

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

KEEPING CULTURE: AN EVALUATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE
IN THE MULTISITE CHURCH

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

By

Michael J. Grayston

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

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APPROVED BY:

Brian S Pinzer, PhD, Dissertation Supervisor

Stephen Grusendorf, PhD, Second Reader

ABSTRACT

KEEPING CULTURE: AN EVALUATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN THE MULTISITE CHURCH

The purpose of this descriptive qualitative study was to explore the attendee perception of organizational culture, including the communication pathways, vision, and mission in the three common multisite church models: the local franchise model, the national franchise model, and the live teaching model. The study evaluated the attendee perception of the methods and strategies used by the multisite church to create and keep one unique culture in spite of their method, proximity, or demographics. The researcher attempted to evaluate these methods through a survey and face-to-face interviews with multisite church leaders from six different churches representing three different models. The purpose of this project was not to identify the theological validity of the multisite church or its methods. The multisite church movement is here, and it does not appear to be going anywhere anytime soon. Multisite churches have seen exponential growth over the past two decades, and people are becoming more comfortable with attending one church in multiple locations. While there are now thousands of multisite churches, not all multisite churches look the same. The results of this research found that attendees and leaders note that despite the challenges, creating and keeping one unique organizational culture is possible and occurring in multisite churches. Though the methods and strategies vary, church leaders successfully multiply their culture by being intentional in their communication pathways, utilizing scaled consistency in their ministry environments, and empowering local leadership within each location. The researcher did not discover a superior multisite model; instead, the researcher identified that the multisite church has worked within multiple models.

Keywords: multisite church, communication, culture, methods, attendee perception

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Dedication

I dedicate this to my bride, Kim. This accomplishment would not have happened without your love, support, and grace. Twenty years of marriage to you have been God's greatest blessing to me.

Acknowledgments

To God goes the glory of this work and any work that would benefit from it. Heavenly Father, you have called me and gracefully equipped me for the journey. To my family, Kim, Braden, and Ashlyn, who have provided inspiration, support, and grace during the many nights of absence. To Pastor Tom Walker and CenterPointe Church where the challenge of learning about the multisite church and the empowerment to study it began. To Next Level Church, whom God has called me to serve and has provided endless encouragement. To Dr. Brian Pinzer, who has provided guidance, wisdom, and reassurance along the way. The journey has been long and challenging but rewarding. My prayer is that it brings clarity for one church leader who is discerning God's call for his or her church.

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CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH CONCERN

Introduction

Since the early 2000s, the multisite movement has changed the way churches across the nation reach their community. A recent research project noted that “in 2008, there were an estimated 2,000 multisite churches; now, that number is well over 8,000” (Edwards, 2016, p. 1). An estimated 85 percent of multisite churches have reported growth in their Sunday worship attendance, and 88 percent of multisite churches report growth in volunteer participation (Bird, 2014). The multisite movement has reported success in multiple denominations and community sizes (2014).

For the purpose of this research project, the term multisite church will be defined as “one church in two or more locations, under one overall leadership and budget” (Bird, 2014, p. 3). In addition to sharing leadership and budget, organizational culture is also an important key element in the multisite church. Organizational culture is important; it’s “the glue that holds everything together. . . . It connects and engulfs people, systems, and structures” (Klein, 2019). In this study, organizational culture was defined as the precedents, traditions, and accepted behavioral norms found within an organization (Richmond, et al., 2013).

Though participating multisite churches follow a similar definition, they face unique challenges to maintaining an organizational culture. Culture is contextualized and often formed by the surrounding community. The multisite church has the unique challenge of creating and keeping organizational culture across different locations; at times, those locations are hundreds of miles apart. The noted growth of the multisite church is encouraging for a church that is considering launching an additional campus, but the church must first evaluate if its organizational culture can be multiplied in separate locations.

Background of the Problem

Every organization is shaped by its culture; the vision, mission, and communication pathways are essential drivers of an organization's culture. "Church culture establishes the core values that drive your actions and the pace by which you progress. It is a significant factor in sustaining momentum and becomes increasingly more difficult to maintain as you grow" (Klein, 2019). Culture is also influenced by the surrounding community. With the difficulties that can come with establishing and maintaining a culture in different geographic locations, it becomes even more "critical to understand culture and design a plan and process to scale it" (Klein, 2019).

To understand the attendee perceptions of multisite church organizational culture, this study evaluated the backgrounds of both organizational culture and the multisite movement. The terms organizational culture and multisite were not used by the writers of the Old or New Testament. That reality does not mean, however, that the principles of either idea were ignored. House and Allison (2017) noted that in the multisite movement, "the idea of one church meeting as multiple congregations in a city, can be traced back to the first century, to the beginning of Christianity" (p. 31). Paul's mission was to expand the Kingdom of Christ to the Gentiles; this meant that he would have to appeal to different audiences with different cultural influences.

Organizational Culture

Culture matters; "we are all cultured. Everyone is part of some culture. Culture surrounds us, and everything we do. Culture simply cannot be avoided in contemporary society" (Richmond, et al., 2013, p.134). Culture is an "accumulated pattern of values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by an identifiable group of people with a common history and a verbal and nonverbal system" (Neuliep, 2000, p. 26). The influence that culture has on an organization is important to note; Lewis, Cordeiro, and Bird (2005) noted, "your culture is the lens through

which you view your life. If you change the lens, you change your outlook. Change the culture, and everything else changes, including the future" (p. 12).

Organizational culture influences both, secular and church organizations. Schein (2004) noted, "Just as our personality and character guide and constrain our behavior, so does culture guide and constrain the behavior of members of a group through the shared norms that are held in that group" (p. 8). While literature on church organizational culture exists, little research on multisite church organizational culture has been produced. "Though a local church is much more than just an organization, every church has a culture. Some church cultures are healthy, and some are unhealthy, but every church has a culture" (Geiger and Peck, 2016, p. 125). The recognition of organizational culture, as a driver within the church, should be embraced by leaders, but the reality that culture has varied definitions and is difficult to explain is real (2005).

The First Multisite Church

Luke described the first multisite church in the book of Acts. The first multisite church was located in the town of Jerusalem and had over three thousand attendees (Acts 2:41). The attendees "devoted themselves to the apostles' teachings and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer" (Acts 2:42). These early church attendees shared their lives together and were completely devoted to one another as a community of believers. "Where and when did all this activity take place? In two locations: in the temple and from house to house. And it all happened, we are told, on a daily basis" (House and Allison, 2017, p. 32).

The Acts church was successfully expanding the kingdom of Christ. Luke records that the "Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47b). The church of Acts was not restricted to meeting at the temple; they chose to meet in homes as well, "Day after

day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah" (Acts 5:42).

House and Allison (2017) expound further, "The Jerusalem church was indeed multisite, and the issue was not whether all could meet in the temple. They clearly could and did meet in this location. Rather, Luke narrates that these believers daily met together in the disciples' homes, where they continued to do in separate locations what they did in one location" (p. 231).

The Shared Culture

The first multisite church did not only share a common origin; they shared a common organizational culture. Larkin (1995) noted, "The outpouring of the Spirit produced not just momentary enthusiasm but four continuing commitments: to learn, to care, to fellowship and to worship" (p. 61). One additional commitment was to expand. "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The church of Jerusalem was never meant to remain in Jerusalem, and this theme was ingrained in their organizational culture. Larkin (1995) stated, "Luke unfolds before us the church's unstoppable advance even in the face of opposition (3:1-4:31). After a look at the church's internal life (4:32-5:11), he highlights its mission's growing momentum in outreach into "all Judea," even as opposition grows (5:12-52)" (p. 63).

Multisite Churches Today

Larkin (1995) noted four commitments, "to learn, to care, to fellowship and to worship (p. 61). Each of those four commitments, five with the inclusion of evangelism, seem like they would be transferrable to any church's organizational culture. All churches encompass one or all of those commitments, but the approach differs from location to location. The mutual goal might be to reach out to lost people, but what works in an urban city might not work in rural towns. Surratt noted that this principle applies to multisite churches as well, "The model that works

great in Seattle's exurbia might not fly in downtown Miami. The model that fits inner-city Philadelphia might not draw the same response in center-city Vancouver" (Surratt, Ligon, & Bird, 2006, p. 27).

Few churches multiply their church by duplicating their original location in exact detail. Multisite churches have campuses in a variety of locations: schools, gyms, theaters, storefronts. "The core idea for the multisite movement is rather simple: one church in multiple locations. Yet the outward expression is often more like a smorgasbord than a single-nice restaurant chain" (2006, p. 29). Life.Church, for example, has over 30 multisite campuses, and they meet in each one of the venues listed above. They also meet in ten different states, including Oklahoma, Arkansas, New York, and Florida. Each one of these locations has a different surrounding culture, but the organizational culture of each campus remains the same (Life.Church Locations).

Campus Pastors

Surratt, Ligon, and Bird (2009) argued that "the role of campus pastor is a paramount factor in whether a new campus grows or dies" (p. 231). The role of campus pastor at Granger Community Church includes the description, "high-capacity leader who builds teams to ensure the success of the local campus" (2009, p. 225). Sagebrush Community Church has listed a mentor who "provides leadership to paid and volunteer staff" as a primary responsibility (2009, p. 229).

Congregations typically grow their campus pastors from within. In his multisite scorecard, Bird (2014) noted, "87 percent of campus pastors are found internally-trained and hired from within the church" (p 4). Greear, the Lead Pastor of The Summit Church (2014), noted that some of his "favorite leaders" are campus pastors that were leaders he "raised up, trained, and depended on. But now, as campus pastors, they have the opportunity to lead in ways they didn't

when we were all in one place. . . . I can confidently say that if we were all meeting in one place at one time, would have 1/4 of the leaders we have today” (2014). Greear’s testimony affirms the trend that Bird (2014) summarized, “the larger the church’s overall attendance, the more likely to develop the campus pastor from within” (p. 13).

Second chair leaders

The campus pastor serves the church as a second chair leader. As Bonem and Patterson (2005) noted, “the second chair is pure leadership because it seeks to improve the entire organization without the positional power of being in the first chair” (p. 11). The campus pastor sits in a unique second chair role, like all second chair leaders, they lack the power of being in the first chair. However, because of the uniqueness of their role, it can be difficult to identify and understand the opportunities that mold the position. It can be difficult to ascertain where the influence begins and ends each and every day.

The campus pastor has the opportunity to build relationships that the first chair leader would not have. The campus pastor has formal authority, but their authority has a clear ceiling. The campus pastor achieves their influence through relationships, not formal authority. As Bonem and Patterson (2005) noted, “a staff member who cannot lead through influence should not be given additional authority. The second chair who waits to be given the reins of control is unlikely to be an effective leader if or when that authority is extended” (p. 83).

Vision casting as a campus pastor

The role of a campus pastor is unique, but they should always keep the vision of the church in their foresight. As Bonem and Patterson (2005) noted, a campus pastor, like any second chair leader, should “always think of the needs of the congregation ahead of any specific tasks. Identify and act upon ideas that enable the organization to operate more effectively and, in

doing so, to better fulfill its vision” (p. 82). Operating in a multisite role has its challenges, as Bonem and Patterson (2005) noted, campus pastors “are geographically dispersed, which prevents them from having frequent in-person meetings. The value of team, however drives them back together” (p. 94).

Communication and collaboration are key tools when multiplying the vision (Bonem & Patterson, 2005). “Geoff (Surratt) tries to ensure that every campus pastor has a clear understanding of the Seacoast vision. A weekly conference call for all the campus pastors, periodic retreats, and frequent one-on-one conversations with Geoff are all part of the team’s success” (2005, p. 94). The requirement of a campus pastor to multiply the vision requires that they understand the vision first (Bonem & Patterson, 2005). A clear understanding is key, but being fully committed to the vision and the plan to fulfill it is more important (Bonem & Patterson, 2005).

Bonem and Patterson (2005) noted that a campus pastor should be “proactive in helping other leaders understand and implement the organization’s vision. This is especially true in the areas for which you are directly responsible” (p. 103). Multiplying the vision is a key part of the multisite church movement and a key responsibility for the campus pastor. As Bonem and Patterson (2005) argued, “every time another leader takes hold of the vision, the organization’s potential to achieve grows exponentially. It is exciting when your team members begin to truly catch the vision and take personal ownership of it” (p. 103).

Statement of the Problem

Every organization is shaped by its culture; the vision, mission, and communication pathways are essential drivers of an organization’s culture. Culture is contextualized and often formed by the surrounding community. The multisite church has the unique challenge of creating

and keeping organizational culture across different locations; at times, those locations are hundreds of miles apart.

Culture is represented by the combination of three values an individual or an organization will steward: “God’s kingdom agenda, who you are, and your unique setting” (Lewis, et al., 2005, p 21). If communication is a driving force in keeping culture, does video teaching impact the culture of a multisite location? If culture is contextualized to the community that surrounds it, can culture be multiplied across multiple locations? How is culture created, kept, and multiplied in an organization filled with people outside of one unique setting?

Research Purpose

The intent of this descriptive qualitative study was to evaluate the leadership and attendee perception of the methods and strategies used by the multisite church to create and keep one unique culture in spite of their varying proximity, or demographics. The study explored organizational culture, including communication pathways, vision, and mission in three common multisite church models: the local franchise model, the national franchise model, and the live teaching model.

Research Questions

The following Research Questions provided the data needed to guide this study:

RQ1. What are the similarities and differences in the methods and strategies used to create and keep culture between the three researched multisite church models?

RQ2. How do participating church campus pastors describe the communication pathways within their church organization toward creating and keeping one culture?

RQ3. How do participating church campus pastors describe the vision and mission within their church organization toward creating and keeping one culture?

RQ4. What is the overall perception by church pastors of the methods and strategies in creating and keeping one culture?

Assumptions and Delimitations

Assumptions

Numerous assumptions and delimitations existed for this research project. The qualitative survey of multisite location leaders was limited to the scope of the objective responses given by the leader completing the survey. Responders of the survey included campus pastors, multisite staff, and volunteers. The research focused on how culture is created and best kept across the multisite locations.

For the purpose of this research, the multisite location served as a group within an organization. “Organizations exists within cultural environments. Within each organization there is a culture unique to that organization” (Richmond, et al., 2013, p. 137). Additionally, this project presupposed that culture is heavily influenced by communication (Richmond, et al., 2013). The data accumulated from the research questions provided research designed to delimitate the perceptions of communication within the church organization and analyze how it related to the specific multisite model used.

Delimitations

The research considered a variety of multisite locations that meet the criteria of the local franchise model, the national franchise model, and the live teaching model. While the overall weekend attendance of the church was not considered, each location that was surveyed had a weekend Sunday worship attendance of 250 – 800 attendees. This project only researched data from multisite churches that considered their lead pastor as the primary vision caster for their church. It was presupposed that the primary vision caster is also the primary communicator. The

primary communicator can be live or via video broadcast. This delimitation eliminates any multisite church that provides campus-specific teaching.

Finally, the project delimited any multisite church where the lead pastor is on campus for the Sunday worship more than one service per month, with the exception of the central campus. The purpose of this delimitation is to assess the perceived impact a live teacher has on the multisite church's culture. Each campus surveyed will have been in existence for a minimum of two years and maintained the same campus pastor over a two-year span. The rationale for this was to test the impact that tenure had on creating and keeping culture.

Definition of Terms

1. *Broadcast Location*: The location or campus where the Sunday worship service message is recorded or live-streamed in a video-venue multisite church model. The broadcast location is exclusive to the video-teaching model. At times, this location will also serve as the central location.
2. *Campus (Location) Pastor*: This position serves as the pastor for their specific campus. In addition to campus ministry oversight, this role conveyed "the DNA of the primary campus, recruit the core team, develop the new leaders" (Surratt, Ligon, & Bird, 2006, p. 144).
3. *Central Location*: The location or campus where centralized staff are located. This location often serves as a main hub for the multisite church. Often, the central location is the oldest or original campus. However, this isn't always the case in multisite churches.
4. *Centralized Staff*: Staff and/or Pastors that are designated to serve all campuses within a church.
5. *Culture*: "accumulated pattern of values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by an identifiable group of people with a common history and a verbal and nonverbal system" (Neuliep, 2000, p. 26).
6. *Executive Leadership*: Staff and/or Pastors designated to lead departments within a church; at times, leading multiple staff, including Pastors. This team "typically includes the senior pastor, executive pastor (or something similar), and other key leaders based upon the church's organizational structure" (Edwards, 2016, p. 21).
7. *Lead (Senior) Pastor*: This position is often used when a church has more than one pastor. The Lead or Senior Pastor "oversees the other staff members" (Rainer, 2013).

8. *Live Teaching Model*: This model continued the multisite theme, as in it shares a common vision, budget, and elder board. However, each campus offered “its own expression of local, live teaching. . . . Typically, the live teaching is coordinated throughout all campuses and the Campus Teaching Pastors sit on a global teaching team to create the teaching calendar and content” (Vanderbloom, 2016). Examples of churches that followed the live teaching multisite model are New Life Church, and Celebration Church.
9. *Local Franchise Model*: This model provides a duplication of the Sunday worship service from the broadcast campus. Each campus “is granted the responsibility and authority to express the church’s “brand,” that is, its vision, worship, preaching, discipleship, care, and mission” (House and Allison, 2017, p. 58). Each of these campuses used video or streaming to broadcast the teaching from the broadcast campus. The local franchise model consisted of campuses that were within one hour of the broadcast campus. Examples of churches that used the local franchise model concept are National Community Church, Summit Church, and North Point Ministries.
10. *Local Leadership Team*: Paid or unpaid leaders designated within a location or campus. The local leadership team can consist of the location pastor and any other person “determined by the particularities of the local” location (2017, p. 225).
11. *Multisite Church*: “one church in two or more locations, under one overall leadership and budget” (Bird, 2014, p. 3).
12. *National Franchise Model*: The national franchise model followed the same general guidelines as the local franchise model with the exception of location. The national franchise model was any campus that fits the definition of the local franchise model but was located over an hour away from the broadcast campus. This type of venue has gained popularity in recent years and will include: Life.Church, Elevation Church, and Saddleback Church.
13. *Organizational Culture*: “The basic tacit assumptions about how the world is and ought to be that a group of people share and that determines their perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and their overt behavior” (Schein, 1996, p. 11).
14. *Rotating Teacher Model*: This model is used within the live-teaching multisite church model. The rotating teaching model includes a group of teachers designated to teach at each campus. The live-teachers rotate to different locations week-to-week.

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was not to argue that a church organization should or should not multiply itself. The multisite movement has arrived in the American culture, and it has

advanced the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Research that has been conducted on the multisite church includes leadership structures, teaching teams, pastor succession, among others. One focus of the multisite church that has not been sufficiently researched is how organizational culture is created and kept across multiple locations. “Organizational culture, and more pertinently church culture, is intensely potent. Church culture is a powerful force in the hands of those who shape a local church according to God’s design” (2016, p. 126).

In their book, *Multi-Site Roadtrip*, the authors (2009) noted that “a church with campuses of different sizes and locations often struggles with a basic question of unity: “What makes us one church” (p. 30)? Church organizations have used different strategies to answer that question. In spite of the geographical challenges that multisite churches face, multisite organizations are achieving the strategy of creating one culture in multiple locations. This research study attempted to answer the question by researching different models, communication pathways, methods, and strategies.

Summary of the Design

The first phase of this research was to identify six multisite churches that fit the delimitations outlined within the research project. This phase began by identifying the multisite churches within *Outreach Magazine’s Fastest Growing Churches in America, 2019*.

After the multisite churches were identified, e-mails were sent to campus pastors to identify their church size, multisite method, and willingness to participate in the project. Participation in the survey was “not be coerced, but (was) highly encouraged in order to best represent the most dynamic multisite churches in North America. Additionally, their participation (was) strongly encouraged . . . to serve thousands of other multisite churches in America” (2016, p. 108).

The second phase of this project was to develop a survey with the guidance of an expert panel and used it to answer Research Question Two. Serving on the panel included multisite experts that consisted of executive leadership of multisite churches. In addition, leaders within the multisite church who have had significant works, dissertations, or books published were also included on the panel. To form this survey, the researcher developed an initial draft from the existing research found in the literature review. The initial draft was then sent to the expert panel for their feedback.

The panel was asked to evaluate the survey with the following criteria: (One) do you feel that the questions in this survey will be effective in gathering accurate data for the question, “What are the similarities and differences in the methods and strategies used to create and keep culture between the three researched multisite church models?” (Two) Do you believe any questions within the survey are leading or biased; and (Three) do you recommend the removal or the addition of questions better suited to answer the research question? Each panel member was given the opportunity to contribute to the formation of the survey and was communicated with via email.

After the formation of the survey, the researcher identified six multisite church locations that fit the proposed delimitations. Campus pastors of each location were contacted and asked if they would participate in the project. If the campus pastors agreed, they were asked to distribute the survey to attendees in their location that give financially at least one time per month, serve at least one time per month, or both. The data was collected, sent to the researcher, analyzed, and categorized to answer Research Question One.

The second phase of this qualitative research project was used to answer Research Questions Two, Three, and Four. To answer the remaining questions, a qualitative interview of

the six selected multisite churches occurred. The researcher conducted a qualitative interview with campus pastors from each of the selected multisite churches via Zoom. Each interview followed the recommendations by Creswell; “these interviews will involve unstructured and generally open-ended questions that are few in number and intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants” (Creswell, 2014, p. 190). The Zoom teleconferences were recorded, analyzed, and categorized to answer Research Questions Two, Three, and Four.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Overview

The purpose of this chapter was to provide a literature review on topics limited to the leadership and attendee perception of the organizational culture within the multisite church. This review covered often discussed topics that are relevant to the proposed topic of research. Those topics included a brief history of the multisite church, popular theological, and theoretical debates within the multisite church and the importance of cultural relevance in church organizations. In addition, this chapter included a brief literature review on organizational theory as it pertains to this research project. The chapter also provided a theological and theoretical framework before providing a summary of relevant literature, a rationale for the study, and a gap in research.

Theological Framework

The purpose of this section was to provide a summary of the current research as it relates to the multisite movement and organizational culture from a theological perspective. The following section highlighted arguments of both, proponents, and opponents of the multisite movement. While additional research exists, this section narrowed the focus on the topics that relate to the leadership and attendee perception of the church organization within multisite churches.

The Background of the Multisite Movement

There were only a few multisite churches throughout America in the 1980s, but the multisite movement began long before the 20th century (House & Allison, 2017). House and Allison (2017) argued that “the very first Christian church was a multisite church” (p. 31). J.D.

Greear, President of the Southern Baptist Convention, agreed that the church of Acts was a multisite church.

The new congregation in Jerusalem is frequently referred to in the singular, one “church” (Acts 8:1; 11:22; 15:4). However, they obviously had to meet in different times and locations. Historians tell us there was no space in Jerusalem available to the disciples in which three thousand or more people could have met on a weekly basis. It also appears that many first-century house churches came together to celebrate the Lord’s supper as one citywide church (see 1 Cor 11:17–20; Romans 16:5)” (Greear, 2010).

There are scholars who disagree with the claim that the church discussed in Acts 2:46 was one church in multiple locations. For instance, Gaines (2012) argued that the New Testament offers no precedent for the multisite structure. In his dissertation examining the methods of new campus expansion within the multisite church, Gordon (2019) noted,

Roman church, as described by the Apostle Paul, as yet another illustration of a Biblical and historical multi-campus church. In the Book of Romans, Paul addressed all the Christians in Rome, yet acknowledged that they met in various locations throughout the city. While there were some differences between the ancient Roman church and the modern iteration of multi-campus churches, similarities have endured including the use of different locations and the presence of local leadership at each site (Cole, 2009) (p. 19).

While scholars have debated the New Testament origin of the multisite church, House and Allison (2017) argued “the multisite structure . . . continued to characterize churches after the apostolic age. The one-bishop framework, initiated in the second century, developed into the early church’s organization of a regional bishop leading all the churches in a geographical area” (p. 33). Perhaps the intention of the early church was to fall under the definition of the modern multisite church, one church in two or more locations, under one overall leadership and budget, but the New Testament does not provide that support.

The first modern multisite church, Perimeter Church, was launched by a pastor named Randy Pope in 1977 (Frye, 2011). Perimeter Church receives the distinction of becoming the first modern multisite church because of the intention that Pope held when he launched the church, “being one church in multiple locations” (Frye, 2011, p. 100). Pope’s strategy to reach

the city of Atlanta was to launch one congregation in multiple locations that would serve under the same senior pastor, leadership structure, and mission (Chandler, 1992). Pope's church was innovative, but the growth of the multisite church did not occur until decades later. "In the late 1990s, fewer than fifty multisite churches existed. By 2006, over fifteen hundred American Protestant churches were multisite. That figure rapidly escalated to five thousand multisite churches by 2009" (Sullivan, 2009, p. 4).

Why Go Multisite

There are multiple advantages for a church to go multisite. The multisite church model provides churches with the ability to "concurrently grown and become more intimate" (Gordon, 2019, p. 26). Typically, a church the size of two hundred people would not be able to afford the creative resources that a church of three thousand could afford. The multisite church has given "churches who opened multiple locations (the ability) to leverage the assets of a large organization while simultaneously providing the intimacy that a smaller setting afforded" (2019, p. 26).

Greear, who also pastors Summit church, in Raleigh, North Carolina, became multisite out of special necessity. "God was graciously bringing to our doors more people than we could handle. We were doing as many morning services as we could in our rented school facility, and we're having to turn people away" (Greear, 2009). Greear, did not want to turn people away, so he adjusted the strategy of Summit church. Since that monumental shift, he recognizes the "multi-site model for the church is both biblically sound and practically helpful, and we have embraced multi-site as a strategy for growing our church and reaching our city, not merely as a temporary way to deal with a space problem" (2009).

