LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
JOHN W. RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

BUILDING HIGH-PERFORMANCE MINISTRY TEAMS: PASTORS, MINISTERS, AND

LEADERS OF SELECTED BAPTIST CHURCHES IN MACON, GEORGIA

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

by

Michael Johnson

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

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ABSTRACT

This transcendental phenomenological research explored the experiences of pastors, ministers, and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia regarding the impact of a shared vision on the development of high-performance ministry teams. The study's goal will be to understand how a shared vision can motivate pastors and church leaders to do what is necessary to improve church ministries so they can function in a way that would advance the Kingdom of God. Emphasis will be placed on understanding the experiences of pastors and church leaders in building high-performance ministries. Shared vision will be defined as a clear and common view of the future as communicated to members of a team who let the vision resonate within, with the result being them taking ownership of it (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). The team leadership theory, postulated by Douglas McGregor, and the transformational theory, postulated by James MacGregor Burns, would guide this study. This inquiry will focus on pastors and ministry leaders, the importance of sharing the vision, and the willingness to do what it takes to fulfill the vision, even if it requires modifying actions and activities.

Keywords: visionary leader, shared vision, team dynamics, servanthood

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Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation to Karen Vanessa Johnson, my dearly departed wife, my dearly departed mother, my siblings, and my church family. Karen was the inspiration behind the continuation of this quest. I exude special gratitude to her for always believing that I had what it took to do great things in and for God. She will always be in my heart and my inspiration in anything I accomplish.

I certainly dedicate this dissertation to Pauline Virginia Johnson, my mother. Oh, how I love you and miss your encouraging words at those critical junctions in my life. This dissertation is also dedicated to my siblings, Gene, Alice, Helen, and Freddie who supported me unconditionally. As the youngest sibling in the family, you have certainly fulfilled the desires of our mother to always look after me. I love you all!

Finally, I dedicate this dissertation to my church family who has always given me space to grow and encouraged me to always "go for it." The support and prayers you provided me during the transition of my wife were simply amazing. Thank you!

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Finally, to my children and grandchildren—the absolute "love" of my life—thank you for going through the storm with me!!! It has been a journey, but we are getting stronger every day. My wife—your mother and grandmother—is wearing the biggest smile she can muster because her goal was to have us together in all intervals of life. Thank you for allowing me to be "Daddy" and "G-pop"!!!

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Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Liberty University (LU)

Research Questions (RQ)

Interview Participant (IP)

Focus Group Participant (FGP)

Pastor (P)

CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH CONCERNS

Introduction

The foundation for leadership and management was established and mentored by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The scriptures are filled with instructions for the followship and management of God's people. The Bible is also full of biblical characters who were high-performance leaders, with Jesus being the ultimate. Jesus and the characters taught, trained, and mentored others who did the same. Specifically, Jesus mentored His disciples—His followers. Leaders know that they cannot lead without followers and that followers are important. In essence, leaders impact followers, and followers impact leaders. High-performance church leaders have a greater impact on their followers because they are great mentors and servant leaders (Northouse, 2019) with a vision.

All leaders operate under one or more theories. Jesus was a transformational teacher, and His will for leaders is that they are transformational. He brought change, and He continues to invoke change in individuals' lives. He adapted His teaching style to fit the situation (New International Version, John 14:8-12). Likewise, church leaders must be situational. High-performance leaders are situational. Oftentimes, they adapt their leadership style to minister or to meet needs. They assess a situation and do what is necessary to address it or resolve it. Additionally, Jesus incorporated the member exchange theory and the team approach (Kouzes & Posner, 2017) in His ministry. He served and respected His followers and showed genuine concern for them, and they did likewise toward Him. High-performance ministry team leaders serve, respect, and support their team members, and their team members, in turn, do likewise toward them.

In the secular world, individuals in leadership positions who do not serve and show genuine concern are not servant leaders (Northouse, 2019). Servant leaders follow Jesus' teachings. Also, if they do not have a vision, their followers will have nothing to motivate them. Proverbs 29:18 states, "Where there is no vision, the people perish…" This is not the way Jesus Christ planned for the church to operate. His model was that of team ministry, and followers of Christ are called to invoke change in the world and individuals' lives (New International Version, Matt 25). Jesus was also situational. Pastors and church leaders not operating under this model are operating contrary to the divine plan. Thus, they need guidance in getting on the right track and doing the will of God regarding the church. Many churches are attempting to get on the right track, as they are transitioning to team ministry. However, they need guidance in the process. The focus of this research study was on the experiences of pastors, ministers, and church leaders who have established high-performance ministry teams.

This chapter consists of an introduction and overview of the study. The background, situation to self, problem statement, purpose statement, significance of the study, and research questions are also included. Additionally, definitions of terms and the summary are included.

Background to the Problem

Arrey (2014) defined team building as the process of helping a group of individuals enhance performance in completing assigned tasks. Jesus was the first to establish the team-building process. He used the team approach in ministry and built high-performance ministry teams with a shared vision. He communicated His vision and made sure His team understood it and could complete the tasks needed to fulfill it (New International Version, Mark 16:15; Luke 24:45-49). He completed His mission of serving and dying for humanity and of instilling in His disciples the desire to make other disciples (New International Version, Matt 4:19). His vision

was communicated with clarity, and he was convinced the disciples—the members of His team,

understood it and were equipped to complete the required tasks to accomplish the mission. He

then released the disciples to bring the vision to fruition (New International Version, Mark

16:15; Luke 24:45-49). "Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law,

happy is he.…" (New International Version, Prov 29:18). This scripture indicates that if God's

Word is not presented, people would resemble ships drifting without sails or sheep in need of

shepherds (Henry, 2022; New International Version, Mark 6:24). They would be without

direction or moral conscience (Henry, 2022), and the wrath of God would be the result if there is

no repentance (New International Version, Rom 2:5). Like Jesus, but not equal to Jesus, Paul

was a great leader. He possessed the qualities of a high-performance visionary leader,

corresponding to the description described by Kouzes and Posner (2017). He, too, communicated

his vision and imparted instructions for accomplishing it to his team at Ephesus.

