LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

JOHN W. RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

A CORRELATIONAL STUDY OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING TACTICS AND

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

IN EVANGELICAL PASTORS

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

By

Nichelle L. Crozier

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

2023

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ABSTRACT

This research sought a possible explanation for the decline in Christianity in the United States through the lens of Evangelicalism. Holding to the Protestant reformist tenet of *sola Scriptura*, evangelicals characterize the role of the pastoral leader as being responsible for teaching congregants the Scriptures so that the congregant may do the work of the ministry according to Ephesians 4:11-16. Therefore, it was reasonable to question whether a pastoral leader's discipleship experiences, described here as transformational learning, had any impact on their disciple-making efforts, which were described as transformational leadership. The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to determine whether a relationship existed between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning and the frequency of transformational leadership practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio. Guided by Mezirow's (1978) transformative learning theory and Burns' (1978) and Bass' (1985) transformational leadership theory, the findings of this study demonstrated the presence of a strong relationship between transformational learning activities and transformational leadership frequency in pastoral leaders.

Keywords: American Church, discipleship, learning tactics, transformational learning, transformational leadership.

Dedication

Primarily, this work is dedicated to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, without whom the completion of this research would have been impossible. This work is further dedicated to the countless men and women who have humbly given their lives to the proclamation of the Gospel message and the fulfillment of the Great Commission. Those efforts are acknowledged and appreciated. I would also like to dedicate this work to my children, friends, and colleagues, who have endured my relentless writing schedule and provided encouragement when the work became laborious. Thank you for sacrificing time with me so that I could complete this work.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Abbreviations

Association of Religious Data Archive (ARDA)

Collaborative Developmental Action Inquiry (CDAI)

Immunity to Change Theory (ITC)

Learning Tactic Inventory (LTI)

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)

Research Question (RQ)

CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH CONCERN

Introduction

Christianity in the United States is rapidly declining. Data gathered from Christian and secular organizations indicate that the number of Americans identifying as Christian has decreased yearly since the 1950s (Barna, 2020; Pew Research Center, 2019). According to the *Religious Landscape Study* conducted by the Pew Research Center (2015), the number of Americans who describe themselves as Christian has dropped *significantly* over the past decade. In the update to the 2014 study, a telephone survey was conducted in 2018 and 2019. According to that update, the percentage of Americans who identify as Christian dropped 12% to 65%, whereas the number of religiously unaffiliated (atheist, agnostic, or nothing in particular) saw a 9% increase to 26% (Pew Research Center, 2019, para. 2). The drop in Christian identification was seen in both Protestant and Catholic streams (Pew Research Center, 2019, para 3).

In their latest published research, *State of the Church 2020*, the Barna Group, a self-described Christian organization, found similar data as Pew but took their research one step further. They differentiated between those who self-identified as Christians and those practicing Christians. In contrast to nominal or nonpracticing Christians, practicing Christians "identify as Christian, agree strongly that faith is important in their lives, and have attended church in the last month" (Barna, 2020, para 3). This delineation revealed that the number of practicing Christians dropped by 20 % to only 25% between 2000–2020 (Barna, 2020). Considering this information, one must wonder what has changed.

Background to the Problem

In the last statements made to His disciples, Jesus issued a specific directive:

Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have

commanded you, and surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (King James Version 1769/2017 Mathew 28:18-20)

The seriousness with which this command was received and executed by those who heard it was evident in their subsequent actions, as recorded in the book of Acts (Acts 2:14; 4:5-12; 8:5; 10:28-47). More than 20 centuries later, the Western Church is shrinking in numbers. This decline has been particularly evident in the United States, where the number of practicing Christians has dropped by 50% in the last 20 years (Barna, 2020). Moreover, the data concluded that despite being the largest percentage of Protestant worshippers in the United States (35%), "born again" or "evangelical" Christians have made few strides in reversing the downward trend (Pew Research Center, 2015, p. 29). Meanwhile, those who self-identify as atheist, agnostic, or have no religious affiliation have increased by 9% to 26% in the same period (Pew Research Center, 2019, para. 2). These statistics warrant further inquiry. To understand the relevance of this research to the contemporary church, it was important to fully examine the theological construct at the heart of the Christian faith, here described as *Missio-Dei* or mission of God.

Missio-Dei: Joining Christ's Mission

God's mission or *Missio-Dei* for humanity, established in the garden of Eden, is identified as the fruitful multiplication of humans on the earth who will have a direct, intimate relationship with God (Genesis 1:28). Although it is now a commonly held theological construct within the Body of Christ, *Missio-Dei* is a reasonably new formalized concept. Introduced in 1952 at Willingen by the International Missionary Council, the new concept centered on the idea that the Church was neither the subject, initiator, nor center of the mission of God, but the means of God's mission (Baik, 2021). This change meant there could be no participation in Christ without participation in His mission (Baik, 2021).

As a result, the North American report out of Willingen provided a different perspective of mission grounded in the triunity of God. From this point forward, the Church's mission was no longer about territorial or financial gains but transforming individual lives and cultural/societal patterns (Baik, 2021). Gomes (2016) shared:

> The depth of purpose, of understanding that Jesus' mandate to the Church summarized in the Great Commission, is not simply an epiphenomenon of the Church's historical existence, but is, in fact, the summary of a program for the fulfillment, in the church, of a deeper and eternal purpose that has to do with the being of God himself.

Therefore, *Missio-Dei*, as described in the Great Commission, holds great relevance for the contemporary Church and should be executed with vigor by the Body of Christ (Baik, 2021; Buys, 2020; Gomes, 2016).

This sentiment aligns with the doctrine of the priesthood of believers described in Ephesians 4:1-16, which indicates that grace gifts have been given to all believers for the work of the ministry (Baik, 2021; Buys, 2020; Gomes, 2016; Lotter & Van Aarde, 2017). Recapturing the heart of the Great Commission through the lens of the priesthood of all believers provides a richer understanding of the *Missio-Dei*. This understanding is critical to forming biblical unity throughout the diversity of the Body of Christ (Baik, 2021; Buys, 2020; Gomes, 2016; Lotter & Van Aarde, 2017). Lotter and Van Aarde (2017) suggested that one's understanding of the *Missio-Dei* and the priesthood of all believers are deeply intertwined and cannot rightly exist independently of one another.

Moreover, Ephesians 4:11-16 explains that the pastor, along with the other support offices, is responsible for the maturation of those under their guidance so they (the laity) can do the work of the ministry (Lotter & Van Aarde, 2017; Sweeney, 2020). Much of that work centers around developing other disciples of Jesus as understood by historical and contemporary Christian leaders (Bonhoeffer, 1937; Francis, 2015; Getz, 2007; Henry, 1706c; Ogden, 2003;

Spurgeon, 1853; Stedman, 1995; Woodard & Hirsch, 2012). As Lotter and Van Aarde (2017) suggested, the ministry office gift roles must be reconsidered. They write that the separation that exists between leaders and congregants must be examined paying specific attention to "the tradition of the separation of the clergy and the laity in the Catholic tradition, the one category of pastor-missionary in the Lutheran tradition, the distinction between the special gifts and administration and leadership gifts in the Pentecostal and charismatic tradition, and the relation of the offices and the laity in the reformed tradition." (Lotter & Van Aarde, 2017, p. 206).

According to biblical scholars, one would be remiss in their understanding of the faith without identifying the centrality of the *Missio-Dei* in the life of the Christian disciple (Bonhoeffer, 1937; Getz, 2007; Henry, 1706c; Ogden, 2003 Stedman, 1995; Woodard & Hirsch, 2012). This mission is executed through the process of disciple-making, which is the joint effort between the disciple and the Holy Spirit, whereby new disciples of Christ are made (Bonhoeffer, 1937; Getz, 2007; Henry, 1706a; Ogden, 2003; Stedman, 1995; Woodard & Hirsch, 2012). With this understanding, one would expect that the number of Christians would increase over time, in perpetuity. Because this has not been evident, secular theorists have offered psychological and sociological explanations for the phenomenon. This discussion was central to the concepts presented in this research and was therefore briefly explored. This section concludes with a brief examination of these explanations followed by a discussion about the theoretical construct for the decrease in the American church that this research proposed.

The Psychology of Exiting Faith

Recent studies have revealed that the psychological benefits of religion were losing their appeal as individualism became the societal norm (Streib, 2021; Twenge, 2015). In general, young adults (millennials) and adolescents (Generation Z) are becoming less reliant on religion

to provide boundaries for acceptable behavior as the need for rules and rule-following is negated within the mainstream culture (Streib, 2021; Twenge, 2015). As a result, they are the least religious generation in 6 decades (Twenge, 2015). Moreover, studies have indicated that personality, values, and attachment are critical predictors of exiting the faith, herein called deconversion, in the United States (Streib et al., 2009, 2020).

Personality as a Predictor of Deconversion

In consideration of the five personality factors, studies have demonstrated that three of the five factors (emotional stability, openness to experience, and agreeableness) were indicators of deconversion (McCrae & Costa, 1997). Emotional stability or neuroticism is the tendency to experience negative emotions like sadness, anxiety, or mood swings (McCrae & Costa, 1997). Individuals with low levels of emotional stability correlated with deconversion (between .04 - .27) in Belgium, China, Germany, and the United States, exhibiting that this personality trait had moderate levels of correlation with deconversion (Hui et al., 2018; Saroglou, 2020; Streib et al., 2009, 2020). Streib et al.'s (2009) longitudinal study found that openness to experience was a standard deviation point higher in those who exited faith in Germany than in the United States. Finally, agreeableness was also found to be a predictor of deconversion, albeit to a much lesser degree than the other two (Streib, 2021; Streib et al., 2009, 2020). From this, it was extrapolated that personality type had a particular bearing on whether a believer exited the faith (Streib, 2021; Streib et al., 2009, 2020).

Values as a Predictor of Deconversion

Three longitudinal studies utilized Bilsky & Schwartz's (2011) Portrait Value Questionnaire to evaluate the values associated with deconversion (Hui et al., 2015, 2018; Saroglou et al., 2020). These studies concluded that self-direction, stimulation, hedonism,

achievement, and power were highly correlated with deconversion in Chinese Christians (Hui et al., 2015, 2018; Saroglou et al., 2020). In the United States, individualism was found to be a significant factor in deconversion and church participation decline (Twenge, 2015). As Americans become more concerned with individual freedoms and less interested in conforming to societal norms, the appeal of the church wanes across all generations (Twenge, 2015). This phenomenon is particularly evident among millennials, who have been identified as the least religious generation in 60 years (Twenge, 2015). If individualism continues on its present trajectory in the United States, Twenge (2015) posits that the America of the future will be largely unchurched.

Attachment Style as a Predictor of Deconversion

Finally, psychological attachment style was a significant contributor and predictor of religious affiliation and deconversion (Granqvist, 2020). In a systematic study of attachment and apostasy, Greenwald et al. (2021) concluded that "the main themes underlying religious conversion and their association with attachment orientations also apply to apostasy" (p. 435). Specifically, individuals with high attachment anxiety have a predisposition to be fueled by emotional compensation or masking (Greenwald et al., 2021). When this is no longer feasible or when true emotions are exposed, the anxiously attached exit faith in a sudden, almost turbulent manner (Greenwald et al., 2021). Greenwald (2021) further concluded that those with lower anxiety and avoidant attachment tend to explore new ideas and identities over time, also resulting in deconversion.

Sociological Explanations of Church Decline

The decline in religiosity in developed nations has long been a topic of sociological debate. The prevailing theory concerning this decline is secularization (Houtman & Aupers,

2007; Skirbekk et al., 2010). Secularization theory predicts that the demand for religion will decline as nations develop (Dhima & Golder, 2021). Although secularization theory has been widely accepted as accurate for several decades, the conventional wisdom on the subject is changing (Baik, 2017; Houtman & Aupers, 2007; Skirbekk et al., 2010). Sociologists now believe other factors such as changes in birth rates influenced by immigration, across-age cohort decline, the spread of post-Christian spirituality, the politicization of religion, and less effective religious socialization are more concrete reasons for the decrease in religiosity than secularization (Altemeyer, 2004; Brauer, 2018; Houtman & Aupers, 2017; Skirbekk et al., 2010). However, the prevailing explanation for the decline in religiosity was attributed to the rapid rise of the "nones," or those who have disaffiliated from religion (Brauer, 2018). The dramatic increase in the disaffiliated does not track with general secularization (Altmeyer, 2004; Brauer, 2018).

Birth Rates, Immigration, the Age Gap, and Religious Decline

Sociologists have concluded that one possible explanation for the religious decline among Protestants in the United States can be attributed to the declining birth rates of the childbearing population coupled with high immigration rates from other religious groups. Of those Christians currently immigrating to the United States, Hispanic Catholics lead the way (Brauer, 2018). This demographic has the highest birth rate among child-bearing individuals; therefore, barring any changes to current immigration policies, Catholicism will be the most dominant religion in the United States by 2033 (Brauer, 2018). However, Catholics are greatly impacted by conversion from Catholicism to Pentecostalism, which stymies the growth of the American Catholic population; meanwhile, immigrants to the United States from Protestant and Pentecostal-leaning countries occur at much slower rates (Brauer, 2018). Therefore, there is a

zero-sum game effect among the Protestant Christian immigrant population, especially considering the high fertility rates of Hispanic Catholics (Brauer, 2018).

At the same time, the data demonstrated that those with no religious affiliation increased as younger generations replaced older generations (Altmeyer, 2004; Houtman & Aupers, 2007; Skirbekk et al., 2010). Younger cohorts are typically less religious than the preceding generation (Altmeyer, 2004: Houtman & Aupers, 2007; Skirbekk et al., 2010). Scholars attribute these phenomena to shifting societal values and ineffective religious socialization by their parents (Altemeyer, 2004; Brauer, 2018).

The Politicization of Faith and Spread of Post-Christian Spirituality

New data further indicated that several formerly Protestant Christians exited the faith as a result of the activities of the religious right in secular politics (Skirbekk et al., 2010). Younger moderate and liberal cohorts were turned off by what they called exclusionary and incendiary rhetoric promulgated by the religious right (Skirbekk et al, 2010). Already less religious than their parents and grandparents, younger Protestant Christians found the political activities of the religious right distasteful and inherently biased (Skirbekk et al, 2010). As a result, Houtman & Aupers (2007) found that detraditionalization was spurred by cohort replacement, the process of less religious older adults being replaced in the population by a younger, more spiritual cohort. Termed post-traditionalists, these younger cohorts rejected traditional moral values opting to sacralize themselves (Houtman & Aupers, 2007). With self-sacralization being the central theme of post-Christian spirituality, participants moved towards community formation that focused not on collectivism but on individualism (Houtman & Aupers, 2007). Houtmann's study hypothesized and statistically substantiated detraditionalization as a primary cause of the turn from Christianity towards post-Christian spirituality. Post-Christian spirituality involves seeking

identity, purpose, and meaning from internal forces (ego, subconscious) rather than external forces like belief in a higher power (Houtman & Aupers, 2007). Moreover, the data pointed to an expected increase in post-Christian spirituality in the United States as the population becomes more educated and less traditional, barring any spiritual revival among Christians (Houtman & Aupers, 2007).

The Decline in Religious Socialization

The sociological construct of socialization is defined as the process of learning to behave in a way acceptable to society (Brauer, 2018; Crozier-Fleming, 2019; Nickerson, 2023). The typical framework for primary socialization occurs within the family of origin between birth and 7 years of age (Brauer, 2018; Nickerson, 2023). Primary socialization is responsible for teaching the child cultural norms through the lens of familial understanding. Matters of faith and religion are included in primary socialization (Crozier-Fleming, 2019; Nickerson, 2023). When present, religion becomes the lens through which the child views the world (Crozier-Fleming, 2019; Nickerson, 2023).

In a study on religiosity among age cohorts, Brauer (2018) postulated that conditions of religious decline experienced in the United States might be the source of less effective socialization. Nickerson (2023) corroborated this finding. Brauer (2018) found that a more significant proportion of younger Americans were moderately religious not highly religious, whereas older Americans were inclined to be highly religious. Despite this fact, Brauer discovered that neither baby boomers nor millennials could describe their religious beliefs. In contrast, Generation X could express their beliefs but identified as less religious. Bauer's data indicated that the ability or inability of the older generation to pass on their beliefs to the next generation effectively resulted in less religious younger cohorts.

Church Decline Through a Transformational Learning and Leadership Lens

Now that academically accepted psychological and sociological explanations have been reported, this research sought the application of a psychosocial framework to explain church decline by looking at transformational learning and transformational leadership. When applying transformational learning theory to Christian pastoral leaders, it was evident that their frame of reference concerning the authority of Scripture should produce fixed assumptions about discipleship and praxis in disciple-making, described here as transformational leadership. The result would be a church that experiences continued growth year over year. Yet, recent data told another story.

Transformational learning theory has concluded that a choice must be made when an individual encounters new information or experiences that conflict with their original frame of reference (Mezirow & Marsick, 1978). For those "conflicted" individuals, their frame of reference would become problematic, requiring a determination regarding the acceptance or rejection of new information or experiences (Mezirow & Marsick, 1978). To accept the new information or experience, the individual had to employ tactics to overcome previously held fixed assumptions (Mezirow & Marsick, 1978). This process adequately described the transformation involved in Christian conversion and discipleship. Likewise, transformational leadership theorists have determined that it is the best approach for producing valuable, positive, and lasting change in followers, resulting in them becoming leaders themselves (Burns, 1978). Because this is the missiological aim of the Church, one could reasonably expect that transformational leadership would be the natural outflow of leadership practiced by the Christian disciple.

Though the relationship between transformational learning and transformational leadership has been evaluated in other sectors, such an evaluation has not been conducted for the American church. This research aimed to fill this void. While any segment of the American church could have been studied, the discipleship and disciple-making practices of evangelical pastors were of particular interest due to their self-proclaimed adherence to the doctrine of *sola Scriptura*. Historically, evangelicals align with Protestant Reformation theology that emphasized *sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone), *Solis Christus* (Christ alone), *sola Fide* (Faith alone), *sola gratia* (grace alone), and *soli Deo Gloria* (glory to God alone) (Horton et al., 2017) Therefore, this study examined whether there was an identifiable correlation between the use of transformational learning tactics and transformational leadership practice frequency of evangelical pastors.

Statement of the Problem

Personal transformation is the heart of Christianity. Those who ascribe to the faith are called "converts," indicating they have changed in character to embrace the tenets of Christianity (Hull, 2006; McClendon & Kimbrough, 2018). This is not a once-in-a-lifetime experience but a life-long experience of learning where the previously unknown ways of the Kingdom of God replace formerly held beliefs (McClendon & Kimbrough, 2018), also known as fixed assumptions (Mezirow & Marsick, 1978). This occurs during the process of Christian discipleship which as Hull (2006) suggests must be considered the same as sanctification. As the convert continues as a disciple or student of Jesus, they are marked by several characteristics. One of the central characteristics of a disciple of Christ is that they take on the *Missio-Dei* or mission of God to reconcile Himself to humans.

Despite the clarity of Jesus' statements in Matthew 6:33, 16:24, and 28:18-20, the number of Americans identifying as Christian is declining (Barna, 2020; Pew, 2015). The *Missio-Dei* of the Church is an undisputed theological construct that spans doctrinal chasms (Baik, 2017). Yet, recent data has indicated that there has been a disconnect from the practical application of this foundational truth within all segments of the American church. This is a particularly fascinating occurrence among evangelicals.

Well-known Christian apologist Bonhoeffer (1937) attributed the decline in discipleship to the promulgation of "cheap grace" (p. 45). When first released in 1937, Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship* was a revolutionary look at what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. Referring to the work and life of Protestant Reformation leader Martin Luther, Bonhoeffer (1937) concluded that discipleship would ultimately cost the follower of Jesus Christ everything, with everything to be gained. Nearly a century later, recovering the heart of discipleship is still a priority for the church of the United States of America. Hull (2006) wrote:

> Making disciples has nothing to do with winning others over to philosophy or turning them into nice people who smile a lot. Rather the Great Commission launches a rescue mission; all followers receive orders with full authority to take action wherever they happen to be. (p. 26)

Much debate and copious amounts of research have centered around what can be done to reconcile the aforementioned disconnect within the evangelical church. There appeared to be a general acceptance that discipleship and disciple-making practices within the evangelical church are absent or woefully insufficient (Hollis, 2019; Lang, 2014; Seifert, 2013; Francis, 2015). It was also generally believed that this absence or insufficiency is responsible for the current trend of decline being experienced within the church of the United States (Hollis, 2019; Lang, 2014; Seifert, 2013; Francis, 2015). Precedent research has focused on programming and skill acquisition to reverse this trend.

Scholars have evaluated strategy after strategy, resulting in some being deemed more effective than others. For example, small group settings have become widely believed to be better for disciple-making activities (Hull, 2006; McClendon & Kimbrough, 2016; Seifert, 2013). However, the decline in Christian disciple-making persists (Barna, 2020; Pew Research Center, 2019). Although prior research focused on the most effective discipleship models, no studies have simultaneously examined potential barriers to discipleship and disciple-making on a cognitive level. Psychologists and neuroscientists have agreed that the human brain is mainly responsible for one's ability to accept new information and organize that information into usable data (Newberg & Waldman, 2009; Thompson, 2010; Vaillant, 2008). It has also been widely accepted that people filter new knowledge through their previously held beliefs (Newberg & Waldman, 2009; Thompson, 2010; Vaillant, 2008). Therefore, a cognitively significant event must occur to allow new information into the mind. This is the heart of transformational learning, and the essence of mind renewal indicated throughout the Scriptures (Proverbs 23:7; Romans 12:2).

In 1978, Mezirow introduced transformational learning theory to adult education to explain how adult learners incorporate and change long-held belief systems into a new way of thinking (Mezirow, 1991). Mezirow (1991) concluded that adults had acquired fixed assumptions from their experiences that frame their world. In other domains, these fixed assumptions are called one's worldview (Mezirow, 1991). In the Church, but particularly the evangelical church, there is mental assent that one must endeavor to have a biblical worldview (Loder, 1981). Therefore, the Christian's fixed assumptions are firmly rooted in the Scriptures. As revealed in 2 Corinthians 5:17, the evidence of Christian discipleship is a new identifiable way of behaving, thinking, and being. In an examination of the Scriptures, one can also

reasonably conclude that a biblical worldview must be assimilated and acted upon, not merely received. Romans 12:2 admonishes the believer: *"Be not conformed to the patterns of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind"* (New Living Translation 1996, Rom. 12:2).

Throughout this study, Christian discipleship (spiritual formation) was equated with transformational learning. Scripture and theory validate this perspective. Scripture describes the process of discipleship as replacing former ways of thinking, behaving, and being with God's way that is precipitated by the act of repentance (Isaiah 55:6-7; Acts 3:19; James 4:8). The Greek word for repentance is *metanoia*, which means to change the mind (Blue Letter Bible, n.d.a.). For this reason, Christ declared repentance unto salvation (Mathew 4:17; Mark 1:15). According to Mezirow (1991), transformational learning is the process by which problematic frames of reference are transformed to produce a changed way of thinking in the learner. This is a natural parallel to repentance (Loder, 1981; Young, 2013). Intrinsic in the call to discipleship is the notion that one's status as a disciple is partially made evident by replicating oneself in practice, known as disciple-making. In this study, disciple-making has been equated to the practice of transformational leadership, which, among leadership theorists, has been identified as the type of leadership best equipped to produce other leaders (Northouse, 2019).

