DISCIPLESHIP AND LEADERSHIP: THE CORRELATION BETWEEN DISCIPLESHIP
AND SERVANT, TRANSFORMATIONAL, AND SHARED
LEADERSHIP IN THE MARKETPLACE

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education
by
Daniel E. Gifford

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA
2022
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ABSTRACT

This quantitative correlational study explored the intersection of Christians in leadership positions who are not in full-time ministerial positions and the transformational nature of discipleship. It focused on determining if a correlation exists between a marketplace Christian leader’s involvement in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting characteristics of servant, transformational, or shared leadership in the marketplace. It did this by examining the concept of discipleship as currently practiced in today’s environment, comparing it with similar terms and practices prevalent in the literature, such as spiritual formation, mentoring, and coaching. It also reviewed three specific leadership styles, arguing that servant, transformational, and shared leadership, as described by Greenleaf (2002), Bass and Riggio (2006), and Pearce and Conger (2003), respectively, are those that Jesus exhibited during his ministry. Further, it evaluated the concept of the marketplace in scripture, arguing that the marketplace is a valid place for ministry and Christian leadership. Building on work done by Atherton (2014), Beckwith (2016b), Brown (2017), Bunkowske (2019), Davis (2014), Ellis (2020), and others, this project found there was a statistically significant correlation between being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting servant leadership and elements of transformational leadership for marketplace Christian leaders.

Keywords: Christian formation, Christian leadership, discipleship, servant leadership, shared leadership, spiritual formation, transformational leadership.
Dedication

To my wonderful godly wife, Carol

There is absolutely no way I could have completed this project without your love, patience, and kindness. You took care of so much while I was cloistered away in my unkempt study. I can never repay you for all your sacrifice.

To my late parents, Weston and Mildred Gifford

You instilled in me the tenacity and work ethic that allowed me to finish this project despite all the challenges that had to be overcome.

To my good friend and partner in business and ministry, Dr. Jim Harris

Thank you for the encouragement you gave and your patience as you carried the load for both The Kingdom Institute and Dynatos. I could not have completed this project without both.

To my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

It is in you that I live and move and have my being. Without your strength, I could do nothing. Because of you and your sacrifice, I can do this, I am doing this, and I will continue the course. As Paul says, “This one thing I do…forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Phil 3:13-14).
Acknowledgments

In her book entitled *The Dissertation Journey*, Carol Roberts (2010) likens the journey to climbing a high mountain filled with obstacles. As an avid hiker, I understand and agree with her analogy. A hike can be challenging, especially when one is surrounded by trees with no sight of the peak, only to be disheartened when a glimpse is caught of the looming peak in the far-off distance. With that glimpse comes the realization that there is yet so far to go. This project has been much like that. It is crucial to have the right gear, be physical and mentally prepared, and have internal and external encouragement on a hike. In completing a dissertation, this is no less true.

Several people have encouraged me along the way, but here I want to thank just a few. First is my loving wife of 35 years. You endured 35 years of military and government service filled with long deployments, assignments away from the family, and extended work hours. This doctoral journey has given you more of the same, yet you continued to encourage me with patience and grace through it all. I know that God will return the years that the locusts of the military life have eaten. He has already shown his faithfulness in so many ways.

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Business as Mission (BAM)
Council For Christian Colleges & Universities (CCCU)
Fellowship of Companies for Christ International (FCCI)
IBM Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS)
International Coaching Federation (ICF)
Institutional Review Board (IRB)
Liberty University (LU)
Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™ (MLQ™)
Servant Leadership Survey (SL-7)
Shared Leadership Measure (SLM)
CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH CONCERN

Introduction

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (English Standard Version, 2001/2015, Matthew 28:18-20)

As one of Jesus’ last recorded commands to his disciples, Christians have seemingly taken the charge to go to the nations seriously. Within a few short decades of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection, the Gospel was spread to many areas of the globe (Bruce, 1902). Today, Christianity is the largest religious group in the world, with almost a third (31%) of the world population (Hackett & McClendon, 2017). The first-century disciples apparently took Jesus seriously, and that trend continues. According to Miller (2009/2018), “over the past fifty years, there has been an unprecedented push on evangelism, church planting, and church growth” (p. 13). However, despite the long history of evangelism, conversion, and church planting, “discipleship has almost disappeared from everyday discussions in faith communities” (Nel & Schoeman, 2019, p. 1).

Being a disciple is about following Christ in every facet of one’s life (Hull, 2006), or as Bonhoeffer (1995) might argue, Christianity without discipleship is not Christianity because it removes Christ from the equation (p. 59). For the first century Christians, discipleship was life, and there was no separation between the sacred and the secular (Miller, 2009/2018). Paul demonstrated this as he “reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there” (Acts 17:17). Additionally, Jesus called his disciples from the marketplace and not the synagogue.

1 Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are taken from the English Standard Version Bible (2001/2015).
Peter, James, John, and Andrew were fishermen (Tenney, 1976c). Matthew was a tax collector; Simon the zealot may have been a revolutionary trying to overthrow the Roman government (Tenney, 1976d), and Judas was perhaps a thief before following Jesus. While there is insufficient evidence to ascertain the profession of the others, it is not unreasonable to conclude that these were also called from the marketplace and were none other than young, uneducated fishermen, laborers, and businessmen.

When Peter and John were brought before the council after their arrest, the Bible states that when the religious leaders “saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:14). Here, the religious leaders were astonished because these ordinary uneducated fishermen, businessmen, if you will, spoke boldly because they had been with, or were discipled by, Jesus. They were businessmen before Jesus called them, but the discipleship of Jesus transformed them.

But it was not only Jesus’ disciples who worked in the marketplace before becoming his followers. As a carpenter’s son and a carpenter himself (Matt. 13:55, Mark 6:3;), Jesus not only worked in the marketplace for almost 20 years before entering full-time ministry but as the eldest son of Mary and Joseph, he likely was a business owner and leader. As the oldest child of the family, if Joseph had died, Jesus would have “carried on the business and [would be] known as the carpenter of Nazareth” (Tenney, 1976a, p. 757). Thus, he was a businessman before becoming a minister (Johnson, 2004).

The Apostle Paul, well known for his preaching, teaching, and church planting, was also a marketplace leader (Acts 18) and associated with other marketplace leaders (Acts 16:4). First-century Christians did not see working in the marketplace and serving in the Church as mutually
exclusive activities (Silvoso, 2002, p. 45). For them, there was no sacred versus secular split where Christianity was simply a private belief, a matter of the heart and not the brain (Pearcey, 2005, pp. 17-19). Miller (2009/2018) says it this way:

There are not two worlds to live in, nor two types of lives to live. All of life, including the hours of my work, is to be lived coram Deo, for the advancement of God’s kingdom, for the glory of the Lord of heaven and earth. Clearly, living coram Deo means that we are not to make a separation between the sacred and the secular. The secular dwells in the presence of the sacred. The secular is infused with the sacred. (p. 65, emphasis in original)

For 2,000 years, marketplace ministry has continued as Christians who were primarily marketplace Christians have or should have been making disciples of all nations. It is more than likely they encountered unsaved people in the marketplace rather than in the synagogue or the church. If so, they would have been following Jesus’ example of ministering and teaching wherever the people were. Most of Jesus’ miracles occurred in the marketplace, along the road, in people’s houses, at a wedding, or somewhere similar, and most of his parables had a marketplace setting (Johnson, 2004). He also often taught openly in the marketplace or wherever he met people.

Today, most Christians are not involved in what is traditionally called full-time ministry. Most are teachers, taxi-cab drivers, or tax collectors. Some are fishermen; others work in factories, or perhaps are farmers, the same types of people to whom Jesus is recorded as having preached the good news. In almost every area of employment, one will, and should, find Christians, and in every sector of the marketplace, some Christians will most certainly be in leadership positions.

With such a large percentage of the world’s population identifying themselves as Christian (Hackett & McClendon, 2017), and with the vast majority of those working in the marketplace, some of whom are in leadership, one might justifiably ask why corruption in the
marketplace continues to be rampant. If Christians are supposed to be salt and light, influencing the world, why is the marketplace so corrupt. Said another way:

Should not the church have an influence on society? Why are our families, communities, and societies falling apart when there are so many Christians? Never in history have there been more Christians, more churches, and more large churches than there are today, so why are societies so broken? (Miller, 2009/2018, p. xviii)

Further, if Christians are in leadership and leadership is about influence (Åkerlund, 2014; Cox et al., 2010), then why is good leadership so lacking in the marketplace? Could it be that Christian leaders are not exemplifying Jesus in how they lead? Could it be that marketplace Christian leaders have lost their savor, or have they seemingly put their lamps under a basket? Or are Christians not truly transformed and transformational in the marketplace? It would appear that Christians have “allowed work and religion to become separate departments, and [are] astonished to find that, as a result, the secular world is turned to purely selfish and destructive ends” (Glavaš, 2017, p. 30). This is not a new phenomenon and has been building for centuries. Schaeffer (1982) argues that much of this separation can be traced back to the writings of Aquinas, despite the centuries-long influence of Christians who have been charged to make disciples of all nations.

And what of discipleship? Has the Church stopped making disciples, or as Nel (2017) offers, are Christians “struggling to be a blessing to the world because we have confused (and even equated) confrontational evangelism and (with) discipling? And now we are not doing any one of the two” (p. 1). Discipleship, like leadership, is about transformation and influence (Hull, 2006, p. 28). If Christians are being discipled, one would think they are, like the first disciples, being transformed into the image of Christ and exemplifying that image in the marketplace. Is there a disconnect between how Christians are being discipled and leading in the marketplace?
In short, if Christians are to be and make disciples, to be transformed into the image of Christ, and to do business until he comes (Luke 19:13), those in the marketplace should be leading as Jesus led. However, it appears that some Christians’ beliefs on Sunday are disconnected from their actions on Monday, so Christians, especially those in leadership, are indistinguishable from non-Christians in the marketplace. In essence, is a marketplace Christian leader who is being discipled any different than her counterpart that is not a Christian? This research project seeks to answer that question by analyzing marketplace Christian leaders and their involvement in discipleship to determine if there is a correlation between being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting the same leadership styles that Jesus exemplified.

**Background to the Problem**

Scripture is clear that Christians are to make disciples. It was the last reported command Jesus gave his disciples before his ascension, as recorded by Matthew. Jesus said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:18-20).

While Christians are commanded to *make* disciples, they are also commanded to *be* disciples. The command to be disciples is somewhat less explicit than the one to make disciples, but it is still replete throughout scripture. Several times in the gospels, Jesus called people to follow him (Matt. 16:24, Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23), including after his resurrection (John 21). In Matt. 16:24, Jesus told all who would follow him to take up their cross. He also calls all Christians to abide in him as he abides in them (John 15:4). The Greek word translated abide, *menō* (Strongs, G3306), conveys a sense of permanence or an ongoing relationship that does not
end (Sun, 1993, p. 2). To abide in Christ means to remain in him for the rest of one’s life (Strongs, G3306), following him and adhering to his teachings. In arguing before the men of Athens in the Areopagus, Paul said that it is “in him [Jesus] that we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28).

Paul exhorts Christians to imitate him as he imitates Christ (1 Cor. 11:1), presenting their bodies as a living sacrifice and being transformed (Rom. 12:1-2). All these appeals have a sense of permanence or imply a continuous process instead of a single event. In other words, following or imitating Christ, presenting our bodies as living sacrifices, and having our minds renewed are lifelong processes, just as being a disciple is a lifelong process (Hull, 2006, p. 35). Discipleship is not a meeting, program, or temporary endeavor. It is or should be a way of life for the Christian.

While Jesus was teaching his disciples about the Kingdom, he told them a parable about the ten minas “because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately” (Luke 19:11). In that parable, the nobleman said to his servants, “engage in business until I come” (Luke 19:13). What seems clear from this parable is that Jesus expected Christians to continue conducting their daily lives until he returned. There was to be no sacred/secular divide (Pearcey, 2005; Schaeffer, 1982). As Matthew Henry (2018b) states:

Christ here tells them that, instead of this [the Kingdom coming immediately], he designed them to be men of business; they must expect no other preferment in this world than that of the trading end of the town; he would set them up with a stock under their hands, that they might employ it themselves, in serving him and the interest of his kingdom among men (p. 634, emphasis in original)

For some, perhaps for most, that meant doing business in the marketplace. Martinez (2018) points out that many Christians are in the marketplace for forty to sixty hours a week in doing whatever work they have before them (p. 14), and in other than western industrialized
societies, that number can be even higher (Miller, 2009/2018, p. 3). However, few Christians understand that their work environment may be their mission field (Johnson, 2004; Kaemingk, 2011; Silvoso, 2002), and many leave their faith at the door of their employment. At the same time, “there has been a trend amongst Christian business authors towards ensuring that Christian businesspeople understand that the business world is their calling or invocation” (Beckwith, 2016a, p. 17). Despite that trend, it is still a small percentage of Christian writings and an even smaller percentage of academic research that focuses on the marketplace.

**Statement of the Problem**

After Jesus explained that all authority had been given to him, He charged his disciples, and by extension, all Christians, to “make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19). The Church has arguably been reasonably successful in making converts, preparing people to go into the ministry, and perhaps helping people become better fathers, husbands, wives, and mothers. Much has been written about evangelism and discipleship from that perspective.

People tend to understand that discipleship is necessary for Christian maturity or growth (i.e., Asamoah-Gyadu, 2017; Baucham, 2011; Brock, 2014; Chai, 2015; Cherry, 2016). According to a Barna (2015) study entitled *The State of Discipleship*, “most Christians express a desire to grow and yet don’t appear to flesh out this desire” (p. 72).

Many Christians agree that it is important to be in a discipleship relationship or grow more like Christ, but they either do not know how or cannot find the time to do so (Barna, 2015). Those who find the time to flesh out the desire and get engaged in discipleship tend to receive guidance, instruction, and mentoring on being a better Christian in general (Bates, 2017; Layer, 2009; Lockett, 2003; Thomas, 2014). However, there does not appear to have been a focus on
incorporating the life lessons learned from discipleship into one’s leadership style, especially within the marketplace.

As much as has been written about discipleship, arguably more has been written about leadership. With over 4,000 documented definitions of leadership in the literature (Azad et al., 2017) and over sixteen distinct leadership theories or approaches identified by Northouse (2016), the available research is extensive. It is not only the secular community that has been focused on leadership. In the past three decades alone, the interest in distinctly Christian leadership has significantly increased, with over 180,000 doctoral dissertations available on the subject (ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, n.d.). However, much of the research has been focused on Christian leadership within the confines of the Christian community, either in a ministry-related organization or Christian education.

Little of the research has been on Christian leadership in the secular environment, and where there is that intersection (Boyd, 2005; Bunkowske, 2019; Davis, 2014; Sawyer, 2018; Stadler, 2008), the main thrust is on how Christian leadership is executed in the workplace rather than on how Christians develop their leadership style. This researcher cannot find any published studies on the interrelationship between discipleship and exhibiting particular leadership styles in the marketplace. This intersection of leadership and discipleship is one through which there has been little traffic.

If Christians are to do business until Jesus returns, be and make disciples, and exemplify Jesus in every area of their lives, including leadership, should there be some evidence of Christ-like leadership in those being discipled? Further, if Christians are a peculiar people (Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:9), should there not be a difference in how Christians and non-Christians lead in the marketplace, especially for those Christians who are being discipled? This study attempted to
answer those questions by studying the correlation between a marketplace Christian leader being in a discipleship relationship and exemplifying characteristics of servant, shared, or transformational leadership styles.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine if a correlation exists between a marketplace Christian leader being involved in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting characteristics of servant leadership, transformational leadership, or shared leadership within the secular marketplace.

**Research Questions**

The overall research question guiding this study is whether there is a correlation between a Christian participating in a discipleship relationship and the practice of a particular style of leadership in the marketplace. This question was further subdivided into the following four research questions:

**RQ1.** What relationship, if any, exists between a marketplace Christian leader’s participation in a discipleship relationship and exemplifying servant leadership?

**RQ2.** What relationship, if any, exists between a marketplace Christian leader’s participation in a discipleship relationship and exemplifying transformational leadership?

**RQ3.** What relationship, if any, exists between a marketplace Christian leader’s participation in a discipleship relationship and exemplifying shared leadership?

**RQ4.** Does participation in a discipleship relationship correlate to practicing a particular leadership style for marketplace Christian leaders?

**Assumptions and Delimitations**

This research project was based on certain assumptions to facilitate collecting and analyzing the data. It was also limited to a manageably small population to further aid the collection and analysis of the data.
**Research Assumptions**

In general, it was assumed that not every marketplace Christian leader is in a discipleship relationship.

The concept of discipleship is implemented in various ways in different churches; therefore, it was assumed that not every church or individual in this study had the same understanding of what being a disciple entailed.

It was assumed that the research population generally understood what discipleship entails as practiced in their local church.

Individuals and denominations interpret scripture differently; therefore, it was assumed that not every church or individual would interpret the command to make disciples in the same way.

Christians in the marketplace interpret their roles as Christians in various ways; therefore, it was assumed that not everyone would have the same concept of Christian leadership.

**Delimitations of the Research Design**

This study was limited in several ways.

1. Because the term marketplace can be broadly interpreted to include any area outside of the strict confines of the church, this study was limited to non-religious, for-profit, and non-profit organizations (business, government, education, arts, etc.).

2. This research was delimited to self-professing Christians; therefore, this study did not survey anyone that is not a self-professed Christian.

3. This research was delimited exclusively to self-professed Christians who hold leadership positions in the marketplace; therefore, it did not include marketplace Christians who do not serve in a leadership capacity.

4. This study was delimited to only self-professed Christian leaders who work in the marketplace context; therefore, this research did not survey anyone in full-time ministry in the church, a parachurch organization, or a Christian ministry-related organization.
5. This research was delimited to marketplace Christian leaders who already were in or recently had been in (within two years) a discipleship relationship; therefore, this study did not include anyone who was not in a discipleship relationship.

6. This research was delimited to three leadership styles (servant, transformational, and shared leadership); therefore, it did not include evaluations of other leadership approaches.

7. This research was delimited to Christians in the United States; therefore, it did not describe or apply to Christians in other regions or countries of the world.

8. This study did not evaluate who was and who was not a Christian but instead used self-identification criteria.

9. This study did not evaluate specific discipleship programs or practices within any church but evaluated marketplace leadership within the context of discipleship.

10. This study did not specifically compare discipleship programs between churches but examined discipleship in general.

11. This study did not specifically attempt to determine which leadership style is the most appropriate for marketplace Christian leaders but examined three specific leadership styles.

**Definition of Terms**


2. *Disciple*: A Christian that submits him or herself as a learner to another person or group for a definite or indefinite period with the goal of becoming more like Christ (Hull, 2006).

3. *Discipleship*: The ongoing life of the disciple; the process of following Jesus (Hull, 2006, p. 35).

4. *Discipleship relationship*: A relationship built on trust which a person enters wherein a more experienced Christian disciples or trains a less experienced Christian with the goal of becoming more like Christ.

5. *Leadership position*: Any position of formal leadership or influence in an organization where the individual performs leadership functions on a routine basis.

7. **Marketplace**: The location of people’s employment in non-religious institutions. This can be a courtroom, hospital, school, laboratory, corporate office, factory, or any of the other possibilities” (Davis, 2014). It includes business, education, the government, sports, the media, and the arts.

8. **Marketplace Christian leader**: A self-professed Christian in a leadership position in an organization that is not a Christian or ministry-related organization.

9. **Mentoring**: The process where someone who has experience, knowledge, and expertise in a given area shares it with someone who does not (Bekkedahl, 2015, p. 14).

10. **Servant leadership**: A style of leadership in which the leader begins with the natural feeling of serving first, after which a conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead (Greenleaf, 2002, p. 27).

11. **Shared leadership**: A dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both (Pearce & Conger, 2003, p. 1).

12. **Spiritual Formation**: A process through which individuals who have received new life take on the character of Jesus Christ by a combination of effort and grace (Hull, 2006, p. 19).

13. **Transformational leadership**: A process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower (Northouse, 2016, p. 162).

**Significance of the Study**

As stated previously, the concept of discipleship is inherent in Christian belief. Jesus did not tell his disciples to go and plant churches, nor did he say to establish non-profit organizations or religious schools, although those are worthy endeavors. Instead, he told them to go and make disciples of all nations. According to Barna (2015), most Christians understand the need to grow spiritually, and many desire to do so. Whether people refer to it as spiritual maturity, spiritual formation, Christian maturity, Christian growth, or discipleship, the idea is the same, as the literature demonstrates. Christians are called to be continuously transformed into the image of Christ (Hull, 2006; Kilner, 2015). That continuous transformation involves the whole person and
occurs in community (Kilner, 2015, p. 235). Not only do many Christians believe they need to grow spiritually, most pastors and church leaders believe spiritual growth occurs best within a discipleship relationship (Barna, 2015).

If most people believe they should be growing spiritually, and most pastors believe that growth should happen in some form of discipleship, then it is worth discovering if discipleship has a positive effect on people’s lives, especially as it is manifested in leadership styles. Specifically, does discipleship influence Christians in leadership positions in the marketplace? If not, perhaps churches need to rethink their focus on discipleship or how it is conducted. While this study did not explicitly examine the focus or method of discipleship, since it looked at both group and one-on-one discipleship relationships statistically, it may provide helpful clues in determining the efficacy of discipleship in any leadership setting.

**Summary of the Design**

This study was a quantitative study that determined if there is a correlation between a marketplace Christian leader being in a discipleship relationship and their exemplifying either servant, shared, or transformational leadership styles. It used a cross-sectional survey rather than a longitudinal survey. It also conducted content analysis to compare the survey results against the results of other studies. Due to the geographical focus being the entire U.S., study data was collected via Liberty University’s Qualtrics website, with respondents being provided a link to answer the survey questions. Once data was returned, the survey results were analyzed using statistical methodologies to determine the relationship’s strength, weakness, or absence. The primary method for gathering information was a survey conducted through the Qualtrics website, while the primary method for conducting the content analysis was a search of dissertation databases.
Several avenues for gathering responses were attempted. After approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Appendix A), the initial intent was to use churches in the Southeastern U.S. randomly selected from the USA Churches database (USA Churches, n.d.). However, that procedure failed after two attempts to gain acceptance from over 200 churches using a permission request (Appendix B), recruitment letter (Appendix C), and permission letter (Appendix D) emailed to pastors and church leadership. This was followed by two more attempts with a modified request (Appendix E) permission letter (Appendix F) and recruitment letter (Appendix G), again emailed to pastors and church leadership. The IRB Approval (Appendix A) was included in each attempt to highlight that a Christian educational institution approved the research.

Subsequently, after additional approval from the IRB (Appendix H), the researcher expanded the potential population to any marketplace Christian leader in the U.S. using social media and personal email to recruit respondents (Appendix I). Once individuals accepted the invitation to participate, they were directed to the Qualtrics website embedded in the invitation. All participants were required to acknowledge and agree to the informed consent (Appendices A and H) before answering any further questions in the survey. All individuals that were willing to participate in the study and were self-professed Christians in leadership positions in the marketplace and in a discipleship relationship represented the study population.

Once all the data was gathered, respondents were combined into two groups: one-on-one discipleship and group discipleship. Then, descriptive statistics and an independent samples t-test were conducted to determine if there was a difference between the two groups. Finally, a search of the ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global (n.d.) was conducted for studies that reported survey results from the three measurement instruments used in this study. Those results were
compared with the results of this study using a 1-sample t-test to determine if there was a
difference between this study and the others.

Summary

Jesus called all Christians to be and make disciples and conduct business until he returns.
This study examined the correlation, if any, between answering those two calls and leading like
Jesus led. Christians are to be discipled, and discipleship is meant to be transformative in a
Christian’s life (Bonhoeffer, 1995; Eims, 1978; Hull, 2006; Ogden, 2016). Several others (i.e.,
Atherton, 2014; Beckwith, 2016b, Brown, 2017; Bunkowske 2019; Davis,2014; Ellis, 2020)
have done initial work on aspects of this study but have not tied all the elements together. This
study built on their work and went deeper into the specific relationship between leadership and
discipleship, which may provide the church with the ability to tailor discipleship for some of its
people. Specifically, discipleship might be tailored for those in leadership in the secular
marketplace, making them effective followers of Jesus while at the same time demonstrating
Jesus’ leadership traits. The next chapter will explore some of the extant literature for leadership,
discipleship, and the marketplace from theological and theoretical perspectives.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

This research focused on the intersection of Christian discipleship practices and Christian leadership within the marketplace. This intersection is one through which there has been little traffic. Several authors have studied various aspects of the variables in the study, but none have put them together. Much of the research has focused on a singular aspect such as leadership, discipleship, or the marketplace. Occasionally, a writer or researcher will combine two subjects, such as Christian leadership and discipleship (Holsinger, 2009) or Christian leadership in the workplace (Sawyer, 2018). However, most of those studies have been qualitative, and none have analyzed marketplace leadership as one of the potential discipleship outcomes.

Most studies on discipleship have focused on developing better Christians. Even though this is a worthy outcome of discipleship, it can leave some Christians wanting more. When Johnson (2004), a businessman, became a Christian, he approached his church to determine how to serve Jesus best. He was told to leave business and go into real [emphasis added] ministry (p. 7). While a somewhat extreme example, this comment is not unique. Christians tend to view real ministry as occurring somewhere else but not in the marketplace. Generally speaking, most pastors and religious leaders interact more with believers than unbelievers and even less with those believers and unbelievers in positions of prominence in the business community (Silvoso, 2002, p. 19). The church tends to be focused on the church, and Christian discipleship has primarily implemented that focus (Bates, 2017; Layer, 2009; Mapstone, 2019).

The studies on leadership are extensive, with over 4,000 documented definitions of leadership (Azad et al., 2017). The variety and number of leadership theories have grown significantly since the formal study of the concept ensued in the late 19th century. Northouse (2016) outlined more than a dozen distinct theories or approaches in his book.
Finally, the research on the marketplace is seemingly endless, with literally hundreds of distinct topics from which to choose for study. A ProQuest search on *business leadership* yielded more than 500,000 results. Other terms, when coupled with leadership, such as educational, political, or environmental, or several other terms produce similar results. However, this study’s focus, and the literature review that follows, was the intersection of Christian discipleship, the three theories of servant, transformational and shared leadership, and the marketplace.

The remainder of this chapter will delve more deeply into the theological basis for each of the main subjects; leadership, discipleship, and the marketplace. It will also explore the three selected leadership styles in more detail from a theoretical perspective, reaching back to the framers and a few selected authors for each. Finally, it will discuss some of the literature focused on related topics such as spiritual formation, mentoring and coaching, and the idea of Christian leadership in the marketplace, including some of the organizations involved in that sphere of influence.

**Theological Framework for the Study**

In some of the last recorded words of Jesus before he ascended, he charged his disciples, and by extension, the Church, with *making* disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19). He reiterated the same charge just before the Day of Pentecost when he said to his disciples, “you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, *and to the end of the earth* [emphasis added]” (Acts 1:8). Indeed, Jesus wants Christians to disciple and be discipled.

By all accounts, Jesus was and is a leadership model, especially for Christian leaders. Thousands of books, articles, theses, and dissertations have been dedicated to how Jesus led. He
exemplified many leadership styles (Todd, 2004) throughout his ministry; however, he is arguably most recognized as the model for servant leadership, even though Greenleaf (2002) did not use him as an example. Jesus told his disciples that whoever wants to be great must be a servant and then demonstrated it by washing their feet (Matt. 20:26; Mark 10:43). If Jesus was exemplifying serving for his disciples, he was, by extension, illustrating serving for every Christian. Thus, it could be argued that servant leadership is the model for all Christian leaders, not only those in full-time ministry. However, Jesus exemplified several other leadership styles (Roach, 2016; Todd, 2004; Youssef, 2013), and it is relevant to explore those most closely related to servant leadership (Bunkowske, 2019).

As mentioned previously, shortly before Jesus was crucified, he told his disciples a parable about a nobleman who gave his servants money and told those servants to “engage in business until I come” (Luke 19:13). The Greek for the phrase, engage in business, *pragmateuoma* (Strongs, G4231), is used only once in the Bible. It has as its root the word *prassō* (Strongs, G4238), which brings a sense of staying busy and managing public affairs and business (Blue Letter Bible, n.d.). Other versions translate it as *occupy, trade, or invest* (Blue Letter Bible, n.d.).

Regardless of the translation, the intent seems to be clear. Jesus wanted his followers to continue working in the secular environment, and while engaging in business, to make disciples until he returned (Henry, 2018a; Miller, 2009/2018). Hamilton (2015) reinforces this point by stating, “God desires that believers go to the nations and integrate in all aspects of life.” Miller (2009/2018) takes it further by saying that in disengaging from the culture rather than doing business, a Christians’ life purpose is stunted, and they become “bankrupt in ways that truly matter (p. 6).” All of this adds up to there being no separation between the sacred and secular.
Christians are to be Christians in everything they do, whether in church on Sunday or in the marketplace on Monday. Nothing is separated from Christ and the scriptures. Nothing is autonomous (Schaeffer, 1982). Everything, including the marketplace, is under the authority of God.

Others may disagree with this assessment. Dreher (2018) argues that Christians have already lost the fight, and secular nihilism has won. Christians should stop wasting energy and instead focus on building separate and distinct communities based on the Benedict code to weather the storm. Others argue from scripture that the church must be completely separate from the world (agodman 2020; Hicks, n.d.; Sorenson, 2017) and not involved in politics (Cooper, 2011; Redekop, 1985), or that a focus on the marketplace as an area of ministry is wrong (Chew, n.d.). These interpretations may miss some key points about the marketplace in scripture.

If Luke 19:13 were the only reference to engaging in the marketplace, one might justifiably disagree with its importance for Christians. However, it is not, and others agree with the idea of Christians engaging in the marketplace (Sproul, 2018).