Arrey (2014) and Kouzes and Posner (2017) noted that high-performance team leaders

clearly communicate the vision to their followers. The desire of church leaders should be that

team members and congregants grasp the vision. They must, however, clearly communicate

God's revelations to obtain the desired results (Byrd, 2018). The local church has the

responsibility of preparing the laity to serve in leadership (Laird, 2019). In advancing the

Kingdom of God, ministry teams must be operational, and members of the team must share the

established vision. Church leaders must have competent individuals in their circle, and they must

share the vision. They must work closely together and be on the same path (Byrd, 2018).

Statement of the Problem

Team ministry is God's plan for the church, as the first team ministry was organized by

Jesus Christ who recruited disciples and mentored them on how to establish high-performance

ministry teams. It was at this time that Jesus established the guidelines for church ministry (New International Version, Luke 6:12-16). Jesus created the model in the form of training His disciples to train others. In essence, He had a high-performance ministry team. High-performance team ministries operate under the principles established in the Theory Y model, designed by McGregor, and the transformational model, designed by MacGregor Burns. Both models allow ministry leaders to inspire, empower, and challenge their followers to be highly productive and creative (ResearchGate, n.d.).

High-performance teams not only lead team members but also set the tone for completing the tasks to accomplish the mission and fulfill the vision (Arrey, 2014). High-performance team leaders communicate the vision to their followers clearly and concisely (Arrey, 2014; Kouzes & Posner. 2017). Low-performance team leaders communicate poorly to team members. A missing element is the lack of a clear vision and mission, resulting in team members' inability to complete the mission. Team members and congregants are expected to understand the vision, so team leaders must clearly communicate God's revelations to obtain preferred results (Byrd, 2018). High-performance ministry team leaders produce high-performance ministry team members who are eager to do what is needed to advance the Kingdom (Kouzes & Posner, 2019).

Leaders in churches planning to establish new ministries or revamp established ministries to mirror that of Jesus will need guidance. They must focus on improving the performance of existing members (Arrey, 2014) and on training new members to ensure that the tasks necessary to bring the vision into reality are completed successfully. They must instill in the members that they must be on the same page and have a common purpose to successfully complete the tasks (Kouzes & Posner, 2019). They must share the vision and realize that the knowledge and skills the members bring to the team are of great importance (Dyer et al., 2013).

Not all pastors, ministers, and church leaders know how to establish high-performance ministry teams. Pastors and church leaders who have not established team ministries but are planning to do so need guidelines on how to establish and build high-performance team ministries. Likewise, pastors and church leaders who have established team ministries but need to perform at a higher level, need guidelines. Much literature exists on team building from a general perspective. However, very little research exists on the experiences of church leaders regarding how to build high-performance ministry teams. Church leaders can benefit from the experiences of those who have done so. Because this research study was on the experiences of pastors and church leaders who have high-performance team ministries, the findings should narrow the gap and add to the existing research because they included a description of the participants' experiences using a shared vision, and most importantly, proven strategies used by church leaders who have established high-performance ministry teams.

Some literature provides awareness, thoughts, beliefs, and experiences regarding how to develop new teams and how to improve existing teams (Dyer et al., 2013; Fapohunda, 2013; Hartwig & Bird, 2015; Jen Su, 2019; Lencioni, 2016; McChrystal et al., 2015; Thomas, 2019; Weir, 2018). Dyer et al. emphasized the importance of considering the skill levels of prospective team members. Fapohunda listed qualities team members should possess. Hartwig & Bird focused on identifying authentic teams. Jen Su studied the trust element which is needed by every team member. Lencioni focused on how to select team leaders. McChrystal focused on the development of teams and focused on team size. Thomas emphasized servant leadership and the love factor. Weir focused on the make-up of the team in terms of attitudes. Team members' attitudes, according to Weir, should be optimistic. A review of the literature, however, revealed a lesser amount of research on building high-performance ministry teams. Specifically, very little

literature is available on the experiences of leaders regarding building high-performance ministry teams.

This research study sought to provide insight into how to use a shared vision to build high-performance ministry teams. Qualitative research of this phenomenon was conducted by transcendental phenomenology, which involved exploring the lived experiences of the participants. Because the experiences of pastors, ministers, and other church leaders who are skilled in using a shared vision in establishing high-performance ministry teams were explored, first-hand information in terms of guidelines and strategies were described in the findings, which should be helpful to churches—especially Baptist churches that are transitioning to team ministry or establishing ministry teams for the first time. It also adds to existing research.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological research was to explore the experiences of pastors, ministers, and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia regarding the impact of a shared vision on the development of high-performance ministry teams. The goal of the study was to understand how a shared vision could be used to motivate pastors and church leaders to do what is necessary to improve church ministries so they would function in a way that would advance the Kingdom of God. Emphasis was placed on understanding their experiences using a shared vision. The team leadership theory and the transformational theory set the framework for this study.

Research Questions

The central research question established for this study is What are the experiences, if any, of pastors and church leaders regarding the impact of a shared vision on building ministry teams? Sub-research questions are listed below.

RQ1. What are the similarities and differences among pastors of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia regarding how they communicate their vision for ministry?

RQ2. How do licensed ministers and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia use the shared vision to build high-performance ministry teams?

RQ3. How do licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia describe the benefits of using a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams?

RQ4. What barriers, if any, have pastors, licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected churches in Macon, Georgia experienced in using the shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams?

Assumptions and Delimitations

Research Assumptions

This study was designed based on assumptions of Douglas McGregor's team leadership theory that suggests two styles of management exist—Theory X and Theory Y—authoritative and participative, respectively. The study was also based on assumptions of James MacGregor Burns' transformational theory that suggests that leaders inspire followers to accomplish more or increase performance by adapting or altering behaviors (See Figures 1 and 2). A general assumption was that the participants who agreed to participate would be comfortable and would spend the time needed to complete the interview and/or focus group sessions. Another assumption was that the responses of the respondents would be beneficial in the analysis process. Other assumptions were that the responses of the participants would be somewhat different and that the strategies used by the participants could be used by church leaders in churches of all sizes in establishing team ministries.

