must commit to the mentoring relationship and to the love necessary to stick with the relationship. The mentorship of women is important for the future of the church. “A church can thrive when good leaders are

¹²² Barbara Ann Neumann, “An Examination of Mentoring Programs for Serving the Needs of the Postmodern Christian Woman,” D.Min. diss, Dallas Theological Seminary (2011), 135, accessed June 17, 2019, <https://journals-sagepub.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/doi/abs/10.1177/003463731311000111>.

¹²³ Ibid., 137.

raising up new leaders. . . . For the sake of the mission, we need leaders who are trained and ready to step into a new role at any time.”¹²⁴

Other Related Literature

The field of mentoring and discipleship is broad, and some literature is worth mentioning simply because of its value to the understanding of these relationships in general. According to Dever, modeling is vitally important to the mentoring relationship. The modeling of obedience to Christ by the mentor is a key to the success of the mentoring relationship. “We communicate not merely with our words but by our whole lives. . . . Discipling is inviting them to imitate you, making your trust in Christ an example to be followed. It requires you to be willing to be watched, and then folding people into your life so that they actually do watch.”¹²⁵ In addition, teaching and correcting are also important and necessary aspects of the discipleship/mentoring process.

Mentors should operate with the goal of developing others. According to Maxwell, people development should be the priority of anyone desiring to mentor another person. Mentors should offer help unconditionally with no thought for what they will receive from the relationship. The mentoring relationship should follow a process that begins with the mentor modeling the correct skill set needed for a particular job. Gradually, the mentee begins to join in on the work, with the mentor watching and offering suggestions along the way. Finally, the

¹²⁴ Natasha Sistrunk Robinson, *Mentor for Life: Finding Purpose through Intentional Discipleship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2016), 36.

¹²⁵ Mark Dever, *Discipling: How to Help Others Follow Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 39-40.

mentee is able to perform the action alone.”¹²⁶ The mentor offers evaluation and advice all along the way.

One interesting source details the mentoring that occurs as a conductor meets together with the musicians in rehearsal settings. According to Sharp, mentoring occurs in passive ways in every rehearsal, performance, concert, and tour of the musical ensemble. This is particularly interesting for the worship leader, as much of his/her time is devoted to rehearsals and other meetings with those who volunteer their musical skills in the worship ministry. “The level of mentoring will vary widely depending on whether or not the conductor embraces the mentoring role, and whether or not the process is acknowledged, unacknowledged, passive, active, informal, formal, or structured. However, the dynamics of the environment and the outlook of ensemble members remain consistent. Mentoring is taking place and lessons are being observed and learned; both career lessons and life lessons.”¹²⁷ This concept is of particular interest to the experienced female in WML. When the worship leader is aware of the passive mentoring taking place in the gatherings of the worship ministry, this mentoring can occur with more intentionality.

Although this is not an exhaustive search of the three areas pertinent to this study, the examined literature gives the researcher and the reader an overview of the unique challenges facing women in WML. In addition, this examination gives practical insight to the process and best practices for mentoring the worship leader and mentoring women, both of which are essential for a better understanding of mentorship of the female worship leader. Chapters four

¹²⁶ Maxwell, *Mentoring 101*, 16-17.

¹²⁷ Tim Sharp, *Mentoring in the Ensemble Arts: Helping Others Find Their Voice*, (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, Inc., 2011), 60.

and five will further discuss the findings and implications of this research and offer practical suggestions for mentorship of the female worship leader.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Research Method

Because this study aimed to answer the research questions in a manner that examined challenges faced by females in WML in the past to predict how they will be handled in the future, a qualitative historical approach was appropriate. According to Creswell, “A research problem . . . is an issue or concern that needs to be addressed. . . . The problem comes from a void in the literature, . . . topics that have been neglected in the literature, a need to lift up the voice of marginalized participants, and ‘real-life’ problems found in the workplace, the home, the community, and so forth.”¹²⁸ This research project fits this description because of the lack of available literature regarding mentorship of the female worship leader. The historical approach was appropriate because the study attempted to answer the research questions by examining how the challenges faced by some females in WML have been handled in the past in order to predict how they might be handled in the future. The topics of mentorship of the worship leader and mentorship of women were both researched in an attempt to bridge this existing gap in the literature.

Research Questions

The following research questions are addressed in this qualitative, historical study:

¹²⁸ Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 19.

RQ1: What challenges are commonly faced by the female worship leader within the 21st century evangelical church?

RQ2: In what ways could an experienced female worship leader address the challenges faced by the young female worship leader?

Hypotheses

In response to the research questions, the following hypotheses were developed for this qualitative, historical study:

H1: Challenges commonly faced by the female worship leader within the 21st-century evangelical church may include: clarity of call, difficulties in a male-saturated work environment and lack of perceived ministry opportunities.

H2: The experienced female worship leader can address the challenges experienced by the young female worship leader by modeling biblical principles, lifestyle worship and respect for authority.

The process for this qualitative historical research project began with a review of women in the Bible who held ministry leadership positions and/or contributed to God's salvation plan for mankind. Included in this study were Deborah, Huldah and Miriam from the Old Testament, and Priscilla, Junia and Mary from the New Testament. Each of these women held a significant spiritual leadership role in the life of the Israelites and/or the early church. The accounts of each of these women was examined to provide a framework or reference point for the validity of

women in ministry leadership. The Bible and existing relevant literature, such as commentaries and books, were examined for insight and clarification.

Further, existing literature was examined pertinent to three main areas of research: challenges and issues faced by the female in WML, mentorship/discipleship of the worship leader and mentorship/discipleship of women. In addition, several valuable sources were identified that related to the mentorship and development of ministry staff personnel. Each of these areas offered insight into the topic of mentorship of the female worship leader. Sources were identified from the existing literature, including books, journal articles, dissertations and magazine articles.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Answering the First Research Question

In response to the first research question, the literature suggests that the unique challenges faced by some females in WML include ambiguity regarding the call to ministry, working in a male-saturated work environment, and perceived lack of ministry opportunities. Some additional challenges are faced by women in WML that do not fit into these broad categories. Each of these challenges is discussed below.

Ambiguity Regarding Call to Ministry

Some females in WML experience challenges related to ambiguity regarding their call to ministry. Part of this struggle relates to significant passages of Scripture that suggest that women should not be leaders or teachers in the church, such as I Timothy 2:11-15. “Many young women stop or are stumped when they arrive at 1 Timothy 2:11-15. For them, this passage is an obstacle in following God’s call to a ministry calling that involves communicating the Word of God.”¹²⁹ This passage has been interpreted in many different ways and depending on the denomination, can mean many different things to a young woman experiencing a call to WML. Although this passage seems to prohibit women from roles in the church that involve communicating the Gospel, especially when men are present, the passage must be understood in light of the whole of Scripture. As mentioned in the biblical review of women in ministry leadership positions, Scripture offers many examples of women serving in ministry leadership, some of whose words

¹²⁹ Padilla, *Now That I’m Called*, 107.

are recorded as part of the Scriptures themselves. “No matter our interpretation of 1 Timothy 2, we must still recognize that we sit at the feet of female teachers every time we approach the divinely inspired speech of women in Scripture.”¹³⁰ Nevertheless, many women today still experience a lack of clarity regarding the interpretation of this passage. In fact, varying interpretations of these Scriptures contribute to the fact that some women in ministry leadership positions continue to face blatant opposition by those who do not believe women should be allowed to serve in ministry leadership positions.¹³¹ This type of opposition can contribute to feelings of ambiguity regarding whether or not the call they are experiencing is real and should be pursued. “Many of us [females in WML] have been made to feel that who we are and what we bring are not as valuable as who men are and what they bring, that the only role we can play remains in the kitchen and the nursery. . . . And if we hear these things or have these boundaries placed around us for long enough, we end up believing these lies and don’t step into all that God has for us.”¹³²

The variety of interpretations of Scripture passages such as 1 Timothy 2 also contributed to the aforementioned climate among conservative evangelical denominations, such as the SBC. In the early history of WML, women were poised to take a significant role. However, the momentum of women in WML was stalled, due to the resolutions and amendments to the Baptist Faith and Message in the 1980s and early 2000s.¹³³ “Women called to music ministry who came of age in the 1970s proceeded with music ministry education; however, by the time they were completing their education, the denomination that nurtured their call to ministry was reluctant to

¹³⁰ Padilla, *Now That I’m Called*, 122.

¹³¹ Leach, *Emboldened*, 70-86.

¹³² Buckley, *Rise Up & Sing*, 27-28.