In Jesus’ short earthly ministry, of the thirty-seven recorded miracles Jesus performed\(^2\), only three were in the synagogue. The remainder were in the marketplace (Johnson, 2004). Much of his recorded teaching happened within the marketplace context, and he chose his twelve disciples from people who worked and led in the marketplace, not from the rabbinical schools. Jesus taught in, healed in, and recruited from the marketplace. Jesus has an interest in the marketplace, and several authors agree.

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\(^2\) The number of Jesus’ miracles recorded in scripture is much debated, with some writers counting as few as thirty-five while others identify as many as forty-eight (Chen, 2018, p. 25). Thirty-seven is the number used by Johnson (2004) and is also used here for consistency.
If Christians are called to a life of transformation, discipleship, and serving, it follows that Christians who are discipled and are in positions of leadership should exemplify the type of leadership that Jesus demonstrated. While much has been written about servant leadership and discipleship within the context of ministry, this author can find scant research about the relationship between discipleship and leadership in the environment in which Jesus spent most of his life, the marketplace. This study endeavored to fill that gap in the literature.

**Discipleship**

The concept of discipleship is replete throughout scripture and was not new to Jesus’ disciples. Although the term *mathētēs* (Strongs, G3101) is not present in the Old Testament, many researchers (i.e., Bekkedahl, 2015; Brewer, 2020; Clarke, 2005; Erskine, 2004) identify several passages, beginning with Genesis and ending with Revelation that speak to the concept. The First Century Church practiced discipleship from its inception, and it continues to this day in many churches in one form or another. Like the concept of leadership, discipleship is one of the most studied ideas in the church today.

Despite discipleship being much studied in academia, it is not universally discussed in the church. “Discipleship training, which used to be a fixture on Sunday and Wednesday evenings, is now largely ignored” (Bekkedahl, 2015, p. 1). In a Barna (2015) study, researchers found only 20 percent of Christian adults were involved in some sort of discipleship activity (p. 10). Perhaps one reason discipleship is no longer a fixture, and few people are involved, is because “the concept is so negatively loaded that we need to find another way of referring to what it means” (Nel & Schoeman, 2019, p. 1). Hence, the concept of discipleship is often couched in the more familiar and perhaps less inflammatory term spiritual formation (Hull, 2006). Regardless of the
term used, much of the research is driven by Jesus’ charge in Matthew 28. None of the sources referenced in this study discuss the topic without explicit or implicit reference to this passage.

Christian discipleship, the type on which this study is focused, is a call on all Christians’ lives to be conformed to Christ. Being a Christian means “adherence to Christ, and, because Christ is the object of that adherence, it must take the form of discipleship” (Bonhoeffer, 1995, p. 59). Again, like leadership, there are several definitions for discipleship. Brewer (2020) identifies three, from as simple as “a disciple of Jesus is one who trusts Jesus enough to follow, one step at a time, wherever He leads” (p. 41) to one with three elements which is more of a description than a definition (pp. 42-43). Haynes (2020) defines it as “the process of developing “healthy spiritual leaders in Christ’s likeness to reach the world for Christ.” Erskine (2004) defines it as “a person-in-process who is eager to learn and apply the truths that Jesus Christ teaches him, which will result in ever-deepening commitments to a Christlike lifestyle” (Adsit 1996, as cited in Erskine, 2004, p. 8). However, he does so only after explaining that “theological and educational differences prohibit this [having a single agreed-upon definition of discipleship] from being realized” (p. 7). Several others are satisfied with discussing the term generically rather than defining it (Brock, 2014; Cherry, 2016; Cox & Peck, 2018).

Despite the challenges, all the definitions include three essential elements of following Jesus, adhering to the teachings of Jesus, and having a goal of being transformed into the image of Christ (Kilner, 2015). While following Jesus and adhering to his teachings appear similar, they are slightly different and incorporate different levels of commitment (Brewer, 2020). Following Jesus is a willingness to enter a relationship with him, the first step in becoming a disciple. Once the relationship is established, the desire to abide by his teachings is another step of commitment, more an act of obedience than a simple acknowledgment of who Jesus is and
being willing to follow him. A person can have a relationship with Jesus, go to church, and read the Bible, but not obey his commandments. In other words, people can follow Jesus, but at a distance and under their rules rather than his, attempting to be autonomous (Schaeffer, 1982) or trying to keep the secular and sacred divided (Pearcey, 2005).

Adherence to his teachings goes further. It requires obedience and sacrifice (Bonhoeffer, 1996; Brewer, 2020; Hull, 2006). Even many of Jesus’ disciples left him when he started teaching hard things (John 6:22-66). Thus, it takes all three elements to be a disciple.

One other element that undergirds the ability for one person to disciple another is the idea of trust. “Effective discipleship must meet people’s spiritual needs. To meet a person’s spiritual needs, a disciple-maker must be trusted by that person” (Haynes, 2020, pp. 31-32). One cannot disciple another or be effectively discipled and transformed unless there is a basis of trust in the relationship.

Scripture consistently charges Christians not to be conformed to the world (Romans 8:29; 1 Peter 1:14) but to be transformed (Romans 12:2). Once a person accepts Jesus as Lord and Savior, once they begin to follow Jesus, they are made new (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15), and the journey of discipleship should begin. The journey of discipleship is one of sacrifice and self-denial.

Christians are commanded to pick up their crosses daily and follow Jesus (Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34, Luke 9:23), which is “a summons to the discipline and self-denial of discipleship for all who [strive] to follow him” (Pelikan, 1985, p.109). It is a call for Christians to examine themselves to see if they are still worthy (1 Corinthians 11:28; 2 Corinthians 13:5). The Bereans were acknowledged as noble because they studied the scriptures daily (Acts 17:10-11), a form of examining oneself. “Discipleship is a daily, ongoing journey through the work of
the Holy Spirit” (Brewer, 2020), and it continues throughout a Christian’s life. There is no end to the journey, but there is the beginning, and it begins with the call to follow Christ (Bonhoeffer, 1995).

As mentioned above, theologians and writers have offered several definitions of discipleship, but the variety does not end with the definitions. There are also various types of discipleship, or more accurately, discipleship is practiced in different ways in different churches and denominations, some of which will be explored in the next section.

**Types of Discipleship**

One might believe that since discipleship has been practiced for almost 2,000 years and is commanded in the Bible, the practice would be relatively solidified and effective throughout the many churches, cultures, and denominations. However, that is not the case. Instead, it is as varied in practice as there are variations in denominations and cultures. Despite that variation, or perhaps because of it, Clarke (2005) argues that the current discipleship practices in the local church are ineffective (p. 5).

Perhaps because of that perceived ineffectiveness, several other terms have become ubiquitous in the literature in recent years that appear to be synonyms with discipleship. Specifically, mentoring and coaching entered the literature as equivalent to discipleship in the early 1980s and have been prevalent ever since. Similarly, the terms spiritual formation, Christian formation, and Christian spiritual formation entered the literature at around the same time, coincident with the demise of the Shepherding movement (Moore 1999). These terms occur more than four hundred times in the titles of doctoral dissertations in the last 20 years. These other terms will be discussed under the Related Literature section and will include a
potential rationale for why discipleship has somewhat fallen out of favor in the literature and practice.

The literature describes variations, two of which will be briefly covered here, on how discipleship is implemented in different churches and denominations: One-on-one and group discipleship. This research focused on one-on-one and group discipleship, primarily because the additional terms above are executed mainly in one-on-one or group environments.

A search of scripture (Blue Letter Bible, n.d.) reveals no incidence of the term mentor or coach. In contrast, the term disciple is prevalent, and “discipleship is a prominent and important concept in the New Testament” (Tenney, 1976b, p.130). However, regardless of the type of discipleship practiced or the terms used, there is an acknowledged value in a discipleship relationship. Haynes (2020) identifies transformation as the first and arguably, the most important benefit, and much of that transformation happens best in a one-on-one discipleship relationship (Man in the Mirror, n.d.).

**One-On-One Discipleship.** This type of discipleship seems to have fallen out of favor over the past few decades with some churches, perhaps at least partly due to the excesses of the shepherding movement (Moore, 2000) of the 1970s and 1980s. Any program can be taken to the extreme if not executed with humility and love, with a servant leader’s heart on the part of the one who is discipling and a relationship built on trust. Moore (2000) provides sufficient evidence that, at times, the element of trust was missing in the shepherding movement, as were the characteristics of humility and love. However, others argue that one-on-one discipleship is still the most potent and effective type of discipleship (Man in the Mirror, n.d.).

The one-on-one form of discipleship includes all three elements of the definition, but that relationship must also be built on trust to be effective. Another example in addition to Man in the
Mirror is the Iron-on-Iron ministry based on Proverbs 27:17. The program starts with a retreat in which the individuals get to know each other better and help build trust. A 12-week one-on-one discipleship program follows the retreat. All this is done under the authority of a local church (Iron on Iron Ministries, n.d.). It includes a Paul-Timothy relationship and incorporates someone in an oversight role, occasionally called a Barnabas, who oversees several Paul-Timothy teams. The person in the Barnabas role ensures trust is not broken and ensures the discipleship relationship remains doctrinally sound.

**Group Discipleship.** Group discipleship is perhaps the most common form of discipleship practiced in churches today. Several recent researchers on discipleship refer to groups when describing discipleship (Brewer, 2020; Chai, 2015; Frederick, 2017; Hamilton, 2015; Haynes, 2020; Martinez, 2018; Monk, 2005). Occasionally, discipleship is conducted as a weekly Bible study (Brewer, 2020; Frederick, 2017; Haynes, 2020; Martinez, 2018). However, group discipleship takes as many forms as groups in the church, parachurch organizations, and education.

A cursory review of the literature will find titles that refer to Christian education as discipleship (Cox & Peck, 2018), a comparison of short-term missions as discipleship (Farrell, 2013), using applications on mobile devices to facilitate discipleship (Haynes, 2020), or evangelism as discipleship (Hewitt, 2014). There are even variations between Charismatic discipleship (Hill, 2017) and Spirit-driven discipleship (Langford, 2014), although the differentiation can be difficult to discern.

None of the above is meant to disparage any of the variations. The point is that much like Paul describes the body of Christ as having many members, each with its function, discipleship can be practiced in unique ways, as the body has need. Hewitt (2014) explains that “there is no
one-size-fits-all plan” for discipleship. However, since this project is about the relationship between discipleship and leadership, this research condensed all discipleship applications into one-on-one discipleship and group discipleship. The reality of all discipleship, whether individual or group, is that it is focused on the transformation of the Christian.

**Purpose of Discipleship**

The theme of variation will continue in exploring the purpose of discipleship. As mentioned above, there are several ways in which churches implement discipleship programs. In the same way, there are several purposes researchers have outlined in studying discipleship, but all those purposes relate to the three elements of the definition of discipleship.

Martinez (2018) describes discipleship as an iterative process with at least one purpose: growing in relationship with God. Brewer (2020) describes the purpose of discipleship as growing in Christ, and Bonhoeffer (1995) describes it as adherence to Christ. In Haynes’ (2020) study, one participant describes it as “intentionality and consistency for the purpose of spiritual growth.” Others describe the purpose of discipleship in different ways. Still, all allude to the concept of following Jesus, adhering to his teachings, and having a goal, as Erskine (2004) states, of having “a life transformed into the image and likeness of Christ” (p. 45).

One interesting point is that much of the research on discipleship has been focused on producing individuals that will be effective in traditional ministry. In a study on discipleship, Gillcash (2011) wrote of the challenges of a growing church and how a discipleship program would “increase the capabilities of the staff” (p. 3) to do the work of the ministry. In other words, there was too much to do in a growing church, and a discipleship program would help raise leaders to serve in the church.
This mindset is both familiar and understandable, as it may be difficult for Christians to resolve the idea of seeking the Kingdom and His righteousness outside of the church’s walls in an increasingly secular environment. Thus, they leave their Christianity and their Christian leadership inside the church, reinforcing the sacred/secular divide that Pearcey (2005) and Schaeffer (1982) discuss at length. Nel (2017) would seemingly agree when he states, “seeking what is right on a personal level is easier than seeking righteousness or justice in public life.” For most Christians, public life is outside the church walls, and for some, it invariably involves performing functions of or being in a leadership position.

One aspect of discipleship that others have explored is the idea of followership (Alvesson & Blom, 2015; Arenas et al., 2018). While this study did not explicitly explore followership, it is implicit in the concept is leadership. One cannot be a follower of someone or something without a leader of some sort (Alvesson & Blom, 2015; Cox et al., 2010). Being a disciple, as described earlier, involves following Christ. It is an important, perhaps the most important, aspect of Christianity. If discipleship is essential, and scripture makes that clear, then so is leadership. To paraphrase Wilhoit (2000), people are the key to any endeavor, and if true, leadership should focus on shaping peoples’ values. Each of the styles of leadership described below is focused on shaping people’s values.

**Theological Basis for Christian Leadership**

As much as discipleship has been studied over the recent decades, the amount of research on leadership from a Christian perspective, whether the label is Christian leadership or spiritual leadership, has been almost overwhelming. A recent search on the ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global (n.d.) site on Christian leadership yielded over 160,000 dissertations produced in
the previous 20 years. Another search on *spiritual leadership* yields similar results over the same period.

Those results are interesting because the word leadership is either not used in the Bible or used sparingly, with eight references being the most in the New English Translation (Blue Letter Bible, n.d.), split evenly between the Old and New Testaments. However, the concept of leadership, like discipleship, is replete throughout the Bible (Atherton, 2014; Harmeling, 2013; Huizing, 2016; Patterson, 2016; Sawyer, 2018). Seaman (1976), in an analysis of leadership and management in the Old Testament, identifies several individuals who had significant leadership roles, including Joseph, Moses, Samuel, Saul, David, and Solomon.

After creating man in the first chapter of Genesis, “God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and *subdue* it and *have dominion over* [emphasis added] the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth’” (Genesis 1:28). The two Hebrew words, *kāḇaš* (Strongs, H3533) and *rāḏâ* (Strongs, H7287) translated to English as *subdue* and *have dominion* (Strongs, n.d.) have the idea of ruling, to have authority over, or to lead. As Henry (2018a) explains, man being made in God’s image provides man some of God’s authority as his representative on earth (p. 8).

Just as there is the idea of authority in subduing and having dominion, there is authority in the concept of leadership. Those who subdue or have dominion have authority and are in leadership positions. Those who are subdued or over whom dominion is exercised must follow the direction of those in leadership (Alvesson & Blom, 2015; Cox et al., 2010).

The Hebrew word נָחָה or *nāḥâ* (Strongs, H5148) is often used to describe God leading individuals (Abraham’s servant in Genesis 24) and the multitudes in the wilderness (Exodus 13 & 15; Nehemiah 9). It is also used often in Psalms as the psalmist asks for God to lead him
It is not only God who is described as leading, as Seaman (1976) points out. The same word, נָּהַּ, is used to describe Moses leading the people in the wilderness (Exodus 32:34), when David took his parents to stay with the king of Moab (1 Samuel 22:4) and when Solomon gathered his chariots (1 Kings 10:26). Nor is the term consistently used to describe positive or good leadership, such as when Balaam describes being brought up by Balak (Numbers 23:4) or when Isaiah prophesied about the Israelites being led away by the king of Assyria (Isaiah 20:4). In each of these examples, there is the concept of leadership and followership.

There are several other examples of leadership in the Old Testament, as described by Harmeling (2013), but a few are presented here. Abraham led his family out of his father’s country into Canaan (Genesis 12); Joseph was placed in the second-highest position of leadership in Egypt (Genesis 41:40); God charged Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt (Exodus 3:10-11), and the examples in Judges through Kings are too many to mention.

The New Testament also has its share of leadership examples, good and otherwise, with Jesus being perhaps the most cited example of good leadership. His washing of the disciples’ feet is arguably the epitome of servant leadership. McRae (2020) provides an excellent exposition of Barnabas as an example of servant leadership, citing several examples, but he still identifies Jesus as the servant leadership paradigm.

Several other examples of leadership are portrayed in the New Testament, from Paul as an example of servant leadership (Myung, 2015), transformational leadership (Chen, 2020), and shared leadership (Atherton, 2014) to Peter as an example of transformational leadership (Bonnet, 2020). Others have explored leadership in the New Testament from other perspectives and applications. For instance, Ntow (1999) proposed a model for leadership development in

(Psalms 5, 23, 27, 31, 60, 61, 67, 73, 77, 78, 107, 108, 139 & 143).
church planting, and Jones (2019) explored leadership in the New Testament to raise elders. However, since “for Christians, Jesus lies at the center of understanding leadership in the Bible” (McRae, 2020, p. 2), this study focused on Jesus as the example of three types of leadership—servant, transformational, and shared—each to be briefly explored below from a theological perspective. The theoretical aspects of each of the three leadership theories will be explored later in this chapter.

**Servant Leadership**

In John’s account of the Last Supper, Jesus is recorded as washing the disciples’ feet. Piecing together the other versions of that event as well as other occasions when the disciples were arguing about who among them is greatest (Matthew 18:1-4; Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48; Luke 22:24-27), it is reasonable to conclude that Jesus was demonstrating for the disciples his expectation of leadership in the Kingdom (Henry, 2018b).

When his disciples were looking to be leaders in his kingdom (see Matthew 20:20-28 and Mark 10:35-45), Jesus repeatedly stated that whoever wants to be the greatest in the Kingdom must be the servant of all (Matthew 20:26, Mark 9:35, and Mark 10:43). In referring to these passages (Matthew 20 and Mark 10), Henry (2018b) describes the disciples’ discussion as “a great degree of ignorance that they still expected a temporal kingdom with worldly pomp and power, when Christ had so often told them of sufferings and self-denial” (p. 233). In other words, his disciples were looking for leadership and authority, and Jesus was offering a life of followership and serving. Jesus’ example of leadership to his disciples, and by extension to those who are called by his name, is servant leadership (Atkinson, 2014; Clemons, 2018; Howell, 2003; Jones, 2013; McRae, 2020).
Several people have written about servant leadership from various perspectives in secular and sacred environments. Clemons (2018) describes servant leadership as embodying “biblical leadership where the style of Jesus involves being among those who serve” (p. 15). Atkinson (2014) describes it as “freeing for the people who are led” (p. 138) and ties it to the concept of *kenosis* or emptying oneself (Chen, 2020). Northouse (2016) identifies at least seven separate writers who identify varying characteristics of servant leadership. Spears (2018), building off Greenleaf’s (2002) theory, identifies ten characteristics, while other authors identify as few as five (Northouse, 2016, pp. 227-230). Regardless of the number of characteristics or attributes one chooses, Jesus is the most oft-cited example of servant leadership by Christian writers.

The ten characteristics Spears (2018) identifies are listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community. In McRae’s (2020) analysis of Barnabas as a servant leader, he uses Spears’ (2018) ten characteristics of servant leadership. Although his work is focused on Barnabas, McRae (2020) uses Jesus as the model for servant leadership and then provides extensive scriptural evidence to back up his claim.

As a listener, Jesus was unmatched. From an early age, he was “sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions” (Luke 2:46). He listened to those who wanted healing (Matthew 15:22; Luke 5:12-13; 7:1-9; Luke 17:11-19), those who were against him and disagreed with him (Matthew 15:1-2; Luke 5:30-35; 6:1-5), and even those who asked inappropriate questions (Mark 10:35-40; Luke 9:54-55). By listening at these times, sometimes responding, and sometimes referring questions back, McRae (2020) says that “Jesus’ willingness to listen to all people revealed his use of the characteristic of servant leadership” (p. 10).
In describing the characteristic of healing, McRae (2020) uses several passages from Luke (4:33-37; 4:38-41; 5:12-16; 5:17-26; 5:30-32; 6:6-11; 7:2-10; 7:11-17; 8:26-39; 8:40-56; 11:14; 13:10-13; 14:1-6; 17:11-19; 18:35-43; 22:50-51), some of which have been identified above in the characteristic of listening. While it is unlikely that Greenleaf (2002) intended the servant leadership characteristic of healing to describe how Jesus healed people, he did say that healing means “to make whole” (Greenleaf, 2002, p. 50). He describes it as an ongoing process that one never attains but is always sought. He argues that it has a dual purpose when a leader seeks to heal. One is to help others become whole while at the same time it is done for one’s healing (p. 50). Thus, while not explicitly describing how Jesus healed people, Greenleaf’s (2002) writings are consistent with that characteristic of Jesus. However, a distinct difference between Greenleaf’s (2002) description and Jesus is that Jesus fully attained healing for the entirety of the body of Christ (Isaiah 53) while taking upon himself the sins of the world and the punishment that came along with it, a far cry from helping for one’s healing.

McRae (2020) uses the same construct as he outlines the remaining characteristics of servant leadership, providing extensive scriptural evidence that Jesus epitomizes servant leadership. Jesus came to serve and not to be served, and he came to glorify God. Atkinson (2014) puts it best when he says, “truly Christian servant-leadership glorifies God and furthers humanity’s redemption” (p. 150). For instance, in describing how Jesus applied conceptualization, McRae (2020) explains that “for Jesus, conceptualization came through going off alone to seek God in prayer (Luke 5:16; 6:12-13; 9:18; 9:28; 11:1; 22:39-46) (McRae, 2020, p. 13). Neufeld (2009) takes a similar approach and includes several other non-biblical references to make his point.
However, Jesus did not only embody servant leadership. He is also a model for several leadership styles (Youssef, 2013). As several authors attest, he was a servant leader and a transformational leader (Bonnet, 2020; Chen, 2020; Kull, 2003; Morse, 1996). Jesus was the model for servant leadership and is also a model for transformational leadership.

**Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership shares several characteristics with servant leadership. Bunkowske (2019) explains that the “closest equivalent to Christian transformational leadership is servant leadership” (p. 46). Scarborough (2010) states that “Christian transformational leadership incorporates several Christian leadership theories [and]...bears key characteristics of secular transformational leadership” (pp 58, 60). Stone (2008) believes that “transformational leadership is not a set of strategies or tools to be taught, [rather] it is to engage the process of deep change in oneself and thereby to invite others to do the same” (p. 12). Jesus’ invitation to follow him is an invitation to be profoundly changed or transformed, as Paul points out in his letters to the Romans and Corinthians.

Scarborough (2010) identifies thirteen authors with unique definitions of Christian transformational leadership, with all the definitions emphasizing influence or a synonym (pp. 67-68). From those sources, he constructs a definition with seven characteristics. Those seven are Christian, influence, persuasiveness, strategy, shared goals, character, and vision (pp. 70-77), each briefly explored below. Based on those characteristics, he defines Christian transformational leadership:

**Christian Transformational Leadership** is leadership which declares a Biblical or Christian foundation or is specifically directed to the Church. It holds that a leader’s vision, character, persuasiveness, and ability to strategize guarantee that he or she will be influential (or transformational) to achieve shared goals. (Scarborough, 2010, pp. 77-78)
While Scarborough does not explicitly identify Jesus as the example of Christian transformational leadership, several authors he references do, each with multiple biblical references to support their position. Bunkowske (2019) takes a similar approach to Scarborough (2010), whom he quotes several times and uses the same definition as above. Despite the lack of explicit biblical references, Jesus fulfills the idea of transformational leadership. As Bunkowske (2019) explains, Jesus is described in the Bible as coming to transform his followers, which is the essence of transformational leadership (p. 46).

The seven characteristics of Christian transformational leadership identified above are slightly different from the four components of transformational leadership presented by Bass and Riggio (2006) (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation). However, they nevertheless provide a similar construct to Scarborough’s characteristics within which Jesus operated. For the remainder of this study, the terms Christian transformational leadership and transformational leadership will be used synonymously, but the focus of the research will be on transformational leadership as described in the theoretical section of this dissertation.

For instance, the Christian transformational leadership characteristic of persuasiveness is consistent with Bass and Riggio’s idealized influence component. They describe this component as when “leaders behave in ways that allow them to serve as role models for their followers. The leaders are admired, respected, and trusted” (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 6). Jesus was undoubtedly admired, respected, and trusted by his followers, and several places in scripture remind Christians that Jesus is the model to follow (1 Corinthians 11:1; Ephesians 5:1-2; Philippians 2:5; 3:17; and 1 Peter 2:21). Matthew Henry (2018c) agrees, saying that “ministers are likely to preach to the purpose when they can press their hearers to follow their example” (pp. 451-452).
The component of intellectual stimulation correlates well with the characteristics of strategy, shared goals, and vision. “Transformational leaders stimulate their followers’ efforts to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways…new ideas and creative problem solutions are solicited from followers” (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 7). Jesus stimulated his followers, and his detractors as well, to think about things differently. Five times in Matthew chapter 5, he started a sentence with “you have heard it said,” and challenged his listeners to think differently about the situations, expounding on the Law they knew and giving them a different perspective.

Throughout the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus appears to turn traditional teaching on its head. One commentary describes the language Jesus used in the Beatitudes as coming from the Old Testament to demonstrate how the new kingdom has its roots there (Jamieson et al., 1996) but with a unique perspective. What follows in the five “you have heard it said” statements is a refinement, not of the law, but its application. The scribes and Pharisees applied the letter of the law but missed the intent (Matthew 5:20; 23:1-12; Henry, 2018b), applying it with heartlessness and inconsistency (Jamieson et al., 1996).

Even though Jesus is not identified as the example of Christian transformational leadership by Scarborough (2010), several of the authors he references claim that Jesus used transformational leadership in his ministry (McKinley, 2016; Stetzer & Rainer, 2010, as cited in Bunkowske (2019, p. 2).

He is the founder of the Christian faith with unquestioned influence over his followers. His actions and speech are uniquely persuasive (Matthew 7:29; 8:5-13; Mark 1:22). Scripture is clear that Jesus’ life, death, burial, and resurrection were part of the Trinity’s strategy (John 17:24; 1 Peter 1:20; Revelation 13:8; Henry, 2018c). He was unequivocal with his disciples
about his goals, sharing them with his disciples (John 14:28). His character was above reproach (2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:22), and he had vision, as has already been made clear in servant leadership. Jesus came to transform his followers, which is the essence of transformational leadership (Bunkowske, 2019, p. 46).

In his relatively short earthly ministry, he not only served his followers intending to transform them, but he also shared much of his power and authority with them, exhibiting characteristics of the third leadership style that will be explored, shared leadership.

**Shared Leadership.**

There is a relative lack of research on shared leadership in a Christian environment compared to servant and transformational leadership. Rather than there being thousands of books, articles, theses, and dissertations on the subject, there are a few, or at the most tens. Much of the recent research on shared leadership uses Pearce and Conger’s (2003) seminal work entitled, *Shared Leadership: Reframing the Hows and Whys of Leadership* as a basis for the discussion.

Ellis (2020), who uses their work extensively, explains it is “only in the last twenty-five years [that shared leadership] has emerged as a distinct concept that has received much attention from practitioners or scholars” (p. 50). Atherton (2014) does much the same in his discussion, while Brown (2017) does not even refer to Pearce and Conger’s work. Another researcher (Ivan, 2013) discusses consensus leadership and describes it as a shared leadership approach (p. 31). Several others (Alexandre, 2012; Delgado, 2015; Lommen, 2018) use terms such as collaborative, integrative, or participatory conjoined with leadership to identify the overall concept of shared leadership, occasionally using shared leadership to describe the other terms.
Delgado (2015) discusses shared leadership as a business practice but uses *collaborative ministry* to describe how the church has practiced it for decades (p.33).

Davis (2014) also relies heavily on Pearce and Conger but asserts that the research on shared leadership has been extensive over the last 30 years (p. 15). However, he also includes research on distributed leadership, which he claims has similarities and differences with shared leadership. Davis (2014) also traces the antecedents of shared leadership from 1924 to the present. He includes names such as Mary Parker Follet, Abraham Zaleznik, Warren Bennis, Daniel Katz, and Robert L. Kahn (pp. 19-21) as theorists and practitioners of shared leadership.

In identifying the best practices of shared leadership in the marketplace, Davis (2014) explains that Jesus is an example that several Christians used as a model in his study. He further argues that “just as Jesus moved beyond the obvious understanding of the religious law of his day, participants of this study have established best practices [of shared leadership] that reflect their Christian faith and an understanding of secular best practices” (p. 97).

In describing how those included in his research perceived shared leadership, Ellis (2020) states, “almost every interviewee had deep-seated theological convictions about shared leadership” and many “modeled themselves after what they saw in Jesus, developing roles that corresponded to three offices of Christ—prophet, priest, and king” (pp. 269-270). For these participants, Jesus was a model of shared leadership. Ellis (2020) also does an exceptional job of grounding shared leadership in theology, including such arguments as the doctrine of the Trinity to emphasize that leadership was shared among the Godhead.

For this research, shared leadership is defined by applying Pearce and Conger’s (2003) definitions used by Atherton (2014), Davis (2014), and Ellis (2020). They all use some variation of the definition of shared leadership, which is “a dynamic, interactive influence process among
individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both” (Pearce & Conger, 2003, p. 1).

As has been stated, much of the research in these three leadership styles has been focused on non-Christian environments. Much of it has been focused on the marketplace. This study will examine the marketplace from a theological perspective, evaluating its place in scripture and what place, if any, it has in a Christian’s life today.

Theological Basis for Marketplace Leadership

Referring to one of the first scripture references in this study about the marketplace, in Luke 19, Jesus charged his disciples by parable to engage in business, occupy, trade, or invest until he returns (Luke 19:3; Henry, 2018b). Christians are also charged not to neglect meeting together (Hebrews 10:25), and the implication is that the meeting is in the church or synagogue (Jamieson et al., 1996). As the literature has shown, discipleship often happens within the confines of and is focused on the church. However, Jesus did not tell his disciples to go to the church and make disciples (Matthew 28:19), nor did he tell them to go to the ends of the earth to be witnesses solely to and in the church (Acts 1:8). The unsaved are not usually found in the church. They are found in the fields, mines, and marketplace, the places where John Wesley did much of his preaching (Luchetti, 2017), and where Christians can and should conduct business, trade, invest, and occupy.