Delimitations of the Research Design

The following delimitations applied to this study:

1. This study was delimited to Baptist churches located within the central section of the southeastern region of the United States in Macon, Georgia. Baptist churches located in other sections of the United States will not be included.

2. This research study was delimited to pastors, ministers, and church leaders. It would not include pastors, ministers, and church leaders who are not affiliated with Baptist churches.

3. This research study was delimited to pastors who have served in the position of pastor at the selected churches for at least two years.

4. This research study was delimited to licensed ministers affiliated with the selected churches who have been licensed for at least two years. It did not include ministers affiliated with other churches or licensed in other denominations.

5. This research study was delimited to leaders who have served in the position at the selected churches for at least one year.

Definition of Terms

For this proposed study, the following definitions of terms were used:

1. *Common purpose*: Common purpose is when a team leader and group members share the same goals (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

2. *Leader:* Servant and steward of God who guides church members, following biblical principles (Church Leadership, 2007-2022).

3. *High-performance ministry team.* A group of Christians faithfully using their God-given gifts, operating as a cohesive team exhibiting a sense of togetherness with a shared purpose, a common goal, and a deep commitment to accomplishing it (Mayhew, Deterding, & Bruyn, 2016).

4. *Minister:* One who is motivated by God to lead and provide service to others in the name of Jesus Christ; serves in the capacity of a priest (Grace Theological Seminary, 2021).

5. *Pastor:* Leads the church, determines the direction the church should go, and guides in the process; watches over church members, preaches, teaches, and evangelizes (Christianity Today, 2022)

6. *Shared vision*: Shared vision is a clear and common view of the future as communicated to members of a team who let the vision resonate within, with the result being them taking ownership of it (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

7. *Team building*: Team building is the process of helping a group of individuals enhance performance in completing assigned tasks (Arrey, 2014).

8. *Transcendental phenomenology research:* Transcendental phenomenology research is a qualitative research method wherein the researcher uses instruments, i.e., interviews and surveys. The instruments are unbiased, and the analysis is conducted without researcher preconceptions or input (Martirano, 2016).

Visionary leader: A visionary leader leads by example, communicates his or her vision, and provides instructions for completing tasks necessary to fulfill the vision. The visionary leader also confirms the establishment of values and encourages team members to share those values (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Significance of the Study

The team approach in ministry is the divine plan. It is the plan for building high-performance ministry teams. Many churches have adopted the team approach to ministry, and many others are in the transitional process. Jesus led a high-performance, team-oriented ministry. He shared His vision and communicated it to His disciples. He operated in excellence, and the expectation is for all churches to follow suit. He was a visionary leader (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

As followers of Christ, church leaders are instructed to lead as Jesus led and communicate the vision to ministry team members and laity (Matt 4:19; SHRM, 2021). However, not all churches that have adopted the team approach to ministry or transitioning to the team approach are knowledgeable about how to develop high-performance ministry teams. Much literature exists on team ministry and shared vision regarding awareness, thoughts, beliefs, and

experiences on how to develop new ministry teams and how to improve existing teams. However, very little literature exists on building high-performance ministry teams and on the experiences of leaders regarding building high-performance ministry teams.

Team building has been described as the process of assisting a group of individuals to improve performance in completing assigned tasks (Arrey, 2014). To be successful in advancing the Kingdom of God, members of the team must have a common purpose. They must also share the vision (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). The competencies of the individuals assigned to teams are very important (Dyer et al. (2013). Individuals with high-level skills are needed to assist in accomplishing the mission to fulfill the vision.

This study was designed to add to the existing literature on team building—specifically ministry team building. Moreover, it would add the experiences of pastors and church leaders who have been successful in building high-performance ministry teams to the minimal amount of existing literature. This expansion to the current literature would be beneficial to church leaders transitioning to team ministry or church leaders starting to establish ministries as they will be acquiring knowledge directly from those who established high-performance ministries. It is hoped that the proven strategies for building high-performance ministry teams and the information presented by the participants in the study narrow the gap, aid leaders in developing high-performance teams, and enable them to fulfill the Great Commission.

Summary of the Design

The selected design for this study was transcendental phenomenological qualitative because it permits the researcher to use surveys, interviews, and focus groups (Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Poth, 2018). The instruments used in this study were a demographic survey, an interview protocol, and a focus group protocol. The transcendental phenomenological approach

was selected because it enables the researcher to describe participants' lived experiences rather than interpret them (Adams et al., 2017; Sheehan, 2014). The instruments were created without bias, and the analysis was conducted without preconceptions or input provided by the researcher (Martirano, 2016). In essence, the selected design would help describe the primary experiences of the participants regarding the use of a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams. In that regard, it will enable the researcher to collect the type of data needed to answer the research questions.

A thorough review of existing literature on the study topic is presented in Chapter 2. Specific findings on the link between a shared vision and high-performance ministry teams will be presented. Theological and theoretical frameworks will also be presented.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

This literature review summarizes and synthesizes existing research on shared vision and building high-performance ministries. This transcendental phenomenological study explored high-performance church ministries to better understand how they are developed, specifically, to determine how or if a shared vision is used. By focusing on the experiences of pastors, licensed ministers, and church leaders in churches with high-performance ministries, the researcher desired to describe how they use shared vision to build high-performance ministries. Meaning was found in the experiences of the research participants through the transcendental phenomenology study (Adams & van Manen, 2017; Cresswell & Poth, 2018; Martirano, 2016; Moustakas, 1994).

This chapter summarizes some of the existing literature on the topic of shared vision and building church ministry teams. The theological and theoretical frameworks on which this study was based begin this chapter. The theological section covers the biblical basis for the study, and the theoretical section covers the theories on which the study is based. The following theories are presented: Visionary leadership/clarify values, servant leadership, team leadership, situational leadership, and transformational leadership. The next section presented is related literature. This section covers findings from existing literature on transformational leadership, team leadership, team building, ministry development, creating/writing the vision, and communicating the vision. The final section is the conclusion.