Perhaps the biggest reason to go multisite is listed in the title of this section, “Go.” In the book of Matthew, Jesus told His disciples to “go and make disciples” (Matt 28:19). The multisite strategy helps church leaders achieve that mission. Herrington (2017) listed evangelism as the number one reason why churches become multisite. “The primary reason the churches seem to become multi-site is to reach new people with the gospel” (p. 35). Surrat, Ligon, and Bird (2009) noted,

For many churches, the biblical motivation for embracing the multi-site model isn’t controversial. Churches want to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19–20) by giving more opportunities for the gospel to be shared. They want to obey the Great Commandment (Matt. 22:37–40) by taking the love of Christ to the people, meeting them where they are. These churches believe that new campuses are places where (to borrow the metaphor of Jesus in Luke 15) lost sheep and coins are sought out, and where lost children are welcomed home. They want to take big risks for God that don’t violate Scripture, sharing the apostle Paul’s dream that “by all means possible I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel” (1 Cor. 9:22–23) (p. 201).

The Argument against the Multisite Church.

The purpose of this research project was not to join the ongoing debates on the biblical validity of the multisite church. As illustrated in earlier sections of this project, there is still debate, but the multisite church is here to stay. The purpose of this project is to explore the leader and attendee perception of organizational culture in spite of the variables that exist within the multisite church. However, there are two specific debates that relate to the purpose of this study and both will be briefly discussed.

Streaming Broadcast

After successfully launching three additional campuses at Perimeter Church, Pope elected to discontinue the multisite model. Pope noted that one factor for his decision was that pastors should be the primary communicator for their campus (Pope, 2015). Pope (2015) noted that “A pastor is called to lead the congregation. Much of the leadership collateral that makes this

possible is gained through preaching. We are called pastor-teachers because we pastor in a significant way through our teaching” (p. 1). Perhaps most striking was his final claim that “If the leader isn't preaching, and the preacher isn't leading, there's a serious disconnect” (2015, p. 1).

Another issue that opponents of the streaming broadcast method is the claim that teaching pastors will have difficulty contextualizing with their audience (Herrington, 2017). Herrington provided extensive research in his recent study. Herrington (2017) noted, “One argument against simulcast preaching—because it separates the preacher from the audience—is that it limits the preacher from being able to contextualize to each of the different campuses” (p. 67). It would be difficult for a pastor of any church with over 200 members to understand the specific needs of each member, but a simulcast broadcast does make it difficult for a teaching pastor to “have some sense of the room” when he or she is teaching (Leeman, 2014).

A third issue brought forth by opponents of simulcast teaching is the belief that it promotes an entertainment factor or consumerism that live teaching would not (Herrington, 2017). In an article titled, *Nine Reasons I Don't Like Multisite Churches*, White (2010) noted:

With varying degrees of guilt, the multi-site method encourages consumerism. In the best scenarios, screens display messages from the most gifted communicators. Most locations have campus pastors who are theologically sound or they would not have been hired. They must be able to teach or they do not fit the biblical qualifications (1 Tim. 3:2). They may not, however, communicate as effectively or in such an entertaining manner as the video preacher. Perceptive audiences get the message when the more entertaining speaker has the spotlight.

White co-authored a book titled, *Franchising McChurch: Feeding Our Obsession with Easy Christianity*, which he and the co-author named simulcast teaching, “theotainment” (White & Yeats, 2009, p 135). In their book, White and Yeats (2009) warned “Our inclination is that the multisite methodology should be feared rather than commended. It typically creates a consumer

mentality, undermines church planting, compromises ecclesiology, and focuses on numerical growth as a measure of success (p. 163).

Lack of Teaching Opportunities for Campus Pastors

In his dissertation on leadership structures and dynamics within the multisite church, Edwards, noted (2016) that “more than half of campus pastors responded that they aspired for more preaching opportunities. Nearly half (45.5 percent) of campus pastors in this study indicated they preach 4 times or less each year” (p. 214-215). In a multisite church that uses a video teaching model, the opportunities for campus pastors to teach on a Sunday worship service are few and far between (2016). Opposers of the multisite church could potentially argue that the lack of teaching opportunities stunts the potential of campus pastors.

Even in live teaching models, the opportunity to teach or develop a sermon series are not the same as a single site pastor would have. Edwards’ study highlighted that pastors in “live preacher” models were often told what he must preach on any given weekend (2016). “This study indicated that 70 percent of campus pastors never or only on occasion have the opportunity to choose their preaching text or topic” (2016, p. 215). While there are advantages of pastors preaching the same text within a multisite church at their Sunday worship service, “many pastors feel that in order to be sensitive to their unique context, they need the ability to choose their own texts on an occasional, or even regular basis” (2016, p. 215 – 216).

Lack of Biblical Support

Perhaps the largest argument against the multisite church is that the approach, as defined in this chapter, is not discussed in Scripture. White (2010) argued that the multisite church contradicts the meaning of church provided by Scripture. “The Greek word *ecclesia* (*ekklessia*) most often translated as “church” means assembly or gathering. The oft heard mantra “one

church many locations” is a contradiction in terms” (White, 2010). White further (2010) argued, “The meaning of *ecclesia*, the commands to bear one another’s burdens, and congregational polity outweigh arguments from silence about congregation size or anachronistic arguments about Paul and technology. Thus, Scripture provides no firm foundation for the multi-site methodology.”

Gaines (2012) established the same principle in his dissertation. In Gaines’ extensive research regarding the multisite church, he argued:

The theme of the people of God as one assembly is central to the New Testament teaching on the church. In the New Testament, the church is the regathered assembly of the Lord. The ultimate form of the church is a single heavenly-eschatological assembly that is gathered in Christ by the Spirit, and each local church is viewed as a manifestation in time and space of this one heavenly-eschatological assembly. Because of this, each earthly assembly should be viewed as a manifestation of the ultimate heavenly reality. Each earthly assembly has the status of a full-fledged, self-contained, earthly manifestation of the heavenly-eschatological assembly. Thus, what multi-site proponents consider a site or campus that is merely part of a church, the Bible considers a church in itself” (p. 67-68).

In an article for *9Marks*, Jonathan Leeman (2010) wrote that multisite churches have mistaken a network of churches as a church. “The problem with this argument is, Paul does not write to a network of churches. He writes to the church (singular) in the city of Corinth and the “churches” (plural) in the region of Galatia” (2010). Leeman (2010) also discussed that multisite church proponents refer to house churches as one church. Leeman (2010) argued:

Nowhere does Paul refer to the church (singular) of Rome or Colossae, nor does he refer to house “churches” in Jerusalem. Even if there is a reason to think he was writing to a single church in Rome or Colossae, as some commentators argue there’s absolutely no reason to think that said house churches also belong to (or constitute) the single city church. Maybe there is one major church in Rome to whom he’s writing, and maybe Prisca and Aquila happen to have their own little church on the outskirts of the city. Who knows! The point is, the Scriptures do not speak to any of this. It only speaks of “those in Rome loved by God” in chapter 1 and the “church in their house” in chapter 16. Everything else, we might say, we have to make up

Relational Proximity

In Dennis Kyle's dissertation, *Examining the Ecclesiological Soundness of the Southern Baptist Multisite Movement*. He discussed the relational proximity implied of ekklesia in the New Testament. Kyle (2019) noted that while proponents of the multisite church "place no value on the geographical proximity required to maintain relational proximity in the local church" (p. 101). Kyle took issue with this position, (2019) stating that "it prohibits the relational proximity prescribed for church members in the New Testament that can only be accomplished in the context of the gathered church" (p. 101).

Kyle's argument includes the distribution of spiritual gifts for the good of the body (1 Cor 12:7) (2019). "The distribution of spiritual gifts within the church entails the necessity of relational proximity and the exercise of the gifts in the assembly of the church" (2019, p. 101). The multisite church's members rarely, if ever, all gather. Kyle (2019) argued, "The limited relational proximity limits the ability of church members to exercise their spiritual gifts for the good of others or to receive the benefit of the spiritual giftedness of others" (p. 101).

Lack of Leadership Clarity

Edwards provided an in-depth study in 2016 on the leadership dynamics in the multisite church. In his research, Edwards found that after his survey of campus pastors tension existed in the minds of campus pastors in terms of the complexities of the multisite leadership structures (Edwards, 2016). "Senior leadership in multisite churches will be wise to recognize, embrace, and provide ongoing clarity to their subordinates related to their leadership structure's complexities" (p. 188). He went on to note, that his research showed, "When campus pastors were asked to describe or identify the nature of their church's organizational decision-making structure, they often expressed difficulty in doing so" (p. 188).

Edwards researched revealed complexities in the organizational structure for campus pastors. Campus pastors are empowered to lead their campus but are not free to make the decisions that a single site pastor would (2016). The expectation is that campus pastors are vision casters of the senior pastor, but communication with that pastor is not often more than once per month (2016). “To say that they “lead an entire campus,” but then to say that they “are not free to make their own decisions” seems confusing not only to the reader, but in many cases, to the campus pastor himself” (p. 201).

Edwards research highlighted conflict occurring as the result of being “too controlled” and often those lack of freedoms and limitations aren’t expressed or weighed in the hiring process of campus pastors (2016). Vision casting for campus pastors might even be more limited in the case of video teaching models. A “campus pastor is expected to cast vision, touch hearts, and cover the announcements in perhaps 240 public seconds or less each weekend. That takes a special set of gifts” (Surratt, Ligon, and Bird, 2013, p. 124).

Biblical Guidelines for Church Structure

While it is difficult to find an example of the modern multisite church in the New Testament, finding any appropriate church organization is difficult. “As it has been noted previously, historical consensus does not exist within Christianity as to a single form of church organization and government” (Frye, 2011, p. 194). Erickson (2013) noted, “Attempts to develop a structure of church government that adheres to the authority of the Bible encounter difficulty at two points. The first is the lack of didactic material . . . (and) there is no unitary pattern” (p. 1003). Erickson further (2013) noted,

There is no prescriptive exposition of what the government of the church is to be like, comparable to, say, Paul’s elucidation of the doctrines of human sinfulness and justification by faith. The churches are not instructed to adopt a particular form of church order. The only didactic passages on church government are Paul’s enumerations of basic

qualifications for officers that already existed (1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9). Although it is preferable to build on the basis of didactic or perspective rather than narrative or descriptive passages, in this case we have little choice (p. 1003).

Ecclesia or Ekklesia

The Greek term, *ekklesia*, which White (2010) called a contradiction to the multisite church claim, one church in multiple locations, has also been rebutted by multisite church proponents. Allison (2017) argued that while multisite supporters agree that Christians are to assemble, *ekklesia* has a deeper contextual meaning than multisite opponents provide. In their book, *Multichurch*, House and Allison (2017) noted:

Assembly and gathering are not the only translations of this word. It can refer to meetings of Christians in particular houses (Acts 12:12), the church in a city (1 Cor. 1:1-2; 1 Thess. 1:1), all the churches in a region (Acts 9:31), the universal church (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:21-23), the Christian people (1 Cor. 10:32), and even the saints already in heaven (Heb. 12:23). Even when the word clearly means “assembly,” *ekklesia* itself does not indicate the manner of the assembly, that is, if it is a gather of a few members, some members, many members or all the members (p. 39).

In his research project, Frye (2011) noted the evolving nature of the early church.

Regarding the term, *ekklessia*, Frye (2011) noted:

during the NT era the concept of *ekklesia* was fluid from location to location and situation to situation. Variation existed in terms of where, how often, in what numbers, in what groups, and for what purposes the New Testament *ekklesias* met. As such, no singular NT church arrangement (or a combination of them all) provides a clear ecclesiological structure (p. 184).

Greear (2009) argued that “The essence of a New Testament local church, however, is not “assembly” but “covenant body.” He did not discredit the importance of assembly, or meeting as members. Instead, Greear (2009) argued that “Assembly” is a much-needed function, but “covenant” is the essence.” The New Testament provided evidence of single-service assembly, but it does not limit the church to that specific model. In fact, we see both models evidenced (1 Corinthians 11) (Greear, 2009). “The new congregation in Jerusalem is frequently

referred to in the singular, one “church” (Acts 8:1; 11:22; 15:4). However, they obviously had to meet in different times and locations” (Greear, 2009).

It has become evident that the multisite model is not for everyone. Ministry leaders as highlighted within this work have shared their concerns and displeasure with the multisite strategy for reaching the lost. However, there appears to be no substantial evidence that following the multisite model is unbiblical. In his overview of the modern multisite church, Frye (2011) noted, “If multi-site ecclesiological expressions achieve the purposes of God’s design and they more effectively aid churches in reaching the lost, the multi-site church conception is not only appropriate—it is also commendable” (p. 190).

Theology and Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is widely studied and there is numerous scholarly and popular literature on the subject. However, there appears to be little research on organizational culture and theology (Mahan, 2014). Ward (2011) defined church organizational culture as “the system of basic assumptions, values, and reinforced behavioral expectations that are shared by the people within a church and tangibly reflected in their symbolic expressions and collective practices” (p. 104).

Every organization has a culture and the church is no different. Identifying the culture of a church organization is important for any ministry leader. In their book, *Culture Shift*, the authors (2005) noted, “Culture is the most important social reality in your church. Though invisible to the untrained eye, its power is undeniable. Culture gives color and flavor to everything your church is and does” (p. 3).

Identifying the culture within a single-site church can be challenging in its own right, but the multisite church would prove to be more difficult. The multisite church could be one church

in anywhere from two to over 30 locations. Those locations could be a 15 minute or 24-hour drive from one another. The following section will provide a summary of organizational culture from a theological perspective.

Theology of Culture

The term culture does not exist anywhere in the Bible. However, culture has existed from the beginning of humankind (Dyrness, 2001). Theology and culture have always weaved together, and readers can identify how culture has influenced theology and how theology has influenced culture in many ancient writings. In an article titled, *Christianity and Culture*, Dyrness (2001) noted “The fall following Adam and Eve’s rebellion against God’s instructions resulted in a disordered community and a culture that reflected human pride (Gen. 11:4).” (p. 228).

Christianity has also influenced the culture from its inception. Often, critics note that the New Testament offers little discussion regarding culture. Dyrness (2001) disagreed, and noted:

The oft-repeated remark that the NT is indifferent to culture holds only for a very narrow view of culture. The Christian experience with Christ was seen to have great implications for culture (cf. Paul’s advice to Philemon). And if the OT vision of earthly and human renewal is borne in mind, it can be seen that Christ’s earthly work started a process of transformation that will be gloriously completed when he returns to judge the world, a consummation which by our response of faith and obedience we are already made to taste (p. 228).

Culture has also heavily influenced the organizational structure of the church. Frye (2011) noted that even “Paul’s growing understanding of what the church is and how it should function provides a clear example of this evolution in his understanding of the church” (p. 183). The reality that culture has and continues to influence how the church operates is not something that should be feared, it should be embraced. As Erickson (2013) noted,

The church must also be versatile and flexible in adjusting its methods and procedures to the changing situations of the world in which it finds itself. It must go where needy

persons are found, even if that means a geographical or cultural change. It must not cling to all its old ways. As the world to which it is trying to minister changes, the church will have to adapt its ministry accordingly, but without altering its basic direction (p. 987).

Culture of the Church

Like every organization, every church has a culture. “Worship style, the nature of the sermon, the ways in which members interact with each other, church signage, etc., are all behavioral artifacts of the church’s culture” (Hebert, 2014). A church organization can be influenced by both, the external cultural and internal cultural influences. Geiger and Peck (2016) noted that “Church culture is formed through the actual beliefs and resulting expressions for a local church about creation, the identity of the local church, and how the local church interacts in the world” (p. 103). As individuals develop a culture within their church, they must rush to Scripture to identify how the church was meant to influence the world around it. How the church is organized is important, but the mission of the church is more important!

The Call to Multiply

At the heart of the multisite movement is the call to multiply their church in multiple locations in order to fulfill Christ’s mandate to make disciples in all nations (Matt. 28:19-20).

Bethlehem Baptist Church Lead Pastor, John Piper noted:

For many churches, the biblical motivation for embracing the multisite model isn’t very controversial. Churches want to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) by giving more opportunities for the Gospel to be shared. They want to obey the Great Commandment (Matt. 22:37-40) by taking the love of Christ to the people, meeting them where they are. . . . They want to take big risks for God that don’t violate Scripture, sharing the Apostle Paul’s dream that “by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the Gospel” (1 Cor. 9:22-23) (Surratt, Ligon, & Bird, 2009, p. 201).

Multiplication takes intentional leadership development; Geiger and Peck (2016) argued that “A church’s capacity for developing leaders relies on the collective worldview of the church and whether it is compatible with the ambition” (p. 125). Multisite churches have placed a

premium on leadership development and recruit potential leaders on their ability to lead.

Life.Church Lead Pastor, Craig Groeschel noted that the most following essentials when identifying team leaders:

One is we have to be a developer of people, to see potential in people, and help bring it out. We have to be willing to have transparent conversations at the same time, we need to be team players as leaders. We are not just coaches but player-coaches. We need to remain teachable and keep growing, so our players don't outgrow us (Crosby, 2012, p. 152).

Theology and Communication

Theology and Communication have been connected since the beginning of humankind. God has also always used the communication methods that the current culture presented. Throughout most of the history of humanity, God has “made His will clear through the written messages He had given in the past – in other words, through the Bible” (Graham, 2010). From the Old Testament, continuing in the New Testament, the early church, and the decades to follow, the teachings of God have been communicated through a variety of methods.

God has always used technology. As Moses delivered the ten commandments to the Israelites, He did so by using tablets. The technology became much more sophisticated over the years, and by the time of the New Testament, God was using technology in a different way. Pastor and author, Mark Driscoll (2008) argued, “In the days of the New Testament, the apostles used the technology available to them to speak to churches at which they were not present. They sent letters by courier to the church they were responsible for” (p. 248).

Greear also identified the use of technology in the New Testament. He (2009) noted,

It is clear in Acts 2 to 8 that all eight thousand (some historians estimate that the actual size at the end of Acts 3 would have been about ten thousand) were not gathering weekly in one place to hear one teaching pastor give a message. Perhaps the Apostles were a teaching team who rotated between the houses. Perhaps groups of the church gathered with particular apostles in small assembly places (campuses). Yet they were one church.

Theoretical Framework

The purpose of this section is to provide a summary of the current research as it relates to the multisite movement and organizational culture from a theoretical perspective. The multisite movement includes multiple models, but this project will focus on three specific models, the franchise model, the national franchise model, and the live teaching model. In 2011, Frye provided a taxonomy that heavily influenced the overview of this section. However, the multisite movement continues to evolve, and the taxonomy of this project has been adjusted to fit the delimitations of this research. In addition to an overview of the multisite models selected for this project, the section will also discuss organizational culture and provide both, secular and theological research.

Multisite Organizational Models

There are multiple taxonomies of multisite models. For years, experts have attempted to categorize each structure (Edwards, 2016). While multisite experts like Surratt, Ligon, Bird (2006, 2009) and most recently House and Allison (2017) have all provided these taxonomies. The taxonomy used for this project does not mirror any one specific taxonomy previously used. However, the researcher used previous taxonomies to develop one specific to this project.

The following section will provide a summary of the three common multisite church models evaluated within this research project. As Frye (2011) noted, his taxonomy followed three characteristics of the multisite church to differentiate each organization: “(1) proximity of sites, (2) preaching methodology, and (3) process of multi-siting” (Frye, 2011, p 138). To explore the attendee perception of organizational culture in each of these models, this project will provide a review of the literature on each model: local franchise, national franchise, and live teaching.

Local Franchise Model

This model provides a duplication of the Sunday worship service from the broadcast campus. Each campus “is granted the responsibility and authority to express the church’s “brand,” that is, its vision, worship, preaching, discipleship, care, and mission” (House and Allison, 2017, p. 58). Each of these campuses will use video or streaming to broadcast the teaching from the broadcast campus. The local franchise model is a combination of two models previously characterized by Frye, the localized multisite and the regional multisite model. The local franchise model will consist of campuses that are within one hour of the broadcast campus. Examples of churches that use the local franchise model concept are National Community Church, Summit Church, and North Point Ministries.

Frye (2011) characterized the localized multisite model as “one church with two or more campuses focused on a limited geographical region. Generally, churches within this proximity category focus on a single city or a limited part of a region” (p. 143). Frye’s description is useful for this project. However, the local franchise model is limited to multisite churches that are within an hour of the broadcast campus. While in more urbanized areas, an hour limitation might very well create a church focus on a single city or a limited part of a region, that dynamic will change in rural areas.

In addition to Frye’s localized model, the researcher also considered Frye’s regional model. Frye (2011) defined the regional multisite model as “a regional multi-site church is one church with multiple sites positioned throughout a region” (p 145). Church of the Highlands, with a weekly attendance of over 40,000 has 16 locations throughout the state of Alabama (churchofthehighlands.com, 2018). The Summit Church has nine locations; each location is in

North Carolina and the majority are situated around Durham and Raleigh (summitrdu.com, 2018).

Frye would consider National Community Church as a regional multisite church, due to the fact that they meet in multiple states (Frye, 2011). While it is true, National Community Church has locations in Maryland, Virginia, and Washington D.C. The focus of National Community Church is on Washington D.C. and the limited region surrounding the city. This example is why it is essential to combine the two models for this project.

National Franchise Model

The national franchise model follows the same general guidelines as the local franchise model with the exception of location. The national franchise model will be any campus that fits the definition of the local franchise model but is located over an hour away from the broadcast campus. This type of venue has gained popularity in recent years and will include: Life.Church, Elevation Church, and Saddleback Church. The national franchise model follows the model that Frye described as, the extended multisite model.

In continuation of Frye's taxonomy, he (2011) defines the extended multisite model as "This final multi-site proximity classification is not limited to geographic boundaries. It centers on one church with multiple sites extending beyond a single region traversing multiple regions, states, nations, or some combination of the three" (p 147). Life.Church has 31 locations across 10 states (life.church, 2018). Elevation Church has 16 locations; in addition to the thirteen locations across North and South Carolina, they have locations in Florida, Virginia, and Toronto (elevationchurch.com, 2018). Next Level Church has nine locations in 3 states; New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Florida (nextlevel.church, 2020).

Each of the models considered in this research has seen growth. The largest church in America, Life.Church, however, fits within the national franchise model. The lead pastor of Life.Church is Craig Groechel. “Groechel leads the largest church in the country, but he doesn’t like to dwell on Life.Church’s size” (Briggs, 2018). In fact, you will not find Life.Church’s name on top of the *Outreach 100 Largest Churches List*. While Life.Church has provided a model that many churches are attempting to duplicate, “it wasn’t premeditated” (Briggs, 2018). Groechel (2018) noted, “once the church grew beyond its seating and service time capacity, someone had the “crazy idea” of meeting in more than one location.” He stumbled upon the video stream option when he was forced to broadcast a previous recording after the birth of his son on a Saturday evening” (Briggs, 2018).

Live Teaching Model

This model continues the multisite theme, as in it shares a common vision, budget, and elder board. However, each campus offers “its own expression of local, live teaching. . . . Typically, the live teaching is coordinated throughout all campuses and the Campus Teaching Pastors sit on a global teaching team to create the teaching calendar and content” (Vanderbloom, 2016). The live teaching model is, perhaps, the broadest model evaluated in this project. Multisite churches that use the live teaching model fit the proximity guidelines of both the local and national multisite models. The live teaching model also uses a variety of teaching methods including the rover, rotation, and collaborative approach (Frye, 2011).

The rover approach has been defined as “a single individual traveling between two or more locations to preach during a weekend, especially during the Sunday morning hours” (Frye, 2011, p. 152). The rover approach has been part of the multisite church model very early on (Harrison, 2017). In the early days of Perimeter Church, Pope noted,

Within two years of beginning Perimeter Church, we felt it was time to birth a second congregation that we called ‘Perimeter West.’ I preached an early service at our original location, left before the service had ended, drove approximately ten miles to our new congregation, and walked in just in time to preach. Then, before that service was complete, I was back into my car and drove back to our original congregation, once again, just in time to preach the second service” (Pope, 2002, p. 127)

While the rover approach is used in the multisite movement, it is not exclusive to it. “In terms of ministry within the American history, the Methodist circuit-riding concept would be a clear example of a roving approach to ministry” (p. 153).

The second live teaching model highlighted in this project is the rotation model. Frye (2011) defined the rotation approach as “two or more (multiple) individuals regularly preaching at the various locations of a multi-site church” (p. 153). This style has also been referred as a teaching team model (Surratt, Ligon, and Bird, 2008). One multisite church currently using the rotation model is Alpine Church. Alpine has a rotating group of teaching team pastors, who along with the campus pastor at each location will rotate through each location. In a private phone interview with Alpine Church’s Executive Lead Pastor, Scott Creps, Creps noted that Alpine had no issues with broadcast streaming, Alpine had decided to go with a different approach early on.

The third approached highlighted in this project is the collaborative approach. Frye (2011) defined the collaborative approach as “multiple individuals contribute to the creation of sermons delivered at the various locations of a multisite church” (2011, p. 156). Similar to the rotation model, a teaching team is involved in the message preparation. The teaching team “raises the quality of teaching” and is then distributed to the different teaching pastors at each location (Harrison, 2017). Frye described the collaborative approach in action at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky. “As a multisite church, Highview . . . maintains a

preaching campus pastor at each of its six campuses. On a weekly basis, the team of Highview campus pastors gathers to work on sermon preparation” (Frye, 2011, p. 158).

Trend Towards Live Teaching

In Edwards’s research project, he noted that his research found there is a trend towards live preaching (Edwards, 2016). “Live-preaching is on the rise in multisite churches, while video-preaching is becoming less prevalent” (2016, p. 198). Edwards compared his 2016 findings to the 2014, Leadership Network Study and reported that per his findings, there was a 6.9 percent increase in live preaching at all campuses and a 10.6 percent increased in a combination of live and video preaching (2016, p. 199). Edwards’s research found that over half of campus pastors desire for more preaching opportunities and this trend towards live teaching could be “good news” (2016, p. 198).