Unfortunately, a brief look at news headlines past and present would provide scant evidence that Christians have occupied the marketplace, nor is the marketplace led exclusively or predominantly by Christians. Before moving too far, it is necessary to define the term marketplace. For this research, the marketplace is defined as “the location of people’s employment in non-religious institutions. This can be a courtroom, hospital, school, laboratory,
corporate office, factory, or any of the other possibilities” (Davis, 2014). It includes business, education, the government, sports, the media, and the arts. Unfortunately, for many Christians, the marketplace is somewhere from which to escape (Miller, 2009/2018).

It is not only the laity that seeks to avoid the marketplace. For many Christians in business, the sense is that most pastors and church leaders are either uncomfortable with or do not understand the business world or the marketplace in general (Boyd, 2005, p. 6). Silvoso (2002) provides a similar perspective on the lack of most pastors’ understanding of the secular marketplace. Perhaps because of their church leadership’s perceived discomfort with the secular marketplace, many Christians seemingly feel comfortable separating their lives on Sunday from the rest of their week (Forster & Oostenbrink, 2015; Glavaš, 2017; Wood, 2015). But the marketplace is not somewhere from which Christians should flee. Instead, many would argue that the marketplace is a calling.

Although others may disagree (agodman, 2020; Chew, n.d.; Cooper, 2011; Hicks, n.d.; Redekop, 1985; Sorenson, 2017), the call of Christians to the marketplace in modern times goes back as far as 1920 with Belden’s 1920 article entitled, *Christ’s Call to Business Men*. The same refrain can be heard from Belden (1920) as it is a century later in today’s research. Christians have, by and large, abdicated the marketplace and need to return.

As the research suggests, there has been a calling back to the marketplace for Christians. The non-academic Christian literature is replete with recent and not-so-recent examples of Christians in the marketplace. Bill Hybels (1982) wrote a book with that title, and Rich Marshall’s 2000 book, *God @ Work*, calls marketplace Christians a new breed of ministers (p. 1). Several other more recent books, such as Van Duzer’s (2010) *Why Business Matters to God,*

Bunkowske (2019), referenced above, explores Christian leadership for secular organizations. Beckwith (2016a/b) wrote two articles discussing the role of Christians in the marketplace in which she argues that “for the Christian business leader, the marketplace is a venue that is right for service” (2016a, p. 18). Scripture reinforces that idea if one steps back and views the entirety of the Bible from a marketplace perspective.

Johnson (2004) describes several characters in the Bible that were businessmen when God called them, several of whom remained in the marketplace while still serving God. Some were also in leadership positions (pp. 77-78). Abraham was a businessman with such extensive holdings that he had to separate from Lot (Genesis 13). Joseph was promoted to the second-highest leadership position in Egypt, second only to Pharoah, a decidedly secular (non-Jewish) leader (Genesis 41). Nehemiah was the cupbearer, a position of leadership and responsibility, to Artaxerxes, another secular king (Nehemiah 1 and 2). Daniel was made ruler over all of Babylon and its wise men (Daniel 2). David and Solomon were kings, positions of distinct leadership, but they were also worshippers who penned several Psalms and Proverbs.

Each of these men was in a leadership position in the marketplace and had tremendous influence over nations and people’s lives, some in nations that could easily be described as heathen. Despite the challenges and shortcomings of these men recorded in the Bible (Tenney, 1976b and 1976d), they continued their service to the Lord while still in leadership in the marketplace and are examples for Christian leaders today.

Before Jesus was in ministry, he was a carpenter for about 17 years and likely part-owner of the family business (Tenney, 1976a). All his disciples were in the marketplace, and some such
as Peter were in leadership as business owners before they were called to follow him. Paul was a
tentmaker for at least a time (Acts 18), and several of the people brought into the church were
businesspeople. Lydia was a seller of purple (Acts 16), Peter stayed with Simon a tanner (Acts
10) when he received the command to go to the gentiles, and Luke was a physician (Colossians
4). Jesus did not speak harshly about those in the marketplace, nor did he speak harshly about
leadership.

Many of the individuals identified above were in leadership, either as business owners or,
like Matthew, responsible for collecting taxes. The Romans gave him authority to collect taxes;
thus, he was arguably a business leader who influenced people’s lives and livelihoods. Jesus
never condemned those in leadership, except when they used their leadership positions to enrich
themselves rather than serve others.

The exchange between Jesus in Matthew 20, when the sons of Zebedee wanted to have
seats of honor (or authority), highlights how Jesus addressed those who exercised leadership
improperly. He emphasized that the disciples should not lord over others as the gentiles do. The
phrase *lord over* is translated from the Greek word *katakyrieuō* (Strong’s, G2634), which has a
negative connotation of subjugation (Strong’s, n.d.). Jesus did not want his disciples to lead as the
gentiles did. He wanted them to serve those whom they led. As stated earlier, if they wanted to
be great, they should serve.

Another example of Jesus excoriating leadership gone wrong is how severely he
chastised the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Jesus told all who would listen to “do and observe
whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice” (Matthew
23:3). However, when approached by a Roman Centurion, one who was in a position of secular
leadership and one who had the authority to subjugate the Jews, Jesus exclaimed, “I tell you, not
even in Israel have I found such faith” (Luke 7:9). If Jesus were against leadership in the marketplace generally, he had sufficient opportunity to address the issue, yet he did not.

Christians are to occupy the marketplace until Jesus returns. Christians are further called to be salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16) and, in the world, but not of it (John 15:19). Christians cannot be salt and light in the marketplace if they are not present, and for some, they could be salt and light in leadership. If, as Henry Blackaby notes, “God is moving in a powerful way in the marketplace” (2001), then Christians need to engage.

Christians are to make disciples of all nations, they are to occupy until he comes, and the marketplace is a ripe field waiting for the harvesters. The church could and should be using discipleship to train marketplace leaders to be effective as both Christians and leaders. “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-12). The work of the ministry is not solely in the church (Beals, 2014; Boyd, 2005; Dalrymple, 2015; Johnson, 2004). If the church is not equipping the saints for leadership positions in the marketplace, it could be losing a valuable opportunity for evangelism and potentially millions of souls who would not otherwise be exposed to the Gospel.

As should be evident, much has been written from a Christian perspective about each of the topics identified above. Unfortunately, much of the research has been somewhat isolated in its approach, focusing on a single aspect (i.e., Brewer, 2020; Chai, 2015; Erskine, 2004 for discipleship; Atherton, 2014; Harmeling, 2013; Jones, 2019 for leadership), or at most, a combination of two of the three ideas of leadership, discipleship, and the marketplace (i.e., Bentley, 2014; Bunkowske, 2019; Davis, 2014). When combining all three into a single study, the literature is lacking.
Each of the ideas addressed above (discipleship, leadership, and the marketplace) have strong foundations in scripture. As has been demonstrated, much has been written about discipleship and leadership from a Christian perspective. Although the marketplace has not been extensively addressed in the academic arena from a Christian point of view, there is still sufficient evidence that the marketplace is a valid area for research for Christian researchers.

The following section will focus on the theoretical aspect of each of the ideas presented above.

**Theoretical Framework for the Study**

The theoretical basis for this study is an adaptation of Northouse’s review of several leadership theories and styles, Greenleaf’s (2002) servant leadership, Bass and Riggio’s (2006) transformational leadership, and shared leadership (Northouse, 2016). It further builds on elements of Clemons’ (2018), McRae’s (2020), and Neufeld’s (2009) work on servant leadership; Bunkowske’s (2019), Kull’s (2009), McManus’ (2019), Schell’s (2010), and Stone’s (2008) studies on transformational leadership, and Alarifi’s (2020), Davis’ (2014), Ellis’ (2020), and Mendez’ (2009) research into shared leadership.

Historically, much of the research for the three theories identified above has focused on secular organizations (Bunkowske 2019), but the church and academics have increasingly identified these topics as of interest to the church and ministry leadership. Each of the authors has a slightly different approach, but none integrates the three leadership styles in their studies, and even when two subjects intersect, those studies tend to be qualitative rather than quantitative. This study conducted a quantitative analysis to correlate these leadership theories with discipleship.
Leadership and Leadership Theory

Leadership is difficult to define (de la Rey, 2005; Cox et al., 2010), with over 4,000 documented definitions of leadership (Azad et al., 2017). Northouse (2016) outlines the evolution of leadership study and definitions beginning in 1900 and progressing to the 21st century (pp. 2-4). Max De Pree (2004) calls leadership an art, writing a book with that title, and Bennis (1994) says it is like art, “hard to define, but you know it when you see it” (p.1). It is also challenging to identify when the study of leadership actually began.

Yammarino (2013) states that “for thousands of years, there was no systematic scholarly, scientific leadership research” (p. 149) on leadership. Arenas et al. (2018) concur, stating that “leadership is a topic that has evolved over the course of humanity” (p. 1). Others (Northouse, 2016) focus on specific leadership theories, while Day & Antonakis (2011) and Early (n.d.) argue that the study of leadership began around the turn of the 20th century. This research did not attempt to create a new definition of leadership, discuss all the leadership theories, or determine when the formal study of leadership began. Instead, after briefly identifying some of the more prominent leadership theories, it explores three in detail: Servant leadership, transformational leadership, and shared leadership.

Leadership Theories and Approaches

It is occasionally difficult to differentiate between an approach to leadership study, a theory of leadership, and leadership styles, as many authors use the terms interchangeably. Northouse (2016), Johns and Moser (1989), and Early (n.d.) identify several approaches to and theories of leadership study, but all tend to agree that they fall into one of several categories. Northouse (2016) identifies at least five approaches to leadership study entitled the trait, skills, behavioral, situational, and psychodynamic approaches. He then outlines no fewer than seven
theories (path-goal, leader-member exchange, transformational, authentic, servant, adaptive, and team), many of which are not labeled as such, and most with other theories or styles embedded within them.

Of particular interest to this study, shared leadership is explained within the context of team leadership (Northouse, 2016). Although Johns and Moser (1989) do not identify the skills approach, they identify many of the same methods. As specified above, both authors intersperse approaches to leadership study with the concept of leadership theories, with Johns and Moser (1989) and Bunkowske (2019) identifying trait as a theory instead of an approach. Early (n.d.) and Bunkowske (2019) explicitly identify the Great Man theory as a distinct theory that precedes all others, but the other authors do not.

The above is not intended to critique the literature but highlight the vast leadership literature and language landscape. One would be challenged to find a definitive definition, theory, style, or leadership approach. As Johns and Moser (1989) explain, the “plethora of leadership definitions creates a research dilemma for any investigator” (p. 116). This researcher would add the lack of a single coherent leadership theory or approach to that dilemma. Despite the lack, the remainder of the research explores three specific leadership theories more deeply.

**Servant leadership.** As Greenleaf (2002) describes in his book entitled *Servant Leadership*, for which the theory is named, the concept of servant leadership was an outgrowth of several experiences in his life and reading a book. In the book he read, the central character was someone everyone believed was an expedition's servant. However, upon the servant’s disappearance, “the group falls into disarray, and the journey is abandoned” (Greenleaf, 2002, p. 21). The reader finds that the central character, the servant, was the leader all along. Greenleaf
interpreted the book as saying that “the great leader is seen as a servant first” (p. 22, emphasis in original).

As Greenleaf (2002) later points out as a pseudo definition, “the servant-leader is servant first…it begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first” (p. 27, emphasis in original). While servant leadership “has been of interest to leadership scholars for more than 40 years…little empirical research on servant leadership has appeared in established peer-reviewed journals” (Northouse, 2016, p. 225). However, this has changed in recent years. A ProQuest search with servant leadership in the title resulted in 250 doctoral dissertations in the last five years alone and several hundred peer-reviewed articles from other database searches, some of which inform this study.

**Characteristics of servant leadership.** Greenleaf (2002) did not explicitly outline characteristics or attributes of servant leadership, but he identifies several items in the first chapter of his book that Spears (2018) later identifies as the ten characteristics. Others (Focht, 2011; Wilkes, 1998; Witt, 2018) identify varying characteristics between seven and twelve. Focht (2011) limited his study “to only the characteristics that have been substantively discussed in the literature” (p. 19), yet, he still identified sixty-four characteristics, eventually only studying twelve of those sixty-four. This research followed McRae’s (2020) example and limited the brief exploration to Spears’ (2018) ten characteristics as outlined in Northouse (2016), although it relied extensively on Greenleaf’s (2002) book for the details. Those ten characteristics as identified above are: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community (Spears, 2018, p.15). Each will be briefly explored below.
**Listening.** Greenleaf (2002) describes an executive who, upon being assigned to a challenging position, stopped receiving input from outside sources for three months, except for those with whom he met in the course of his work (p. 30). The result was that the individual could resolve the issues he faced satisfactorily. Greenleaf (2002) explains that he believes “only a true natural servant automatically responds to any problem by listening first” (p. 31). He further suggests that it is difficult for a non-servant to become a servant, and one can only do so “through a long, arduous discipline of learning to listen” (p. 31).

**Empathy.** Greenleaf (2002) describes this characteristic using two words: acceptance and empathy. Spears (2018) uses the single word empathy and writes that empathy is when one “strive[s] to understand and empathize with others” and “assume the good intentions of others and do not reject them as people” (p. 15). Greenleaf (2002) explains it using a Robert Frost poem and says that “the interest in and affection for one’s followers that a leader has—and it is a mark of true greatness when it is genuine—is clearly something that the followers ‘haven’t to deserve’” (p. 34). In other words, acceptance and empathy are not commodities for the follower to earn. Instead, they are given freely and without reservation, and it is validating for the follower, making them feel unique (Northouse, 2016).

**Healing.** Healing is described by Greenleaf (2002), Spears (2018), and Northouse (2016) in similar ways. It means making something whole, whether that is oneself or others. While Spears (2018) described it as “recogniz[ing] the opportunity to help make others whole” (p.15), Greenleaf might suggest it is as much about the leader as it is about the follower, and perhaps more so, as described earlier in the theological section.

**Foresight.** Foresight is the central ethic of leadership, according to Greenleaf (2002). Unlike how others might view foresight, he describes it as much about the now as it is about the
future (p. 38). To see the future, one must understand the present and the past (Northouse, 2016). Spears (2018) describes it only slightly differently, suggesting that it is the ability to “foresee the likely outcome of a situation…understand the lessons of the past…see the realities of the present…and [foresee] the likely consequence of a future decision” (p.17).

On this ability to be prescient, Greenleaf (2002) is demanding. Since foresight is “a wholly rational process” which includes constant evaluation of several variables, “comparing them with a series of projections made in the past and…projecting them into the future…the failure (or refusal) of a leader to foresee may be viewed as an ethical failure” (Greenleaf, 2002, p. 39, emphasis in original).

**Awareness.** For Greenleaf (2002), the foresight mentioned above feeds into awareness, which opens “wide the doors of perception so as to enable one to get more of what is available of sensory experience…than people usually take in” (p. 40). “When one is aware, there is more than the usual alertness, more intense contact with the immediate situation, and more is stored away in the unconscious” (p. 41). But it is more than a leader’s being conscious of their surroundings. It is the ability to step outside of oneself “in the context of one’s own experiences, amid the ever-present dangers, threats, and alarms” (p. 41). Northouse (2016) describes leaders with awareness as being able to “view themselves and their own perspectives in the greater context of the situation” (p. 228). Spears (2018) explains it as having “the ability to understand issues involving ethics, power, and values…[viewing] most situations from an integrated or holistic position” (p.16).

**Persuasion.** Persuasion can have significant negative connotations, but it should not be thought of in that light. Bilezikian (2007) says that “a distinctive mark of Christian leadership is that it is not authority-driven. It relies on instruction, exhortation, and persuasion” [emphasis
added] to fulfill its mandate” (p. 6). Northouse (2016) explains that persuasion is “clear and persistent communication that convinces others to change…as opposed to coercion which utilizes positional authority” (p. 228). In describing how John Woolman “almost singlehandedly rid the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) of slaves” (Greenleaf, 2002, p. 43) describes a continuous, gentle nudging of slaveholders by persistently pressing the argument for thirty years.

**Conceptualization.** Whereas foresight is the central leadership ethic, conceptualization is the prime leadership talent, according to Greenleaf (2002). Some may view this characteristic as being visionary (Northouse, 2016) or being able to dream big dreams (Spears, 2018). Greenleaf (2002) described it by telling of the conceptual leadership of Nikolai Grundtvig, who imparted his vision of Folk high schools to the people of Denmark, transforming their society against all odds. Not only was he a visionary who dreamt big dreams, but he was also able to impart his vision and dream to those who followed him.

**Stewardship.** Greenleaf does not explicitly identify stewardship as a servant leadership characteristic, but he writes an entire chapter on how institutions can demonstrate servant leadership. Specifically, he argues that “if a better society is to be built…one that provides greater opportunity for its people, then the most open course is to *raise both the capacity to serve and the very performance as servant* of existing major institutions” (p. 62, emphasis in original). In essence, he argues that organizations can and should act as stewards of society by exemplifying servant leadership. Similarly, Spears (2018) explains stewardship as leaders “utilize[ing] their position for the greater good of society…and serving the needs of others” (p. 17). Northouse (2016) describes it as leaders “carefully manag[ing] the people and organization…and holding the organization in trust for the greater good of society” (p. 228). For Greenleaf (2002), servant leadership was as important for the institution as for individuals.
Commitment to the growth of people. Northouse (2016) and Spears (2018) argue that Greenleaf believed that each individual was a unique person and should be treated with intrinsic value “beyond his or her tangible contributions to the organization (Northouse, 2016, p. 228). Liden et al. (2015) articulate it as prioritizing the followers’ full potential. Spears (2018) concurs, saying that leaders committed to people’s growth are “deeply committed to the growth of each individual” (p. 17).

Building community. Several researchers and authors have identified the value of community in ensuring individuals’ growth (Samra, 2006), whether in the educational environment (Lowe & Lowe, 2018) or the church (Bilezikian, 2007; Chester & Timmis, 2008). Greenleaf (2002) holds similar beliefs and expects the servant leader to be a community builder rather than one who tears it down. “Community allows followers to identify with something greater than themselves that they value” (Northouse, 2016, p. 229). Greenleaf (2002) identifies several institutions (orphanages, prisons, and schools) contributing to the loss of community but later argues that all is not lost. “All that is needed to rebuild community as a viable life form for large numbers of people is for enough servant-leaders to show the way…demonstrating his or her own unlimited liability”—or love as he states elsewhere —"for a quite specific community-related group” (Greenleaf, 2002, p. 53). In other words, if servant leaders show love for their followers, they can rebuild community.

A leader who aspires to servant leadership embarks on a challenging journey. Some say that combining the terms servant and leadership creates a paradox (Northouse, 2016). Greenleaf (2002) describes just one aspect, learning to listen, as an arduous journey. However, servant leadership is not alone in its call to leaders to give of themselves for their followers. Servant
leadership’s closest leadership corollary is transformational leadership, which calls on leaders to focus on their followers and themselves.

**Transformational leadership.** Transformational leadership has been the focus of much leadership research since the early 1980s (Northouse, 2016). Both “servant leadership and transformational leadership are independently supported by over 30 years of theory and empirical research” (Scuderi, 2011, p. v). In their review of ten years of *Leadership Quarterly*, Lowe and Gardner (2000) found that of the almost 200 articles written during the previous decade, more than a third were about what they termed the neo-charismatic approach, which includes transformational and charismatic leadership. While the two are different, according to Northouse (2016), they are described in ways that make them almost synonymous with each other (p. 164). However, since charismatic leadership is not the focus of this research, it explored transformational leadership rather than charismatic leadership for the remainder of the study.

Transformational leadership is a “process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower” (Northouse, 2016, p. 162). Some authors (Kull, 2003; Northouse, 2016; Podsakoff et al., 1990) contrast the transformational approach with the transactional approach whose leaders “adopt a political style in seeking to accomplish incremental change through bargaining and compromise (Kull, 2003).

While much research has been done on transformational leadership with several theorists building upon its foundation, “the most widely accepted and utilized form of transformational leadership has four components, or disciplines (Stone, 2008): idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation” (Bunkowske, 2019) as
identified earlier. These four components will be later broken into five areas, also known as the 5 Is.

**Idealized influence.** Helping to fuel the conjoining of charismatic and transformational leadership is the first factor. It is often “called charisma, or idealized influence [and] is the emotional component of leadership” (Northouse, 2016, p. 167). This factor is further subdivided into two components: Idealized Influence Attributes (IIA) and Idealized Influence Behaviors (IIB). The first is the attributional component, which “refers to attributions of leaders that followers make based on follower perceptions of the leader” (Northouse, 2016; Bunkowske, 2019). The behavioral component “refers to leader behaviors that followers observe (Northouse, 2016; Avolio et al., 1999). Northouse (2016) combines these two components and, utilizing the charisma language described above, explains that the idealized influence factor describes people “who make others want to follow the vision they put forward” (p. 168).

**Inspirational motivation.** The second factor of transformational leadership is called inspiration or inspirational motivation (IM). This factor facilitates a feeling of optimism and helps motivate followers to commit to the shared organizational vision (Northouse, 2016; McManus, 2019). Arenas et al. (2018) use the terms motivating, inspiring, and articulating a vision as characteristic of this factor. Northouse (2016) discusses the use of “symbols and emotional appeals to achieve more than they would in their own self-interest” (p. 169). Kouzes and Posner (2017) might describe it as inculcating a common set of values or corporate culture. In their studies, they found that “shared values foster heightened levels of motivation and intense feelings of personal effectiveness” (pp. 62-63). When individual, group and organizational goals (or vision) coalesce, commitment, enthusiasm and drive are intensified (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).
**Intellectual stimulation.** A transformational leader stimulates followers to be creative and innovative, to think outside the box (Northouse, 2016; Arenas et al., 2018) without the fear of failure (McManus, 2019). The idea of intellectual stimulation (IS) fuels much of the Agile or DevOps mindset of learning from failure fast (Kipreos, 2019; Kuiper, 2019; Mayner, 2017). Transformational leaders can make risk safe as they “turn experiments into learning opportunities” (Kouzes & Posner, 2017, p. 171) for their followers, themselves, and the organization.

Further, leaders employing IS inspire members to become more creative by questioning assumptions and reframing problems while approaching old situations or problems with new methodologies. Followers are encouraged to try new approaches; they are not criticized for taking risks or disagreeing with leadership. Encouraging this type of stimulation coupled with leadership support, is not only a powerful transformational tool but also leads to unexpected innovations. (Arenas et al., 2018, p. 30)

**Individualized consideration.** A transformational leader who exemplifies the individualized consideration (IC) factor acts as a coach, advisor, and mentor (Northouse, 2016; Arenas et al., 2018; Bunkowske, 2019; McManus, 2019). These leaders provide a supportive climate, paying attention to their followers and not allowing distractions to interfere with that attention (Arenas et al., 2018; Northouse, 2016;). The challenge for many leaders is that “the average person is capable of thinking five times faster than the rate at which most of us can speak. This difference creates what is referred to as a ‘physiological barrier’ to active listening” (Arenas et al., 2018, p. 34). Active listening is increasingly challenging in an era of decreasing attention spans and multiple distractions like ubiquitous cell phones and other personal electronic devices.

As attested to earlier, there are several similarities between transformational leadership and servant leadership (Northouse, 2016). Idealized influence correlates well with the servant leadership characteristic of persuasion. Conceptualization and inspirational motivation share the
idea of the leader’s ability to inspire commitment through conceptualizing and communicating a
shared vision. The trust engendered by intellectual stimulation conveys elements of commitment,
community, and healing from the servant leadership list of characteristics. Finally, the focus on
the individual and active listening harkens back to the servant leadership characteristics of
listening, empathy, and stewardship. However, there are differences, as well.

In transformational leadership, while the leader spends much of his or her time focused
on the followers, the real focus is on the leader who “moves followers to exceptional things”
(Northouse, 2016, p. 179). In essence, transformational leadership is about the leader. On the
other hand, servant leadership is about serving first (Greenleaf, 2002). However, both leadership
styles also have characteristics similar to the final leadership style we will explore, namely
shared leadership.

Shared leadership. Whereas much has been written about transformational and servant
leadership over the past thirty to forty years, comparatively little research has been done on
shared leadership, distributed leadership, or team leadership. In a recent search on shared
leadership in the ProQuest database (ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, n.d.), less than
140 dissertations have been written from 1960 to the present, with more than half of those
produced in the last ten years. Searching for distributed leadership yielded similar results and
temporal dispersion with fewer than 150 items returned. Team leadership had fewer results (58),
with fewer than half completed in the last ten years. Although the numbers represent a significant
body of work, they do not compare to the writings on servant and shared leadership. Even when
adding similar terms such as collaborative, consensus, participative, and integrative, there is still
a relative dearth of research compared to servant and transformational leadership. Only after the
publication of Pearce & Conger’s Shared Leadership in 2003 was there significant research on
shared leadership (Ellis, 2020, p. 59), with 115 dissertations since 2004 (ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, n.d.).

As was previously mentioned, others have researched the other terms such as consensus (Ivan, 2013), collaborative, integrative, and participatory leadership (Alexandre, 2012; Delgado, 2015; Lommen, 2018) to describe shared leadership. However, they collectively still represent only slightly over 100 dissertations since 1967 (ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, n.d.).

Shared, distributed, and team leadership styles have similar characteristics (Davis, 2014) and are used similarly in the research (Atherton, 2017; Brown, 2017; Davis, 2014; Ellis, 2020). Northouse (2016) combines shared and distributed leadership in the same three short paragraphs embedded in an extensive section on team leadership (p. 365). Despite the similarities, there is sufficient research on shared leadership and its elements to separate it as a distinct research area and a distinctive characteristic of Christian leadership (Ellis, 2020).

This study continues to use Pearce and Conger’s (2003) definition of shared leadership as defined earlier. It is re-presented here for consistency. Shared leadership is “a dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both” (Pearce & Conger, 2003, p. 1). Shared leadership does involve risk, and it takes courage for those who are not in formal leadership positions (Northouse, 2016). While he could not have foreseen the COVID-19 pandemic and its concurrent rise in virtual or telework, Northouse (2016) mentioned that shared leadership is more important for virtual teams, making them more effective, especially when the task is complex (p. 365).
Outcomes of Shared Leadership. In their seminal work on shared leadership, Pearce and Conger (2003) identified four outcomes of shared leadership. They are group or team behavior, attitudes, cognition, and performance.

“Davis (2014) points out that “research related to team behaviors includes the concepts of empowerment and vertical leadership support” (p. 25). Shared leadership and vertical leadership may seem at odds with each other, and some research suggests so. “Though traditional leadership theories employ hierarchical influence, shared leadership distinguishes itself from other forms of leadership in that it utilizes upward, downward, and lateral influences to accomplish its objectives” (Atherton, 2014, p. 20). In much the same way, Duguay (2020) explained that “shared leadership challenges traditional views of leadership that rely heavily on a leader-centric approach” (p. 83). She then countered with the comment that “scholars have emphasized that both structures of team leadership [empowerment and vertical leadership support] are important and act in supplementary ways” (p. 83).

At least one goal of shared leadership is to improve team or group performance and interaction, and since “shared leadership’s main focus is the group as a whole as opposed to focusing on the individual within the group, [it] causes greater interaction among members of the team” (Brown, 2017, pp. 24-25). The more significant interaction also fuels the sense of empowerment which “allows team members to feel the freedom to act on decision-making opportunities without seeking permission of the leader” (Davis, 2014, p. 26).

Not only does shared leadership influence group behavior, but it also affects individual attitudes, which then, in turn, affects behaviors. Davis (2014) identifies two attitudes resulting from implementing shared leadership. He cites a 2002 study of a nursing program where the designers “found that shared leadership techniques implemented by the nurse residency program
not only reduced absenteeism and increased retention of nurses but also contributed to nursing staff/team effectiveness” (p. 31). In that study, the authors identified seven lessons they learned throughout the six-month process, including modeling relationship building, encouraging risk-taking, and creating a vision (Williams et al., 2002, as cited in Davis, 2014).

These lessons are reminiscent of servant and transformational leadership characteristics, where both elaborate on similar concepts of relationship building and creating a vision. After applying shared leadership, Williams and her team identified a significant reduction in turnover and a corresponding improvement in attitudes.

Cognition describes how teams come to know what they know (Davis, 2014) or how they have a shared understanding of the processes by which they need to act (Ellis, 2020). Additionally, cognition implies that the team generally agrees on “how they will work together, handle conflict, pursue goals, and delegate responsibilities” (Ellis, 2020, p. 75). Duguay (2020) suggests four cognitive drivers play a crucial role in the development of shared team leadership [enabling] team members to recognize when leadership roles need to change” (p. 122). In essence, cognition enables team members to understand the task, and each other’s roles and responsibilities, enabling leadership to be shared seamlessly and fluidly among the team (Atherton, 2014). Perhaps, for this reason, Northouse (2016) suggests that some of the internal relational leadership actions which are part of shared leadership are coaching team members in interpersonal skills, encouraging collaboration and compromise, and managing conflict (p. 378).

The final outcome of shared leadership is team performance. As the other outcomes build upon each other, it would seem logical that team performance would increase with shared leadership implementation. Davis (2014) found that shared leadership improves several elements of team performance, including effectiveness, diversity, and coordination.
Citing a 1999 article by Taggar, Hackett, and Saha, Davis (2014) pointed out that the team was more effective when the entire team was exercising leadership. However, team effectiveness is diminished even with an effective team leader when the team or even one team member lowers its leadership engagement (p. 38). Duguay (2020) identifies a similar effect on athletic teams. Citing several researchers, she suggests that while a strong coach can help a team be successful, strong team leadership enhances that success far more than a strong coach alone or when a single person steps into the leadership role. Thus, while strong leadership can improve performance, shared leadership can improve it more than a single team leader.

There is evidence that there are areas of overlap in exploring these three leadership styles, as identified above. Not only do servant leadership and transformational share similar factors, but elements of shared leadership outcomes can also be found in the ten characteristics of servant leadership and the four factors of transformational leadership. However, there are certainly differences.

Servant leadership focuses on serving the follower, transformational leadership focuses on the leader, and shared leadership focuses on the team or group. However, whether servant, transformational, or shared, leadership is about accomplishing a goal (Northouse, 2016). Each of the styles, theories, or practices has similar goals but goes about it differently. This study did not attempt to determine which of the three is the most appropriate for Christians, but the literature provides sufficient evidence that Christians can appropriately apply each style, whether in the ministry or the marketplace.