Theological Framework for the Study

In this section of the research study, theological support regarding the significance of having a shared vision to build high-performance ministry teams is discussed. The theological frameworks for this study are rich in scriptures, with Jesus Christ being the supreme leader. Commentaries and findings from various authors are presented. Serving as the master teacher and mentor in establishing team ministry, Jesus taught His team of disciples to lead and to develop their followers so that they could lead. Specifically, it is all about leading others to Christ, as He desires that no one will perish (2 Peter 3:9). To lead in the manner dictated by Christ, church leaders must be skilled and possess Christ-like qualities. Topics of discussion include vision/shared vision and team building. The New International Version, Bible (2011), Bible commentaries, books, and journal articles were reviewed and included.

Vision/Shared Vision

Craig (2019) noted that one of the most essential tasks leaders have is that of ensuring individuals in their circle embrace their vision. These individuals or team members should buy into the point that they share it with others within their teams and across the organization (Craig, 2019). Craig stressed that to operate in this way, the vision must be convincing but realistic. Craig (2019) noted that leaders should involve and influence others. Craig noted that vision should be formed considering the purpose, core values, and expectations of long-term accomplishments. The leader should be able to clearly communicate the goals and the overall perspective to others so well that they can visualize the vision (Craig, 2019).

Craig (2019) stressed that leaders need vision ambassadors. Craig explained that vision ambassadors assist leaders when needed, in promoting or encouraging buy-in. Vision ambassadors also focus on projected issues that may arise among team members that leaders have not considered (Craig, 2019). Additionally, they emphasize focus on established long-term goals. Instituting an administrative structure that can efficiently respond to deviations and encounters is crucial (Craig, 2019). Leaders must ensure that structures are in place wherein team members are free to make suggestions and developments.

Craig (2019) noted that leaders should consider the frequency of communicating the vision and updating team members and others, including stakeholders. Craig concurs with Bryant (2018) regarding behavioral expectations, which must be communicated clearly. In establishing a shared vision, leaders must also consider the process for termination or dismissing a member because of substandard performance or a poor cultural fit (Craig, 2019). Craig and Bryant share similar views on the requirements of creating a shared vision. Leaders must construct a resilient framework that is realistic, cohesive, and stable, which provides opportunities for members to

refine and share thoughts (Craig, 2019). For refining and sharing of thoughts to manifest, leaders must do what is necessary to acquire buy-in.

Mugavin (2023) concurred with Craig that generating cohesion and encouraging team members is crucial. Inspiring a shared vision is a major practice of effective leaders as it helps team members see the connection and meaning in the tasks they perform (Mcgavin, 2023). Noting leaders must describe their vision for the future and bring others on board, Mugavin concurred with Bryant (2018) and Craig (2019) regarding how leaders can inspire a shared vision. In defining their vision, leaders acquire clarity and can better explain it. Bringing others on board provides an opportunity for leaders to understand their desires for the future and explain how their vision can assist them in attaining those desires. In essence, leaders can take advantage of this opportunity to show those brought on board how having a shared vision can assist them in achieving their future aspirations. Mcgavin suggested checking in frequently with team members concerning progress regarding the established future vision. Hearing team members' goals and aspirations and discovering the desired shared goals of the team should be a practice (Mcgavin, 2019).

Mcgavin (2023) suggested that leaders reflect frequently to understand how well they and their team members are inspiring a shared vision. The following reflective questions can be asked by leaders in this reflective process.

1. Where do I see myself in 10 years?
2. How do I talk about my vision for the future?
3. What big-picture goals do I see for the team's future?
4. Do I show others where they fit in this vision of the future?
5. Do I make others part of this shared future?

6. Do I think about the future often enough? (Mcgavin, 2023, Questions section)

Jesus is and was the ultimate visionary leader when he walked the earth. His mission was to serve and die for humanity. Disciples making other disciples was one of Jesus' visions (New International Version, Matt 4:19). Simply knowing the vision is not enough (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Team members should also let the vision resonate within, with the result being the vision living in them (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Jesus was also the ultimate master teacher and mentor. He taught His disciples, and they taught and mentored others, fulfilling His vision. Jesus communicated His vision and made sure His team understood it and could complete the tasks needed to fulfill it (New International Version, Mark 16:15; Luke 24:45-49). Additionally, Jesus was a transformational leader with a flexible leadership style. When necessary, He adapted his leadership style to deal with various situations concerning His team of disciples and to ensure understanding (New International Version, John 14:8-12). Northouse (2019) called this mode of leading situational and noted that situational leaders change their style of leading after evaluating the situation and the motivation level and ability of their followers.

Proverbs 29:18 states, "Where *there is* no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but happy *is* he who keeps the law." This scripture rests upon the premise that if the Word of God is not made known, people would be like ships without a sail, or sheep without a shepherd (Henry, 2022; New International Version, Mark 6:24). They would have no direction or guidance and would be doing anything, with no regard for morality or spirituality. As a result, they would be spiritually dead (Henry, 2022), and if left unrepentant mode, the result would be the wrath of God (Rom 2:5). Likewise, because of their ignorance, they could potentially die physically as death is the consequence of not having a vision or not catching the vision because they would be exposed to danger (Henry, 2022). Church leaders must communicate to the congregants what

God reveals to them (Byrd, 2018), with the hope that they catch the vision. It would be well with them if they do. In team ministry, there must be a leader, and that leader must be adept at leading as he or she must lead the team effort in establishing the vision (Byrd, 2018).