¹³³ Bradley, “Women in Baptist Music Ministry,” 38-41.

accept them into places of leadership.”¹³⁴ Role models for young female worship leaders were scarce, and sometimes nonexistent. This climate has continued to influence women in WML today. Many women experiencing a call to WML have experienced ambiguity regarding their call because they are unable to see other women participating in and thriving in positions of WML. The lack of older female worship leaders causes some younger women to question the appropriateness of their call to WML. When women have no role models who are succeeding in their field of interest, they tend to question whether or not that field is in fact an appropriate field for them to pursue.¹³⁵ The lack of older women serving as role models in WML has caused younger women to pursue mentoring through other means than the traditional mentoring relationship between an older and younger woman. Some seek out mentoring relationships with women who are succeeding in life, but are not necessarily role models in WML. Although this can be valuable, the specific aspect of WML is lacking in the relationship. Others have benefited from mentoring relationships with male role models or married couples. Many young women in WML seek to be mentored through reading books and watching DVDs. Some women in WML participate in several of these options at once.¹³⁶ The lack of role models continues to be a significant challenge for women in WML in discerning and successfully pursuing God’s call on their lives.¹³⁷

Another challenge affecting the ambiguity faced by many women in WML involves the conflict over the ordination of women. Campbell-Reed tells the stories of several women who have served faithfully for many years without the prospect of being ordained. Others have finally

¹³⁴ Bradley, “Women in Baptist Music Ministry,” 42.

¹³⁵ Alves and English, “Female Students’ Preparedness for a Male-Dominated Workplace,” 589.

¹³⁶ Miller, “The Struggle to Find a Mentor,” 2.

¹³⁷ Nordhoff, “Let’s Deal With the Challenges You Face as a Female Worship Leader,” 3.

experienced ordination after more than a decade of service.¹³⁸ Although ordination is not a requirement for WML, some women equate ordination with having the full support and blessing of the church that they serve.¹³⁹ Others cite ordination as a symbol of equality with men.¹⁴⁰ When it becomes clear that ordination will not be offered, some women in WML begin to wonder if they have misinterpreted the call of God on their lives. In addition, when ordination is offered, some women face the challenge of opposition from those that are not in agreement with the ordination of women. Sometimes these women are faced with the unfortunate choice of receiving ordination and alienating a portion of their congregation, or declining the possibility of being ordained.¹⁴¹ When a woman serves in ministry without the possibility of ordination, while the men around her are being ordained, she can sometimes experience disillusionment regarding her call to ministry.¹⁴² While this is a significant issue for some women in WML, others are content to serve without the prospect of ordination on the horizon.

Challenges Working in a Male-dominated Environment

Some women in WML experience challenges related to working in a male-saturated work environment. One of these challenges is sexism. Although many people would prefer not to acknowledge it, sexism is still a problem within the evangelical church of the 21st-century. Unfortunately the church is not immune from this type of discrimination against women. “The truth is that you [women in ministry leadership] will experience sexism, overtly and covertly; it

¹³⁸ Campbell-Reed, “Changing Hands,” 22-24.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Houser, “A Biblical Foundation and a Mentor’s Manual,” 62.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Cox, “New Testament Prophecy and Its Implications for the Ministry of Women,” 29-30.

is just a matter of time.”¹⁴³ Sexism in the church is sometimes more difficult to navigate than it is in the business world. Christianity teaches kindness in the face of adversity, turning the other cheek, and responding in love to those who are not loving. For this reason, sexism in churches is sometimes overlooked or swept under the rug.¹⁴⁴ Sexism in its most basic form is a type of prejudice—in this case a prejudice against women in ministry leadership positions. Sexism can manifest itself in many different forms. Some of the most common are *sexist microaggressions*, which are, “the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.”¹⁴⁵ Other forms of sexism also exist in the church, such as *mansplaining* (condescending talk from a man to a woman), *bropropriation* (a man taking credit for a woman’s idea), and *maninterrupting* (frequent interruption by a man when a woman is speaking). Of course, other more serious forms of sexism also exist within the church, such as male dominism and outright sexual harassment.¹⁴⁶ “This [sexism] is a very real circumstance of being a woman in ministry that your male colleagues will never, ever have to contend with, and they will not understand, as much as they might want to try, or think that they can.”¹⁴⁷ Sexism still exists in the 21st-century evangelical church and unfortunately, it can be a significant challenge for the woman serving in WML.

Another challenge unique to the female in WML is that of nurturing and cultivating an appropriate relationship with her senior pastor, who is most likely a male. Many would suggest

¹⁴³ Lewis, *She*, 117.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 119.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 125.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 123-128.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 122.

that the relationship between the senior pastor and worship leader is one of the most crucial relationships within the church staff. Finding ways to cultivate this relationship without overstepping boundaries can be a challenge for the female in WML. It is likely that the other males on staff will receive the majority of the senior pastor's time and attention, and will possibly develop deeper relationships with him. They can also receive the greatest benefit of the pastor's mentoring efforts. This has the potential to create feelings of inferiority or uncertainty for the woman in WML as she attempts to develop an appropriate relationship with her senior pastor.¹⁴⁸

Some women in WML experience challenges managing their emotions in a male-saturated work environment. Rarely does society connect nurturing and maternal characteristics with leadership success. Some women in WML are unsure as to how to express these feminine traits among their male co-workers. If a woman shows emotion, she is sometimes unfairly labeled as emotionally unstable. And when a woman expresses care and concern for others, it can sometimes be mistaken for inappropriate communication with the opposite sex.¹⁴⁹

Conversely, when a woman in a predominantly male environment displays assertive tendencies, she can be labeled as too masculine or domineering. This presents a challenge for women who enjoy taking the initiative. When a woman is eager to take on a leadership role, she is sometimes interpreted as being too aggressive. Typically, males do not struggle with this interpretation of their initiative.¹⁵⁰

Houser mentions a *lack of voice* that is sometimes a challenge for women in ministry leadership positions in male-saturated work places. Although a woman might be in a position of

¹⁴⁸ Buckley, *Rise Up & Sing*, 103-110.

¹⁴⁹ Leach, *Emboldened*, 51-52.

¹⁵⁰ Padilla, *Now That I'm Called*, 118-119.

ministry leadership, she sometimes has no say in the direction and focus of the ministry. Ministry decisions are made by a committee or board whose membership is predominantly male. These decisions, frequently made with no female input, contribute to the lack of voice experienced by some females in WML in planning and implementing the direction of their ministry.¹⁵¹

Another challenge facing a woman in WML in a male-saturated workplace is a lack of confidence and the inability to stand up for herself in a room full of males. Some women experience a feeling of intimidation when faced with speaking up in a meeting that is predominantly attended by males. Some fear that their ideas will be ridiculed, ignored, or even stolen by males who want to take the credit for themselves. Unfortunately, women who do not stand up for themselves or share their ideas or thoughts are often stereotyped and labeled as incompetent or unneeded. When fear keeps a woman from speaking out, it fulfills this stereotype and perpetuates this unhealthy perception.¹⁵²

Tokenism can be another significant challenge for a woman working in a male-saturated workplace. Sometimes a woman is hired simply to fulfill a mandate for diversity or inclusion. Diversity among staff members can be seen as an asset, but sometimes it is pursued in order to be politically correct instead of from a desire for diverse perspectives. When this happens, women are hired simply as tokens of the political idea of diversity. This creates an atmosphere in which, although women are included in the staff, they are not thought of as true equals and are victims of inauthentic inclusion. They have a place, but are not really part of the team.¹⁵³ Unfortunately, this mindset can also happen in the church, resulting in an atmosphere that serves to challenge a woman's perception of her call to ministry.

¹⁵¹ Houser, "A Biblical Foundation and a Mentor's Manual," 61-62.

¹⁵² Alves and English, "Female Students' Preparedness for a Male-Dominated Workplace," 588-591.

¹⁵³ Alves and English, "Female Students' Preparedness for a Male-Dominated Workplace," 588-591.

In addition to the issues mentioned above, some women struggle with the challenges of being a working mother in a predominantly male office. The demands of motherhood and domestic responsibilities still exist, even when a mother chooses to work outside of the home. When a woman in a male-saturated work environment is called away from the office to her child's school or has difficulty with childcare, her absence is sometimes interpreted as a lack of commitment to her career. "Child-rearing responsibilities disproportionately fall on mothers, so problems with child care most frequently result in mothers making career sacrifices."¹⁵⁴ This challenge also exists for nursing mothers who must take regular breaks during the day to breastfeed or pump.¹⁵⁵

Perceived Lack of Ministry Opportunities

Many females in WML also have difficulty with their perception regarding the availability of opportunities open to them in fulfilling the calling on their life. This challenge also stems from the history regarding women in ministry in SBC life. Bradley writes, "When Southern Baptist music ministry became prominent . . . the future for women in leadership appeared hopeful with several women filling prominent positions and leading out in denominational life. . . . However, the initial strong showing of women in music ministry has not continued."¹⁵⁶ As the role of women in ministry leadership positions was marginalized, opportunities for women in WML became scarce. The standard in WML shifted to a pastoral position, and because of the SBC stance on women's ordination, the outlook for women in WML

¹⁵⁴ Schochet, "The Childcare Crisis is Keeping Women Out of the Workforce."

¹⁵⁵ Nordhoff, "Let's Deal With the Challenges You Face as a Female Worship Leader," 1.