**Related Literature**

Much is left unexplored despite the breadth of the topics briefly covered above. This portion of the literature review will briefly touch on the subjects directly relevant to this research
topic. Specifically, much of the vernacular related to discipleship uses the terms spiritual formation, mentoring, and coaching, and this section will explore those subjects and the associated literature. For this research, the term spiritual formation included the terms Christian formation and Christian spiritual formation, which in the literature describe the same overall transformational goal of the Christian life (i.e., Douglass, 2019; Flesoras, 2009; Freeks, 2017; McRay et al., 2018). Additionally, the topic of Christian leadership is broad, so this section will briefly discuss some of the other aspects of Christian leadership previously left untouched. Finally, since Christians have been in the marketplace for more than two millennia, much has been written about, and many Christian organizations are involved in that sphere. This section will discuss some of the more prevalent writings not explored above and identify a few Christian organizations engaged in the marketplace.

**Spiritual Formation**

It is difficult to determine precisely when the term discipleship became less prevalent and spiritual formation, and others became more so. Wilhoit (2008) suggests that spiritual formation is *the* task of the church, is not optional, and is at the heart of the church’s purpose for existence (p. 15, emphasis in original). At least in part, the terminology change may result from the controversy of the shepherding movement, which was also known as the discipleship movement. “While initially a distinction was made between discipleship (a more intense and focused relationship) and shepherding care (a less intense nurturing relationship), in practice, the distinction was blurred with both discipling and shepherding being nearly synonymous” (Moore, 1999, p. 117). The shepherding movement was eventually dissolved in 1986, with charismatic leaders acknowledging they went too far with the movement (Moore, 1999; Religious News Service, 1990).
Others have a slightly different perspective on the terms, contributing to confusion and blurring the distinctions. In response to a question in an interview for *Christianity Today* with Richard Foster and Dallas Willard, two key men in the Renovare (to renew or restore) movement, Willard believed that because the term discipleship had lost its meaning, many stopped using it (Tennant, 2005, p. 42). He goes on further to say:

> In our country, on the theological right, discipleship came to mean training people to win souls. And on the left, it came to mean social action—protesting, serving soup lines, doing social deeds. Both of them left out character formation. (Tennant, 2005, p. 43)

Others use discipleship and spiritual formation almost interchangeably (Barton et al., 2014), and Beard (2017) acknowledge there is “terminological imprecision that reflects this vastness and diversity” (p. 248). Bock (2008) takes pains to differentiate between discipleship and spiritual formation, saying that asking the difference between the two is important (p. 104). Morrow (2008) describes it as a process that takes place through the power of the Holy Spirit, much akin to discipleship wherein a Christian is transformed into Christ’s image (p. 44), and Averbeck (2008) uses similar language to describe the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.

Vanhoozer (2015) describes discipleship, “or the post-conversion process of becoming more like Christ” (p. 148), as a drama, and then adds later that “the drama of discipleship is another way of addressing the dynamics of spiritual formation” (p. 150), and becoming more like Christ, or putting on Christ, “involves a transformation at the source of behavior: the heart” (p. 168).

Miller and Beazley (2018) refer to Christian spiritual formation from an educational perspective. The Moody Bible Institute offers a certificate in Christian spiritual formation through which Christians are invited “into a *transforming relationship* [emphasis added] with Jesus Christ” (Moody Bible Institute, n.d.). Currie (2017) refers to spiritual direction training and puts it in the context of the “wider world of spiritual formation ministry” (p. 294).
The landscape is seemingly littered with terms, all with different, unique, synonymous, and overlapping definitions. For instance, Biola University sponsors a journal entitled *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care*, which offers as its purpose “advancing the discussion of the theory and practice of Christian formation” (Biola University, n.d.). While not criticizing either the university or the publication, it uses the term Christian formation to describe spiritual formation.

This interspersing of terms and using them interchangeably makes differentiation and clarity almost impossible. When the Christian community fails to precisely define the terms and adequately and accurately describe the transformational life with a degree of consistency, it can come across to the secular world and even those within the church as confused and insular. Or worse, when it adopts terms the secular world uses, as shall be seen when discussing mentoring and coaching, albeit with different meanings, it makes it even more challenging for the church to articulate its uniqueness to a lost and dying world.

*Spiritual Formation*. Like leadership, the term spiritual formation has myriad definitions. Bock (2008) does not so much define it as describe it as not something the Christian does, but as “what God does to us and for us, along with all he makes available to make this transformation possible, a process that never ends until he brings us to himself” (p. 105). Hall (2014) defines it this way:

> Spiritual formation is the Spirit-empowered and directed process of forming human beings—God’s flawed, cracked, beloved image-bearers (Gen. 1:26)—ever more fully, more deeply into the image of Christ, who himself is “the image of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15). It is a time-bound process, both in its context…and in its movements and outcomes. For instance, spiritual formation takes a long time. (Hall, 2014, p. 211)

Erskine (2004) defines it similarly, saying “spiritual formation describes the continuing work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer which conforms the child of God more and more

McRay et al. (2018) refer to the 2011 Council for Christian Colleges & Universities (CCCU) *Report on Spiritual Formation* in which spiritual formation is defined as “the biblically guided process in which people are being transformed [emphasis added] into the likeness of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit within the faith community in order to love and serve God and others” (p. 273). There are distinct similarities between the terms spiritual formation and discipleship, as both have as a core emphasis the transformation of the Christian into Christ’s image.

Regardless of how the term is used or defined, like discipleship, spiritual formation is customarily practiced in either one-on-one (Hollis, 2013) or group settings such as in community (Bock, 2008; Kapic, 2014; Samra, 2006), Bible study, or similar fashion. Additionally, spiritual formation aims to transform the Christian’s life (Kapic, 2014; McRay et al., 2018; Moles, 2016). Or, as Francis (2019) states, “spiritual formation is an attitude and posture of learning beyond mere facts that transforms [emphasis added] perspective, renews the mind, defines character, and is grounded in the heart and soul (Geiger et al., 2012; Waggoner 2008, as cited in Francis, 2019, p. 502). However, none of the writers indicate how this transformation is manifested in leadership outside the church. While spiritual formation is focused on the Christian’s whole life, most writers refer to ministry and life within the church's confines instead of the entirety of a Christian’s life, which for most, includes time in the marketplace.

The same three aspects of discipleship identified above (one-on-one, in community, and transformational) are also valid for the subsequent two terms, Christian formation and Christian spiritual formation.
**Christian Formation.** As was mentioned previously, this term is used synonymously and interchangeably with the other two. Throughout much of the primary and secondary literature, a commonality is using one or more of these terms without specifying a meaning. Douglass (2019), for instance, uses the term in an article but never defines it. Wheaton College offers a degree in Christian Formation and Ministry, describing it as a program which “prepares you to minister in whatever context you are called through course work in ministry, teaching, counseling, and discipleship [emphasis added]” (Wheaton College, n.d.). Francis (2019) describes it under the umbrella of spiritual formation, saying that it “is a facet of Christian formation and is analogous in much of the academic literature” (Francis, 2019, p. 502), and then defines it as “an intentional journey resulting in conformity to the image of Christ through the message of Jesus Christ (Estep & Kim 2010, 239–42, as cited in Francis, 2019, p. 502). Freeks (2017) says that “Christian formation should be viewed as part of salvation and human formation that confirm that God, as Father, sent Jesus Christ his Son, as Savior, to redeem humankind by transforming [emphasis added] the inner person through the Holy Spirit” (p. 3).

As is evident, there are similarities and differences among and between these terms, with the idea of transformation being key to all of them. One writer uses the term spiritual formation (Francis, 2019), another uses Christian formation (Freeks, 2017) and describes similar characteristics, occasionally using the same words. Unfortunately, like spiritual formation, the research on Christian formation lacks any explicit focus on improving one’s leadership acumen in the marketplace. However, the variety in describing a Christian’s transitioning from the new birth and being transformed into the image of Christ does not end with these two terms.

**Christian Spiritual Formation.** The final term frequently seen in the literature is Christian spiritual formation. While McRay et al. (2018) referred to the 2011 CCCU Report on
Spiritual Formation for a definition of spiritual formation, they “found it neglectful of the critical component of grace” (p. 273). Thus, they turned to other authors for their definitions of Christian spiritual formation.

Jeffrey Greenman defined it as “our continuing response to the reality of God’s grace shaping us into the likeness [emphasis added] of Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, in the community of faith, for the sake of the world”…[and] Evan Howard defined it as a “Spirit- and human-led process by which individuals and communities mature in relationship with the Christian God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) and are changed into ever-greater likeness [emphasis added] to the life and gospel of this God.” (McRay et al., 2018, p. 273)

As highlighted in the above quote, key elements in these definitions are similar to those identified in spiritual and Christian formation. As one looks closely, each description includes terms such as forming people more fully into Christ (Hall, 2014), the Holy Spirit working to conform the believer to the image of Christ (Erskine, 2004), and people being transformed into the likeness of Christ (McRay et al., 2018). All reflect the commands in the Bible to put on Christ (Romans 13:14; Galatians 3:27) and be transformed (Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 3:18) because Christians are to be new creations (2 Corinthians 5:17). It is also an ongoing process that begins at the new birth and ends with a Christian’s last breath. However, other than the words “for the sake of the world” from McRay et al. (2018), the main thrust of most of the research is to make one a better Christian for service in ministry.

The challenge for each of these terms is best articulated by Moles (2016).

Communication is difficult. Language is slippery and, at times, can fail to get a complex thought, concept, or idea from one person to another. The task is made even more cumbersome when the same words are used to communicate slightly different concepts. A quick look at the literature surrounding the topic of spiritual formation suggests that there are almost as many definitions of what spiritual formation is as there are individuals who write about the topic. (Moles, 2016, pp. 5-6)

His insights are helpful, but the challenge remains. All the attempts to define and refine these terms only seem to exacerbate the difficulties inherent in studying these concepts, but even
more so when one needs to explain the nuances of the terms and their applicability to a Christian’s life.

If the terms can be consistently and cogently defined and agreed upon by several writers, the real question, and the area to which this study will turn next, is how a Christian works through and toward that transformation. Earlier, the literature on discipleship was reviewed, but several other terms are used to describe how a Christian is to be transformed, and it is to these terms to which this study will turn.

**Mentoring and Coaching**

Mentoring and coaching have become more prevalent in the literature over the most recent ten years as replacements for or synonyms with discipleship. As identified with the other terms described above, mentoring and coaching have varied definitions, depending on the intended audience and the authors’ community. Dr. Jim Harris (personal communication, October 8, 2020), an executive coach, author of 14 books on leadership and management, and the President of Dynatos Global, states that coaching and mentoring are convoluted in today’s environment. Those who identify themselves as coaches often define the term as they wish.

There are several organizations and businesses involved in the coaching and mentoring field. Perhaps the most recognizable is Dale Carnegie which advertises itself as a coaching, mentoring, and training organization and identifies in its approach “a rich history and a proven, innovative process [that] has connected Dale Carnegie training to people around the world seeking real transformation [emphasis added] and impactful results” (Dale Carnegie, n.d.). The International Coaching Federation (ICF) (n.d.) and the Center for Executive Coaching (n.d.) offer to credential the individual coach, and the ICF provides the avenue to certify a coach’s training program. From a sports perspective, the American Coaching Academy also provides an
avenue to become a certified coach proclaiming that “as a coach, you are a teacher and a mentor” (American Coaching Academy, n.d.). Lest the Christian community be left out, the Christian Coach Institute, whose courses fill the coach-specific training hours for the ICF, offers an opportunity to become a certified life coach (Christian Coach Institute, n.d.).

There are several organizations and websites for mentoring, including mentoring.org, the website for The National Mentoring Partnership, which primarily focuses on young people. Like the ICF, the International Mentoring Association will also accredit one’s mentoring program at the Silver or Gold level for a nominal fee of 2,000 dollars for the Silver level and 5,500 dollars for the Gold level (International Mentoring Association, n.d.).

The brief review above of mentoring and coaching is not meant to disparage either coaches’ or mentors’ value in any environment. However, it would seem clear that the language landscape, as with the other terms already explored, is varied and convoluted, as Dr. Harris (personal communication, October 8, 2020) indicated. However, these terms are also being used pervasively in Christian literature as synonyms or replacements for discipleship, as will be shown in the following section.

**Mentoring**

Mentoring has a long history outside of the church. “The first usage of the word comes from Homer’s *The Odyssey*, the story of Odysseus traveling home after the Trojan War. Odysseus places his son in the care of Mentor, his trusted friend” (Barlow, 2019, p.3). “It was not until 1699, however, that the term ‘mentor' would be synonymous with instructor, trusted advisor, confidant” (Flesoras, 2009, p. 1) or several other similar terms. Barlow (2019) also argues that mentoring has a long history within the church.

Mentoring can be found all throughout the Old and New Testament, although the word is never explicitly used. The relationships between Elijah and Elisha (2 Kings 2), Eli and
Samuel, (1 Samuel 3), Paul and Timothy (Acts 16), and Jesus and the disciples (Matthew 6) could all be described in this manner. (p. 3)

Bekkedahl (2015) and Clarke (2005) use the term mentoring almost interchangeably with discipleship throughout their research, as do Hollis (2013) and Huckaby (2012). Bekkedahl (2015) defines mentoring as “the process where someone who has experience, knowledge, and expertise in a given area shares it with someone who does not” (p. 14). He earlier defines discipleship or discipling as “training to help another grow in his or her commitment to Christ and the practical application of God’s Word in their life” (p. 13).

The unstated assumption in Bekkedahl’s (2015) discipleship definition is that the one training has the experience, knowledge, and expertise to do the training. Clarke (2005) argues that since Jesus called twelve disciples to follow him, he “was the first biblical mentor of the Christian church!” (p. 2), further proclaiming that biblical mentoring “is a return and rediscovery of the art of making disciples” (p. 3).

Harder (2018), on the other hand, argues that “mentoring extends well beyond the purview of the discipleship process” (p. 6), and Hollis (2013) puts mentoring into the category of paired learning, into which is also included “player development, tutoring, executive coaching, doctoral advising, etc.” (p. 7).

So precisely, what is mentoring? Hollis (2013) defines a mentor as “one who fundamentally affects and influences the development of another” (p. 29), but also acknowledges that the terms “coaching, mentoring, [and] discipleship at times have different meanings and different applications. At other times the words are used interchangeably and synonymously” (p. 29). Huckaby (2012) defines mentoring as “a method of discipleship by which Christians are encouraged to conform to the image of Christ that they might do what He saved them to do in the world” (p. 1).
Though it has been studied from a Christian perspective, much of the research on mentoring has been from a secular standpoint. A brief search on mentoring in the title returns more than 2,500 doctoral dissertations while including Christian in the search reduces that to just over 600 (ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, n.d.). As with discipleship, leadership, and spiritual formation, there are multiple definitions of mentoring, “ranging from career sponsor to coach to facilitator of all aspects of a mentee’s development “(Philippart, 2014).

After conducting a review and evaluation of the literature on mentoring, one researcher defines mentors as those who “take an active interest in an individual’s development and serve as coaches, tutors, counselors, sponsors and/or confidants for another with whom there is a relationship of mutual trust” (Levy, 2003). Merriam-Webster defines a mentor as “a trusted counselor or guide; tutor; coach” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). One word from both definitions is important to highlight and relate to discipleship. As was pointed out when describing discipleship, a key ingredient in mentoring is that it is a relationship built on trust.

In attempting to differentiate between the terms mentoring and discipleship, Hollis (2013) quotes extensively from Hendricks and Hendricks’ 1995 book, _As Iron Sharpens Iron:_

For Hendricks, discipleship and mentorship are closely related but not completely identical. Discipleship is based on a call, which is, in fact, a command by Jesus, the one who calls. In this relationship, God is the teacher; Jesus is the one who disciples and, as such, remains the Teacher. Followers are learners of Jesus, and discipleship is viewed to be instruction based. While discipleship and mentorship are viewed as developmental processes; to Hendricks, mentorship is more devoted to protection of the protege. The focus of mentorship is that of a protection relationship where the mentored is protected as he crosses the frontier into manhood. This is not simply an educational relationship between teacher and student, but more of a familial relationship in which older and younger men are relating so that the younger grows, develops, and matures as the older one guides. (Hendricks & Hendricks, 1995 as cited in Hollis, 2013, p. 30)

Based on the information above, it should come as no surprise that the church is confused about what to call the process of discipleship…or mentoring…or coaching…or spiritual formation. Bekkedahl (2015) identifies that as a problem.
Many churches confuse merely learning about Christ and Christianity with discipleship, providing lots of classes and studies that do little to change anyone. For many church members, this academic approach to discipleship is anemic and not very compelling. Rather than producing needed change, such programs foster incorrect or incomplete notions about the nature of a disciple within congregations. (p. 19)

However, in his project, Bekkedahl (2015) uses the terms discipler and mentor interchangeably (p. 6), which would seem only to reinforce the confusion he decries. Huckaby (2012) likely agrees as he states that “Christian mentoring is discipleship when comparing the descriptions of each. They are too closely related to be notably distinct of each other” (p. 8, emphasis in original)

Most of the definitions and descriptions have in common the idea of a relationship, usually one-on-one, intending to help move a person from one spot in their lives to another. In a similar vein, the term coaching has been used interchangeably with or instead of mentoring or discipleship. “In our culture, the closest synonym for the mentor is the coach” (Hollis, 2013, p. 32). Introducing coaching into the church’s discipleship lexicon has not helped the matter and may have increased the confusion.

**Coaching**

Coaching is a seemingly well-understood concept. Anyone who has played sports at almost any level has encountered a coach. As mentioned above, some organizations will credential a person as either an athletic, personal, or life coach. Each of those has a different application, with the personal coach or life coach most closely resembling the concept of discipleship. It is that aspect on which the remainder of this section will focus.

“In an American context, personal coaching and mentoring are used extensively in the fields of business, athletics, and Christian discipleship” (Hollis, 2013, p. xiv). Although less prevalent in the academic literature, the language landscape is replete with different, often complementary, but occasionally contradictory definitions and practices for coaching as a
replacement for or supplement to discipleship. Adeleye-Olusae, (2008) defines coaching as “the art and practice of guiding a person or group from where they are toward the greater competence and fulfillment they desire” (p. 7).

Contrast that definition with their later description of discipleship, which “centers on teaching biblical truth and spiritual disciplines to younger believers. A discipleship process usually contains a set course of study within a limited time frame and a student-teacher relationship” (Adeleye-Olusae, 2008, p. 9). This description falls in line with Bekkedahl’s (2015) critique of discipleship as “lots of classes and studies” (p. 19). Hull (2006) and Bonhoeffer (1995) also are critical of those sorts of programs or classes, and both explain that discipleship should not be either a program or temporary. Bartley (2011) makes the point succinctly, stating that “many pastors and people in the religious community do not clearly understand the difference between coaching and discipleship” (pp. 81-82). With the variety in terms and definitions, this misunderstanding is understandable.

Others define coaching similarly. “Personal coaching is a process designed and defined in a relationship agreement between a client and a coach. It is based on the clients’ expressed interests and objectives” (Hollis, 2013, p. 20, emphasis in original). “Coaching is a collegial partnership between a coach and client that focuses on the client taking action towards the realization of his or her visions, goals, and desires” (Collins, 2009; Williams & Davis, 2007 as cited in Bartley, 2011, p. 39). He outlines what he believes are the tremendous benefits that only coaching can provide.

The coaching industry offers what few other fields and venues, including discipleship [emphasis added], consulting, management, and sometimes counseling, have been able to provide for people. People in transition, groups, churches, businesses, health care organizations, entrepreneurial, charitable organizations, management, corporations, and governments on both a national and international scale seek coaching (Bartley, 2011, p. 25)
This somewhat negative view of discipleship is understandable, given earlier issues associated with the Shepherding movement (Moore, 1999). The potential for misunderstanding is reinforced when one reviews the literature outlined above. While most acknowledge that “discipleship is what Jesus mandated the disciples to do in the Great Commission” (Huckaby, 2012, p. 1), many view discipleship, as currently practiced in many churches, with a degree of disdain. That sentiment is summed up by Huckaby (2012) when he says, “the problem with many discipleship philosophies and strategies is that they merely focus on completing certain courses/classes, whereby one could claim he has graduated or moved on from one step or stage in his spiritual maturation. When in reality, he might have not grown at all” (p. 5).

Once one analyzes the definitions, practices, and goals of each of the terms outlined in the literature, the reality is that theoretically, each is trying to achieve the same thing: transformation in the life of the Christian. The descriptions from the literature may not make it this straightforward, and Dr. Harris (personal communication, October 8, 2020), in an interview, sums it this way from his experience:

As I see it, the difference between coaching, mentoring, and discipleship is where you start, where you are going, and where you are focused. Coaching is all about training, focusing on current job skills. Mentoring is about moving a person from where they are to what their next step will be, and the focus is more on one’s career. Discipleship is different. It begins with the assumption that complete, whole-life transformation is the goal, and it starts in heaven. It also includes the others. As one who discipless others, you are also a coach and a mentor at different times, but you are always one who discipless. (Harris, personal communication, October 8, 2020)

The challenge alluded to above is that many new Christians, the ones who should be the focus of a discipleship, mentoring, or coaching relationship (Hollis, 2013; Huckaby, 2012), come to church with a non-biblical perspective on these words. When they hear coach, they think of life skills. When they hear mentor, they think about getting to the next phase in their career. However, when reviewing the literature, it does not appear that these Christian writers intend to
confuse by using these terms interchangeably. As has been evident throughout the literature, the implication behind each of the words is a transformative relationship with Jesus. That transformation is aided by the Holy Spirit and by more mature believers. As Huckaby (2012) states, “it is difficult for disciples to be made outside of close relationships with more mature followers” (p. 22).

Despite the terms coaching and mentoring being prevalent in the secular environment, especially in the business arena, none of the literature identifies Christian coaching's potential crossover to the non-church environment. Indeed, the term mentoring in the Christian literature is almost exclusively about a Christian’s transformation, generally without any explicit discussion of how transformation is evidenced in leadership outside of the church.

Two aspects of discipleship need to be briefly readdressed here. When viewing a discipleship relationship, there is one who is theoretically more mature (Huckaby, 2012) and in a position of leadership, and one who is less mature and follows. Also, in Jesus' charge to make disciples, the first part of that charge is to “go,” and the last part is “into all the nations,” which has been argued earlier means the marketplace. In the next section, we will look at additional examples of Christian leadership in the marketplace and some organizations which occupy that sphere of influence in anticipation of Christ’s return.

**Christian Leadership in the Marketplace**

Despite the identified shortfalls in the literature thus far, some research has been done with a marketplace focus. Specifically, the Business as Mission movement, or BAM for short, has been a movement within the Christian community for more than two decades. Their website asks, “what if more Christian businesspeople were world-leaders at tackling global evils through business?” (Business as Mission, n.d., emphasis in original). It is an outstanding question and
one that closely aligns with the focus of this research. Their goal is to transform business, and how Christian businesspersons view their work. Rather than being an evil that must be tolerated or a place from which to escape (Miller, 2009/2018), a person’s work can be a calling (Silvoso, 2002).

Beals (2014) provides a thorough analysis of the BAM construct in his dissertation entitled, *Business as Mission: Equipping Business Professionals to Serve in Cross-Cultural Ministry*. His focus is primarily on the evangelical and missiological aspects of the movement; however, he argues that is not BAM's emphasis. “While there are individuals who have co-opted the BAM name using their business as a cover for missionary work, this does not reflect a correct understanding of BAM” (p. 58).

Johnson (2004) also reviews the BAM movement from a similar perspective in another research project, but he goes further. He identifies several companies that have moved well beyond a missional focus and are working to integrate business-to-business discipleship and business-to-business coaching (p. 203). Specifically, he walks through the genesis of The Fellowship of Companies for Christ International (FCCI), tracing its history back to some of the first men and companies to be involved. Many of those pioneers eventually began their own Christian businesses and wrote extensively in the extra-academic environment. In his extensive work, he argues that not only is the marketplace a valid mission in theory, but it “may be the leading edge of a major mission movement, perhaps the major mission movement, of the twenty-first century…[and] is actually being realized in contemporary mission practice” (Johnson, 2004, p. 125). Boyd (2005) writes about the intersection of Christian leadership and the marketplace but does not incorporate the discipleship aspect nor evaluates that intersection from a quantitative perspective.
Where the academic literature is relatively sparse, the Christian business community has been busy. In the time before and since Johnson’s (2004) work, several companies have emerged with a marketplace focus, and more books have been written, some of which have already been quoted, all to take back the marketplace for God, or as Wallnau and Johnson (2013) put it, *Invading Babylon*. Silvoso (2002) and Marshall (2000) write that not only can the marketplace be a valid mission field, but it also is a valid ministry, and some Christians are specifically called and anointed to be in business (Silvoso, 2002, p. 19; Marshall, 2000, p. xiii).

Miller (2009/2018) argues eloquently that the sacred/secular dichotomy remains a problem that must be overcome (p. 33). Hybels (1994) claims that the Church cannot be salt and light if it stays inside the church walls and equates that to hiding the light under a basket (p. 18). Larry Burkett (1998), the founder of Crown Financial Ministries, wrote *Business by the Book*. In a short chapter on leadership, he outlines responsibilities that closely resemble the characteristics of servant leadership previously discussed (pp. 103-110). The list could continue but need not as it is evident that the Christian business community is very interested in the marketplace and is willing to share its ideas. However, no one has written about the intersection of discipleship and leadership in the marketplace, even in the non-academic realm.

**Rationale for Study and Gap in the Literature**

**Rationale for the Study**

The concepts of leadership and discipleship, however one defines the ideas or which terms one uses, are difficult to solidify. Perhaps this is why there are so many definitions for each. What is clear is that Christians are to be and make disciples. What is also evident through scripture and the literature is that Christians are to go, and as they are going, to make disciples. Since most Christians are not involved in full-time ministry, it is logical to conclude, and the
literature strongly suggests (i.e., Boyd, 2005; Curpanen, 2013; Davis, 2014; Duncan, 2015), that much of that disciple-making and teaching will and should be done with a focus on the marketplace as well as the church.

Further, some Christians in the marketplace will either be in or end up in leadership positions, whether in business, politics, education, or any other areas in which one could lead. If true, discipleship should at least partially focus on how Christians should lead in their family, church, and work.

This literature review has tried to make the case that for Christians, Jesus is the model for servant, transformational, and shared leadership. Christians are called to be salt and light to the world (Matthew 5:13-16), and they are to put on Christ (Romans 13:14, Galatians, 3:27; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10). If Christ’s leadership style is best exemplified by one or all three of these leadership styles, Christians should be modeling the same leadership to the best of their Spirit-empowered ability. Thus, discipleship should include some facet of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:12). For those marketplace leaders who are being discipled, the question becomes, does it affect the disciple’s leadership style. If it does not, perhaps the church needs to re-look at how it is practicing discipleship.

**Gap in the Literature**

As should be evident, despite the extensive research done on Christian leadership, discipleship, and the less extensive research on marketplace ministry or Christian leadership in the marketplace, this researcher can find no study that correlates all three factors into a project that looks at the effect discipleship has on Christian leadership in the marketplace. Some have studied Christian leadership in the marketplace (see, e.g., Boyd, 2005; Davis, 2014; McGaughey, 2016), and several others have discussed Christians in the marketplace (see, e.g., Unni, 2006;
Zeller, 2015; Zinbarg, 1999). Some have combined leadership and discipleship (see, e.g., Lockett, 2003; Monk, 2005; Stone, 2008) or other combinations of the three. But none have done a study that includes all the elements, and this researcher can find none that have taken a quantitative correlational approach to discipleship and leadership.

For those in church leadership, especially those with a discipleship ministry, having a tangible measure of that ministry's effectiveness can be valuable even if only focused on a narrow characteristic. It contributes at least one more piece of evidence of the goal of spiritual formation, discipleship, and mentorship: the transformed life of a Christian disciple.

**Profile of the Current Study**

To fill the gap in the literature, this study undertook a quantitative study involving a survey of marketplace Christian leaders in the United States to ascertain if there is a correlation between a marketplace Christian leader being involved in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting characteristics of servant, transformational, or shared leadership. Once that was accomplished, the survey results were compared to other leadership studies to see how the scores for each of the leadership styles compared to the results from other leadership research.
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter two provided a review of some of the extensive writings on both leadership and discipleship, as well as a brief overview of the role of Christians in the marketplace. This chapter will describe the overall research design, the population, the measurement instruments, and the statistical analysis procedures and methodologies used to determine a relationship between the key variables. The dependent variable is a marketplace Christian leader exhibiting servant, transformational, or shared leadership characteristics in the marketplace, and the constant is participation in a discipleship relationship. Following a brief description of the nature of the problem, this chapter provides the research design synopsis, population and sampling procedures, limitations of generalization and ethical considerations, proposed instrumentation, research procedures, data analysis, and statistical procedures.

Research Design Synopsis

The Problem

As one of Jesus’ last recorded commands to his disciples in Matthew 28:18-20, Christians have seemingly taken the charge to go to the nations and make disciples seriously. Within a few short decades of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection, the Gospel was spread to many areas of the globe (Bruce, 1902). Today, Christianity is the largest religious group in the world, “making up nearly a third (31%) of Earth’s 7.3 billion people” (Hackett & McClendon, 2017). Despite the success of the first-century Christians and those who followed in converting people to the Christian faith, the actual making of true disciples of Christ has not transformed the world for which scripture calls. While the idea of discipleship is prevalent in scripture, it is not universally practiced effectively in many churches (Bonhoeffer, 1995; Eims, 1978; Hull, 2006). Even
further, claims one article, “discipleship has almost disappeared from everyday discussions in faith communities” (Nel & Schoeman, 2019, p. 1).