The Franchise Church Model

Frye’s taxonomy provided a multisite model template that was descriptive and outlined the important differences between each campus. Shifting the focus to another taxonomy, each of these multisite church organizations is considered franchise model churches by House and Allison. House and Allison defined the franchise church model as “one church cloned to multiple sites, each of which is granted the responsibility and authority to express the church’s “brand,” that is, vision, worship, preaching, discipleship, care, and mission” (2017, p. 58). Typically, these church organizations share a central core of staff and stream their broadcast (House & Allison, 2017). As this study focuses on the attendee perception within these church organizations, it will be interesting to examine if attendees are more attracted to a “franchise” style, or if they would prefer a more contextualized local style.

Organizational Theory

Organizations are complex and there are multiple scholarly studies dedicated to organizational theory. While this study will not provide a deep dive into organizational theory, it will highlight the importance of organizational theory as it relates to the multisite church.

“Organizations are viewed as unique social forms that embody choice, visibility, and irrevocability” (Weick, 2001, p. 7) Churches are examples of organizations, and the multisite church has the unique challenge of being one organization in multiple locations.

Weick (2001) noted, “organizations are filled with potential committing conditions. In most organizations people do things that others see (e.g., Tetlock, 1985); people make choices and decisions (e.g., empowerment); choices commit resources to programs and structures that are not reversible” (p. 8). Church organizations exist and effective leaders must understand the culture of their organization (Morgan, 2006). Morgan calls this norm an organizational reality. “Shared values, shared beliefs, shared meaning, shared understanding, and shared sense making are all different ways of describing culture” (Morgan, 2006, p. 134).

Organizational Culture

The following section will examine the current research on organizational culture. “Organizational culture . . . has saturated research for decades” (Mahan, 2014, p. 5). The literature review for organizational culture itself would consume this project if all previous research was used. This project will specifically focus on the organizational culture of the multisite church. It’s important for this research project to provide a brief summary of existing research on organizational culture while illuminating the gap of literature dedicated to the attendee perception of the organizational culture.

Defining Organizational Culture

Schein (2004) defined organizational culture as:

as a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems (p 17).

Richmond, McCroskey, and Powell (2013) noted that “Over time, organizations create their own culture” (p. 138). While the area can influence the culture of an organization, the organization is typically a larger driving force (2013). Many things within an organization can shape the culture; members of an organization will be influenced by the organizational values and goals that are set by leadership (2013). “Traditions are built, and acceptable behavior patterns are determined. . . everyone learns “how we do it around here” (2013, p. 138).

“Organizational culture has been described as assumptions and beliefs that are unconsciously shared by groups, teams, or organizations (Schein, 2010)” (Mahon, 2014, p. 5). Organizational culture exists in every organization, including the church, and it can also be intentionally influenced (Schein, 2010).

The Importance of Organizational Culture

Recognizing the culture that exists within any organization is important, Schein (2004) noted:

Culture is an abstraction, yet the forces that are created in social and organizational situations deriving from culture are powerful. If we don’t understand the operation of these forces, we become victim to them. Cultural forces are powerful because they operate outside of our awareness. We need to understand them not only because their power but also because they help to explain many of the puzzling and frustrating experiences in social and organizational life. Most importantly, understanding cultural forces enable us to understand ourselves better (p. 7).

The culture of an organization can dictate the success of an organization. Surratt, Ligon, and Bird (2009) noted the importance of organizational culture in their book, *Multisite Church*

Road Trip. “Time-tested core vision, mission, and values must be present in each venue or campus. In fact, a clear and widely shared DNA becomes the engine for expansion” (p. 48). An organization’s culture is typically created by the leadership. The leadership of an organization can create and manage the culture by how they hire, the expectations they set, and how they communicate the values of the organization (Richmond, et al., 2013).

Creating and Keeping Culture

It is the responsibility of leadership to create the culture of an organization. If the leader does not create the culture, the culture will be created in the void that he or she left. Lewis, Cordeiro, and Bird (2005) noted that a leader will develop an organizational culture based on three factors: their teaching, their attitude, and how they think. “If you’re a leader, your church’s environment should be a product of the work of God through you” (2005, p. 114).

Creating Culture

Like any organization, every church has a culture. “If the culture is healthy, amazing things happen. People love being there. People grow. Great leaders come and stay. Your church becomes attractive to the community and more fully accomplishes its mission” (Nieuwhof, 2018). The culture of your church is a magnet, it will draw in the people that connect with it best. “Even if you have not yet identified your church’s culture, others have. Culture announces its identity through everything you do. The values of your culture . . . shape the feel, behavior, and attitude of a congregation more than anything else” (Lewis, et al., p. 41).

Culture is important, how does an organization create it? Lencioni (2012) wrote, “An organization doesn’t become healthy in a linear, tidy fashion” (p. 15). Understanding the health of your organization is key to creating its culture. In order for a church to create the right culture,

it must start by building the right team (Lencioni, 2012). Nieuwhof (2018) contested, “Church culture isn’t naturally healthy because people aren’t naturally healthy.”

The second step in creating culture is create and overcommunicate clarity (Lencioni, 2012). Leaders of the church must be aligned; the answers to what is important to the leader and church must not only be consistent, they must be communicated “clearly, repeatedly, enthusiastically, and repeatedly (that’s not a typo). When it comes to reinforcing clarity, there is no such thing as too much communication” (Lencioni, 2012, p. 15). Nieuwhof (2018) noted that a church must “create memorable, exportable language.”

Lewis, Cordeiro, & Bird (2005) listed four ingredients when creating culture. The first ingredient is leadership and values. “What values do members of your church’s leadership communicate? . . . Leaders more than anyone else set the cultural climate of a church” (2005, p. 48). The second ingredient, vision statement. “A good vision statement is one people can feel and connect within both an individual and a congregational way” (p. 48).

The third ingredient, as listed by Lewis, Cordeiro, & Bird is “symbols, ceremonies, (and) celebrations” (p. 48). “The things you honor, remember, and cheer for are the things you most value” (p. 48). The final ingredient is the church leader themselves. “As a leader, you consciously or unconsciously pull everything you do toward the things you really value” (p. 48). Nieuwhof (2018) added, “Expecting a church to be healthy when its leader isn’t is like expecting an athlete to run a marathon with a missing heart. It’s not possible. Any conversation about church health starts in the mirror for a leader.”

Keeping Culture

Little scholarly research exists regarding the discussion of keeping culture. However, it could be argued that keeping culture is as important as creating it. Powers (2017) argued “One

problem faced by small business owners is how to maintain your company culture when you are growing. Rapid expansion can sneak up on you, and make you feel like the spirit and values of your company have been lost.” Powers (2017) listed five tools, including the importance of hiring practices, discussing the values and traditions of the organization. With the exception of hiring practices, all of his tools can fall under the importance of communication.

Communication is an important aspect of creating and keeping culture. While church leaders have argued that the best place to create culture is through teaching, there are other options to communicate the values of an organization.

Communication

How a leader communicates with his or her team is important. If a leader does not recognize the influence that his or her communication style has on an organization’s culture, he or she will risk creating the wrong culture. A leader is not the only person who holds responsibility in how culture is influenced by communication. Richmond, McCroskey, & Powell (2013) noted, “Cultures pressure their members to communicate in very similar ways” (p. 135). Organizations typically force individuals to communicate with one another often, which will result in “regular patterns of communication behavior” that will heavily influence each other (2013, p. 135).

Communication is a key component of culture. “One of the clearest manifestations of culture is communication. Communication as a process, a function, and a result is both a reflection and cause of the organization’s culture” (Gillis, 2011, p. 35). If culture is how a leader or organization gets things done, communication is the sharpest tool in the toolbox. “To win hearts and minds of employees . . . requires comprehensive communication planning, from strategic to tactical program execution” (2011, p. 36).

To create and keep culture across multiple locations, a leader must recognize the importance of being a communicator. Northouse (2016) noted that “with their ability to express a vision strongly and powerfully, communicators can inspire people at all levels” (p. 322). Vision casting can be difficult in one building but spread across multiple locations would likely require a truly gifted leader with exceptional communication skills.

The Influence of Proximity

Identifying a culture can be difficult based on the broad scope that can be included. For instance, some individuals might discuss the Western culture, which would include countries like the United States, Canada, and England. Though the United States and England are part of the Western Culture, sociologists would agree that the United States and England, have different cultures. Differences in culture will continue to be prominent as a researcher narrow by region, state, or area of a country. Richmond, McCroskey, and Powell (2013) defined these smaller groups of individuals, subcultures. Subcultures are “subdivisions of a larger culture whose members have a variety of shared differences between themselves and the larger culture” (p. 135).

While an organization can influence culture, the area in which the organization resides can also influence culture (Richmond, et al., 2013). “Organizations which have multiple worksites, even if they are all within a close geographic area, are likely to develop different cultures” (2013, p. 138). If Richmond, McCroskey and Powell are correct, how does a church organization like Life.Church multiply their culture over ten states? The question is perplexing; many of the multisite churches reside in different subcultures. Yet, the organizational culture is consistent.

Communication Pathways

Communication is a key component to an organization and leadership (Grusendorf). “For leadership to exist there must be the exercise of influence. Yet the influence of leadership requires communication (Grusendorf, 2016, p. 78). The multisite church has the unique challenge of creating communication pathways in an organization where locations are spread from 15 miles or more. Multisite churches don’t follow the same organizational model, and they don’t use the same communication pathways.

How the leadership of a church communicates to its attendees and staff can occur in multiple ways. Multisite church organization leadership uses video, graphics, social media, and direct communication. In a video venue, the primary leader can communicate to any number of locations in spite of their proximity from the central location. The live teaching model, on the other hand, will take a different communication pathway.

Related Literature

As the multisite model grows, the research and literature on the model become more available. Literature exploring the multisite model spans from practical research in how to become multisite, to more theological research, including leadership structures and the debate regarding broadcast streaming. The span of literature and research is helpful for a church leader who is contemplating becoming a multisite church. However, one area that has produced little study is organizational culture. The multisite church is not alone in this reality, little research in the culture of the single-site church exists as well. Even less literature has been produced regarding the attendee perception.

Organizational Structure

Identifying a biblical organizational structure for any church organization, single or multisite, would prove to be challenging. In fact, the first church outlined in Acts was a megachurch, by today's standards, a megachurch is a church with more than 2000 attendees (Edwards, 2016). Other New Testament churches existed and one of the most common threads between these churches, in spite of the cultural surrounding they were placed in, is that there is little offered in how they were structured. It would be difficult to assume that the lack of detail about each of these church organizational structures was due to a lack of organizational complexity. A look at either the Hebrew church or the Roman government at the time would show that organizations had no issue with being complex.

Today's church organizations are similarly diverse. Many church organizations are created based on church tradition, but that reality is changing. Both, the megachurch and the multisite church have forced church leaders to look at business organizations for a template to run their church. This truth might be off-putting for some church leaders, but it should not be. Business organizations are efficient because they cannot afford to not be inefficient. As stewards of God's money, a church organization should strive to be efficient. Why would any leader refuse to look for the best practice?

While the Bible is silent on how a church should be organized, the Bible does provide a template to follow on how a church should be led. Geiger and Peck (2016) noted, "The primary purpose for our leadership mandate is to make known the glory of God by leading others to flourish in God's design" (p. 62). The Bible spends much more time providing direction on how to lead others rather than how to organize the church. Even as Paul was "planting churches

across continents” the Bible reminds readers that God was “concerned with Paul’s humility and character” (2 Cor. 12:7) (2016, p. 65).

Though little has been clarified in the Bible, the structure of how a church operates is important. God has a high demand for the leadership of ministry leaders. God’s qualifications for leaders are found in the New Testament, most often quoted is the passage, 1 Timothy 3:2-12. The passage noted that a leader must be faithful, self-controlled, disciplined, but hospitable and gentle (1 Timothy 3:2-3). He or she shouldn’t be greedy; he or she should manage their family well; and be respected both inside and outside of the home (1 Timothy 3:3-7).

Operational Structure

The multisite church is relatively new and the different structures found within the multisite movement are impressive considering the dense nature of the movement. Much of the literature dedicated to the multisite church model is dedicated to operational structures. To their credit, many church leaders are relying on the best practices of other churches to help develop their model. Single-site churches have done the same, but the challenges that multisite churches face in regard to their operational structure are inevitably more unique (Edwards, 2016). As difficult as launching a second campus might seem to church leaders, the launch itself might be the easy part. Tomberlin writes, “The challenging part is managing the relationships between campuses and re-organizing staff to support multiple campuses” (Tomberlin, 2014).

In his extensive research of the organizational structure of multisite churches, Edwards noted the complex nature that these organizations face. Decision-making is not necessarily vertical, it might also be horizontal. With each addition of a new campus, the organization would be more complex if an operational structure is not outlined first (Edwards, 2016). Surratt (2006) noted that it is more important to be flexible and fluid for survival. He noted that the church

should “be structured more like an organism than like an organization; the structure will have to morph and change rapidly as the dynamics of new campuses are brought into the picture” (p. 141).

Matrix Structure

A popular structure found in the multisite church borrowed from the business world is the matrix structure. As Edwards (2016) noted,

As opposed to a traditional hierarchical system in which staff members may report to any particular senior staff pastor, churches no have to think in terms of “vertical accountability” and “horizontal relationships with solid or dotted line connections.” In other words, the multisite church is characterized by a unique matrix model (p. 41).

Unlike a vertical structure, the multisite church staff could be accountable to multiple leaders. For instance,

The staff at an off-site campus is accountable to a campus pastor for job performance, ministry effectiveness, and the staff responsibilities within the campus. At the same time, staff members will be on a ministry-specific team (youth ministry, media ministry, etc.) with their counterparts at the other campuses. One of the campus leaders (often the leader at the original campus) will act as team leader. These cross-campus teams focus on decisions and projects that affect every campus (2016, p. 43).

The nature of a staff that exists in multiple locations, sometimes thousands of miles away, creates a dynamic where co-workers are not under the same roof. This complexity can make it difficult for ministry teams to communicate. Communication can break down which can lead to disunity across the organization. While unity is important in any organization, for a multisite church to truly be one church in many locations, teams must strive to have unity inspire by the complex nature of their work environment (Edwards, 2016).

Leveraging Technology

It is possible that one would assume that technology within the multisite church organization is limited to the Sunday worship service. To combat the difficult nature of remote

staff, some church organizations have leveraged technology to bridge the communication gap. Next Level Church, an eight-location church with its central offices in Somersworth, NH uses multiple platforms to provide its employees with the means to collaborate. Location pastors, otherwise known as campus pastors, meet weekly with central staff leaders including the lead pastor and executive pastor via a video conference platform. The pastors discuss their weekend experiences, upcoming events, and even a leadership teaching.

Technology continues to be the driving force in the multisite movement. Without advancements in technology, the multisite church would have likely phased out like many other ministry ideas. Frye listed three specific factors that have influenced the growth of the multisite church: “(1) economic advancement, (2) accelerated mobility, and (3) technological innovation” (Frye, 2011, p. 66). In addition to Frye’s list, research has shown that the millennial generation has also influenced the importance of technology and the multisite church. The millennial generation is different than any generation that has come before, and their influence on the church is big.

Research conducted by Deitsch (2012) noted that the millennial generation views communication quite differently and technology plays a large focus. Millennials “do not prefer face to face communication and will respond quickly to Facebook or text than a note, phone call, or email” (p. 15). With millennials using a screen for the majority of their communication, it should be of no surprise that Pastors have become more effective communicating over a multicampus streaming broadcast platform. “Technology has changed everything for them, including the way they learn” (2012, p. 15).

Church Culture

In spite of the cultural shift occurring across the western world, many opponents of the multisite church movement have sided with church tradition to reach the community. Deitsch (2012) noted:

As the 2012 Southern Baptist Conference Convention, it was reported that within the last year over 800 Southern Baptist churches closed and over 10,000 had no baptisms, which means they are not winning any converts. This writer believes it is because the church as a whole is not reaching the millennial generation. They are not reaching the millennial generation because they expect this unique, but massive, generation to conform to the patterns and traditions of older generations instead of trying to change the culture of their church to be more appealing to them. The Millennials live in a world where everything has been catered for them. Right or wrong, it is reality and the church is pushing people away from having an experience with God because of old methodology (p. 1).

Traditional, single-site churches have a significant place in today's ministry landscape. The multisite church is not the only church that can reach the lost and while Deitsch's point, that the Church must be willing to adjust to the culture where it exists, it is better to have multiple expressions of worship to choose from. Mark Batterson, founding and lead pastor of National Community Church in Washington D.C. (2014) noted, "each of our congregations has a unique churchprint."

Humanity is filled with different people, different skills, and different gifts. Believing that the church should be a one-size-fits all model sounds more unbiblical than anything. As Batterson (2014) noted,

Too often we cast a suspicious look at any church that is unlike our church instead of celebrating kingdom diversity. But every church is destined to be a unique expression of the Kingdom of God. We play different roles, but we're on the same team. And the truth of the matter is this: we need lots of different kinds of churches because there are lots of different kinds of people.

Rationale for the Study

As churches evolve and attempt to identify the best way to move forward in a digital world, many church leaders are not sure where to turn. This study will attempt to help those churches identify the right cultural fit for their church organization, an attendee perception provides an important “pulse check.” Attendee perception of the church organization is important and the lack of research dedicated to this field highlights an ill-advised take that curtailing your church model to attendee’s desire is consumerism. In his letter to the Corinthian church, Paul noted that he was a “slave to everyone, to win as many as possible” (1 Cor. 19). Paul taught that it was important to identify the culture and adapt your message appropriately “for the sake of the gospel and share in its blessings” (1 Cor. 23).

Creativity in the Church

One of the driving forces behind the multisite church organization is creativity. Somewhere along the way in church history, creative became a negative word. It was a term that was lost in the fray and though the theology of the Church experienced significant change, creativity played a very small role. Batterson (2020) noted boldly that “the church ought to be the most creative place on the planet” (theaterchurch.com). Batterson’s plea is a core value of the National Community Church and the value has been duplicated in many ways throughout other church organizations.

In an article Batterson (2014) wrote for lifeway.com, he noted,

When I first started pastoring National Community Church I was frustrated that God didn’t outline an exact order of service in the New Testament. I wanted a church formula. I wanted God to tell me exactly what to do and how to do it. And then I realized why He didn’t give us an over-the-counter prescription: it would have taken creativity out of the equation. There are certainly biblical principles that establish parameters for the way we lead our churches, but I also believe that there are ways of doing church that no one has thought of yet.

The draw of creativity is not a new draw, but it is something that has been lost in the church. As church organizations used the same hymn books for decades, entire generations became bored with the idea of church. Would a creative flair make a difference during that time period? Would a relevant church impact the American culture of the 60's, 70's, or 80's? It is impossible to say, but the reality is that "People have always been more or less drawn toward creative expression, particularly when it comes to musical or visual creativity" (Romero, 2017).

Perhaps Batterson is right, the church ought to be more creative. The church should reflect its creator, who is the most creative being that has ever existed. As Romero (2017) noted, "It's impossible to lack creativity while standing in the presence of the creator. The Lord has graced us with an intrinsic ability to create. To design beauty from nothing."

Gap in Literature

As this chapter outlines, there is a large amount of scholarly research dedicated to the multisite church. Herrington (2017) discussed the theological theories of broadcast streaming and the multisite church. Edwards (2016) discussed the multisite organizational structure. Frye (2011) provided a taxonomy of different models for ministry leaders to examine. While literature on the relevance of culture and how it should influence a church organization also exists, little has been written on the attendee perception of these organizations toward methods and strategies of keeping culture.

Edwards went as far as providing ample research on the perception of campus pastors and their roles within the multisite church but stopped short of including other attendees' perceptions. His research also did not provide a comparison of the different multisite models and study how they impacted those perceptions. In his research, Edwards (2016) noted that further research could occur on churches that have four or more locations.

Multisite experts concur that the complexity of leadership structures uniquely increases when a church adds its fourth campus. However, the current study more broadly examined multisite churches with two or more geographic campuses. A study that focused only on multisite churches with four or more campuses could uniquely benefit similar multisite churches with a more succinct and narrow analysis of leadership structures for similar churches. (Edwards, 2016, p. 220).

The project will also discuss the attendee's perception of the mission and values of a church. Each of these topics, which have been largely ignored by scholarly research is relevant to ministry leaders who wish to provide a relevant church organization model.

Conclusion

The multisite church movement has its opponents. The fear of consumerism is a recognizable fear, but the fear is not limited to the multisite movement. Both consumerism and "theotainment" are concerns for churches of all sizes and structures. While the lead pastor will find difficulty pastoring attendees across the organization, the multisite church does provide campus or location pastors that will provide the needed pastoral care. This level of care is a benefit of the multisite church in comparison to a single-site church with more than 250 weekly attendees.

Church organizations are working hard to follow the Great Commission. There are multiple strategies to reach the unreached, and the multisite church movement has expressed a variety of methods. House and Allison (2017) noted that "the diversity among multisite models reflects the church's creative impulses to advance the kingdom of God and proclaim the gospel" (p. 45). While the attendance numbers highlight success, it is important to evaluate who is attending the multisite church and why are individuals drawn to this type of expression? If culture is an important aspect of an organization, how does a multisite church achieve the multiplication of one culture across multiple locations? Do the methods and strategies used by multisite churches influence the attendee perception of its culture? Does the video broadcast

affect the attendee perceptions of the organizational culture? These questions will be evaluated as the project continues.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The following chapter outlines the research design used to examine the organizational culture in the multisite church. The chapter includes the research design, the population surveyed, the sampling procedure, including limitations of the generalizations, and ethical considerations. In addition, the research study evaluated the research tool, data collection, and analysis.

Research Design Synopsis

The Problem

Every organization is shaped by its culture; the vision, mission, and communication pathways are essential drivers to an organization's culture. Culture is contextualized and often formed by the surrounding community. The multisite church has the unique challenge of creating and keeping organizational culture across different locations; at times, those locations are hundreds of miles apart.

Culture is represented by the combination of three values an individual or an organization will steward: "God's kingdom agenda, who you are, and your unique setting" (Lewis, et al.,2005, p 21). If communication is a driving force in keeping culture, does video teaching impact the culture of a multisite location? If culture is contextualized to the community that surrounds it, can culture be multiplied across multiple locations? How is culture created, kept, and multiplied in an organization filled with people outside of one unique setting?

Research Purpose

The intent of this descriptive qualitative study was to evaluate the leadership and attendee perception of the methods and strategies used by the multisite church to create and keep one unique culture in spite of their varying proximity, or demographics. The study explored

organizational culture, including communication pathways, vision, and mission in three common multisite church models: the local franchise model, the national franchise model, and the live teaching model.

Research Questions

The following Research Questions provided the data needed to guide this study:

RQ1. What are the similarities and differences in the methods and strategies used to create and keep culture between the three researched multisite church models?

RQ2. How do participating church campus pastors describe the communication pathways within their church organization toward creating and keeping one culture?

RQ3. How do participating church campus pastors describe the vision and mission within their church organization toward creating and keeping one culture?

RQ4. What is the overall perception by church campus pastors of the methods and strategies in creating and keeping one culture?

Research Design and Methodology

The qualitative research method was found to be the most appropriate approach for this study for a variety of reasons. “The qualitative research method is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (Creswell, 2014, p. 4). The qualitative research method also allows the researcher to collect data from multiple sources, including the survey and face-to-face interviews (Creswell, 2014). This allowed the researcher to “review all of the data, make sense of it, and organize it into categories or themes that cut across all of the data sources” (Creswell, 2014, p. 186).

A qualitative design with a descriptive methodology was selected for this project. The value of a descriptive research project is that its “best suited to examining and trying to make

sense of a situation or event as it currently exists in the world” (Leedy & Ormond, 2019, p. 146). Instead of attempting to identify the cause and effect, a descriptive method allowed the researcher to simply observe and characterize the data collected (Leedy & Ormond, 2019). The descriptive method used is also advantageous to the remote nature of this project. Data from surveys and face-to-face interviews can be collected remotely, using web-based tools, specifically SurveyMonkey and Zoom.

Due to the qualitative nature, this researcher acknowledged that there is a “range of strategic, ethical, and personal issues” involved (2014, p. 187). Within the interview process, the researcher kept in mind their personal biases, work history, culture, and values. The project utilized a comprehensive survey for this research study. The initial survey instrument is located in Appendix F.

A survey can be implemented in a variety of ways, including the internet, mail, phone, or face-to-face interviews (Fowler, 2009). For ease and increased participation, the method used for this survey was SurveyMonkey, an electronic, web-based survey. The SurveyMonkey survey was not only easy to use for participants, but it was also used to save time and financial resources for the researcher. SurveyMonkey “provides templates that make questionnaire design easy and enable a researcher to present a variety of item types (e.g., multiple-choice items, rating scales)” (Leedy & Ormond, 2019, p. 170).

Following the collection of the completed surveys, the researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with participants using, Zoom, a recorded teleconference tool. The interviewer engaged six multisite church leaders in qualitative interviews. An initial draft of open-ended questions has been completed. These questions, along with the information collected from the initial survey was used in the face-to-face interviews. The list of questions used in the face-to-

face interviews is located in Appendix J. This particular method was useful as it allowed the “researcher control over the line of questioning” (2014, p. 191). Finally, the Zoom teleconference tool also allowed for flexibility to work around the schedules of participants.

Setting

The setting was completed remotely in an online format. The survey used to answer RQ1 was formed digitally from information gathered from the literature review and then sent to an expert panel via email for their feedback. The SurveyMonkey survey were conducted electronically and the link was sent to participants via e-mail. The face-to-face interviews were conducted virtually using a Zoom web-based teleconference and was scheduled at the convenience of the participant and the researcher.

Participant(s)

The desired population of this study was multisite church attendees. Multisite church attendees included campus pastors, pastoral staff, department directors, and volunteers. The sample selection for this project was intentional. It was not random or representative of a larger population. It was not a viable option to qualitatively survey attendees at the over 8000 multisite churches or their campuses. The individuals selected for the proposed study were purposeful (Creswell, 2014).