Theology has made a similar connection between discipleship and transformational learning and disciple-making and transformational leadership. Loder (1981) suggested that transformational learning is an intrinsically spiritual phenomenon that is an experience of divine grace for the follower of Christ. Moreover, in a 2013 study of transformational learning in Christian ministry, Young (2013) concluded that:

> findings with the theory (transformational learning theory) have had potential relevance for Christian ministers and educators whose calling is to foster great change among their congregations or their students, so they progress from unbelief to mature joyful faith in

Christ. This kind of engagement with others is the essence of Christian discipleship... (p. 329)

Likewise, Lee (2012), and White et al. (2018) concluded that making disciples can be attributed to transformational leadership in ministry leaders. Christ's followers are encouraged to abandon their former worldview to embrace a new worldview, as evidenced by Paul's personal experience and related proclamation: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things are passed away, behold all things are become new" (New Living Translation, 1996, 2 Cor. 5:17). During the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus offered insight into this new life and resultant Kingdom (Matthew 5). According to Young (2013) and Loder (1981), such transformation requires turning away from previously held frames of reference to embrace a new frame of reference that aligns with the Kingdom of God through the leadership of Christ. Even still, transformation is not a mystical process. From the onset of the conversion experience, the individual must employ methods or tactics to change their previously held frames of reference that have become problematic, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit. These findings were foundational to this study. Because the Gospel message is meant to be transformational, this study assumed that some transformational learning was necessary to experience Christian conversion (Hull, 2006; Hull & Sobels, 2018; Loder, 1981; McClendon & Kimbrough, 2018).

As the leader of their congregation, it can be concluded that the pastor has achieved the level of spiritual maturity necessary to release deep/transformational learning experiences to others (Young, 2013). Yet, as Loder (1981) explained, this may only sometimes be the case. Loder wrote, "Rather than face and embrace appropriate conflict with perseverance, learners risk becoming narcissistically preoccupied with the human struggle. The release of energy and celebration that follow the constructive act of imagination can deteriorate into self-indulgence and instant gratification" (pp. 218–219). Therefore, achieving deep learning in others requires

the leader or teacher to experience transformational learning themselves (Young, 2013). This raises the question, has the Pastorate of the present-day Evangelical church of the United States discarded the call to discipleship as described in Matthew 6:40; 7:21; 9:37-39; 16:24-25; Mark 8:24; Luke 9:23; 14:26; and 14:43 and followed a more self-indulgent path of leadership because they have not fully utilized learning tactics to achieve transformational learning? Although this study did not consider this particular phenomenon, it did seek to determine the relationship between the two variables.

In 2001, Brown & Posner conducted a study exploring the relationship between learning and leadership. That study hypothesized that "individuals that were better learners were more engaged in better leadership behaviors" (Brown & Posner, 2001, p. 276). Using the Learning Tactic Inventory (LTI) and the Leadership Practices Inventory, the study looked for a relationship between several learning tactics and leadership behaviors. In Brown & Posner's (2001) study, high levels of learning versatility correlated with transformational leadership. For this reason, and because transformational leadership has been described as the leadership style most likely to make other leaders, understanding the connection between the use of learning tactics and the frequency of transformational leadership practices in pastoral leaders was critical. It is important to reiterate that pastors and congregants are disciples of Jesus, and one of the marks of a disciple is that they make other disciples (Hull, 2006). When one considers this fact, the decline in the number of those identifying as Christian is particularly perplexing.

At the conclusion of the Brown & Posner study (2001), the researchers suggested that further research was warranted among different populations using other instruments to answer questions of generalizability. This study endeavored to add to the conversation about the relationship between learning and leadership by using evangelical pastors as the sample

population to answer that generalizability question. This study focused on self-identifying

evangelical lead pastors in Ohio. A list of pastoral leaders was compiled that represented a

diverse sample population and included a variety of denominational and nondenominational

congregations in both urban and rural parts of Ohio. This sample population was chosen because

the list of evangelical pastors was accessible through public and private records.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to determine whether a

relationship existed between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning and

the transformational leadership practice frequency of self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in

Ohio. This study was guided by Mezirow and Marsick's (1978) transformative learning theory

and Burns' (1978) and Bass' (1985) transformational leadership theory.

Research Questions

RQ 1. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve
transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the
frequency of idealized influence behaviors practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors
in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 2. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve
transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the
frequency of idealized influence attributes practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors
in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ?

RQ 3. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve
transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the
frequency of inspirational motivation practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in
Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 4. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve
transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the
frequency of intellectual stimulation practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in
Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 5. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve
transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the

frequency of individual consideration practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 6. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of transformational leadership practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

Assumptions and Delimitations

As is common in any study, several assumptions were made about the nature of and participants in the study, which provided a basis for the research. Furthermore, good research must have a narrow enough focus to ensure credibility; therefore, delimitations were necessary. Those assumptions and delimitations are discussed in the following sections.

Research Assumptions

In conducting this study, several assumptions were made. First, it was assumed that some personal transformation had occurred within the self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio at conversion. The word convert means to change or transform. Therefore, it was assumed that pastoral leaders had a conversion experience when coming to Christ. It was also assumed that this conversion experience changed their previously espoused worldview and replaced it with the knowledge of Christ as Lord and Savior. Next, it was assumed that self-identifying evangelical pastoral leaders considered themselves responsible for their congregation's spiritual maturation. To fully engage in the discipleship and subsequent disciple-making activities of the congregation, the pastoral leader must acknowledge their God-given role in the maturation of their congregations in preparation for the work of the ministry, according to Ephesians 4:11-12.

Finally, it was assumed that the self-identifying evangelical pastoral leaders had prior knowledge of the term disciple. The term disciple is used over 250 times in Scripture to describe an individual who follows the teaching of Jesus. Evangelical Christians are defined as those who

exhibit strict adherence to the Scriptures. Because the pastoral leaders in this study self-identified as evangelical, it was reasonable to assume they were familiar with the term.

Delimitations of the Research Design

Although this research was relevant to many segments of the church of Ohio, the scope of the study was delimited. First, the study was delimited to pastors who self-identified as evangelical per the definition provided in this study. This study did not include pastors who did not self-identify as evangelical. Due to the nature of the study, it was determined that utilizing convenience sampling was the best means to gain access to the sample population. It was determined that the compiled list of pastors was large and diverse enough to provide a snapshot of the evangelical church of Ohio. Since generalization to evangelical pastors in the United States was the aim, this study only included pastors who identified as evangelical.

Finally, the study was delimited to self-identifying evangelical pastors who served as their congregation's lead pastor; associate pastors were not included as pastoral leaders. Lead pastors are typically responsible for the spiritual growth and development of the congregation. For this reason, this study focused on the activities of the lead pastor.

Definition of Terms

1. *Accessing Others Tactic*: Using a trusted person as a sounding board when faced with unfamiliar tasks or experiences (Dalton et al., 1999).

2. *Action Tactic*: Employing a trial-and-error approach to unfamiliar tasks or experiences (Dalton et al., 1999).

3. *Congregants*: Those who follow the teachings and instructions of the pastor within the Christian faith.

4. *Church*: A group of people within a specific region that collectively worships the God of the Christian faith.

5. *Cognitive Dissonance*: The behavioral coping mechanisms an individual employs in response to feelings of internal conflict caused by acting contrary to their worldview (Bochman & Kroth, 2010; Ste-Marie, 2008).

6. *Disciple*: The state of being a follower of the example and teachings of Jesus Christ (Hull, 2006; McClendon & Kimbrough, 2018).

7. *Discipleship*: The process by which an individual learns the ways of the Kingdom of God due to their relationship with Jesus Christ and is evidenced by a transformed way of thinking, being, and acting (Hull, 2006; McClendon & Kimbrough, 2018).

8. *Disciple-making*: Helping another become a disciple of Jesus Christ (Hull, 2006; McClendon & Kimbrough, 2018).

9. *Evangelical*: The segment of the American Church (both Catholics and Protestants) that emphasizes conversion experiences, reliance on Scripture, and missional work rather than sacraments and tradition (Association of Religious Data Archive [ARDA], 2012).

10. *Feeling Tactic*: Confronting one's fears when facing unfamiliar tasks or experiences (Dalton et al., 1999).

11. *Fixed Assumptions*: The framework of an individual's long-held attitudes, values, beliefs, and thoughts that produce specific actions or inaction (Mezirow, 1978).

12. *Idealized Influence*: The presence of admiration, respect, and trust among followers of a particular leader (Bass, 1985).

13. *Individual Consideration*: "considering individual needs of followers and developing their individual strengths" (Rowold, 2005, p. 5).

14. *Inspirational motivation*: "The articulation and representation of a vision by the leader" (Rowold, 2005, p. 5).

15. *Intellectual Stimulation*: "Challenging the assumptions of followers` beliefs, their analysis of problems they face and solutions they generate" (Rowold, 2005, p. 5).

16. *Learning Tactics*: Strategies individuals use when challenged to learn from a new situation (Dalton et al., 1999).

17. *Pastoral Leader*: Primary leader of a church who is recognized (by self and others) as having shepherding responsibilities for the congregation. This would include disciple-making activities (ARDA, 2012).

18. *Thinking Tactic*: Knowledge acquisition through research approaches when facing unfamiliar tasks or experiences (Dalton et al., 1999).

19. *Transformational Leadership*: "A process where leaders and followers engage in a mutual method of raising one another to higher levels of morality and motivation" (Burns, 1978, p. 299).

20. *Transformational Learning*: "Learning that transforms problematic frames of reference to make the individual more inclusive, discriminating, reflective, open, and emotionally able to change" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 6).

21. *Variety Tactic*: The use of more than one learning tactic (accessing, action, feeling, and thinking) when faced with an unfamiliar task or experience (Brown & Posner, 2001).

22. *Worldview*: the fixed assumptions a person has about the world and their place in it (Mezirow, 1991).

Significance of the Study

During the precedent literature review, it was discovered that scholars and theologians believed that discipleship and disciple-making practices within the Evangelical church were absent or woefully insufficient (Hollis, 2019; Lang, 2014; Seifert, 2013; Wallace, 2011). It was widely believed that this absence or insufficiency was responsible for decreased participation within the church (Hollis, 2019; Lang, 2014; Seifert, 2013; Wallace, 2011). Despite this belief, precedent research focused on creating effective discipleship "programs" or developing interpersonal skills that would reverse this trend. These efforts were understood and appreciated; however, a shift in thought was warranted.

For example, no research was found that explained the absence of discipleship programs or why currently existing programs were insufficient in reversing the decrease in Christian affiliation. This study moved beyond looking for strategies to disciple new Christian converts to discover more practical barriers to discipleship and disciple-making within the Evangelical church. Specifically, did the use or lack of tactics to overcome fixed assumptions (transformational learning) in pastors have any bearing on their transformational leadership practices that precipitated the decline in the American church? This research aimed to unveil a

more substantial, holistic explanation for church decline that would give way to future study and shifts in thought and praxis within the leadership of the Evangelical church.

Summary of the Design

The target population for this study was evangelical pastors in the United States who served as their congregations' primary spiritual leaders. To make the study more feasible, convenience sampling was used to narrow the focus to 819 self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio. A convenience sample design indicates that the most convenient population was used due to ease of access to the compiled list of evangelical pastors. The pastoral leader's list was collected using public and private records. As prescribed by the G* Power sample size calculator, reaching an 80% confidence rate with a confidence interval of five; required 67 respondents to run a Pearson Correlation. G* Power has been widely used in the social and behavioral sciences to help determine sample size that includes power analysis (Erdfelder et al, 2007). Assuming a response rate of 33%, surveys were circulated to 819 pastoral leaders in Ohio.

The study focused on administering two preexisting instruments to describe learning tactics that resulted in transformational learning and transformational leadership practice frequency, respectively. The (LTI) and (MLQ) were administered to pastoral leaders as a single combined online survey. The LTI identified learning tactics that led to transformational learning, whereas the MLQ identified transformational leadership practices. The mean (μ) of the data retrieved from the instruments was statistically analyzed using the Pearson correlational coefficient to determine whether a correlational relationship existed between the two variables in each pastoral leader.

Chapter Summary

Recent survey data indicated Christianity is declining in the United States (Pew, 2014; 2019). This researcher was particularly interested in the decline in those identifying as evangelical Christians, considering their adherence to Scripture. The foundational question sought an explanation for evangelical church decline when Scripture provides a specific directive to expand in Matthew 28:19-20. Through this study, the researcher aimed to discover whether the pastor's use of transformational learning tactics during conversion and beyond (discipleship) impacted their transformational leadership practices, as evidenced through disciple-making. Chapter Two will explore the theological and theoretical framework for this research, examine the related literature, and identify the gap in the literature that this study sought to fill.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Matthew 28:1-20 is a clear directive to the burgeoning Christian church. Its leader, the second member of the Trinity, released those with whom He spent three and one-half years teaching into co-ownership of His eternal mission. Readers of this work are more than likely a product of the success of this mission. Yet, as the Church stands on the precipice of a new era, for the first time in its history, it fails to make disciples of all nations (Pew Research Center, 2019); this is not a new threat. Previous generations have warned of a decline in Christianity and the staggering shift in societal norms that will accompany this decline.

As a member of the Body of Christ and a student of Christian leadership, this researcher sought a definitive explanation for such a decline. Has the Gospel message lost relevance in this present day? Is there some underlying leadership issue that must be addressed? Perhaps followership was to blame? These questions were the catalyst for this study.

In answering these questions, this study was centered around transformational learning and transformational leadership theories. Given the similarity in their names, one could assume that the two theories are intertwined and that there has been copious amounts of research on the intersection. Yet, this has not necessarily been the case. The presented study was undertaken to understand the deep connection between the two theories and how that connection might explain the current dilemma within the American church. This literature review introduced the transformational learning process and transformational leadership practices from theological and theoretical frameworks. These frameworks were followed by examining the related literature on the topic.

Theological Framework

In providing a theological framework for transformational learning and transformational leadership, transformational learning was compared to Christian discipleship. In contrast, transformational leadership was compared to the action of Christian disciple-making. Scripture and theological constructs validated these comparisons.

Discipleship as Transformational Learning

Christian discipleship is the practice of following Jesus. With this understanding comes another reality: Followers of Jesus cannot be followers of another, including themselves. Christ said it this way, "Whoever wants to be my follower, you must give up your way, take up your cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24 NLT). This represents a radical departure from the societal norm that every man should do what is right in his sight. Henry (1706a) explained:

> God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and so saving it. It could not be saved, but through him; there is no salvation in any other. From all this is shown the happiness of true believers; he that believeth in Christ is not condemned. Though he has been a great sinner, yet he is not dealt with according to what his sins deserve.

Complying with such a dramatic departure undoubtedly required more than mental assent. Scripture tells us that discipleship involves the changing of one's mind, replacing former ways of thinking, behaving, and being with a new way (2 Cor 5:17). The mind, as defined by Baker (1996), is part of the human being in which thought takes place, and where perception and decisions to do good, evil, and the like come to expression. In other words, it is the place where the unregenerated subconscious part of the brain constructs meaning for itself through socialization to form a primary habit or worldview (Crozier-Fleming, 2019). Thompson (2010) reflected that although the mind and brain are not entirely synonymous, they are closely related in their role in being known by God and one another. Thompson (2010) went on to say that being engaged, known, and understood by others and God occurs when both the right and left

hemispheres of the brain, the physical structures of the mind, are integrated. Even still, the proposed follower cannot activate himself in this process of integration or transformation, this is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Discipleship is preceded by repentance, a concept in both the Old and New Testaments. The Greek word for repentance, *metanoia*, which means to change the mind, is recorded in the New Testament 24 times (Blue Letter Bible). For this reason, Christ started His earthly ministry declaring repentance unto salvation (Mathew 4:17; Mark 1:15). Peering through the lens of Scripture as described by Charles Spurgeon (Spurgeon, 1853), this change in thinking is facilitated by the disorienting call of the Lord to repent. Repentance is the only way an ordinary person can follow a Holy God. Spurgeon (1853) wrote:

> The law rends the goodly Babylonish garment of our imaginary merits into ten pieces and proves our wedge of gold to be mere dross, and thus it leaves us "naked, and poor, and miserable." To this point, Jesus descends; His entire line of blessing comes up to the verge of destruction, rescues the lost, and enriches the poor. The gospel is full as it is free. (p. 5)

For a follower of Jesus, this initial moment of conflict or crisis occurs when they hear the call to repentance. Henry (1706c) described this as the moment the light confronts darkness. He wrote, "Note when the gospel comes, light comes; when it comes to any place when it comes to any soul, it makes day there, (Jn. 3:19; Lu. 1:78, 79). Light is discovering, it is directing; so is the gospel" (Henry, 1706c).

Those who engage with the call to repentance must agree that what they have heard applies to them. There must be an awareness of their sinful nature and recognition that they need a Savior. They must acknowledge that Christ was and is talking to them. This realization is disorienting because what they hear deeply conflicts with previously held attitudes, behaviors, and actions. Now the hearer of the gospel message must decide how this message interacts with their previous frame of reference. Young (2013) wrote, "Individuals feel compelled to try and

solve a disorienting dilemma. For them, it is a matter of survival and living as they feel they intended to live. Their effort internally is a spiritual journey" (p. 329). Loder (1981) called this point a conflict that requires scanning for information. Scanning, which is nearly identical to Mezirow's (1990) critical reflection, involves a critique of the presuppositions on which one's beliefs have been built. In keeping with this idea, from a theological perspective, critical reflection is necessary to become a disciple of Jesus. The individual must consider their beliefs before responding to the Kingdom of God. Is humility a part of their lives? Is there a new meaning to be made about the world through the lens of the gospel? The hearer must go inward to determine if what they have believed up to this point is still valid. They must question their previously held values to determine if they still apply. For most, the gospel is good news, but to be fully received, the truth of its message must replace previously held truths (Loder, 1981; Young, 2013). This requires a shift concerning the personhood of Jesus.

This process is often associated with guilt and shame that the hearer must overcome to accept the gift of salvation. For many hearers, this was the first time they were confronted with their sinfulness and idolatry. Sin is no longer some far-removed action of others; it is now the description of their actions. For example, according to the tenets of the faith, placing natural family connections ahead of following Christ is unacceptable (Luke 14:26). This naturally breeds discontent as the hearer acknowledges that they need a Savior. Henry (1706b) expounded on this idea:

> There is also a condemnation grounded on their former guilt; they are open to the law for all their sins; because they are not by faith interested in the gospel pardon. Unbelief is a sin against the remedy. It springs from the enmity of the heart of man to God, from love of sin in some form. The doom of those that would not know Christ. Sinful works are works of darkness. The wicked world keeps as far from this light as they can, lest their deeds should be reproved. (para. 5)

The Changed Mind

Scripture reveals the change that must occur in the mind of a believer. The Apostle Paul writes "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2 KJV). Jesus, preceded by John the Baptist, issued this call to repentance everywhere (Matthew 4:17; Acts 13:24). Repentance is, therefore, a dynamic process that is often described in the Scriptures as transformation whereby an individual turns from their previous ways of thinking, behaving, and being to embrace the way of God's kingdom. In reading Romans 12:2, the reader can grasp the essence of the transformational change being instituted by Apostle Paul. How one formerly thought and behaved is no longer acceptable. Ellicott (1905) wrote that to be conformed to this world is to act as other men do, who do not know God. Because this is not the situation of the intended reader (disciples of Christ), there must be a process to change this scenario.

Thompson (2010) concluded that only through integration of the right hemisphere (the feeling part) with the left hemisphere (the thinking part) can we maintain an undivided heart whereby we fully experience the love of God and attain the mind of Christ. However, disintegrated minds are minds that lack a connection between the right and left hemispheres giving way to spiritually neutral minds that are closed off from being known by God (Thompson, 2010). Neutral minds, including mental faculties, reasonings, and understandings, do not have a vision of the Kingdom of God. Loder (1981) suggested that without the Holy Spirit, transformation breaks down into ego-centeredness, which is nothing more than sin. Repentance is the key to a transformed perspective that proves (discriminates and approves) what God's will is (Ellicott, 1905): the manifestation of the Kingdom in the heart of those who believe. Romans

12:2 is the seminal Scripture concerning the individual disciple's responsibility to produce change within and without. It has been noted that persuading individuals to move into transformational learning can only be accomplished by "generating personal dissatisfaction" (Bonhoeffer, 1937; Cherry, 2016). This embodies Mezirow's problematic frame of reference necessary for transformational learning. It is new information intended to foster a surge of vitality and celebration (Loder, 1981; Young, 2013). "This experience is more than initial relief at having gotten past a crisis or the freeing up of emotion previously bound by the crisis. It is a surge of vitality linked directly to the new perspective" (Young, 2013, p. 332).

Other sources have similarly defined discipleship. Bock et al. (2016) defined discipleship as follows:

> becoming and being a flourishing follower of Jesus who embodies the character of Christ by engaging in lifelong personal pursuit of holistic transformation and doing so within a like-minded community of faith that's corporately committed to being and making other disciples. (p. 2)

Young (2013) concluded that "the idea of fostering learning to reveal (Christ) is at the heart of discipleship" (p. 336). Many theologians have recognized the transformative nature of Christian discipleship and concluded that at its core lies the acquisition of Christ's knowledge (Ellicott, 1905; Henry, 1706a; Spurgeon, 1853).

Loder (1981) broke down this process in a way that aligns with Mezirow but through a spiritual lens. Loder suggested that learning is creational and a part of the deep structure of the human experience as designed by God. Sin or "ego-centeredness" interferes with transformational learning; therefore, transformation requires the intervention of the Holy Spirit (Loder, 1981). Loder concluded that acquiring new information could be broken down into five steps: (a) conflict (identical to Mezirow's disorienting dilemma): The learner is presented with new information that conflicts with their current understanding of life; (b) scanning (compares

with Mezirow's self-examination): The learner must reflect on previously held beliefs to determine whether they are true; (c) convictional experience (unique to Loder): The learner experiences "two habitually incompatible frames of reference converging, with surprising suddenness, to compose a meaningful unity" (Loder, 1981, p. 32). This would be what has been called a revelation from the Lord. (d) release of energy or celebration: Once the learner experiences this revelation, they are filled with hope, faith, and gratitude towards God for revealing His entire order of things (Loder, 1981). Loder suggested that this becomes a perpetual awakening to the reality of God's Kingdom. And (e) interpretation: In this final step, the learner reinterprets past experiences through the lens of this new revelation, allowing for the incorporation of the new information into their fixed assumptions (Loder, 1981).

Young (2013) took the work of Loder further to reframe transformational learning for pastoral ministers. In his dissertation, Young sought to understand how transformational learning theory could move beyond a theoretical context into praxis for pastoral ministers. After conducting a qualitative case study that included nine pastoral ministers, Young reframed transformational learning theory and found that it had the following five phases of deep learning: (a) the disorienting dilemma: the inner crisis that results when that person's experiences contradict their understanding of life; (b) the journey of desperate hope: an individual feels compelled to try to resolve a disorienting dilemma; (c) the transforming moment (compared with Loder's convictional experience): the moment when one's perspective changes, coined the "Aha moment"; (d) the surge of vitality (compared with Loder's release of energy) is described as a tremendous burst of spiritual energy linked with a new perspective; and (e) growth (compared with Loder's interpretation): the point of metamorphosis. The new perspective leads the

individual down a new trajectory (Young, 2013). Table 1 presents the phase/steps of

transformational learning by theorist.

Table 1

Phase/Steps of Transformational Learning by Theorist

Mezirow	Loder	Young
Phase 1: Disorienting dilemma	Step 1: Conflict	Phase 1: Disorienting dilemma
Phase 2: Self-examination with feelings of guilt and shame	Step 2: Scanning	Phase 2: The Journey of Desperate Hope
Phase 3: Critical reflection	Step 3: Convictional experience *	Phase 3: The transforming moment
Phase 4: Recognition	Step 4: Release of energy *	Phase 4: Surge of vitality
Phase 5: Exploration of options	Step 5: Integration	Phase 5: Growth
Phase 6: Planned course of action		
Phase 7: Acquiring knowledge		
Phase 8: Trying new roles		
Phase 9: Building competence		
Phase 10: Reintegration		

*Note: Unique to Loder

The core purpose of discipleship is that God wants a Church that reflects His character. This can only be accomplished when said people give themselves repeatedly to the transformation process. Apostle Paul explains:

> If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (Kings James Version 1767/2017 Ephesians 4:21-24).