Being a disciple is about following Christ in every facet of one’s life (Hull, 2006), or as Bonhoeffer (1995) would say, “Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ” (p. 59). Scripture provides no evidence of a separation between Christians' beliefs on Sunday and their actions on Monday in the marketplace (Forster & Oostenbrink, 2015; Glavaš, 2017; Wood, 2015). For the first-century Christians, this was true (Eims, 1978). Discipleship was simply a part of life, and they took their beliefs everywhere they went (Acts 4:2; 5:42; 8:4-40; 10:34-48; 11:19-21; 13:4-52; 14:25; 15:35; 16:25-34; 17:17). The first Christians were transformational and endeavored to model Jesus in every aspect of their lives.

Since most of the 2.2 billion Christians in the world\(^3\) are not in full-time ministry, many must be in the marketplace. By nature of sheer numbers, many of those Christians in the marketplace will be in leadership positions as teachers, businesspersons, government workers, or in other organizations.

The Bible calls all Christians to have Jesus as the model for their lives. For many, Jesus is also their leadership model (Blackaby & Blackaby, 2011; Bunkowske, 2019; Clemons, 2018; Webb, 2018). Several writers identify Jesus as the model for servant leadership (Atkinson, 2014; Clemons, 2018; Howell, 2003; Jones, 2013; McRae, 2020), transformational leadership (Bunkowske, 2019; Kull, 2003; Morse, 1996; Scarborough, 2010), and shared leadership (Atherton, 2014; Cincala, 2016; Ellis, 2020; Johns, 2015).

If Jesus modeled these leadership styles, then Christians in leadership positions should also model those leadership styles. This study attempted to determine if there was a correlation

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\(^3\) Estimates are based on Hackett and McClendon’s (2017) estimates of 31% of the world population being Christian.
between marketplace Christian leaders' involvement in a discipleship relationship and the embodiment of one or more of these leadership styles.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine if a correlation exists between a marketplace Christian leader being involved in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting characteristics of servant leadership, transformational leadership, or shared leadership within the secular marketplace.

**Research Questions and Hypotheses**

**Research Questions**

**RQ1.** What relationship, if any, exists between a marketplace Christian leader’s participation in a discipleship relationship and exemplifying servant leadership?

**RQ2.** What relationship, if any, exists between a marketplace Christian leader’s participation in a discipleship relationship and exemplifying transformational leadership?

**RQ3.** What relationship, if any, exists between a marketplace Christian leader’s participation in a discipleship relationship and exemplifying shared leadership?

**RQ4.** Does participation in a discipleship relationship correlate to practicing a particular leadership style for marketplace Christian leaders?

The research questions above are rooted in a null hypothesis indicating no statistically relevant relationship between participation in a discipleship relationship and a marketplace Christian leader’s exemplifying a particular leadership style.

**Research Hypotheses**

**H01:** There is no statistically significant relationship between a marketplace Christian leader being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting servant leadership.

**H02:** There is no statistically significant relationship between a marketplace Christian leader being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting transformational leadership.

**H03:** There is no statistically significant relationship between a marketplace Christian leader being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting shared leadership.
**H04:** There is no statistically significant relationship between a marketplace Christian leader being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting a particular leadership style.

**Research Design and Methodology**

This quantitative study examined the statistical correlation between a marketplace Christian leader’s participation in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting characteristics of servant, transformational, or shared leadership styles to determine if participation in a discipleship relationship is a reliable predictor of a marketplace Christian leader exhibiting one of the three styles of leadership.

A quantitative design incorporating statistical correlation was used in the study because the relationship between two variables and the strength of that relationship was evaluated (Creswell & Creswelle, 2018; Leedy & Ormrod, 2019). This design has been used successfully in recent similar studies (Cannon, 2019; Drummond, 2020; Hanson, 2020; Moore, 2020; Ramseur, 2018). Specifically, this study examined the relationship identified above for marketplace Christian leaders who worship in a church in the United States. The data for discipleship relationship participation and leadership style was obtained through a survey instrument.

This study used a survey with statistical analysis to evaluate a potential relationship and then compared the results of that analysis against other leadership studies. A survey is helpful when trying to determine specific information about a group of people (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019). In this case, the survey highlighted several aspects of a sample’s behaviors related to discipleship and leadership.

Permission to use three extant leadership surveys was requested before any research was conducted (Appendices J, K, and L). They were combined with a demographic survey (Appendix M) to collect general demographic information and elements of a marketplace Christian leader’s discipleship relationship. Several surveys existed with varying degrees of validity and reliability.
that measure servant, transformational and shared leadership characteristics. Three were explicitly chosen for their applicability to a quantitative study: The Servant Leadership Scale, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™, and the Shared Leadership Measure.

The Servant Leadership Scale short form or SL-7 (Liden et al., 2008) is a seven-question Likert-style survey (Appendix N) that has been used recently by others to gather information about servant leadership (Davis, 2018; Hayes, 2018; Jones, 2020; Milacci, 2021; Nee, 2020; Ragaisis, 2018; Raybourne, 2018; Warig, 2020).

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™ (MLQ™) (Bass & Avolio, 1997 as cited in Bass & Riggio, 2006) is a 45-question Likert-style survey (Appendix O) that reflects transformational and transactional leadership characteristics and has been used extensively to study transformational and transactional leadership.

Shared leadership characteristics are less well studied, but the Shared Leadership Measure, a 20-question Likert-style device developed by Brussow (2013), has been used to effectively ascertain shared leadership in teams (Alarifi, 2020). This survey used a slightly modified version of that instrument (Appendix P) to focus on the leader attributes instead of the group characteristics.

All four questionnaires were combined into a single Qualtrics assessment which took most respondents less than fifteen minutes to complete.

**Population**

The population of this study was initially intended to be selected from Christians currently worshipping in a church in the Southeastern United States listed in the USA Churches database who self-identified as being in a position of leadership in a secular (non-ministerial) organization and currently are or have been in a discipleship relationship within the past two
years. However, after four unsuccessful attempts at gaining participation from over 200 churches and further approval by the IRB (Appendix H), the potential population was expanded to any marketplace Christian leader attending church in the U. S. who identified themselves as currently in a discipleship relationship or have been within the past two years.

The term discipleship was used in this study, but according to the *State of Discipleship* (Barna, 2015), the term discipleship was more common among nondenominational church leaders and congregants than denominational churches (p. 19). Other terms such as mentoring, spiritual formation, or becoming more like Christ (Barna, 2015; Hull, 2006) are prevalent in today’s churches. Since the population included congregants from both denominational and nondenominational churches, a clear definition of discipleship was provided as part of the demographic questions to ensure a common understanding of the term.

Coincidentally, nondenominational congregations appear to have recently had the most significant growth (Brauer, 2017) compared to mainline denominations. For clarification, the Barna (2015) study uses the term mainline, which includes American Baptist Churches, Episcopal, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church, and Presbyterian Church, USA, and non-mainline for Protestant churches not included in mainline denominations (p. 94). The terms denominational and nondenominational were used to describe those groups for this study.

The Southeastern U.S. was initially chosen primarily because that was the researcher's general location and to expand the potential population widely enough to gain sufficient respondents and limit the scope of the population. It was determined that there would be potentially tens or hundreds of thousands of marketplace Christian leaders in the U.S. based on population estimates and the number of churches in the initial study area (see Table 1 and Figure
I below). According to the USA Churches database (USA Churches, n.d.), there are 2,394 churches of varying sizes in the Southeastern U.S., with 10,447 in the entire U.S. (Table 1). It is acknowledged that there are many more churches than those identified in the USA Churches database. The Southern Baptist Convention alone has over 50,000 churches (Figure 1) in the U.S. (Southern Baptist Convention, n.d.). However, other researchers had used this database successfully (Sironen, 2020). Since it also had no denominational association, which may reduce denominational bias toward or against discipleship practices, the researcher believed it to be a good starting point for research.

Table 1.

*Churches in the U.S. in the USA Churches Database*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>SMALL</th>
<th>MEDIUM</th>
<th>LARGE</th>
<th>MEGA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>4262</td>
<td>6245</td>
<td>1603</td>
<td>731</td>
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</table>
USA Churches database divides churches into four categories: Small, medium, large, and mega. Small churches have an average weekend attendance of fewer than fifty people. Medium churches have an average attendance of between 51 and 300 people. Large churches are defined as having between 301 and 2,000 in attendance, and churches having more than 2,000 in average weekend attendance are defined as mega-churches. USA Churches is an independent organization and is not associated or sponsored by any specific denomination or church organization (USA Churches, n.d.) which may account for the database not reflecting as many churches as are acknowledged to exist in the U.S.

Although the overall population of marketplace Christian leaders could not be precisely known, it was anticipated there were enough churches with sufficient marketplace Christian leaders as members in the initial seven-state study area to gather a large enough sample size. The
assumption was that the selection of states and this database, while not providing a comprehensive analysis of all marketplace Christian leaders, would give a cross-section of Christian churches and the marketplace leaders within these churches to conduct a valid statistical analysis.

After four failed attempts over six weeks to find churches to participate in this research and with approval of the IRB, the USA Churches database was abandoned in favor of nonprobability convenience sampling through direct contact with several Christian individuals and organizations involved in the marketplace. This was done through two methods: A post of the researcher’s LinkedIn account and an email appeal (Appendix I) to several known Christian business owners, managers, and other marketplace Christian leaders. Although this technique could introduce bias, anonymity was maintained, as discussed in the ethical considerations section below.

Sampling Procedures

For this study, more than one sampling technique was used. The first step was to develop a list of churches of varying sizes in each state included in the study. With over two thousand churches in the USA churches database for the states being studied, this researcher deemed it prudent to reduce the number of churches for initial contact and incorporate a degree of randomness. With email survey participation results being relatively low (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), ten percent of the churches in each category in each state was determined to provide a high enough likelihood of gaining sufficient returns to meet the initial goal of 94 respondents.

A random selection of the churches in the Southeast from the USA Churches database from each state in each category (small, medium, large, and mega) was initially contacted to
ensure a mix of respondents representing a broad socio-economic cross-section. There were 813 small churches, 1155 medium churches, 293 large churches, and 133 mega-churches in the southeastern U.S. (Table 1). Small and medium churches represented more than 80% of the churches in the southeast. However, they represented less than 25% of the estimated weekend attendance of almost 900,000 people (Table 2). Thus, a systematic sampling of each category and state was used to account for the population estimates and ensure that no church size would be over or underrepresented.

Table 2.

Church Population Estimates by State and Category

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<th>STATE</th>
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<td>34</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TN</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>1155</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>133</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| ESTIMATED CHURCH POPULATION* | 20325 | 202125 | 336950 | 332500 | 891900 |

* Estimated attendance was calculated by multiplying the number of churches in each category by the mean of USA Churches (n.d.) categories (small = 25, medium = 175, large = 1,150 mega was estimated as 2,500).

All the churches from each state were alphabetized by category and state. Then, a random number generator (random.org, n.d.) was used to determine which churches were to be initially contacted. A different random number was used for each state, but the number remained the same for each category. For Alabama, the number generated was four, so the fourth, fourteenth, twenty-fourth, etc., church in each category was selected. That resulted in
six small, seven medium, two large, and one megachurch being selected for initial contact for Alabama. For Florida, the random number was eight, meaning the eighth, eighteenth, twenty-eighth, etc., churches were identified, resulting in 20 small, 31 medium, 8 large, and four megachurches selected for initial contact. For Georgia, the number was 2, resulting in 17 small, 22 medium, 6 large, and 3 mega-churches selected for initial contact.

Mississippi’s random number was five, using the same methodology (the fifth, fifteenth, twenty-fifth, etc., selected for contact), resulting in three small, six medium, and one large church. Mississippi only had four mega-churches in the USA Churches database, so a random number between one and four was generated, with the result being one. Thus, one megachurch was selected from Mississippi. The process continued in the same way, with North Carolina’s number being ten, resulting in seventeen, twenty-eight, seven, and one church from each category initially selected for contact. South Carolina’s number was nine, with seven, eight, two, and one church chosen from each category. Finally, Tennessee’s number was four, resulting in ten, fourteen, three, and two churches from each category selected for initial contact.

The total number of churches selected for contact by the initial random selection of churches was 244 (Table 3), slightly more than ten percent of the total number of churches in the USA Churches database for the Southeastern U.S.
Table 3.

Number of Churches Contacted by State and Category (USA Churches, n.d.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Large</th>
<th>Mega</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TN</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The population of marketplace Christian leaders could not be determined beforehand for the initial study, which included only the Southeastern U.S. However, the population of the 244 churches selected randomly was estimated to be approximately 94,500 (see Table 4). Still, the percentage of marketplace Christian leaders within that population could not be effectively determined. If only one percent of those church members were marketplace Christian leaders, the potential respondents would have been approximately 900.

Given the definition of a leadership position used for this research is rather broad, a conservative estimate of five percent of the membership in any church could be in a leadership position. Thus, the population estimate of those in leadership positions is approximately 4,725. Using that number as a population estimate and a sample size calculator (Creative Research Systems, n.d.), it was determined that a sample size of 94 was necessary to achieve a 95% confidence level with a 10% margin of error.

Since responses to an email questionnaire are lower than 50% (Rogelberg & Luong, 1998; Sheehan, 2001, as cited in Leedy & Omrod, 2019), and assuming a response rate of less than 25 percent, it was assessed that contacting between 150 and 200 churches would be
sufficient to gain enough responses to meet a 95% confidence level\textsuperscript{4}. For this study, the positive response rate of churches to the initial and subsequent appeals (Appendices B and E) was less than one percent, with fewer than ten total surveys being initially completed.

If a sufficient percentage of the contacted churches had participated in the survey and a large enough sample was gathered, a proportional random sampling would have been used to gain respondents from churches of various sizes and respondents with varying characteristics, potentially demonstrating a correlation between and among the variables. However, that turned out not to be the case.

Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Membership of Churches Contacted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SMALL</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESTIMATED CHURCH POPULATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2050</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Estimated attendance was calculated by multiplying the number of churches in each category by the mean of USA Churches categories (small = 25, medium = 175, large = 1,150). Mega was estimated as 2,500.

The secondary method of gathering respondents for the survey was to send a recruitment email and LinkedIn post (Appendix I) to friends and colleagues known to be marketplace Christian leaders or organizations that catered to marketplace Christian leaders. The researcher posted the recruitment message to his LinkedIn account and sent it to several known Christians in the marketplace. Both appeals encouraged individuals to forward the

\textsuperscript{4} The number of churches needed to be contacted was an estimate based on overall estimated church population of churches in the database (891900), a conservative estimate of 5% of the congregation being marketplace Christian leaders and an expected return rate of 20% or less. 150 churches contacted would have been more than sufficient to meet a sample size of 94.
email or post the embedded link to their social media accounts to further expand the number and randomness of the respondents. In the expanded appeal, several more responses were gained, leading to a total number of survey attempts of 63, with 34 of those valid for the study, well short of the desired goal of 94.

According to the United States Census Bureau (n.d.), the estimated population for 2019 for the initial study area was approximately 62 million people (Table 5). Thirty-one percent (Hackett & McClendon, 2017) of 62 million equals about 19 million, far exceeding the 900,000 number estimated from numbers found in the USA Churches database. Applying the same estimates to the expanded study area (entire U.S.), with an estimated U.S. population of 332 million, the estimated number of Christians in the U.S. is 103 million⁵. Since the initial geographic area of the southeastern U.S. was abandoned in favor of a nationwide survey, the potential population of marketplace Christian leaders could be in the millions.

Another sample size calculation was conducted after expanding the survey to the entire U.S. Assuming a population of approximately five million marketplace Christian leaders in the U.S. (5% of 103 million, see footnote 3), at least 96 respondents would be necessary to reach a 95% confidence level with a 10% margin of error (Creative Research Systems, n.d.). The margin of error was eventually increased to 16.81 when calculating the confidence interval given a sample size of 34 (Creative Research Systems, n.d.).

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⁵ As of this writing, the U.S. population is approximately 330 million (census.gov) and the number of self-assessed Christians is estimated to be one-third of that number (Hackett & McClendon, 2017) which leaves an estimated 110 million Christians in the U.S. If only 5 percent of Christians are in leadership positions in the marketplace, the potential population is well over 5 million.
Table 5.

Population Estimates by State and U.S.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Gen Pop*</th>
<th>Est Christians**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>4903185</td>
<td>1519930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>21477737</td>
<td>6634000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>10617423</td>
<td>3292200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>2976149</td>
<td>922560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>10488084</td>
<td>3241900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>5148714</td>
<td>1596190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TN</td>
<td>6829174</td>
<td>19323770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>62440466</td>
<td>36530550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>33239968</td>
<td>103211390</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Population was based on the US Census Bureau’s 2019 estimates.

** Estimate based on Hackett & McClendon’s (2017) (see footnote 4).

The goal was to have the sample include individuals from rural and metropolitan areas and a broad socio-economic, cultural, and racial base, so demographic information was collected to help ensure the sample reflected the overall population to the greatest extent possible. Unfortunately, there was an insufficient distribution of characteristics to provide any meaningful differentiation.

Content Analysis

The researcher conducted several searches in the ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global (n.d.) database for doctoral dissertations conducting similar studies for the content analysis. Searches were made using variations of servant, transformational, and shared leadership, and variations of each of the various measurement instruments used in these studies. After reviewing and consolidating the results of the searches, only those studies which used the same measurement devices and similarly reported results (averages and totals) were included in the content analysis. That review resulted in 13 servant leadership
studies using the SL-7 measurement device and 12 using the MLQ™ device. There were no other studies for shared leadership that used the SLM with results in a useable format.

**Limits of Generalization**

This study was limited to U.S.-based marketplace Christian leaders who were currently in a discipleship relationship or had been within the past two years. Therefore, this study is not directly applicable to marketplace Christian leaders who were not in a discipleship relationship, Christians in general, either in or out of full-time ministry or a ministry-like organization (parachurch organization or Christian educational institution), marketplace Christian leaders in other regions of the world, or marketplace leaders in general.

**Ethical Considerations**

The researcher applied to and received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Liberty University (Appendix A) before collecting data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019). All modifications to the permission and recruitment letters and further expansion of the survey population were also submitted to and approved by the IRB (Appendices E, F, G, and H). Documents were disclosed that acknowledged the protection of human rights, including identification of the researcher’s information, participants’ involvement, the confidentiality of participants, the right to withdraw, and contact information.

This researcher had no affiliation with the churches contacted for the initial research to help reduce potential bias. However, in the subsequent contact (email and LinkedIn), the researcher used his knowledge of marketplace Christian leaders and his LinkedIn account to gain responses, introducing a potential for bias in the results. However, as far as the researcher can ascertain from an anonymous survey, the researcher had no leadership relationship with any respondent.
In the initial round of church contact, all churches were contacted via email to request their members’ participation in the study, explaining what the research entailed. It was intended that once participation was granted, church members were to be provided a link to the survey, which required acknowledging the consent form to continue. Qualtrics coded each survey response with a random ID number to correlate demographic information with each response. At no time was data collected that specifically identified any individual to protect participants’ privacy and anonymity.

This research was intended to survey adults in leadership positions in the marketplace, and no children, adolescents, or other at-risk populations were included in the research population. No personally-identifiably information was collected; thus, no harmful information of participants was collected or reported. Since information was collected about demographic data, including race and gender, no respondents were explicitly identified. All demographic data was associated with the unique responses by using the unique ID that Qualtrics provided for each respondent. The researcher followed all guidelines established by the IRB for data storage and protection, and the data was stored in a password-protected external hard drive.

**Instrumentation**

This quantitative study used several survey instruments to gather demographic data and measure the participants’ servant leadership, transformational leadership, and shared leadership characteristics. The surveys were distributed to the church members and other individuals who agreed to participate. The researcher obtained permission from all owners to use and modify the surveys identified below (Appendices J, K, and L).

Even though the survey was combined into a single instrument, there were several elements to the study (Appendices M, N, O, and P). Others have taken a similar approach of
combining survey instruments into a single device, and it has worked effectively (Cannon, 2019; Drummond, 2020; Hanson, 2020; Moore, 2020). Ramseur (2018) combined three validated instruments: the Servant Leadership Scale (SLS; Liden et al., 2008), the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI; Kouzes & Posner, 2013), and the Perceived Leader Integrity Scale (PLIS; Kouzes & Posner, 2013) (p. 109), so combining three leadership measurement instruments is not unprecedented in this type of research.

Following previous researchers’ approaches, the first section of the survey asked the respondents for demographic information. This questionnaire also asked respondents to self-assess their leadership style and discipleship relationship, if any (Appendix M). As outlined below, the remaining elements were divided into questions relating to servant, transformational, and shared leadership (Appendices N, O, and P, respectively).

**Discipleship and Demographic Questionnaire**

Since the selected instruments had neither demographic nor discipleship collection questions, the researcher developed a survey instrument to collect that information. The demographic questionnaire consisted of two sections (Appendix M) composed of ten and four questions. The first ten were self-assessment questions asking the respondent to identify that they were Christians in leadership positions in the marketplace and further requested a description of their discipleship relationship, whether short-term (less than six months) or long-term (6 months or more) one-on-one or group, or none. The first few questions were elimination questions. In other words, if a respondent selected *No* to the questions asking whether they considered themselves to be a Christian, were in a leadership position in the marketplace, and in a discipleship relationship, the skip-logic option in Qualtrics would bring them to the end of the survey. None of their data was included in the study. The subsequent few questions asked the
respondent to describe their discipleship relationship in terms of style and length, leadership situation (how many people they directly/indirectly supervise), and style. The study focused on a discipleship relationship occurring within the last two years, even though it can be argued that the lessons learned from discipleship can be lifelong (Hull, 2006; Ogden, 2016). However, this question helped answer research question four.

The last four questions were purely demographic information, including race, gender, neighborhood characteristic (urban, suburban, rural), and church size. All these questions aided the researcher in determining if the sample reflected a cross-section of the population.

**Servant Leadership Scale (SL-7)**

The Servant Leadership Scale (Appendix N) is a 7-statement instrument with several areas that measure whether a leader exhibits servant leadership characteristics (Liden et al., 2008). This instrument or its variants (the Servant Leadership Profile-Revised [SLP-R]) and variants of the (Self-Assessment of Servant Leadership [SASL]) have been used effectively in other studies (Clemons, 2018; Davis, 2018; Hayes, 2018; Jones, 2020; Milacci, 2021; Nee; 2020; Ragaisis, 2018; Ramseur, 2018; Raybourne, 2018; Warigon, 2020). The instrument uses a seven-point Likert scale with response options that range from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree with 1 = Strongly Disagree, 4 = Undecided, and 7 = Strongly Agree. This survey was used to answer research question one.

**Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™ (MLQ™)**

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™ (MLQ™) at Appendix O is used to measure various leadership types, including transformational leadership (Mind Garden, n.d.). “The MLQ™ has become the de facto standard for measuring transformational leadership and has undergone rigorous examination, review, and revision since the original version was produced by
Bass (1988)” (Mayner, 2017). The MLQ\textsuperscript{TM} is widely accepted (Ng & Rivera, 2018) and uses a five-point Likert scale consisting of several statements designed to determine the respondent’s attributes of transformation, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles (Avolio & Bass, 2004, as cited in Mayner, 2017). Ratings for the MLQ\textsuperscript{TM} Likert scale are 0 = Not at all, 1 = Once in a while, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Fairly often, or 4 = Frequently, if not always. This survey instrument was used to answer the second research question. All 45 statements were provided as part of the survey, but only the 20 statements dealing explicitly with the five transformational leadership factors, or the 5 Is (IIA, IIB, IM, IS, and IC), were used in the statistical analysis.

**Shared Leadership Measure (SLM)**

Compared to servant leadership and transformational leadership, few instruments measure shared leadership. Other researchers have developed their own (Kawata, 2012) due to the lack of measurement devices. Perhaps as a result, Brussow (2013) developed the Shared Leadership Measure. It is a twenty-question instrument that helps teams assess their overall level of shared leadership. The focus is on four “domains of shared leadership: Collaboration, Vision, Delegation, and Culture” (Brussow, 2013). It also uses a five-point Likert scale from 1 to 5, with 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. This survey instrument was slightly modified to focus on the leader and addressed the third research question.

**Validity and Reliability**

Validity is the extent to which an instrument “yields accurate assessments of the characteristics of the phenomenon in question” (Leedy & Ormord, 2019, p. 104), while reliability “is the degree to which an assessment strategy yields very similar results when the entity being assessed has not changed” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019, p. 107). The Servant Leadership
Survey and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™ (MLQ™) have produced high levels of validity and reliability in several studies. In contrast, the Shared Leadership Measure (SLM) has far less exposure in formal research.

In their goal of developing a shortened version of the Servant Leadership Scale (SLS), reducing the number of items from twenty-eight to seven, Liden et al. (2015) compared the two versions to determine if they both accurately measured the seven dimensions of shared leadership. The seven dimensions are: 1) emotional healing, 2) creating value for the community, 3) conceptual skills, 4) empowering, 5) helping subordinates grow and succeed, 6) putting subordinates first, and 7) behaving ethically (p. 255). They found that Cronbach's alpha reliability estimates for the short (SL-7) and long (SL-28) servant leadership composite scales in this sample were .80 and .95, respectively (p. 258). Their work was further validated by Grobler and Flotman (2020), who found “it could be used with confidence (and ethically) in the study of servant leadership” (p. 9). The Servant Leadership Profile-Revised survey, a variant of the SLS, had an overall reliability score of 0.937 on a 12-factor scale (Page & Wong, 2000 as cited in Clemons, 2018), with the individual reliability scores ranging from visionary leadership (0.569) to inspiring leadership (0.916) (Page & Wong, 2000, as cited in Clemons, 2018). The instrument’s validity was “tested by comparing the instrument to the Servant Leadership Questionnaire and Organizational Leadership Assessment, with relationships being the only category with an Alpha lower than .86” (Green et al., 2015, as cited in Clemons, 2018).

As stated above, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™ (MLQ™) has been used extensively in other studies (Clemons, 2018) and is one of the most widely used instruments to measure the comprehensive theory of leadership behaviors. The MLQ™ has been completed by more than 15,000 respondents, translated into many languages, and has excellent internal
consistency with alpha coefficients above the .80 level for all MLQ™ scales (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p. 22). Others have reported that the MLQ™ is the most valid measure of transformational and transactional leadership and “was deemed in the literature as the best and most appropriate instrument to study perceived leadership styles” (Austin, 2019, p. 64).

Alarifi (2020) conducted a pilot survey using the SLM (Brussow, 2013), in which he trained 47 educators to improve their practice of shared leadership. He used the SLM in pre-and post-training, with the pre-training results having a Cronbach’s alpha of .97 and post-training results of .93 (Alarifi, 2020, p. 36).

**Pilot Study**

While the SLS and its variants and the MLQ™ instruments have been used effectively with documented validity and reliability measures, other than the Alarifi (2020) study referenced above, the SLM has not. This researcher contacted the developer of the survey instrument and was informed he had no data on validity or reliability, so a pilot study was determined to be appropriate. The pilot study consisted of six marketplace Christian leaders to determine the SLM and combined survey instruments’ reliability and validity. The pilot study helped refine the questions and determine if the chosen instruments, as combined, created either confusion due to different Likert scales or frustration due to the length of time it took to complete the survey. Neither was the case, and no significant changes were made to the combined survey instrument. Details of the pilot study are addressed below.

**Research Procedures**

As a precursor to approval by the IRB, permission was sought and granted to use or modify each of the survey instruments (Appendices J, K, and L). Once permission was granted
for use or modification, the selected devices were compiled into a single survey, a Qualtrics account was established, and the survey was loaded for use in the pilot study.

Six known marketplace Christian leaders were contacted to participate in the pilot study, all also included in the formal study. Much like the formal research, the pilot study participants followed the same steps, using an emailed link to the survey with an embedded consent form.

Once the pilot study data was gathered, it was analyzed using IBM Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) statistical software package and was reviewed to ensure validity and reliability. After the pilot study, the SLM had a Cronbach’s alpha of .89 (Table 6), and the combined instrument had a Cronbach’s alpha of .91 (Table 7), both acceptable results. The overall feedback on the survey instrument was positive, with the wording for some demographic questions being slightly modified to eliminate confusion and clarify the requested responses. One participant mentioned that they found the framing of the leadership survey questions represented a more worldly perspective than they had anticipated. This was likely the result of using previously developed and validated survey mechanisms. The comment from this respondent may reinforce, even for marketplace Christian leaders, a perspective of separation of the sacred and secular since they perhaps believed that a survey of Christian leadership could not or should not include a secular questionnaire.

Even though each measurement instrument used a different Likert scale, none of the respondents found that distracting since each section was distinctly separated with an introduction of the measurement device and an explanation of the scale for the expected responses. Once the survey mechanism was modified, it was again published in Qualtrics, and the link was sent out for respondents to participate in the study.
Table 6.

**Shared Leadership Measure Cronbach’s Alpha**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.896</td>
<td>.906</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.

**Combined Survey Measure Cronbach’s Alpha**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.911</td>
<td>.927</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As stated previously, for the formal portion of the study, a random sampling of the 2,394 churches in the USA Churches database in the Southeastern U.S. was initially contacted via email (Appendix B) with the permission documents attached. The recruitment letter (Appendix C), a permission letter (Appendix D), and the IRB approval (Appendix A) were attached to gain acceptance and support from each church’s leadership team to garner the participation of as many marketplace Christian leaders as possible. However, only one of the churches contacted was willing to participate in the study. On several occasions, the researcher was in repeated contact with other church leaders via email, but each church was concerned about protecting their congregation from outside influence despite attestations to the contrary.

This researcher conducted two rounds of email and follow-up contact to all the randomly selected churches with valid email addresses that had not already declined to participate, for a total of four attempts at contact. Follow-up was made with several church leaders who had questions about the study, but every church that responded to the emails eventually declined to participate. Despite modifying the participation request email (Appendix E) and permission request (Appendix F) to clarify what the researcher requested from the church leadership, all
churches declined to participate. An interesting point is that several pastors and church leaders commended the researcher on the endeavor, but all eventually declined to participate. Thus, the alternate method of emails and a LinkedIn post was initiated.