In Ephesians 4:1-6, the Apostle Paul is in prison. Referring to the negative connotation of being imprisoned, Tranvik (2012) noted that imprisonment is considered to be a waste of valuable time because it deprives one of freedom. However, Tranvik added, that Paul did not view it in that manner because he referred to himself as being "a prisoner of the Lord" (New International Version, Eph 4:1; Tranvik, 2012, p. 1). Paul's mission was to declare or speak out for Christ, and he admitted that imprisonment did not inhibit the completion of his mission (New International Version, Phil 1:12). On the contrary, according to Paul, the imprisonment helped him to further proclaim and advance the gospel of Jesus Christ (New International Version, Phil 1:12-14; Tranvik, 2012). Arrey (2014) noted that team members will be confronted with some difficulties, but they can rise above them all. They would have to keep their focus on the mission/task and keep working until they have fulfilled the vision (Arrey, 2014).

Even though he was in prison, Paul led by example, a characteristic of a visionary leader, as described by Kouzes and Posner (2017). In this leadership role, he communicated his vision and provided instructions for fulfilling it to the members of his team at Ephesus. These are actions, according to Arrey (2014), of a high-performance team leader. Paul's focus was on building character while completing the mission and seeing the vision fulfilled. He provided instructions on how to get it done—in unity—as a team (New International Version, Ephesians 4: 2-3). Likewise, in a letter to his team in Corinthians (New International Version, 1 Cor 1:10), Paul discussed the importance of having a shared vision:

> I appeal to you, brothers, and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.

Visionary church leaders do the same. Paul specifically instructed the team members to be tolerant or patient with one another (New International Version, Eph 4:2). Arrey (2014) explained that team members must possess this quality because of the varied personalities and other differences of team members. They will not agree on everything, but they can be civil toward one another (Arrey, 2014). In essence, according to Kouzes and Posner (2017), visionary leaders ensure that values are established, and they promote sharing them. Team efforts will not be successful if the vision is not shared (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Each team member must share the vision (Byrd, 2018).

Team Building

Team Building: Recruiting and Development

Self-managed project teams need considerable time to show their real aptitudes. What a group can achieve depends in part on its stage of development (Stein, 2018). Stein noted that a team's effectiveness can be improved if its members are committed to evaluating their work and receiving feedback. However, the most important aspect is that all team members understand their development as a team. (Stein, 2018)

Bailey (2018) outlined steps to recruit and maintain an exceptional team and expressed that the vision should be kept at the forefront with a plan in place. The plan would permit leaders and team members to look at various perspectives in terms of disparities in tasks and enable them to recognize competencies necessary to advance or expand the organization. The first suggestion was to use a scorecard for all positions and describe the abilities and competencies necessary to be successful (Bailey, 2018). Bailey noted that careful consideration should be given to

discussion time and discussion questions. Because existing team members could be very beneficial in the recruiting of new team members, leaders should involve them in the interview process (Bailey, 2018). They would be working with the individuals interviewed and are in a position to determine if the interviewees are a good fit and possess the competencies needed to complete the tasks necessary to accomplish the mission and fulfill the vision.

Bailey (2018) emphasized that recruiting the right people is crucial as they will accomplish the mission and fulfill the vision. Screening is necessary to discover the most skilled or competent individuals (Bailey, 2018). While there are various ways to screen, the best methods will appeal to the individuals who are right for the team (Bailey, 2018). The amount of time allocated in the recruitment and interview process is critical, according to Bailey, who recommended doubling the time to ensure an informed decision. Leaders should remain in recruit mode and have quick access to a list of prospective team members if the need arises.

Bailey indicated having an excellent recruitment process in place is not enough. Attention must be provided to existing team members—top talented individuals who are on task, mission-focused, and working hard to fulfill the vision. Bailey indicated that leaders must develop a personal relationship with them and not only recognize their achievements but also compensate them. One of the most important things leaders can do is invest in their team members (Bailey, 2018).

Recruitment team. A recruiting team is needed to ensure the successful recruitment of team members ("Recruiting team structure," 2023). The structure of the recruiting team must be well-designed in terms of workflow, communication, tasks, and responsibilities ("Recruiting team structure," 2023). Diversity is key ("Recruiting team structure," 2023). The team is comprised of various individuals with unique skills, talents, and specializations ("Recruiting

team structure," 2023). The role of the recruiter is very significant as he or she has the task of ensuring a positive session in a positive environment and that all goes well ("Recruiting team structure," 2023).

Garcia (2023) noted that recruiting is complex and concurred with "Recruiting team structure" (2023) that the tasks are varied. Garcia indicated that the tasks need to be based on priorities and restrictions or limits.

Some organizations may have a sourcer, one who reviews and identifies candidates from talent pools ("Recruiting team structure," 2023). Sourcers review resumes in databases and browse social media platforms, online job postings, and professional networks to find candidates who match the established criteria ("Recruiting team structure," 2023). Sources also maintain the talent pool so the organization will be able to meet the needs of future team members. Additionally, sources must keep abreast of the most updated recruiting strategies, recruitment instruments, and forms of recruiting technology ("Recruiting team structure," 2023).

Garcia (2023) concurred with "Recruiting team structure" (2023) that recruiters have the critical task of finding individuals who will be essential in the operation of the organization. These individuals must be capable, knowledgeable, and respectful (Garcia, 2023). Garcia (2023) noted that members of the recruiting team need to be skillful, patient, and possess the ability to work as a team. However, not all companies use recruiting teams to select team members because it may not be practical (Garcia, 2023). Garcia noted that if recruiters are used, leaders must have a vision for it and select individuals who know how to recruit.

Garcia noted that the purpose of using recruiters is to make the selection process much easier. Thus, balancing the tasks among the team is key, and understanding those tasks and corresponding functions is significant in building a recruitment team that complements the tasks

(Garcia, 2023). Garcia (2023) emphasized that some tasks are not necessary. Leaders must understand their needs and build their recruiting needs along those lines (Garcia, 2023). Garcia and "Recruiting team structure" (2023) concurred with Smith (2021) that having a talent pool benefits recruitment efforts. Smith (2021) encouraged leaders to be collaborative in their efforts in selecting a recruitment team. Leaders should first determine, according to Smith, if they need a recruitment team.