Young (2013) asserted that a person's life can be described as a series of disorienting dilemmas over time, resulting in a substantial opportunity for deep learning. God created humankind so that all learning, regardless of subject, would be spirit-infused, leading to a more profound knowledge of Him (Young, 2013). To fully engage in transformational learning/discipleship, the learner must be self-aware. "The ego must be defeated" (Young, 2013, p. 330).

Believers are to continue to be made new in their thinking by immersing themselves in transformational learning (precipitated by the Holy Spirit) to develop the mind of Christ within them (Utley, 2013). This undoubtedly means shedding the tattered and torn sin-stained garments and replacing them with new, clean garments, here referred to as the "new man" (Utley, 2013). Hertig (2001) asserted that a disciple is primarily a learner who constantly struggles with human limitations, faith limitations, fear, and doubt. More plainly stated, the mission is not accomplished in triumph but in weakness. As modeled by Jesus on the Cross, one continually participates in whole-person transformation while simultaneously helping others transform (Bonhoeffer, 1937; Hertig, 2001).

Summary

While explaining the process of conversion to new believers, Apostle Paul writes "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (Kings James Version 1767/2017, 2 Corinthians 5:17). Life in Christ, as a disciple, is altogether an absolute aberration from that which was previously experienced. Maintaining this new life will be at many points met with internal conflict and external opposition (Ellicott, 1905; Young, 2013), yet when a believer has been wholly transformed (deeply immersed) in the discipleship process, the cost is considered gain

(Bonhoeffer, 1937). Butler (2020) stated, "The experience of the Christian life is often not heroic, but chaotic, confusing slow and a struggle, yet it is often in these times of crisis that transformational change can occur within a community of similarly changing people" (p. 281). Cherry (2016) and Bonhoeffer (1937) concluded that thinking about what makes one Christian produces the transformational change necessary to grow in discipleship. As Bonhoeffer suggested, this is a costly endeavor.

Disciple-making as Transformational Leadership

The connection between leadership and disciple-making is also evidenced in Scripture. As a Christian disciple grows in the things of God and comes to have a greater understanding of His Kingdom, they transition from the role of learner to a teacher, as demonstrated by Christ's example described in Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 9:2, and Luke 10:1:

> All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore, go ye into all the world and make disciples of all nations. Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I commanded you, and behold I am with you all the days to the close and consummation of the age. (King James Version 1769/2017 Matthew 28: 18-20)

These are the final words of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, to His disciples, released just before His heavenly ascent. This was the first time He shared this information with them. Christ's natural departure signaled that those who once were students were now to become teachers and leaders. They were to continue the work that He began (McClendon & Kimbrough, 2018). Before His passion, Christ provided a sneak peek into His plan for redemption to be executed by His disciples. He declared "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father" (King James Version 1769/2017 John 14:12). Jesus' directive to the 11 at Galilee indicated His continued work in Galilee and beyond (Barker & Kohlenberger, 2017). He intended for those He taught to now lead the charge in fulfilling the *Missio-Dei* to bring others to the saving knowledge

of His authority as King (Getz, 2007; Stedman, 1995; Sweeney, 2020; Woodard & Hirsch, 2012). At this critical point, Christ's authority on the earth was expanded to include Jews and Gentiles in the Great Commission, establishing the Messianic Age (Barker & Kohlenberger, 2017). The paradigm shift proclaimed in John 14-17 set the stage for a worldwide evangelistic effort that transitioned followers into leaders (Barker & Kohlenberger, 2017). Assuming this new leadership role meant that students would become the conduit for the Holy Spirit, producing personal transformation in those who would come after them (Barker & Kohlenberger, 2017). Christ asked them to take up His mission and make it their own. They were to go into every part of the world, including the gentile nations that were previously excluded, and make those individuals His disciples. This was the essence of *Missio-Dei* (Sweeny, 2020; Woodard & Hirsch, 2012). This was Christ's blueprint for Kingdom expansion. If this blueprint were followed devotedly, every person on earth would hear the gospel. Moreover, the disciples were to complete the mission following the pattern He used with them, baptizing them and teaching them the commands of the Kingdom of God (Getz, 2007; Stedman, 1995). When the disciples responded to the call to go in obedience, their reward was having an eternal connection with the King of the Kingdom who empowered them to prosper in their going (Barker & Kohlenberger, 2017; Bonhoeffer, 1937).

The most critical task associated with disciple-making is teaching the commands to love God and neighbor (Matthew 22:35-40). As has been previously demonstrated, teaching is at the crux of transformation; therefore, the teacher becomes vitally important to the student's development (Young, 2013). An individual cannot change absent new information. Because the change process can be arduous, it is best accomplished in collaboration (Loder, 1981; Young,

2013). Individuals need the support and encouragement of those who have been where they currently are to face the challenges ahead (Young, 2013).

For this reason, the role of disciple-maker is a leadership role of tremendous significance. Even still, this leadership role is not reserved for the elite (Devries, 1996; Getz, 2007; Lotter & Van Aarde, 2017; Ogden, 2003). Fulfilling the Great Commission is the responsibility of all believers. Christ's expectation and desire were for those who would come after Him, to teach others the ways of the Kingdom (Hull, 2006; Hull & Sobels, 2018; Ogden, 2003; Stedman, 1995). Therefore, this discussion was central to the concepts presented in this research. The disciple-making process epitomizes transformational leadership, which Burns (1978) described as "a process where leaders and followers engage in a mutual process of raising one another to higher levels of morality and motivation" (p. 299).

According to Loder (1981), the acquisition of knowledge through teaching and observation results in metamorphosis, which qualifies those previously unqualified to lead (due to the lack of knowledge) for a leadership role. It now becomes the responsibility of the leader to become a teacher who develops new disciples (learners) by teaching others the commands of God and the ways of His Kingdom in the way that it was introduced to them (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8). Therefore, disciple-making is one of the hallmark traits and responsibilities of a disciple of Christ (Hull, 2006; Hull & Sobels, 2018).

The connection between transformational leadership and disciple-making was further substantiated through research that concluded that making disciples can be attributed to transformational leadership in ministry leaders (Fryer, 2007; Lee, 2012; White et al., 2018). When describing the connection between teaching and leading, Lee (2012) concluded the following:

> Teaching and leading involve more than the demonstration of technical competency. They are moral endeavors because teaching and leading require human action undertaken on behalf of another human being. The Christian educator should be a relational leader. Transformational leadership components point to the specific elements and patterns that distinguish the behaviors and attitudes of followers and high-performance leaders. (p. 57)

Several studies have tested the efficacy of transformational leadership in the church (Brooks, 2018; Lee, 2012; McCall, 2019; Rumley, 2011; White et al., 2018). Each study described transformational leadership as the most desirable leadership style for church leaders in that transformational leaders greatly assist with aligning congregants with the vision of the local church and universal tenants of the Christian faith (Brooks, 2018; Lee, 2012; McCall, 2019; Rumley, 2011; White et al., 2018). Lee (2012) particularly acknowledged the role of Christian educators in the process of transformation. Lee wrote, "The more the Christian educator relies on God's grace and applies God's word personally, the more qualified they become as role models" (p. 68). Rumley (2011) found that transformational leadership practices exhibited by the lead pastor impact the effectiveness of the Assembly of God Churches he studied. Specifically, 24% of church effectiveness in his study could be explained by transformational leadership (Rumley, 2011). Disciple-making was a key to effectiveness (Rumley, 2011).

As leaders consider their discipleship and disciple-making efforts, they must ask why the Messiah commanded the 11 to make disciples of Himself. To answer that question, the disciple must understand what makes being a disciple of Jesus distinct from an ordinary student or even a disciple of the 11 (Hull, 2006; Hull & Sobels, 2018). A disciple of Jesus is different in that they have abandoned their way of thinking and being and instead chosen to pattern themselves after Jesus' thinking and being (Hull, 2006; Hull & Sobels, 2018; Ogden, 2003; Stedman, 1995). Paul put it this way: "I am crucified with Christ; it is not I that live, but Christ that lives within me" (Galatians 2:20 KJV).

As present-day believers engage with this reality, the command to make disciples or followers of Jesus is significant (Getz, 2007; Stedman, 1995; Sweeney, 2020; Woodard & Hirsch, 2012). It offers the disciple-maker the unique opportunity to provide testimony concerning the efficacy of the Cross (Acts 1:8). The redemption offered by Jesus' shed blood was enough to change everything forever. The blood turned the sinner into a saint (1 Peter 1:18-19). This testimony can only be given by those who have experienced the Cross' power profoundly and intimately. When disciples share this good news with the unbeliever, they extend the opportunity to gain this experience first-hand (Getz, 2007; Hull & Sobels, 2018; Keener, 2014; Sweeny, 2020; Woodard & Hirsch, 2012).

Moreover, Baptism into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is an outward sign of the work done within. The new convert buries the old man—his ways of thinking, behaving, and being in the water—and rises as the new creation, a cleansed vessel ready to receive Christ's way of thinking, behaving, and being in the form of the commands that Jesus taught. This is essential knowledge needed to follow Christ and make disciples (Keener, 2014).

Biblical Case Studies of Transformational Learning and Transformational Leadership

The Scriptures are replete with examples of transformational learning and transformational leadership. Some of the most well-known Bible stories are linked to these concepts. This section surveys transformational learning and transformational leadership in the life of prominent biblical leaders.

Transformed Learner: Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9)

Equipped with 3.5 years of on-the-job training, Jesus' disciples face a new challenge. They must cultivate the work that began in them while simultaneously continuing the mission of their leader. One of the disciples did not have the luxury of this training, yet he, too, was

expected to learn and change. Upon a single encounter with Jesus, Saul of Tarsus was entirely transformed and introduced to the learner-leader cycle. His story is widely known. A well-trained scholar, "Pharisee of Pharisee" (Philippians 3:5), Saul despised the idea of heart-level transformation being promoted by Christ's students. He heard they were gathering in Damascus, so he sought permission to go there and continue his violent persecution (Act 9:2). Yet, on the way, he had a life-changing encounter, which gave entrance to his change of heart and mind. Be reminded that transformational learning transforms problematic frames of reference to make the individual more inclusive, discriminating, reflective, open, and emotionally able to change (Mezirow, 1990).

The sight of Jesus surrounded by light on every side startled Paul so much that he fell on his face (Acts 9:3). This moment in time served as that all-important problematic frame of reference (Mezirow, 1991, p. 5). It was meant to awaken him and signified the enlightening of his understanding in the knowledge of Christ (Henry, 1706a). In his commentary on the Book of Acts, Henry (1706a) reminded us that the work of conversion is often not tied to the church building: "Sometimes the grace of God works upon sinners when they are at their worst, and hotly engaged in the most desperate sinful pursuits". So, it was with Saul. He was at his most sinful point when God intervened, shifting his thinking and trajectory. Being called by name twice and confronted for his erroneous thinking and actions caught him off guard, so he desired more information, to which Christ obliged. The reminder of self (persecutor of Jesus) resonated with such conviction that Saul was immediately ready to change; he asked, "What would you have me do?" (Acts 9). Seeing Christ in His glory and hearing His voice redirected Saul's frame of reference. Henry (1706a) pointed out that hearing and seeing are the two learning senses. Upon experiencing both, Saul was ready to fully embrace transformational learning to become

instructed by Christ in the way of salvation. He was prepared to submit his will to the will of Christ. He overcame his previously held fixed assumptions to engage in a watershed transformational learning process that produced an entirely different person with a new name: Paul. This singular moment of transformation would become the hallmark of Paul's leadership from that point forward. Paul's conversion was so thorough that he openly associated with those he had previously persecuted and risked his own life (Acts 9:19-23).

Transformed Learner: Simon Peter (Acts 10)

Much like his eventual colleague Paul, Simon Peter, known simply as Peter, had his own life-changing experience steeped in transformational learning. Peter's story of personal transformation continues after the ascension of Christ. While embarking on his first missionary journey, he has a vision (Act 10:10-11). Knowing he was hungry; the Lord showed Peter a sheet with many ceremonially unclean food items and told him to kill and eat them (Acts 10:12-16). Like Saul, Peter saw a vision and heard a voice. Yet because he rigidly practiced the tenets of Judaism, Peter refused to eat the items as instructed (Acts 10:14). This refusal was met with a strong rebuke from the Lord: "What God has cleansed, that call not thou common" (Acts 10:15). This was unusual and contrary to what Peter had been taught and served as a problematic frame of reference necessary for transformational learning (Mezirow, 1990). Peter's encounter with the Lord on the rooftop in Joppa was precipitated by the prayers and alms of the Roman soldier named Cornelius demonstrating that no devotion to Him goes unrewarded (DeWalt, 1958). Because Peter was familiar with the voice of the Lord, he quickly responded to His directions even when those directions were outside the confines of his previously held fixed assumptions. When the Holy Spirit fell before Peter could finish speaking (Acts 11:44), Peter understood that the Gentiles within Cornelius' house were accepted and ordained by God. Therefore, he would

also accept them (DeWalt, 1958). Again, this story magnifies the revolutionary quality of transformational learning as promulgated by a transformational leader (The Lord).

Jesus Christ Transformational Leader

Jesus Christ, the Messiah, is often described as the most outstanding leader who ever existed. In reference to this reality, the Scriptures declare:

> In the beginning, was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God…and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth. (King James Version, 1769/2017 John 1: 1,14)

> Christ's humility is celebrated as a true example of servant leadership (Berry, 2009). This

is an example to be emulated by future leaders everywhere. What type of leader hinges their leadership not on their attributes, power, or positional authority, but solely on their desire to see people's lives change? His words, recorded by John, provide the reader with the absolute assurance that this leader and His leadership had different goals than previously seen. He proclaimed,

> For God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. (John 3:16-17)

This statement proposes a radical directional shift for those who would hear the message. The hearer was being provoked into self-judgment. Would they side with or against this leader? (Harris, 2004).

The arrival of the Messiah on the earth would be known as a moment of crisis. A time when difficult decisions had to be made or better described in Greek as *krisis* or judgment (Harris, 2004). Christ stated that He did not come to pronounce judgment on behalf of the Father, who loved the world, yet the internal moorings of those who witnessed His proclamation felt the weight of the shift in thought that was being promulgated. What Kingdom, and which King,

would become the source of personal allegiance? Christ's arrival and subsequent leadership introduced a dramatic change in thought and life; it would be the hearer's choice to follow.

One must travel back in the Scriptures to the time when Jesus was a boy to find evidence that He would be like no other leader in history. "And He said unto them, how is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my father's business?" (Luke 2:49). At 12 years old, He was found sitting with the wisest men in the community, questioning and learning from their perspectives (Luke 2: 46). The fact that He could keep up with the questioning of the Rabbis at this age indicated His otherness: entirely God and entirely man as described by Barth, Bonhoeffer, and so many others who accepted the Chalcedonian definition of Christology (Hutabarat, 2015; Palmer, 1977). Spurgeon (1857) described this as the sacred call to the work He had to undertake out of deference to the "spirit of obedience"; Bonhoeffer (1937) coined it "single-minded obedience."

The sin of fallen humanity was so profound that it required a radical departure from the norm. Embracing the "spirit of obedience" in relationship to the will of the Father, as is the expectation of a follower of God, necessitated Christ's submission to transformational learning under the tutelage of humans (i.e., the Rabbis in the Temple (Luke 2:46) or His parents (Luke 2:51). Through His example, one can see that a life submitted to the process of transformation is dynamic and perpetuates growth (Luke 2:52). Paul admonished that this is the path all Christ-followers should take (Philippians 2:6-11).

Unlike previous examples of leadership, the leadership of Christ was embedded in ethical practices heretofore unknown: humility and self-sacrifice (Bonhoeffer, 1937; Spurgeon, 1853). Retaliation was forbidden, and love for one's enemies was required (Bonhoeffer, 1937; Spurgeon, 1853). Even still, this was no easy feat for Christ. He, too, continued in the process of

transformation under the direction of the Holy Spirit so that His will (as one that was all God and all man) would be indistinguishable from that of the Father. "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine will be done" (King James Version 1769/2017, Luke 22:42). Spurgeon (1857) wrote, "At last, God determined that He would gather all His works into one volume and give all the virtues in the person of Jesus Christ." At the inception of His ministry, Jesus became the epitome of a transformational leader. After being baptized, He immediately started proclaiming a new reality: Repent for the Kingdom is at hand (Matt 4:12). His arrival heralded the entrance of an entirely new way of thinking (Barth, 1960; Bonhoeffer, 1937; Spurgeon, 1857) that can be described as the Kingdom.

The Sermon on the Mount was the first time Jesus engaged His followers in transformational learning as He shared His vision for the Kingdom of God. Through the Beatitudes, an unobstructed vision of the coming Kingdom was revealed. This Kingdom is made up of servants who must reflect the heart of the King (Berry, 2009; Weber & Anders, 2000). As previously stated, Jesus arrived on the scene to reveal an ethic of care previously unknown on earth but duly recognized in heaven as the "flawless" model of life in the Father (Berry, 2009). This new ethic of care was predicated on "justice, holiness, love, faith, hope, mercy, forgiveness, kindness and truth representing a new moral order that reflected the nature of God" (Noebel, 2009, as cited in Berry, 2009).

In other words, this ethic of care was not previously seen in the natural realm. Therefore, Berry (2009) wrote, "It must be established within the heart by the supernatural power of the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit, made flesh in the person of Jesus". Jesus always starts with the heart (Weber & Anders, 2000). At the center of His teaching lies this fact: Personal heart change is necessary and expected (Bonhoeffer, 1937; Spurgeon, 1853; Weber &

Anders, 2000). Servants of the King must be pure in heart, as mentioned in Psalm 24. Only the pure heart will be unencumbered in pursuing God the Father and have the best view of His earthly movements (Berry, 2009; Weber & Anders, 2000).

For this reason, Jesus' expectations for believers differed from those of the world. They were to seek and apply the heart intention of the Father's instruction from the reservoir of their own changed heart. Merely following the letter of it was (and still is) wholly unacceptable. They were challenged to fully engage in the transformational learning process.

Once sufficiently satisfied with the progress of His disciples, Jesus does something extraordinary for the time but fully encompasses the heart of a transformational leader. He releases His disciples to become change agents themselves, thus completing one full rotation in the leader-learner cycle. The Great Commission, found in Matthew 28:16-20, marks the disciple's graduation from being primarily learners to becoming transformational leaders. The central command in "The Great Commission" is to make disciples and other transformational learners who will eventually become transformational leaders. This mandate still holds relevance for the Body of Christ today.

Bennett (2000) stated,

At the heart of our mission is the reproduction in others what Christ produced in us: faith, obedience, growth, authority, compassion, love, and a bold truthful message as His evangelistic task of the church. To bring those who identify with the world into a new identification. (para. 3)

We must begin to embrace this infinite learner to leader cycle that causes us to see ourselves as learners in a family of teachers who are also learners (Bennett, 2000). This is the legacy left by the most memorable transformational leader ever known. When adequately framed, we see that the Gospel message, released by a transformational leader, produces a change within the learner in both the Spirit (higher power) and soul (lower power) (Wulff, 2011). Colossians 3:9-10

becomes a reality only because reason and conscience overrule appetite and passion (Henry, 1706b). This is the whole point of transformational leadership, the tangible manifestation of a new way of thinking and being (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Wulff, 2011).

Apostle Peter: Transformational Leader

One of the original 12, Peter had numerous transformational learning experiences with Christ: his initial call to follow while fishing, walking on water, his declaration of Jesus as Messiah, and correction received from Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, to name a few (DeWalt, 1958). The first evidence of his transition into a leadership role was made evident on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2: 14-42). The events of that day marked the first time Peter stood before men initiating a disorienting dilemma through the proclamation of the Gospel, resulting in 3,000 Christian converts (Acts 2:41). However, the most transformative moment of his ministry was what occurred at Joppa. From that groundbreaking moment, Peter brought the others into this new way of thinking and behaving, which resulted in the others freely accepting and themselves working to make disciples of Gentile nations (Acts 11:20).

Apostle Paul: Transformational Leader

Acts records that Paul spent time with the disciples in Damascus and Jerusalem, undoubtedly learning their ways and practicing their understanding of Kingdom living post conversion (Acts: 9-19; 29). Paul began to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ with such boldness that the Hellenists desired to kill Him (Acts 9:29). This marks Paul's promotion from learner to leader. Though his attempts to make disciples were thwarted there, Paul would be sent out from Antioch with Barnabas on his first missionary journey to proclaim the good news in Cyprus (Henry, 1706a). This would be the first of many journeys Paul would take throughout his

life to make disciples of Jesus in the Gentile nations. Ultimately, Paul is credited with planting 20 churches through his disciple-making efforts (Henry, 1706a).

The Others

When the news of Peter's exploits with Cornelius reached the others, it caused great division (Acts 11:3). They were offended by Peter's disregard for the Torah in eating with the Gentiles (Guzik, 2018). Yet, Peter seamlessly transitioned from the position of the transformational learner into that of a transformational leader, as he explained his actions with great detail (Acts 11:4). Through his leadership, the others experienced their problematic frames of reference, which allowed for transformational learning on a larger scale. Moreover, because the others were so quick in their willingness to change, the hand of the Lord was with them as they preached, and a significant number believed (Acts 11: 21). Once again, the transformational learner became a transformational leader as the believers in Antioch continued in the work of making disciples of Jesus (both Jew and Gentile) with such fervor that the church of Jerusalem took notice. Guzik (2018) pointed out that a ministry cannot turn people to the Lord unless the hand of the Lord is with them. The hand of the Lord was with them because they were willing to be transformed, meaning their thinking was changed and their hearts were changed (Acts 11: 18). The product of a changed nature in an effective witness is another transformed heart. And so, it continued in Antioch. Guzik (2018) wrote, "As the Saints were equipped for the work of the ministry, they grew into maturity, and due to their maturity, the Body of Believers grew" (p. 4).

Summary of the Theological Framework

The theological framework for discipleship can be described as moving from a transformed learner into a transformed leadership role (Hertig, 2001; Weber & Anders, 2000). This construct was made evident through the life and leadership of Jesus, who being entirely

God, submitted Himself to embody the ways of the Kingdom in an earthen vessel, and then taught this way to others (Luke 2, Matthew 5). The connection between discipleship and disciple-making is further understood through the introduction of problematic frames of reference in the lives of Paul, Peter, and "the others," which produced a new way of thinking and eventual teaching and preaching that serves as the foundation for modern-day discipleship (Hull & Sobels, 2018). Through this new lens, the reader can intimate that discipleship requires a whole-person transformation that includes but is not limited to the surrendering of the "old man" and his way of life to gain the "new man" who has a vision of the Kingdom of God within and that which is to come (Butler, 2020; Cherry, 2016; Ellicott, 1905; Hertig, 2001). This will undoubtedly be associated with high costs, but ultimately, it proves worth it all (Bonhoeffer, 1937).

Theoretical Framework

In developing a theoretical framework for this study on the relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning and transformational leadership, Mezirow and Marsick's (1978) transformational learning theory and transformational leadership as theorized by Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) were used. To understand the possible relationship between transformational learning and transformational leadership, it is essential to examine each theory independently. In so doing, a foundational understanding is provided.

Transformational Learning Theory

Transformational learning theory, as defined by Mezirow (1991), is learning that transforms problematic frames of reference to make them more inclusive, discriminating, reflective, open, and emotionally able to change. The theory emerged through a study on women returning to community colleges in the United States (Mezirow & Marsick, 1978). The research

team determined that all participating women experienced a personal transformation during their educational pursuits (Mezirow & Marsick, 1978). *Transformative Dimensions of Learning*, Mezirow and Marsick's (1978) seminal work on the subject, introduced the multifaceted approach necessary to activate learning in adult students. In developing this theory, Mezirow was deeply influenced by the work of several theorists, namely Kuhn's theory about personal paradigms, Paolo Freire's dialogue built on sound argumentation, and Jurgen Habermas' "lifeworld" concept (Calleja, 2014). Table 2 displays Mezirow and Marsick's (1978) 10 phases of transformational learning.