The survey data was collected by sending emails to the churches and individuals and posting on LinkedIn requesting their participation and providing informed consent (Appendices A and H) via an embedded link to the Qualtrics website where individuals could enter their responses. No identifying data were collected, and each of the respondents was correlated with their responses by a unique Qualtrics ID. Once the survey window closed, all data was downloaded and imported into SPSS to conduct the analysis.

Data was collected via the Qualtrics website and imported into SPSS for statistical analysis. The survey results represent self-reported data for a single point in time, consistent with other survey research (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019).

Even though the survey was combined into a single instrument, there were several elements to the study, according to the construct outlined above (Appendices M, N, O, and P). As identified previously, others have combined survey instruments into a single device, which has worked effectively (Cannon, 2019; Drummond, 2020; Hanson, 2020; Moore, 2020; Ramseur, 2018). Unfortunately, none of the researchers have combined the same survey instruments as this study used. Therefore, the combined instrument was validated by a pilot study (referenced above) before use.

**Data Analysis and Statistical Procedures**

This quantitative study sought to determine the relationship between the two variables of discipleship relationship and leadership style. Since every participant in the study was already in a discipleship relationship, a statistical correlation could not be accomplished with Pearson’s r,
Spearman’s Rho, or Kendall’s tau. Since this study determined whether there was a statistically significant difference between groups (group discipleship and one-on-one discipleship) and the means of those groups for each leadership style, the most appropriate statistical test is the independent samples t-test (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019, p. 334). Later a 1-sample t-test was conducted to compare these results against those from several other similar studies.

**Data Analysis**

Consistent with other similar research projects, all data obtained via the Qualtrics website was analyzed using the SPSS statistical software package, Version 27. Data from each instrument was aligned with the appropriate research questions to determine the relationship. The relationship between this data and the RQs is briefly discussed here. Refer to Chapter 4 for more details.

Research Question One focused on the correlation between participation in a discipleship relationship and servant leadership. The Servant Leadership Scale data were analyzed to determine any relationship. The SL-7 has seven questions with a low score of 1 and a maximum of 49.

Research Question Two was intended to determine the correlation between participation in a discipleship relationship and transformational leadership characteristics, so the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™ (MLQ™) data was analyzed in the same way. The MLQ™ has 45 statements, but only the twenty exclusively focused on determining transformational leadership factors were included in the analysis for this study. Each statement has five response options available, ranging from zero to four, with a minimum possible score of 0 and a maximum score of 80.
Shared leadership is the subject of Research Question Three, and the Shared Leadership Measure (SLM) was used to gather the necessary information to answer the question. The SLM is a 20 question Likert-scale survey with five responses with a maximum score of 100 and a minimum of 20.

The final research question, Research Question Four, was intended to determine if there was a statistically significant correlation between participation in a discipleship relationship and a marketplace Christian leader exhibiting a particular leadership style. This question used the results of the other three research questions to determine if marketplace Christian leaders in a discipleship relationship exhibited a particular leadership style.

**Statistical Procedures**

Data collected by Qualtrics for this quantitative study was analyzed via the SPSS statistical software package, Version 27. The most widely used statistic for determining correlation is Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation (Pearson’s $r$) (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019). However, since discipleship relationship was not a scale variable (i.e., all participants were in a discipleship relationship), a $t$-test was used to compare the means between two discipleship groups. Then, a 1-sample $t$-test was used to compare the study results against previous studies that had used the same measurement instruments and reported results in the same manner as this study.

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter began with a brief introduction to the intended research methodology and then introduced the research problem and the purpose statement that will drive this research. The four research questions were identified, along with the corresponding null hypotheses. It then outlined the quantitative design that this research took. The population and sampling procedures
were described in detail, followed by a brief statement of the limits of generalization. The anticipated ethical considerations were identified, followed by a detailed description of the three survey instruments and the demographic data intended to be incorporated into the survey. The validity and reliability of each survey instrument and the pilot study plan were described. This chapter concluded with a description of the research procedures to be used and the anticipated data analysis and statistical procedures.

Discipleship is one of the last recorded commands that Jesus gave his disciples before his ascension. Discipleship is intended to be a lifelong transformational endeavor (Bonhoeffer, 1995; Eims, 1978; Hull, 2006; Ogden, 2016) that transforms Christian into the image of Christ (Kilner, 2015). Jesus is the model for all Christians in every aspect of life (Blackaby & Blackaby, 2011; Webb, 2018), including Christians who function in leadership positions, whether in or out of ministry.

As the extant literature attests (Atkinson, 2014; Bonnet, 2020; Bunkowske, 2019; Chen, 2020; Clemons, 2018; Davis, 2014; Ellis, 2020; Howell, 2003; Kull, 2003; McRae, 2020; Morse, 1996; Roach, 2016; Todd, 2004), Jesus was and is the model of servant, transformational, and shared leadership. Thus, Christians who function in leadership positions outside the church should emulate Jesus in their leadership style. However, no research existed that demonstrates a relationship between a Christian participating in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting a particular leadership style, particularly when focused on leadership in the marketplace.

Much of the literature has thus far focused on a specific element of this research, whether marketplace leadership (Davis, 2014), marketplace discipleship (Martinez 2018), or a particular leadership style. This quantitative study attempted to fill that gap using the above-stated statistical methodology.
CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Overview

This quantitative study attempted to determine if a correlation exists between a marketplace Christian leader being involved in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting characteristics of servant leadership, transformational leadership, or shared leadership within the secular marketplace. Discipleship is at the core of Christianity. It defines or should define who a Christian is and what a Christian does. For Christians, “Jesus was both example and exemplar…of how to live a godly life…but also an exemplar of the way such a life under God worked itself out concretely in the world” (Pelikan, 1985, p.176). A Christian is a disciple, and a disciple should manifest Jesus in their daily lives, be that in the monastery or marketplace. Christians should also manifest Jesus in how they lead, especially in the marketplace. For many non-Christians, Christians in leadership in the secular marketplace may be the only Christ they will ever see and the only Bible they will read. If marketplace Christian leaders are not exemplifying Jesus in their leadership, then they are no different than their non-Christian counterparts, having lost their ability to be salt and light to the world. If true, that would be a travesty and an abdication of their role as watchmen on the wall. This study was meant to determine if that was true from a leadership perspective.

This study was conducted with a random and convenience sample comprised of 34 people from across the U.S. who are Christians, currently or have recently been in a discipleship relationship, and are in a leadership position in the marketplace. The study was initially intended to be a random sample of individuals with those same characteristics currently attending a church in the Southeastern U.S., listed in the USA Churches database. However, since the initial
response was minimal, the researcher, with the approval of the IRB (Appendix H), expanded the
survey population.

The study combined three distinct leadership surveys; the Servant Leadership Scale
(SLS), the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™ (MLQ™), and the Shared Leadership
Measure (SLM) with a total of 72 statements plus demographic questions, all hosted on Liberty
University’s Qualtrics site. The servant leadership scale consisted of seven statements, the
MLQ™ had 45 statements, and the SLM had 20. Each survey instrument was in various Likert
scale styles, each with slightly different numerical measures.

This chapter provides the results and findings of the data analysis beginning with a
review of the compilation protocol and measure, followed by demographic and sample data,
analysis, and findings. It concludes with an evaluation of the research design.

**Research Questions**

**RQ1.** What relationship, if any, exists between a marketplace Christian leader’s
participation in a discipleship relationship and exemplifying servant leadership?

**RQ2.** What relationship, if any, exists between a marketplace Christian leader’s
participation in a discipleship relationship and exemplifying transformational leadership?

**RQ3.** What relationship, if any, exists between a marketplace Christian leader’s
participation in a discipleship relationship and exemplifying shared leadership?

**RQ4.** Does participation in a discipleship relationship correlate to practicing a particular
leadership style for marketplace Christian leaders?

**Hypotheses**

**H01:** There is no statistically significant relationship between a marketplace Christian
leader being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting servant leadership.

**H02:** There is no statistically significant relationship between a marketplace Christian
leader being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting transformational leadership.

**H03:** There is no statistically significant relationship between a marketplace
Christian leader being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting shared leadership.
**H04:** There is no statistically significant relationship between a marketplace Christian leader being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting a particular leadership style.

**Compilation Protocol and Measures**

The data collection phase for the survey study began on August 5, 2021, and ended on November 30, 2021. The ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global (n.d.) searches were ongoing from July 15, 2021, until December 15, 2021.

All the survey data was collected using Liberty University’s Qualtrics website. The initial population was a random sampling of marketplace Christian leaders attending church from one of more than 2,000 churches in the Southeastern U.S. that were identified in the USA Churches database. A total of 244 churches were randomly selected for initial contact by email; however, 45 had no email address in the USA Churches database, and no email address was found by conducting an internet search on the church’s name. A total of 15 emails were undeliverable, and after three weeks, five churches declined to participate. Only one church responded positively, resulting in seven completed surveys, a return rate of less than one percent.

After reviewing the responses from those churches that declined, a request was made to the IRB to rewrite the recruitment memo to clarify the researcher’s intention not to request access to the church’s membership rolls.

After approval from the IRB, a follow-up email (Appendix E) with the new recruitment memo (Appendix G) was sent to the remaining 184 churches with valid contact information. For this round of emails, five churches responded and declined to participate, one after a series of emails from the church leadership asking the researcher follow-up questions, resulting in a total of four survey attempts and 0 valid surveys, a positive return rate of less than one percent after more than 30 days.
Once again, the researcher contacted the IRB, requesting the abandonment of the USA Churches database, expanding the population to the entire United States, and modifying the recruitment methodology to include email and social media recruitment.

After approval from the IRB (Appendix H), a post to the researcher’s LinkedIn account and an email (the post and email were identical) to known marketplace Christian leaders and Christian business organizations (Appendix I) was sent. This methodology resulted in 50 attempts and 27 valid surveys in less than 30 days, for a total of 34 valid surveys out of 63 attempts.

The study included each respondent who completed the survey, including demographic questions and the three survey instruments (SL-7, MLQ™, and the SLM). The return rate is unknown because the post and email encouraged individuals to share the link with other known marketplace Christian leaders. All data files were compiled and downloaded from the Qualtrics site and analyzed using SPSS Version 27.

Searches of the ProQuest database on the three leadership styles (servant, transformational, and shared) in the title resulted in over 600 doctoral dissertations on servant leadership, 1,100 on transformational leadership, and 136 on shared leadership. Additional searches and further refinement of the search terms by adding the three measurement instruments and the term quantitative resulted in a final review of 104 dissertations for servant leadership, 52 for transformational leadership, and 8 for shared leadership. All those were searched for the specific measurement devices and how the data was captured and reported. Only quantitative research that used the same measurement device and reported the results similarly (either total score or average score for servant leadership and composite scores or 5 Is for transformational leadership or the SLM for shared leadership) were used. A total of 13 servant leadership studies,
12 dissertations on transformational leadership, and none for shared leadership were used for comparison. All others either did not report their results in a useable manner or used another dissimilar measurement device.

**Demographic and Sample Data**

Demographic data collected (Appendix M) included gender, race, the length of time one had been a Christian, neighborhood type (urban, suburban, or rural), estimated church size (small, medium, large, and mega) using the same sizes as described in the USA Churches database, self-assessed leadership style, and supervisory role (direct or indirect and the number of people over whom supervision was exercised). Other information collected was used to ensure only self-assessed Christians that were in leadership positions in the marketplace and were or had recently (within the previous two years) been in a discipleship relationship.

A total of 63 people responded to the survey, with 29 attempts not qualifying for inclusion in the study for reasons shown below in Table 8. Two individuals answered No to the consent form, five did not complete the survey, and the remaining non-participants either were not in a discipleship relationship or not in a leadership position in the secular marketplace.

**Table 8.**

*Reasons for nonparticipation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Classification</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non Participants</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in a discipleship program</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>62.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not complete the survey</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in a leadership position in the secular marketplace</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not agree to consent form</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Using the skip logic feature in Qualtrics, all respondents who answered No to the questions dealing with being in a leadership position in the secular marketplace or a discipleship relationship were taken to the end of the survey without the ability to respond to any of the remaining questions. The only other requirement for participation was acknowledging that they were self-assessed Christians 18 years of age or older. These questions were embedded as the first part of the survey. A No answer to any of these questions would exit the individual from the survey.

The sampling method for the USA Churches population was systematic sampling, as it “can have precision-equivalent random sampling (Fowler, 2014, as cited in Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 150). Of the 2,394 churches in the Southeastern U.S., the researcher alphabetized the list by state and size (small, medium, large, and mega) and then used a random number generator from 1 to 10 to determine which churches would be contacted. If there were more than ten churches in the category, the researcher selected every \emph{nth} church in that category resulting in approximately ten percent of the churches being initially contacted. It was believed that ten percent would be a sufficient percentage of churches since the membership of those 244 churches exceeded 90,000 (see footnote 3 and Table 4).

Once the USA Churches database and the Southeastern U.S. were abandoned as a geographic focus for the research, the sampling methodology became nonprobability convenience sampling. It is less desirable than other types of sampling (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 150), but the options were few. Although non-probability convenience sampling was used, the researcher introduced an element of random sampling when he requested the respondents forward the link to the survey link to other marketplace Christian leaders or make it available on their social media sites. It is unknown how many people did that or how many
completed surveys were due to people forwarding the link or posting it to their social media sites.

Since the total number of valid responses received was 34, the researcher returned to the sample size calculator (Creative Research Systems, n.d.) and calculated the confidence interval given an estimated population of 5 million (see footnote 3 and Table 5). The result was a confidence interval of 16.81.

The response or return rate of the survey could not be known due to the way it was posted and sent and the anonymity of the survey instrument. However, the researcher has 450 LinkedIn contacts, and all 450 of those contacts viewed the post (according to the researcher’s LinkedIn home page). Additionally, an email was sent to several marketplace Christian leaders known to the researcher with a request to forward the email or make the link available on their social media sites. Using the 450 views of the post as a guide, the return rate of over 40 shows a return of approximately 9 percent, far exceeding the return rate of almost 400 emails sent out with one church participating and fewer than ten completed surveys.

A total of 63 people responded to the survey, with 29 respondents either answering No to some of the elimination questions or not completing the questionnaire (Table 8). Only those individuals who completed the entire survey were included in the analysis. As is evident from Table 9, there is insignificant diversity in the population. Of the 34 respondents, only two were female (6%), and only 6 of the 33 (17%) were other than Caucasians. The lack of diversity continued with several other demographic elements. Only one respondent (3%) stated they had been a Christian for less than ten years, and only 8 (24%) were from other than a suburban neighborhood. While the above demographic data was not explicitly measured, it was collected
to help identify a sample with more demographic diversity. The variables that were being
evaluated, specifically leadership style and discipleship, were far more diverse.

Table 9.

*Demographic data for all respondents*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Classification</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Participants</th>
<th>Cumulative percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>94.12%</td>
<td>94.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.88%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of time a Christian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 year</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 3 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 5 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 10 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 10 years</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>97.06%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.88%</td>
<td>5.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.82%</td>
<td>14.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>82.35%</td>
<td>97.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to answer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Supervision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct - 10 or more</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>41.18%</td>
<td>41.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct - &lt;10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23.53%</td>
<td>64.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect - 10 or more</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14.71%</td>
<td>79.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect - &lt;10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20.59%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-assessed leadership Style</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directive</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laissez-Faire</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participative/Shared*</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11.76%</td>
<td>14.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team/Group*</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17.65%</td>
<td>32.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational*</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>35.29%</td>
<td>67.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant*</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32.35%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Discipleship Relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long term - one on-one</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>35.29%</td>
<td>35.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short term - one on one</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14.71%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small group in church</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14.71%</td>
<td>64.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small group outside church</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26.47%</td>
<td>91.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.82%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood Type</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.82%</td>
<td>8.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>76.47%</td>
<td>85.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban/City</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14.71%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Church Size</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to 50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.88%</td>
<td>5.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 to 300</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>38.24%</td>
<td>38.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>301 to 2000</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>38.24%</td>
<td>38.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000+</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17.65%</td>
<td>17.65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Values-based leadership styles

Before data cleaning, the discipleship responses were distributed relatively evenly between those in a one-on-one relationship (50%) and those in some sort of small group (41%), as was supervision with those who supervised 10 or more and those who supervised less than 10 with 17 in each category. There was more disparity between direct (64%) and indirect (35%) leadership. One other aspect that was collected, although not evaluated for this study, was the self-assessed leadership style of the respondents.

For each of the available responses for self-assessed leadership style, the researcher provided a concise explanation of the leadership style (see Appendix M) derived from the descriptions in Northouse (2016). Directive leadership was defined as setting clearly defined objectives and rules; Participative/Shared was defined as all group members work together to make decisions; Team/Group was defined as the group participates, but the leader makes decisions; Laissez-Fare was defined as the leader relies on subordinates to make decisions; Situational was defined as a leadership style based on competence and commitment of subordinates, and Servant was described as focusing on growth and well-being of subordinates.
While the categories provided as response options were not explicitly the same as those being evaluated, elements of each leadership style in the survey instruments correspond with those styles being evaluated. Participative leadership “consists of inviting followers to share in the decision making” (Northouse, 2016, p. 118), and shared leadership is placed in the same category as team and group leadership according to Northouse (pp. 363-384). Although situational leadership is not the same as transformational leadership, it is “one of the more widely recognized approaches to leadership” (Northouse, 2016, p. 93). Therefore, the researcher assumed situational leadership would be more widely understood by the respondents than transformational leadership. Finally, Laissez-Faire is an explicit element in the MLQ™.

Although Directive is not one of the styles measured by the device, there are shared characteristics with the contingent reward, management by exception (active), and management by exception (passive) factors (Avolio & Bass, 2021) within the MLQ™. Unsurprisingly, since all the respondents were Christians, the vast majority (97%) self-assessed more values-based leadership styles (Kouzes & Posner, 2017) than non. Conversely, one respondent identified themself as having a Directive style of leadership which appears to be inconsistent with Jesus’ leadership style as described in Chapter 2. However, if their organization demands a more directive approach due to repetitive tasks or those they lead have less competence, this style may be appropriate (St. Thomas University Online, 2019).

Data Analysis and Findings

The SPSS, Version 27 software package was used to perform statistical calculations and generate charts and graphs for analyzing the data.
Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics (frequencies, mean, SD, and histograms) for each of the examined variables are briefly described in the following paragraphs, after which the discussion of each of the research questions and the data accepting or rejecting the null hypotheses were analyzed.

Discipleship Relationship

In this research, discipleship relationship was compared to the variables of leadership style as determined by the responses to the survey instrument. Each respondent was asked two questions to determine their current or previous discipleship relationship. The first discipleship question was introduced with the definition of discipleship, so the respondents understood the researcher’s definition of discipleship. The definition provided was: For the purpose of this study, a discipleship relationship is defined as: A relationship built on trust which a person enters wherein a more experienced Christian disciples or trains a less experienced Christian with the goal of becoming more like Christ.

After being provided the definition as an introduction to the question, they were asked if they were currently, or had been within the last two years, in a discipleship relationship. Answering no would exit the individual from the survey, and their data was not included in the analysis.

A follow-up question asked them to describe their discipleship relationship with several responses available from which to choose. The choices were: Long-term (more than 6 months) one-on-one discipleship with another Christian; Short-term (6 months or less) one-on-one discipleship with another Christian; Weekly or other meetings (other than weekly worship/Bible study meetings) in the church; Weekly or other meetings (other than weekly worship/Bible study meetings)
meetings) in member’s homes (small groups); or None of the Above, categorized as Other in Table 9.

Three respondents chose none of the above and were provided with a text box to describe their discipleship relationship. One deemed that being a Sunday School teacher was a discipleship relationship. One described a virtual discipleship group to which they belonged. The third person felt that none of the answers adequately addressed an authentic discipleship relationship. Based on their responses in the text box, the Sunday School teacher was added to the small group inside the church, whereas the other two were added to the small group outside the church. Table 10 shows the distribution of responses after the data was cleaned.

**Table 10.**

**Discipleship Relationship Type**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipleship Relationship Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long term - one on-one</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>35.29%</td>
<td>35.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short term - one on one</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14.71%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small group in church</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17.65%</td>
<td>67.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small group outside church</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32.35%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All respondents who answered the discipleship question and completed the survey were included in the study. After ascertaining their discipleship relationship, each respondent was asked to respond to a series of questions or statements, all focused on determining how well they exemplified three leadership types: Servant, Transformational, and Shared.

**Servant Leadership**

The Servant Leadership Scale (SL-7) (Appendix N) was used to answer RQ1, asking what relationship exists between a marketplace Christian leader’s participation in a discipleship relationship and exemplifying servant leadership. The seven statements were used to determine a
participant’s self-assessed demonstration of servant leadership. The SL-7 is a validated Likert style measurement device that includes seven statements and is a shortened version of the 28-question Servant Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ28) (Liden et al., 2015). Respondents were given seven statements to which they choose from a range of responses: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Slightly disagree, (4) Neutral, (5) Slightly agree, (6) Agree, and (7) Strongly agree. Responses were totaled and averaged. The lowest possible score for the seven statements would be 7, which would indicate that an individual is deficient in each of the seven dimensions of servant leadership.

In contrast, the highest score of 49 would indicate that the individual was very high on the dimensions, thus a genuine, albeit self-assessed, servant leader. As shown in Table 11, the averages ranged between 5.43 and 7, and total scores ranged from a low of 38 to a high of 49, with means of 6.1 and 42.7, respectively. Histograms for both averages and totals are shown in Figures 2 and 3.

Table 11.

Servant Leadership Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Servant Leadership Average Scores</th>
<th>Servant Leadership Total Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Valid 34</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Missing 0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>42.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>43.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>.383</td>
<td>2.680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 2.

*Servant Leadership Average Scores Histogram*

![Histogram of Servant Leadership Average Scores]

- Mean = 6.10
- Std. Dev. = 0.84
- N = 34

Figure 3.

*Servant Leadership Total Scores Histogram*

![Histogram of Servant Leadership Total Scores]

- Mean = 42.71
- Std. Dev. = 2.68
- N = 24
In the Liden et al. (2015) research, two studies were conducted consisting of five samples and 1,499 respondents of diverse populations, none of whom indicated they were Christians or in a discipleship relationship. The mean for all the samples was not reported, but those that were reported ranged from a low of 4.67 to a high of 4.9. Those means were compared to the SL-28 means, ranging from a low of 4.75 to a high of 4.94 (Liden et al., 2015). Both the SL-7 and SL-28 results were significantly lower than the results of this study which only included self-assessed Christians in a discipleship relationship. As Figure 4 demonstrates, more than 95% of respondents agreed, to varying degrees, with all the statements.

Three responses are outliers in the data (Figure 4). Statements 6 and 7 had three responses that demonstrated respondents disagreed with one of these statements. Statement 6 concerns providing subordinates the flexibility to deal with challenging situations, and two respondents selected *slightly disagree*. This implies these two respondents might not provide their subordinates the flexibility to deal with difficult situations. It is difficult to determine why they chose that response precisely, but there may be several reasons. Much like the directive leadership style described earlier with lower follower competency, such a situation may require more leader direction in challenging situations.

**Figure 4.**

*Servant Leadership Scores Distribution*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Know work related issues</th>
<th>Subordinates’ career development</th>
<th>Subordinates seek your help with problems</th>
<th>Give back to the community</th>
<th>Subordinates’ interests ahead of yours</th>
<th>Flexibility to handle challenges</th>
<th>Not compromising ethical principles</th>
<th>Averages</th>
<th>Cumulative Averages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>26.47%</td>
<td>26.47%</td>
<td>26.47%</td>
<td>35.29%</td>
<td>17.64%</td>
<td>14.71%</td>
<td>82.35%</td>
<td>32.77%</td>
<td>32.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>73.53%</td>
<td>55.88%</td>
<td>55.88%</td>
<td>44.12%</td>
<td>58.82%</td>
<td>47.06%</td>
<td>14.71%</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>82.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>14.71%</td>
<td>14.71%</td>
<td>11.76%</td>
<td>20.58%</td>
<td>32.35%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>13.44%</td>
<td>96.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
<td>8.82%</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>2.52%</td>
<td>98.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly Disagree</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>5.88%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.42%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 See Liden et al. (2015) for details of each of the studies and the populations.
Statement 7 says, “I would not compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success.” For this statement, one person selected disagree, implying that they would compromise their ethical principles to achieve success. This researcher found it somewhat surprising that a self-attested Christian would compromise their ethical principles to achieve success. However, the individual may have misread the question and interpreted it differently. Conversely, this individual may believe that it is acceptable to compromise one’s ethical principles to achieve success occasionally. Without asking the person directly, which is not possible due to the anonymity of the survey, this researcher cannot be sure which is correct.

Coincidentally, all three respondents that disagreed with statements 6 and 7 chose Team/Group in the demographic questions at the beginning of the survey as the leadership style they felt they practiced. Also, their overall responses on the SL-7 tended to be toward the lower end of the scale. The two respondents who slightly disagreed with statement 6 scored 40 and 39 overall out of 49. The individual that would compromise their ethical principles to achieve success was one of two respondents to score a 38 out of 49.

**Transformational Leadership**

Research question two asked what relationship exists between a marketplace Christian leader’s participation in a discipleship relationship and exemplifying transformational leadership. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™ (MLQTM) was used to answer this question, although only 20 of the 45 statements were used in the study. The MLQ™ is a proprietary measurement device, and Mind Garden, Inc. (Mind Garden, n.d.) authorized its use (Appendix K), with the stipulation that no changes may be made to any portion of the instrument.

The MLQ™ (Appendix O) measures leadership factors associated with transformational and transactional leadership, passive avoidant behaviors, and leadership outcomes. Since this
study was focused on transformational leadership, only those statements specifically related to the transformational leadership factors (Idealized Influence attributes and behaviors, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individual Consideration, also known as the 5 Is) were included in the study.

The MLQ™, like the SLM, uses a five-response Likert-style scale that asked people to respond to how often they exhibited a series of behaviors from 0 to 4 with 0 meaning not at all, 1 meaning once in a while, 2 meaning they exhibited that behavior sometimes, 3 meaning fairly often, and 4 meaning frequently, if not always.

Responses were totaled and averaged and then used for calculations in SPSS. The lowest possible score for the twenty statements was 0, which would indicate that an individual does not exhibit any behaviors associated with transformational leadership. The highest score of 80 would indicate that the individual strongly exhibited all five transformational leadership characteristics.

As shown in Table 12, the scores range from a low of 46 to a high of 78 with averages between 2 and 4 and means of 64.03 and 3.15, respectively. Additionally, Figures 5 and 6 show the distribution of the scores. However, these measurements do not tell the entire story as Mind Garden, Inc. (Mind Garden, n.d.) only provides data on percentile for each characteristic rather than scores for the entire survey (Figure 7).
Table 12.

Transformational Leadership Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Transformational Leadership Average Scores</th>
<th>Transformational Leadership Total Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Missing</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>64.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median</strong></td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>64.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Std. Deviation</strong></td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>8.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minimum</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maximum</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.

Transformational Leadership Average Scores Histogram

*Note:* 0=Not at all; 1=Once in a while; 2=Sometimes; 3=Fairly often; 4=Frequently, if not always
Figure 6.

*Transformational Leadership Totals Histogram*

Note: A score of 0 would mean the respondent answered *Not at all* for every statement, and a score of 80 would mean the respondent answered *Frequently, if not always* for every statement.

Figure 7.

*Percentiles for Individual Scores Based on Self Ratings (U.S.)*

Figure 7 removed to comply with copyright.

Note: Percentile scores from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™ provided to the researcher for this study (Mindgarden Inc., 2021, p. 108).

Transformational leadership consists of five characteristics or factors, all measured by the MLQ™ instrument. As defined by Bass and Riggio (2006), those are Idealized Influence (Attributes) (IIA), Idealized Influence (Behavior) (IIB), Inspirational Motivation (IM), Intellectual Stimulation (IS), and Individualized Consideration (IC). The averages for each characteristic are shown in Table 13. In comparison to the percentiles in Figure 7 above, the scores for the discipleship group are in the 50 to 60 percentile for each factor.
### Table 13.

**Transformational Leadership Averages by Element**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>IIA Avg</th>
<th>IIB Avg</th>
<th>IM Avg</th>
<th>IS Avg</th>
<th>IC Avg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N Valid</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Shared Leadership**

For RQ 3, determining what relationship, if any, exists between a marketplace Christian leader’s participation in a discipleship relationship and exemplifying shared leadership, the Shared Leadership Measure (SLM) was used to determine the relationship. Like the previous two survey instruments, the SLM was also a Likert scale, again with five options for responses. However, in contrast to the MLQ™, the response options went from 1 to 5 with 1 equating to *Strongly Disagree*, 2 meaning *Disagree*, choosing 3 meant the respondent was *Neutral* about the statement, 4 meant the respondent *Agreed* with the statement, and 5 meant *Strongly Agree*. Very similar to the other measurement devices, the respondent was provided with a statement such as *I collaborate regularly with my team members to achieve goals* and was then asked to select a response from 1 to 5. The descriptive statistics of the responses are in Table 14.

For the SLM, the lowest score possible was 20, with the highest score being 100. As shown in Table 14, the scores for the respondents had a mean of 4.35 and a maximum of 5 out of 5 for the averages and a mean of 87, and the minimum score of any respondent was 71 for the totals.
Table 14.

*Shared Leadership Frequencies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Shared Average</th>
<th>Shared Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N Valid</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Missing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>87.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>87.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>7.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8.

*Shared Leadership Average Scores Histogram*

*Note:* 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree
Figure 9.

*Shared Leadership Totals Histogram*

Note: A score of 20 would indicate the respondent answered *Strongly Disagree* for every statement, and a score of 100 would indicate the respondent answered *Strongly Agree* for every statement.

As Table 15 demonstrates, almost 93% of respondents agreed, to varying degrees, with all the statements.