Recruiting team size. According to "Recruiting team structure" (2023), to ensure a smooth process, the recruitment team should be balanced. Because every organization is unique, its needs are unique ("Recruiting team structure," 2023). However, one step in determining the size of the recruiting team is to consider the number of tasks required of the recruiting team members. Because the strength of the team is key, oftentimes, small may be enough ("Recruiting team structure," 2023). Garcia (2023) concurred with the "Recruiting team structure" and indicated that the number of recruiters is not tied to better recruitment. More importantly, leaders must have an understanding of the organizational needs, including the needed skills and abilities. Garcia cautioned granting the recruiters too much responsibility or more than they can handle because it would be ineffective and concurred with the "Recruiting team structure" on balancing the recruitment team. Balancing, according to Garcia, prevents burnout.

Bryant (2018) conducted over 500 interviews with leaders on the topic of teamwork and concluded that selecting the individuals who are right for the task is crucial. Empowering them to do that task makes them highly motivational (Bryant, 2018). The results of the interviews revealed that a plan, with a measurable stated goal, must be in place (Bryant, 2018). While it may be easy to select the right team members for a task, it is not as easy to manage the team (Bryant, 2018). Bryant indicated that leaders must

monitor the team to ensure the team members are working well together and maintaining the right focus. Bryant noted that followers or team members want to know the mission, the goal, and how progress will be assessed along the way, and team leaders must be prepared to communicate this information in a clear and precise manner. Not knowing what the monitoring process would entail is one of the greatest challenges confronted by teams (Bryant, 2018). The issue is initiated when leaders give team members too many priorities (Bryant, 2018) It is an issue not only for team members but for leaders as well (Bryant, 2018). Defining priorities and how they will be measured is vital because the priorities must be carefully aligned with the goal, which must be shared (Bryant, 2018). When the shared goal is concise and clear, unity—a sense of togetherness—will be evident. Bryant noted that having a system of measurement in place empowers individual teams across the organization in the decision-making process. Team members align their decisions with the established metrics. However, when no metrics are in place, teams establish their systems of measurement, and get off course or simply be counterproductive (Bryant, 2018). Bryant indicated that once the plan is in place, team members must be constantly reminded of established priorities until it is apparent, they internalize them.

Bryant (2018) expressed that standards, performances, and social boundaries must be set to ensure that all team members know how to work in harmony. Rules must be set regarding acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, i.e., expectations of team members when relating to one another (Bryant, 2018). Leaders may decide to have nothing to do with establishing team values and let the teams decide or work through it, i.e., how they will work in unity. They may, though, decide to establish shared policies on values, including

how team members will work collectively (Bryant, 2018). It is, however, crucial that team members adhere to the set values which should prompt them to remain in alignment with them (Bryant, 2018). Bryant noted that the values should be specific and clear.

Jesus knew He needed a team of disciples to accomplish His mission and fulfill His vision. Thus, He selected 12 men to bring it to fruition (Luke 6:12-16). Paul was also a team leader. In 1 Corinthians 11:1, while recruiting team members, He stated, "Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ." Paul's mission was like that of Jesus' mission—to make disciples so they could go and make disciples. Uhl-Bien et al (2019) called this the leadership co-created process theory as Paul and his team members influenced one another. Uhl-Bien et al. contended that followers are equally important as team leaders. Leaders cannot lead if they have no followers.

Proverbs 27:17 states, "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another." Fapohunda (2013) noted that team building involves individuals working within teams, depending on one another. They have a common purpose—to improve performance. Gordon (2018) expressed that members of high-performance teams are constantly searching for ways to improve. They are team-oriented and express that they are better collectively (Gordon, 2018).

Fapohunda (2013) indicated that teamwork promotes all the qualities necessary for a team to function at a high capacity. These qualities include respect, inspiration, enthusiasm, and concern for team members. Fapohunda found that organizations that encourage teamwork establish a collaborative culture that is valued (New International Version, 1 Corinthians 1:10; Psalm 133). Team members believe and appreciate the fact that when they have a shared vision and work collaboratively, the functions and processes needed to complete tasks are better.

Proverbs 16:3 motivates individuals to trust God with the results as blessings are tied to trusting God. Jen Su (2019) stated that leaders may need to change their attitudes and/or behaviors to be viewed as being more trusting (New International Version, Rev 2:2). According to Jen Su, team leaders may also need to observe elements of trust that are not very strong within their teams. Once the search is completed, team leaders must do what is necessary to support them (Jen Su, 2019).

1 Corinthians 1:10, Paul made a plea to his team at Corinth to work in unity. According to Byrd (2018), unity is needed in every team and every team-building activity. All team members must share the vision, work closely, and be on the same path. Byrd noted that team members must own the vision for unity to prevail, for the mission to be accomplished, and for the vision to be fulfilled.

In Ephesians 4:32, Paul reminded the team members to treat one another with love and kindness as Christ has treated them. Arrey (2014) noted that team members will have disagreements, but they can be settled amicably. In Ephesians 4:1-12, Paul wrote, "So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors, and teachers, to equip His people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up." In 1 Corinthians 3:9, Paul reminded his team members that they are partners in the ministry with various gifts and are expected to use them to serve others. Byrd (2018) noted that high-performance teams are diverse teams with team members possessing varied gifts, talents, and experiences so they would have distinct roles in realizing the shared vision.

Theoretical Framework for the Study

One of the most significant elements in the research process is the theoretical framework (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). Mertz (2017) described the theoretical framework as a lens through

wherein the researcher views and manages the study. In essence, it directs the study. The primary beliefs are based on theoretical principles. This section of the literature review builds theoretical support to guide and strengthen the research regarding the use of a shared vision to build high-performance ministry teams and transcendental phenomenology. Visionary leadership/clarifying values, servant leadership, team leadership, situational leadership, and transformational leadership are the theories that lay the framework for this study. While these theories are needed for this study's foundation and will be presented, the specific focus will be on the theories of team leadership and transformational leadership.