Table 2

Mezirow and Marsick's (1978) Phase of Transformational Learning

Phases of transformational learning	Description
Phase 1: Disorienting dilemma	Learner experiences conflict with fixed assumptions.
Phase 2: Self-examination with feelings of guilt and shame	Learner considers the possibility that fixed assumptions are wrong
Phase 3: Critical reflection	Learner actively reflects on why they believe what they believe
Phase 4: Recognition	Learner recognizes that their assumptions are wrong or incomplete
Phase 5: Exploration of options	Learner begins to incorporate new information
Phase 6: Planned course of action	Learner decides how they will move forward with this new information
Phase 7: Acquiring knowledge	Implementing the plan that was laid out in the previous phase
Phase 8: Trying new roles	Testing new skills (validating new information)
Phase 9: Building competence	Through the testing of the new skills, confidence is gained.
Phase 10: Reintegration	The new information/skills become a permanent part of one's perspective.

Since its introduction, transformative learning theory has been studied and practiced in adult education in various sectors, from training pastors (Ste-Marie, 2008) to training counselors (Fazio-Griffith & Ballard, 2016). Mezirow's work is the primary source of information on this topic (Calleja, 2014). In review, Mezirow's work outlines 10 stages found in transformational learning: (a) a disorienting dilemma; (b) self-examination with feelings of guilt and shame; (c) a critical assessment of underlying assumptions; (d) community collaboration; (e) exploring new roles, relationships, and actions; (f) planning a course of action; (g) gaining new knowledge and skills to steer the course of action; (h) trying new roles; (i) building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships; and (j) a reintegration of new information/skills into one's perspective (Mezirow & Marsick, 1978).

Transformational learning theory discovered that individuals have underlying assumptions that become a part of their subconscious frame of reference (Mezirow & Marsick, 1978). According to Mezirow and Marsick (1978), this is how one's worldview is developed. To initiate a change in the worldview, which is described as the dynamic learning process, the original frame of reference must be confronted (through a disorienting dilemma or crisis) to expose the underlying assumptions and prove them valid or invalid (Fazio-Griffith & Ballard, 2016; Yukawa, 2015). Howie and Bagnall (2013) described a disorienting dilemma as:

> Experiences that do not fit into a person's current beliefs about the world. When faced with a disorienting dilemma, people are forced to reconsider their beliefs in a way that will fit their new experiences into the rest of their worldview. (p. 820)

This is when new information can be introduced and potentially incorporated into a new frame of reference (Mezirow & Marsick, 1978). This process is preceded by critically reflecting on one's underlying assumptions (why do I believe what I believe?), leading to moments of clarity that are further worked out through community collaboration and dialogue (Calleja, 2014). When the

cycle is complete, it will produce personal transformation, or a shift in thought and action, resulting in the transformed individual (Fazio-Griffith & Ballard, 2016; Yukawa, 2015).

As asserted by Mezirow and Marsick (1978) and Calleja (2014), the goal of transformational learning is to make the individual aware of their subconscious assumptions and those of others to determine their validity, which will alleviate oppressive thoughts and actions, resulting in positive change described as learning (Mezirow, 1991). Mezirow (1991) wrote that learning is "the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience to guide future action" (p. 22).

Utilization of Learning Tactics and Transformational Learning

An integral part of Mezirow and Marsick's (1978) 10 phases of transformative learning are the specific steps to overcome the fixed assumptions associated with a problematic frame of reference. Because these fixed assumptions are subconscious, Mezirow and Marsick (1978) concluded that they must be brought to the conscious mind through self-examination (Phase 2) and then analyzed by critical reflection (Phase 3). Phases 2 and 3 are what would be considered a learning tactic. Accordingly, Maxine Dalton, developer of the LTI, defined learning tactics as strategies individuals use when challenged to learn from a new situation (Dalton et al., 1999).

To experience transformative learning, Mezirow and Marsick (1978) concluded that individuals must examine their current assumptions by actively thinking about what they believe and why they believe it. This will often produce guilt and shame as the individual acknowledges that their beliefs could be wrong and based on a personal bias (Mezirow & Marsick, 1978). If these feelings are not adequately addressed during the self-examination phase, they can lead to what Kegan and Lahey (2009) termed immunity to change (ITC). As discussed later in this review, ITC theory has found that there are occasions when an individual may desire to embrace

change but never actually change (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). The failure in change action can be attributed to what Kegan & Lahey termed the emotional immune system, which protects competing or hidden interests.

In developing the ITC theory, Kegan and Lahey (2009) recognized that transformational learning precipitates personal change. The individual must include discovering fixed assumptions and identifying hidden or competing interests associated with them to produce change (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). This step compares to Mezirow's self-examination phase. Kegan and Lahey offered "teasing out" those fixed assumptions as a necessary tactic to increase learning that produces change. It is through the process of "teasing out" significant assumptions that an individual can discover what meaning has been assigned to said assumptions (Kegan & Lahey, 2009), which compares with Mezirow and Marsick's (1978) critical reflection.

Dalton et al. (1999) used the same construct to include thinking and feeling tactics in the LTI. According to Dalton et al., the thinking tactic was drawn from the work of Meichenbaum et al. (1989) and Bandura and Walters (1977). Dalton et al. (1999) described thinking tactics as "behaviors that are solitary and internal, including (1) reflecting on the past to draw parallels, contrasts, and rules of thumb and (2) anticipating the future through cognitive rehearsal and if/then possibilities" (p. 5). Whereas feeling tactics on the LTI are drawn from Kolb (1984) and Horney (1970). Dalton et al. (1999) described feeling tactics as "behaviors that individuals employ to acknowledge and manage the feelings of anxiety or discomfort that arise from facing an unknown challenge" (p. 5). As discovered by Mezirow (1991) and Kegan and Lahey (2009), Dalton et al. (1999) agreed that an individual cannot move into change (transformation) without first acknowledging the emotional discomfort associated with that change. Therefore, an individual must use some strategy to overcome those feelings (Dalton et al., 1999).

Dalton et al. (1999) included two other tactics in the LTI that are commonly used to foster change: action and assessing others. The action tactic is learning that occurs by performing actions and experiencing the effects. Using action tactics results in the individual learning from the task; no information gathering is associated with it (Dalton et al., 1999). Kegan and Lahey (2009) also suggested using action to overcome internal barriers to change. They concluded that a necessary part of overcoming ITC is testing out significant assumptions (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). They suggested using the SMART (safe, modest, actionable, research-based, and test your assumption) test when trying assumptions (Kegan & Lahey, 2009).

Wang et al. (2021) found that technology can be used as a learning tactic to achieve transformational learning for some populations, whereas Torbert's (1991, 1999, 2003) collaborative developmental action inquiry (CDAI), which utilizes questioning to achieve organizational transformation is described as another valuable tactic for organizational leaders to experience and promote transformational learning (Nicolaides & McCullum, 2013). Additionally, in a study conducted in 2018, Zaky found that collaboration in writing can be a successful tactic to spur transformational learning in students. The idea of collaboration aligns with Dalton et al.'s (1999) *assessing others'* learning tactics. Again, drawn from the work of Bandura and Walters (1977), Dalton et al. held that these tactics are observational and vicarious behaviors that include modeling and seeking advice, support, counsel, coaching, or formal training from others.

Criticisms of ITC and Collaborative Development Action Inquiry

Despite most of the literature emphasizing favorable outcomes when applying ITC theory and CDAI, some research found adverse effects in their application. Reams (2016) discovered that ITC theory, as offered by Kegan and Lahey (2009), failed to address the need for self-

awareness or the practice of mindfulness to overcome the fixed assumptions associated with the emotional immune system. Likewise, Nicolaides and Dzubinski (2016) concluded that using CDAI to assist in transformational learning only sometimes works. Specifically, they found that some learners do not respond to CDAI practices (Nicolaides & Dzubinski, 2016). They found that some learners practiced avoidance and continued in single loop learning when faced with new information (Nicolaides & Dzubinski, 2016).

Summary of Transformational Learning

Transformational learning is a process that includes discovering fixed assumptions that exist on a subconscious level and overcoming those assumptions so that an individual's frame of reference (worldview) becomes more inclusive, discriminating, reflective, open, and emotionally able to change (Mezirow & Marsick, 1978). The change associated with such learning is a rigorous and emotional endeavor that will require that an individual utilize tactics or strategies to help them foster this change (Dalton et al., 1999; Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Mezirow, 1991; Nicolaides & McCullum; 2013; Torbert, 1991; Wang et al., 2021). Although there are a variety of tactics available, research has supported the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, here termed learning tactics, to achieve transformative learning (Dalton et al., 1999; Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Mezirow, 1991; Nicolaides & McCullum; 2013; Torbert, 1991; Wang et al., 2021). Even still, some research has identified that learning tactics do not always result in transformational learning (Nicolaides & Dzubinski, 2016; Reams, 2016).

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership theory is one of the most studied leadership models in the 21st century (Khanin, 2007; Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987). It has offered tremendous insight into the world of successful leaders in every type of organization, from nonprofits, major corporations,

and political systems to the military (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). Today, the discussion about transformational leadership offers a model for effecting change in a world that is becoming increasingly more connected (Khanin, 2007).

James McGregor Burns

Transformational leadership was introduced into leadership literature in 1978 by Burns in his seminal work titled *Leadership*. In this work, Burns asserted that two primary types of leadership produce change within a society: transforming and transactional leadership (Burns, 1978). Burns viewed the two leadership styles on opposite ends of the spectrum serving antithetical purposes. From Burns' perspective, transformational leaders have an altruistic quality, whereas transactional leadership is more self-serving (Khanin, 2007; Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987). Burns was partial to the belief that transformational leadership has a mutually beneficial quality for the leaders and followers, which stimulates and elevates followers into leadership and changes leaders into moral agents.

Khanin (2007) wrote that Burns described transactional leadership as appealing to the immoral side of humanity, where leaders sought to meet the needs of followers only to achieve their own (often self-serving) objectives. Transactional leadership ranged from the apparent quid pro quo exchanges (work for pay) to more obscure discussions such as trust, commitment, and respect between leaders and followers (Khanin, 2007; Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987). Yet, Burns believed leaders could choose whether to be transformational or transactional, with the most influential leaders demonstrating transformational leadership.

Bernard Bass

Bass (1985) furthered Burns' transformational leadership theory in his seminal work *Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations*. Bass (1985) concluded that transformational

leadership motivates individuals to do more than they previously thought possible. This is accomplished by raising the followers' awareness of the importance of the goal, getting them to move beyond their personal needs for the sake of others, and expanding the followers' needs and wants to include those of the leader (Bass, 1985). Table 3 presents Bass' transformational leadership theory.

Table 3

Bass' Transformational Leadership Theory Explained

Leadership style	Factors	Description
Transformational leadership	Idealized Influence Attributes	Leader builds trust and confidence through personal association
Transformational leadership	Idealized Influence Behaviors	Leader develops a collective sense of mission and values
Transformational leadership	Inspirational Motivation	Leader creates a collective vision
Transformational leadership	Individual Consideration	Leader teaches and coach on an individual basis
Transformational leadership	Intellectual Stimulation	Leader encourages innovation through the examination and analysis of critical assumptions.
Transactional leadership	Contingent Reward	Leader provides meaningful rewards based on task completion
Transactional leadership	Management by exception (active)	Leader seeks deviation from expectation and provides punishment
Transactional leadership	Management by exception (passive)	Leader reacts to situations after they become serious
Passive-avoidant	Laissez-faire	Absence of Leadership

Being influenced by charismatic leadership theory, Bass (1985) concluded that transformational leadership requires charisma. According to Burns (1978) and Bass et al. (2003), leaders who display transformational behaviors come to the forefront in times of crisis.

Despite citing Burns' ideas about transformational leadership as foundational to his research, Bass (1985) substantially departed from Burns' belief about the motivation of transformational leadership, stating that transformational leadership is not altruistic and does not focus on developing a symbiotic exchange between leaders and followers. Instead, it hinges on assisting followers in enhancing their performance using various methods from charismatic motivation to individualized consideration (Khanin, 2007). Bass (1985) is most well-known for determining that transformational leadership includes four components: (a) idealized influence (charisma; the leader's personality), (b) inspirational motivation (using symbols and images to focus follower efforts), (c) intellectual stimulation (empowering followers to reframe thoughts about problems), and (d) individual consideration (works with followers one-on-one to foster change). Moreover, Bass (1985) concluded that transformational leaders have personality traits that include social boldness, introspection, thoughtfulness, sociability, cooperativeness, friendliness, authoritarianism, maturity, integrity, creativity, and originality.

Meanwhile, transactional leadership is needed to generate a base of trust between a leader and follower through quid pro quo (Bass, 1985). Transactional leadership includes two components: (a) contingent reward, which ensures close agreement between effort and reward for doing what is expected; and (b) management-by-exception, which is activated only when a mistake has occurred (Bass, 1985). Bass (1985) asserted that leaders may be transformational and transactional depending on the situation.

Bass (1985) developed a measurement tool to evaluate his transformational leadership theory called the MLQ. Bass and his team undertook numerous studies and considered the research of outside groups when testing the different versions of the MLQ to determine the efficacy of his transformational leadership model. These studies found that transformational leadership can be learned (Bass & Avolio, 1990), and transformational leadership will act to reduce feelings of burnout and stress (Bass & Avolio, 1990), depending in part on the context of the leaders and followers (Bass et al., 2003); charismatic transformational leaders transform the self-concepts of their followers (Shamir et al., 1993); transformational leadership enhances the development of followers, challenging them to think in ways that they are not accustomed to thinking, whereby inspiring them to accomplish beyond what they felt was possible and motivating them to do more than what is required (Avolio, 1999); leadership behavior may be motivated by a desire for morality (Turner et al., 2002); followers of transformational leaders experience a greater sense of meaningfulness and personal engagement (Bono & Judge, 2003); followers may experience both "dependence and empowerment" as a result of exposure to transformational leadership (Kark et al., 2003). Therefore, Bass et al. (2003) concluded that transformational leadership should be widely taught throughout organizations to generate needed change, mainly to move organizations forward in times of transition.

Though Bass' research did provide greater clarity to Burns' transformational leadership theory, Bass conceded there was a lack of information regarding the conception of transformational leadership (how does a transformational leader evolve outside of bureaucracy?) and how leadership influences the effectiveness and continuity of organizations (Khanin, 2007). Moreover, problems emerged within the research on transformational leadership theory. It was discovered that the model did not include hostile transformational leaders (Yukl, 1999), nor did it

consider the potential for conflicting agendas of transformational leaders where transformational leadership is taught and utilized throughout an organization (Porter & Begley, 2003). Bass added pseudo-transformational leadership to the discourse to differentiate between positive and negative transformational leadership without researching the topic (Porter & Begley, 2003).

Detractors and Alternative Research

There were also several distractors to Bass' transformational leadership model. Most notably, Burns. Burns and Bass agreed on several things, including the multilevel, multidimensional nature of transactional leadership and transformational leaders' justice and integrity orientation (Khanin, 2007; Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987). However, Burns criticized Bass' emphasis on achieving organizational objectives versus developing a symbiotic relationship between leaders and followers (Khanin, 2007). Additionally, Lord and Maher concluded that transformational leadership is not unique but is substantially the same as other behavioral measures of leader/follower relationships (Burns et al., 2003). Meindl (1990) concluded that transformational leadership "romanticized" leadership, resulting in people (including followers) attributing more to causative leadership than is warranted. Meindl (1990) wrote, "Romanticizing the leader in this way can be so extreme that charismatic leadership becomes nothing more than a set of follower attributions"; it (romanticized leadership) is highly contagious and is transmitted among followers through their networks of interpersonal relationships (friendships) (Pastor, Meindl, & Mayo, 2002).

<div align="center">

Related Literature

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The theological and theoretical frameworks were explored in previous sections of this literature review. The following section explored the literature related to this study. This section includes literature on "transformational learning theory," and "transformational leadership

theory" successes and barriers. Next, the literature that focused on the relationship between learning and leadership was explored, followed by a review of Brown & Posner (2001) and Trautmann et al (2006) which provided a frame of reference for the present study. Finally, several studies incorporating either transformational leadership or transformational learning in connection with discipleship practices within the church were explored.

Transformational Learning Success

Although transformational learning theory has been around for the same time as transformational leadership, significantly fewer empirical studies have been completed on the topic. Studies that have been conducted on the topic appear to agree with Mezirow's (1991) definition that transformational learning transforms problematic frames of reference to make them more inclusive, discriminating, reflective, open, and emotionally able to change. It has been suggested that all activities that involve the forming and shaping of a worldview are considered learning, with transformational learning having the most formative properties (Astley, 2015; Yukawa, 2015).

It has been further concluded that transformational learning is the only conduit through which students consistently realign their trajectory to meet the demands of a preferred future. For example, Helsing (2018) suggested that although average (adult) struggles can be overcome through skill and information acquisition, many problems cannot be solved quickly and require gaining and applying relevant knowledge. This often requires pushing against and breaking through limiting beliefs to replace them with more helpful information (Fazio-Griffith & Ballard, 2016; Helsing, 2018; Young, 2013). When appropriately executed, transformational learning will redirect an individual's previously held assumptions to a more egalitarian point of view that is innately spiritual but usually unstated (Helsing, 2018; Mezirow, 1990; Young, 2013).

In evaluating transformational learning through the lenses of Mezirow and Loder, Young (2013) described the transcendental nature of transformational learning as "intrinsically spiritual" in that it moves the person beyond survival into flourishing. De Jong (2012) reiterated that this is only possible when the teacher described in his study as a coach, spiritual guide, or discipler has participated in their transformational learning process, enabling them to serve as the transformed leader in the life of another. Young reached an identical conclusion, which led to the development of his stages of transformational learning within a ministry context.

ITC Theory

As identified in transformational learning (Mezirow, 1991) and transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978) theories, there exist barriers to the transformation that result in stagnation. Though there are a variety of explanations for this phenomenon, Kegan and Lahey (2009) offered ITC theory as a possible explanation for these barriers. ITC theory suggests individuals have unspoken and unrecognized competing interests that result in behavior opposite of stated goals (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). These competing interests are developed on a subconscious level and remain hidden to serve as a natural defense against emotional harm, and self-flagellation (Bochman & Kroth, 2010; Yukawa, 2015). "Immunity is a multidimensional phenomenon involving emotional and epistemological factors in addition to the active resistance to change" (Bochman & Kroth, 2010, p. 332). Self-protection "reflects productive reasoning that is outdated because the assumptions which gave rise to it are no longer accurate or valid" (Bochman & Kroth, 2010, p. 335).

Like Mezirow's (1991) frame of reference, an individual can only overcome these competing interests by acknowledging them and bringing them into conscious thought to be scrutinized, which often results in shame as the individual feels vulnerable to perceived character

flaws (Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Ste-Marie, 2008). Acknowledging one's cognitive dissonance and resistance to change allows for transformational learning and transformational leadership practices to be enacted (Bochman & Kroth, 2010; Ste-Marie, 2008); Yukawa, 2015). Therefore, the ITC theory presents a helpful barometer for understanding why barriers to transformational learning exist. It also supports the idea that using learning tactics assists the individual with experiencing transformational learning, thereby validating the RQs associated with this study.

Transformational Leadership Theory Success

As previously mentioned, numerous studies have been conducted to verify the validity of transformational leadership theory. By definition, transformational leadership is an approach to leadership that creates a meaningful change in people and organizations where perceptions and values are redesigned to change the expectations and aspirations of followers (Burns, 1978). Burns' (1978) idea of transformational leadership is connected to political movements, whereas Bass' (1985) ideas stem from military training. This is an essential distinction in that most of the transformational leadership studies have branched into other spheres of influence (Bae, 2001; Dvir et al., 2002; Mutahar et al., 2015; Tims & et al., 2011; Trautmann et al., 2006; Zhu & Aktar, 2014).

Other generalized findings have concluded that transformational leadership is best received during conflict and organizational change (Hartley, 2007; Mutahar et al., 2015; Tims, et al., 2010). Therefore, when transformational leadership is utilized during times of crisis or uncertainty, the stress levels of followers decrease, and trust is established between the transformational leader and their followers (Dvir et al., 2002; Mutahar et al., 2015; Tims, et al., 2010; Trautmann et al., 2006). Follower behavior improves significantly under the direction of a

transformational leader in times of crisis (Dvir et al., 2002; Mutahar et al., 2015; Tims et al., 2010).

Moreover, transformational leadership theory has held up relating to its ability to move followers beyond what they think they can accomplish onto an "other-focused" narrative (Dvir et al., 2002; Mutahar et al., 2015; Tims et al., 2010). It has been concluded that transformational leadership must be taught, meaning the transformational leader must be engaged in an innately transformational learning process before being adequately transformational (Dvir et al., 2002; Hartley, 2007; Mutahar et al., 2015; Tims et al., 2010). For example, several reviewed studies concluded that a more invested type of leadership was required of the teachers seeking student transformation (De Jong, 2012; Fazio-Griffith & Ballard, 2016; Forest, 2019; Helsing, 2018). Transformational teaching is, therefore, synonymous with transformational leadership. Fazio-Griffith and Ballard (2016) and Forest (2019) agreed that educators need a cognitive shift to this reality. Fazio-Griffith and Ballard wrote, "The notion that teachers function as guides, mentors, or coaches in modeling and providing mastery experiences can be a difficult concept for professors entrenched in information-giving instructional styles, such as lecturing" (p. 232).

Barriers to Transformational Leadership

Some studies have shown that transformational leadership theory must be revised to address the predisposition to identify the transformational leader as a hero (Alvesson & Karreman, 2016; Fourie & Höhne, 2019; Yukl, 1999). The "hero" leader is often based on an ideology that centers solely on positive images of leadership with high levels of moral integrity (Alvesson & Karreman, 2016; Fourie & Höhne, 2019; Yukl, 1999). According to detractors, the current iteration of transformational leadership theory does not allow for the fallibility of leaders creating cult-like follower's dependent on such leaders (Alvesson & Karreman, 2016; Fourie &

Höhne, 2019). As a result, the theory is said to need more balance when confronting leadership failures or leaders who do not have an altruistic end goal (Alvesson & Karreman, 2016; Fourie & Höhne, 2019; Yukl, 1999).

It has been discovered that when a heavy burden is placed on transformational leaders to perform well, it perpetuates negative cycles of denial and self-aggrandizement (Alvesson & Karreman, 2016; Fourie & Höhne, 2019; Yukl, 1999). When transformational leaders fail, follower performance stagnates (Alvesson & Karreman, 2016; Fourie & Höhne, 2019; Yukl, 1999). This is further complicated by a leader unwilling to recognize their fallibility and the reality of failure on the part of the followers (Fourie & Höhne, 2019; Yukl, 1999). Fourie and Höhne (2019) made recommendations to improve this situation by suggesting that conversations surrounding transformational leadership include realistic human failure framed in a way that holistically furthers the understanding of the leader–learner cycle.

Relationship between Learning and Leadership

The connection between learning and leadership has been firmly established in a variety of contexts. Previous research on this relationship has concluded that a profound connection exists between the leader's ability to accept and incorporate new information into their frame of reference and the way that they lead others (Argyris, 2006; Coad & Berry, 1998; Brown & Posner, 2001; Senge, 1990; Trautmann et al., 2006). Senge (1990) discovered that most leaders had "mental models" akin to Mezirow's fixed assumptions that determine how they understand the world. These mental models serve as barriers to learning and require the deployment of five disciplines (personal mastery, shared vision, mental models, team learning, and systems thinking) to effectively lead learning organizations (Senge, 1990).