This study attempted to narrow the research population by interviewing multisite church leaders from six churches. The six churches were selected from the *Outreach Magazine's Fastest Growing Churches in America, 2019*, and fit the delimitations outlined in chapter one. The target population attended multisite churches with a weekly Sunday worship attendance between 250 – 800 attendees and included multisite locations that vary in proximity between at least 15 miles

away from the central location. The population included two multisite locations that meet the criteria of the local franchise model, the national franchise model, and the live teaching model.

Participation in the survey was “not be coerced, but (was) highly encouraged in order to best represent the most dynamic multisite churches in North America. Additionally, their participation (was) strongly encouraged . . . to serve thousands of other multisite churches in America” (2016, p. 108). SurveyMonkey, an internet-based survey tool, was used for this project. The raw data from SurveyMonkey was collected and placed into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.

Role of Researcher

It was important to identify the personal values, assumptions, and biases of the researcher within this project (Creswell, 2014). The researcher was Location Pastor at Next Level Church, a multisite church with nine locations. Prior to this role, the researcher served at Centerpointe Church and helped research and launch their first multisite location. The purpose of this study was not to discuss whether a church should or should not become multisite. The purpose was also not to identify the theological value of the multisite church. With that said, this researcher, as evidenced in his work history, believed the multisite church has theological value.

It was important for the researcher to identify his work history openly and honestly with the interview participants. The researcher did not leverage his own thoughts on specific models in his line of questioning or in the data that he received from the surveys or interviews. To help eliminate perceived bias, an expert panel was selected to assist in the formation of the survey. As a descriptive study, the researcher will not compare and recommend a specific model.

Ethical Considerations

The interview data collected was anonymous to create an environment where respondents knew that their data would not be tracked back to them. The goal in making the data anonymous was to increase the likelihood of honest feedback. To make sure that the results would represent each multisite location in a proportional manner, the multisite location will be included in the data results. One important ethical consideration is response bias. “Whenever we gather data through interviews or questionnaires, we are relying on self-report data” (Leedy & Ormond, 2019, p. 183). By making the results anonymous, the respondents should feel comfortable in providing honest feedback, eliminating response bias. The project did “provide an accurate account of the information” to assure the validity of data reporting (Creswell, 2014, p. 99).

The study was submitted to the Liberty University Institutional Review Board. The main purpose of an institutional review board (IRB) “is the protection of those participating in a research study, particularly around ethical issues such as informed consent, protection from harm, and confidentiality” (2010, p. 32).

Data Collection Methods and Implementation

Information was collected in two ways. The first cache of information was collected from the survey. The purpose of this information served two purposes. The information was utilized to help provide an answer to Research Question Two, what are the similarities and differences in the methods and strategies used to create and keep culture between the three researched multisite church models? In addition, this initial information was sent to the participants prior to the face-to-face interviews that took place via Zoom. The purpose of this was to provide questions pertaining to the attendee’s perceptions. The second cache of data was collected in face-to-face interviews.

Collection Methods

The first phase of this research was identifying six multisite churches that fit the delimitations outlined within the research project. This phase began by identifying the multisite churches within *Outreach Magazine's Fastest Growing Churches in America, 2019*.

After the multisite churches were identified, e-mails were sent to campus pastors to identify their church size, multisite method, and willingness to participate in the project. Participation in the survey was “not be coerced, but (were) highly encouraged in order to best represent the most dynamic multisite churches in North America. Additionally, their participation (were) strongly encouraged . . . to serve thousands of other multisite churches in America” (2016, p. 108). The Campus Pastor and Church Recruitment Emails are listed in Appendix B and C.

The second phase of this project was to develop a survey, which was used to answer Research Question One. An initial draft of the survey was created by the researcher from the information collected during the literature review. The draft of the survey was then sent to an expert panel, who contributed to the formation of the survey by making recommendations in a single round of emails directed specifically to the researcher. The survey that was used for this research project was distributed by SurveyMonkey. SurveyMonkey is internet-based and highly flexible in question formatting. This particular project used multiple-choice, open-ended, and true/false questions. The raw data from SurveyMonkey was collected and used to provide open-ended questions pertaining to the attendee's perception during the face-to-face interview.

Serving on the panel included multisite experts that consisted of the executive leadership of multisite churches. In addition, leaders within the multisite church who have had significant works, dissertations, or books published were included on the panel. The Panel Expert Recruitment Email is listed in Appendix A.

The panel was asked to evaluate the survey with the following criteria: (One) do you feel that the questions in this survey will be effective in gathering accurate data for the question, “What are the similarities and differences in the methods and strategies used to create and keep culture between the three researched multisite church models?” (Two) Do you believe any questions within the survey are leading or biased, and (Three) do you recommend the removal or the addition of questions better suited to answer the research question? Each panel member was given the opportunity to contribute to the formation of the survey and was communicated with via email.

The survey was sent to six multisite locations that fit the proposed delimitations. Campus pastors of each multisite location were contacted and asked to distribute the survey to attendees in their location that give financially at least one time per month, serve at least one time per month, or both. The data was collected, sent to the researcher, analyzed, and categorized to answer Research Question One.

The second phase of this qualitative research project was used to answer Research Questions Two, Three, and Four. To answer the remaining questions, a qualitative interview of the six selected multisite churches occurred. The researcher conducted a qualitative interview with campus pastors from each of the selected multisite churches via Zoom. Each interview followed the recommendations by Creswell; “these interviews will involve unstructured and generally open-ended questions that are few in number and intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants” (Creswell, 2014, p. 190). The Zoom teleconference was recorded, analyzed, and categorized to answer Research Questions Two, Three, and Four.

Procedures

The purpose of this research study was to explore the attendee perception of organizational culture, including the communication pathways, vision, and mission in the three common multisite church models: the local franchise model, the national franchise model, and the live teaching model. To answer the research questions, the researcher followed the outlined stages of this research project while limiting the participants to those delimitations. The combination of the survey and the face-to-face interviews answered each of the research questions.

The survey, along with the selected interview questions, were evaluated for their trustworthiness, quality, and ethical reliability prior to distribution. The survey was formed by the researcher. Following the initial draft, created by information reviewed in chapter two, the survey was evaluated by a panel of multisite church experts that consisted of lead and executive pastors of multisite churches. In addition, leaders within the multisite church who have had significant works, dissertations, or books published were also be included on the panel.

Each panel participant was given a description of the prospectus, including the research problem and research questions. At this stage, participants only communicated with the researcher. The panel was asked to evaluate the survey with the following criteria: (One) do you feel that the questions in this survey will be effective in gathering accurate data for the question, “What are the similarities and differences in the methods and strategies used to create and keep culture between the three researched multisite church models?” (Two) Do you believe any questions within the survey are leading or biased, and (Three) do you recommend the removal or the addition of questions better suited to answer the research question? Each panel member was

given the opportunity to contribute to the formation of the survey and was communicated with via email.

An initial draft of potential questions was sent to each participant with the request to respond and make recommendations. After the initial recommendations were considered, the formation of the survey was finalized. If there was a need for additional updates, it occurred at that time. Following the final stage of recommendations made, the updated and complete survey was emailed to the panel participants.

While the electronic survey was being formed, a population list of participating multisite churches was also be formed. The target response for this project is six churches with a total list of 200 attendees participating. This occurred by identifying the multisite churches within *Outreach Magazine's Fastest Growing Churches in America, 2019*. After the multisite churches were identified, e-mails were sent to campus pastors to identify their church size, multisite method, and willingness to participate in the project.

Following the formation of the electronic survey and the list of participating multisite churches, campus pastors were emailed with a link to the survey. Allowing the campus pastors to take the survey first will help build trust with the participating churches. The list of participants was dependent on the campus pastor's willingness to support and provide needed information. A third email was sent, requesting that the email with a link to the survey, and informed consent, was sent to attendees, including location-paid staff members and volunteers.

Research Question One

Information collected from the initial survey provided the answer to Research Question One. The survey that was used for this research project was distributed by SurveyMonkey and used multiple-choice, open-ended, and true/false questions. The information was manually

collected by the researcher and recorded on Microsoft Excel. The information highlighted the similarities and differences between each multisite church model represented within this project.

Research Questions Two, Three, and Four

The proposed survey served two purposes in this research project. The survey was developed by the researcher, evaluated by an expert panel, and answered Research Question One. In addition, it provided the basis of conversation in the interview stage. Following the collection of the survey information. The results of the survey were sent to the participant prior to the face-to-face interview. The purpose of this was to provide additional questions pertaining to the attendee's perceptions.

A second list of questions developed by the researcher was asked during the interview stage. The results of the open-ended questions were recorded on the Zoom web-based teleconference program. Following the interview, the researcher manually recorded the answers from the open-ended questions on Microsoft Word. The researcher attempted to identify narrative themes from the six interviews and answer Research Questions Two, Three, and Four.

Data Analysis

Each face-to-face interview was recorded, and the interviews were analyzed following the completion of each individual interview. This differed from quantitative interviews, where all the data is gathered and analyzed at the end (Creswell, 2014). This qualitative study was descriptive in design. While descriptive research is often used in quantitative studies, it is not limited to quantitative studies only. Descriptive research, including “observation studies, survey research, interviews, questionnaires, and sources of bias, is relevant to qualitative research as well” (2019, p. 146).

The data included responses about the behaviors, opinions, attitudes, and previous experiences of those respondents (2019). This researcher recognized that “survey research captures a fleeting moment in time By drawing conclusions from one transitory collection of data, we might generalize about the state of affairs for a longer time period” (2019, p. 153). It was important to go beyond survey research, which is why this researcher selected face-to-face interviews.

There are multiple variables that existed in this research project, and the data reflected the attitudes, behaviors, and opinions of those participants from both multisite central locations and locations that vary at least 15 miles away. Due to the nature of this study, this qualitative study was considered complex (2019). The questionnaire formed used a variety of tools to identify data. One tool used was a checklist, “a list of behaviors or characteristics for which a researcher is looking . . . each participant simply indicates whether each item on the list is observed, present, or true, or in contrast, is not observed, present or true” (2019, p. 155). Another tool used to analyze behavior, attitude, or opinion is a rating scale. Unlike the checklist, a rating scale will ask use terminology, “strongly disapprove” to “strongly approve” (2019, p. 155). The use of both methods helped the researcher “simplify and more easily quantify people’s behaviors or attitudes” (2019, p. 156).

Analysis Methods

Each interview was recorded, and the researcher analyzed each interview while taking notes. Following the completion of the interviews, the researcher transcribed the interviews to Microsoft Word. Next, the researcher compiled the information from the interview process and aligned the information by model. The researcher used basic coding and manually evaluated each interview for emerging trends and themes. Following the interview analysis, a narrative was

completed and eventually included in a final report. “This process is unlike quantitative research in which the investigator collects the data, then analysis the information” (Creswell, 2014, p. 194).

Trustworthiness

Validity within qualitative research differs from validity within quantitative research (Creswell, 2014). Validity allowed the researcher to prove the trustworthiness of the research project (Creswell, 2014). By evaluating six multisite locations, with recorded interviews, the researcher attempted to eliminate his own and the participant’s bias. All information recorded from the separate interviews and the information collected from the research was done so in an ethical manner.

Credibility

The researcher provided credibility to the research by requesting input from multisite church experts in the formation of the questionnaire. The researcher also requested peer examination. As a doctoral student, peer examination occurred by the dissertation supervisor and committee.

Dependability

Triangulation of data occurred within this research project. The questionnaire was evaluated alongside the individual interviews to affirm the dependability of the data collected.

Confirmability

Each interview was included via transcript within this research project, and this will provide confirmation and add credibility to the research project.

Transferability

The goal of this study was to assist future research studies. Research and data will be transferable to future research and practical application within the church. Church leaders will be able to evaluate this research and identify the best method to create and keep culture within their organization.

Chapter Summary

The chapter above exists to develop an accurate qualitative method that provided a deeper understanding of organizational culture in the multisite church. The data obtained through this descriptive study allowed the researcher to effectively answer the proposed research question. By using the methods listed above, the researcher identified the behaviors, actions, and opinions of multisite church participants and whether a list of variables affects their understanding of the organization's culture.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

The intent of this descriptive qualitative study was to evaluate the leadership and attendee perception of the methods and strategies used by the multisite church to create and keep one unique culture in spite of their varying proximity, or demographics. Chapter one introduced the topic, presented a brief historical and theological history of the multisite church and campus pastors, and provided important terms that will be useful for this project. Chapter two offered a literature review on topics limited to the leadership and attendee perception of the organizational culture within the multisite church. In addition, Chapter two also provided a brief history of the multisite church, popular theological and theoretical debates, and the importance of cultural relevance in church organizations. Chapter two outlined the research design, the population, the sampling procedures, including limitations of the generalizations and ethical considerations, and introduced the research tool and methods used in this study. Chapter four will deliver the survey results and offer an analysis of the data accumulated.

Compilation Protocols and Measures

The researcher was successful in gaining permission to partake in the research proposed and received permission to interview multisite church leaders and attendees from six churches from the local franchise model, the national franchise model, and the live teaching model by the Liberty University Institutional Review Board. The researcher began by recruiting multisite churches within *Outreach Magazine's Fastest Growing Churches, 2019*. Emails were sent to executive leaders to gauge their interest, multisite model, and willingness to participate in the project, see Appendix C. Simultaneously; the researcher developed a survey with the guidance of an expert panel that would answer Research Question One. In addition, the survey was disseminated to the participating churches in the research study.

The researcher was successful in interviewing multisite church leaders from six churches. As outlined in Chapters one and three, the researcher began recruitment by extending an invitation to churches from the Outreach Magazine's Fastest Growing Churches in America, 2019. After two attempts, only three churches agreed to participate in the research project. Following the procurement of three churches, the researcher expanded his original search by including the Outreach Magazine's Fastest Growing Churches in America, 2020, and was able to include one additional church. The final two participants were sought out as churches that fit the delimitations outlined in Chapter one, with the exception that they were not included on the Outreach Magazine's Fastest Growing Churches in America, 2019 or 2020. The researcher was compelled to add churches that represent different models in the research project—expanding the scope of the sampling provided depth to the sample size.

The purpose of this research study was to explore the attendee perception of organizational culture, including the communication pathways, vision, and mission in three common multisite church models: the local franchise model, the national franchise model, and the live teaching model. The intention of using three different models was to identify if the unique culture of one church could be multiplied in communities that represented different communities. After multiple attempts, the researcher found that it was difficult to differentiate churches in the three proposed models and equally challenging to gain participation in the study.

The researcher found churches that fit within each of the three specific models. However, the researcher could not find two churches of each model willing to participate. The participating churches were: three live teaching models, two local franchise models, and one national franchise model.

Table 1

Participating Church Models

Participating Church Models		
Church Code	Church Model	Distance from Central Location
Church A	Live Teaching	15-45 Miles
Church B	Local Franchise Model	15-45 Miles
Church C	Live Teaching	No Central Location
Church D	Live Teaching	15-45 Miles
Church E	Local Franchise Model	15-45 Miles
Church F	National Franchise Model	Over 200 Miles

It should also be noted that the researcher found that while a church might start using one specific model, they might change. For instance, one participating church began using the local franchise model but changed to a live teaching model shortly after the launch of their second campus. Though the researcher was not able to recruit two churches from each model, each church presented diversity in their in their communities and provided an evaluation of different cultures.

Following the recruitment phase of this project, the researcher sent the SurveyMonkey survey (Appendix F) to each participating campus pastor with instructions to send the survey to attendees and leaders within the campus who either give or serve one time monthly. The data was collected via SurveyMonkey and exported to both Microsoft Excel and PDF form. Next, the researcher interviewed each campus pastor via Zoom. The researcher provided each campus

pastor with the results of the survey without identifiers. The survey data, along with the questions developed by the expert panel, found in Appendix J, were used in each interview to answer Research Questions Two, Three, and Four.

Demographic and Sample Data

The researcher was successful in obtaining data from 52 church leaders and attendees from six churches across North America to answer RQ1. Demographic data collected included multisite church leaders and attendee’s respondents to the following questions: specific campus weekly attendance, total church weekly attendance, location, distance from the broadcast location, and teaching method used at their campus. Table 2 is survey responses to questions two – six. The researcher feels compelled to note, the interview process was completed during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the perception of campus and church size varied.

Table 2

Demographics of Survey Participants

Q2. How many people attend your specific location's weekend services each week?		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
250 - 400	46.51%	20
401 - 550	16.28%	7
551 - 700	2.33%	1
701 - 800	4.65%	2
Other	30.23%	13
	Answered	43
	Skipped	9

Q3. How many people regularly attend your church's weekend services at all locations?		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
250 - 800	18.0%	9
801 - 1200	14.0%	7
1201 - 4000	26.0%	13
More than 4000	22.0%	11
I don't know	20.0%	10
	Answered	50
	Skipped	2
Q4. How many locations does your church have?		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
2	24.0%	12
3	6.0%	3
4	4.0%	2
5	22.0%	11
6 or more	44.0%	22
	Answered	50
	Skipped	2
Q5. How far is your location from the central location?		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
15 - 45 miles	74.0%	37
46 - 90 miles	0.0%	0
91 - 200 miles	0.0%	0

More than 201 miles	8.0%	4
We do not have a central location	18.0%	9
	Answered	50
	Skipped	2
Q6. Which of the following best describes the primary teaching method used at your church?		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Video teaching	26.0%	13
Live teaching	74.0%	37
	Answered	50
	Skipped	2

Data Analysis and Findings

Data analysis occurred simultaneously with data collection (Creswell, 2014). During and following each face-to-face interview, the researcher transcribed and analyzed the data attempting to identify themes that could potentially be used to answer research questions. The data was transcribed, organized, categorized, and checked for validity and reliability. The research was then used to answer each research question as outlined in the following section.

Research Question One

The desired outcome of the first research question was to evaluate the similarities and differences in the methods and strategies used to create and keep culture between the three researched multisite church models. The research used to answer RQ1 was accumulated using the Attendee Survey (Appendix F). The Attendee Survey included 25 questions and was

intentionally designed to examine the perceptions of attendees and leaders within each church surveyed.

Executive Leadership

For the purpose of this study, Executive leadership in the multisite church has been defined as staff and/or Pastors designated to lead departments within a church; at times, leading multiple staff, including Pastors. Questions 7, 8, 14, and 15 from the Attendee Survey (Appendix F) were designed to the participating campus' perception of executive leadership influence on their specific location.

Table 3

Executive Leadership Control

Q7. Respond to this statement: The executive leadership team maintains significant control over the ministries, decisions, and directions of my location.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Strongly disagree	7.69%	4
Disagree	7.69%	4
Agree	67.31%	35
Strongly agree	17.31%	9

Question seven from the Attendee Survey highlights that out of the 52 respondents, 44 agreed or strongly agreed that executive leadership of the church holds significant control over the ministries, decisions, and directions of their location. While the majority of respondents, 84.6%, agreed, 15.4% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed. The eight respondents who

disagreed or strongly disagreed represented four churches out of six churches. Three of those churches used the live teaching model and were within 15-45 miles of the broadcast location, and the one video teaching model was also 15-45 miles from the broadcast location.

Table 4

Executive Leadership Understanding

Q8. Respond to this statement: The executive leadership team has a clear understanding of the needs of my local community.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Strongly disagree	3.85%	2
Disagree	5.77%	3
Agree	69.23%	36
Strongly agree	21.15%	11

Question eight from the Attendee Survey highlights that out of the 52 respondents, 47 agreed or strongly agreed that the executive leadership team has a clear understanding of the needs of their local community. While the majority of the respondents, 90.4%, agreed or strongly agreed, 9.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed. The five respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed represented at least three out of six churches. At least two of those churches used the live teaching model and were within 15-45 miles of the broadcast location, and the one video teaching model was greater than 200 miles from the broadcast location. One respondent skipped questions one and six.

Table 5

Executive Leadership Visits

Q14. How often does a member of the executive leadership team visit your specific location's weekend services?		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
1 - 2 times per year	19.23%	10
1 - 2 times every other month	30.77%	16
1 - 2 times per month	26.92%	14
3 - 5 times per month	23.08%	12

Question 14 from the Attendee Survey breaks down how each survey participant perceives as the number of visits executive team members visit their specific location's weekend services. The researcher noted that there was a variety of responses to this question within the same church. At times, one church would have multiple respondents note different answers to question 14. This led the researcher to note that there was a lack of knowledge when it came to attendees and leaders when it came to executive leadership.

Table 6

Executive Leadership Mission, Vision, and Values

Q15. Respond to this statement: The number of visits by the executive leadership team impacts the mission, vision, and values of the church.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Strongly disagree	3.92%	2
Disagree	27.45%	14
Agree	39.22%	20
Strongly agree	29.41%	15

Question 15 from the Attendee Survey highlights the value that survey participants place on executive leadership team visits on the mission, vision, and value of the church. Thirty-five attendees and leaders, or 68.6%, responded that they agree or strongly agree that the visits influence the mission, vision, and value of the church, and 16 or 31.4% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that their visits made an impact. Those 16 responses represented five out of six churches. There was no identifiable connection between the survey participants' understanding of the number of executive team meetings and their impacts. This is likely due to a lack of knowledge for church attendees and leaders on who exactly serves in executive leadership roles and how often they visit.

My Specific Location

The multisite church is unique as it operates like a local church in its specific community while being part of a larger congregation in multiple communities simultaneously. Questions 9, 10, and 11 from the Attendee Survey (Appendix F) were designed to identify the participating

campus' perception of location leadership influence on their church and how they perceive their campus' value to the rest of the church.

Table 7

Local Leadership Input

Q9. Respond to this statement: The leadership team at my specific location has considerable input in the ministries, decisions, and direction of my location.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Strongly disagree	5.77%	3
Disagree	1.92%	1
Agree	51.92%	27
Strongly agree	40.38%	21

Question nine from the Attendee Survey highlights that out of the 52 respondents, 48 agreed or strongly agreed that their campus leadership team has considerable input in the ministries, decisions, and direction of their location. While the majority of respondents, 92.3%, agreed, 7.7% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed. The four respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed represented three churches out of six churches. Three of those churches used the live teaching model and were within 15-45 miles of the broadcast location, and the one video teaching model was also 15-45 miles from the broadcast location.

Table 8

Local Leadership Community

Q10. Respond to this statement: The leadership team at my location has the autonomy to adapt to the needs of the local community context.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Strongly disagree	5.77%	3
Disagree	7.69%	4
Agree	67.31%	35
Strongly agree	19.23%	10

Question 10 from the Attendee Survey highlights that out of the 52 respondents, 45 agreed or strongly agreed that their campus leadership team has the autonomy to adapt to the needs of their local community context. While the majority of respondents, 86.5%, agreed, 13.5% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed. The seven respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed represented three churches out of six churches. Two of those churches used the live teaching model and were within 15-45 miles of the broadcast location, and the one video teaching model was also 15-45 miles from the broadcast location.

Table 9

My Location is Valued

Q11. Respond to this statement: My location is valued by the entire church.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Strongly disagree	1.96%	1
Disagree	7.84%	4
Agree	52.94%	27
Strongly agree	37.25%	19

Question 11 from the Attendee Survey highlights that out of the 51 respondents, 46 agreed or strongly agreed that their campus was valued by the entire church. While the majority of respondents, 90.2%, agreed, 9.8% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed. One respondent skipped this answer. The five respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed represented three churches out of six churches. Two of those churches used the live teaching model and were within 15-45 miles of the broadcast location, and the one video teaching model was greater than 200 miles from the broadcast location.

Teaching Communication

The multisite church has utilized multiple methods of teaching communication models. While this project has differentiated between video and live teaching within the locations, even within those locations is a variation of teaching models. For instance, one of our participating churches uses a rotating teaching model for their live teaching. Questions 6, 12, 13, 16, and 17 from the Attendee Survey (Appendix F) were designed to identify the survey participant's perception of the teaching communication model of their church.

Table 10

Primary Teaching Model

Q6. Which of the following best describes the primary teaching method used at your church?		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Video teaching	26.0%	13
Live teaching	74.0%	37

Question 6 from the Attendee Survey highlights that out of 52 respondents, 37 described the primary teaching method used at their church as live teaching. Thirteen respondents described the primary teaching method used at their church as video teaching. Two survey participants skipped this question.

Table 11

Location Pastor Teaches in Person

Q12. How often does your location pastor teach in person at your specific location's weekend services?		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Less than 2 times per year	7.69%	4
3 - 5 times per year	21.15%	11
6 - 8 times per year	5.77%	3
9 or more times per year	65.38%	34

Question 12 from the Attendee Survey highlighted that even though 26% of survey respondents described their primary teaching model as video, their location pastor will teach at their specific weekend's service. Forty-eight participants report that their location pastor will teach at their specific location's weekend services at least three-five times per year. All four participants who responded that their location pastor teaches less than two times per year attend the same church.

Table 12

Lead Pastor Teaches in Person

Q13. How often does the lead pastor teach in person at your specific location's weekend services?		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Less than 2 times per year	32.69%	17
3 - 5 times per year	15.38%	8
6 - 8 times per year	11.54%	6
9 or more times per year	40.38%	21

Question 13 from the Attendee Survey highlighted the variation in how often attendees perceive that their lead pastor teaches at their specific location's weekend service. Seventeen respondents reported that their lead pastor teaches at their specific location's weekend services less than two times per year. Twelve of those participants report participating in a church where video teaching is the primary model of their church. The remaining five participants were part of

churches in which respondents reported live teaching as the primary model of the church. It is unclear to the researcher why there is a variation in responses at each of the church models.