¹⁵⁶ Bradley, "Women in Baptist Music Ministry," 34.

became bleak.¹⁵⁷ When the denomination moved into a more closed position regarding women in WML, some women began to question whether or not opportunities would exist for them to fulfill the calling on their lives. “With a regular flow of anti-women statements coming from the denomination, the climate for women to move forward was oppressive.”¹⁵⁸ This period of political uncertainty within evangelical denominations caused some women to abandon their call or to seek ministry positions in other areas. Some even moved to other denominations that were more accepting of women in WML.¹⁵⁹

Another contributing factor to the challenge of perception regarding ministry opportunities is the disparity between what churches and denominations say and do regarding women in WML. Although many churches might advertise positions equally for males and females, their hiring practices sometimes suggest that preference is given to males. “Moderates, while registering strong opposition to the 2000 revision of the Baptist Faith and Message, and while offering strong words of encouragement to women seeking to serve . . . appear to be extremely reluctant to call women to serve in these positions.”¹⁶⁰ This disparity contributes to the perception of some women called to WML that even if they train for and pursue a career in WML, they might never be given the opportunity to serve in that capacity.¹⁶¹ They simply have a

¹⁵⁷ Bradley, “Women in Baptist Music Ministry,” 42-43.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 44.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹⁶⁰ R. Albert Mohler, Jr., “Do SBC Moderates Really Believe Women Should Serve as Pastors?: An Important Research Project,” *Conventional Thinking*, August 21, 2006, accessed October 15, 2019, <http://www.conventionalthinking.org/?id=26>.

¹⁶¹ Flowers, “In My Mother’s House,” 110-111.

difficult time believing that ministry opportunities will actually be available and accessible to them.¹⁶²

Other Challenges Face by Women in WML

In addition to the challenges mentioned above, some women in WML also face obstacles regarding musical style and song choice. Because of the scarcity of women in WML in the past, a large portion of worship songs that are currently available are written for a male voice.¹⁶³ Although the key to these songs can easily be changed to fit a female voice, some are written with a melodic range that makes it difficult for women to sing. Male voices are generally more compatible with songs that begin in a low register and then jump up an octave to add power and excitement to the climax of the song. Although it is possible for women to sing these songs, sometimes the melodic jump pushes the woman into either a lower or higher range than she would prefer to sing. Many of these songs are unsingable for women in WML. In addition to this challenge, these songs are also written from a male perspective.¹⁶⁴ With less than twenty percent of female leaders overall serving in various positions in churches today, these songs with a male perspective are sung by male worship leaders throughout the majority of evangelical churches across the country, even though the majority of people attending these churches are females.¹⁶⁵ God created men and women unique, and both sexes display different aspects of God's character. When worship contains only a male perspective, we are in danger of missing the more feminine, nurturing aspects of God's nature. Nordhoff asks, "Is there something wrong with this picture?"

¹⁶² Houser, "A Biblical Foundation and a Mentor's Manual," 61-62.

¹⁶³ Nordhoff, "Let's Deal With the Challenges You Face as a Female Worship Leader," 2.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

Are women able to walk into a service on a Sunday morning and sing out the song in their hearts? Are we honoring them across the majority of our congregations?”¹⁶⁶ Nordhoff suggests that songs written from both a male and female perspective offer the most complete perspective on the character of God.¹⁶⁷

Some women in WML experience challenges seeing themselves as leaders. In fact, they are sometimes apologetic about stepping out as leaders.¹⁶⁸ This problem can manifest itself in a variety of ways, including a lack of confidence related to theological knowledge. Some women experience insecurity when it comes to speaking theological truth, especially when it involves a controversial passage of Scripture. Speaking one’s beliefs requires the vulnerability of opening up and showing who you truly are. Some women lack the confidence to be secure in sharing theological truths.¹⁶⁹ This challenge can also manifest itself as *imposter syndrome*, or a woman’s tendency to feel like she is simply faking it in her ministry position. “Although a woman has clear ability and giftedness, and although others recognize her giftedness and ability, there is an *inability* on the part of the woman to internalize that giftedness as genuine.”¹⁷⁰ Typically, men have a tendency to attribute their success to their gifting, skills and hard work, while women minimize their role in their own success, naming others who helped along the way or simply believing they got lucky.¹⁷¹

Women in positions of ministry leadership also face the reality that many people are scrutinizing their clothing styles, and the way they choose to wear their hair and makeup.

¹⁶⁶ Nordhoff, “Let’s Deal With the Challenges You Face as a Female Worship Leader,” 2.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Lewis, *She*, 54-57.

¹⁷⁰ Leach, *Emboldened*, 36-37.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 37.

Although this often happens to women in general, women who serve in leadership roles that place them in front of people are particularly vulnerable to this type of scrutinization. “Your clothing, makeup, jewelry, and shoes suddenly become the objects of everyone’s interest as a woman in ministry and will get far more attention and many more comments than your theological or ministerial gifts and capabilities.”¹⁷² People in the congregation have distinct opinions of how their ministerial staff should look. This is especially true when it comes to women in ministry leadership positions. Common criticisms for a woman in ministry leadership suggest that her clothes are too tight, too revealing, not modest enough, or not feminine enough. Typically, men in ministry leadership positions do not deal with these types of challenges and rarely, if ever, receive criticism regarding their clothing.¹⁷³

Answering the Second Research Question

In response to the second research question, the literature suggests that the experienced female worship leader can address the challenges faced by the young female worship leader by modeling biblical principles, lifestyle worship and respect for authority. Each of these areas is discussed below.

Modeling Biblical Principles

Experienced female worship leaders can help address the challenges faced by young female worship leaders by modeling biblical principles. Post-modern women in particular need

¹⁷² Leach, *Emboldened*, 67.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 67-70.

to see biblical principles modeled before adopting them into their own spiritual habits.¹⁷⁴ In fact these principles must be modeled not just for the sake of the young woman in WML, but as a regular life habit.¹⁷⁵ Spradlin suggests that in order to effectively mentor/disciple a younger worship leader, the experienced worship leader must be committed to the spiritual disciplines of prayer, Scripture reading, fellowship, and serving others.¹⁷⁶ Each of these spiritual disciplines requires some explanation. The spiritual discipline of prayer is more than simply setting aside a daily time devoted to prayer. Rather, it is the intentional back-and-forth conversation with God that occurs all day long in the believer's life. Effective modeling of daily prayer involves talking with God throughout the day as various situations occur and being open about these conversations with others. The spiritual discipline of Scripture reading is more than just fulfilling a Scripture reading plan or reading a chapter a day. A commitment to reading Scripture involves devoting daily time to reading God's Word, meditating on it, seeking ways to apply it to one's life, and sharing insights with others. The spiritual discipline of fellowship is more than simply becoming a member of a church. Rather, it involves developing deep relationships based on a common love for God and spending time worshiping and growing with other believers. Some would suggest that the community within the church is the ideal place for mentoring/modeling relationships to thrive.¹⁷⁷ The experienced female in WML must be committed to the mission of the church, and fully involved in the work of the church.¹⁷⁸ Finally, the spiritual discipline of serving others involves noticing the needs of others and being willing to meet those needs

¹⁷⁴ Neumann, "An Examination of Mentoring Programs," 137.

¹⁷⁵ Robinson, *Mentor for Life*, 36.

¹⁷⁶ Spradlin, "Disciplining Worship Leadership," 119.

¹⁷⁷ Robinson, 36.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

whenever possible. Often this happens through the context of the church, but the idea of serving others should move beyond the church walls to neighborhoods, communities, and ultimately the world.¹⁷⁹

Modeling biblical principles is also beneficial in the area of developing character qualities essential for Christian living. Younger females in WML will benefit from the example of older female worship leaders as they display the character qualities of humility, integrity, servanthood, personal discipline and spiritual passion. Growing as a worship leader involves more than just developing the musical skill set to put together a seamless service of worship. These skills are important for the success of the worship leader. However, equally important is growing as a disciple of Christ and developing the personal characteristics that will help one succeed in ministry. Worship leaders must be humble and serve with integrity. They must serve others and be disciplined in their spiritual life. And if they want their congregations to be passionate in worship, they must first be passionate about worship themselves.¹⁸⁰ Developing the essential musical, organizational and people skills for success, as well as cultivating Christlike characteristics are both essential for the young woman in WML. But when the emphasis is only on developing musical, organizational and people skills, the young woman in WML could be lacking in her personal relationship with Christ. Likewise, when the emphasis is only on discipleship, the young worship leader might fail for lack of skill development. The young female in WML benefits from modeling both the necessary skill set and Christlike characteristics.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ Spradlin, "Disciplining Worship Leadership," 119.