Similarly, Argyris (2006) found that leaders who had a predisposition to single-loop learning (problem-solving) were resistant to new information. Argyris noted that double-loop learning (critical reflection) was required to perpetuate change within leaders first before change could occur in those that they lead (Argyris, 2006). Meanwhile, Coad & Berry (2009) compared the learning orientation of leaders with transformational leadership qualities and found that leaders who focused on performance goal orientation were less likely to be transformational than those with a learning orientation. Brown & Posner (2001) and Trautmann et al. (2006) had similar findings when examining the relationship between learning and transformational leadership. Due to the significance of these studies to the present study, Brown & Posner (2001) and Trautmann et al. (2006) are discussed separately.

Brown & Posner Study

In 2001, Brown & Posner conducted a quantitative study exploring the relationship between learning and leadership. That research hypothesized that "individuals that were better learners were more engaged in leadership behaviors" (Brown & Posner, 2001, p. 276). Using the LTI and Leadership Practices Inventory, the study looked for a relationship between each of the learning tactics and leadership behaviors.

According to Brown & Posner (2001), high levels of learning versatility correlate with transformational leadership. The learner could overcome previously held fixed assumptions using a variety of learning tactics (Brown & Posner, 2001). For this reason, understanding how the use of learning tactics in pastoral leaders relates to their transformational leadership practices is critical.

Trautmann et al. Study

Trautmann et al., (2006) sought to understand the relationship between learning tactics and transformational leadership. Citing the "dearth of empirical research to document, refine and more closely test the strengths and nuances (p. 281)" of the connection between learning and leadership, Trautmann et al. (2006) used the LTI as the independent variable, and the MLQ as the dependent variable. The research team was interested in ascertaining the relationship between the variables as presented in nonprofit professionals based upon the belief that "an effective leader must be an effective learner" (Trautmann, et al., 2006, p. 270).

Using regression analysis, Trautmann et al. (2006) found that nonprofit leaders who utilized action tactics were predictive of transformational leadership. Meanwhile, neither learning through reflecting nor accessing others was predictive of transformational leadership (Trautmann et al., 2006). As in the Brown & Posner study, Trautman et al. (2006) concluded that the use of multiple learning strategies correlated with transformational leadership. Once again confirming previous findings that better learners make for better leaders (Argyris, 2006; Coad & Berry, 1998; Brown & Posner, 2001; Senge, 1990; Trautmann et al., 2006).

Transformational Learning and Transformational Leadership in the Church

The global Church has developed numerous ideas concerning Christian discipleship (transformational learning) and disciple-making (transformational leadership) in response to Scripture. Christian discipleship is the transformative process by which an individual becomes like Jesus Christ. A review of related literature has legitimized the efficacy of this definition (De Jong, 2012; Hartley, 2007; Lang, 2014; Seifert, 2013). Gorman (2001) suggests that transformational learning is the essence of discipleship and a requirement for transformational leadership. She concludes that transformative teaching can be dangerous for all parties involved

because it challenges assumptions and adult learners resist learning that conflicts with fixed assumptions (Gorman, 2001). Marmon (2010) agreed that teaching transformation could be daunting, and further concluded that critical reflection must be taught so that complete spiritual formation can occur. McEwen (2012) noted that individual transformation cannot occur without the help of others. Further corroborating the necessity of transformational leaders that facilitate the development of learning communities.

Moreover, the decrease in church attendance both in the United States and abroad has resulted in numerous empirical studies into effective discipleship methodologies and programming. Research has indicated that at its core, discipleship programs should be focused on spiritual formation (transformational learning) and multigenerational connections (Astley, 2015; Krau, 2008; Seifert, 2013; Tahaafe-Williams, 2016). Through spiritual formation, individuals experience moments of personal crisis as they encounter the reality of their sinful nature (Astley, 2015; Krau, 2008; Seifert, 2013; Tahaafe-Williams, 2016). Particular emphasis has been placed on the need for evangelization of church members (Hollis, 2019; Lang, 2014; Nel & Moser, 2019). Evangelization is the primary context for transformational learning across generations, meaning that the process of discipleship should be done continuously in ways that incorporate spiritual disciplines, i.e., prayer, Bible study, and self-reflection (Hartley, 2007; Hollis, 2019; Lang, 2014; Nel & Moser, 2019; Tahaafe-Williams, 2016).

Furthermore, studies have found that positive discipleship outcomes are connected to an extension of the pastoral function that is highly relational and seasonal (De Jong, 2012; Hartley, 2007; Seifert, 2013). Moreover, discipleship was found to be most effective when the transition between transformational learner and transformational leader was allowed to remain fluid, understanding that leaders will never exhaust the need for personal transformation (Hollis, 2019;

Krau, 2008; Lang, 2014; Nel & Moser, 2019; Walters, 2011). Failure to recognize this fact has

resulted in church leadership being burned out and overwhelmed, leading to bad behavior by said

leaders (Cathie, 2019; De Jong, 2012; Forrest, 2019). Cathie (2019) asserted,

> We are aware, to varying degrees, of the fact of decline, and we are also aware of certain
> dysfunctional characteristics of church life, but we do not put the two together. This, too,
> reflects how the catastrophic decline of the Church has impacted church members
> collectively and individually, resulting in a blind spot. (p. 279)

Though not explicitly stated in the literature, significant connections between

transformational learning and transformational leadership have been established in the Church.

Using Mezirow's (1978) definition, several studies discovered that transformational learning is

most effective when transformed learners become transformed teachers (Boyd, 2009; Ste-Marie,

2008). Other studies identified that this process can be described as a cycle that starts with

confronting underlying assumptions and competing interests and overcoming them through

critical reflection and questioning. However, it does not necessarily have an endpoint (De Jong,

2012; Forrest, 2019; Hartley, 2007; Nel &Moser, 2019). It was also found that transformational

leaders will inevitably engage in learning at varying points in their leadership journey, indicating

that personal transformation is fluid. This allows for leaders' fallibility, resulting in a more

realistic picture of transformation (Alvesson & Karreman, 2016; Fourie & Höhne, 2019; Nel &

Moser, 2019).

Summary of Related Literature

The related literature pointed to the connection between learning and leadership on many

levels in a variety of domains. Studies have shown that adults have a predetermined,

subconscious way of viewing the world and their place in it that will remain intact absent

intervention. When placed in leadership roles, these fixed assumptions inform their leadership

practices. Therefore, the critical reflection component of transformational learning theory was

found to be essential for worldview reassessment. Absent this crucial step, an individual's fixed assumptions will not change resulting in what has been coined immunity to change. Leaders that are impervious to their fallibility are the most susceptible to immunity to change which can result in cult-like followership. Despite this reality, transformational leadership was found to be the most effective model of leadership for organizations when change is necessary. Brown & Posner (2001) and Trautmann et al., (2006) concluded that leaders with high learning versatility were more transformational in their leadership practices. The findings of these studies were foundational to the current study.

Finally, as the Body of Christ considered the fluidity of learning and leadership through empirical research, it has discovered the cyclical nature of transformational learning and leadership. Meeting the scriptural command to "make disciples" requires the participation of all Christian community members (Ephesians 4:16). Successful discipleship models are highly relational and include periods of concentrated spiritual formation on all levels. Church leaders who fully engage in this process (personally and as leaders) have the highest outcomes of lasting discipleship, which can reverse the trends of decline within the church (Bae, 2001; Hartley, 2007).

<div align="center">**Rationale for Study and Gap in the Literature**</div>

This section outlines the rationale for the study and the gap in the literature. In so doing, the reasoning for the research is clearly defined, and holes within the current literature are discovered. As a result, the contribution to the existing literature will be described.

Rationale for Study

The rationale for this study is two-fold. First, despite clear direction in the Scriptures, the global Church has experienced more than five decades of decline, notwithstanding continual

efforts at evangelism (Burdick, 2018; Nel & Moser, 2019). Secondly, there appears to be a disconnect between the stated desires of the leaders and those of the followers (Bae, 2001; Hartley, 2007).

Burdick (2018) reported that the United States continues the exportation of an Americanized gospel, yet the decline in Europe and other locales abroad does not reflect this reality (Burdick, 2018; Jackson, 2018). How can both sentiments be true? Furthermore, research has demonstrated that this exported American gospel message rooted in individualism and patriotism is still losing steam at home and abroad (Altemeyer, 2004; Brauer, 2018; Burdick, 2018; Jackson, 2018,). Jackson (2018) described the decline in the European church as a reflection of the Western church's inability to embrace ethnic diversity. Similarly, Burdick (2018) affirmed that a nationalist agenda within the American church seriously hinders its ability to see the mission field within its borders. Both ideals contradict Scripture that commands Christians to love their neighbor as thyself (Matthew 22:39), yet they persist.

Krau (2008), Nel & Moser (2019), and Tahaafe-Williams (2016) each asserted that church leaders have relegated discipleship to attractional evangelism while church members continue in isolated, self-centered worship of a personal God not interested in changing the world. This literature review demonstrates a belief that discipleship and disciple-making practices within the evangelical church are absent or woefully insufficient (Hollis, 2019; Lang, 2014; Seifert, 2013; Wallace, 2011). It is widely believed that this absence or insufficiency has led to decreased participation within the church (Hollis, 2019; Lang, 2014; Seifert, 2013; Wallace, 2011). Yet, precedent research has focused on creating discipleship programs or developing interpersonal skills to reverse this trend.

These efforts were understood and appreciated. Yet, a shift in thought was warranted. For example, existing research has failed to identify the reasons for the absence of discipleship efforts that focus on spiritual formation instead of increasing member participation in local church activities or why currently existing programs have not reversed the decrease in those identifying as Christian. Moreover, no research was found that aimed to determine whether there was a universally held belief about transformational learning and leading that was ascribed to but not acted on.

This study looked beyond praxis to consider other cognitive and metacognitive barriers to discipleship and disciple-making within the evangelical church. Specifically, were there unchallenged fixed assumptions in play that can explain the decline of Christianity on a larger scale? In taking on this research, the hope was to reveal a more powerful, comprehensive approach to fulfilling the Great Commission that will produce Christ's intended results.

Gap In the Literature

While completing the search for related literature, several studies surfaced that either examined transformational learning or transformational leadership in the church. To date, there have been no studies undertaken that considered the relationship between transformational learning theory and transformational leadership theory among evangelical lead pastors or within the church setting. This was the aim of the presented study.

Transformational leadership theory has been widely studied within various demographic conditions (Bae, 2001; Dvir et al., 2002; Mutahar et al., 2015; Tims et al, 2011; Trautmann et al., 2006; Zhu & Aktar, 2014). These findings resulted in its continued proliferation in leadership theory as the preferable form of leadership (Bae, 2001; Dvir et al., 2002; Mutahar et al., 2015; Tims et al., 2011; Trautmann et al., 2006; Zhu & Aktar, 2014). This is despite unresolved

empirical inconsistencies relating to pseudo transformational leadership and heroism pointed out by its critics (Alvesson & Karreman, 2016; Fourie & Höhne, 2019; Yukl, 1999).

Likewise, transformational learning theory has been widely studied in a variety of contexts, leading many to engage in transformational teaching methods that require the teacher to serve as a guide, mentor, and helper to students (both adult and youth) to overcome previously held fixed assumptions to open themselves to the opportunity to have a perspective change (Helsing, 2018; Ste-Marie 2008). Moreover, the literature suggested a general understanding that transformational learning requires effort on the part of the learner to overcome hidden competing interests (Helsing, 2018; Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Mezirow, 1991). This perspective change comes with critical reflection and vulnerability, leaving the learner to contend with the reality of their limiting beliefs (Mezirow, 2001).

Normative studies that analyzed Christian discipleship were limited to testing the quality of and need for various discipleship programs, failing to address why proven discipleship programs are not emulated around the globe or why the American church may be experiencing decline. The presented study sought to identify a point of intersection between the two theories in the context of the evangelical church in the United States. There were several studies that served as a backdrop for this discussion. These key studies are discussed next.

Key Studies Within this Study

In the context of this study, the Church has recognized the role of both transformational learning and transformational leadership as it has attempted to answer questions surrounding decline (Hartley, 2007; Seifert, 2013; Walters, 2011). Studies conducted by Loder (1981) and Young (2013) discovered that transformational learning was an essential component of spiritual

formation and discipleship. Additionally, Bae (2001) and Brooks (2018) found transformational leadership to be essential to the health and growth of a church.

While there has been a dearth of research that examined the relationship between transformational learning theory and transformational leadership theory within a church context, Brown & Posner (2001) and Trautmann et al. (2006) both found a positive correlation between the use of a variety of learning strategies that result in transformational learning and transformational leadership whereby serving as a foundation for this research. This study sought to add to the literature that has revealed the nexus between transformational learning and transformational leadership while simultaneously filling gaping holes in the church's understanding of itself. By examining the correlation between transformational learning and leadership among pastoral leaders, the aim was to offer a potential explanation for the problem of church decline.

Profile of the Current Study

According to a 2018 update to the Pew *Religious Landscape Study* of 2014, the percentage of Americans who identify as Christian decreased by 12% to 65%, whereas the number of religiously unaffiliated (atheist, agnostic, or nothing in particular) saw a 9% increase to 26% (Pew Research Center, 2019, para. 2). As one can imagine, church participation has dropped accordingly in both Protestant and Catholic streams (Pew Research Center, 2019, para. 3). Moreover, the Christian-identifying Barna Group found that the number of practicing Christians dropped by 50% in the last 2 decades (Barna, 2020). Evangelicals (those who self-identified as "born again or evangelical" in the 2014 Pew *Religious Landscape Study*) were identified as the largest segment of Protestant worshippers in the United States (35%) but have made few strides in answering the call to discipleship (Pew Research Center, 2015, p. 29). This

was surprising considering evangelical's historical emphasis on conversion experiences, reliance on Scripture, and missional work rather than sacraments and tradition (Wacker, 2000).

The data suggested that the evangelical church has shifted away from its adherence to the Scriptures and abandoned disciple-making. But what happened? Because whole-person transformation is a requisite for Christ's followers (Romans 8:29), it is reasonable to suspect that a breakdown in the transformation process has occurred. Can the decrease in church participation be explained by the nexus between transformational learning experiences and transformational leadership practice frequency of pastoral leaders? Finding this answer presented a compelling study.

Guided by Mezirow's (1978) transformational learning theory and Burns' (1978) and Bass'(1985) transformational leadership theory, this research sought to examine whether the tactics used by evangelical pastors to achieve transformational learning had any relationship to their transformational leadership practice frequency. Precedent literature suggested that Christian discipleship was closely related (if not identical) to the theoretical concept of transformational learning (Loder, 1981). Moreover, transformational leadership theorists have found that transformational leadership is the best approach to produce a valuable, positive, long-lasting change in followers that will result in them becoming leaders themselves (Burns, 1978), making it like Christian disciple-making.

From a theoretical perspective, it has been widely accepted that the leader's leadership style significantly affects their followers' activity (Northouse, 2019). The data gathered from the evangelical pastors was used to understand their discipleship and disciple-making activities. In consideration of the data presented by the Barna Group, Pew Research Center, and ARDA, it was concluded that a study of evangelical pastors offered the best opportunity to understand the

presented phenomenon due to the diversity of pastoral leaders who identify as evangelical. The perplexing nature of church decline experienced in the United States—despite the call to discipleship issued in the Great Commission—warranted a deeper look into the intersection of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning and transformational leadership practices in pastoral leaders. For this reason, a quantitative approach was utilized to determine whether a correlational relationship existed between the two variables.

Statistical analysis using Pearson's r correlational coefficient allowed for the testing of the theories by measuring the degree of relationship that existed between them (Creswell, 2013). In this study, the use of two preexisting instruments was proposed to measure correlation. The LTI measured the learning tactics used to achieve transformational learning. The MLQ measured the frequency of transformational leadership practices in self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the problem identified in the study, describes its purpose, and explains the rationale behind using a quantitative correlational approach. The chapter also offers details about the research population, the sampling methods utilized to generalize to that population, and the instrumentation and analysis procedures used in the study. There was a conscientious effort made to outline this study to allow for easy replication in other settings and to add to and fill gaps in the literature on this topic.

<div align="center">Research Design Synopsis</div>

The Problem

In one of the last statements made to His disciples, Jesus issued a specific directive to replicate themselves by making disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20). As the Book of Acts recorded, this command was taken seriously and enacted with vigor. More than 20 centuries later, the church is in decline in the West. This decline is particularly evident in the United States, where the number of those who self-identify as Christian dropped by 12% to only 65% in the last decade (Pew Research Center, 2019, para. 1). Moreover, it appears that those who self-identified as "born again or evangelical" in the 2014 Pew *Religious Landscape Study* were still identified as the largest segment of Protestant worshippers (35%) in the United States but made few strides in answering the call to discipleship (Pew Research Center, 2015, p. 29). In the 2019 update to the *Religious Landscape Study*, it was discovered that those who self-identify as atheist, agnostic, or have no religious affiliation increased by 9% to 26% in the same period (Pew Research Center, 2019, para. 2). The shift in numbers across the span of a decade raised significant questions about the relationship between beliefs, values, and attitudes, otherwise

known as a frame of reference, towards discipleship, among all Protestant pastors, but particularly evangelical pastors due to their self-proclaimed strict adherence to the Scriptures.

Brown & Posner (2001) and Trautmann et al. (2006) discovered that high levels of learning versatility correlated with transformational leadership. The learner could overcome previously held fixed assumptions using a variety of learning tactics (Brown & Posner, 2001). Because transformational leadership has been described as the leadership style most likely to make other leaders, the disconnect between transformational learning and transformational leadership could explain the decline in the number of Americans identifying as Christian. This study aimed to examine if the use of learning tactics to achieve transformational learning affected the transformational leadership practices of evangelical pastors.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to determine whether a relationship existed between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning and the transformational leadership practice frequency of self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio. This study was guided by Mezirow & Marsick's (1978) transformative learning theory and Burns' (1978) and Bass' (1985) transformational leadership theory.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research questions and hypotheses relating to this research were as follows:

Research Questions

RQ 1. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of idealized influence behaviors practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 2. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the

frequency of idealized influence attributes practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 3. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of inspirational motivation practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 4. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of intellectual stimulation practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 5. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of individual consideration practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 6. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of transformational leadership practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

Hypotheses

$H_01.$ There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of idealized influence behaviors practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ).

$H_02.$ There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of idealized influence actions practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ).

$H_03.$ There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of inspirational motivation practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ).

$H_04.$ There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of intellectual stimulation practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ).

$H_05.$ There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the

frequency of individual consideration practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ).

H_06. There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of transformational leadership practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ).

Research Design and Methodology

The perplexing nature of church decline experienced in the United States—despite the call to discipleship issued in the Great Commission—warranted a deeper look into the intersection of transformational learning experiences and transformational leadership practice frequency in pastoral leaders. Specifically, how did using learning tactics to acquire new information affect one's leadership practices? For this reason, a quantitative approach was utilized to determine whether a correlational relationship existed between the two variables.

This research sought an unbiased understanding of the possible relationship between the two phenomena from a quantifiable perspective (Creswell, 2013; Nettleton, 2014). Therefore, a correlational study was determined to provide the best and most straightforward approach to answer questions concerning the relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning and the frequency of transformational leadership (Creswell, 2013; Nettleton, 2014). Statistical analysis provided through Pearson's correlational coefficient allowed the theories to be tested by measuring their relationship (Creswell, 2013; Nettleton, 2014).

In this study, two preexisting instruments were used to examine correlation. The LTI measured the use of learning tactics (independent variable) that achieve transformational learning during the process of discipleship of self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio. At the same time, the MLQ measured the frequency of transformational leadership practiced by these same pastors (dependent variable).

Quantitative data was gathered from self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio using a combined MLQ and LTI survey sent to the entire sample population. The 84-question survey was administered through the Mindgarden.com Transform online platform to establish a baseline for the use of learning tactics and transformational leadership frequency among self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio. Each instrument was scored separately, as if given independently, to avoid disrupting established validity and reliability testing.

The data was analyzed using scatter plots to determine whether transformational learning tactics have impacted the presence of transformational leadership practices of self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio. Because a linear relationship was evident on the scatterplot, Pearson's correlational coefficient was used to determine the degree and direction of correlation.

Population

The target population for this study was evangelical pastors in the United States who serve as their congregations' primary spiritual leaders. According to the ARDA's most recent study, the 2010 *Religious Congregations and Research Study*, there were 191,111 Evangelical congregations in the United States led by a pastoral leader (ARDA, 2012). The ARDA (2012) described evangelical Protestant congregations as churches emphasizing conversion and evangelism, holding biblical authority in high regard, and seeking more separation from the broader culture. Evangelical Protestants are also seen as "more theological and socially conservative" (ARDA, 2012, p. 5). As of 2010, over 13,000 evangelical congregations were recorded in Ohio (ARDA, 2012). The pandemic of 2020 has more than likely changed this number. However, no new data was available. An update to the ARDA's *Religious Congregations Research Study* is underway, yet the update was not available before the completion of this study.

To make this study more feasible, the focus of this study was narrowed to 819 self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio. The sample population was constructed using a list of public and private records of a variety of denominational and nondenominational congregations in both urban and rural parts of Ohio. For this research, study participants agreed that the provided definition of evangelical adequately reflected their understanding of self before being included as a participant.

Sampling Procedures

Non-random convenience sampling was used to administer the LTI and MLQ to the sample population of self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio. This research sought to determine whether a relationship existed between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning and the frequency of transformational leadership practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio. A convenience sample design indicated that the most convenient population was used due to ease of access to the list of self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio (Creswell, 2013). The G *Power sample size calculator determined that 67 respondents were necessary to satisfy the 80% confidence rate with a confidence interval of five. Assuming a response rate of 33%, surveys were circulated to the entire sample population.

Limits of Generalization

Because this study examined the experiences and practices of self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, the study is only generalizable to evangelical pastors in Ohio. Therefore, this study is not directly applicable to non-evangelical pastors, pastoral leaders who are subordinate to another pastor within the same congregation, or pastors outside of Ohio.

Ethical Considerations

This study examined the use of learning tactics and transformational leadership practices in evangelical pastoral leaders in Ohio. Considering the sensitive nature of the collected data, ministry names were not used to gather the data. All participants were assigned an identifying numerical value to create anonymity and ensure confidentiality. The researcher was the only individual with access to the data. Collected data will be stored digitally on a USB for five years. After five years, the data will be destroyed. Only consenting adults (those 18 or older) were permitted to participate in the study. All aspects of this study were conducted upon the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Liberty University. Moreover, an informed consent statement was provided to all participants outlining anonymity and confidentiality expectations and participants' ability to opt out of completing the study.

Instrumentation

This study sought to identify a relationship between the use of learning tactics (independent variable) that achieve transformational learning and the frequency of transformational leadership (dependent variable) practiced. To answer RQs 1–6, quantitative data was collected from self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio using the preexisting LTI and MLQ in a combined survey of 84 questions. Although the MLQ is readily available for purchase, thus including permission upon purchase (see Appendix A), permission was sought to use the LTI in this study (see Appendix B).

The LTI was chosen for this study because it was explicitly designed to measure the tactics used to result in transformational learning (Dalton et al., 1999). According to Mezirow and Marsick (1978), action must be taken to overcome the fixed assumptions associated with problematic frames of reference. The use of learning tactics meets this requirement. Moreover,

the LTI had been used to effectively determine the presence of transformational learning activities and transformational leadership practices in learners in prior empirical research (Brown & Posner, 2001; Trautmann et al., 2006). Likewise, the MLQ was chosen as the instrument to measure the presence of transformational leadership because Bass (1985) developed it to precisely align with the four Is of transformative leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. The MLQ was later updated to separate the idealized influence scale into two separate scales: idealized influence actions and idealized influence behaviors (Avolio et al., 1999).