Table 13

Lead Pastor Teaches in Person Impact

Q16. Respond to this statement: The number of times the lead pastor teaches at my specific location's weekend service impacts the mission, vision, values of the church.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Strongly disagree	11.54%	6
Disagree	23.08%	12
Agree	48.08%	25
Strongly agree	17.31%	9

Question 16 from the Attendee Survey highlighted the number of survey respondents who believed that the number of times the lead pastor teaches at their specific location's weekend service impacted the mission, vision, and values of the church. Of the 52 respondents to this question, 34, or 64.4%, agreed or strongly agreed that this teaching method made an impact. The remaining 18, or 34.6% disagreed, or strongly disagreed that this teaching method impacted the mission, vision, and values of the church. Every participating church had at least one respondent who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Every participating church had at least one respondent who agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

Table 14

Lead Pastor Primary Communicator

Q17. The lead pastor is the primary communicator of my church.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
True	80.77%	42
False	19.23%	10

Question 17 from the Attendee Survey highlighted that 42, or 80.8% of attendees, agreed that the lead pastor is the primary communicator of their church. 10, or 19.2%, report that the lead pastor is not the primary communicator of their church. Nine out of the ten survey respondents who reported that their lead pastor is not the primary communicator of the church attend churches where live teaching is the primary communication model, and five respondents are from one specific church.

Mission, Vision, and Values

This study presupposed that mission, vision, and values are essential elements to create and keep one unique culture. In spite of their varying methods and models, the multisite church has been able to help its leaders and attendees recognize and understand their mission, vision, and values (see Table 14). Questions 18, 19, 20, and 21 from the Attendee Survey (Appendix F) were designed to identify the survey participant's perception of the mission, vision, and values of their church.

Table 15

Mission, Vision, and Values

Q18. I have a strong understanding of my church's mission, vision, and values.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
True	94.12%	48
False	5.88%	3

Question 18 from the Attendee Survey highlighted that 48, or 94.1% of survey respondents, have a strong understanding of their church's mission, vision, and values. The three participants, or 5.9% who did not feel like they had a strong understanding of their church's mission, vision, and values, represented two out of the six churches participating. Two of those respondents attended the same church. All three participated in churches that reported that live teaching was the primary method of communication, and each ranged between 15 – 45 miles from the broadcast campus.

Table 16

Mission, Vision, and Values One Location

Q19. I believe that I would have a better understanding of the mission, vision, and values of my church if we were all attending one location.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
True	1.92%	1
False	98.08%	51

Question 19 from the Attendee Survey highlighted that one, or 1.9% of survey respondents, feel like they would have a better understanding of the mission, vision, and values of their church if they were all attending one location. The remaining 51, or 98.1% of survey respondents, feel that they have an understanding in spite of their varying proximities and models. The one respondent who answered true to question 19 attended a church that reported using live teaching as their primary method and was 15-45 miles from the broadcast location.

Table 17

Mission, Vision, and Values and Culture

Q20. The mission, vision, and values of my church are essential to the culture of my location.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
True	96.15%	50
False	3.85%	2

Question 20 from the Attendee Survey highlighted that 50, or 96.2% of survey respondents, believed the mission, vision, and values of their church are essential to the culture of their location. The two survey respondents who answered false to question 20 both attended separate churches who reported that their primary teaching model was live teaching. Both respondents who answered false to this question attended locations that ranged from 15-45 miles away from their broadcast location.

Table 18

Enjoy the Multisite Church

Q21. I enjoy attending a location that is part of a multisite church.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
True	98.08%	51
False	1.92%	1

Question 21 from the Attendee Survey highlighted that 51, or 98.1%, of survey respondents enjoyed attending a location that was part of a multisite church. The one respondent, who answered false to question 21 attended a church that reported a live teaching model as their primary form of communication and was 15-45 miles away from their broadcast location.

Ministry Comparison

The final section of the Attendee Survey was dedicated to four narratives, ministry comparison questions. Questions 22, 23, 24, and 25 from the Attendee Survey sought out the perceptions of church attendees and leaders regarding how each specific ministry compared to other ministries across other locations at their specific church.

Question 22 from the Attendee Survey asked survey respondents how the weekend service at their location compared to the weekend service at other locations within their church. Forty-nine church attendees and leaders answered question 22 and provided feedback in a narrative form. Twenty-seven respondents noted that the services were similar. Fifteen respondents provided different narrative feedbacks, which included differences in size, preference, and atmosphere. Five respondents noted that they were not sure.

Question 23 from the Attendee Survey asked survey respondents how the worship portion of their weekend service at their location compared to the weekend service at other locations within their church. Fifty church leaders and attendees responded to this question. Twenty-eight respondents noted that the worship portion of their services was similar, if not identical. Twelve respondents noted that there was a difference; no stylistic differences were noted, but some are better resourced than others. Two respondents noted there was a vast difference in the worship experience. Two respondents noted that they were not sure of any differences between locations.

Question 24 from the Attendee Survey asked survey respondents how their kid's ministry service at their location compared to the kid's ministry service at other locations within their church. Fifty church leaders and attendees responded to this question. Thirty-two respondents felt that the kid's ministry service was similar from location to location, and nine respondents noted they were not sure of any differences between locations.

Question 25 from the Attendee Survey asked survey respondents how the guest services at their location compared to the guest service area at other locations within their church. Forty-nine church leaders and attendees responded to this question, and 34 respondents felt that their guest services area was similar from location to location. There were notable differences in terms of resources. For instance, two respondents mentioned a café at one location but not another. Six respondents noted they were not sure of any differences between locations.

Section Summary

The survey results used to answer RQ1 highlighted to the researcher that there are more similarities than differences in the methods and strategies used to create and keep culture in the three researched multisite models. 84.6% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that executive leadership had significant control over the decisions, and 90.4% of respondents agreed

or strongly agreed that they made those decisions with a clear understanding of the local community's needs. While attendees noted the influence of the church's executive leadership, the respondents also noted the influence of local leadership. 92.3% agreed or strongly agreed that their campus leadership team has considerable input in their location's ministries, decisions, and direction. 86.5% agreed or strongly agreed that their campus leadership team has the autonomy to adapt to the needs of their local community context.

The data also highlighted that live teaching is typically part of the worship experience regardless of the model. 74% of survey respondents answered that the primary teaching model of the church was live teaching, but 92.3% of participants reported that their location pastor would teach at their specific location's weekend services at least three-five times per year. Irrespective of the teaching model, 80.8% of attendees agreed that the lead pastor is the primary communicator of their church.

98.1% of respondents reported a high level of understanding of the church's mission, vision, and values. 96.2% of survey respondents believed the mission, vision, and values of their church are essential to the culture of their location. The data also showed that survey respondents are happy to attend the multisite church, and 98.1% of survey respondents enjoyed attending a location that was part of a multisite church.

Research Question Two

The desired outcome of the second research question was to evaluate how participating church campus pastors describe the communication pathways within their church organization toward creating and keeping one culture. The researched used to answer RQ2 was accumulated through the use of six face-to-face interviews with campus pastors from six separate churches. The face-to-face interviews occurred using Zoom, a recorded teleconference tool. Each

participant will be asked a set of open-ended questions (appendix J). Each teleconference was recorded, transcribed, and analyzed. This method of interviewing was useful as it allowed the “researcher control over the line of questioning” (Creswell, 2014, p. 191).

In order to answer RQ2 using the qualitative method, the researcher asked the same open-ended questions to each participating campus pastor. To answer this specific question, the researcher asked two out of eight questions pertaining to communication pathways. To protect the identity of the campus pastor and his or her church, the researcher used codes A, B, C, D, E, and F.

Communication Pathways

Each campus pastor was asked, “How would you describe the communication pathways between the central office and the location of your church?”

Church A

The campus pastor noted that the primary communication pathway was via a weekly staff meeting. He noted that while Church A had multiple meetings, the weekly staff meeting was a meeting where direction, announcements, video guides, and dates were provided. He noted that this meeting is where most information is disseminated (Appendix L). The researcher followed up by asking if Church A had other forms of communication platforms. The Church A campus pastor replied by noting that they use text messaging threads as a communication platform.

Church B

The campus pastor for Church B noted multiple pathways for his church. The executive team of Church B will communicate in one of four ways: (One) An annual staff meeting, where all staff members are in attendance. (Two) Via announcements, the lead pastor will broadcast into the auditoriums of all the locations for staff. (Three) Via a meeting that occurs every other

Tuesday. The executive pastor, often the lead pastor, and all of the campus pastors will meet.

The Church B campus pastor noted that this meeting is highly informational. And (Four) Global core ministry meetings. In these meetings, the executive pastor will disseminate information to the campus pastors, and the campus pastors will disseminate the appropriate information to all other teams. Global meetings occur two times monthly at their largest campus (Appendix M).

Church C

The campus pastor for Church C noted that the majority of their central communication occurs through the campus pastor team. He stated that the campus pastor team is the “hub of what’s happening at the church. The campus pastor is a conduit for communication from central to all of the teams” (Appendix N). Church C had felt that their communication was often top-down, and after the executive team recognized that, they attempted for communication to be two ways (Appendix N). The researcher asked the follow-up question, do you have any type of platform or meeting? The Church C campus pastor replied by noting they had weekly meetings in which the executive pastor was included (Appendix N).

Church D

Church D’s pastor noted a struggle with their communication pathways. The campus pastor stated that they were working hard to fix their system of communication, including adding the campus pastor to their executive team. With the campus pastor on their executive team, the pastor also noted that they also communicate directly to all staff members who are part of that campus. Church D recognized that the flow of information could not go through just one individual (Appendix O).

Church E

The campus pastor for Church E also noted that communication pathways can be a struggle. He stated it was a working progress and Church E is always trying to make it better (Appendix P). The Church E campus pastor (Appendix P) noted,

We had three locations and had to move to two. You'd assume that the communication would be more clear, but it hasn't always been the case. Campus pastors can struggle because they have so much input from central. We believe it can be overwhelming with all the dotted lines that campus pastors have from our central team. It's also challenging for volunteers. Volunteers have different buy-in and availability. The volunteer's ability to take part in the communication varies among the volunteer leaders. Clarity leads to unity. I have to be consistent in my communication, but the volunteer leader also has to be consistent. The size of the campus also matters. Can the second campus do what the primary campus does? Can portable facilities do the same as permanent facilities? Are we creating fair expectations for all campuses and leaders? That can create a lot of frustration in our communication pathways. Let's set fair expectations and then follow up with appropriate communication. We believe it will eliminate burnout, tension, and frustration.

Church F

The campus pastor for church F also noted changes in their communication pathways. Church F recognized that more organizational clarity was needed and made the following (Appendix Q) changes:

We have two executive leaders; one leader who is in charge of all central ministries and one leader who is in charge of all site ministries. In the past, we, as site pastors felt like we had multiple bosses. Now, if a central ministry wants us to do something, they go to their executive leader, who will then take it to the site pastor executive leader who will filter it and approve or disapprove. At that time, it will then go to the site pastor via the executive site leader and the central ministry leader.

The researcher followed up by asking if the change was more or less efficient. Church F's campus pastor noted that it was more efficient. "Our central leader talks with us often and has a great feel of what should and shouldn't go to us. The system has worked out really well for us as site pastors" (Appendix Q).

Section Summary

In all models evaluated in this research project, communication was a work in progress. Each pastor interviewed discussed the importance of communication as a pathway from the highest leadership level to the volunteer teams at the weekend worship experience. Each campus pastor noted the use of meetings, weekly or bi-weekly meetings, and those meetings were typically highly informational. There was no apparent connection to communication pathways and the multisite church model.

Teaching Method

The second question asked campus pastors during the face-to-face zoom interviews was, “What is the purpose of video teaching?” The purpose of this question was to identify if video or live teaching influenced the communication pathways of a church.

Church A

The campus pastor for Church A noted that each of the locations at their church was live teaching. The researcher followed up by asking if the campus pastor had ever been to a video-teaching church, and the campus pastor replied yes (Appendix L). The researcher followed up by asking, what is the purpose of video teaching? The campus pastor (Appendix L) noted,

I was surprised how quickly it didn't matter. The reason why we didn't do it that way, originally, is because we felt that everything needs to multiply. We do it the way we do it, not because video preaching doesn't work. We feel that video preaching doesn't raise up more preachers. If you want to go fast, go alone, if you want to go far, go together. It's faster to use video preaching, but live teaching helps go further, due to the leadership component.

Church B

The campus pastor for Church B noted that they were live, video teaching. Meaning, their lead pastor streams live into each location. For the purpose of this research, this method is

considered video teaching. The researcher asked Church B's campus pastor what the purpose of video teaching is and the campus pastor responded with the following (Appendix M):

What God is doing to identify your uniqueness as a church. One of those, for us, is an anointed communicator. For our model, our Lead Pastor is an anointed communicator and that is a huge plus. So many people come for the communicator, for the message of the word of God. We have locations that are 300 or less and locations that are 3000. For our model, it's extremely important to have that live feel from the lead pastor.

Church C

The pastor for Church C noted they utilize live, in-person teaching at their location. The researcher asked the pastor what the purpose of video teaching is, and the pastor replied by noting that it helps provide the church with a "one church feel" (Appendix N). He also noted "it is a way to reinforce who we are as a church; big picture, where we are going. It's something that aligns us" (Appendix N). Finally, the pastor noted, that he felt there was a "drop-off in excellence between teaching pastors and campus pastors. Teaching isn't everyone's gift" (Appendix N).

Church D

Church D utilizes live, in-person teaching. The researcher asked what the purpose of video teaching is and the pastor (Appendix O) replied,

We tried video teaching but it wasn't successful. We use live-in person teaching. We have a teaching team that will collaborate and talk about the messages. Our lead pastor will come to the meeting and the team will discuss it. The main essence and objectives of the message is agreed upon and the campus pastor will write a message around it.

Church E

The campus pastor for Church E noted that his church uses video teaching for his campus. The lead pastor currently teaches at Church E's broadcast location 85% of the time (Appendix P). "He will only travel to other campuses to welcome and introduce the video venue aspect" (Appendix P). The campus pastor also noted that his expectation as their church will

continue to transition all of their experiences, outside of their Saturday night experience, to video teachings (Appendix P).

The researcher followed up by asking he felt like the purpose of video teaching was and the campus pastor (Appendix P) noted,

Consistency and communication. What I've found is that it's easy to sway from vision not having the same communicator. Even if a message is written by the same person, it can become very different. There is value to have one voice across the church for consistency and clarity. We want our campus pastors to understand the culture and our language before they start communicating from stage.

Church F

Church F utilizes the video teaching model. The researcher asked the campus pastor what the purpose of video teaching is and he (Appendix Q) replied,

For us, right now, the video model falls in our church planting model. How do we do leadership and stewardship well. We don't just use a video message; we use video worship as well. We plant churches in movie theaters. We know they are centrally located and are built for audio/visual. With that said, the entire service is on the screen. We are about to move into our sixth location using that model and it's been completely sustainable. The up cost is less and puts less pressure onsite pastors as communicators. We get to hire people who are shepherds.

Section Summary

Through the qualitative interview process, the researcher discovered an emerging theme within the section. Regardless of the multisite teaching model, pastors at each location within a church are teaching a similar message. The lead pastor has an input in the message, whether they are broadcasted into each campus or collaborating with the campus pastor on his or her message.

Another consistent theme in the churches evaluated was excellence. Within the interviews, pastors from both live teaching and video teaching models noted a potential drop-off in excellence in some circumstances of live teaching. One live teaching campus pastor noted the

value in leadership development in the live teaching model and expressed a responsibility of the church to raise up and train communicators.

Research Question Three

The desired outcome of the third research question was to evaluate how participating church campus pastors describe the vision and mission within their church organization toward creating and keeping one culture. The research used to answer RQ3 was accumulated through the use of six face-to-face interviews with campus pastors from six separate churches. The face-to-face interviews occurred using Zoom, a recorded teleconference tool. Each participant was asked a set of open-ended questions (Appendix J). This particular method of interviewing was useful as it allowed the “researcher control over the line of questioning” (Creswell, 2014, pl 191).

In order to answer RQ3 using the qualitative method, the researcher asked the same open-ended questions to each participating campus pastor. To answer this specific question, the researcher asked two out of eight questions pertaining to the vision and mission within their church organization. To protect the identity of the campus pastor and his or her church, the researcher used codes A, B, C, D, E, and F.

Vision, Mission, and Values

Each campus pastor was asked, “Describe how the vision, mission, and values are communicated at your location?” The purpose of this question was to help the researcher identify if the campus pastors reported that creating and keeping one culture was influenced by the vision and mission within their church organization. A potential follow-up question was, “Does that differ from other locations within your church?”

Church A

The campus pastor for Church A noted that the vision, mission, and values

was communicated in a variety of ways at his church. The vision, mission, and values are part of Church A's mission statement (Appendix L). The campus pastor noted that core values are posted in its lobby, and verbiage is often used in conversations, announcements and even during testimony videos (Appendix L). The campus pastor also noted that Church A does an annual sermon series that will highlight its core values (Appendix L).

The researcher followed up by asking Church A's campus pastor if the vision, mission, and values differed at other locations. The campus pastor (Appendix L) noted

It is dependent on the campus pastor. I do believe it's different because the campus pastor drives it. Our entire team is on board with our mission, vision and values. Everyone who has come on board has either helped create it or has come on board after it was solidified.

Church B

The campus pastor for Church B noted that the vision, mission, and values were communicated in every staff meeting. "They are literally at the top of our agendas as a visual queue" (Appendix M). He noted that at each All-Staff meeting, the executive pastor discussed Church B's history, who they are, where they are going, their strategy, mission, vision, and values that guide them (Appendix M). The researcher followed up by asking Church B's campus pastor if it differs between locations and he noted that nothing he said differed.

Church C

The campus pastor for Church C noted the importance of the campus pastor when it came to vision casting the mission and values. He (Appendix N) noted,

We really lean on the Campus Pastor to vision cast the mission and values. We try to articulate those clearly to our Campus Pastors, Teaching Pastors and the whole team. We have a rotating teaching team who speak monthly at the campuses. The Campus Pastors do a lot of heavy lifting. We use live teaching and video elements.

The researcher followed up by asking the campus pastor if that differed between locations. The campus pastor responded by noting “the campus pastor’s ability to vision cast does impact the church vision. It’s actually why we started using more video elements because we found a lack of vision and mission” (Appendix N). He stated that the “values have always been solid, but the big picture was suffering” (Appendix N).

Church D

When asked how the vision, mission, and values were communicated at their location, the campus pastor for Church D (Appendix O) noted,

The vision, mission, and values are communicated through the campus pastors. We do a monthly collaboration with the executive team. The campus pastor is part of the executive team. Our mission and vision are simple. Our core values are communicated through meetings and verbalized through conversation. The campus pastor is the primary communicator. He takes it from the executive team and it’s customized for their specific location. What works for the entire church, might not work in that specific community. We used to try to superimpose, but it didn’t work. We needed to contextualize it to the community. Collaboration is a core value of ours. We push our campus leaders for “corporate, church wide” training. The vision, mission, and values will be communicated through that training as well.

Church E

Church E noted that the vision, mission, and values were communicated in a variety of ways including volunteer huddles, and sermon series. He (Appendix P) noted,

We have a huddle every Sunday. It’s a campus wide volunteer huddle. Every Series, our campus pastors meet and discuss which core value will be best highlighted through the sermon series. We collaborate and discuss which core value and an action step week to week. We utilize the platform, via announcements to discuss our vision, mission, and values. We are in the process of a branding change and we believe it’s important for our attendees to see our missions and vision. We have our vision, mission, and values branded on our walls across our building. We also communicate it often in face-to-face conversations and from the stage. It’s key to keep the vision and mission in front.

The researcher followed up by asking if that differed from location to location and the campus pastor (Appendix P) answered,

No, that is something that we talk about frequently. We are not going to create different vision and mission. We are here to carry not create. We are DNA carriers and though we give autonomy in many areas to campus pastors, we do want our VMV adjusted or changed campus to campus.

Church F

When the researcher asked the campus pastor for Church F how the vision, mission, and values were communicated his location, he (Appendix Q) noted,

It should be done by the site pastor. As a site pastor, I'm the primary driver for the vision, mission, and values. It all begins with the sermon. We as site pastors will reiterate the vision, mission, and values from the message. We actually will say our mission statement often and will say until people are sick of it. We "over" communicate our vision, mission, and values.

The researcher followed up by asking if that differed between locations and the campus pastor responded, "Yes, there is always a tension between locations. We will have a spectrum of leadership and communication across our campuses. It's a bit inconsistent, but we try really hard without micromanaging to help campus pastors communicate strongly" (Appendix Q).

Section Summary

An emerging theme found in the results of the qualitative interview process was the intentionality each participating multisite church placed on communicating the mission, vision, and values of the church, and the results of that intentionality were positively reflected in the Attendee Survey. The survey participants overwhelmingly (98.1%) noted a high level of understanding of the church's mission, vision, and values, and 96.2% believed that the mission, vision, and values were essential to the culture of their location.

Another theme identified was the value that each church placed on the campus pastor. The campus pastor played a pivotal role in communicating the church's mission, vision, and values. Regardless of the teaching model, the campus pastor will use the platform provided to

communicate the mission, vision, and values. One pastor, who used a live-teaching model, noted the increased use of video elements to help support the campus pastor.

One Church in Multiple Locations

Each campus pastor was asked, “What does one church in multiple locations mean?” The purpose of this question was to help the researcher identify how the campus pastor felt being a multisite church was influenced by a church organization’s vision and mission.

Church A

The campus pastor for Church A was asked by the researcher “what does one church in multiple locations mean?” The campus pastor answered the question in two ways. He stated, “my initial reaction is that we have one budget, elder, and overseer team” (Appendix L). His second response was regarding organizational culture. He noted, “we are really a band of brothers. Even when people leave the team, we feel that our culture goes with them.”

Church B

When Church B’s campus pastor was asked, “what does one church in multiple locations mean?” The campus pastor answered, “To wrap the loving arms of Jesus around the surrounding region. The reason we are one church in multiple locations is to reach an entire region for Jesus” (Appendix M).

Church C

Church C’s campus pastor joked, “it’s what every church says” (Appendix N) when asked, “what does one church in multiple locations mean?” He stated, “Same name, same mission, same values, same Sunday service, same discipleship process, same ministries, same events. The power to harness the church to create large events. But also, the ability to minister small and develop personal relationships” (Appendix N).

Church D

Church D was asked, “what does one church in multiple locations mean?” Church D answered by (Appendix O) stating,

Unity, Commodity, resourcing, support, progress, equipping. Those words and objectives are powerful. There is value in being multisite; you can’t duplicate a culture. There is a large difference in communities, but we can duplicate and multiply a mindset in ministry.

Church E

The researcher asked Church E’s campus pastor, “what does one church in multiple locations mean?” The campus pastor for Church E answered by (Appendix P) noting,

We are all one body; we resemble one church. Our branding is the same. It’s like going to a chick-fil-a. No matter what chick-fil-a you go to, it’s going to be red and white. It’s going to serve chicken. Our campuses will contextualize to our community, but we are all part of the same body. The same branding, quality, and organization. I am ordained with a denomination and I can look at the directory and go to different churches within the denomination and could find a variety of differences. Our church’s style of worship, message, and experience will feel the same regardless of which location you attend.

Church F

The researcher asked the campus pastor of Church F, “what does one church in multiple locations mean?” The campus pastor for Church F noted that, “For us, it’s one elder team across the church. Same mission, same vision, same goals, same language, same authority, same message” (Appendix Q).

Section Summary

An emerging theme discovered in asking this question was that multisite churches share the same mission, vision, values, goals, language, and leadership. Some multisite churches were focused on a specific city or region, and others have an extended reach. There are similarities in excellence and expectations across each location within a church and an expectation that the church can contextualize to the local community.

One unexpected theme discovered by the researcher was found in the weekend worship experience sermon. Church F's campus pastor noted the same message each week by each location. Church F represented a video teaching church, but the researcher found that each participating church used a similar message, regardless of their teaching model. While it might not be the same exact message broadcast into the auditorium, each church used a collaborative process to develop similar messages across all locations of their specific church.

Research Question Four

The desired outcome of the fourth research question was to evaluate how participating church campus pastors describe the methods and strategies in creating and keeping one culture. The research used to answer RQ4 was accumulated through the use of six face-to-face interviews with campus pastors from six separate churches. The face-to-face interviews occurred using Zoom, a recorded teleconference tool. Each participant will be asked a set of open-ended questions (Appendix J). This particular method of interviewing was useful as it allowed the "researcher control over the line of questioning" (Creswell, 2014, p. 191).

In order to answer RQ4 using the qualitative method, the researcher asked the same open-ended questions to each participating campus pastor. To answer this specific question, the researcher asked three out of eight questions pertaining to the methods and strategies within their church organization. To protect the identity of the campus pastor and his or her church, the researcher used codes A, B, C, D, E, and F.

Methods and Strategies

Each campus pastor was asked, "How would you describe the church attendee's perception of the methods and strategies used at your church?" The purpose of this question was to help the researcher identify if the campus pastors reported that creating and keeping one

culture was influenced by the methods and strategies within their church organization. A potential follow-up question was, “How does that differ from location to location at your church?”

Church A

When asked, “how would you describe the church attendee’s perception of the methods and strategies used at your church.” The campus pastor noted a mixed response. He (Appendix L) stated,

It’s mixed. The church is 213 years old. There are multiple traditions. We have a heavy Methodist and catholic influence in our communities. We also have workers from the south that have moved into our communities. People come with an understanding of what a method of church “should” look like. I’m amazed of how many people don’t like our methods, but still attend for years. Their kids and spouses love it and they are growing. “Even if I don’t agree with your methods, it is reaching my family.”

Church B

The campus pastor for Church B was succinct when asked how the attendees perceived the methods and strategies used at his church. The campus pastor answered, “They would say that we are an aggressive church to reach our community” (Appendix M). The researcher followed up by asking if that differed from location to location, and the campus pastor responded, “No, it’s the same message” (Appendix M).

Church C

The campus pastor for Church C noted that attendees would perceive that the methods and strategies of Church C were “Directed by the staff and leadership. Meaning their input was not asked very often. Everything is methodical, process-driven, and intentional. Positively, they were accessible to non-Christians and new people” (Appendix N). The campus pastor noted that this would be the perception across all locations (Appendix N).