Visionary Leadership/Clarifying Values

Warren (2018) stated, "There are two major components in a church building project. The first is vision; the second is execution. The lead pastor sees the vision, feels it, and knows what it looks like. Execution—the documents and permits, the construction process, the intricate details—is where we'll see a calculated shift to an administrative pastor taking the ball and running with it to the finish line." The ultimate leader, Jesus, was a visionary leader. He was extremely focused on His mission. Visionary leaders view the world differently. They assist others in seeing the vision, and they turn the vision into reality (Michigan State University, 2021).

Leaders must, according to Kouzes & Posner (2017), encourage or inspire their team members to align their actions with the established values because they must be shared. Regarding values, Kouzes and Posner (2017) found that leaders must clearly understand their values and put them into action. Afterward, they must then decide on the values that they will use in the leadership process (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Once that decision is made, they must

positively lead by example and spend as much time as needed teaching those values to the team members.

Progressive church leaders make a deliberate effort to clearly explain the established values before aligning their actions with the shared values so they can be good role models. They then teach and coach leaders how to align their actions with shared values and advise them to teach the members under their leadership to follow the leader (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

The Servant Leadership Theory

The servant leadership theory states that needs must be met (Northouse, 2019). Jesus' life was one of servanthood. His mission was to serve others—to meet their needs. He was not to be concerned about His needs because His father was going to take care of them. He had to fulfill His mission, and leaders must fulfill their mission. Philippians 2:1-3 states that we are to value others above ourselves. Therefore, church leaders must follow this principle in putting the needs of the congregants above their own. They must also understand they must put the needs of the ministries within the church above their own, make their will God's will, and look to Him to fulfill their needs. Additionally, they must understand that they must focus on God's will regarding every aspect of their life as they serve His people.

Pastors or lead servants of servant leaders within the church should try to model servant leadership while teaching how to be servant leaders. Every leader is expected to serve with a servant's heart and mind, in humility. They are also expected to model servanthood and teach those who serve under their leadership to do likewise (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Team Leadership Theory

Kouzes and Posner (2017) noted that enlisting others involves kindling excitement for a purpose and causing individuals to be resilient against enormous odds. It takes a special kind of

leader to be able to get followers to be resilient. Jesus formed the first team with His disciples being His followers (New International Version, Luke 6:12-16). John the Baptist had Christ-followers, and so did Apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 11). Nehemiah enlisted followers to help him and kept his focus against tremendous odds. By doing so, he was able to teach them how to be resilient, and they got the job done.

Equipping the laity to lead in ministry is the role of the local church, according to Laird (2019). She states, "Leaders do not emerge from a vacuum. Leader emergence requires a community where individuals function as leaders and followers, with roles often reversing depending on the responsibilities and tasks" (p. 67). Northouse (2019) described the term leadership as a procedure in which one influences a group of people to obtain a common goal., "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal." This definition, according to Laid, includes community connection wherein the servant leaders' characters are developed.

Situational Leadership Theory

According to Basu (2021), situational leadership involves leaders having to adjust to various situations. Basu lists four recommendations regarding how to adjust:

1. Prioritize the tasks.

2. Assess employee skills and motivation.

3. Decide on the leadership style—directing, coaching, supporting, or observing—that best fits the tasks.

Basu noted that a combination of leadership styles may be needed, contingent upon the situation or the group.

Pastors continuously deal with varied situations that require them to change or adjust their leadership style. Most situations have occurred within ministries. Some leaders, like Jesus' disciples, can handle situations with little to no supervision, while others often need one-on-one supervision or additional coaching to resolve some conflicts or to handle specific situations. This style of management calls for pastors to assess the situation and lead in a manner most appropriate as it may require them to lead in an autocratic manner rather than in a democratic or transformational manner.

Transformational Leadership Theory

According to Northouse, transformational leadership entails persuading individuals to achieve more and/or to attain increased performance or productivity by modifying behaviors. Referring to a University of Florida description of transformational leadership, Sheahan (2021) described transformational leadership as a method of encouraging individuals to accept change and upon acceptance, be devoted to the established vision. Sheahan noted that leaders must assess the church membership and leaders or organizational employees and managers/supervisors to determine what they need. They must also determine how to satisfy that need and let the followers know they are valued. By doing this, leaders, according to Sheahan, will inspire the members, employees, and other stakeholders to respond positively to their leadership. Sheahan concurred with Argyris, who, according to Stoyan (2017), indicated that every member should feel valued and should be asked for input. All members of an organization should participate in the decision-making process (Stoyan, 2017).

RELATED LITERATURE

Transformational Leadership

Mirkamali et al. (2014) explained that transformational leadership refers to leaders who develop dedication, desire, and loyalty among followers. Transformational leaders, according to Mirkamali et al., also activate team members to make fundamental changes necessary to move in new directions that would ensure improved performance and productivity. Korejan and Shabazi (2016) concurred with Mirkamali et al. by describing transformational leaders as being inspirational and creative, leading individuals in a manner that motivates their followers to go beyond to develop and remodel, transform, or renovate. Korejan and Shabazi noted that transformational leaders ensure their followers understand the value of their assigned tasks. Korejan and Shabazi also discovered that the transformational leader consistently looks for possible intentions in followers to attract their attention to higher needs and lead them to focus on what would benefit the organization.

Gleeson (2017) contended a strong leadership team or task force is needed to lead the transformation process. The team should be comprised of highly respected experienced leaders, essential leaders, and team members who embrace change (Gleeson, 2017). Warren (2018) noted that highly effective leaders are those who keep the organization, including the church, on point in accomplishing the mission needed to fulfill the vision.

Lancefield and Rangen (2021) found that transformational leaders operate systematically, applying new mental simulations, working organizational perimeters, sharing leadership more thoroughly, and causing empowerment to function as an expected strategy. Another finding by Lancefield and Rangen was that transformational leadership involves in-depth thinking, vision, the ability to deal with major issues, and the ability to govern their emotions in extreme

circumstances. Transformational leaders must be purposeful and possess a deep sense of purpose. Key questions centered around purpose, impact, requirements, and consequences will be asked of transformational leaders, and they must be ready to respond (Lancefield & Rangen, 2021). Transformational leaders must also be able to explain and describe the decision-making methods and processes they use and have used (Lancefield & Rangen, 2021).