The LTI consisted of 32 closed-ended Likert-scale questions, which asked respondents to rate transformational learning activities on a 5-point scale where (1) indicated "I have almost never used this approach" and (5) indicated "I have almost always used this approach" (Dalton et al., 1999). The LTI has four scales, each representing a different learning tactic: (a) action (e.g., initiative-taking in my approach, preferring to learn by trial and error), (b) thinking (e.g., reading articles or books or going online to gain knowledge and background, (c) feeling (e.g., confronting myself on what I am worrying about) and (d) accessing others (e.g., bouncing my hopes and fears off someone I trust; Dalton et al., 1999). It took approximately 15 minutes to complete this survey tool (Dalton et al., 1999). Pastoral leaders immediately began the MLQ upon completing the LTI. The MLQ contained 45 closed-ended Likert-scale questions that asked respondents to describe their transformational leadership practices on a 5-point scale, with unsure being (0) and frequently, if not always, being (5) (Avolio et al., 1999). The MLQ had 5 scales, each representing transformational leadership practices: (a) idealized influence actions (b) idealized influence behaviors (c) inspirational motivation (d) intellectual stimulation (e) individual consideration. The survey took approximately 15 minutes (Avolio et al., 1999).

Validity

Two studies were conducted to establish construct validity for the LTI (Dalton et al.,

1999). The first study was conducted from self-report data using three scales from Prospector.

The second study used boss ratings from Prospector and self-report ratings from the LTI (Dalton

et al., 1999). In both studies, the instrument had the appropriate levels of convergent and

discriminant validity, making it an instrument suitable for use (Dalton et al., 1999). Dalton et al.

(1999) wrote,

> The tactics are to some extent intercorrelated, and this is reflected in the zero-order
> correlation, and the Multiple R. The beta weight removes the influence of the
> intercorrelation of one tactic with the others and shows the relationship of each tactic
> with each criterion measure on the Prospector learning scale. (p. 8)

Validity for MLQ (5X), the latest version, was established using an expert panel of six

leading scholars who made additions and deletions to the instrument and through confirmatory

factor analysis (Avolio et al., 1999). Antonakis et al. (2003) wrote,

> According to Avolio et al. (1999), the MLQ (Form 5X) scales have, on average, exhibited
> high internal consistency and factor loadings. Similar validation results confirming the
> validity of the MLQ (Form 5X) have been reported by Bass and Avolio (1997) using
> another large sample of pooled data (N=1490). (p. 266)

Reliability

The LTI addressed reliability through data collection from participants in Center for

Creative Leadership-sponsored courses for 2 years and a military officer training school over 1

year (Dalton et al., 1999). Dalton et al. (1999) wrote,

> Theory and item-to-total scores were used to determine which items provided the best fit
> and coverage of the domains. An item-to-total score correlates an item with the total scale
> and indicates the degree to which each item belongs with the rest of the items on the
> scale. Items were retained if the item-to-total correlation was .35 or greater. Thirty-two
> items, eight items per scale, were retained. (p. 8)

All scales had a Cronbach alpha score of .70 or higher (Dalton et al., 1999).

Reliability for the MLQ was addressed using three independent approaches (Rowold, 2005). Cronbach's Alpha, the interrater agreement, and test-retest reliability were calculated (Rowold, 2005). Rowold (2005) wrote:

> First, internal consistency was calculated for each of the MLQ-5X subscales. As a standard, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for each subscale of the MLQ-5X (Cortina, 1993). In sum, the internal consistencies of the MLQ-5X scales, as indicated by Cronbach's Alpha, are good. Since the nine leadership scales consist of only four indicators, the internal consistencies can be categorized as very good (Cortina, 1993). (p. 15)

Research Procedures

After receiving approval from the IRB of Liberty University (Appendix C) an email (Appendix D) was sent to 819 self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio that included a description of the study, informed consent (Appendix E), and a link to the survey instrument. The email outlined the benefits of study participation and described anonymity and confidentiality protocols to decrease participation apprehension and self-reporting bias. The email also explained the study population as evangelical pastors with active congregations in Ohio. Participants were asked to confirm their agreement that they were evangelical pastors by the definition previously described in this study. The survey included only those who affirmed that they meet the definition of an evangelical pastor. Participants were also required to confirm that they were 18 years of age or older and the lead pastor of a church in Ohio. No other criteria were necessary for participation. The email also described the study platform, the Transform platform associated with Mindgarden.com. As a part of the informed consent, participants were notified that participation in the survey was voluntary. They could choose to leave the study at any time for any reason. Two weeks after the initial contact with the sample population, a follow-up email was sent reminding participants of the request for participation (See Appendix F). The follow-up email process was repeated multiple times over 60 days.

Data Analysis and Statistical Procedures

This study sought to determine whether a relationship existed between transformational learning and transformational leadership. The RQs asked whether learning tactics used to achieve transformational learning were connected with a pastoral leader's transformational leadership practice frequency, making Pearson's correlational coefficient the most appropriate statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

Before the RQs could be answered, a linear relationship was established between the independent variable (use of learning tactics) and dependent variable (transformational leadership practice) using a scatter plot. Each pastor was given a composite score between 0–4 on the LTI and 1–5 on the MLQ. These scores were graphed on the scatterplot to determine whether a linear relationship could be established. Because a linear relationship was evident the correlational coefficient (Pearson's r) was run to determine the direction and degree of correlation between the use of learning tactics and each transformational leadership practice frequency, answering each RQ.

Because this study simulated parts of Brown & Posner's (2001) study, a variety index was computed for the LTI. The variety index, which was named in this study "LTI composite score" indicated that the respondent used multiple learning tactics to achieve transformational learning (Brown & Posner, 2001). This was valuable information in that those who used more than one learning tactic are considered better learners or learners who engage in transformational learning (Mezirow, 1991). According to Brown & Posner (2001),

> A variety index is computed by adding up how many tactics the respondent reports using, where the respondent's score was above the median for the sample. Scores can range from zero to four; thus, a score of four means the respondent scored above the median in all four learning tactics and is a highly versatile learner. (p. 276)

Statistical Procedures

Because the use of learning tactics and transformational leadership practices met the assumptions of interval measurement, linearity, normality, related pairs, and no outliers, as evidenced by the scatterplot the correlation coefficient known as Pearson r was utilized for data analysis (Nettleton, 2014) to answer RQs 1–6. In this study, Pearson r measured the degree of relationship between the use of learning tactics and each transformational leadership practice, including the strength and direction of that relationship. When using Pearson r, +1 indicates a strong positive relationship (when one variable goes up, the other goes up), and -1 indicates a robust negative relationship (when one variable goes up, the other goes down; Nettleton, 2014). Zero indicated no correlational relationship (Nettleton, 2014).

Chapter Summary

This study sought to determine whether a relationship existed between transformational learning and transformational leadership among evangelical pastors. The aim was to offer one possible explanation for the phenomenon of American church participation decline as presented by data from the Pew Research Center and the Barna Group (Pew Research Center, 2019; Barna, 2020). Based upon evangelicalism's commitment to the authority of Scripture and the conversion experience, evangelical pastors were deemed to offer the greatest likelihood of action relating to the Great Commission found in Mathew 28:19-20. For this reason, they were chosen as the sample population.

Related literature found that high levels of learning versatility correlated with transformational leadership suggesting that better learners overcome previously held fixed assumptions using a variety of learning tactics (Brown & Posner, 2001; Trautmann et al., 2006). Therefore, it was postulated that low levels of learning versatility impeded transformational

learning, whereby decreasing transformational leadership practice frequency within evangelical pastors which hindered disciple-making tendencies in congregants. This study chose a quantitative approach to examine the phenomenon using the LTI and MLQ as its primary instruments.

As with all correlational studies, linearity was first tested using scatterplots. Because a linear relationship was evident, the data was analyzed using the correlational coefficient (Pearson's r) to determine the direction and degree of the correlational relationship. In Chapter Four, the research findings are presented and discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

This correlational quantitative research aimed to determine whether a relationship existed between learning tactics that result in transformational learning and transformational leadership. This study utilized the LTI and MLQ to collect data relating to the transformational learning and transformational leadership practices of self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio. After presenting the RQs and hypotheses that guided the study, this chapter details the compilation protocols and statistical measures used to analyze the research data. Next, the data analysis and findings are presented separately by RQ. Finally, an evaluation of the research design is offered.

Research Questions

RQ 1. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of idealized influence behaviors practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 2. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of idealized influence attributes practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 3. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of inspirational motivation practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 4. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of intellectual stimulation practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 5. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of individual consideration practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 6. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the

frequency of transformational leadership practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

Hypotheses

$H_01.$ There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of idealized influence behaviors practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ).

$H_02.$ There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of idealized influence attributes practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ).

$H_03.$ There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of inspirational motivation practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ.

$H_04.$ There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of intellectual stimulation practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ).

$H_05.$ There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of individual consideration practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ).

$H_06.$ There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of transformational leadership practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ).

Compilation Protocol and Measures

The raw data was compiled in multiple steps. First, each participant was given a number between 1–67. Next, the statistical mean (μ) was calculated for each participant in each of the four LTI subcategories: action tactic, thinking tactic, feeling tactic, and accessing others tactic to arrive at a participant score for each category. Then the participant LTI composite score was calculated by finding the statistical mean (μ) of the combined categorical scores. A composite score of 3 indicated a moderate level of learning tactic use, whereas a composite score of 4 or

more indicated that the participant was a highly versatile learner. Composite scores lower than 3, indicated low levels of learning versatility, suggesting that the learner relied heavily on one of the LTI tactic categories to learn.

Equivalent steps were undertaken to determine each of the MLQ 5-I subcategory scores and MLQ 5-I composite scores. The statistical mean (μ) was calculated for each participant in each of the five MLQ subcategories: idealized influence behaviors, idealized influence actions, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Next, the participant MLQ composite score was calculated by finding the statistical mean (μ) of combined subcategory scores. A composite score of 3 or more indicated a high frequency of transformational leadership practices. A composite score lower than 3 indicated a low frequency of transformational leadership practices.

From there, linearity was verified using scatter plot analysis. Next, Pearson correlation analysis was used to determine whether a correlational relationship existed between the two variables (LTI and MLQ). Pearson correlation was chosen because it was the most suitable analysis to determine the relationship between two scale variables (Nettles, 2014). Findings between 0 and +1 indicated a positive correlation between the two variables, meaning that as one variable increased, the other variable increased. Findings between -1 and 0 indicated a negative correlation between the two variables, meaning that as one variable increased, the other variable decreased. The strength of the relationship was also determined based on coefficient size.

Demographic and Sample Data

The sample group was comprised of 67 self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in the state of Ohio who were at least 18 years of age. For this study, evangelical was defined as the segment of the American church (both Catholics and Protestants) that emphasizes conversion

experiences, reliance on Scripture, and missional work rather than sacraments and tradition (ARDA, 2012). This definition is widely used to describe the evangelical population. Pastoral participants were recruited through email and during a series of statewide pastoral gatherings. Survey participation was anonymous. To avoid misguided inferences and/or bias, additional demographic data was intentionally not captured. It was concluded that such data would have no bearing on the findings of the study.

Data Analysis and Findings

To determine the reliability of the survey instruments, a Cronbach alpha analysis was run on both the LTI and MLQ using the Intellectus Software. Cronbach alpha analysis is regularly used to ensure that a scale consistently measures the same characteristic (Frost, n.d.). A Cronbach alpha coefficient was calculated for the LTI scale, consisting of LTI_Action, LTI_Thinking, LTI_Feeling, and LTI_Accessing_Others. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was evaluated using the guidelines suggested by George and Mallery (2018), where "> .9 excellent, > .8 good, > .7 acceptable, > .6 questionable, > .5 poor, and ≤ .5 unacceptable" (p. 236). Likewise, a Cronbach alpha coefficient was calculated for the MLQ scale, consisting of MLQ_Idealized_Attributes, MLQ_Idealized_Behavior, MLQ_Inspirational_Motivation, MLQ_Intellectual_Stimulation, and MLQ_Individual_Consideration. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was also evaluated using the same guidelines suggested above by George and Mallery.

Cronbach Alpha Results

The subcategories for the LTI had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .71, indicating acceptable reliability. LTI_Thinking was negatively correlated with the overall composite score; therefore, it was automatically reverse-coded by Intellectus Software to improve reliability. "Reverse coding is completed when an item is negatively worded so that a high value indicates

the same type of response on every item" (Grace-Martin, n.d.). Table 4 presents the results of the reliability analysis for the LTI. Additionally, the subcategories for MLQ had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .87, also indicating good reliability. Table 5 presents the results of the reliability analysis for the MLQ.

Table 4

Reliability Table for LTI Cronbach Alpha

Scale	No. of items	A	Lower bound	Upper bound
LTI	4	.71	.61	.81

Note. The lower and upper bounds of Cronbach's α were calculated using a 95.00% confidence interval. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory.

Table 5

Reliability Table for MLQ Cronbach Alpha

Scale	No. of items	α	Lower bound	Upper bound
Cronbach alpha for MLQ	5	.87	.83	.91

Note. The lower and upper bounds of Cronbach's α were calculated using a 95.00% confidence interval. MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

LTI Summary Statistics

Summary statistics were calculated for LTI_Action, LTI_Thinking, LTI_Feeling, LTI_Accessing_Others, and LTI_Composite using the Intellectus Software. According to Westfall and Henning (2013),

> when the skewness is greater than 2 in absolute value, the variable is considered to be asymmetrical about its mean. When the kurtosis is greater than or equal to 3, then the variable's distribution is markedly different from a normal distribution in its tendency to produce outliers. (p. 248)

The sample population had a statistical mean of $\mu=3.34$ It should be noted that three of the five subcategories had a standard deviation score nearly one whole point away from the statistical

mean, indicating that answers were widely dispersed in the sample. In looking at the LTI

composite breakdown, A composite score of 3 indicated a moderate level of learning versatility,

whereas a composite score of 4 or more indicated that the participant was a highly versatile

learner. A majority of the sample (67%) had a moderate level of learning versatility which was

in keeping with Dalton et al.'s (1999) findings regarding learning tactic use. The LTI summary

statistics can be found in Table 6. LTI composite score analysis for the research sample is found

in Table 7.

Table 6

LTI Summary Statistics Table for Interval and Ratio Variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	*n*	SE_M	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis
LTI_Action	3.26	0.73	67	0.09	1.50	4.80	-0.23	-0.52
LTI_Thinking	3.25	0.73	67	0.09	1.10	5.00	-0.44	0.44
LTI_Feeling	3.74	0.65	67	0.08	2.10	4.80	-0.34	-0.52
LTI_Accessing_Others	3.13	0.74	67	0.09	1.50	4.90	-0.05	-0.47
LTI_Composite	3.34	0.47	67	0.06	2.30	4.30	0.03	-0.65

Note. '-' indicates the statistic is undefined due to constant data or insufficient sample size. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory.

Table 7

Participant LTI Composite Score Breakdown

LTI composite score	n	%
Less than 3	15	22
Greater than 3 but less than 4	45	67
Greater than or equal to 4	7	10
	67	100

Note. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory.

MLQ Summary Statistics

Summary statistics were calculated for MLQ_Idealized_Attributes,

MLQ_Idealized_Behavior, MLQ_Inspirational_Motivation, MLQ_Intellectual_Stimulation,

MLQ_Individual_Consideration, and MLQ_5_I_Composite using the Intellectus Software.

Skewness and Kurtosis are reported in Table 8 according to the standards prescribed by Westfall

and Henning (2013). It is important to note that none of the MLQ subcategories had a statistical

mean (μ) that cleared three. Moreover, the standard deviation was high in four of the five

subcategories indicating that the scores were widely distributed in the sample.

Relating to the MLQ composite score breakdown, a composite score of 3 or more

indicated a high frequency of transformational leadership practice. A composite score lower than

3 indicated low frequency of transformational leadership practices. The data showed that a

majority (61%) of the pastors demonstrated a low frequency of transformational leadership use.

Meanwhile, only 39% of the sample population practiced transformational leadership frequently.

The MLQ summary statistics can also be found in Table 8. MLQ composite score analysis for the

research sample is found in Table 9.

Table 8

MLQ Summary Statistics Table for Interval and Ratio Variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	*n*	SE_M	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis
MLQ_Idealized_Attributes	2.61	0.82	67	0.10	1.00	4.00	-0.14	-0.87
MLQ_Idealized_Behavior	2.91	0.56	67	0.07	1.30	4.00	-0.45	-0.16
MLQ_Inspirational_Motivation	2.76	0.85	67	0.10	1.00	4.00	-0.12	-1.12
MLQ_Intellectual_Stimulation	2.06	1.00	67	0.12	0.30	4.00	0.12	-0.92
MLQ_Individual_Consideration	2.54	0.94	67	0.11	0.80	4.00	0.03	-1.20
MLQ_5_I_Composite	2.63	0.73	67	0.09	1.10	4.00	0.05	-1.07

Note. '-' indicates the statistic is undefined due to constant data or insufficient sample size.

MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

Table 9

Participant MLQ Composite Score Breakdown

MLQ composite score	n	%
Less than 3	41	61
Greater than 3 but less than 4	25	37
Greater than or equal to 4	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
	67	100

Note. MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

LTI & MLQ Composite Summary Statistics

Summary statistics were calculated for LTI_Composite and MLQ_5_I_Composite. The

summary statistics can be found in Table 10.

Table 10

Composite Summary Statistics Table for Interval and Ratio Variables

Variable	M	SD	n	SE_M	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis
LTI_Composite	3.34	0.47	67	0.06	2.30	4.30	0.03	-0.65
MLQ_5_I_Composite	2.63	0.73	67	0.09	1.10	4.00	0.05	-1.07

Note. '-' indicates the statistic is undefined due to constant data or insufficient sample size. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory; MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

Research Questions

Research questions one through five sought to understand the relationship between the

use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning and the frequency of

transformational leadership practice by subcategory. Research question six served as a summary

question that combined each transformational leadership subcategory into one composite score.

These questions aimed to explore a possible explanation for the decline of Christianity being

experienced in the United States. For this study, transformational learning was associated with

the pastoral leader's discipleship, whereas transformational leadership was associated with the pastoral leader's disciple-making activities.

Research Question One

This research question asked whether a relationship existed between the use of learning tactics that result in transformational learning and the frequency of transformational leadership subcategory idealized influence behavior. Idealized influence behavior is the extent to which "a sense of mission and values, as well as acting upon these values" (Rowold, 2005, p. 5) is evident in the pastoral leader. To answer this question, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted between the variable LTI_Composite score and the variable MLQ_Idealized_Behavior. Cohen's standard was used to evaluate the strength of the relationship; therefore, coefficients between .10 and .29 represent a small effect size, coefficients between .30 and .49 represent a moderate effect size, and coefficients above .50 indicate a large effect size (Cohen, 1988).

To substantiate the use of the Pearson coefficient, linearity is assumed (Conover & Iman, 1981). Any curvature among the points on the scatterplot between any pair of variables violates this assumption (Conover & Iman, 1981). Figure 1 presents the scatterplot of the correlation. A regression line was added to assist the interpretation.

Figure 1

Scatterplots with the Regression Line Added for LTI_Composite and MLQ_Idealized_Behavior
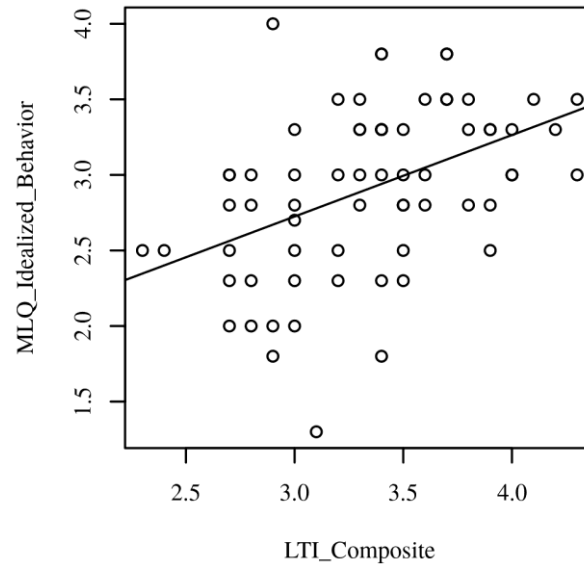
The result of the correlation was examined based on an alpha value of .05 (Conover &

Iman, 1981). A significant positive correlation was observed between LTI_Composite and

MLQ_Idealized_Behavior, with a correlation of .45, indicating a moderate effect size ($p < .001$,

95.00% CI = [.23, .62]; Cohen, 1988). This suggested that as the LTI_Composite score increased,

the MLQ_Idealized_Behavior score also tended to increase. Tables 11 and 12 present the results

of the correlation. Because a positive correlation was found between the use of learning tactics

and idealized behavior, the null hypothesis H_01 was found to be false:

H_01. There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the level of idealized influence behaviors practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). **FALSE**

Table 11

Pearson Correlation Matrix Between LTI_Composite and MLQ_Idealized_Behavior

Variable	1	2
1. LTI_Composite	-	
2. MLQ_Idealized_Behavior	.45[*]	-

Note. *p. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory; MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

Table 12

Pearson Correlation Results Between LTI_Composite and MLQ_Idealized_Behavior

Combination	r	95.00% CI	n	p
LTI_Composite-MLQ_Idealized_Behavior	.45	[.23, .62]	67	< .001

Note. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory.

Research Question Two

Research question two asked whether a relationship existed between the use of learning tactics that result in transformational learning and the frequency of transformational leadership subcategory idealized influence attributes. Idealized influence attributes refer to the "charisma of the leader" (Rowold, 2005, p. 5). To answer the question, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted between LTI_Composite scores and MLQ_Idealized_Behavior. Cohen's standard was used to evaluate the strength of the relationship; therefore, coefficients between .10 and .29 represent a small effect size, coefficients between .30 and .49 represent a moderate effect size, and coefficients above .50 indicate a large effect size (Cohen, 1988).

To substantiate the use of the Pearson coefficient, linearity is assumed (Conover & Iman, 1981). Any curvature among the points on the scatterplot between any pair of variables violates this assumption (Conover & Iman, 1981). Figure 2 presents the scatterplot of the correlation. A regression line was added to assist the interpretation.

Figure 2

Scatterplots with the Regression Line Added for LTI_Composite and MLQ_Idealized_Attributes
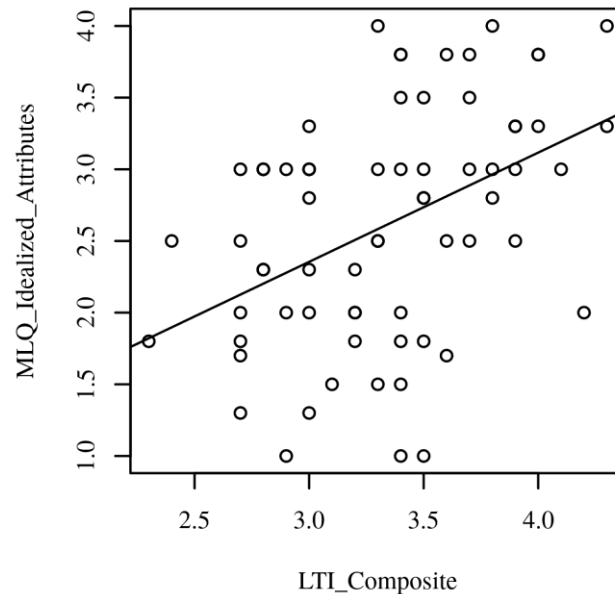
The result of the correlation was examined based on an alpha value of .05 (Conover &

Iman, 1981). A significant positive correlation was observed between LTI_Composite and

MLQ_Idealized_Attributes, with a correlation of .44, indicating a moderate effect size ($p < .001$,

95.00% CI = [.22, .61]; Cohen, 1988). This suggests that as LTI_Composite scores increased,

MLQ_Idealized_Attributes tended to increase. Tables 13 and 14 present the results of the

correlation. Because a positive correlation was found between the use of learning tactics and

idealized attributes, the null hypothesis H_02 was found to be false:

H_02. There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve
transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the level of
idealized influence attributes practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio as
measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). **FALSE**

Table 13

Pearson Correlation Matrix Between LTI_Composite and MLQ_Idealized_Attributes

Variable	1	2
1. LTI_Composite	-	
2. MLQ_Idealized_Attributes	.44[*]	-

Note. *p. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory; MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

Table 14

Pearson Correlation Results Between LTI_Composite and MLQ_Idealized_Attributes

Combination	r	95.00% CI	n	p
LTI_Composite-MLQ_Idealized_Attributes	.44	[.22, .61]	67	< .001

Note. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory.