Church D

The pastor for Church D was asked how the attendees would perceive the methods and strategies of Church D and the pastor (Appendix O) noted,

The attendees believe our systems are organized and well-informed. We use something called discover Church D. It's a four-step process that helps attendees learn more about our church. They can assimilate and identify their next-steps. During that course, people speak positively about Church D. People state that the church is welcoming, friendly, well-organized. Though the systems are flawed, people like it.

The researcher asked if this perception would differ from location to location and the pastor answered, "no" (Appendix O).

Church E

Church E's campus pastor was asked, how would you describe the church attendee's perception of the methods and strategies used at your church? The campus pastor (Appendix P) noted,

It would depend on the community. When guest come and they see a video message, many will question why there isn't a live teacher. That is the biggest questions that we navigate through with people who are new to our church. Our worship is also much more modern, which many churches where we are at are not used too.

Church F

When the campus pastor for Church F was asked how would you describe the church attendee's perception of the methods and strategies used at Church F, the pastor (Appendix Q) answered,

They would say that we make decisions based on people who don't show up. Our goal is to plant churches in urban cities across Canada and purposely place ourselves in cultural centers. They would call us business and methodical. It's not traditional at all but it's necessary to meet the non-Christian. It does not differ from location to location.

Section Summary

The researcher noted an emerging theme of consistency when evaluating this question's responses in the qualitative interview process. Each participating pastor noted that the attendee's

perception of the methods and strategies used would not differ from location to location. Three of the participating churches, one live teaching, and two video teaching churches noted the value of reaching new people, the community, or non-Christians when cultivating their methods and strategies. One video teaching campus pastor highlighted the need to explain video teaching to new guests, stating that was the most common question received.

Sunday Worship Service

Each campus pastor was asked, “How, if at all, does the Sunday worship service differ from location to location at your church?” The purpose of this question was to help the researcher identify if the campus pastors reported that creating and keeping one culture was influenced by the similarities or differences of the Sunday Worship service within their church organization. A potential follow-up question was, “Do similar worship, guest service, and kids’ ministry affect the organizational culture?”

Church A

The campus pastor for Church A noted that not all of the Sunday worship services are identical at their locations. He (Appendix L) stated,

Some of the things have changed. We used to try and do the same worship set, but we have backed out of that. We give 20-30 songs and ask each campus to choose which songs to sing. We borrow a lot of musicians from each other and they need to know the songs. The messages have the same points and the same passages, but other than that, they differ. Sometimes, people would say they are quite different. The biggest similarity is the “feel.” It is the same kind of music style and the atmosphere and warmth feel the same. Each have a biblical practical teaching. It’s not the same, but it rhymes.

The researcher followed up by asking the campus pastor for Church A if he would same that there were differences in guest services and kid’s ministry as well? The campus pastor (Appendix L) answered,

Yes, Guest services and Kid’s ministry is very much the same. All of our Kids ministries run on teenagers. The best indicator if a teen will walk away from church is if they were involved in ministry. If they are involved in ministry; they won’t walk away from

church. One of our teachers was doing the teaching and he felt like it was complex so they went ahead with the teaching video. Some campuses will exclusively do the video and some will do the teaching live. Depending on the size; the classrooms will vary with ages. This can change based on the number of kids and/or leaders.

Church B

The campus pastor for Church B noted “very little” difference in the Sunday worship service from location to location (Appendix M). The researcher followed up by asking if the campus pastor believed that similar worship, kid’s ministry, and guest services affected the culture. The campus pastor (Appendix M) answered,

Yes, no doubt. I think, for us, I love our global culture. It keeps the competition out of the game. We all do it the same way. We are able to take all the best ideas and implement them at all the campuses. We are all on the same tracks. People know the theme and quality of what they are getting. We try to keep it the same as possible to be able to bring the most excellence to all of our locations instead of one soaring above the others.

Church C

When the campus pastor for Church C was asked how, if at all, does the Sunday worship service differ from location to location at your church, he (Appendix N) answered,

It does not differ in music, sermon, or announcements. They are all very similar. Local announcements are added, but everything else is pretty much the same and uniform. Guest Services and Kid’s Ministry is also very uniform. We have five overarching teams and they are all similar location to location.

Church D

The pastor for Church D noted quality was a difference when asked how, if at all, does the Sunday worship service differ from location to location at Church D. The pastor (Appendix O) stated,

Quality. Our Lead Pastor recently visited our campus and he wasn’t pleased. We recently brought on a new worship pastor, but there is a difference in quality. They believe that it’s amazing, but there is more work to do. It’s a culture difference. People haven’t recognized the importance of excellence and practice. It is also more charismatic. I would argue that our second location is much more charismatic; I would call it a 10 where our central location is a seven. Our communicator at our central location is dynamic and well-received. That doesn’t translate to our second campus, but the attendees don’t

realize it. Mediocre cannot be their standard and that is something that we are working on as a church.

The researcher followed up by asking if there were any differences in the setlist or curriculum for their kid's ministry. The pastor (Appendix O) noted,

We have a next-gen coordinator. She is an administrator who uses the Orange curriculum. The administrator/coordinator gives the freedom to use the curriculum and attempt to capture the essence at both locations. Both locations use the same worship set practice. Our worship pastor is over both campuses.

Church E

The pastor for Church E was asked how, if at all, does the Sunday worship service differ from location to location at your church. The campus pastor for Church E (Appendix P) responded,

Leaders at each location provide a flavor. Even though it's the same message and worship set, the leaders do provide a feel to the Sunday gatherings at each location. We have a diverse staff and that also impacts the specific campus. The diversity of the staff, for us, leads to more diversity in the congregation, which creates a beautiful collage. Worship and kids' curriculum (Orange) is the same.

Church F

The campus pastor for Church F noted the most uniform response to the question, how if at all, does the Sunday worship service differ from location to location at your church. He (Appendix Q) noted,

Outside of the site that utilizes a live teacher, all other sites use video worship and teaching. Most of our sites use the cinema model. We use the same curriculum for Kid's ministry. In the beginning, all locations have a group of essential ministries offered. As the locations grow and the needs change, different ministries will be added. All ministries are uniform across all locations.

Section Summary

An emerging theme found by the researcher was the consistency from location to location within each multisite church. Outside of the concern of excellence or minor changes a specific

individual might bring, each location utilizes a similar message, worship, set, and kid's curriculum. One church, a live teaching church, moved from using the same exact set to a setlist where each location can choose from. This church was the exception to the rule for churches participating in this research project.

Having a similar Sunday worship service location to location appeared intentional to the researcher. The similarities impact the overall culture of the church, but pastors did not report being held to unrealistic expectations. While the curriculum in kid's ministry might be the same, there was noted flexibility in the scale of curriculum use.

Who is your Pastor

Each campus pastor was asked, If attendees at your location were asked who their pastor was, who would they say? The purpose of this question was to help the researcher identify if the organizational culture was influenced the attendee's perception of who their pastor was.

Church A

The campus pastor was asked, if attendees at your location were asked who their pastor was, who would they say? The campus pastor of Church A (Appendix L) responded,

No question. They would all immediately say their campus pastor is their pastor. I would say 51% would say that they don't know who the lead pastor is. He is on videos; if they were paying attention they would know, but they aren't paying attention.

Church B

The campus pastor of Church B was asked, if attendees at your location were asked who their pastor was, who would they say? The campus pastor of Church B answered, "they would say the lead pastor is their pastor" (Appendix M).

Church C

When asked, if attendees at your location were asked who their pastor was, who would they say, the campus pastor for Church C responded, “they would say the campus pastor” (Appendix N).

Church D

This question was not asked during the face-to-face interview.

Church E

The campus pastor for Church E was asked, if attendees at your location were asked who their pastor was, who would they say? Church E’s campus pastor answered, “depends on the attendee. The most bought-in people, leaders, volunteers would probably say that their campus pastor is their pastor. The folks who just attend/consume would say the lead pastor is their campus pastor” (Appendix P).

Church F

The campus pastor for Church F was asked if attendees at your location were asked who their pastor was, who would they say? The campus pastor for Church F (Appendix Q) noted,

They would definitely say me, the site pastor. Attendees know there is more people resourcing the church, but the person developing a relationship with me is my pastor. Our lead pastor does not communicate via email or social media. All communication happens via the site pastors outside the weekly Sunday message.

Section Summary

The researcher noted that all but one campus pastor responded that the campus pastor would be considered church attendee’s pastor if asked, “who is your pastor?” The one campus pastor who reported that all attendees would likely say the lead pastor is their pastor was a video teaching church, and there were no other video or live teaching churches that agreed. One other video teaching pastor said that attendees who “just attend” people who do not serve, give, or

participate in groups would be more likely to say that the lead pastor is their pastor. One live teaching campus pastor noted that many attendees would not know the lead pastor if he walked into their church.

Research Questions Summary

Following the qualitative interview process, the researcher transcribed each zoom interview on a Microsoft Word document. The researcher evaluated each transcription, attempting to identify themes within each interview. When themes became consistent, meaning two or more campus pastors noted a similar occurrence, the researcher took note and included the findings in a section summary within this research project. In addition to consistent themes, the researcher also took note of responses that he felt illuminated a unique perspective. There were also attempts to connect emerging themes or unique responses to specific multisite church models.

The researcher discovered multiple themes from the data used to answer the research questions. One emerging theme is the similarities between live-teaching and video teaching multisite churches. Attendees noted significant collaboration between the executive and local leadership. They also noted awareness of the local community needs and the ability for the location to contextualize. All multisite churches participating in this research are intentional regarding the communication of their mission, vision, and values, and it shows. The data highlighted a high attendee awareness of the mission, vision, and values.

The researcher discovered that there is no apparent connection between communication pathways and the church model, but all participating churches identify the importance of clear communication. Each provides informational weekly or bi-weekly meetings. Each church places a high value on the campus pastor as a conduit in the communication pathway. Another theme

that emerged in this research is the consistency in the weekend worship service. All participating churches highlighted similarities in worship, guest services, and kid's ministries at their weekend worship service from location to location. While video-teaching ministries broadcast the same message into multiple locations, each participating church noted a similar message given in each location regardless of the live or video teaching model.

Evaluation of the Research Design

The qualitative design selected for this study was performed in 2 steps. The first step was unique in the fact that it utilized an instrument. Qualitative research typically occurs in a natural setting (Creswell, 2014). Meaning, a researcher does “not bring individuals into a lab (a contrived situation), nor do they typically send out instruments for individuals to complete” (2014, p. 185). This project utilized an instrument, the Attendee Survey, and the information gathered from that tool was used to answer Research Question One. In addition, the data collected from the Attendee Survey provided context for the remaining research questions.

Research Design Strengths

The data collected from the Attendee Survey were valid, as they were found to be accurate “from the standpoint of the researcher” (Creswell, 2014). The Attendee Survey eliminated the idea of any potential research bias that the researcher could have brought to the study due to the fact that the researcher was not present when participants were completing the survey. The researcher also included an expert panel in the formation of the Attendee Survey to eliminate research bias in the questioning.

The remaining data used provided in this research were the results of six face-to-face interviews. The data collected from each interview were used by the researcher to answer Research Questions Two, Three, and Four. Though the interviews were completed via Zoom, the

interviews occurred in a natural setting. Data were “gathered by actually talking directly to people and seeing them behave and act within their context” (2014, p. 185). In the six face-to-face interviews, the researcher was a key instrument. The researcher collected data himself through the interview process (2014). The use of face-to-face interviews allowed the researcher to have control over the line of questioning and allowed the participants to provide historical information about their churches (2014).

The research used multiple sources of data; the researcher “did not rely on a single data source” (2014, p. 186). The researcher collected the data from the Attendee Survey and six face-to-face interviews and triangulated the data for variability. The researcher was aware of his potential bias throughout the research, and questions, either by instrument or face-to-face was formed with the intention of eliminating any real or perceived bias.

Research Design Weaknesses

The researcher identified weaknesses within the research design. The greatest design flaw resided in the recruitment phase. Obtaining permission from churches proved to be incredibly difficult. The majority of churches ignored the researcher’s request, but some church leaders responded and kindly declined to participate. The largest reason for declining participation was that churches that this researcher was targeting do not survey their participants. It was not the concern of an outsider, the researcher, performing the survey. It was the idea of surveying their attendees at all. The researcher feels that the attendee perception is a key component of this research, but the lack of willing church participants slowed the project down significantly.

The second limitation to the recruitment phase of this research project was surveying churches during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is difficult to fully understand the impact that the pandemic had on this research project. During the recruitment phase, many churches were not

meeting in person, and when they did begin regathering, some closed locations. One church participating in this project had three locations prior to the pandemic and was down to two locations when the researcher was able to interview the campus pastor.

The third weakness to this research design was found in the attendee survey. The researcher found that the majority of respondents had a high level of understanding of the questions asked, but it became apparent that not all of the attendees participating in the survey knew who served on the executive leadership team. It should be noted, during the development of the attendee survey, one of the expert panelists raised this concern. The final weakness noted was how difficult it was for the researcher to obtain survey responses. The researcher asked the participating church leader to send multiple follow-up requests for participating. It is possible that the pandemic impacted this as well.

Chapter Summary

Chapter four provided a detailed overview of the data collection procedures, the data results, and the analysis of the data required to answer each of the four research questions. The data collected for Research Question One evaluated the similarities and differences in the methods and strategies used to create and keep culture between the three researched multisite church models. The data collected for Research Question Two evaluated how participating church campus pastors described the communication pathways within their church organization toward creating and keeping one culture. The data collected for Research Question Three evaluated how participating church campus pastors described the vision and mission within their church organization toward creating and keeping one culture. The data collected for Research Question Four evaluated how participating church campus pastors described the methods and strategies in creating and keeping one culture. Chapter Five of this research project will offer

emerging themes, conclusions, and analysis for the data obtained. Chapter five will also provide suggestions for further research identified throughout the research process of this project.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

The intent of this descriptive qualitative study was to evaluate the leadership and attendee perception of the methods and strategies used by the multisite church to create and keep one unique culture in spite of their varying proximity, or demographics. Chapter one introduced the topic, presented a brief historical and theological history of the multisite church and campus pastors, and provided important terms that will be useful for this project. Chapter two offered a literature review on topics limited to the leadership and attendee perception of the organizational culture within the multisite church. In addition, Chapter two also provided a brief history of the multisite church, popular theological and theoretical debates, and the importance of cultural relevance in church organizations. Chapter three outlined the research design, the population, the sampling procedures, including limitations of the generalizations and ethical considerations, and introduced the research tool and methods used in this study. Chapter four provided survey results and offered an analysis of the data accumulated. The purpose of Chapter five was to provide conclusions from the research data and analysis accumulated throughout this project.

Research Purpose

The intent of this descriptive qualitative study was to evaluate the leadership and attendee perception of the methods and strategies used by the multisite church to create and keep one unique culture in spite of their varying proximity, or demographics. The study explored organizational culture, including communication pathways, vision, and mission in three common multisite church models: the local franchise model, the national franchise model, and the live teaching model.

Research Questions

The following Research Questions provided the data needed to guide this study:

RQ1. What are the similarities and differences in the methods and strategies used to create and keep culture between the three researched multisite church models?

RQ2. How do participating church campus pastors describe the communication pathways within their church organization toward creating and keeping one culture?

RQ3. How do participating church campus pastors describe the vision and mission within their church organization toward creating and keeping one culture?

RQ4. What is the overall perception by church pastors of the methods and strategies in creating and keeping one culture?

Research Conclusions, Implications, and Applications

The intention of this research project was exploratory and was not meant to compare the different models found within the multisite church for the sake of placing value on a specific model. The research project did provide a descriptive comparison of each model for the sake of research. The conclusions, instead, gathered the perceptions of church leaders and attendees of the organizational culture, communication pathways, methods, and strategies used by the multisite churches. The design of this research was successful in providing an evaluation of those perceptions for the multisite church that attempt to create and keep one unique culture in spite of their varying proximity or demographics.

Research Conclusions

The data provided by both the Attendee Survey and the face-to-face Zoom interviews were successful in answering the research questions. The researcher was pleased with the results and found, while the intention was never to identify a superior church model, the results were successful in providing a descriptive comparison in addition to identifying narratives and emerging themes between each model.

Research Question One

The purpose of Research Question One was to evaluate the similarities and differences in the methods and strategies used to create and keep one unique culture within multisite churches in spite of their teaching style, proximity, or demographics. The data provided by the 25 questions, Attendee Survey, provided the researcher with the desired data to provide the data needed.

The research highlighted both similarities and differences between each church. The organizational culture of each church was different and that was reflected in the survey responses. Though differences exist, the survey responses also revealed unique similarities in each church in spite of their model, proximity, or demographics. Each church attempted to create a unique culture across multiple locations without ignoring the complexities, and needs of the unique culture in which the specific location resides.

In conclusion, Research Question One revealed that the majority of attendees and leaders perceive a collaboration of leadership from the church executive team and the local leadership team. The data also showed that there is an awareness and adaptability to the local community.

Figure 1

Church Leadership Collaboration

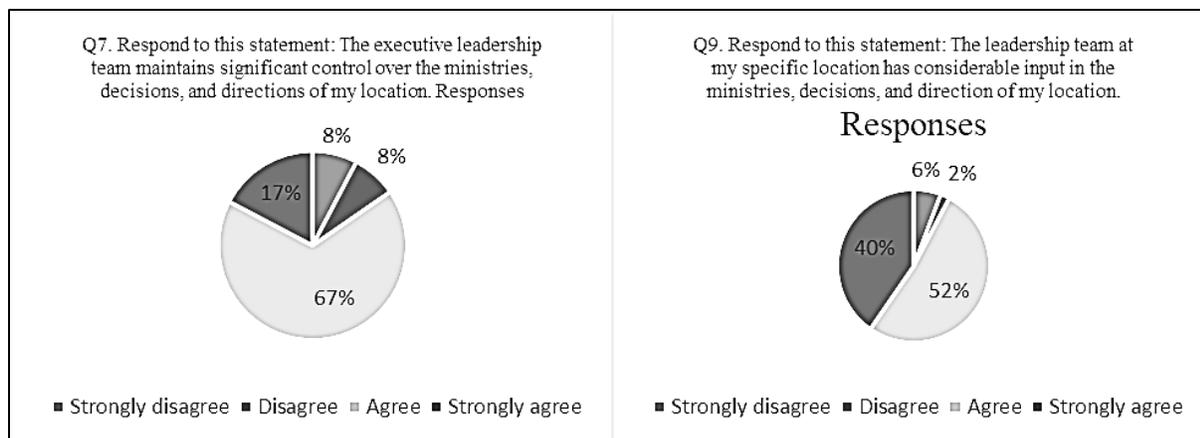
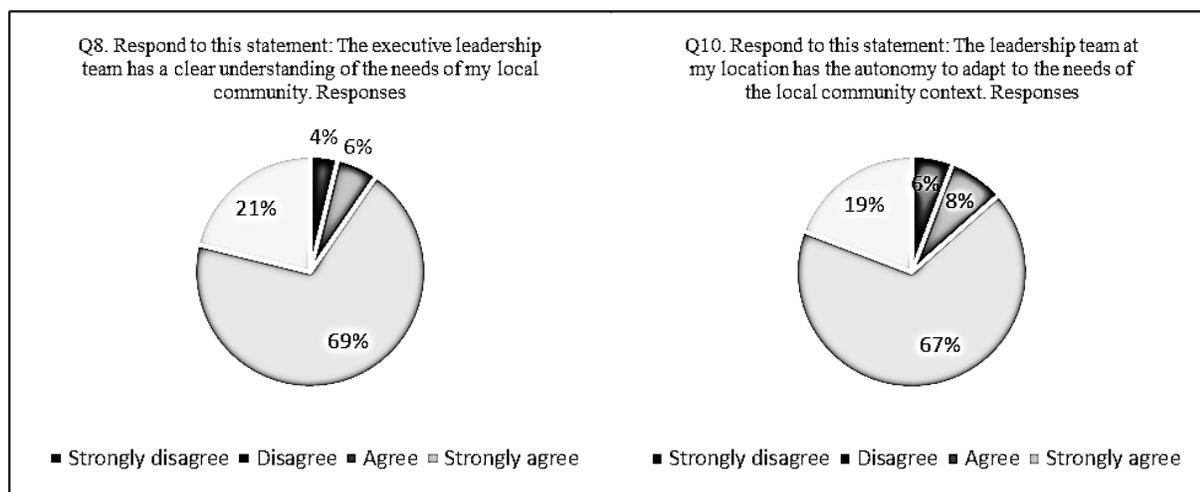


Figure 2

Church Awareness of Local Community

The researcher assumed that he would find an equal balance of video teaching and live teaching churches, but Table 10 showed that more live teaching locations were prevalent or were more willing to participate in the survey. In spite of the teaching model, the data highlighted, as seen in Table 13, that church attendees felt that lead pastors teaching at their specific location impacted the organizational culture.

Table 10

Primary Teaching Model

Q6. Which of the following best describes the primary teaching method used at your church?		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Video teaching	26.0%	13
Live teaching	74.0%	37

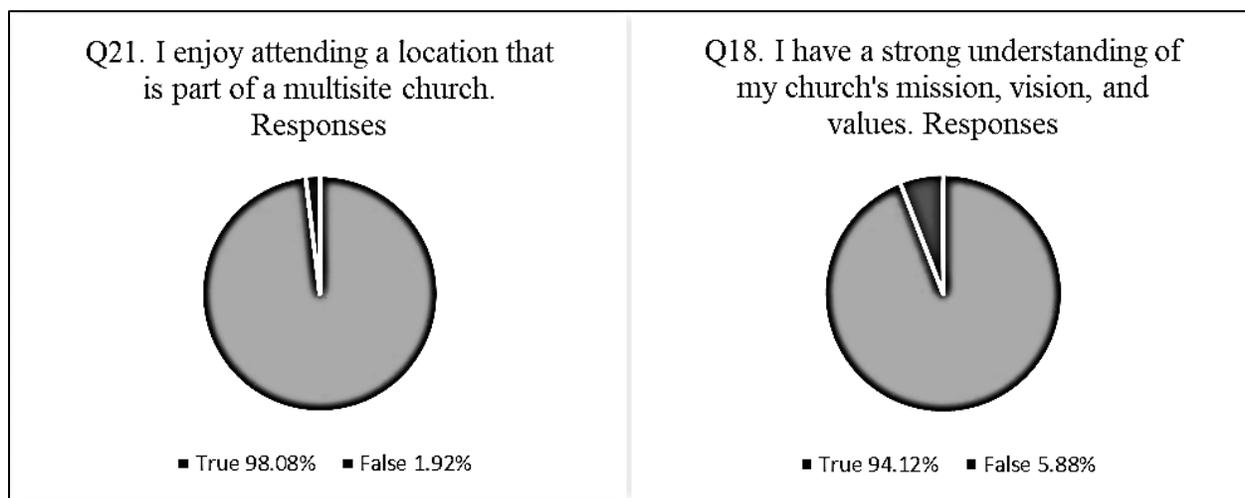
Table 13

Lead Pastor Teaches in Person Impact

Q16. Respond to this statement: The number of times the lead pastor teaches at my specific location's weekend service impacts the mission, vision, values of the church.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Strongly disagree	11.54%	6
Disagree	23.08%	12
Agree	48.08%	25
Strongly agree	17.31%	9

As highlighted in the Ministry Comparison section of Chapter four, the research data reflected that attendees and leaders were typically aware of how Sunday worship ministries compare to other locations and believe that while they are similar, at times, they need to be adjusted to fit the needs or resources of their specific location. Another similarity found in the data was that attendees and leaders have a positive perception of the multisite church model regardless of the model, proximity, or demographics. The favorability was close to 100 percent; each attendee believed they had a strong understanding of the mission, vision, and values of the church and that attending one location would not impact their understanding.

Figure 3

Church Favorability and Understanding***Research Question Two***

The purpose of Research Question Two was to evaluate how participating church campus pastors described the communication pathways within their church organization toward creating and keeping one culture. The data provided by the six face-to-face interviews from six separate churches provided the researcher with the desired data to appropriately answer question two.

The research highlighted the intentional approach by each church. While the research showed similarities between each church's communication pathway, informational weekly or bi-weekly meetings for, example, the researcher found that each church attempted to create communication pathways in unique ways. The organizational culture of each church varied, and that was reflected in the interviews. Church B noted multiple meetings in his face-to-face interview, including an annual staff meeting, video announcements from the lead pastor, bi-weekly meetings, and global meetings for all staff and volunteers (Appendix M). Church D, on the other hand, included the campus pastor on the executive team and noted that communication would often go directly from executive leadership to each campus (Appendix O).

The researcher found significant variables in communication pathways as well. Church E (Appendix P) noted multiple challenges that can exist.

I have to be consistent in my communication, but the volunteer leader also has to be consistent. The size of the campus also matters. Can the second campus do what the primary campus does? Can portable facilities do the same as permanent facilities? Are we creating fair expectations for all campuses and leaders? That can create a lot of frustration in our communication pathways. Let's set fair expectations and then follow up with appropriate communication. We believe it will eliminate burnout, tension, and frustration.

Though there were differences noted, the data reflected the importance that each church placed on communication in creating one unique culture across multiple locations, even though each church varied in its approach.

In conclusion, Research Question Two revealed that communication pathways are key to how the interviewed multisite churches create and keep culture. The campus pastors revealed that each of their churches placed value on routine, informational meetings, and each participating church had at a minimum one routinely scheduled meeting that reinforced important information that would come from the executive team.

The research highlighted the complexities of communication pathways and that most churches utilize a top-down method of communication. While some churches feel the campus pastor should be a conduit in that pathway, others attempt to disseminate information to all staff and volunteers from the top. The data also reflected that churches recognize the challenges of their communication pathways and are not afraid to make needed adjustments.

Finally, communication pathways include the teaching model. The researcher found varied responses in the interview data. Three of the pastors interviewed noted the value of using video teaching, and one other pastor, who used a rotating teaching model, noted the value of teaching pastors instead of campus pastors. The common narrative in these responses is that

teaching is not every pastor's gift, and not only is there a potential drop-off in excellence, one church noted that they could spend more time in finding a shepherd pastor.