¹⁸⁰ Jarboe, "An Investigation Into Five Essential Discipleship Characteristics for Church Staff Members," 10-12.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

This process of modeling is especially beneficial when the mentee identifies an older woman in WML who displays the character traits and skills that she most admires. Women from all walks of life are looking for someone they can admire and look up to.¹⁸² When a woman is able to identify someone who displays the skills and characteristics they themselves would like to have, both spiritually and professionally, the mentoring relationship can have great impact. Part of the reason for this is that she believes this woman will be able to identify with and help her through the struggles of becoming who she wants to become.¹⁸³ For this reason mentoring/modeling relationships are generally more successful when a younger woman is able to identify an older woman for the development of the relationship, rather than being paired with someone through a random process. When an older, experienced woman in WML reciprocates interest in the relationship, the younger female gains a boost of confidence in her value as a worship leader.¹⁸⁴

Modeling Lifestyle Worship

Experienced female worship leaders can also address the challenges faced by younger female worship leaders by modeling lifestyle worship. “It’s inconceivable for us to see ourselves as worship leaders if we’re not giving attention to what we do every day.”¹⁸⁵ Lifestyle worship involves more than the regular habit of engaging in worship through the local church. Lifestyle worship is a daily choice to honor God with one’s life—time, talents, possessions,

¹⁸² Goodwin, “Effective Discipling of Women,” 173-174.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Neumann, “An Examination of Mentoring Programs,” 135.

¹⁸⁵ Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 43.

relationships—in fact, every area of one’s life. It also involves the personal act of worship through the spiritual disciplines discussed previously. “Worship leadership cannot disciple others in personal worship if they themselves are not regularly worshipping personally.”¹⁸⁶ Personal worship involves daily confession of sins and an intentional commitment to walk with God throughout the day. Dever suggests that modeling obedience to Christ is the most important aspect of the mentoring relationships. As the experienced female worship leader models a lifestyle of worship through consistent obedience to Christ and His commands, the younger female worship leader is able to see the value of obedience to Christ in her own life.¹⁸⁷ Through the practice of personal worship, the believer is continually being conformed into the image of Christ, becoming more and more like Him, and through their example, encouraging others to do the same.¹⁸⁸

Modeling lifestyle worship also involves the experienced female worship leader opening her life to a younger female worship leader for the purposes of spiritual development and professional success. By modeling a lifestyle of worship, the experienced female worship leader is able to encourage the spiritual development of the younger female worship leader. This happens as the habit of lifestyle worship is modeled by the experienced worship leader and adopted by the younger worship leader. It also happens as the two look at and sort through life situations using the Bible as a guide. Through this process the younger worship leader’s call to WML can also be clarified and confirmed, as the experienced worship leader is able to identify and reinforce specific giftings that are beneficial to WML.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ Spradlin, “Disciplining Worship Leadership,” 120.

¹⁸⁷ Dever, *Disciplining*, 39-40.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 121.

¹⁸⁹ Scheer, *Essential Worship*, 275.

Modeling lifestyle worship is also important in helping the younger female in WML to fill in the gaps of her education with practical application and spiritual truth. Many women enter the field of WML with an education in music. This is certainly important, as a great portion of the job responsibilities of a worship leader have to do with musical skills. But an education in music does not prepare the female in WML for the demands of ministry and for developing the spiritual attributes to be successful in ministry. Even additional theological education sometimes does not adequately prepare one for a life of ministry. A more experienced female in WML can help to bridge the gap in education by modeling lifestyle worship and by sharing her experience with a younger female in WML. This type of modeling/mentoring relationship can also be beneficial for the young female worship leader in discerning her call to WML and in building the confidence necessary for pursuing her call.¹⁹⁰ As the mentor shares her experiences in WML with the mentee, practical knowledge can be gained that is beneficial to the success of the young female in WML.¹⁹¹ Being intentional in the modeling relationship is a key to its success. The experienced female in WML must be intentional in listening and watching for areas in which she can share from her experience, both spiritually and musically/administratively. As these areas are identified, the mentor must model the correct and biblical response to these life and ministry situations so that the mentee can learn from her experience and benefit from her wisdom.¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰ Mazak, "A Call to Excellence," 87.

¹⁹¹ Newkirk and Cooper, "Preparing Women for Baptist Church Leadership," 340.

¹⁹² Edwards and Neumann, "Mentoring With Intention," 2-3.

Modeling Respect for Authority

The female in WML is given opportunities to serve largely depending on her denomination or church leadership's stance regarding women in ministry. As mentioned earlier, there are many views on the appropriateness of women in ministry leadership. Some would suggest that women should never be in a position of authority over men. Others would allow for females to serve as lead pastors, with the entire congregation under their authority. Whatever the stance of the denomination or church leadership, the female in WML should serve within the authority structure of the denomination and of the individual church's leadership. The benefit of seeing a more experienced woman in WML serving within the authority of her church and denomination is greatly beneficial to a young woman in WML. Leach outlines several ways the experienced female ministry leader can model respect for authority, no matter the type of authority structure in which she finds herself. When difficulties arise related to serving under authority, the experienced female in WML can model respect for authority first of all by staying calm and not reacting in anger. In addition, she should listen in order to fully understand, not with the intent to argue. She should work hard to discover common ground and celebrate what can be agreed on. She should avoid blaming others and never personally attack the person. Finally, the female in WML should do everything with a humble attitude.¹⁹³ These suggestions can help the female in WML to appropriately respond to these issues without causing division in the church body. Leach cites Paul as an example of serving under authority. Even though he was in prison, he was not angry or bitter. Rather, he continued to be led by the Spirit and did not let opposition sideline him from pursuing God's purposes.¹⁹⁴ "We are not the *ultimate authority* but

¹⁹³ Leach, *Emboldened*, 85.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.* 84.

simply a conduit of God’s grace, truth, and love under the reign of King Jesus. . . . So, instead of allowing bitterness and anger to be the banner under which you lead, *preach on, teach on, lead on, move on with grace, love, and in the power of the Spirit.*¹⁹⁵ When a young female in WML sees this principle modeled, even amid difficult circumstances, it is a powerful reminder that God’s purposes can be accomplished regardless of the authority structure in which she serves. She must simply be faithful to God’s call on her life and allow God to make the way for her ministry.

Buckley encourages women to model respect for authority, saying, “We see in Genesis that men and women have both been created in the image of God to reflect different aspects of His heart and character. This is a wonderful thing, but because of the oppression that women have been under in the past, and in some places still are, there is a danger that in our fight for equality we have almost tried to disregard our differences.”¹⁹⁶ The Bible teaches the value of all people and the importance of treating everyone with respect and dignity. This is especially true when disagreements arise. Although there will be those who oppose the idea of women serving in ministry leadership positions within the church, the biblical standard still applies. These people also deserve to be treated politely and with respect. Seeing this standard modeled by an experienced female worship leader can be an invaluable example for the younger female worship leader.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 84-85.

¹⁹⁶ Buckley, *Rise Up & Sing*, 28.

Other Benefits of Modeling

Modeling is also helpful for women working in a male-dominated work environment. Modeling can help women to overcome the challenges of working in a male-saturated situation and to develop the skills and abilities needed for success. Seeing another woman succeed in one's field can be a catalyst for a woman's own success. The example of a successful woman can help women leaders to develop confidence in their own potential to succeed. Conversely, when there are no female role models it is much more difficult for a woman to see herself succeeding in her field.¹⁹⁷

Conclusion

The research shows that the female in WML experiences unique challenges in discerning and pursuing her call to ministry. These challenges manifest themselves in three main areas. Many women in WML experience ambiguity regarding their call to ministry. For many women, the conservative climate in recent history related to women in ministry leadership positions has contributed to the difficulty in discerning and pursuing their call. The female in WML also experiences challenges related to working in a male-saturated workplace and career field. Because the majority of staff positions in 21st-century evangelical churches are filled by males, the likelihood of the female in WML working within an all-male or mostly-male staff is high. In addition, because of the lack of female role models in WML, the novice female in WML can have difficulty in perceiving potential ministry opportunities that might be open and available to her.

¹⁹⁷ Alves and English, "Female Students' Preparedness for a Male-Dominated Workplace," 588-591.

Research also shows that the experienced female worship leader is uniquely qualified to help the novice female worship leader address these challenges through modeling/mentoring relationships. Modeling biblical principles and a lifestyle of worship help the novice female in WML to develop the needed Christian disciplines and characteristics that can help her to succeed in ministry. In addition, modeling respect for authority can help the novice female in WML to have the right attitude related to authority, even when there are challenges and difficulties related to doing so. Conclusions related to these findings will be discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

This chapter will present a brief summary of this research study, its purposes and the methods used to gain the findings. The findings will be discussed in terms of the benefits of mentoring by an experienced female in WML for the development, growth and success of the novice female worship leader. Application will be made and suggestions offered both for the novice female in WML and the experienced female in WML. Limitations to the study will also be discussed. Finally, recommendations will be offered for future research.

Summary of the Study

This qualitative historical study examined the unique challenges faced by the female in WML and the ways in which the experienced female in WML could help to address these challenges. The research shows that the female in WML faces challenges in the areas of ambiguity regarding her call to ministry, working in a male-saturated work environment, and her perception of whether or not ministry opportunities will be open and available to her. Furthermore, research also shows that the experienced female worship leader can help to address these challenges by modeling biblical principles, lifestyle worship and respect for authority.

The study examined ways in which the novice female worship leader can be encouraged to pursue and fulfill her call to WML. By examining the literature related to the two research questions, the study verified the validity of the two hypotheses. The study's research findings suggest that the novice female worship leader can be encouraged to pursue and fulfill her call to WML through a mentoring and modeling process with another female who has experience in WML.