Research Question Three

The research question asked whether a relationship existed between the use of learning tactics that result in transformational learning and the frequency of transformational leadership subcategory inspirational motivation. Inspirational motivation is the leader's ability to convey and represent a vision to be shared by their followers (Rowold, 2005). To answer the question, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted between LTI_Composite and MLQ_Inspirational_Motivation. Cohen's standard was used to evaluate the strength of the relationship, where coefficients between .10 and .29 represent a small effect size, coefficients between .30 and .49 represent a moderate effect size, and coefficients above .50 indicate a large effect size (Cohen, 1988).

To substantiate the use of the Pearson coefficient, linearity is assumed (Conover & Iman, 1981). Any curvature among the points on the scatterplot between any pair of variables violates

this assumption (Conover & Iman, 1981). Figure 3 presents the scatterplot of the correlation. A

regression line was added to assist the interpretation.

Figure 3

Scatterplots with the Regression Line Added for LTI_Composite and
MLQ_Inspirational_Motivation
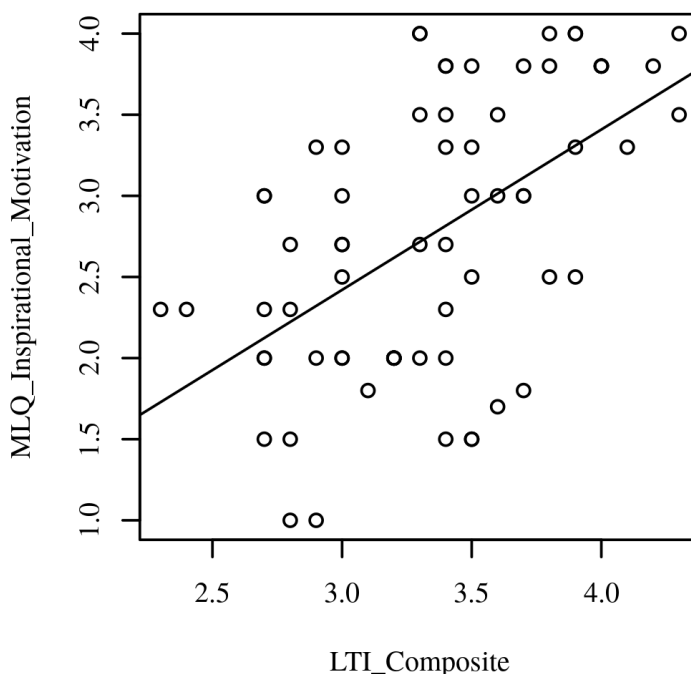
The result of the correlation was examined based on an alpha value of .05 (Conover &

Iman, 1981). A significant positive correlation was observed between LTI_Composite and

MLQ_Inspirational_Motivation, with a correlation of .54, indicating a large effect size ($p < .001$,

95.00% CI = [.35, .69]). This suggests that as LTI_Composite increased,

MLQ_Inspirational_Motivation tended to increase. Tables 15 and 16 present the results of the

correlation. Because a positive correlation was found between the use of learning tactics and

inspirational motivation, the null hypothesis H_03 was found to be false:

H_03. There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve
transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the level of

inspirational motivation practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). **FALSE**

Table 15

Pearson Correlation Matrix Between LTI_Composite and MLQ_Inspirational_Motivation

Variable	1	2
1. LTI_Composite	-	
2. MLQ_Inspirational_Motivation	.54[*]	-

*Note. *p*. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory; MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

Table 16

Pearson Correlation Results Between LTI_Composite and MLQ_Inspirational_Motivation

Combination	r	95.00% CI	n	p
LTI_Composite-MLQ_Inspirational_Motivation	.54	[.35, .69]	67	< .001

Note. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory.

Research Question Four

Research question four asked whether a relationship existed between the use of learning tactics that result in transformational learning and the frequency of transformational leadership subcategory intellectual stimulation. According to Rowold (2005), intellectual stimulation "includes challenging the assumptions of followers' beliefs, their analysis of problems they face, and solutions they generate" (p. 5).

To answer question four, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted between LTI_Composite and MLQ_Intellectual_Stimulation. Cohen's standard was used to evaluate the strength of the relationship, where coefficients between .10 and .29 represent a small effect size, coefficients between .30 and .49 represent a moderate effect size, and coefficients above .50 indicate a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). To substantiate the use of the Pearson coefficient, linearity is assumed (Conover & Iman, 1981). Any curvature among the points on the scatterplot

between any pair of variables violates this assumption (Conover & Iman, 1981). Figure 4

presents the scatterplot of the correlation. A regression line was added to assist the interpretation.

Figure 4

*Scatterplots with the Regression Line Added for LTI_Composite and
MLQ_Intellectual_Stimulation*
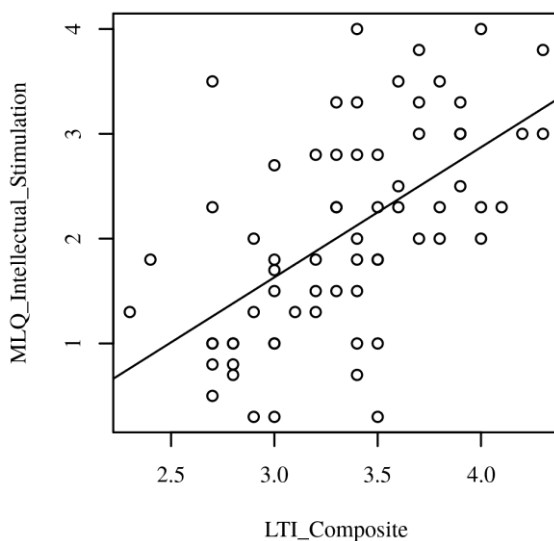
The result of the correlation was examined based on an alpha value of .05 (Conover &

Iman, 1981). A significant positive correlation was observed between LTI_Composite and

MLQ_Intellectual_Stimulation, with a correlation of .58, indicating a large effect size ($p < .001$,

95.00% CI = [.40, .72]; Cohen, 1988). This suggested that as LTI_Composite increased,

MLQ_Intellectual_Stimulation tended to increase. Tables 17 and 18 present the results of the

correlation. Because a positive correlation was found between the use of learning tactics and

intellectual stimulation, null hypothesis H_04 was found to be false:

H_04. There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the level of intellectual stimulation practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). **FALSE**

Table 17

Pearson Correlation Matrix Between LTI_Composite and MLQ_Intellectual_Stimulation

Variable	1	2
1. LTI_Composite	-	
2. MLQ_Intellectual_Stimulation	.58[*]	-

Note. *p. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory; MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

Table 18

Pearson Correlation Results Between LTI_Composite and MLQ_Intellectual_Stimulation

Combination	r	95.00% CI	n	p
LTI_Composite-MLQ_Intellectual_Stimulation	.58	[.40, .72]	67	< .001

Note. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory; MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

Research Question Five

Research question five asked whether a relationship existed between the use of learning tactics that result in transformational learning and the frequency of transformational leadership subcategory individual consideration. Individual consideration includes "considering the individual needs of followers and developing their individual strengths" (Rowold, 2005, p. 5). To substantiate the use of the Pearson coefficient, linearity is assumed (Conover & Iman, 1981). Any curvature among the points on the scatterplot between any pair of variables violates this assumption (Conover & Iman, 1981). Figure 5 presents the scatterplot of the correlation. A regression line was added to assist the interpretation.

Figure 5

Scatterplots with the Regression Line Added for LTI_Composite and

MLQ_Individual_Consideration
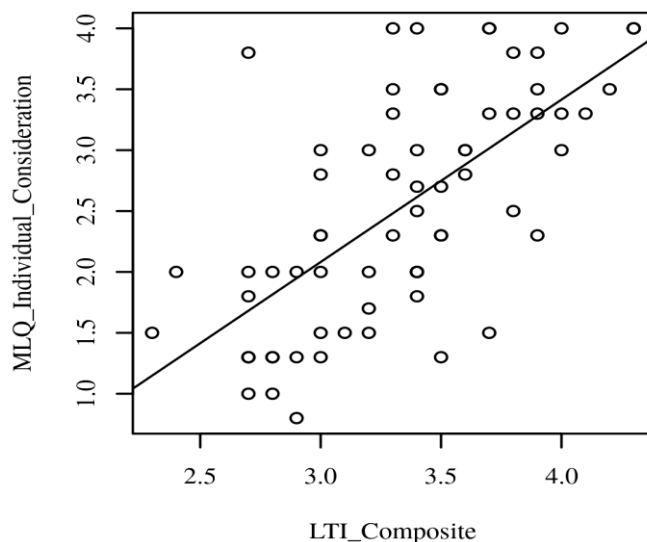
The result of the correlation was examined based on an alpha value of .05 (Conover &

Iman, 1981). A significant positive correlation was observed between LTI_Composite and

MLQ_Individual_Consideration, with a correlation of .66, indicating a large effect size ($p < .001$,

95.00% CI = [.50, .78]; Cohen, 1988). This suggests that as LTI_Composite increased,

MLQ_Individual_Consideration tended to increase. Tables 19 and 20 present the results of the

correlation. Because a positive correlation was observed between the use of learning tactics to

achieve transformational learning and individual consideration, the null hypothesis H_05 was

found to be false:

H_05. There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve
transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the level of
individual consideration practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as
measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). **FALSE**

Table 19

Pearson Correlation Matrix Between LTI_Composite and MLQ_Individual_Consideration

Variable	1	2
1. LTI_Composite	-	
2. MLQ_Individual_Consideration	.66[*]	-

Note. *p. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory; MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

Table 20

Pearson Correlation Results Between LTI_Composite and MLQ_Individual_Consideration

Combination	r	95.00% CI	n	p
LTI_Composite-MLQ_Individual_Consideration	.66	[.50, .78]	67	< .001

Note. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory; MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

Research Question Six

Research question six was the summary question that sought to determine whether a relationship existed between the use of learning tactics that result in transformational learning and the frequency of transformational leadership practiced. Transformational learning refers to "learning that transforms problematic frames of reference to make the individual more inclusive, discriminating, reflective, open, and emotionally able to change" (Mezirow, 1978 p. 6). Meanwhile, transformational leadership is defined as "a process where leaders and followers engage in a mutual method of raising one another to higher levels of morality and motivation" (Burns, 1978, p. 299).

To answer research question six, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted between LTI_Composite and MLQ_5_I_Composite. Cohen's standard was used to evaluate the strength of the relationship, where coefficients between .10 and .29 represent a small effect size, coefficients between .30 and .49 represent a moderate effect size, and coefficients above .50 indicate a large

effect size (Cohen, 1988). To substantiate the use of the Pearson coefficient, linearity is assumed

(Conover & Iman, 1981). Any curvature among the points on the scatterplot between any pair of

variables violates this assumption (Conover & Iman, 1981). Figure 6 presents the scatterplot of

the correlation. A regression line was added to assist the interpretation.

Figure 6

Scatterplots with the Regression Line Added for LTI_Composite and MLQ_5_I_Composite
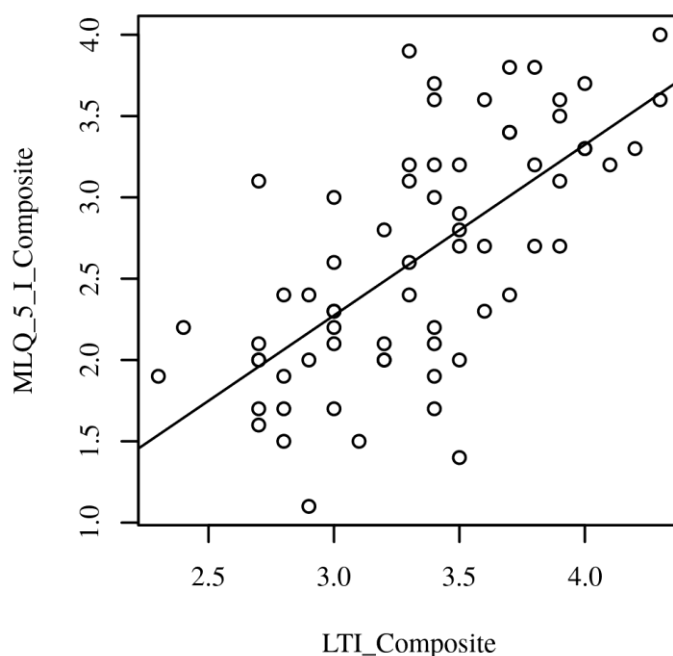
The result of the correlation was examined based on an alpha value of .05 (Conover &

Iman, 1981). A significant positive correlation was observed between LTI_Composite and

MLQ_5_I_Composite, with a correlation of .67, indicating a large effect size ($p < .001$, 95.00%

CI = [.51, .78]; Cohen, 1988). This suggests that as LTI_Composite increased,

MLQ_5_I_Composite tended to increase. Tables 21 and 22 present the results of the correlation.

Table 23 presents the correlations between learning tactics and transformational leadership's

Five I's. Because a significant positive correlation was found between the LTI composite and

MLQ composite scores, null hypothesis H_06 was found to be false:

H_06. There is no correlational relationship between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the level of transformational leadership practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). **FALSE**

Table 21

Pearson Correlation Matrix Between LTI_Composite and MLQ_5_I_Composite

Variable	1	2
1. LTI_Composite	-	
2. MLQ_5_I_Composite	.67[*]	-

Note. *p. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory; MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

Table 22

Pearson Correlation Results Between LTI_Composite and MLQ_5_I_Composite

Combination	r	95.00% CI	n	p
LTI_Composite-MLQ_5_I_Composite	.67	[.51, .78]	67	< .001

Note. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory; MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

Table 23

Correlations Between Learning Tactics and Transformational Leadership Five I'.s

	Idealized behaviors	Idealized attributes	Inspirational motivation	Intellectual stimulation	Individual consideration	MLQ composite
Action	.35	.23	.35*	.53*	.63*	.54*
Thinking	.15	.36*	.27	-.04	.09	.19
Feeling	.41*	.38*	.54*	.46*	.51*	.57*
Accessing others	.30*	.22*	.30*	.59*	.55	.50*
LTI composite	.45*	.44*	.54*	.58*	.66*	.67*

Note. *p <.05. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory; MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

Evaluation of the Research Design

This final section of this chapter briefly discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the research design used and how the design could be improved in future similar studies. This study used a correlational quantitative approach to explore the existence of a relationship between transformational learning and transformational leadership. The study included only one phase, which was comprised of an 84-question online survey.

Strengths

The correlational quantitative research design was easy to execute in that all of the data were extrapolated from the online survey hosted by a third party. Both instruments used in the study have been used in many other quantitative studies, ensuring the appropriate levels of validity and reliability. The use of quantitative data provided a supplement to qualitative studies that have been conducted regarding discipleship and disciple-making. Finding a correlational relationship between the variables greatly assists with assigning value to the presented phenomenon. Too often, qualitative research is dismissed due to its anecdotal nature. The

numerical value associated with quantitative design can serve as a baseline for qualitative research that strengthens findings.

Weaknesses

One weakness of the quantitative design was the statistical knowledge that was necessary to successfully execute data analysis. Choosing the right type of analysis is imperative. Therefore, researchers should seek statistical consultation very early on in the process. Fortunately, there are new resources available that make this endeavor affordable.

Another weakness of the design was the impersonal nature of quantitative design. Participants are asked to complete a survey without knowing the researcher. This caused a high level of reticence among potential participants which made what should have been a relatively easy process much more arduous. Having to repeatedly ask for participation was time-consuming. Had there been an opportunity to meet the researcher, a rapport could have been established, reducing hesitance and boosting participation. Ultimately, the researcher had to utilize a series of pastoral gatherings to gain a significant number of participants because email requests were largely ignored.

When considering both the strengths and weaknesses of the study, it is still believed that a quantitative approach to these types of phenomena is beneficial and offers another perspective to consider. The only thing that must be accounted for is how to get participation in online surveys. Researchers should designate multiple ways to recruit study participants. Hosting and/or attending events for the desired research population appeared to be the most efficacious way to quickly scale study participation. A variety of modalities for participant recruitment should be included in research plans.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Overview

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to discover whether a relationship existed between transformational learning and transformational leadership. After presenting the research purpose and RQs, Chapter Five offers research conclusions, implications, and applications. Research limitations are also discussed. The chapter concludes with multiple suggestions for further research.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the use of transformational learning tactics and the frequency of transformational leadership practices exhibited by evangelical lead pastors in Ohio. This study was conducted to offer a possible explanation for church decline in the United States. Paying particular attention to those who identify as evangelical, this research associated transformational learning with Christian discipleship, whereas transformational leadership was associated with disciple-making. Because the literature supported the use of these associations, the study went on to ask the following questions:

Research Questions

RQ 1. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of idealized influence behaviors practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 2. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of idealized influence attributes practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 3. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the

frequency of inspirational motivation practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 4. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of intellectual stimulation practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 5. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of individual consideration practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

RQ 6. What relationship, if any, exists between the use of learning tactics that achieve transformational learning, as measured by the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI), and the frequency of transformational leadership practiced by self-identifying evangelical lead pastors in Ohio, as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)?

Research Conclusions, Implications, and Applications

The research questions in this study aimed at discovering whether there could be any connection detected between how pastoral leaders preceded through their own discipleship, here described as transformational learning, and how they disciple others, here described as transformational leadership. This section starts by discussing the results of the summary RQ (RQ 6) followed by a discussion of observations found in each subcategory. This is followed by a discussion of the implications and applications of the findings.

Research Conclusions

In this study, transformational leadership was described as "a process where leaders and followers engage in a mutual method of raising one another to higher levels of morality and motivation" (Burns, 1978, p. 299). In the context of this research, transformational leadership was associated with the process of making new disciples of Jesus Christ. Moreover, transformational learning was described as "learning that transforms problematic frames of reference to make the individual more inclusive, discriminating, reflective, open, and

emotionally able to change" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 6). Therefore, in the context of this research, transformational learning was associated with Christian discipleship.

To better understand the concept of Christian discipleship, it was helpful to identify its primary purpose as spiritual formation. Pettit (2008) defined spiritual formation as "the holistic work of God in a believer's life whereby systematic change renders the individual continually closer to the image and actions of Jesus Christ" (p. 17). To experience the change or transformation described by Pettit requires "the believer" to learn and incorporate the image and actions of Christ into their currently held belief system (Pettit, 2008). Therefore, discipleship is a process of transformational learning as described by Mezirow (1991). Because having a proper understanding and commitment to the Scriptures is necessary to lead others, it was assumed that the pastoral leaders had experienced transformational learning.

It was equally important to understand how disciple-making related to transformational leadership. Burns (1978) described transformational leadership as the best leadership model to produce other leaders. Although not explicitly stated in the Scriptures, the *telos*, or aim of the pastoral leader, is to develop congregants into leaders who would participate in the *Missio-Dei* by creating new disciples of Jesus Christ themselves. Therefore, the presence of the Five Is of transformational leadership (idealized influence behaviors, idealized influence attributes, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) in pastoral leaders speaks to their ability to turn disciples into disciple-makers as compelled by the Great Commission.

Participation in the *Missio-Dei*, mission of God, is expected of all believers, including but not limited to the pastoral leader (Getz, 2007; Hull & Sobels, 2018; Keener, 2014; Sweeny, 2020; Woodard & Hirsch, 2012). Therefore, the presence of transformational leadership practices in

pastoral leaders is an expected and necessary reality. Previous studies that used the MLQ to identify transformational leadership frequency in leaders have concluded that each of the five I's are intercorrelated, thereby making them virtually indistinguishable (Grieman, 2009; Ingram, 1997). This was not the case in this study. Each of the variables was able to stand on its own, indicating that they were sufficient indicators of transformational leadership.

With that in mind, the summary question (RQ 6) asked what relationship existed between transformational learning and the frequency of transformational leadership practiced by the evangelical pastoral leader. The findings indicated that among the sample population, pastoral leaders differ in their use of learning tactics in discipleship. They likewise differed in the frequency with which they practiced transformational leadership competencies. Significant relationships were found between the way pastors engaged in their discipleship and the way they led others to become disciples. A strong positive relationship was found between how these leaders learned and how they led others. Pastoral leaders who reported using more than one of the LTI learning tactics (action, thinking, feeling, and accessing others) practiced transformational leadership more frequently.

LTI composite learning and MLQ composite leadership were significantly positively correlated (r=.67 <.001). This result is in keeping with Brown & Posner (2001), which found that high learning versatility (LTI composite score of 4 or more) increased the frequency of transformational leadership practiced (MLQ composite score of 3 or more). The present study also discovered that even moderate learning versatility (LTI composite score between 3 and 4) increased the frequency of transformational leadership practiced in pastoral leaders, albeit it not as strongly. The raw data had to be rounded to meet the high transformational leadership

frequency threshold. Correlations for each subcategory are presented in Table 23. The LTI

learning index data are presented in Table 24.

Table 23

Correlations Between Learning Tactics and Transformational Leadership Five Is

	Idealized behaviors	Idealized attributes	Inspirational motivation	Intellectual stimulation	Individual consideration	MLQ composite
Action	.35	.23	.35*	.53*	.63*	.54*
Thinking	.15	.36*	.27	-.04	.09	.19
Feeling	.41*	.38*	.54*	.46*	.51*	.57*
Accessing others	.30*	.22*	.30*	.59*	.55	.50*
LTI composite	.45*	.44*	.54*	.58*	.66*	.67*

Note. *p<.05. LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory; MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

Table 24

LTI Mean Scores (High, Moderate, and Low Groups)

	LTI composite (μ)	IB	IA	IM	IS	IC	MLQ composite (μ)
High (n=7)	**4.1**	3.31	3.23	3.71	2.91	3.59	**3 (3.5)**
Moderate n=45	**3.4**	2.64	2.97	2.81	2.18	2.68	**3 (2.7)**
Low n=15	**2.7**	2.21	2.57	2.15	1.29	1.63	**2 (2.0)**

Note. () indicates raw data. IA = Idealized Influence Actions; IB = Idealized Influence Behaviors; IC = Individual Consideration; IM = Inspirational Motivation IS= Intellectual Stimulation; LTI = Learning Tactic Inventory; MLQ = Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.

These findings align with transformational learning theory as presented by Mezirow and

Marsick (1978), Loder (1981), and Young (2013), all of whom concluded that individual

transformational learning experiences are a prerequisite for leading others in transformational learning. This finding was also in keeping with Bass' transformational leadership model which includes intellectual stimulation as one of its five subcategories. Because the findings of this research corroborate Mezirow's and Bass' conclusions, the null hypothesis was found to be false. Similar patterns were observed in the data for RQs 1–5.

Research questions one and two sought to understand the relationship between transformational learning, as evidenced by learning tactic use and idealized influence behaviors and attributes. Idealized influence behavior "emphasized a collective sense of mission and values, as well as acting upon these values" (Rowold, 2005, p. 5). Meanwhile, idealized influence attributes refer to the charisma of the leader (Rowold, 2005). Rowold (2005) wrote, "Because of the leaders` positive attributes (e.g., perceived power, focusing on higher-order ideals and values), followers built close emotional ties to the leader. Trust and confidence are likely to be built in followers" (p. 5).