Each pastor provided a different perspective on video teaching. While one pastor felt like it was a negative from a leadership component, another felt like it positively affected leadership stewardship. The intention of this research project was not to identify whether one form of teaching model was better, but the researcher found the varying responses, in spite of their own teaching model, was useful.

Research Question Three

The purpose of Research Question Three was to evaluate how participating church campus pastors described the vision and mission within their church organization toward creating and keeping one culture. The data provided by the six face-to-face interviews from six separate churches provided the desired data to appropriately answer question three.

The research showcased the importance each church placed on sharing the vision and mission of their church. The research showed multiple similarities in each church's approach, including the use of meetings, visible queues, announcements, video elements, and sermons. One overwhelming similarity was the value of campus pastors when it comes to the vision and mission of each church interviewed. Five out of six participating pastors highlighted the value the campus pastor has in casting or carrying the vision and mission of the location. The one out of six churches that did not mention the importance of the campus pastor did not contradict the other pastors; he just did not note the value himself.

Each pastor also noted the value of being one church in multiple locations. The responses varied when asked what that meant. Campus pastors responded by discussing church reach, mission, values, and organizational culture, to name a few.

In conclusion, Research Question Three highlighted a consistency to the church attendees' survey response to the mission, vision, and values of a church. Church organizations place a high priority on how their communicated, and church attendees who participated in the survey have a strong knowledge of them. The data provided in chapter four highlighted that the communication of the mission, vision, and values are both verbal and non-verbal. Pastors noted that the mission and values are communicated via mission statements, visual queues within the environments, and through video elements. A consistent response from participating pastors was the importance campus pastors play in communicating the church's mission, vision, and values. While communication pathways are complex, communicating the mission and values are evidently consistent.

Research Question Four

The purpose of Research Question Four was to evaluate how participating church campus pastors described the methods and strategies used in creating and keeping one unique culture. The data provided by the six face-to-face interviews from six separate churches provided the researcher with the desired data to appropriately answer question four.

The research provided a mix of responses by participating campus pastors. Similarities exist in the responses to the Sunday worship services, but when asked about methods and strategies in general, the data varied. Data highlighted intentional, methodical approaches that appeared aligned location to location within their church.

In conclusion, Research Question Four revealed that most participating churches believed that their methods and strategies were directly connected to their reach. One pastor noted their aggressive nature, and another noted the attraction of their methods to non-Christians. Campus pastors also highlighted a methodical approach that was not always perceived well by their

attendees. Yet, in spite of the fact that attendees might not care for their methods, the pastors noted that the church attendees recognized the importance.

Data revealed that one of the most consistent responses in this project was the similarities from location to location in the Sunday worship ministries, including Adult Worship, Kid's Ministry, and Guest Services. All participating churches highlighted using similar messages even when the teaching model varied. The data also showed that churches used similar worship sets and kids' curriculum. Five out of six pastors noted that most attendees would agree that the campus pastor is their pastor.

Research Implications

Between 2008 to 2016, the number of multisite churches grew from 2,000 to 8,000 (Edwards, 2016). House and Allison (2017) noted, "Over five million people worship in one of the more than 8,000 multisite churches, making up nine percent of American Protestant churchgoers" (p. 10). The Sunday worship attendance has reported roughly 85 percent growth and 88 percent growth in volunteer participation (Bird, 2014). With this reported success, churches will look at the multisite model as a potential church solution to meet the needs of surrounding communities. The decision to go multisite church should never be taken lightly by any church leader, but if the leader decides it's best, he or she might ask "what's the next step?" There are multiple models for church leaders to study, and the models are evolving. As of the date of this publication, the researcher is in the midst of a model shift with his own multisite church.

To identify the best step, an evaluation of the different models would be helpful. An understanding of attendee perceptions of existing models would also help illuminate a church leader's ability to make the decision that fits his or her church's community needs and existing

culture. Phil Klein (2019) stated, “Church culture establishes the core values that drive your actions and the pace by which you progress. It is a significant factor in sustaining momentum and becomes increasingly more difficult to maintain as you grow.”

The literature review in chapter two provided reasons to go multisite and the arguments against it. The review provided the context of leadership development, the theological and church history of the multisite church, and the challenges documented for multisite church leaders. The literature review highlighted different existing models of the multisite church, including the three models highlighted in this project. While literature regarding the pros and cons of the multisite church and different models and structures exists, the literature review highlighted a significant gap in research. There is little research regarding the organizational culture of the multisite church, and the researcher found even less existing research of the attendee’s perception.

Given the lack of research in the multisite church’s organizational culture, the researcher elected to seek out the perceptions of attendees and church leaders at six church models that utilize different models and have locations at varying proximities. The project provided unique perceptions of methods, strategies, communication pathways, teaching models, and organizational culture that did not previously exist by surveying 52 attendees and leaders of six churches across the United States and Canada.

The intention of this research study was to identify perceptions of the existing organizational culture within different multisite churches and examine how each church created and kept that culture. The literature review in Chapter two of this study provided important existing data that helped formulate the context of this study. The theological, biblical, historical and cultural implications of the multisite church, and the different models that have been

documented provided significant consideration to the researcher and developed a foundation for research and the research tools.

Applications

Based on the data collected from the research and a study of precedent literature, the researcher found multiple applications for church leaders either considering becoming multisite or multisite church leaders evaluating their current model.

Collaboration Wins

Attendees believe that both the executive leadership of their church and the local leadership team have considerable input in the ministries, decisions, and directions of their location (see tables 3 and 7).

Table 3

Executive Leadership Control

Q7. Respond to this statement: The executive leadership team maintains significant control over the ministries, decisions, and directions of my location.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Strongly disagree	7.69%	4
Disagree	7.69%	4
Agree	67.31%	35
Strongly agree	17.31%	9

Table 7

Local Leadership Input

Q9. Respond to this statement: The leadership team at my specific location has considerable input in the ministries, decisions, and direction of my location.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Strongly disagree	5.77%	3
Disagree	1.92%	1
Agree	51.92%	27
Strongly agree	40.38%	21

Attendees also note that the executive leadership team has a clear understanding of the needs of their local community and the location leadership has the autonomy to adapt to the needs of the local community (see tables 4 and 8).

Table 4

Executive Leadership Understanding

Q8. Respond to this statement: The executive leadership team has a clear understanding of the needs of my local community.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Strongly disagree	3.85%	2
Disagree	5.77%	3
Agree	69.23%	36
Strongly agree	21.15%	11

Table 8

Local Leadership Community

Q10. Respond to this statement: The leadership team at my location has the autonomy to adapt to the needs of the local community context.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Strongly disagree	5.77%	3
Disagree	7.69%	4
Agree	67.31%	35
Strongly agree	19.23%	10

These results take considerable collaboration between the executive and local leadership of the church. The campus pastors agreed. During the face-to-face interviews, the campus pastor for Church C noted that the communication pathways were often “top-down, and the executive team recognized that,” and their desire was for communication to be both ways (Appendix L). Church D noted that communication was a struggle but adding the campus pastor to their executive team improved their communication pathway (Appendix M).

As churches move forward, they would benefit from recognizing the value of a collaborative team. Executive leadership in the multisite church is important, but not at the expense of local leadership. The campus pastors have a unique viewpoint of their community, and the executive team has a unique viewpoint of the entire church. These viewpoints should be evaluated in decision-making. The research highlighted that church attendees do notice this collaboration and value it.

Multiple Teaching Models

Prior to the study, the researcher perceived that teaching models would be easy to categorize and evaluate. The research showed, however, that teaching models look different, church to church and they evolve. The majority of respondents to the Attendee Survey revealed that they perceived their church's teaching model as live teaching (Table 10). Though 26% of respondents perceived their church's teaching model as video teaching (table 10), all but four attendees reported that their location pastor teaches in person at their weekend worship services more than two times per year (table 11). Regardless of who is teaching and how it is broadcast, 80.77% of respondents believe that the lead pastor is the primary communicator of their church (Table 14). The data reflects that lead pastors have been able to leverage other opportunities to communicate, even when they are not communicating the Sunday worship service.

Table 10

Primary Teaching Model

Q6. Which of the following best describes the primary teaching method used at your church?		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Video teaching	26.0%	13
Live teaching	74.0%	37

Table 11

Location Pastor Teaches in Person

Q12. How often does your location pastor teach in person at your specific location's weekend services?		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Less than 2 times per year	7.69%	4
3 - 5 times per year	21.15%	11
6 - 8 times per year	5.77%	3
9 or more times per year	65.38%	34

Table 14

Lead Pastor Primary Communicator

Q17. The lead pastor is the primary communicator of my church.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
True	80.77%	42
False	19.23%	10

In a study evaluated in the literature review, Edwards (2016, p. 198). noted, “live-preaching is on the rise in multisite churches, while video-preaching is becoming less prevalent.” Church D stated that they attempted to use video teaching, but “it wasn’t successful. We use live-in person teaching” (Appendix O). While the current research project did not ask the question of how the teaching model is changing in each church, it was clear to the researcher that almost all churches are using a collaborative approach in the teaching method.

Mission, Vision, and Values

One inconsistency in the data was regarding Mission, Vision, and Values. 65.4% of attendees survey agree or strongly agreed that the number of times the lead pastor teaches at their specific location's weekend service impacts the mission, vision, and values of the church (table 13).

Table 13

Lead Pastor Teaches in Person Impact

Q16. Respond to this statement: The number of times the lead pastor teaches at my specific location's weekend service impacts the mission, vision, values of the church.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
Strongly disagree	11.54%	6
Disagree	23.08%	12
Agree	48.08%	25
Strongly agree	17.31%	9

However, in spite of the communication model, 94.12% of respondents felt they had a strong understanding of their church's mission, vision, and values (table 15). 98% of respondents agreed that attending one location would not make a difference in their understanding of the mission, vision, and values of the church (table 16).

Table 15

Mission, Vision, and Values

Q18. I have a strong understanding of my church's mission, vision, and values.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
True	94.12%	48
False	5.88%	3

Table 16

Mission, Vision, and Values One Location

Q19. I believe that I would have a better understanding of the mission, vision, and values of my church if we were all attending one location.		
Answer Choices	Response Percent	Responses
True	1.92%	1
False	98.08%	51

The attendees of the multisite churches have a strong understanding of their church's mission, vision, and values. This research did not evaluate single-site churches and is unable to compare that data, but the perception of the researcher is that the church organizations within the multisite church are intentional about developing the attendees' understanding. It is possible that church leaders in the multisite church put a high level of importance on the mission, vision, and values because they are creating and keeping one unique culture across multiple locations. A heightened awareness of the mission, vision, and values are important for any organization. They provide a roadmap for every participant in the organization. They help align the focus and

behaviors of individuals and keep each individual moving in the same direction (Principles of Management, 2021).

Campus pastors at each participating church noted the value of mission, vision, and values within their church and noted the varying ways of communicating them to the attendees. The participating churches noted the use of meetings, visible queues, announcements, video elements, and sermons.

Campus Pastors are Important

Precedent literature and this research affirmed the importance of campus pastors in the multisite church model. RQ2 highlighted the value of a campus pastor as a conduit of communication. Church C's campus pastor noted, "the majority of their central communication occurs through the campus pastor team. . . . The campus pastor team is the hub of what's happening at the church" (Appendix L).

The campus pastor for Church A noted the importance of the campus pastor when asked if the vision, mission, and values differed at other locations. He (Appendix L) stated, "It is dependent on the campus pastor. I do believe it's different because the campus pastor drives it." Church C's pastor (Appendix N) revealed, "We really lean on the campus pastor to vision cast the mission and values . . . The campus pastors do a lot of heavy lifting." Church F's campus pastor (Appendix Q) agreed, "As a site pastor, I'm the primary driver for the vision, mission, and values."

A practical application for this research is the value that church leaders should place on hiring and developing campus pastors. Surratt, Ligon, and Bird (2009) argued that "the role of campus pastor is a paramount factor in whether a new campus grows or dies" (p. 231). The data gathered from this research project affirmed that truth and expanded the reality beyond new

campuses. The research highlighted that these pastors are shepherds, teachers, leaders, and vital communication holders. Campus pastors need to recognize the complexities of their own community while keeping in alignment with the overall vision of the multisite church. The data revealed that these pastors execute the vision, mission, and values. Campus pastors are tasked with leadership development, and they are the culture keepers.

Methods and Strategies are Consistent

Methods and strategies are consistent across locations by design, not by accident. The Sunday Worship service is consistent, though resources do play a role in what certain locations are able to do. The campus pastor for Church A noted that the Sunday worship services are “identical” (Appendix L). Church B reported that there was “very little” difference in the Sunday worship service location to location. Church C’s campus pastor revealed that the Sunday worship service does not differ in “music, sermon, or announcements” (Appendix M). While the campus pastor for Church E (Appendix P) stated, “leaders at each location provide a flavor,” the church provides the same message and worship set.

While the methods and strategies are consistent across each church, the multisite churches themselves evolve rapidly. The intention of this research project was to categorize the multisite models in an attempt to examine how organizational culture was created and kept in spite of varying teaching methods and distances. The researcher found, throughout the research, that this type of categorization was difficult. The multisite church continues to evolve. A church that is “video teaching” today might be live, in-person teaching tomorrow. A church that has two locations in the same city might merge them next week. The researcher perceived this agility as a strength of the multisite church and an application that other church leaders would likely benefit from.

Research Limitations

This researcher used a qualitative approach and surveyed 52 respondents from six churches. The qualitative approach does not typically rely on instrumentation (Creswell, 2014), but in order to survey participants at six churches, the instrumentation was necessary. The use of an instrument, the Attendee Survey, was useful for this project, as it helped the researcher answer RQ1 and provide useful context to the six face-to-face interviews. A limitation to the Attendee Survey was that not every attendee shared the same perspective. The survey was created in a way that would avoid differences in the ability to articulate, but it was obvious to the researcher that there were knowledge deficits for some attendees while answering specific questions.

The six qualitative, face-to-face interviews occurred using Zoom. Each interview involved unstructured and generally open-ended questions. “The intention of these questions were intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants” (2014, p. 190). The qualitative interviews were useful for this project, but limitations existed. The Zoom setting provided the ability for interviews to occur in a more natural setting, but each participant was interviewed in their office setting. Each participant was also limited to their own specific view; this truth can cause bias to provide affirmation for their church or their specific methods. Bias can also occur in qualitative interviews due to the presence of the researcher (Creswell, 2014).

Finally, the intent was to identify the perceptions of the leaders and attendees. To identify the perception of church leaders and attendees over 8000 multisite churches would be difficult using a quantitative method. The target audience would have been much larger than the sample size used in this project. The qualitative approach eliminated the need for a larger sample size but is limited to the research to the six churches that participated. The researcher attempted to

find churches of varying demographics and sizes but noted the reality that every church and community is unique.

Further Research

The research on the multisite church exists. As noted, there is a large amount of research on the validity of the multisite church, specific teaching methods, including the use of video teaching. Research also exists on the multisite leadership structure and how campus pastors perceive their own leadership within this model. The researcher found the existing researcher to be helpful but also noted that there was not enough research on the organizational culture, specifically, the attendee and leader's perception of the organizational culture. This study began this research and will be a foundation for future research within the multisite and single-site church.

Quantitative Study

There are over 8000 multisite churches (Bird, 2014). The perception of attendees and leaders at each of these churches would be beneficial and could be obtained using a quantitative method. The use of the quantitative method would require the researcher to use a substantially larger sample size, which would provide more data and potential perspectives that were not recognized using the qualitative method. The current method also avoids comparing models; using a quantitative method would help the researcher compare model to model and identify potential best practices for church leaders.

Online Church

Research data collection for both the Attendee survey and the qualitative interviews occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. During this pandemic, the online church became an important tool for churches to reach their attendees who were not able to attend live, in-person

church services. Online church is not new; many churches utilize social media and websites to broadcast their weekly worship service. Churches have also included Online campuses as their own unique location, with a hired campus pastor, groups, and community platforms.

The video component highlighted that church does not require a live, in-person speaker, but what about community? Does church require in-person worship, serving opportunities?

Research on the online church would be beneficial. Who attends online church and why? Does attending church exclusively online hinder the growth of a church attendee, or does it influence it all?

The Evolving Multisite Church

The intent of this research was to evaluate the leadership and attendee perception of the methods and strategies used by the multisite church to create and keep one unique culture in spite of their varying proximity or demographics. To do that, the researcher would explore the organizational culture, including communication pathways, vision, and mission in three common multisite church models: the local franchise model, the national franchise model, and the live teaching model. The researcher identified throughout the research that categorizing multisite church into specific models were challenging.

The researcher identified that the multisite church is always evolving. Locations open and close, and teaching models change. A potential for future research could be based on the constant change of the multisite church. What effect does this constant change have on leadership? How often do multisite churches add or subtract locations? Do these changes impact the organizational culture of the church?

Chapter Summary

The intention of chapter five was to provide a conclusion to this research project. Chapter five restated the purpose statement, research questions, implications, applications, limitations, and recommendations for further research. The conclusions highlight the importance that multisite churches place on communication pathways, consistent ministry environments, the mission, vision, and values, leadership collaboration, and campus pastors recruitment, development, and retention.

The researcher noted that though there are significant differences between communities, attendees and leaders perceive that the multisite church has created and kept one unique organizational culture in multisite churches across North America. The methods and strategies of church leaders have successfully operated within the multisite movement who have been intentional with their communication, and they are also consistent yet flexible in their operational approach. Finally, they have been empowering, continually identifying, recruiting, and developing future church leaders. The researcher did not discover a superior multisite model; instead, the researcher identified that the multisite church has worked within multiple models.

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APPENDIX A

Panel Expert Recruitment Email

Dear [Recipient]:

As a graduate student in the John W. Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for an EdD in Christian Leadership. The purpose of this study will be to evaluate the attendee perception of the methods and strategies used by the multisite church to create and keep one unique culture in spite of their varying proximity, or demographics. The study will explore organizational culture, including communication pathways, vision, and mission in three common multisite church models. I am inviting eligible participants to join my study.

Serving on the panel will include multisite experts, consisting of executive leadership of multisite churches. In addition, leaders within the multisite church who have had significant works, dissertations, or books published will also be included on the panel. Each leader will receive a description of the prospectus, including the research problem, and research questions. An initial draft of potential questions will be sent and each participant will be encouraged to respond and make recommendations for a final draft. All communication will occur via email with the researcher. It should take approximately 60 minutes to complete the procedures listed above.

In order to participate, please contact me at [REDACTED].

A consent document is provided via the link below. The consent contains additional information about my research and will need to be read and signed prior to our face-to-face interview. You will be prompted to sign the form digitally, which will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the research.

Sincerely,

Michael Grayston
EdD Student
[REDACTED]

APPENDIX B

Campus Pastor Recruitment Email

Dear [Recipient]:

As a graduate student in the John W. Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for an EdD in Christian Leadership. The purpose of this study will be to evaluate the attendee perception of the methods and strategies used by the multisite church to create and keep one unique culture in spite of their varying proximity, or demographics. The study will explore organizational culture, including communication pathways, vision, and mission in three common multisite church models. I am inviting eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must serve as a campus pastor of a location with a weekly service attendance between 250 – 800 attendees and must be at least 15 miles away from the central location. Participants, if willing, will be asked to participate in a face-to-face interview conducted by the researcher via Zoom. It should take approximately 60 minutes to complete the procedure listed.

In order to participate, please contact me at [REDACTED].

A consent document is provided via the link below. The consent contains additional information about my research and will need to be read and signed prior to our face-to-face interview. You will be prompted to sign the form digitally, which will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the research.

Sincerely,

Michael Grayston
EdD Student
[REDACTED]

APPENDEX C

Church Recruitment Email

[Insert Date]

[Recipient]

[Title]

[Company]

[Address 1]

[Address 2]

[Address 3]

Dear [Recipient]:

As an EdD student in the John W. Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for an EdD in Christian Leadership. The title of my research project is Keeping Culture: An Evaluation of Organizational Culture in the Multisite Church, and the purpose of my research is to evaluate the attendee perception of the methods and strategies used by the multisite church to create and keep one unique culture in spite of their varying proximity, or demographics. The study will explore organizational culture, including communication pathways, vision, and mission in three common multisite church models.

I am writing to request your permission to conduct my research at [\[church name\]](#).

Participants will be asked to participate in a SurveyMonkey survey by clicking on a link provided. Upon clicking on the link, the participant will be presented with an informed consent form. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, respond by email to [REDACTED]. A permission letter document is attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Michael Grayston
EdD Student
Liberty University

APPENDIX D

Church Recruitment Email Follow-Up

[Insert Date]

[Recipient]

[Title]

[Company]

[Address 1]

[Address 2]

[Address 3]

Dear [Recipient]:

As a graduate student in the John W. Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for an EdD in Christian Leadership. 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 respond if you would like to participate and have not already done so. The deadline for participation is [Date].

If you choose to participate, I am writing to request your permission to contact members of your church and staff to invite them to participate in my research study. Participants will be asked to complete a SurveyMonkey questionnaire by clicking on the link provided. Upon clicking on the link, the participant will be presented with an informed consent form. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

The completion of the survey should take approximately 15 minutes. The participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be required.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, respond by email to [REDACTED]. A permission letter document is attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Michael Grayston
EdD Student
Liberty University

APPENDIX E

Permission Letter

[Insert Date]

Michael Grayston
EdD Student
Liberty University

Dear Michael Grayston:

After careful review of your research proposal entitled Keeping Culture: An Evaluation of Organizational Culture in the Multisite Church, I/We have decided to **conduct your study at [name of church]**. Our Campus Pastor will distribute the survey, which includes an informed consent form, to adult attendees in their location that give financially at least one time per month, serve at least one time per month, or both.

Check the following boxes, as applicable:

[I/We are requesting a copy of the results upon study completion and/or publication.]

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
[Your Title]
[Your Company/Organization]

APPENDEX F

Attendee Survey

1. What is the name of your church? Where is your location located?
2. How many people attend your specific location's weekends services each week?
 - a. 250 – 400
 - b. 401 – 550
 - c. 551 – 700
 - d. 701 – 800
3. How many people regularly attend your church's weekend services at all locations?
 - a. 250 – 800
 - b. 801 – 1200
 - c. 1201 – 2000
 - d. 2000 – 4000
 - e. More than 4000
4. How many locations does your church have?
 - a. 2
 - b. 3
 - c. 4
 - d. 5
 - e. 6 or more
5. How far is your location from the central location?
 - a. 15 - 45 miles
 - b. 46 - 90 miles
 - c. 91 - 200 miles
 - d. More than 201 miles
 - e. We do not have a central location
6. Which of the following best describes the teaching method used at your church?
 - a. Video teaching
 - b. Live teaching
7. Respond to this statement: The executive leadership team maintains significant control over the ministries, decisions, and directions of my location.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree
8. Respond to this statement: The executive leadership team has a clear understanding of the needs of my local community.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree

9. Respond to this statement: The leadership team at my specific location has considerable input in the ministries, decisions, and direction of my location.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree
10. Respond to this statement: The leadership team at my location has the autonomy to adapt to the needs of the local community context.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree
11. Respond to this statement: My location is valued by the entire church.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree
12. How often does your location pastor teach at your specific location's weekend services?
 - a. Less than 2 times per year
 - b. 3 – 5 times per year
 - c. 6 – 8 times per year
 - d. 9 or more times per year
13. How often does the lead pastor teach in person at your specific location's weekend services?
 - a. Less than 2 times per year
 - b. 3 – 5 times per year
 - c. 6 – 8 times per year
 - d. 9 or more times per year
14. How often does a member of the executive leadership team visit your specific location's weekend services?
 - a. 1 – 2 times per year
 - b. 1 – 2 times every other month
 - c. 1 – 2 times per month
 - d. 3 – 5 times per month
15. Respond to this statement: The number of visits by the executive leadership team impacts the mission, vision, and values of the church.
 - a. Strongly Disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree
16. Respond to this statement: The number of times the lead pastor teaches at my specific location's weekend service impacts the mission, vision, values of the church.
 - a. Strongly Disagree

- b. Disagree
 - c. Agree
 - d. Strongly Agree
17. The lead pastor is the primary communicator of my church.
- a. True
 - b. False
18. I have a strong understanding of my church's mission, vision, and values.
- a. True
 - b. False
19. I believe that I would have a better understanding of the mission, vision, and values of my church if we were all attending one location.
- a. True
 - b. False
20. The mission, vision and values of my church are essential to the culture of my location.
- a. True
 - b. False
21. I enjoy attending a location that is part of a multisite church.
- a. True
 - b. False
22. How does your location's weekend service compare to other location's weekend service at your church?

23. How does the worship portion of your location's weekend service compare to the other location's weekend service at your church?

24. How does your location's kids' ministry service compare to the other location's kids' ministry service at your church?

25. How does your location's guest service area compare to the other location's guest services area at your church?

APPENDEX G

Campus Pastor Informed Consent

Title of the Project: Keeping Culture: An Evaluation of Organizational Culture in the Multisite Church

Principal Investigator: Michael Grayston, EdD Student, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study
--

You are invited to participate in a research project! Participants must serve as a campus pastor of a location with a weekly service attendance between 250 – 800 attendees and must be at least 15 miles away from the central location. 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 project.

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

The purpose of the study to evaluate the methods and strategies used by the multisite church to create and keep one unique culture in spite of their varying proximity, or demographics. The study will explore organizational culture, including communication pathways, vision, and mission in different multisite church models.

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 things:

1. Participants, if willing, will be asked to participate in a face-to-face interview conducted by the researcher via Zoom. The interview will be recorded and transcribed. It should take approximately 60 minutes to complete the procedure listed.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Benefits to society include participating in research that will assist church leaders explore methods and strategies used in multisite churches. This study will help church leaders identify the best possible method for them to implement in their church.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?
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The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

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

- Responses will be kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or your church. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

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

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

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

The researcher conducting this study is Michael Grayston. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at [REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Brian Pinzer, at [REDACTED].