Hebrews 10:24-25 says, “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” These verses describe the very best of what mentoring has to offer. Mentoring is more than just a haphazard relationship where the two parties discuss anything that comes to mind. Rather, mentoring involves giving thought to how we can *spur one another on toward love and good deeds*. Mentoring also involves encouragement, specifically from an experienced veteran to a novice in the same field. “It requires the kind of instruction that occurs through an apprenticeship at a job, or with a personal trainer or coach. An apprentice learns by listening *and watching and participating*, little by little, with more responsibility being earned over time.”¹⁹⁸

John Maxwell suggests, “The positive effects of developing others are remarkable. But you don’t have to be a remarkable or unusually talented person to mentor others. You can raise up people around you and teach them to fly. It does take desire and a commitment to the process, but it is the most rewarding part of success. Raising up others is the greatest joy in the world.”¹⁹⁹ Experienced female worship leaders must realize the benefits of mentoring and begin to step up and look for ways to model what a healthy and successful woman in WML looks like. The remainder of this chapter offers suggestions, or action points for the experienced female in WML as she begins the process of mentoring novice females in WML. In addition, suggestions are made for the novice female in WML as she looks for and enters into a mentoring relationship. Finally, additional suggestions will be made for others who might play a role in the mentorship of the female in WML.

¹⁹⁸ Devers, *Discipling*, 39-40.

¹⁹⁹ Maxwell, *Mentoring* 101, 23.

Discussion of Findings

Research Question 1

The findings of the study address the following research question: “What challenges are commonly faced by the female worship leader within the 21st-century evangelical church?” The literature suggests that the female worship leader faces unique challenges related to pursuing and fulfilling her call to WML. These challenges can begin as the young female begins to sense that God is calling her to a life of ministry. Discerning God’s call to WML can be difficult and present challenges to the novice female worship leader. As she pursues her calling to WML, the female worship leader may also experience challenges related to working in a male-saturated work environment. Additional challenges arise related to her perception of the availability of ministry opportunities. For purposes of clarity, the three broad areas presenting challenges to the female in WML will be reordered from Hypothesis 1 as follows: challenges related to discerning her call to ministry, challenges regarding her perception of available ministry opportunities, and challenges working in a male-saturated work environment.

Research suggests that the female in WML may experience ambiguity regarding discerning her call to ministry. For many women, this uncertainty is sometimes caused from both the interpretation of Scriptures which might seem to limit the leadership role of women in the church and from the past actions of conservative evangelical denominations that have minimized the possibilities for women in ministry leadership. One of the passages of Scripture that contributes to this ambiguity is 1 Timothy 2:11-15. “A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be

quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.” Although this passage of Scripture seems to suggest that women should not be in positions of leadership in the church, the passage must be interpreted in light of Scripture as a whole. One cannot negate the positive examples of women in Scripture who rose to ministry leadership roles, such as Deborah, Huldah, Miriam, Priscilla, Junia and Mary the mother of Jesus. These women served in significant spiritual leadership roles within the life of the Israelites and the early church. Many of these roles were culturally and traditionally occupied by men, and held authority over men and women alike. In addition, through the biblical accounts of the lives of these women, the Scriptures reveal that God not only calls women to ministry leadership roles, even positions with authority over men, but He has also recorded the words of some of these women in the Holy Scriptures for the edification and inspiration of mankind through the ages. God has historically used women in His divine plan for the spiritual leadership of His people and for the edification of the church through the ages. These women serve as examples for all women serving in ministry leadership today.

Because of varying interpretations of this and other Scripture passages, the evangelical church in recent history has made statements that also seem to suggest that women should not serve as leaders in a ministry setting. As mentioned in Chapter 1, in recent years the SBC has contributed to this conservative mindset by adopting resolutions and amending the Baptist Faith and Message towards the marginalization of women in ministry leadership positions. This climate among conservative evangelical churches has contributed to the challenges that women face in discerning their call to ministry. Closely related to this issue is the ongoing debate regarding the ordination of women. Although ministry may be accomplished without receiving

ordination, some women view ordination as a stamp of approval over one's ministry and a symbol of equality with men who hold similar positions. Therefore, when ordination is withheld or delayed for significant periods of time, some women experience disillusionment regarding their call to ministry.²⁰⁰ Although this issue does not present a challenge for every woman in WML, it does present a significant challenge for some women in WML.

Research also suggests that the female worship leader experiences challenges related to her perception regarding whether or not ministry opportunities will be available to her. The causes contributing to this issue are closely related to those that have contributed to the ambiguity experienced in discerning the female worship leader's call to ministry. Although every Southern Baptist church is autonomous and is able to make decisions related to women in ministry leadership positions separate from the denomination, many SBC churches have been unwilling to pursue women in ministry leadership positions because of the denominational slant against doing so. In the past, women who pursued training and education for a career in WML have had difficulty finding such a position within a conservative evangelical church.²⁰¹ For this reason, many women who are called to WML today have doubts regarding whether or not they will be able to fulfill their call and acquire a position in WML that will adequately provide for their needs and the needs of their families.

Many of the unique challenges facing the female in WML stem from working in a male-saturated work environment. Research shows that women filling any type of church staff ministry leadership role represent less than 20% of overall church staff positions.²⁰² It would be fair to assume that the percentage of women compared to men specifically in WML is much

²⁰⁰ Cox, "New Testament Prophecy and Its Implications for the Ministry of Women," 29-30.

²⁰¹ Bradley, "Women in Baptist Music Ministry," 44.

²⁰² Nordhoff, "Let's Deal With the Challenges You Face as a Female Worship Leader," 2.

lower than 20%. What this means for the female in WML is that it is very likely that most of the people she works with will be men. Additionally, the majority of people in her profession will also be men. Research shows that women working in male-saturated fields experience some unique challenges.

Cultivating and maintaining appropriate relationships within a male-saturated work environment is a challenge for some women in WML. Women in male-saturated work environments sometimes have difficulty navigating the expression of their emotions. Depending on the type of emotion or female characteristic, some women have been labeled as too emotionally unstable, too masculine, too domineering, too meek, too mothering, too aggressive, too forward, etc.²⁰³ In addition, cultivating an appropriate relationship between the female in WML and her senior pastor can also be a challenge. Having a healthy relationship with the senior pastor is essential for the success of any worship leader. These two staff members must be able to work closely together in planning and implementing the worship services for the congregation. A female in WML faces the challenge of building and cultivating this relationship with a person of the opposite sex in an appropriate way.²⁰⁴ Some pastors, and also some women in ministry leadership positions, hold strict guidelines regarding meeting alone with anyone of the opposite sex. Although this guideline can help to protect the ministry leader against false allegations and any hint of inappropriateness, it makes it somewhat difficult for a woman who must work closely with her senior pastor. The female in WML must navigate this situation carefully and search for ways to cultivate the relationship with her senior pastor using wise, discerning and appropriate methods.

²⁰³ Padilla, *Now That I'm Called*, 118-119.

²⁰⁴ Buckley, *Rise Up & Sing*, 103-110.

Sexism, or discrimination based upon gender, is another challenge experienced by the female in WML. Sexism can happen in varying degrees, from subtle snubs and condescending behavior to outright sexual harassment and everything in between.²⁰⁵ The most common of these are sexist microaggressions that include slights or snubs carrying subtle messages, sometimes even unintentional, that occur on a regular basis. Other forms include mansplaining, bropropriation and maninterrupting.²⁰⁶ Research suggests that every woman serving in a ministry leadership position will eventually face sexism of some type while serving on a church staff.²⁰⁷

Closely related to sexism is the issue of tokenism. Sometimes women are hired simply to fill a quota or to represent a sense of inclusion of women in various roles. When this happens, women hold a position but really have no authentic relationship to the team as a whole. Although her presence might indicate that the organization is open to the hiring of women, her lack of authentic inclusion suggests that she is simply there as a token of what is politically correct.²⁰⁸ Tokenism also occurs within the 21st-century evangelical church.

Women working in male-saturated work environments can also experience a lack of voice. Although women in WML might be the ones organizing and facilitating the worship ministry, sometimes they have no say in the direction of the ministry and simply act on decisions made by an elder board or leadership team made up of males.²⁰⁹ This organizational structure can sometimes imply that the woman in WML has no credible insight to offer in giving direction to her ministry. In addition, some women experience a lack of confidence when working in a male-

²⁰⁵ Buckley, *Rise Up & Sing*, 123-128.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 123-128.

²⁰⁷ Lewis, *She*, 117.

²⁰⁸ Alves and English, "Female Students' Preparedness for a Male-Dominated Workplace," 588-591.

²⁰⁹ Houser, "A Biblical Foundation and a Mentor's Manual for Women Ministry Students," 61-62.

saturated work environment. They are sometimes intimidated about speaking out and advocating for themselves or for their ideas in a room filled with men. Unfortunately, this hesitancy to speak out can sometimes perpetuate the incorrect interpretation of this lack of confidence as incompetence.²¹⁰

Finally, women in WML can experience challenges simply related to being a wife and mother. Although women are an important part of the workforce in America, the bulk of domestic responsibilities such as caring for children and taking care of the home falls to women. When a woman in a male-saturated work environment must leave her place of work to care for a sick child or misses a day of work because of childcare issues, she is sometimes labeled as unreliable or lacking commitment to her job.²¹¹ It is much more rare for a man to experience this type of challenge, since he often has a wife who takes on these responsibilities and is rarely called away from the office to deal with them.