**Table 15.**

*Shared Leadership Response Percentages*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.94%</td>
<td>7.35%</td>
<td>8.43%</td>
<td>49.56%</td>
<td>43.24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages were the percentage of total responses for each category

**Discipleship and Leadership**

The last research question, **RQ4**, asked if participation in a discipleship relationship correlates to practicing a particular leadership style for marketplace Christian leaders. The above statistical analysis does not provide sufficient data to correlate with this research question. Every
participant in the study was in a discipleship relationship and exhibited varying degrees of each leadership style. To answer this and the other three research questions thoroughly, the data for each leadership style and discipleship group was compared to several other studies that have been conducted on various groups using the same measurement devices.

**Analysis**

For this study, **RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3** were answered by doing an independent samples *t*-test to compare the two discipleship types (one-on-one and group) with the means of each of the leadership styles. In the case of **RQ 1** and **RQ2**, those results were then compared with previous studies to determine any statistical difference between the current study results and others.

**Research Question One**

Research Question 1 asked if there was any correlation between participating in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting characteristics of servant leadership. The data indicated that this was the case. Table 16 shows the group mean and standard deviation for group and one-on-one discipleship types.

**Table 16.**

*Servant Leadership and Discipleship Type*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipleship Type</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Servant Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Scores</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td>.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Scores</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>41.71</td>
<td>2.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>43.71</td>
<td>2.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After conducting an independent samples *t*-test, those participating in a one-on-one discipleship relationship scored higher on servant leadership (*M*=6.24, *SD* = .33) and (*M*=43.71, *SD*=2.29) than did those in the group discipleship relationship (*M*=5.96, *SD* = .39) and
(\(M=41.71, SD=2.73\)), \(t(32) = -2.31, p = .02\) and \(t(32) = -2.31, p = .02\) for both average scores and total scores respectively. Since \(p = .05\), there is a statistically significant difference between the two types of discipleship relationship relative to servant leadership as measured by the SL-7.

These results only show the difference between the two discipleship groups but do not show how participating in a discipleship relationship affects how one exemplifies servant leadership. To fully answer the question, this researcher analyzed 13 studies using the SL-7 with reported means and standard deviations for averages (8 studies) or totals (5 studies).

Each of those studies focused on different groups of organizations, from the medical community (Fitzgibbon, 2021; Raybourne, 2018) to NCAA Division II Athletic Directors (Nee, 2020) and the military (Hayes, 2018). One additional study had religious or spiritual underpinnings (Wilkinson, 2020), but those scores could not be used for comparison because of how the results were cataloged. None of the other studies focused on Christian discipleship either explicitly or implicitly. Table 17 shows the mean and SD for each of the studies that reported averages and the results from this study.
Table 17.

*SL-7 Average Scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Scores</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One-on-one Average</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Average</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nee</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitzgibbon</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>5.49</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>5.37</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ragaisis</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>SL-7 Weighted Average</em></td>
<td>180</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christiansen</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curukovic</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jones</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayes</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* SL-7 weighted average and SD were calculated by multiplying the M and SD by N for each non-discipleship study, summing the totals, and dividing by the sum of N. (Sum of N = 1617).

After comparing the weighted averages of the other studies with the two discipleship groups, a 1-sample *t*-test was conducted to compare the average mean of the eight studies that reported averages and the combined discipleship group mean (Table 18). Above, in Table 11 (Servant Leadership Frequencies), the combined discipleship group average scores were $M=6.1$. With a test value of $M=4.45$, $t(33) = 25.10$, $p = .00$, there is a statistically significant difference between the discipleship group and the non-discipleship group, with the discipleship group scoring significantly higher (1.65 mean difference) on the SL-7.

Table 18.

1-Sample *t*-test for Servant Leadership Averages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Value = 4.45</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 19 shows the mean and SD for each of the studies that reported total scores, along with the results from this study highlighted in gray.

**Table 19.**

**SL-7 Total Scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Studies</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One-on-one Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>43.71</td>
<td>2.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>41.71</td>
<td>2.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milacci</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>37.93</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warnigan</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>37.12</td>
<td>9.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raybourne</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>32.98</td>
<td>11.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*SL-7 Weighted Totals Average</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>32.80</td>
<td>7.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winkler</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>30.99</td>
<td>5.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles Sanchez Jones</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>29.64</td>
<td>10.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* SL-7 weighted totals average and SD were calculated by multiplying the M and SD by N for each non-discipleship study, summing the totals, and dividing by the sum of N (714).

Again, after comparing the weighted totals of the other studies with the two discipleship groups, a 1-sample t-test was conducted to compare the average mean of the five studies that reported totals and the combined discipleship group mean (Table 20). In Table 11 above, the combined discipleship group resulted in $M=42.71$. With a test value of $M=32.8$, $t(33) = 21.55$, $p = .00$, there is a statistically significant difference between the discipleship group and the non-discipleship group, with the discipleship group scoring significantly higher (9.91 mean difference) on the SL-7.

**Table 20.**

1-Sample t-test for Servant Leadership Totals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Servant Total</td>
<td>21.551</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>9.906</td>
<td>8.97, 10.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While the discipleship group scored significantly higher for average and total scores, the comparisons are not exact. This study relied on a self-assessment of the servant leadership characteristics as measured by the SL-7 survey, while the other studies had a mix of self-assessments (Milacci, 2021; Nee, 2020; Raybourne, 2018), assessments of their supervisors (Christensen, 2020; Curukovic, 2019; Davis, 2018; Hayes, 2018; Jones, 2020; Los Angeles Sanchez Jones, 2017; Warigon, 2020; Winkler, 2020), or a mix of both (Fitzgibbon, 2021; Ragaisis, 2018).

As reported above, with a test value of $M=4.45$, $t(33) = 25.10$, $p = .00$ for average scores and a test value of $M=32.8$, $t(33) = 21.55$, $p = .00$ for totals, there is a statistically significant difference between the discipleship group and the non-discipleship group. These results lead to the conclusion for RQ 1 that there is a statistically significant relationship between being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting servant leadership characteristics, rejecting H01 that there is no relationship.

Research Question Two

Research question 2 asked if there was any relationship between participating in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting transformational leadership characteristics. The data indicated mixed results. Table 21 shows the group mean and standard deviation for group and one-on-one discipleship types.
Table 21.

Transformational Leadership and Discipleship Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipleship Type</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transformational Leadership Averages</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformational Leadership Totals</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>61.35</td>
<td>8.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>66.71</td>
<td>6.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After conducting an independent samples *t*-test for both types of discipleship, those participating in a one-on-one discipleship relationship scored higher on transformational leadership (*M*=3.29, *SD*=.47) and (*M*=66.71, *SD*=6.73) than did those in the group discipleship relationship (*M*=3.0, *SD*=.5) and (*M*=61.35, *SD*=8.59), *t*(32) = -2.31, *p* =.09 and *t*(32) = -2.31, *p* =.05 for both average scores and total scores respectively. With *p* =.09 and .05 on averages and totals respectively, there is no statistically significant difference between the two types of discipleship relationship.

As with RQ1 and servant leadership, these results only show the difference between two discipleship groups but do not show how participating in a discipleship relationship affects how one exemplifies transformational leadership. Similarly, this researcher analyzed 12 studies wherein the researchers used the MLQ and reported means and *SD* in much the same way as this study.

In contrast to the studies on servant leadership, all but two studies (Austin, 2019; Kiperos, 2019) were focused on transformational leadership in churches or religious education. Four of the studies (Bragg, 2008; Carpenter, 2006; Christopherson, 2014; Rumley, 2011) touched on discipleship but from an outcome of transformational leadership by pastors...
or Christian school leaders. Others, Brooks (2018), Parrish (2009), and White (2012), were focused on Christians or congregations in general. Table 22 shows the mean and SD for each of the studies that reported averages and the results from this study. Of note, the Christopherson (2014) study mean, which focused on declining churches, is lower than the MLQ™ mean of 3.24, and the group average is also lower. However, all scores fall within +/- 1 SD of the mean.

**Table 22.**

*Transformational Leadership Composite Scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brooks</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parrish</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumley</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-on-one Average</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scuderi</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLQ™ Averages**</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Average</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopherson</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1.13*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Christopherson (2014) did not report SD but reported individual scores. SD was calculated using scores reported.

** MLQ™ Averages and SD were calculated using the composite scores from each study.

Since the discipleship groups are split between above and below the mean of the rest of the groups, another 1-sample t-test was conducted to compare the combined discipleship group against the mean of the other studies. Table 23 shows the results of the 1-sample t-test.
Table 23.

1-Sample t-test for Transformational Leadership Totals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trans_Avg</td>
<td>-1.08</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>- .09</td>
<td>- .27 to .08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 12 above, the combined discipleship group total scores resulted in $M=3.15$. With a test value of $M=3.24$, $t(33) = -1.08$, $p = .29$, there is no statistically significant difference between the discipleship group and the non-discipleship group, with the discipleship group slightly lower (-.09 mean difference) on the transformational leadership factors of the MLQ™.

Several studies did not provide composite scores for the five elements of transformational leadership (5 Is in MLQ™) but did report means and SD for each of those elements. To facilitate comparison, Table 24 shows the group mean and standard deviation for both one-on-one and group discipleship types and the transformational leadership composite averages (5 Is).
Table 24.

Transformational Leadership (5 I) Scores for Disciple Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipleship Type</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIA Average</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIB Average</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM Average</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS Average</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IC Average</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Is Average</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As is evident from Table 24, in every category of transformational leadership, those in a one-on-one discipleship relationship outscored those in a group discipleship relationship in exhibiting transformational leadership traits. The independent samples t-test reinforces that conclusion. Except for the intellectual stimulation (IS) category where \( p = .66 \), every category shows that \( p < .05 \), demonstrating there is a significant difference between the two discipleship relationships. However, to determine a difference between being in a discipleship relationship and reflecting transformational leadership, this researcher compared the 5 I scores for the study participants with those from the other six studies.

For comparison, all the scores from the studies that reported for the 5 Is are shown in Tables 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29, with those from this study highlighted in gray. The discipleship groups’ scores are highlighted in the tables. Also included are the Avolio & Bass (2004) (as cited in Schell, 2010) scores. Except for Austin (2019), who studied athletic training programs, and Kiperos (2019), who studied transformational leadership related to adopting agile software.
development, all the studies involved Christians in leadership inside the church or Christian educational environment (Flieger, 2014).

Table 25.

*Transformational Leadership IIA Scores by Study Sorted by Mean*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flieger</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bragg</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scuderi</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bass &amp; Avolio</td>
<td>3375</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIA Averages*</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiperos</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* IIA Averages and SD were calculated based on the composite scores reported in the selected studies.
Table 26.

Transformational Leadership IIB Scores by Study Sorted by Mean

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bragg</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flieger</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scuderi</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bass &amp; Avolio</td>
<td>3375</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIB Averages*</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiperos</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* IIB Averages and $SD$ were calculated based on the composite scores reported in the selected studies.

Table 27.

Transformational Leadership IM Scores by Study Sorted by Mean

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flieger</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bragg</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scuderi</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM Averages*</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bass &amp; Avolio</td>
<td>3375</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiperos</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* IM Averages and $SD$ were calculated based on the composite scores reported in the selected studies.
Table 28.

*IM Averages and SD were calculated based on the composite scores reported in the selected studies.

Table 29.

The overall dispersion of scores for the two discipleship types is noticeable when breaking out the scores into the 5 Is. While the one-on-one group was still higher in every category, as is evident in Table 24, the two discipleship types are not closely grouped compared
to the other studies. Except for the inspirational motivation (IM) and intellectual stimulation (IS) elements of transformational leadership, the discipleship group does not significantly differentiate itself from the other studies, including the Bass & Avolio study. Even the participants in Austin’s (2019) study, which looked at transformational leadership in athletic training program directors, which ostensibly included no Christians, exhibited higher transformational leadership characteristics than the one-on-one group in two of the five categories (IIA and IS) and in three categories (IIA, IIB, and IS) compared to the group discipleship scores.

However, this does not necessarily demonstrate a statistically significant difference between the discipleship group and other groups. To determine that relationship, this researcher again conducted a 1-sample t-test as before, but this time with the average means of each of the five categories (IIA, IIB, IM, IS, and IC) as shown in Tables 30, 31, 32, 33, and 34.

Table 30.

1-Sample t-test for IIA Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IIA</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.922</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>-.168 to .185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Averages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 31.

1-Sample t-test for IIB Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Test Value = 3.04</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIB Averages</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 32.

1-Sample t-test for IM Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Test Value = 3.01</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM Averages</td>
<td>4.104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 33.

1-Sample t-test for IS Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Test Value = 2.93</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS Averages</td>
<td>1.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 34.

1-Sample t-test for IC Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Averages</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.246</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the results are broken out by each element of transformational leadership, the results become less clear. With a test value of $M=2.94$, $t(33) = .10$, $p = .922$ for IIA, and a test value of $M=2.93$, $t(33) = 1.58$, $p = .123$ for IS, there is no statistical difference between the groups. However, IIB, IM, and IC all have $p < .05$, meaning there is a statistically significant difference between those in a discipleship relationship exhibiting the transformational leadership characteristics of idealized influence behaviors, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration.

Based on the above data from the scores broken out for the individual factors, this researcher would reject the null hypothesis H02 that there is no statistically significant relationship between a marketplace Christian leader participating in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting transformational leadership characteristics. Based on the analysis above, there is evidence of a correlation between the discipleship group and some transformational leadership factors. However, the composite scores with a test value of $M=3.24$, $t(33) = -1.08$, $p = .29$ showed no statistically significant difference between the discipleship and the non-discipleship groups. The discipleship group was slightly lower (-.09 mean difference) on overall transformational leadership for the MLQ™. Therefore, when taken collectively, the null
hypothesis **H02** is accepted that there is not a statistically significant relationship between being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting transformational leadership.

**Research Question Three**

Research question 3 asked if there was any relationship participating in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting characteristics of shared leadership. The data indicated there was no statistical relationship. Table 35 shows the group mean and standard deviation for group and one-on-one discipleship types.

**Table 35.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipleship Type</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Averages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>86.24</td>
<td>7.41</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>87.76</td>
<td>6.76</td>
<td>1.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the independent samples *t*-test revealed that those participating in a one-on-one discipleship relationship scored higher on shared leadership (*M*=4.38, *SD* = .37) and (*M*=87.761, *SD*=7.41) than did those in the group discipleship relationship (*M*=4.31, *SD* = .37) and (*M*=86.24, *SD*=7.41), *t*(32) = -.63, *p* = .53 and *t*(32) = -.63, *p* = .53 for both average scores and total sores respectively. Since *p* = .53, there is no statistically significant difference between the two types of discipleship relationship as related to shared leadership.

Unfortunately, only one other study (Alarifi, 2020) used the Shared Leadership Measure (SLM). That researcher did not post results in a useable format, so there is no ability to compare these results with another population. This researcher might have rejected the Null hypothesis if both servant leadership and transformational leadership had shown a strong correlation between
being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting those leadership styles. However, since only servant leadership showed a statistically significant difference, and based on the above $p=.53$ showing no statistically significant difference between the two groups, with no additional data, this researcher accepts $H_03$ that there is no statistically significant relationship between a marketplace Christian leader being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting shared leadership.

**Research Question Four**

Research question 4 was a summation question and asked if participation in a discipleship relationship correlates to practicing a particular leadership style for marketplace Christian leaders. As seen in Tables 19 and 21 and reported for $RQ_1$, with a test value of $M=4.45$, $t(33) = 25.10$, $p = .00$ for average scores and a test value of $M=32.8$, $t(33) = 21.55$, $p = .00$ for totals, there is a statistically significant difference between the discipleship group and the non-discipleship group. These results lead to the conclusion for $RQ_1$ that there is a statistically significant relationship between being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting servant leadership characteristics, rejecting $H_01$ that there is no relationship.

The results of the analysis of $RQ_2$ dealing with transformational leadership, as demonstrated in Tables 23, 30, 31, 32, 33, and 34, were mixed. Although there is a statistically significant difference between the discipleship and other groups on some transformational leadership factors, the null hypothesis $H_02$ was accepted.

As stated above, for $RQ_3$, there are insufficient other studies that have used the SLM. However, based on the results from the independent samples $t$-test in Table 35 and the mixed results mentioned above, this researcher accepted $H_03$ that there is no relationship between being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting characteristics of shared leadership.
Therefore, based on the above analysis, this research rejects H04 that there is no statistically significant relationship between being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting characteristics of a particular leadership style. Based on the analysis above, those marketplace Christian leaders who participate in a discipleship relationship appear to exhibit servant leadership and some transformational leadership characteristics.

**Evaluation of the Research Design**

A quantitative design was most appropriate for this study because it was intended to measure “one or more variables of interest…by using commonly accepted measures” (Leedy & Ormrod, p. 6). Specifically, it used three previously used measurement instruments, two of which were already validated. For this research, participating in a discipleship relationship was tested against the dependent variables of exhibiting servant, transformational, and shared leadership characteristics to assess a relationship between them.

The convenience of reaching out to more participants online via email and social media is conducive to this type of design. However, the lack of responses to emails, the failure of churches to maintain their information in databases, and low survey participation and completion rates make it difficult to gain a large enough population to make accurate and valid extrapolations. Other researchers have experienced similar challenges in research using email and social media (Drummond, 2020; Ramseur, 2018). Additionally, in an environment of a proliferation of spam and phishing emails, internet fraud and identity theft, and a focus on individual security in online environments exacerbates an already low return rate for questionnaires (Leedy & Omrod, 2019).

For this study, 34 marketplace Christian leaders completed the survey, reporting their self-perceived leadership characteristics for each of the three leadership styles being researched.
The results indicate a statistically significant relationship between the marketplace Christian leaders being involved in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting characteristics of servant and some transformational leadership factors \( p = .000 \) and \( < .05 \) on three of the five elements) for a 1-sample \( t \)-test, but not shared leadership. However, with a small sample size of 34, it is challenging to extrapolate to a much larger population.

The survey was also limited in that the only participants were marketplace Christian leaders who were already in a discipleship relationship. Even though the results were compared to other studies that focused on the same factors, there was no way to directly correlate these results with marketplace Christian leaders who were not in a discipleship relationship or non-Christians in leadership positions. That is a significant weakness of the study in this researcher's mind.

Also, while a definition of discipleship was provided for the respondents, it was intentionally broad so potential participants would not be inadvertently disqualified. As identified throughout the literature, the lack of a coherent definition of discipleship is problematic. While helpful for research, relying on individuals to assess their leadership style, Christian walk, or discipleship relationship does not necessarily provide consistency in thought. A case in point is how one individual, when describing his discipleship relationship, stated that he was a Sunday School teacher, which in his mind qualified as true discipleship. This is not meant to malign that respondent, but as Charron (2020) found in his study on creating a culture of leadership development in the church, the quality of discipleship is lacking in many churches, and this confusion of terms might be an indication of that lack of quality.

A further weakness of the design was the lack of a widely accepted, used, and validated survey mechanism for shared leadership. Of the 136 doctoral dissertations on shared leadership
(ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, n.d.), only 17 used some type of measurement device. Several researchers identified the problem of a lack of measurement instruments (Alarifi, 2020; Allen, 2010; Brown, 2017; Kawata, 2012; Wooleyhand, 2012), some of whom developed their own. The lack of valid measurement devices presents significant challenges when conducting comparative quantitative research.

Finally, this survey relied on individuals’ perceptions of their leadership styles, was a snapshot-in-time and did not include any other perception data. Had they taken the survey at a different time of day or different day of the week, or if they had a challenging day at work or with an employee, that may have changed how they responded to the survey. This survey did not attempt to evaluate a marketplace Christian leader’s leadership style from either a subordinate’s or superior’s perspective, which may also have altered the results. In each of those cases, the data returned could have been dramatically different.

**Conclusion**

The findings of this study may be helpful to marketplace Christian leaders and those pastors who have a discipleship program in their church. If servant leadership is the model for Christians to emulate (Atkinson, 2014; Boyd, 2005; Cannon, 2019; Clemons, 2018; Myung, 2015; Sironen, 2020), this research seems to indicate that being involved in a discipleship relationship, especially a one-on-one relationship may help Christians, especially those in leadership in the marketplace, learn to emulate Jesus in his leadership style. However, with such a small sample of exclusively Christians already in a discipleship relationship, this cannot be known without additional research into the problem.
The following chapter concludes this dissertation by discussing the overall results of the research, some implications, and applications, and finally makes some recommendations for further research.
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Overview

While there are shortcomings in this quantitative study, as identified in chapter four, there still is much to take away. It is evident that there is a correlation between being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting characteristics of at least one type of leadership. However, without additional research, the causal nature or strength of that relationship cannot be determined by this study alone, even when combined with several others that have been done on related topics (see, e.g., Boyd, 2005; Bunkowske, 2019; Charron, 2020; Drummond, 2020; Holsinger, 2009; Scuderi, 2011). Despite the significant amount of extant research related to Christian leadership and discipleship, none have yet explored the causal relationship, if any, between the two.

This chapter will discuss some of what research has been accomplished, how this study supports others’ research, how it can be applied in both the church and in the marketplace today, and will finally touch on several recommendations for further research. The chapter ends with some concluding thoughts and a brief summary of the project.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine if a correlation exists between a marketplace Christian leader being involved in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting characteristics of servant leadership, transformational leadership, or shared leadership within the secular marketplace.

This research intended to build on the research already done by Atherton (2014), Beckwith (2016b), Brown (2017), Bunkowske (2019), Davis (2014), Ellis (2020), and others on servant, transformational, and shared leadership for Christian leaders. This researcher believes it achieved that goal, but only tangentially. Most other research on leadership and discipleship in a
Christian context has focused on the church and Christian education and has been qualitative. From that standpoint, this research plowed new ground in that it expanded the scope of study explicitly to include Christian leaders in the marketplace instead of within the other circles. While it did a quantitative correlational study, it did not fully discover a statistically significant correlation because it did not include anyone not in a discipleship relationship for comparison.

**Servant Leadership**

Most of the research on servant leadership can be broadly binned into secular and sacred areas. While most research has used Greenleaf’s (2002) concept of servant leadership, Spears (2018) and others have expanded on that concept. Several of the studies identified herein have used both as a basis for their research. Cannon (2019) used Greenleaf (2002) as a foundation for her research concerning servant leadership and mentorship in Christian churches. Also, using self-assessed servant leadership characteristics, she found that women with higher education and higher income felt they could exercise more decisive leadership within their congregation (p. 164). However, there was no mention of any relationship to the outcomes of discipleship and leadership.

Ramseur (2018) was attempting “to understand the relationship between servant leadership, effective leadership, and ethical leadership in a non-profit organization, as perceived by employees” (p. 147). The researcher found “no significant correlation between servant leadership and effective leadership; or servant leadership and ethical leadership, in a non-profit organization, as perceived by employees” (p. 152). However, she acknowledges that others have found servant leadership to affect other organizations positively.

On the other hand, Scuderi (2011), studying both servant and transformational leadership in church organizations, found servant leadership behaviors were able “to predict leader
effectiveness [and] church health perceptions” (p. 168), among other aspects of church organization. While the results of this study do not explicitly support that conclusion, they are consistent with them. However, when compared to the research done by Liden et al. (2015) to validate the SL-7, the scores from this study appear to be high, as Tables 19 and 21 show. Further, compared to Ramseur’s (2018) study with a sample from a single non-profit organization in Frisco, Texas, which resulted in M=5.95 using the 28-question version (p. 139), the scores from this study on leadership and discipleship are still high.

This study partially reinforces the results of both Ramseur (2018) and Scuderi (2011). Each was studying a different aspect of servant leadership, and although Ramseur (2018) found no correlation between servant leadership and effective leadership, she acknowledges others have. Scuderi (2011) found there was a relationship. If discipleship influences exhibiting servant leadership, discipleship may, by extension, influence leader effectiveness. This correlation may be worth further research.

**Transformational Leadership**

Far more has been studied on transformational leadership both inside and outside the church, and much of that research has been based on the work of Bass and Riggio (2006). This study is no different in that it uses their book on transformational leadership as a foundation and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™ to collect responses. Several studies have been identified throughout this research using the MLQ™, and many have informed this study.

Bunkowske’s (2019) work on transformational leadership in secular organizations was beneficial and helped focus this research. He was trying to “discover what the effects of practicing Christian transformational leadership are in secular organizations” (p. 88), at the time,
“the first research study on Christian transformational leadership in secular organizations” (p. 89). He found that

Christian transformational leadership, as practiced by these leaders in secular organizations can be defined as transformational leadership with the addition of the element of agape love. The Christian transformational leadership elements are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and agape love. When analyzed from the Christian perspective, the new element of agape love can be seen as the motivating element, which causes Christian leaders to be transformational (p. 107).

The effects of Christian transformational leadership or transformational leadership, in general, were not the focus of this study; however, the findings are not inconsistent with Bunkowske (2019) and may provide the basis for additional research. He argues that agape love is unconditional from God to humans and is the highest form of love for Christians that “extends to the love of other humans” (p. 10). Since discipleship is about transforming Christians into the image of Christ, who was the embodiment of God’s love for humanity, the results of this study partially support Bunkowske’s (2019) conclusions, but due to the mixed results, this is an area for potential further study.

**Shared Leadership**

As stated previously, compared to servant and transformational leadership, the extant research on shared leadership is limited, and so are the available validated survey mechanisms for studying it. However, several researchers provided a starting point for this study, and the results are not inconsistent with theirs, although there is very little to compare directly.

Alarifi (2020) provided the avenue with which to survey shared leadership, although his findings showed no correlation between shared leadership and “student achievement in high schools in Saudi Arabia” (p. 54). Brown’s (2017) extensive study on the impact of shared leadership and nonprofit performance informed the direction of this research. He concluded that
shared leadership offers “a more effective organizational performance” (p. 346), and although the results of this study do not further his study, they are not inconsistent with them. Allen, 2010) found evidence that team leadership is “promising in implicating shared leadership with successful teams” (p. 130). Although the results of this study were inconclusive concerning shared leadership, with the relationship between both servant leadership and some factors of transformational leadership above, there is a degree of consistency between these results and Allen’s (2010). Since there was some evidence that those marketplace Christian leaders in a discipleship relationship exhibit some degree of shared leadership, there may be a relationship between discipleship and improving team effectiveness.

**Discipleship**

Much like leadership, discipleship has been studied from many perspectives within the Christian community, whether one calls it discipleship, spiritual formation, mentoring, or coaching. The research archives are replete with examples of discipleship studies that focus on making Christians better (Bates, 2017; Bekkedahl, 2015; Brewer, 2020; Charron, 2020; Erskine, 2004; Neufeld 2009). Charron’s (2020) work was beneficial because it focused on the intersection of leadership and discipleship. He found that “implementing a leadership development process that intentionally focuses on discipleship” (p. 91) and “implementing an intentional discipleship process” (p. 93) were both critical in developing leaders in the church. This study’s finding that being in a discipleship relationship tends to foster servant leadership further reinforces the conclusions in Charron’s (2020) study.

Additionally, as evidenced by more than one respondent’s comments, there is a degree of confusion on what discipleship is, a consistent message throughout the literature. One believed that being a Sunday School teacher was discipleship, while another believed that the definition
provided did not represent what they described as *authentic* discipleship. This study purposely used a broad definition of discipleship partially to ensure sufficient responses. Had the definition been more strictly aligned with both Hull’s (2006) and Bonhoeffer’s (1995), there is potential that the number of responses would be even more limited because it may have eliminated several people who were in a group-based discipleship relationship.

**Marketplace**

Leadership in the secular marketplace is perhaps one of the most studied concepts in the U.S. today, with almost 17,000 dissertations with the word *leadership* in the title available for research (ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, n.d.). While this study did not attempt to further the tremendous wealth of research in that area, it built upon that wealth and focused it slightly differently. Specifically, Beals (2014), Duncan (2015), Unni (2006), and Wood (2015) formed the basis of this study, each with its unique look at the marketplace and marketplace ministry with Davis (2014), Johnson (2004) and Martinez (2018) providing a direction from which to proceed with this study.

Davis’ (2014) analysis of shared leadership in the marketplace by Christians helped bound and provided direction to this study. His research was based on the thesis “that business persons may practice shared leadership in the marketplace as an intentional expression of their Christian discipleship” (p. 94). He concluded that there are shared leadership best practices for Christian leaders in the marketplace, and this study’s focus on shared leadership furthers his research and reinforces his conclusions.

Johnson’s (2004) descriptive work on the marketplace as a mission field provided a strong foundation of the marketplace, boldly proclaiming that God appears to be doing as mission, *missio Dei*, into, within, and through the Marketplace” (p. ii). He later proposed several
ways to apply this understanding theoretically and practically. With what could be argued as a follow-up to Johnson’s (2004) study, Martinez (2018) furthered the discussion by introducing the idea of cultivating discipleship in the marketplace. Martinez’s study resulted in developing a discipleship curriculum that was both conducted outside the church and included a focus on the marketplace as a mission field. The results of this study reinforce both concepts and take them further with a focus on the relationship of discipleship and specific types of leadership within the marketplace mission field.

**Research Questions**

The overall research question guiding this study is whether there is a correlation between a Christian participating in a discipleship relationship and the practice of a particular style of leadership in the marketplace. This question was further subdivided into the following four research questions:

- **RQ1.** What relationship, if any, exists between a marketplace Christian leader’s participation in a discipleship relationship and exemplifying servant leadership?

- **RQ2.** What relationship, if any, exists between a marketplace Christian leader’s participation in a discipleship relationship and exemplifying transformational leadership?

- **RQ3.** What relationship, if any, exists between a marketplace Christian leader’s participation in a discipleship relationship and exemplifying shared leadership?

- **RQ4.** Does participation in a discipleship relationship correlate to practicing a particular leadership style for marketplace Christian leaders?