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 Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team 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.

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

Printed Subject Name

Signature & Date

APPENDIX H

Panel Expert Informed Consent

Title of the Project: Keeping Culture: An Evaluation of Organizational Culture in the Multisite Church

Principal Investigator: Michael Grayston, EdD Student, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study
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You are invited to participate in a research project. Serving on the panel will include multisite experts, consisting of executive leadership of multisite churches. In addition, leaders within the multisite church who have had significant works, dissertations, or books published will also be included on the panel. 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 project.

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

The purpose of the study to evaluate the methods and strategies used by the multisite church to create and keep one unique culture in spite of their varying proximity, or demographics. The study will explore organizational culture, including communication pathways, vision, and mission in different multisite church models.

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 things:

1. You will receive a description of the prospectus, including the research problem, and research questions.
2. An initial draft of potential questions will be sent and each participant will be encouraged to respond and make recommendations for a final draft. All communication will occur via email with the researcher. It should take approximately 60 minutes to complete the procedures listed above.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Benefits to society include participating in research that will assist church leaders explore methods and strategies used in multisite churches. This study will help church leaders identify the best possible method for them to implement in their church.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?
--

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

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 will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be confidential.

- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or your church. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey without affecting those relationships.

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

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

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

The researcher conducting this study is Michael Grayston. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at [REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, [REDACTED].

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 Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team 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 I

Attendee Informed Consent

Title of the Project: Keeping Culture: An Evaluation of Organizational Culture in the Multisite Church

Principal Investigator: Michael Grayston, EdD Student, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study
--

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be eighteen years old, give financially at least one time per month, serve at least one time per month, or both. 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 project.

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

The purpose of the study to evaluate the methods and strategies used by the multisite church to create and keep one unique culture in spite of their varying proximity, or demographics. The study will explore organizational culture, including communication pathways, vision, and mission in different multisite church models.

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 things:

1. Complete a SurveyMonkey questionnaire by clicking on the link provided. The completion of the survey should take approximately 15 minutes.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Benefits to society include participating in research that will assist church leaders explore methods and strategies used in multisite churches. This study will help church leaders identify the best possible method for them to implement in their church.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?
--

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

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 will have access to the records.

- Participant responses will be anonymous.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or your church. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey without affecting those relationships.

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 Michael Grayston. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at [REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Brian Pinzer, at [REDACTED].

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 Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team 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

APPENDEIX J

Questions for Face-to-Face Zoom Interviews for Pastors

1. Describe how the vision, mission, and values are communicated at your location.
 - a. Possible Follow-up: Does that differ from other locations within your church?
2. What is the purpose of video teaching?
3. What type of church model would you attend, in addition to the church model that you are currently attending?
4. How would you describe the communication pathways between the central office and the location at your church?
5. If attendees at your location were asked who their pastor is, who would they say?
6. What does “one church in multiple locations” mean?
7. How would you describe the church attendee’s perception of the methods and strategies used at your church?
 - a. Possible Follow-up: How does that differ from location to location at your church?
8. How, if at all, does the Sunday worship service differ from location to location at your church?
 - a. Possible Follow-up: Does similar worship, guest service, and kids’ ministry affect the organizational culture?

APPENDIX K

Church Attendee Recruitment Email

[Date]

[Recipient]

[Title]

[Company]

[Address 1]

[Address 2]

[Address 3]

Dear Recipient:

As an EdD student in the John W. Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for an EdD in Christian Leadership. The title of my research project is Keeping Culture: An Evaluation of Organizational Culture in the Multisite Church, and the purpose of my research is to evaluate the attendee perception of the methods and strategies used by the multisite church to create and keep one unique culture in spite of their varying proximity, or demographics. The study will explore organizational culture, including communication pathways, vision, and mission in three common multisite church models. I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

In order to participate, you must be eighteen years old, give financially at least one time per month, serve at least one time per month, or both. Taking part in this research project is voluntary. Participants, if willing, will be asked to Complete a SurveyMonkey questionnaire by clicking on the link provided. The completion of the survey should take approximately 15 minutes. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

In order to participate, please click here ([include hyperlink to online survey](#)) and complete the attached survey. When you click on the hyperlink above, you will first be directed to a consent document. The consent document contains additional information about my research. After you have read the consent form, please click the button 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.

Sincerely,

Michael Grayston
EdD Student



APPENDIX L

Church A Face-to-Face Interview Transcript

After an introduction and explanation of the academic research process.

Interviewer - Are there are any questions that you have after consuming the data?

Pastor – No, the answers were expected, no surprises.

Interviewer – Describe how the vision, mission, and values are communicated at your location.

Pastor – The vision, mission, and values, some of that is in our mission statement. Our mission is to make more and better disciples. When we do a testimony video, it ends with I'm _____ and I am making more and better disciples. We have our five core values. They are in the lobby, little things. We do a sermon series every year that talks about them. We try to incorporate them; we use the verbiage often. In sermons, in conversations. We don't hear a lot of our values in conversations, but our mission is heard. Even the guy, or host, who gives announcements uses the verbiage in his host time.

Interviewer – It's amazing how that stuff, catches. You don't always hear the terminology, but you do see it lived out.

Interviewer – Does that differ from other locations?

Pastor – I'm at the original campus. Our Lead Pastor was at a different location. He resigned in November and the location has changed in the last few months.

Pastor – It is dependent on the campus pastor. I do believe it's different because the campus pastor drives it. Our entire team is on board with our mission, vision and values. Everyone who has come on board has either helped create it or has come on board after it was solidified.

Interviewer – Everyone is live teaching?

Pastor – Yes

Interviewer - Have you ever been to a video teaching.

Pastor – Yes

Interviewer - What is the purpose of video teaching?

Pastor – I was surprised how quickly it didn't matter. The reason why we didn't do it that way, originally, because we felt that everything needs to multiply. We do it the way we do it, not because video preaching doesn't work. We feel that video preaching doesn't raise up more preachers. If you want to go fast, go alone, if you want to go far, go together. It's faster to use video preaching, but live teaching helps go further, due to the leadership component.

Interviewer – What type of church model would you attend in addition to the model you are currently attending.

Pastor – I'm flexible with that. The non-negotiable for me is multiplication. IF I am going to attend a church; If "they" don't want me to multiply, then no. I don't care if it's video preaching,

or home churches. Each have their strengths and weaknesses but multiplication is the deal breaker.

Interviewer – How would you describe the communication pathways between the central office and the location at your church?

Pastor – I don't know. The primary communication pathway is our Monday staff meeting. We have multiple meetings, but that is the one that provides direction. Announcements, video guides, dates. That is the primary meeting where information is disseminated.

Interviewer – Staff meeting is in person? Weekly?

Pastor – Yes. The meeting is in Person every week.

Interviewer – Do you use any other type of communication platforms?

Pastor – Yes, we use messaging threads via text.

Pastor – The central location is 35 minutes tops from all other locations. We are clustered.

Interviewer – If attendees at your location were asked who their pastor is, who would they say?

Pastor – No question. They would all immediately say their campus pastor is there pastor. I would say 51% would say that they don't know who the lead pastor is. He is on videos; if they were paying attention they would know, but they aren't paying attention.

Interviewer – What does “one church in multiple locations” mean?

Pastor – It means we are. There are two ways to answer the question. My initial reaction is that we have one budget, elder, overseer team. The other side of it is culturally. We really are a band of brothers. Even when people leave the team, we feel that our culture goes with them. We stay in touch as brothers in ministry. They really are some of our best friends.

Interviewer – How would you describe the church attendee's perception of the methods and strategies used at your church?

Pastor – It's mixed. The church is 213 years old. There are multiple traditions. We have a heavy Methodist and catholic influence in our communities. We also have workers from the south that have moved into our communities. People come with an understanding of what a method of church “should” look like. I'm amazed of how many people don't like our methods, but still attend for years. Their kids and spouses love it and they are growing. “Even if I don't agree with your methods, it is reaching my family.”

We are in a rural community. There is no other church like us in town. Few bible believing churches.

Interviewer – How, if at all, does the Sunday worship service differ from location to location at your church?

Pastor – Some of the things have changed. We used to try and do the same worship set, but we have backed out of that. We give 20-30 songs and ask each campus to choose which songs to sing. We borrow a lot of musicians from each other and they need to know the songs. The messages have the same points and the same passages, but other than that, they differ.

Sometimes, people would say they are quite different. The biggest similarity is the “feel.” It is the same kind of music style and the atmosphere and warmth feel the same. Each have a biblical practical teaching. It’s not the same, but it rhymes.

Interviewer – Would you say the same for guest services and kids ministry

Pastor – Yes, Guest services and Kid’s ministry is very much the same. All of our Kids ministries run on teenagers. The best indicator if a teen will walk away from church is if they were involved in ministry. If they are involved in ministry; they won’t walk away from church.

One of our teachers was doing the teaching and he felt like it was complex so they went ahead with the teaching video. Some campuses will exclusively do the video and some will do the teaching live. Depending on the size; the classrooms will vary with ages. This can change based on the number of kids and/or leaders.

APPENDIX M

Church B Face-to-Face Interview Transcript

Interviewer - Describe how the vision, mission, and values are communicated at your location.

Pastor – Every Sunday morning, our Lead Pastor will discuss the mission, vision and values. The mission, vision, and values are discussed in all staff meetings. They are literally at the top of our agendas as a visual queue. All Staff – monthly, our executive pastor, discussed our history, who we are, where we are going. Strategically, our mission, vision and values guide us.

Lifetrack – Similar to Church of the Highlands growth track. Once a month 90 minutes on a Sunday after church. Mission, vision, values, and discipleship pathways are discussed at that meeting with our attendees.

Interviewer – Does that differ between locations.

Pastor – Nothing that I said would differ between locations.

Interviewer – Are you using live teaching?

Pastor – We are live, video teaching.

Interviewer – What is the purpose of video teaching?

Pastor – What is God doing to identify your uniqueness as a church. One of those, for us, is an anointed communicator. For our model, our Lead Pastor is an anointed communicator and that is a huge plus. So many people come for the communicator, for the message of the word of God. We have locations that are 300 or less and locations that are 3000. For our model, it's extremely important to have that live feel from the lead pastor.

Interviewer – What type of church model would you attend, in addition to the church model that you are currently attending?

Pastor – I would absolutely attend a single model church. I ask the question, why are they a single site church? I would attend a live teaching multisite church. I would attend a church plant. Honestly, I would attend anywhere that God called me as long as it was a Gospel centered church that was moving forward.

Interviewer – How would you describe the communication pathways between the central office and the location at your church?

Pastor – Multiple pathways. One is communication from the executive team. One of three ways. 1) annual staff meeting. Everyone is in the room. 2) Important announcements – LP will broadcast it into the auditoriums for the staff at all the locations. 3) every other Tuesday, XP, often the LP, and all of the campus pastors meet. Highly informational. 4) Global core ministry

meetings. Executive – Campus pastors – global leaders discriminate all information to all other teams.

First and third Tuesday. We have our global meetings at our largest campus/location.

Interviewer – If attendees at your location were asked who their pastor is, who would they say?

Pastor – They would said the Lead Pastor is their pastor

Interviewer – How would you describe the church attendee’s perception of the methods and strategies used at your church?

Pastor – They would say that we are an aggressive church to reach our community.

Interviewer – does that differ location to location?

Pastor – No, it’s the same message

Interviewer – How, if at all, does the Sunday worship service differ from location to location at your church?

Pastor – Very little.

Interviewer – Do you believe that similar worship, kids, min affect the culture?

Pastor – Yes, no doubt. I think, for us, I love our global culture. It keeps the competition out of the game. We all it do it the same way. We are able to take all the best ideas and implement them at all the campuses. We are all on the same tracks. People know the theme and quality of what they are getting. We try to keep it the same as possible to be able to bring the most excellence to all of our locations instead of one soaring above the others.

Interviewer – What does “one church in multiple locations” mean?

Pastor – To wrap the loving arms of Jesus around the ___ region. The reason we are one church in multiple locations is to reach an entire region for Jesus.

APPENDIX N

Church C Face-to-Face Interview Transcript

Interviewer - ____ was the one church that didn't have a central location, correct?

Pastor – Yes, that is correct.

Interviewer – That's a very unique structure.

Pastor – Yes, the two oldest and largest campuses are similar. We have an original campus, but it's not central and we don't broadcast a message.

Interviewer – Describe how the vision, mission, and values are communicated at your location.

Pastor – We really lean on the Campus Pastor to vision cast the mission and values. We try to articulate those clearly to our Campus Pastors, Teaching Pastors and the whole team. We have a rotating teaching team who speak monthly at the campuses. The Campus Pastors do a lot of heavy lifting. We use live teaching and video elements.

Interviewer – Does that differ location to location?

Pastor – Yeah, the Campus Pastor's ability to vision cast does impact the church vision. It's actually why we started to use more video elements because we found a lack of vision and mission. The values have always been solid, but the big picture was suffering.

Interviewer – What is the purpose of video teaching?

Pastor – To have that one church feel. To know that we are something bigger. It is a way to reinforce who we are as a church; big picture, where we are going. It's something that aligns us. I would also say that there is a drop off in excellence between teaching pastors and campus pastors. Teaching isn't everyone's gift.

Interviewer – What type of church model would you attend, in addition to the church model that you are currently attending?

Pastor – I would be happy to attend a multisite church that's all video or almost all video. That wouldn't bother me. I would also attend a single sight, but I would want that church to be a church planting church. I wouldn't be opposed to a mega church, but most mega churches are multisite.

Interviewer – How would you describe the communication pathways between the central office and the location at your church?

Pastor – We had a lot of central communication happening through the campus pastor team. The campus pastor team is the hub of what's happening at the church. The campus pastor is a conduit

for communication from central to all of the teams. We felt for a long time our communication was top-down and we fought for a way for the communication to be two ways.

Interviewer – Did you guys use any type of platforms or meetings?

Pastor – The Campus Pastors had a weekly meeting that the Executive Pastor was part of.

Interviewer – If attendees at your location were asked who their pastor is, who would they say?

Pastor – they would say the campus pastor.

Interviewer – Why did your church use the rotating pastor model?

Pastor – Not to create a church around one specific personality. The Lead Pastor wanted to create an environment where we would be forced to develop more leaders and teachers. It also gave significant leadership to high-level leaders.

Interviewer – What does “one church in multiple locations” mean?

Pastor – It’s what every says. Same name, same mission, same values, same Sunday service, same discipleship process, same ministries, same events. The power to harness the church to create large events. But also the ability to minister small and develop personal relationships.

Interviewer – How would you describe the church attendee’s perception of the methods and strategies used at your church?

Pastor – Directed by the staff and leadership. Meaning, their input wasn’t asked very often. Everything is methodical, process driven, and intentional. Positively, they were accessible to non-Christians and new people.

Interviewer – How, if at all, does the Sunday worship service differ from location to location at your church?

Pastor – It does not differ in music, sermon, or announcements. They are all very similar. Local announcements are added, but everything else is pretty much the same and uniform. Guest Services and Kid’s Ministry is also very uniform. We have five overarching teams and they are all similar location to location.

APPENDIX O

Church D Face-to-Face Interview Transcript

Interviewer – Describe how the vision, mission, and values are communicated at your location.

Pastor – The Vision, mission, and values are communicated through the campus pastors. We do a monthly collaboration with the executive team. The campus pastor is part of the executive team. Our mission and vision is simple. Our core values are communicated through meetings and verbalized through conversation. The campus pastor is the primary communicator. He takes it from the executive team and it's customized for their specific location. What works for the entire church, might not work in that specific community. We used to try to superimpose, but it didn't work. We needed to contextualize it to the community. Collaboration is a core value of ours. We push our campus leaders for "corporate, church wide" training. The vision, mission, and values will be communicated through that training as well.

Interviewer – What is the purpose of video teaching?

Pastor – We tried video teaching but it wasn't successful. We use live teaching. We have a teaching team that collaborate and talk about the messages. Our lead pastor will come to the meeting and the team will discuss it. The main essence and objectives of the message is agreed upon and the campus pastor will write a message around it.

Interviewer – What type of church model would you attend, in addition to the church model that you are currently attending?

Pastor – I would not attend a video teaching church. I believe relationships, and discipleship is lost when face to face teachers is not present. The model we are using is the ideal model for me.

Interviewer – How would you describe the communication pathways between the central office and the location at your church?

Pastor – We struggle with our communication pathways. We are working hard to remedy that. The Campus Pastor was not originally part of the executive team, but he is now. Him being on that team helps with communication. We also communicate directly to staff members who are part of that campus; we realize the flow of information can't go through just one person. We desire strongly to improve our channels of communication. We owe that to the campus.

Interviewer – How would you describe the church attendee's perception of the methods and strategies used at your church?

Pastor – They see the struggle and our attempts to approve it. Our executive pastor is very detailed and process oriented. She has taken responsibility for our methods and pathways and the attendees see the results of that attention. We are making adjustments to our infrastructure and our responses to attendees. That's important to our attendees.

Interviewer – What does "one church in multiple locations" mean?

Pastor – Unity, Commodity, resourcing, support, progress, equipping. Those words and objectives are powerful. There is value in being multisite; you can't duplicate a culture. There is a large difference in communities, but we can duplicate and multiply a mindset in ministry.

Interviewer – How, if at all, does the Sunday worship service differ from location to location at your church?

Pastor – The attendees believe our systems are organized and well-informed. We use something called discover mosaic. It's a four-step process that helps attendees learn more about our church. They can assimilate and identify their next-steps. During that course, people speak positively about Mosaic church. People state that the church is welcoming, friendly, well-organized. Though the systems are flawed, people like it.

Interviewer – How does it differ campus by campus?

Pastor – Quality. Our Lead Pastor recently visited our campus and he wasn't pleased. We recently brought on a new worship pastor, but there is a difference in quality. They believe that it's amazing, but there is more work to do. It's a culture difference. People haven't recognized the importance of excellence and practice. It is also more charismatic. I would argue that our second location is much more charismatic; I would call it a 10 where our central location is a 7. Our communicator at our central location is dynamic and well-received. That doesn't translate to our second campus, but the attendees don't realize it. Mediocre can not be their standard and that is something that we are working on as a church.

Interviewer – Is there any differences in the set list or curriculum

Pastor – We have a next-gen coordinator. She is an administrator who uses the Orange curriculum. The administrator/coordinator gives the freedom to use the that curriculum and attempt to capture the essence at both locations. Both locations use the same worship set practice. Our Worship Pastor is over both campuses.

APPENDIX P

Church E Face-to-Face Interview Transcript

Interviewer - Describe how the vision, mission, and values are communicated at your location.

Pastor – We have a huddle every Sunday. It's a campus wide volunteer huddle. Every Series, our campus pastors meet and discuss which core value will be best highlighted through the sermon series. We collaborate and discuss which core value and an action step week to week. We utilize the platform, via announcements to discuss our vision, mission, and values. We are in the process of a branding change and we believe it's important for our attendees to see our missions and vision. We have our vision, mission, and values branded on our walls across our building. We also communicate it often in face-to-face conversations and from the stage. It's key to keep the vision and mission in front.

Interviewer – Does that differ from campus to campus?

Pastor – No, that is something that we talk about frequently. We are not going to create different vision and mission. We are here to carry not create. We are DNA carriers and though we give autonomy in many areas to campus pastors, we do want our VMV adjusted or changed campus to campus.

Interviewer – Do you use live or video teaching?

Pastor – Yes, our LP IS AT our broadcast location 85% of the time. He will only travel to the other campus to welcome and introduce the video venue aspect. We are primarily live teaching at our broadcast location, but we expect that to change. He is currently live at our Saturday night experience, but we are transitioning to all other experiences to be video venue. We also try to have our campus pastors speak 5-6 times per year at each of our locations.

Interviewer - What is the purpose of video teaching?

Pastor- Consistency and communication. What I've found is that it's easy to sway from vision not having the same communicator. Even if a message is written by the same person, it can become very different. There is value to have one voice across the church for consistency and clarity. We want our campus pastors to understand the culture and our language before they start communicating from stage.

Interviewer – What type of church model would you attend, in addition to the church model that you are currently attending?

Pastor – I can attend in both live and video campuses. It depends more on who I am pastored by. The message is important for me, but it's more important who is pastoring me. I would be more attracted to live teaching but appreciate pastoring more. I could also attend a single-site church. Knowing what I know now, I would probably try to find a multisite church. I understand their focus on reaching the lost and multiplication, but I could attend a single-site. Single site churches have wonderful attributes, but as a leader, I feel like I grow more in a multiplication focused church.

Interviewer – How would you describe the communication pathways between the central office and the location at your church?

Pastor – It can be messy. It's something that we are always working on and trying to make right. We had three locations and had to move to two. You'd assume that the communication would be more clear, but it hasn't always been the case. Campus pastors can struggle because they have so much input from central. We believe it can be overwhelming with all the dotted lines that campus pastors have from our central team. It's also challenging for volunteers. Volunteers have different buy in and availability. The volunteer's ability to take part in the communication varies among the volunteer leaders. Clarity leads to unity. I have to be consistent in my communication, but the volunteer leaders also have to be consistent. The size of the campus also matters. Can the second campus do what the primary campus do? Can portable facilities do the same as permanent facilities? Are we creating fair expectations for all campuses and leaders? That can create a lot of frustration in our communication pathways. Let's set fair expectations and then follow up with appropriate communication. We believe it will eliminate burnout, tension, and frustration.

Communication honors people.

Interviewer – If attendees at your location were asked who their pastor is, who would they say?

Pastor – It depends on the attendee. The most bought in people, leaders, volunteers, would probably say that their campus pastor is their pastor. The folks who just attend/consume would say the lead pastor is their campus pastor.

Interviewer – What does “one church in multiple locations” mean?

Pastor- We are all one body; we resemble one church. Our branding is the same. It's like going to a chick-fil-a. No matter what chick-fil-a you go to, it's going to be red and white. It's going to serve chicken. Our campuses will contextualize to our community, but we are all part of the same body. The same branding. quality, and organization. I am ordained with a denomination and I can look at the directory and go to different churches within the denomination and could find a variety of differences. Our church's style of worship, message, and experience will feel the same regardless of which location you attend.

Interviewer – How would you describe the church attendee's perception of the methods and strategies used at your church?

Pastor – It would depend on the community. When guest come and they see a video message, many will question why there isn't a live teacher. That is the biggest questions that we navigate through with people who are new to our church. Our worship is also much more modern, which many churches where we are at are not used too.

Interviewer – How, if at all, does the Sunday worship service differ from location to location at your church?

Pastor – Leaders at each location provide a flavor. Even though it's the same message and worship set, the leaders do provide a feel to the Sunday gatherings at each location. We have a diverse staff and that also impacts the specific campus. The diversity of the staff, for us, leads to

more diversity in the congregation, which creates a beautiful collage. Worship and kids curriculum (orange) is the same.

APPENDIX Q

Church F Face-to-Face Interview Transcript

Interviewer – Describe how the vision, mission, and values are communicated at your location.

Pastor – It should be done by the site pastor. As a site pastor, I'm the primary driver for the vision, mission, and values. It all begins with the sermon. We as site pastors will reiterate the VMV from the message. We actually will say our mission statement often and will say until people are sick of it. We “over” communicate our vision, mission, and values.

Interviewer – Does that differ between locations?

Pastor – Yes, there is always a tension between locations. We will have a spectrum of leadership and communication across our campuses. It's a bit inconsistent, but we try really hard without micromanaging to help campus pastors communicate strongly.

Interviewer – What is the purpose of video teaching?

Pastor – For us, right now, the video model falls in our church planting model. How do we do leadership and stewardship well. We don't just use a video message; we use video worship as well. We plant churches in movie theaters. We know they are centrally located and are built for audio/visual. With that said, the entire service is on the screen. We are about to move into our 6th location using that model and it's been completely sustainable. The up cost is less and it puts less pressure on site pastors as communicators. We get to hire people who are shepherds.

Interviewer – What type of church model would you attend, in addition to the church model that you are currently attending?

Pastor – We don't label our locations. We have one location that has a live preacher. That location at 8:00am has a live preacher and then all other services receive video teaching and worship. I would be willing to go to a model that uses the video teaching but utilizes live worship.

Interviewer – How would you describe the communication pathways between the central office and the location at your church?

Pastor – This has shifted a lot. We recently found that we need much more organizational clarity. We have two executive leaders; one leader who is in charge of all central ministries and one leader who in charge of all site ministries. In the past, we, as site pastors felt like we had multiple bosses. Now, if a central ministry wants us to do something, they go to their executive leader, who will then take it to the site pastor executive leader who will filter it and approve or disapprove. At that time, it will then go to the site pastor via the executive site leader and the central ministry leader.

Interviewer – Is that more efficient or less efficient?

Pastor – It is way more efficient. Our central leader talks with us often and has a great feel of what should and shouldn't go to us. The system has worked out really well for us as site pastors.

Interviewer – If attendees at your location were asked who their pastor is, who would they say?

Pastor – They would definitely say me, the site pastor. Attendees know there is more people resourcing the church, but the person developing a relationship with me is my pastor. Our lead pastor does not communicate via email or social media. All communication happens via the site pastors outside the weekly Sunday message.

Interviewer - What does “one church in multiple locations” mean?

Pastor – For us, it's one elder team across the church. Same mission, same vision, same goals, same language, same authority, same message.

Interviewer - How would you describe the church attendee's perception of the methods and strategies used at your church?

Pastor – They would say that we make decisions based on people who don't show up. Our goal is to plant churches in urban cities across Canada and purposely place ourselves in cultural centers. They would call us business and methodical. It's not traditional at all but it's necessary to meet the non-Christian. It does not differ from location to location.

Interviewer – How, if at all, does the Sunday worship service differ from location to location at your church?

Pastor – Outside of the site that utilizes a live teacher, all other sites use video worship and teaching. Most of our sites use the cinema model. We use the same curriculum for Kid's ministry. In the beginning, all locations have a group of essential ministries offered. As the locations grow and the needs change, different ministries will be added. All ministries are uniform across all locations.