Research Question 2

The findings of this study also address the following research question: “In what ways could an experienced female worship leader address the challenges faced by the young female worship leader?” The research suggests that the experienced female worship leader can address the challenges experienced by the young female worship leader by modeling biblical principles, a lifestyle of worship and respect for authority. This modeling can be accomplished through a mentoring relationship with a seasoned female in WML and a novice female in WML. Maxwell suggests that the goal of a mentoring relationship is the development of others. This development

²¹⁰ Alves and English, “Female Students’ Preparedness for a Male-Dominated Workplace,” 588-591.

²¹¹ Schochet, “The Childcare Crisis is Keeping Women Out of the Workforce.”

and growth should encompass two areas: spiritual growth and professional growth. Spiritual growth occurs as the mentee learns how to live a successful Christian life. Professional growth occurs as the mentee develops the skills and abilities necessary for a successful career. Both areas are essential for the successful mentoring relationship.²¹²

Research suggests that the experienced female in WML can help to address the unique challenges faced by the novice female in WML by modeling biblical principles. Modeling biblical principles should not be carried out simply as an act for the benefit of the mentee, but rather as a personal lifestyle of the mentor.²¹³ “Leading worship starts with the way I live my life, not with what I do in public.”²¹⁴ Some would suggest that these biblical principles should include prayer, Scripture reading, fellowship, and serving others.²¹⁵ Others would suggest modeling biblical principles involves the development of character qualities such as humility, integrity, servanthood, personal discipline and spiritual passion.²¹⁶ Certainly, all of the above and more are examples of biblical principles, spiritual disciplines and characteristics that should be modeled in the Christian life. Of most benefit to the mentee are those characteristics that she wishes to develop in her own life. When a novice woman in WML can identify someone with the biblical attributes and characteristics that she most wants to develop in her own life, there is great benefit to the modeling/mentoring relationship.²¹⁷

²¹² Maxwell, *Mentoring 101*, 16-17.

²¹³ Robinson, *Mentor for Life*, 36.

²¹⁴ Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 43.

²¹⁵ Spradlin, “Discipling Worship Leadership, 119.

²¹⁶ Jarboe, “An Investigation Into Five Essential Discipleship Characteristics for Church Staff Members,” 10-12.

²¹⁷ Goodwin, “Effective Discipling of Women,” 173-174.

Research also suggests that the experienced female in WML can help to address the challenges of the novice female in WML by modeling a lifestyle of worship. Lifestyle worship involves the conscious act of offering all of oneself to God on a daily basis. Daily submission to God's leadership and direction in one's life is critical for developing lifestyle worship. Furthermore, lifestyle worship entails giving freely of one's resources, time, talents and energy for the purposes of God. Modeling a Christian lifestyle of day-by-day and minute-by-minute obedience to Christ is one of the most effective means of mentoring for the growth and development of a life of Christian ministry.²¹⁸ "Everything we do should be governed by one goal—to see Jesus Christ praised, exalted, magnified, lifted up, and obeyed."²¹⁹ It is not enough to focus simply on the development of the necessary skills and abilities to do the job well. Mentoring for the purposes of developing as a women in WML must include a focus on both the development of skills and abilities to facilitate the worship ministry and also the growth of lifestyle worship.²²⁰ Intentionality is the key to the success of the mentoring relationship. The experienced female in WML must be intentional about guiding discussions and responding to challenges faced by the novice female in WML with a biblical viewpoint and Christian outlook.²²¹ In this way, she encourages the development of lifestyle worship in the novice female in WML.

Finally, the experienced female in WML can help to address the challenges faced by the novice female in WML by modeling appropriate respect for authority. Females in WML serve in all types of churches with varying interpretations regarding women in ministry leadership. When

²¹⁸ Dever, *Discipling*, 39-40.

²¹⁹ Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 44.

²²⁰ Jarboe, "An Investigation Into Five Essential Discipleship Characteristics for Church Staff Members," 10-12.

²²¹ Edwards and Neumann, "Mentoring With Intention," 2-3.

the experienced female in WML models respect for authority, even in situations when she might not agree with that authority, her example speaks volumes about living under the authority structure that God has designed. The Bible is clear that both men and women are to submit to one another and to submit to those who hold authority in one's life. This mindset requires humility and the intentional effort to avoid dissention. Modeling appropriate respect for authority might involve staying calm and not resorting to anger in difficult situations. It could entail listening not with the intent to argue, but to fully understand. And, certainly, it involves searching for and celebrating the common ground on which you can agree and collaborate.²²² Romans 12:18 says, "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." This Scripture applies to those in all walks of life, including both men and women serving in ministry leadership positions.

Implications for Future Practice

Research supports the two hypotheses of this qualitative, historical study. The female in WML faces unique challenges in pursuing and fulfilling her call to ministry. These challenges can occur in discerning her call to ministry, working in a male-saturated work environment, and perception related to available ministry opportunities. Furthermore, the experienced female in WML can help to address these challenges through modeling and mentorship. Modeling should occur in the areas of living out biblical principles, lifestyle worship and respect for authority. Given the positive outcome of the research questions and hypotheses, some implications exist for

²²² Leach, *Emboldened*, 85.

future practice. What follows are suggestions for future practice for the experienced female in WML and for the novice female in WML.

Implications for the Experienced Female in WML

1. Be willing to participate in mentoring relationships with younger females in WML. The experienced female worship leader must engage in mentoring relationships for the success of the novice female in WML. Much of the literature studied indicates that mentoring relationships are a large part of the process for growing and developing as a worship leader. The experienced female in WML should ensure that the mentoring relationship involves the development of the younger female both in spiritual disciplines and in the skills and abilities needed to be successful in her position. Successful mentoring involves a focus on both of these areas.²²³ Mentoring is most impactful when the mentee is shown how to succeed at life, not simply how to perform well in their job or career. Furthermore, mentoring requires intentionality. Rather than just meeting together to talk about life, the mentor should help the mentee to view each life situation through the lens of Scripture. These mentoring relationships benefit not only the novice female in WML, but also provide an avenue for the experienced female in WML to continue meaningful ministry as she grows older and is replaced by a younger generation. “By intentionally building mentoring relationships, worship pastors can encourage, disciple, and influence worship for years to come.”²²⁴

²²³ Rettino, “Mentoring Saddleback Church Staff Women,” 29.

²²⁴ Page and Gray, *Hungry for Worship*, 151.

2. Seek out and cultivate relationships for the purpose of fellowship with younger females in WML. There are a growing number of young females in WML within evangelical churches today. These young females might be volunteers within the worship ministry of the experienced female worship leader's church, or they might be involved in other churches in the general area. Make inquiries regarding where these younger females in WML are serving and make an effort to get to know them. Research shows that these young women might be reluctant to approach an experienced female worship leader for help. They sometimes tend to question their value to an experienced female worship leader who has been successful in her career.²²⁵ This is why it is important to take the initiative in seeking out relationships with younger women in WML. Show interest in them. Invite them for lunch or for a coffee date or gather two or three together to share about ministry. It is quite possible, perhaps even probable that these younger females in WML are experiencing some of the challenges discussed in this paper and would benefit from the fellowship of getting together with others who serve in a similar situation.
3. Model biblical principles. Because the female worship leader serves in a position of prominence in the church, people are watching what she does. Modeling biblical principles affects not only the novice female worship leader who may be watching, but also the entire congregation. As the female worship leader acts as an example of someone who engages in prayer, regular reading of Scripture, fellowship and service, she is modeling the behaviors that contribute to spiritual health and growth. In addition, as she displays character qualities such as humility, integrity, servanthood, personal discipline and spiritual passion, she sets an example of how to live among and respond to the

²²⁵ Neumann, "An Examination of Mentoring Programs," 135.

various people she comes in contact with. These behaviors and characteristics are important in any believer's life, but especially in the life of someone who is serving in a position of ministry and regularly on the church platform for everyone to see. Tim Sharp suggests that passive mentoring takes place in every rehearsal and gathering of the musical ensemble.²²⁶ For the worship leader, this includes the worship team, ensemble and choir rehearsals as well as the worship services where the entire congregation is present.

4. Model a lifestyle of worship. This is closely related to modeling biblical principles, but also involves the act of offering oneself to God on a daily basis. One who lives a lifestyle of worship seeks to honor God in every aspect of their lives, not just when they are in front of an audience. 2 Timothy 4:12 encourages leaders to “set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.” Everything the female worship leader says has the potential to honor God or dishonor God. Everything she does sets an example for others of how they should live their lives. How the female worship leader treats others is a representation of God's love for them. Displaying an active faith tells others that God is in control no matter the circumstances. And living with purity allows the female worship leader to lead in sincere, authentic worship without hypocrisy.²²⁷ Lifestyle worship involves living every aspect of one's life for God and to accomplish His purposes in the world.
5. Model appropriate respect for authority. Some female worship leaders serve in churches and denominations that might not fully embrace women in worship ministry leadership.