As previously indicated, in this study, idealized influence was able to stand on its own merit to demonstrate that as learning tactics use increased, idealized influence (behaviors and attributes) would likewise increase. Despite this fact, the idealized influence variables (behaviors and attributes) had the smallest level of positive correlation ($r=.45$ and $r=.44$, respectively) of all the variables. This finding aligns with other studies in which idealized influence had an equally poor showing, causing researchers to question its necessity in the transformational leadership scale. Hinkin & Tracey (1999) suggested that charisma was only necessary for political or religious leaders or when the organization is in a state of crisis. The researchers believed that the lack of a crisis event in the research population could explain the low levels of empirical support. This is a particularly interesting phenomenon when it occurs among pastoral leaders.

The present study also discovered that learner versatility has only a moderate impact on whether a leader has charisma or communicates a shared mission and values and then acts upon that mission and those values. This aligns with House's (1976) research that has suggested that charisma was needed for religious leaders, but that charisma tends to be a personality trait, not a learned behavior. Moreover, the findings of this study further indicate that learning to emphasize a shared mission and values and then acting on them is something intrinsic to pastoral leaders as a result of their conversion experience. However, these actions do not necessarily show up in their efforts to make disciples who make other disciples.

Bass & Avolio (1990) attributed increased follower participation in transformational activities to idealized influence behavior. The result of RQ 1 corroborates this conclusion warranting rejection of the null hypothesis. The identification of this relationship has meaningful implications for pastoral leaders in the American church relating to the demonstration of specific behaviors to influence congregants. These implications are discussed in the next section.

This study also found that there was a positive relationship between the use of learning tactics and the frequency with which idealized influence attributes were practiced. Bass and Avolio (1990) found that personality had some bearing on transformational leadership practices. Again, a moderately strong relationship between the variables was detected in this study. Therefore, the result of RQ 2 corroborates Bass & Avolio's (1990) conclusion warranting the rejection of the null hypothesis. It also adds to the discussion concerning the need for the acquisition of certain charismatic personality traits by leaders- in this case, pastoral leaders, as mentioned by Bass (1985).

Research question three sought to understand the relationship between transformational learning and inspirational motivation. Inspirational motivation is identified as the "articulation

and representation of a vision by the leader"(Rowold, 2005, p. 5). Inspirational motivation is the equivalent of the charisma traits identified in charismatic leadership theory (Bass, 1985). In his study, Bass (1985) made it clear that these particular charismatic traits were necessary for transformational leadership. Therefore, the more ways that an individual acquires new information—or, from a Christian perspective, renews their mind—the more adept they will be at articulating the mission of Christ to others. As it relates to this study, the ability to communicate a shared vision is essential in the fulfillment of the Great Commission. The Great Commission was Christ's intended vehicle for Church expansion with which pastoral leaders are expected to be intimately acquainted. The findings in this research demonstrate that this is true. Pastoral leaders with high learning versatility also had a high frequency of inspirational motivation use, indicating that their discipleship practices equip them with the tools needed to be disciple-makers. Precedent literature on transformational leadership suggested that a compelling vision is necessary to move followers in a particular direction (Bass & Avolio, 1990). The absence of a vision will cause followers to stagnate (Bass & Avolio, 1990).

The significant relationship between transformational learning and inspirational motivation (r=.54) identified in this study suggests that knowledge acquisition is a prerequisite for inspirational leaders, once again corroborating Bass' (1985) findings and supporting the rejection of the null hypothesis. This connection offers significant implications for pastoral leaders as they endeavor to lead their congregants to fulfill the Great Commission. These implications are discussed in the implications section.

Research question four sought to understand the relationship between transformational learning and intellectual stimulation. Intellectual stimulation includes challenging the assumptions of followers' beliefs, their analysis of the problems they face, and the solutions they

generate (Rowold, 2005, p. 5). A significant positive correlation (r= .58) was observed between the two variables in this study. As with inspirational motivation, the large effect size demonstrates a strong relationship between transformational learning and intellectual stimulation. This means that as learning tactic use variety increases, the leader's ability to stimulate the thinking of their followers likewise increases.

Young (2013) and Loder (1981) have each attested to the fact that the teacher must have experienced transformational learning before leading others down this path. Bass (1985) believed that intellectual stimulation empowered followers to reframe thoughts about problems. The findings of this study corroborate Bass' (1985) findings and warrant the rejection of the null hypothesis. They also equivocate important implications for pastoral leaders relating to helping congregants overcome their competing interests and fixed assumptions to be explored in the implications section.

Finally, research question five sought to understand the relationship between transformational learning and individual consideration. Individual consideration is "considering individual needs of followers and developing their individual strengths" (Rowold, 2005, p. 5). Individual consideration had a vigorous showing in the literature as an identifier of transformational leadership. In many studies, individual consideration is strongly correlated with work performance and motivation (Brooks, 2018; Greiman, 2009; Ingram, 1997; Posner, 2009). Bass (1985) described individual consideration as paying attention to an individual's need for achievement and growth by acting as a coach and mentor. He further indicated that thoughtfulness was one of the most important traits of a transformational leader (Bass, 1985). The way the pastoral leader learns and the care they give to empower congregants to be disciple-makers demonstrated the strongest relationship (r=.66) in the findings of this study.

The findings suggest that although the discipleship process is largely an individual endeavor, having quality support from leaders and others within the Christian community is important to fully develop the image of Christ (Beagles, 2012; Stedman, 1995). It might be argued that pastoral leaders who frequently demonstrate individual consideration towards congregants have greater success with developing congregants with an intact identity in Christ whereby they understand themselves to be endowed by God with spiritual gifts for the benefit of the community (Getz, 2007; Hull & Sobels, 2018; Keener, 2014; Sweeny, 2020; Woodard & Hirsch, 2012).

Implications

Like Brown & Posner (2001) and Trautmann et al. (2006), learning versatility in this study pointed to the learner's utilization of several of the learning tactic subcategories to acquire new information, otherwise known as renewing their mind. This idea is in keeping with Christian discipleship, which requires a disciple to actively participate in their spiritual formation through repentance and mind renewal before attempting to lead others (Romans 12:2). The data demonstrated that as the pastoral leader acquired new information and incorporated that information into their worldview, they were inclined to utilize a leadership skillset more frequently that would develop other leaders. In this instance, versatile learners tended to practice idealized influence (both behaviors and attributes), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration more often than those with a singular way of acquiring information. Therefore, when a pastoral leader's learning versatility increases, that leader's sense of mission, values, and corresponding actions increase; their charisma increases; their ability to convey a shared vision increases; their ability to challenge their congregants' assumptions increases; their ability to analyze their congregants' problems and generate solutions increases;

and their ability to consider individual needs of their congregants and develop their individual strengths increases. Therefore, as in Brown & Posner (2001) and Trautmann et al, (2006), better learners are better leaders.

The findings of this study revealed that only 39% of the sample population regularly practiced transformational leadership, whereas 61% occasionally practiced. These outcomes corroborate Bass' (1978) assertion that transactional and transformational leadership were not opposites but on a continuum. This information alone has the potential to reverse the downward trend of decline, as disciples learn to make disciples.

Therefore, it can be implied that the pastoral leader who understands their personality attributes, and couples that understanding with a willingness to adjust their behavior to become more charismatic will have greater success with leading congregants (Bass, 1985). Specifically, pastoral leaders who focus on the acquisition of boldness, friendliness, introspection, and thoughtfulness, as well as the consistent display of authority, integrity, and maturity will have greater success with getting congregants to do things that they have never done, i.e., sharing their faith with others (Bass, 1985). For the pastoral leader this is essential as they lead congregants in spiritual formation and to join Christ in His mission to make disciples of all nations.

Contrarily, pastoral leaders who lack charisma often have difficulty executing the mission of the Church because they have neglected to gain the trust of their congregants. The data implied that pastoral leaders with rigorous discipleship practices could develop transformational personality traits like displaying a sense of power and calm amid conflict, assuring their congregations they could overcome obstacles (Astley, 2015). This show of power inspires others to persevere even in the face of adversity and is the example that was given by Christ Himself.

It can be further implied that the pastoral leader who uses a variety of methods to accept the mission of Christ (*Missio-Dei)* will be better equipped to communicate and publicly act on this shared mission. The natural outflow of this should be the reproduction of disciples of Jesus. Therefore, the absence of new disciples is an indication that a gap in learning/discipleship has either occurred in the leaders' understanding of the execution of the mission or their willingness to provide intellectual stimulation to the congregant. Loder (1981) and Young (2013) each asserted that a leader must experience transformational learning before leading others in the process. The results of this study corroborate this finding with LTI composite scores and intellectual stimulation having a high level of correlation (.58). Pastoral leaders who continually seek growth as a disciple of Jesus will actively lead congregants to "question assumptions, reframe problems, and approach old situations in new ways" when presented with a disorienting dilemma (Bass & Avolio 1990, p. 3). The practice of intellectual stimulation in the pastoral leader is essential to that leader's ability to teach their congregants. Ultimately, congregants will not grow beyond their pastoral leader's growth. The absence or diminished frequency of intellectual stimulation greatly hinders the pastoral leader's success in leading congregants into the process of transformational learning and/or mind renewal. Therefore, it can be implied that pastoral leaders who are deeply invested in the continuation of their spiritual formation post-conversion are much more likely to develop disciples who are likewise invested in spiritual formation.

The literature has shown that transformational learning is the primary way adult learners acquire new information. Without the transformational learning process, an adult's worldview is not likely to change, as they have had a lifetime to reinforce their point of view. Therefore, the

adult who disallows the disorienting dilemma to move them into self-examination and critical reflection (Mezirow & Marsick, 1978) will not accept new information into their worldview.

This phenomenon is of particular concern relating to the pastoral leader. A pastoral leader who disallows the disorienting dilemma associated with their sinfulness to continually move them into new information acquisition through discipleship (transformational learning) will maintain their previously held worldview. On the surface, it may appear that this leader has had a change in thinking; however, what has happened is that they have merely accepted what fits into their previous worldview and rejected anything that does not (Mezirow, 1991). This will result in weak congregant discipleship as they will be unable to grow beyond the understanding of their teacher because transformational learning was not modeled.

Contrarily, the pastoral leader who successfully develops a congregant into a disciple of Jesus Christ is a leader who has caused the congregant to exchange previous assumptions about the world and their place in it through individualized consideration. This is the only way the new disciple will discover how they have been uniquely gifted to participate in the disciple-making process themselves. As Bass (1985) indicated, transformational leaders have the opportunity and ability to challenge followers to think in ways they are not accustomed to thinking, inspiring them to accomplish beyond what they felt was possible and motivating them to do more than what is required (Avolio et al., 1999). In this study, individualized consideration had the strongest relationship (.66) to the pastoral leader's discipleship practices. Therefore, it could be implied that pastoral leaders with robust discipleship practices have a greater capacity to frequently demonstrate individual consideration and compassion towards congregants. Individual consideration is necessary for the development of congregants with an intact identity in Christ. When congregants are the recipients of compassion they are more inclined to extend compassion.

This greatly increases their capacity to understand themselves to be endowed by God with spiritual gifts for the making of disciples and the benefit of the community (Getz, 2007; Hull & Sobels, 2018; Keener, 2014; Sweeny, 2020; Woodard & Hirsch, 2012).

Applications

The findings of this study implied that pastoral leaders who are highly versatile learners could better overcome their competing interests and fixed assumptions increasing their transformational leadership frequency. In other words, pastoral leaders who have efficacious discipleship practices can more effectively help their congregants practice mind renewal. Competing interests and fixed assumptions each take place on the subconscious level. Having another individual's help to discover these phenomena is crucial to their demise. Pastoral leaders should view their own spiritual formation as a mechanism for congregant growth. When pastors are committed disciples themselves they will find more success in helping others in their journey. Therefore, diversifying ways of learning should be a priority for pastors. As concluded by Dalton et al. (1999) most people could benefit from assessing the way they learn to look for opportunities to incorporate all four learning tactics into their learning arsenal.

The findings of this study corroborate Dalton's (1999) position, as leaders with moderate learning versatility dominated the population sample with 67% of the respondents falling into that category. Only 10% of the sample population was identified as being highly versatile learners, suggesting that pastoral leaders could benefit from analyzing their learning methods and searching for opportunities to diversify the way that they learn from their experiences as suggested by Dalton et al., (1999). This means that a pastoral leader should be intentional about stepping out of their comfort zone when presented with new information of experiences. For example, if they normally defer to independent research as the means to gain new information,

they should try accessing others more frequently. This simple adjustment has the potential to greatly infuse the lead pastor's discipleship journey with a new revelation concerning the nature and character of God and His Word that can be enthusiastically shared with those they lead.

Along this line, repentance should be publicly modeled to encourage congregant spiritual formation. Repentance is defined as the changing of one's mind. A leader who is not open to the correction of the Holy Spirit in concert with the Word of God (the new information), or the admonition of His people (Christian community) to change their minds is a leader who will not experience transformational learning. When the pastoral leader rejects a posture of repentance, they create an environment where those they lead will likewise reject a posture of repentance.

This study revealed that the most significant result of a pastoral leader's discipleship is the development of thoughtfulness that recognizes their congregation as a body made up of individuals with unique needs and trajectories for growth. Too often leaders see the congregation as a whole, forgetting that this whole is made up of many unique parts. This oversight can lead to frustration in the congregants, which stunts growth and results in resentment. In extreme circumstances, this can lead to deconversion. Therefore, pastoral leaders must be willing to show their human side, normalizing the struggle of the human condition. Falling short is the one thing that all humans have in common and should be publicly acknowledged more often.

Lastly, it is important to recognize that while transformational learning is a means for mind renewal in all learners, it is requisite for adult learners who have a fully formed worldview. Because this is not the case for children and adolescents, perhaps a greater emphasis should be placed on reaching and discipling children and adolescents so that a Christian worldview is developed before adulthood, thereby increasing the likelihood that they will join Christ in His mission to make disciples.

Research Limitations

In this section, threats to internal and external validity are addressed. Because the instrumentation used in this study has undergone rigorous analysis relating to internal validity, there were no internal threats to the efficacy of this study. The same could not be said for external validity. Similar to leaders in other sectors, pastoral leaders have a predisposition to the Hawthorne effect. Knowing that they were being studied made them more susceptible to reporting their practices in an idealized manner. This was evidenced by the way the questions were answered. Despite participation being anonymous, a majority of the participants provided Likert Scale answers that were on the positive end versus the neutral or negative end. Because the survey used pre-existing instrumentation, there was no opportunity to remedy this phenomenon. This impacts generalizability. The only possible solution would be to develop a new survey instrument that incorporates open-ended questions that cause the participant to explain their responses.

Future Research

Throughout this study, several areas for future research surfaced. There is a particular need to understand the nuances of pastoral leadership from a variety of perspectives. Research examining cognitive barriers to transformational learning could prove to be efficacious. Other areas for future research include:

1. A qualitative study on the relationship between transformational learning and transformational leadership in pastoral leaders. Adding an interview component could produce greater insight into the phenomena reported in this study.

2. A correlational study of transformational learning and transformational leadership using the congregants' observation of the pastoral leader. Self-reporting bias may have skewed the data in this study. Using the observations of congregants would perhaps produce a more accurate result.

3. A study comparing the lead pastor's self-evaluation of transformational learning with their congregants' self-evaluation of transformational leadership. This kind of research

can provide useful information relating to knowledge transfer between leaders and congregants.

Summary

This study sought to identify whether there was an existing relationship between the discipleship of pastoral leaders, here called transformational learning, and their disciple-making praxis, here called transformational leadership. The study aimed to discover a quantifiable explanation for the decline being experienced in the Christian church of the United States. The findings of this study indicated that pastoral leaders who were better learners were better leaders.

While the results of the statistical analysis showed there was a significant positive correlation between the use of a variety of learning tactics and transformational leadership, only a few of the pastoral leaders met the highly versatile learner threshold. This result suggests that pastoral leaders can benefit from analyzing the way that they learn, looking for opportunities to diversify the way that they learn from their experiences. The data also found that pastoral leaders with evolving and robust discipleship practices had the greatest opportunity to catalyze the development of congregants through intellectual stimulation and individual consideration. From this, we understand the importance of the pastoral leader's commitment to personal discipleship. Without this commitment, disciple-making is limited.

Because the Scriptures (Matthew 28:16-20, Mark 16:14–18, Luke 24:44–49, John 20:19-23, and Acts 1:4–8) indicate that disciple-making is the mission of the Church, pastoral leaders must begin to reignite their passion for the Great Commission and strengthen their resolve in personal spiritual formation so that they are an example to those they lead. This is only accomplished when there is a recognition that learning is an innately spiritual endeavor, championed by the Holy Spirit, that never ceases. There is a perpetual learner-leader cycle that disciples of Christ flow through in the Christian community. When this happens with vigor,

congregants become conduits for disciple-making and the Body of Christ expands in the way

Christ intended. This is the key to reversing the trend of decline evident in the Christian church

of the United States.

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Appendix A

MLQ Permission Document

mind garden

www.mindgarden.com

To Whom It May Concern,

The above-named person has made a license purchase from Mind Garden, Inc. and has permission to administer the following copyrighted instrument up to that quantity purchased:

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

The three sample items only from this instrument as specified below may be included in your thesis or dissertation. Any other use must receive prior written permission from Mind Garden. The entire instrument may not be included or reproduced at any time in any other published material. Please understand that disclosing more than we have authorized will compromise the integrity and value of the test.

Citation of the instrument must include the applicable copyright statement listed below. Sample Items:
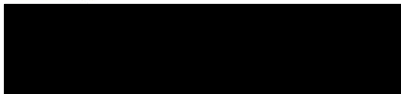
As a leader ….

> I talk optimistically about the future.
> I spend time teaching and coaching.
> I avoid making decisions.

The person I am rating….

> Talks optimistically about the future.
> Spends time teaching and coaching.
> Avoids making decisions

Sincerely,

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

Appendix B

LTI Permission Document

[External] Permission grated to use LTI in your research

CCL Research Services ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Thu 2/16/2023 9:38 AM

To: Crozier, Nichelle ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

[EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open attachments unless you know the sender and trust the content.]

Good morning! Permission has been grated from the Center for Creative Leadership for you to use the Learning Tactics Inventory (LTI) in your dissertation research. There will be no charge for the use of LTI. We look forward to learning about your results.

Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions.

Respectfully,

▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
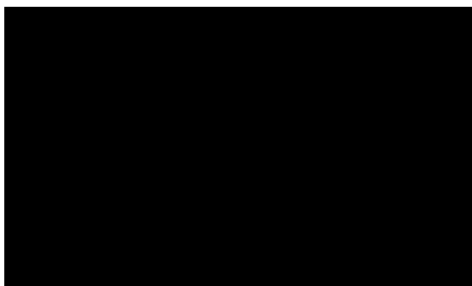
> ! This message has originated from an External Source. **Help protect CCL and our clients** by using proper judgment and caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding to this email.

Greetings,

I submitted a proposal and faculty letter of support for my research that involved the use of the Learning Tactics Inventory tool, for your review on January 24th. I am following up to see if this permission has been granted. My study is currently with my IRB and they are waiting for said permission. Please let me know the status, as soon as possible.

Thank you.

Shelley Crozier-Fleming

Appendix C

IRB Approval Document

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" style="text-align:right">Date: 3-20-2023</td></tr>
</table>

IRB #: IRB-FY22-23-728
Title: A CORRELATIONAL STUDY OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING TACTICS AND
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN EVANGELICAL PASTORS
Creation Date: 12-15-2022
End Date:
Status: Approved
Principal Investigator: Nichelle Crozier
Review Board: Research Ethics Office
Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type	Initial	Review Type	Exempt	Decision	Exempt

Key Study Contacts

Member	Role	Contact
Nichelle Crozier	Principal Investigator	▉▉▉▉▉
Nichelle Crozier	Primary Contact	▉▉▉▉▉
Brian Pinzer	Co-Principal Investigator	▉▉▉▉▉

Appendix D

Participant Invitation Email

Dear Pastor:

As a graduate student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy degree. The purpose of my research is to gain insight into discipleship and disciple-making practices in Ohio by examining whether a relationship exists between the use of learning tactics to achieve transformational learning and transformational leadership practices. I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be 18 or older and agree that identify as an evangelical lead pastor of an evangelical church. For this survey, *evangelical* is defined as the segment of the American Church (both Catholics and Protestants) that emphasize conversion experiences, reliance on Scripture, and missional work rather than sacraments and tradition. Participants, if willing, will be asked to complete an 84-question online survey. It should take approximately 30 minutes to complete the procedure listed. Participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected.

To participate, please [click here].

A consent document is provided on the first page of the survey. The consent document contains additional information about my research. After you have read the consent form, please click the link to proceed to the survey. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the survey.

Participants will be entered in a raffle to receive one (1) of three (3) available $100 BP gas cards.

Sincerely,

Nichelle (Shelley) Crozier
Doctoral Candidate

Appendix E

Participant Consent Form

Consent

Title of the Project: A Correlational Study of Transformational Learning Tactics and Transformational Leadership Practices in Evangelical Pastors
Principal Investigator: Nichelle L. Crozier, Doctoral Candidate, School of Divinity, Liberty University

Invitation to be part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be 1. 18 years of age or older 2. consider yourself to be evangelical which is defined as the segment of the American church (both Catholics and Protestants) that emphasize conversion experiences, reliance on Scripture, and missional work rather than sacraments and tradition. 3. The Lead Pastor of an evangelical church in the State of Ohio. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to learn more about discipleship and disciple-making practices with the evangelical church of Ohio. Specifically, my study will examine whether a relationship exists between the use of learning tactics to achieve transformational learning (discipleship) and transformational leadership practices (disciple-making.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following:
1. Complete an 84-question online survey found using the Transform hosting platform. The questions on the survey are Likert Scale format where you will be asked to rate each item/practice. This will take approximately 30 minutes of your time.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

The direct benefits participants should expect to receive from taking part in this study include gaining an understanding of discipleship and disciple-making activities within the evangelical

pastors in Ohio. Benefits to society include increased effectiveness in spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life. The risks involved in this study include loss of privacy and/or breach of confidentiality if the data is lost or stolen breach of the and possibility of psychological stress from having your thoughts and actions relating to your pastoral leadership scrutinized by a stranger. To reduce risk, the data will be stored on a locked computer only accessible to the researcher/study team. I will additionally provide referral information for counseling.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher[s] will have access to the records. Participant responses will be anonymous. Data will be stored on a password-locked computer. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study. However, at the conclusion of the survey participants will be entered into a drawing to receive one (1) of three (3) available $100 BP gas cards. Email addresses will be requested for compensation purposes; however, they will be pulled and separated from your responses by the survey software/will be collected through a separate survey from the study survey/will be collected by email at the conclusion of the survey to maintain your anonymity.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision on whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or The Center for Christian Virtue. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Nichelle (Shelley) Crozier. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at ███████████ You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Brian Pinzer, at ███████████

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

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

Your Consent

Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You will be given a copy of this document for your records/you can print a copy of the document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the [researcher using the information provided above.

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

_____
Printed Subject Name

_____
Signature & Date

Appendix F

Recruitment Follow-up Email

Dear Pastor:

As a graduate student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy degree. Two weeks ago, an email was sent to you inviting you to participate in a research study. This follow-up email is being sent to remind you to complete the survey if you would like to participate and have not already done so. The deadline for participation is [Date].

Participants, if willing, will be asked to complete an 84-question online survey. It should take approximately 30 minutes to complete the procedure listed. Participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected.

To participate, please [click here].

A consent document is provided on the first page of the survey. The consent document contains additional information about my research. After you have read the consent form, please click the link to proceed to the survey. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the survey.

Participants will be entered in a raffle to receive one (1) of three (3) available $100 BP gas cards.

Sincerely,

Nichelle (Shelley) Crozier
Doctoral Candidate