**Research Conclusions, Implications, and Applications**

This study explored the relationship between participating in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting characteristics of servant, transformational, and shared leadership styles. Using a sample of 34 marketplace Christian leaders from throughout the U.S., survey data was collected by Liberty University’s Qualtrics site and then evaluated using IBM’s SPSS software package,
version 27. Descriptive statistics and two variations of a \( t \)-test were used to help answer the research questions and accept or reject the null hypotheses for each research question. Further comparison between these results and those of similar studies reinforced the findings. Study results revealed a relationship between participating in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting characteristics of servant leadership, rejecting null hypotheses \( H_01 \) and \( H_04 \). However, there was insufficient information to determine a relationship between discipleship and transformational and shared leadership, accepting null hypotheses \( H_02 \) and \( H_03 \). Based on these results, the researcher concluded:

1. There may be a difference between discipleship in a one-on-one and group setting.

2. Marketplace Christian leaders in a discipleship relationship may not exhibit stronger servant, transformational, and shared leadership characteristics than marketplace Christian leaders not in a discipleship relationship.

3. Christians may generally exhibit stronger servant, transformational, and shared leadership characteristics than non-Christians.

4. Marketplace Christian leaders may not be participating in any form of discipleship relationship either in small groups or in one-on-one instances.

**Research Conclusion One**

There may be a difference between discipleship in a one-on-one and group setting. The results of every leadership survey showed the one-on-one discipleship group outperformed their group counterparts in every category. For the servant leadership survey (SL-7), those in a one-on-one discipleship relationship were \( M=6.24, SD=.32 \) for averages and \( M=43.71, SD=2.29 \) for totals. Those in a group discipleship relationship resulted in \( M=5.96, SD=.39 \) for averages and \( M=41.71, SD=2.73 \) for totals. These results show the one-on-one relationship is almost a \(+1 \ SD\) higher than the group relationship.
The results for transformational leadership are similar with \( M=3.29, SD=.47 \) for averages and \( M=66.71, SD=6.73 \) for totals for the one-on-one group. Those in a group discipleship relationship had scores of \( M=3.0, SD=.5 \) for averages and \( M=61.35, SD=8.79 \) for totals. The variance from \( M \) for transformational leadership is not dramatic but still demonstrates a discernable difference. Finally, the results are similar for shared leadership but show a significantly smaller range. The one-on-one relationship had \( M=4.38, SD=.34 \) for averages and \( M=87.76, SD=6.76 \) for totals. Those in a group discipleship relationship had scores of \( M=4.31, SD=.37 \) for averages and \( M=86.24, SD=7.41 \) for totals.

**Research Conclusion Two**

As the data shows, marketplace Christian leaders in a discipleship relationship may not exhibit stronger servant, transformational, and shared leadership characteristics than those not in a discipleship relationship. While both types of discipleship relationship scored significantly higher than those from other studies on servant leadership (see Tables 19 and 20), only one study (Wilkinson, 2020), which was not used for comparison, had even tangential religious or spiritual underpinnings. None of them focused on Christian discipleship either explicitly or implicitly. Without further study on servant leadership that includes marketplace Christians, not in a discipleship relationship, it is difficult to determine if Christians being discipled will exhibit servant leadership better than their non-discipled counterparts.

For transformational leadership, the results are more telling. As opposed to servant leadership, with few exceptions, the referenced studies included Christians, many of whom were pastors, church leaders, or leaders in the Christian educational environment. Tables 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30 demonstrate that the discipleship group does not score significantly better than their counterparts in all the 5 Is of transformational leadership. There is not sufficient
information on which to make a declaration for shared leadership. Still, with the information available, it would not be illogical to conclude that there would be no significant difference between those being discipled and those not.

**Research Conclusion Three**

Christians may generally exhibit stronger servant, transformational, and shared leadership characteristics than non-Christians. The evidence is clear from Tables 18 and 20, where both discipleship types scored significantly higher than their counterparts from the other studies on servant leadership, none of whom were identified as Christians. For the average scores, the $M=6.24$ for one-on-one and $M=5.96$ were $+2.8\ SD$ and $+2.39\ SD$ of $M=4.48\ SD=0.63$ for the rest of the studies. The total scores show a similar variation with $M=43.73\ SD=3.67$ for the other studies and $M=43.71$ and $M=41.71$ both being $+2.72\ SD$, and $+2.17\ SD$, significantly higher than one would expect.

The difference is more challenging to determine for transformational leadership as the population for most comparison studies was exclusively Christians. However, three studies were distinctly non-Christian and provided a degree of comparison. All three, Austin (2009), Bass & Avolio (2004), and Kiperos (2019), reported their results for the 5 IIs of transformational leadership. As shown in Tables 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30, the discipleship group compares favorably to all three studies. In each of the 5 IIs, those in the Kiperos (2009) study scored the lowest for transformational leadership. However, both the Austin (2009) and Avolio & Bass (2004) studies were higher in two of the five categories (IIA and IC), with Austin (2009) also higher in IIB. Again, there is insufficient information to assess if marketplace Christian leaders exhibit shared leadership characteristics at a higher rate than their counterparts.
Research Conclusion Four

Marketplace Christian leaders may not be participating in any form of discipleship relationship either in small groups or in one-on-one instances. Because of the design of the questionnaire and the initial elimination questions, only those in a discipleship relationship were included. However, as was identified in Table 8, of the 29 people who did not complete the survey, 18 (62%) chose the reason for not completing it as not being in a discipleship relationship. The way the questions were organized, all respondents had to first attest to being a Christian and being in a leadership position outside of the church (Appendix M) before answering the discipleship question. While the purpose of this research was not to determine why marketplace Christians were not in a discipleship relationship, one must wonder why that is the case. Are churches not encouraging marketplace Christians to participate in discipleship, or do they feel that their ministry is not viewed as real as implied in Johnson’s (2004) study?

Based on the results of this research, marketplace Christian leaders who participate in discipleship are exhibiting servant leadership and some facets of transformational leadership. Both styles have been attributed to Jesus in the literature (Atkinson, 2014; Bunkowske, 2019; Clemons, 2018; Howell, 2003; Jones, 2013; McKinley, 2016; McRae, 2020; Scarborough, 2010). The church may be missing an opportunity to shape the marketplace by not engaging this sector of valid ministry.

Practical Implications and Application

The impetus for this research was a concern about the state of Christian leadership in the secular marketplace, the perceived lack of effective disciple-making, and the additional perception that the marketplace is an area to be shunned by the church. With very few exceptions (Boyd, 2005; Bunkowske, 2019; Davis, 2014; Martinez, 2018; McGaughey, 2016; Sawyer,
much of the literature on each of the subjects that were the topic of this study were singularly focused. The Christian discipleship literature was focused on making people better Christians to work in the church, ministry, missions, or Christian education (Bates, 2017; Bekkedahl, 2015; Clarke, 2005; Erskine, 2004; Gillcash; Hamilton, 2015; Harder, 2018; Huckaby, 2012; Layer, 2009; Moore, 2020; Stone, 2008; Thomas, 2014). The leadership research was primarily done to provide better leadership within the church of the Christian educational environment (Cox & Peck, 2018; Drummond, 2020; Ellis, 2020; Holsinger, 2009; Johns, 2015; Jones, 2019; Ntow, 1999; Sampson, 2011; Sironen, 2020). The academic literature concerned with the marketplace primarily focused on ministry rather than leadership (Beals, 2014; Curpanen, 2013; Duncan, 2015; Todd, 2004; Unni, 2006; Zeller, 2015).

This study found a gap in the literature, explored the relationship between all three, and found a statistically significant relationship between a marketplace Christian leader participating in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting servant leadership. These results should encourage marketplace Christian leaders to become involved in a discipleship relationship and the church to focus on the role of marketplace Christian leaders in the secular environment. In an era of secular humanism and a cancel culture that prizes tolerance, marketplace Christian leaders may be the only Bible that un-saved people may read; the only Jesus those people encounter. If marketplace Christian leaders can be taught, discipled if you will, to emulate Christ in their leadership styles, in other words, preach the gospel without words, the church may find more people coming to Christ through that engagement than respond to an altar call on a typical Sunday morning.

**Theoretical Implications**

The literature provides a wealth of information on each of the three leadership styles, and they do not require more study in and of themselves. Several writers have explored distinctly
Christian leadership (Boyd, 2005; Patterson, 2016; Sawyer, 2018; Scarborough, 2010; Stadler, 2008) to devise a theory of Christian leadership. That is not the purpose of this study. However, the relationship between and among these theories related to discipleship and leadership in the marketplace deserves more study. Discipleship has been waning in the church (Barna, 2015; Bekkedahl, 2015; Clarke, 2005; Nel & Schoeman, 2019). Additionally, the church has arguably confused those who want to grow closer to the Lord by using more relevant terms like mentoring, coaching, and spiritual formation. While there is not necessarily a danger in using these terms, without a concrete, coherent theory and definition of discipleship, there is potential for the call to discipleship; the call to sacrifice and submission (Bonhoeffer, 1995) to fall on deaf ears.

**Empirical Implications**

What is evident by the results of this study is that those marketplace Christian leaders that were a part of this study exhibit servant leadership at a higher rate than their non-Christian counterparts. This finding may be directly due to their involvement in a discipleship relationship. However, more research is needed to understand if there is a direct correlation between discipleship and marketplace Christian leaders exhibiting this or any other leadership style.

**Research Limitations**

The main limitation of this study was the relatively small number of participants. The initial goal was to have approximately 95 individuals respond to the survey. That number of respondents would have provided a 95% confidence interval with a 10% margin of error, for an estimated population of 5,000 marketplace Christian leaders, based on a Qualtrics sample size calculator (Qualtrics, n.d.). Unfortunately, after more than two months of very few responses,
that goal was abandoned in favor of a lower confidence rate and a higher margin of error. At least two steps could have been taken to reduce the likelihood of a low response rate.

First, the construct and scope of the study could have been expanded beyond the limitation of email contact to include in-person, telephonic, and virtual (Zoom, FaceTime, Microsoft Teams, etc.) engagement. Also, while it may have limited the population somewhat, it could have been narrowed to those in a smaller geographic area (the researcher’s hometown), which would have allowed direct contact with churches in the area and third-party introductions to pastors and church leaders. As it was, no direct contact was made with any church other than email.

Another limitation of the study was the lack of a validated measurement instrument for shared leadership. The Shared Leadership Measure (SLM) developed by Brussow (2013) had been previously used (Alarifi, 2020) but had insufficient exposure in research to ensure it provided valid results. The results of a pilot study helped mitigate that concern. Had the pilot study indicated the instrument was not valid, it could have jeopardized the study. Unfortunately, other studies on shared leadership have encountered the same challenge, resulting in some researchers developing their own measures. However, a self-developed instrument does not alleviate the problem of the lack of a validated and reliable instrument or allow for comparisons between studies.

Other limitations to the study were the homogeneity of the sample. Only two of the respondents (6%) were female, the sample was overwhelming Caucasian (82%) from a suburban neighborhood (75%), and only one person stated they were a Christian for less than ten years. Also, this survey was a snapshot in time rather than a longitudinal study meaning that it was exceedingly difficult to determine if a marketplace Christian leader exhibited servant,
transformational, or shared leadership before entering a discipleship relationship or afterward.

Finally, all the survey instruments relied on self-assessment of an individual’s leadership style based on the statements in the instrument. A way to reduce that risk would have been to conduct a 360-degree survey that included an individual's subordinates, peers, and superiors to validate these scores.

**Further Research**

Due to the limitations of this research and other realizations through the study, there are several recommendations for further research.

1. To improve generalizability, the study should be repeated with a more diverse sample from a geographic, racial, gender, and Christian maturity perspective and a larger sample. While enlisting more churches may help achieve a more representative sample, the lack of responses may continue to be a limitation.

2. To improve response rates, consider in-person, telephonic, or virtual third-party introductions and follow-up. Many pastors and churches may be reluctant to respond to seemingly legitimate emails in an era of spam, phishing, and spear-phishing with email and identity theft.

3. Additional research is needed using a mixed-methods study. This research used a strict quantitative methodology. Incorporating some qualitative questions may address the mindset of the respondents. Additionally, following up with interviews may capture respondents’ attitudes toward discipleship and leadership.

4. Additional research is needed to determine a statistically significant correlation between being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting servant, transformational, and shared leadership characteristics. To achieve this goal, it would be necessary to include Christians who are not in a discipleship relationship and non-Christians in leadership positions in the marketplace.

5. Further research is needed to determine if there is a causal relationship between being in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting servant, transformational, or shared leadership. A mixed-methods study of marketplace leaders who become Christians and enter a discipleship relationship could be tracked through their Christian maturity journey with repeated surveys of the leadership styles and then comparing their scores at different periods in their journey.

6. Additional research is needed to determine if marketplace Christian leaders exhibit other leadership styles similar, higher, or lower rates than the three studied here.
Several other validated leadership measurement instruments could be used along with or instead of the instruments used.

7. Additional research is needed to construct and validate a measurement device for determining shared leadership characteristics. As has been noted, several of the researchers identified in this study experienced the same shortfall, with several developing their device and using a pilot study to validate it before implementation.

8. Further research is needed to determine if there is a difference in the effectiveness of different types of discipleship. This study found that when focusing solely on three leadership styles with three specific leadership measures, a one-on-one relationship showed stronger characteristics than a group relationship. These results may not hold true for other theoretical or practical areas.

9. Further research is needed to determine if there is a difference in outcomes between discipleship, mentoring, coaching, and spiritual formation in a Christian context. As the literature makes clear, these terms are often used interchangeably and have caused confusion among researchers and others. If one type of discipleship is more effective, perhaps the church could fully implement that style rather than implement several different approaches.

10. Further research is needed to determine why marketplace Christian leaders are not participating in discipleship at higher rates than they currently are (62% of eliminated respondents were not participating in a discipleship relationship). Are pastors and church leaders not viewing the marketplace as a valid area of ministry, or are there other reasons?

11. Further research is needed to determine if pastors and church leaders view the marketplace as a valid area of ministry. Since several churches were unwilling to participate in this research, it might be necessary to determine the rationale for that unwillingness. It may highlight a misunderstanding of the marketplace’s value, and specifically the value of Christians in leadership in that sphere.

Summary

This study found a relationship between a marketplace Christian leader participating in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting characteristics of a particular leadership style, namely, servant leadership. Further, it showed that Christians might exhibit servant leadership and transformational leadership characteristics more strongly than their non-Christian counterparts. Based on the sample size of 34, there is a 95% chance these results are within 16.81% of what would be found in the general population (Creative Research Systems, n.d.). With a larger
sample size, the confidence interval could be reduced significantly. While the scores for servant leadership were high, this should not be a surprise since Jesus, as the model for servant leadership (Atkinson, 2014; Boyd, 2005; Cannon, 2019; Clemons, 2018; Myung, 2015; Sironen, 2020), is who all Christians should emulate. More surprising would be that there was no difference between Christians and non-Christians.

Discipleship should be a way of life for Christians, whether in leadership positions in the marketplace or not. The Christian life is about transformation (Rom 12:2), and discipleship is the process Jesus used to transform his disciples. It worked so well that more than 2,000 years later, Christianity is still going strong. However, if Hackett and McClendon (2017) are correct in their estimation that almost a third of the world's population is Christian, something is lacking. Christians have seemingly lost their ability to be salt and light in the marketplace and the larger lost and dying world.
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APPENDIX A

Initial IRB Approval

Consent Form

Title of the Project: Discipleship and Leadership: The Correlation Between Discipleship and Servant, Transformational, and Shared Leadership in the Marketplace

Principal Investigator: Daniel Gifford, doctoral candidate in Christian Leadership, Liberty University, Rawlings School of Divinity

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study
You are invited to participate in a research study on Christian leadership in the marketplace. This study seeks to determine if a relationship exists between participation in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting certain leadership characteristics in the marketplace. You were selected as a possible participant because you attend a Christian church in the Southeastern U.S. (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee). In order to participate, you must be at least 18 years of age or older, in a position of leadership in the marketplace (employment in a non-religious institution) and in a discipleship relationship or have been in such a relationship with the last two years. 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 is to determine if a relationship exists between participation in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting certain leadership characteristics in the marketplace.

What will happen if you agree to be in this study?
If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things: Complete a survey totaling 63 questions plus 13 demographic questions that will take approximately 20-25 minutes.

How could you or others benefit from this study?
Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

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 daily 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.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?
Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.
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 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 Daniel Gifford. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at [email protected]. You may also contact the researcher’s faculty sponsor, Dr. Gary Bredfeldt, at [email protected]

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 [email protected]

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

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

Permission Request Email

Dear Pastor:

As a graduate student in the Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctorate in education (EdD). The title of my research project is Discipleship and Leadership: The Correlation Between Discipleship and Servant, Transformational, and Shared Leadership in the Marketplace, and the purpose of my research is to determine if a relationship exists between participation in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting certain leadership characteristics in the marketplace.

I am writing to request your permission to utilize your membership list to recruit participants for my research. If permission is granted, I further request you make the recruitment letter (attachment 1) available to your congregation on my behalf, or you allow me to email them directly with a recruitment letter.

Participants will be asked to go to a webpage and complete the attached survey. Participants will be presented with informed consent information before participating. Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please respond by email to degifford1@liberty.edu. A permission letter document is attached (attachment 2) for your convenience.

Also attached is the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved consent form (attachment 3) to verify this research is approved.

Sincerely,

Daniel Gifford
Doctor of Education Candidate

Attachments:
1. Recruitment Letter
2. Permission Letter
3. IRB Approved Consent Form
APPENDIX C

Recruitment Letter

Dear Participant:

As a graduate student in the Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctorate in education (EdD). The title of my research project is Discipleship and Leadership: The Correlation Between Discipleship and Servant, Transformational, and Shared Leadership in the Marketplace. The purpose of my research is to determine if a relationship exists between participation in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting certain leadership characteristics in the marketplace. I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older, self-identified as a Christian in a leadership position in the secular environment, and in a discipleship relationship or have been in such a relationship with the last two years. All participants must also be members of a Christian church in the Southeastern U.S. (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee). Participants, if willing, will be asked to complete a survey totaling 63 questions plus demographic questions. It should take approximately 20-25 minutes to complete the survey. Participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected.

In order to participate, please click the link [http://www.linktbd.tbd] and complete the consent form and survey.

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

Sincerely,

Daniel Gifford
Doctor of Education Candidate
APPENDIX D

Permission Letter

Daniel Gifford
Doctor of Education Candidate
Liberty University/Rawlings Divinity School

Dear Daniel Gifford:

After careful review of your research proposal entitled, I have decided to grant you permission to contact our members and invite them to participate in your study.

Check the following boxes, as applicable:

☐ Members’ email addresses will be provided under separate cover.

☐ The church will email a link to your survey and recruitment letter to all members of the church.

☐ A link to the survey and recruitment letter will be made available to our members through the church’s website, app, or social media page.

☐ A member of our church administrative staff will contact you for other avenues of recruiting members.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
[Your Title]
[Your Church]
APPENDIX E

Modified Permission Request Email

Dear Pastor:

As a graduate student in the Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctorate in education (EdD). The title of my research project is Discipleship and Leadership: The Correlation Between Discipleship and Servant, Transformational, and Shared Leadership in the Marketplace, and the purpose of my research is to determine if a relationship exists between participation in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting certain leadership characteristics in the marketplace.

I am writing to request your permission to recruit your members as participants for my research. If permission is granted, I am requesting that you make my recruitment letter (attachment 1) available to your congregation on my behalf via email.

Participants will be asked to go to a webpage and complete the attached survey. Participants will be presented with informed consent information before participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time before submitting the survey.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please respond by email to dgifford1@liberty.edu. A permission letter document is attached (attachment 2) for your convenience.

Also attached is the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved consent form (attachment 3) to confirm that this research has been approved.

Sincerely,

Daniel Gifford
Doctor of Education Candidate

Attachments:
1. Recruitment Letter
2. Permission Letter
3. IRB Approved Consent Form
APPENDIX F

Modified Permission Letter

Daniel Gifford
Doctor of Education Candidate
Liberty University - Rawlings School of Divinity

Dear Daniel Gifford:

After careful review of your research proposal on leadership and discipleship, I have decided to grant permission for our congregation to participate in your study.

Check the following boxes, as applicable:

☐ The church will email your recruitment letter containing a link to your survey to all adult members of the church on your behalf.

☐ Your recruitment letter containing a link to the survey will be made available to our members through the church’s website, app, or social media page.

☐ A member of our church administrative staff will contact you for other avenues of recruiting members.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
[Your Title]
[Your Church]
APPENDIX G

Modified Recruitment Letter

Dear Participant:

As a graduate student in the Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctorate in education (EdD). The title of my research project is Discipleship and Leadership: The Correlation Between Discipleship and Servant, Transformational, and Shared Leadership in the Marketplace. The purpose of my research is to determine if a relationship exists between participation in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting certain leadership characteristics in the marketplace. I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older, self-identified as a Christian in a leadership position in the secular environment, and in a discipleship relationship or have been in such a relationship with the last two years. All participants must also be a member of a Christian church in the Southeastern U.S. (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee). Participants, if willing, will be asked to complete a survey totaling 63 questions plus demographic questions. It should take approximately 20-25 minutes to complete the survey. Participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected.

In order to participate, please click the link [https://liberty.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6gMIOAxpVJ3NM6a](https://liberty.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6gMIOAxpVJ3NM6a), review the consent form, and complete the survey.

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

Sincerely,

Daniel Gifford
Doctor of Education Candidate

dgifford1@liberty.edu
APPENDIX H

Modified IRB Approval

Consent Form

Title of the Project: Discipleship and Leadership: The Correlation Between Discipleship and Servant, Transformational, and Shared Leadership in the Marketplace

Principal Investigator: Daniel Gifford, doctoral candidate in Christian Leadership, Liberty University, Rawlings School of Divinity

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study
You are invited to participate in a research study on Christian leadership in the marketplace. This study seeks to determine if a relationship exists between participation in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting certain leadership characteristics in the marketplace. You were selected as a possible participant because you attend a Christian church in the U.S. In order to participate, you must be at least 18 years of age or older, in a position of leadership in the marketplace (employment in a non-religious institution) and in a discipleship relationship or have been in such a relationship with the last two years. 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 is to determine if a relationship exists between participation in a discipleship relationship and exhibiting certain leadership characteristics in the marketplace.

What will happen if you agree to be in this study?
If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things: Complete a survey totaling 63 questions plus 13 demographic questions that will take approximately 20-25 minutes.

How could you or others benefit from this study?
Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

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 daily 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.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?
Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

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 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 Daniel Gifford. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at [redacted]. You may also contact the researcher’s faculty sponsor, Dr. Gary Bredfeldt, 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 [redacted].

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

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

LinkedIn Post and Email

Friends and Colleagues,

I am writing to request your assistance.

I am in the final stages of completing my doctorate in Christian Leadership from Liberty University, and I need your help.

I know many of you are in leadership positions in the marketplace, and that is the demographic I am studying. More specifically, I am examining the relationship, if any, between Christians being discipled and their leadership style.

I have put together a combined questionnaire surveying three types of leadership: Servant Leadership, Transformational Leadership, and Shared Leadership. The questionnaire can be found at [https://liberty.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6gMIOAxpVJ3NM6a](https://liberty.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6gMIOAxpVJ3NM6a), includes demographic questions, and should take no more than 20-25 minutes to complete.

I ask two things. If you are interested in completing the survey, please do so. If you are not interested, please forward the link to anyone who may be interested.

Participation is strictly voluntary and completely anonymous. Unfortunately, I will not be able to provide you with your specific results, but if you are interested in the result of the project, I can make that available.

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

If you have any questions, feel free to email me at dgifford1@liberty.edu.

Thank you,

Dan Gifford
Doctor of Education Candidate
Liberty University
APPENDIX J

Servant Leadership Survey Permission

From: Robert Liden
Sent: Thursday, May 20, 2021 9:10 PM
To: Gifford, Daniel
Subject: [External] Re: Use of Servant Leadership Scale

Dear Dan,

You are welcome to use the measure and it is attached along with two recent articles. The short version works well for assessing overall/global servant leadership. However, if you envision wanting to analyze the dimensions separately, it is necessary to use the full 28-item scale.

Best of luck with your research,
Bob

On Thu, May 20, 2021 at 8:09 PM Gifford, Daniel wrote:

Dr. Liden,

My name is Dan Gifford, and I am a doctoral student at Liberty University’s Rawlings School of Divinity. I am requesting permission to use the shortened version of the Servant Leadership Scale (SLS 7) for my research.

My project explores the relationship between being in a discipleship or mentoring relationship and exhibiting characteristics of servant leadership, transformational leadership, or shared leadership. In my review of the extant research, several writers and researchers referenced your 2015 article (Liden et al., 2015) on the subject.

As my study incorporates Servant Leadership and two other leadership styles, I would like to use the shortened version (SLS 7) of the Shared Leadership Scale to reduce the number of questions the study participants need to answer.

I have been unable to find the SLS 7 questions, so I am also requesting a copy of the questions.

If you have any questions, you can contact me via this email.

Many thanks for considering my request.

Dan Gifford

---

Liden, Robert C.
Professor of Management and Associate Dean for CBA Doctoral Program
University Scholar
UIC Business
The University of Illinois at Chicago
601 S. Morgan, Room Number 2232, MC 243
Chicago, IL 60607
UIC BUSINESS
APPENDIX K

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™ Permission


MindGarden, Inc.  
Mon 3/24/2021 10:16 AM  
To: Gifford, Daniel

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

Dear Daniel Gifford,

Mind Garden, Inc. has made available your Application for Remote Online Instrument Use Approval for Remote Online Use With License Purchase report for you. You can go to your login page on Transform to view your Approval for Remote Online Use With License Purchase report.

Your login email address is:

Sincerely,

The Mind Garden Team
APPENDIX L

Shared Leadership Measure Permission

[External] FW: Shared Leadership Survey

Noonan, Pattie
Thu 2/18/2021 12:19 PM
To: Gifford, Daniel

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

Hi Dan,
You have my permission to modify and use the Shared Leadership Survey. We’d appreciate you keeping a citation “Adapted from...”. At this time, we have no information about the validity or reliability of the survey.

Good luck in your studies, and please share any learning about the measure with us.
-Pattie

Patricia Noonan, Ph.D.
Associate Research Professor, University of Kansas-CRL
Co-Director, Research Collaboration

From: "Gifford, Daniel"
Date: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at 8:41 PM
To: Center for Research on Learning
CC:
Subject: Shared Leadership Survey

To whom it may concern

My name is Dan Gifford, and I am a doctoral student at Liberty University’s Rawlings School of Divinity. I am beginning my doctoral project on the relationship between being in a discipleship or mentoring relationship and exhibiting servant leadership, transformational leadership, or shared leadership characteristics. In my initial research of extant studies on related subjects, I came across the Shared Leadership Survey (http://www.researchcollaboration.org/uploads/Shared%20Leadership%20Survey.pdf). I see that is copyright is for the Center for Research on Learning at the University of Kansas.

I would like to request permission to use a slightly modified version of the survey, and I would also like to know if there has been any research on the validity and reliability of the survey.

If you have any questions, you can contact me via either of these emails.

Thank you in advance,

Dan Gifford
APPENDIX M

Demographic and Discipleship Questionnaire

1 - Please click on the link above and read the consent form. After fully reading the consent form, do you agree to continue with this survey?
   Y/N

2 – Are you 18 years of age or older?
   Y / N

3 – Do you consider yourself to be in a leadership position in an organization (business, government, education, media, etc.) outside of the church?
   Y / N

4 – Do you consider yourself a Christian?
   Y/N

For the purpose of this study, a discipleship relationship is defined as: A relationship built on trust which a person enters wherein a more experienced Christian disciples or trains a less experienced Christian with the goal of becoming more like Christ.

5 - Are you involved in a Christian discipleship or mentoring program, or have you recently (within the past 1-2 years) been engaged in such a relationship?
   Y/N

6 – How long have you been a Christian
   A – 1 year or less
   B – 1-3 years
   C – 3-5 years
   D – 5-10 years
   E – Longer than 10 years

7 – Which of the following best describes your leadership position:
   A – I directly supervise ten or more people
   B – I indirectly supervise ten or more people
   C – I directly supervise fewer than ten people
   D – I indirectly supervise fewer than ten people
   E – I do not supervise anyone. (Briefly explain in one to two sentences how you exercise leadership in your current position)

8 – Which of the following do you feel best describes your leadership style (choose only one style):
   A – Directive - setting clearly defined objectives and rules
   B - Participative/Shared - all group members work together to make decisions
C – Team/Group - group participates but the leader makes decisions  
D – Laissez-Faire - leader relies on subordinates to make decisions  
E – Situational - leadership style based on competence and commitment of subordinates  
F – Servant - focuses on growth and well-being of subordinates  
G – Other. Please describe your leadership style.

9 – Which of the following best describes your current or previous discipleship relationship?  
A – Long-term (more than 6 months) one-on-one discipleship with another Christian  
B – Short-term (6 months or less) one-on-one discipleship with another Christian  
C – Weekly or other meetings (other than weekly worship/Bible study meetings) in the church  
D – Weekly or other meetings (other than weekly worship/Bible study meetings) in member’s homes (small groups)  
E – None of the above. (Please briefly describe your discipleship relationship)

10 – If there is anything additional you wish to add about your discipleship relationship or how you lead? If so, please add it here.

The following questions are for demographic purposes only. All responses are strictly confidential.

1 - What is your gender?  
1 - Female  
2 - Male  
3 - Prefer not to say

2 - What is your race?  
1 - African American  
2 - Asian  
3 - Caucasian  
4 - Hispanic  
5 - Native American  
6 - Other (please describe your race)

3 – How would you describe the neighborhood in which you live?  
1 – Rural  
2 – Suburban  
3 – Urban/City

4 – How many people would you estimate are members/regular attendees of your church?  
1 – 1-50  
2 – 51-300  
3 – 301-2000  
4 – 2001 or more

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey. Your responses have been recorded.
APPENDIX N

Servant Leadership Scale

Item Key for SL-7 (short form)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #s</th>
<th>Reference/comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Removed to comply with copyright.*
APPENDIX O

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™ (MLQ™)

This survey instrument is available for purchase from Mindgarden.com at

https://www.mindgarden.com/16-multifactor-leadership-questionnaire
APPENDIX P

Shared Leadership Measure

As adapted from the Shared Leadership Measure, Brussow (2013), Shared Leadership Measure

The Shared Leadership Measure is available at