²²⁶ Sharp, *Mentoring in the Ensemble Arts*, 78.

²²⁷ Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 44-47.

Modeling respect for authority means serving faithfully within the authority structure of one's church. Instead of fighting for rights, the female worship leader should serve with humility and faithfulness. When she feels that her gifts and creative potential are being subdued by the leadership of the church, she should serve cheerfully in the avenues that are open to her. Psalms 139:16 says, "all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." God knows each situation. He sees the struggles sometimes faced by women in WML. Serving with humility and faithfulness no matter the circumstance communicates that God is in control and is working for the benefit of all involved. This simple act of submission to authority can hold a powerful influence for those who are witnesses. Modeling respect for authority does not mean enduring abusive or harassing behavior. If these things are occurring, the female worship leader should seek help from a trusted and godly source. And if she comes to the point where she feels that it is impossible to serve with humility and faithfulness, it may be time for her to consider seeking out a new position elsewhere. In this case, prayer and seeking God's direction are essential. Relocating to another place of ministry is a better option than destroying one's witness and being divisive in one's congregation.

Implications for the Novice Female in WML

1. When discerning a call to ministry, a young woman should seek out advice and confirmation from trusted spiritual advisors and mentors. A calling to vocational ministry can be experienced in different ways by different people. Some experience an instantaneous impression by the Holy Spirit of which there can be no question in the mind of the person being called of what God is asking them to do. Some become aware

of their calling over time, as they proceed with a life of ministry and their gifts and heart for ministry are confirmed. Whatever the case, it can sometimes be difficult to discern God's call on one's life. As a young woman senses that God might be calling her to vocational ministry, she should talk to trusted spiritual advisors who know her well. Most often, they will either confirm or question whether or not God is calling her to vocational ministry. If they can see God working in her life and that her gifts, skills and passions line up with a possible vocational calling, they will likely encourage her to pursue her thoughts as a calling from God. If they have questions about her lifestyle, giftings or priorities, they might question whether or not God is really calling her to vocational ministry. "You've got to trust that if you are called to lead worship and it's the right time for you to step out, those around you will encourage you to do so."²²⁸ The young woman should talk with several people: parents, pastors and godly friends and mentors. Of course, prayer is an essential aspect of discerning a call to ministry as well. Only the individual can ultimately determine whether or not God is calling her to vocational ministry. For leadership in worship ministry, having musical talent is not enough. Having a firm grasp on one's call to ministry can be an important factor in ministering with the right heart and focus. "Many problems associated with performance-driven worship can be eliminated if churches focus on securing men and women who are called, rather than simply skilled, to fill ministry positions."²²⁹

2. The novice female in WML should understand the position of her church and denomination regarding women in WML. When a young woman senses a call to

²²⁸ Buckley, *Rise Up & Sing*, 24.

²²⁹ Page and Gray, *Hungry for Worship*, 62.

vocational worship ministry, it is important for her to know where her church leadership and denomination stand on the issue of women in WML. She may already have a good idea, but may need to research this further. The young woman should talk to her pastor or other spiritual leaders in her church to gain a full understanding of their position. These conversations might possibly occur as she shares her thoughts about being called to vocational ministry. If not, she should pursue these answers for herself. As previously mentioned, churches and denominations vary in their stance on women in WML. Gaining the understanding of exactly where one's church and denomination stand on this issue can help give direction as to how to best fulfill one's call and pursue one's ministry.

3. The novice female in WML should understand her own position regarding women in WML. There are godly people on all sides of the complementarian/egalitarian debate. Even within complementarianism there are varying views on what women in ministry should and should not be allowed to do. Some believe that women should not ever be in a teaching position when men are present. Others would allow women to serve in all roles except that of the pastor. The young woman in WML should be sure that she is not simply following what others believe. She should study the Scriptures for herself and spend time in prayer to gain a fuller understanding of how God might want to use her in ministry.
4. The young women experiencing a call to WML should pursue the necessary education to succeed in her career. Many people assume that this might mean pursuing a bachelor's degree in music. Although being a competent musician is an important part of leading in worship ministry, pursuing a theological education is also important. Worship ministers are ultimately theologians. Every song that is sung in worship, and every word that is

spoken contributes to the congregation's knowledge about God. Furthermore, the distinction of a particular denomination's unique doctrine is also supported by what is done in worship. "To protect theological distinctions important to our identities, church leaders must be proactive in reviewing, evaluating, and testing the content of songs before the songs are introduced to congregations. The lack of theological training for worship leaders makes this difficult."²³⁰ Both musical education and theological education are important for the worship leader. Some worship leaders opt to study music as an undergraduate degree and pursue theological education in graduate school. Another degree option that has grown in prominence in recent years is in the area of worship arts or worship studies. Some universities now offer bachelors degrees and/or graduate study in this field of worship arts, combining the disciplines of music and theology into one.

5. The novice female in WML should participate in every opportunity for spiritual and professional growth. In addition to pursuing the necessary musical and theological education for a career in worship ministry, she should attend conferences, seminars and workshops related to worship ministry whenever possible. In addition, she should pursue and take advantage of mentoring opportunities wherever they can be found. Some universities and seminaries offer mentoring opportunities for students, or for ministry wives or even wives of students. These programs are sometimes offered in a group format and can sometimes pair students with an older/seasoned person in the same field of ministry. Internships, both formal and informal, offer valuable work experience and training. Shadowing an experienced worship leader can also help in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the work involved in worship ministry. The young

²³⁰ Page and Gray, *Hungry for Worship*, 127.

female pursuing WML should be proactive about searching out opportunities for growth and let this proactive attitude stay with her as she enters the field of worship ministry herself. Pursuing these opportunities will enable her to continue improving in her skill set for WML.

6. The novice female in WML should seek out experienced females in WML for mentoring relationships. Mentoring can offer incredible benefits for the female in WML. This can be especially true in male-saturated work environments. Research shows that women who are unable to see an older woman thriving in her field of work are less able to visualize their own success in that field. Conversely, having an older female role model in one's field of work contributes greatly to the possibility of success for a younger woman in a male-saturated field. In WML, sometimes these older female role models can be hard to find. The novice female in WML should be proactive in seeking them out. Asking around or calling other churches in the area to make inquiries can be helpful in finding experienced female worship leaders. When one is located, the novice female in WML should not be afraid to approach her with the idea of a mentoring relationship. Although it is often more comfortable to pursue this type of relationship with someone she already knows, it will still be valuable to gain a new perspective from someone who is a few years ahead of her in WML. Sometimes it can also be beneficial to gather together with others who are in the same life situation to share the difficulties and joys of ministry. The novice female in WML should take the initiative to organize gatherings of other females leading in worship ministry. Possible ideas for gatherings include meeting at a coffee shop or arranging a lunch meeting. The purpose of the gatherings is to build relationships with the purpose of providing support and encouragement in ministry.

7. The novice female in WML should model biblical principles. Just as the experienced female in WML must model biblical principles in her life, so must the novice female in WML. The time to build solid spiritual habits into one's life is now. The young woman pursuing WML should not wait until she is in a position of leadership to begin to practice spiritual disciplines. The habits built into her life before pursuing ministry will follow her into ministry. The young female in WML should make it a practice to spend time with God every day, reading His Word and talking to Him in prayer. She should get involved in a church and find a place of service, even if it is not in the worship ministry. She should work to develop the character qualities of humility, integrity, servanthood, personal discipline and spiritual passion. In addition, she should begin the habit of regularly giving a tithe of her income. The longer one waits to start this habit, the harder it will be. The work of ministry can be difficult. The more a young woman is in the habit of communing with God, the easier it will be for her to turn to Him when going through difficult seasons in ministry. These habits will not only help to prepare her for a life of ministry, but they will also help her to grow and thrive as a Christian now.
8. The novice female in WML should model a lifestyle of worship. As suggested in the previous point, she should not wait until she is in a position of ministry to fully honor God with her lifestyle. The young woman should be a worshiper even while she is pursuing and training for WML. She should engage in personal worship on a regular basis, regularly offering herself to God in humility and submission. 2 Timothy 4:12 applies even before she is placed in an established position of worship leadership. "Set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity." The young woman should seek to be an example to the people around her of what a life lived

for the glory and honor of God looks like. “The passion of our lives must be the development of a love relationship with the living God through Jesus Christ. This is done first and foremost through our daily walk with Him in prayer, the study of His Word, and personal worship.”²³¹ Leading worship in a corporate setting must be an overflow of one’s personal worship throughout the week. Regardless of whether or not she is in a position of worship leadership, the young woman should strive to let this be true in her present life.

9. The novice female in WML should model appropriate respect for authority. Whatever position she is in currently, she should serve with humility and faithfulness. She should make it a practice to fully support her pastor and other church leaders. God’s authority structure involves placing church leaders in a position of spiritual authority. Even when they do not fully endorse her calling into WML, the novice female in WML should choose not to be angry or bitter. When they make decisions that she does not necessarily agree with, she should continue to follow their direction as they seek God for the vision and mission of the church. Anger and bitterness will eventually lead to divisiveness in the body of Christ. Instead of allowing anger and bitterness to sabotage her ministry, the novice female in WML should choose to serve joyfully in whatever capacity open to her. If fully supporting the leadership of her church becomes too difficult, she should prayerfully consider the possibility that God may be moving her towards a new place of ministry.
10. The novice female in WML should wait on God’s timing. This is an important concept that some females in WML miss. Many times a person might feel like they are ready to

²³¹ Page and Gray, *Hungry for Worship*, 33.

step into a leadership opportunity. But God knows best. Sometimes He chooses to grow and develop a person more before placing them in a position of leadership. The novice female in WML does not have to push her way into situations or grasp at straws for positions of leadership. God is in control and at the right time He will make a way for her to serve in the appropriate capacity. While she is waiting, she should continue to cultivate her relationship with Christ and model biblical principles, lifestyle worship and respect for authority. As God opens doors, she should walk through them. Perhaps God wants to entrust the young woman with incremental doses of leadership before placing her in a more prominent position. Sometimes it is in quiet service, with humility and faithfulness, that someone takes notice and offers a position of leadership or makes a referral for another opportunity. The novice female in WML should rest in the fact that God knows her and sees her faithfulness. At the right time He will open the necessary doors for her to serve. This does not mean that the young woman should not take some initiative, such as expressing interest in available positions or sending a resume to hiring churches. It does mean that she should not constantly be promoting herself and pointing out her assets to others. She should serve with humility wherever God has placed her and wait on His timing to open doors for ministry. “Keep growing in the practical aspects of leading worship, and trust that He will give you confirmation and will open the doors for you to lead if that is something He has created you to do.”²³²

11. The novice female in WML should be faithful wherever God has positioned her. If God has not yet opened the doors for her to serve in WML, she should be faithful serving in her current ministry. If an opportunity on the worship team has not become available to

²³² Buckley, *Rise Up & Sing*, 25.

her, she should serve in some way in another ministry. A call to WML does not mean that one can only serve within the worship ministry. Rather, a call to vocational ministry involves being willing to serve in whatever capacity God will allow. Although WML might be the focus of her calling, God may want to grow and develop her through other opportunities of service. No area of service should be beneath the novice female in WML. Sometimes God continues to grow her calling as she is faithful to serve in a variety of capacities. For instance, a person may feel called to serve as a youth pastor, and after several years of faithful service, might realize that God's calling is now to be a senior pastor. Sometimes God's ultimate goal for one's life might be too much to handle all at once. Many people serving in ministry have said that if God had told them up front what He would eventually have them do they probably would have told Him no. Instead, God revealed a small part of His plan at a time, growing them and maturing them until they were ready to fulfill His ultimate plan for their lives. God's call on one's life is not a static call. Rather, God's call may continue to grow and change as a person matures spiritually and grows in their relationship with Christ.

Limitations

While this topic of research was pursued rigorously, caution should be exercised in making generalizations based solely on the research presented. This is due in part to the following factors:

1. Some women serve faithfully in WML within encouraging and uplifting environments and do not experience many of the challenges mentioned herein. Although several

controversial subjects and challenges have been discussed, it should be noted that these are not experienced by every female in WML.

2. Women in WML each hold their own view of complementarianism vs. egalitarianism and might interpret challenges differently based upon their viewpoint. In addition, the severity by which they experience challenges to their ministries might vary depending on their viewpoint.
3. Women in WML are all at different states of emotional health. What this means is that what some women might perceive as a significant challenge to their leadership, other women might not even identify as an issue. Mental and emotional health could play a significant role in determining the issues and challenges faced by the female in WML.
4. No personal interviews were conducted throughout this research study. Therefore, the presented research does not claim to contain every challenge faced by women in WML. Personal interviews might reveal additional challenges or varying slants on the challenges contained in this paper.
5. Novice females in WML might experience different challenges from experienced females in WML. In fact, some experienced females in WML might have faced challenges early in their ministries that are not significant issues for novice females in WML today. Conversely, the novice female in WML who is just starting out in her career might face different obstacles than were faced by other females in years past.
6. Some of the research presented in this paper pertains to females in ministry leadership positions of all types. This paper attempted to bridge the gap between the research findings regarding challenges generally faced by women in ministry and specifically by

women in WML. Although it is implied that the challenges faced by the two groups will be similar, some differences could exist.

7. The way in which females in WML perceive challenges to their ministry may vary depending on their experience and education. For instance, females in WML who pursue specific training in worship leadership might be better prepared for the challenges they face. In addition, women who were raised in healthy churches with healthy relationships regarding women in ministry might also respond to challenges in a more stable and healthier way.
8. For the purposes of this research, no distinctions were made regarding women serving in full-time, part-time or volunteer positions of WML. Depending on the employee classification, women in WML might experience and deal with the challenges they face in different ways.
9. For the purposes of this research, no distinctions were made regarding women serving as the sole worship leader or those serving on a team with multiple worship ministry staff. Some differences might exist in the challenges faced when the female in WML is solely responsible for the worship ministry, and when a team works together for the leadership of the worship ministry.
10. For the purposes of this research, no distinctions were made regarding women serving in WML in churches of various sizes. Some differences might exist in the challenges faced by women serving in smaller congregations and larger congregations.
11. For the purposes of this research, no distinctions were made regarding women serving within various denominations. Challenges faced by females in WML might vary depending on denomination. For instance, some denominations might generally hold a

more conservative or more liberal view regarding women serving in ministry leadership positions.

12. The challenges faced by women in WML could vary depending on geographical area. For instance, women in WML serving in California might face different challenges and issues than those serving in the Bible Belt. Although some of the challenges might be the same, the manifestation of them could be different depending on the culture of the geographical area.

Conclusions

The purpose of this paper has been to provide encouragement and support for the female in discerning and pursuing her call to WML. Although identifying and discussing the major challenges faced by women in WML might seem to serve as a discouragement to women who are pursuing a career in WML, this paper has attempted not only to identify the challenges, but also to offer strategies to help the female in WML deal with the challenges she might face as she pursues God's calling on her life.

Research shows that the female in WML faces unique challenges in fulfilling her call to WML. These challenges might exist in discerning her call to ministry, working in a male-saturated work environment and career field, and her perception of available ministry opportunities. Although these challenges might seem daunting, help in dealing with them can be found in modeling/mentoring relationships with experienced females in WML. The experienced female worship leader is uniquely qualified to help the novice female in WML deal with the challenges she faces by modeling biblical principles, a lifestyle worship and appropriate respect for authority.

Experienced females in WML are encouraged to seek out and pursue mentoring relationships with novice females in WML. The veteran female's experience serving in WML has uniquely qualified her to help the novice female in WML deal with the challenges and obstacles she might face in pursuing God's call on her life. In addition, experienced females in WML are encouraged to actively model biblical principles, lifestyle worship and respect for authority in their lives and ministries.

Novice females in WML are also encouraged to seek out mentoring relationships with experienced female worship leaders. In addition, novice females in WML are encouraged to take advantage of every opportunity for training and growth in their field. They are also encouraged to build habits of spiritual discipline into their lives now so that these habits will already be in place as they enter ministry.

Training institutions such as colleges, universities and institutes are encouraged to provide opportunities for females pursuing WML to fellowship together in order to build a network of support as they enter ministry. In addition, they are encouraged to pair novice females in WML with experienced females in WML in mentoring relationships. Churches and church leadership are encouraged to provide healthy environments free from discrimination and to offer encouragement to women in using their gifts in ministry and in pursuing God's call on their lives.

Although none of these suggestions can eliminate the unique challenges faced by females in WML, this paper can serve to offer strategies in dealing with these challenges to women who are pursuing their call to WML. Mentoring relationships offer great value to the novice female in WML. In addition, they can provide meaningful ministry to the aging female in WML that will allow her to impact worship ministry for years to come.

Recommendations for Future Research

Opportunities for future research regarding women in WML exist in the following areas:

1. Research regarding coping strategies employed by women in WML in dealing with the challenges they face.
2. Research attempting to identify factors and practices leading to the success of women in WML.
3. Research regarding how emotional health or the lack thereof can affect challenges faced by females in WML.
4. Research conducted using personal interviews to determine the significant challenges faced by females in WML.
5. Research regarding how the issues faced by females in WML have changed and evolved over the past decade.
6. Research regarding the ways education can help women in WML to more adequately prepare for the unique challenges they might face.
7. Research regarding how church leadership can help women in WML to more adequately deal with the unique challenges they might face.
8. Research regarding the differences in challenges faced by women in WML serving in full-time, part-time and volunteer positions in WML.
9. Research regarding the differences in challenges faced by women in WML serving as the sole worship leader as compared to women serving on a team within a worship ministry staff.
10. Research regarding the differences in challenges faced by women in WML serving in congregations of varying size.

11. Research regarding the specific issues faced by women in WML within a particular denomination.
12. Research regarding the specific issues faced by women in WML serving within a particular geographical area.

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