Assessments must be made repeatedly by transformational leaders while considering how to enhance their organizations. In the assessment process, transformational leaders predict how team members will respond and react to change and/or how they will change (Lancefield & Rangen, 2021). In the assessment process, relationships must be assessed as transformational leaders must be very empathetic and trustworthy (Lancefield & Rangen, 2021).

Lancefield and Rangen (2021) noted that transformational leaders must not remain in the traditional center mode. They must be familiar with occurrences in other areas of the organization or group and provide encouragement whenever possible to ensure a positive environment and to let the members know input and creativity are welcomed (Lancefield & Rangen, 2021). Systems should be in place that solicit ideas, and organize, and analyze data that will inform transformational leaders (Lancefield & Rangen, 2021).

Shared leadership is key in the transformation process (Lancefield & Rangen, 2021). Selecting the right leaders at the right time requires observing individuals who are trusted, respected, influential, and skilled (Lancefield & Rangen, 2021). Once these individuals are selected a comparative analysis should be done to determine whether or not they complement one another in terms of approaches and abilities (Lancefield & Rangen, 2021).

While transformational leaders suggest they want team members to be empowered, many find it difficult to empower them (Lancefield & Rangen, 2021). The inability to relinquish

control hampers the transformational process because it limits the ability of team members to deal with complex issues (Lancefield & Rangen, 2021). Team members are also limited in making widespread deliberate and operational performance changes when transformational leaders fail to relinquish control (Lancefield & Rangen, 2021). To empower team members, Lancefield and Rangen (2021) noted that transformational leaders can make empowerment work by (a) explaining a well-defined purpose to ensure that team members are informed, (b) establishing performance and behavioral expectations, (c) sharing performance data with all involved, (d) providing whatever is needed to perform assigned tasks, (e) providing opportunities for skill development, (f) granting team members freedom in decision-making, and (g) paying attention and responding to suggestions of team members.

Team Leadership

Team leadership involves the renewing of the mind of the leader and the leader leading by example while ensuring a safe work environment and building a leadership culture (Thomas, 2019). Thomas noted that little things leaders do make such a difference to the team members that they result in team success. Thomas contended that team leaders should not only inspire the team members, but they should love them as well. Love, according to Thomas, is the center of leadership. Thomas noted that love is unquestionably at the core of servant leadership. Team leadership to Thomas means serving the team members, which requires a servant's heart. A leader with a servant's heart assists wherever needed and whenever needed (Thomas, 2019). Juan Hao and Yazdanifard also found that effective leaders possess like qualities, i.e., "passion, consistency, trust and vision" (p. 2). Leaders who possess these characteristics are positioned to build trust in their team members (Juan Hao & Yazdanifard, 2015).

Selection of team Leaders and members. Selecting team leaders requires tact. Lencioni (2016) noted that not everyone on a team is a team player. Many team members would become team players if team leaders considered their qualities, selected individuals who fit the assignment or qualifications, clarified the meaning of a team player, informed them of team expectations, and ensured they understood them. Thus, selecting team players is crucial as some leaders, according to Lencioni, select individuals who end up undermining teamwork. He noted leaders can convert team members into team players by assisting them in developing their teamwork skills.

In the recruitment and selection process, Byrd (2018) recommended soliciting long-term commitment, in good faith, from prospective team members. The suggestion included being authentic in explaining that working to fulfill a vision may include some challenges. However, working through the challenges will prove to be invaluable.

Team leaders should be highly skilled in directing and monitoring as they must be able to provide instructions, observe, and keep team members on task. They must be extremely strong in managing teams and teamwork in general (Lotich, 2022). Team leaders support team members and help them not only understand the established goals but prospective challenges as well (Lotich, 2022). Successful team leaders assist team members in positively settling conflicts and do not permit conflicts to impede progress (Lotich, 2022). Lotich (2022), like Stein (n.d.), noted that teams are comprised of individuals with diverse personalities and skills. Some are strong and some are not so strong. (Lotich, 2022). Team leaders, however, should ensure that team members with the strongest personalities do not unintentionally control or govern the team and/or its outcomes.

The role of team leaders. Gleeson (2017) emphasized that leaders must actively participate in the development of the vision statement. Leaders must also buy in regarding the

results and communicate the vision in a variety of ways to other members of the organization (Gleeson, 2017). Team leaders should also monitor the level of energy of members of their team to make sure there is a balance between work and relaxation and that the increased enthusiasm does not cause the initiation of an overabundance of projects (Martin et al., 2014).

Jun Hao and Yazdanifard (2015) expressed that team leaders should provide a clear plan for the team members. Jun Hao and Yazdanifard also found that effective leaders remain in a posture to employ necessary changes to advance the organization. In doing so, these leaders use their knowledge and skills in leading to direct team members on the processes involved in accomplishing the mission and fulfilling the vision. Effective leaders, according to Jun Hao and Yazdanifard, lead their employees to be dedicated to their positions and to work together to accomplish the established goals. Because effective leaders have a well-defined vision, they identify challenging issues or any issues that may hamper the accomplishment of the mission (Jun Hao & Yazdanifard, 2015).

Team Building

Organizations and teams must be flexible, possess a shared vision, be trustworthy, and have a common purpose. "Purpose affirms trust, trust affirms purpose, and together they forge individuals into a working team" (McChrystal et al., 2015, p. 99). McChrystal et al. noted that the size of teams permits the members to work well together. However, at times, it could limit team members' ability to perform on a much greater scale. McChrystal et al expressed that developing the team can mean disassembling what worked on a smaller scale and suggested creating a team of teams. This concept is based on the principle that relationship-building is important but not on the level of a simple team. McChrystal et al expressed that all team

members are not expected or required to be in a relationship with all team members. However,

they are expected to be transparent and to share when necessary (McChrystal et al., 2015).

Horner (2013) found that there are necessary steps church leaders—pastors in

particular—should take to build new ministry teams. They are (a) prayer, (b) preparation, (c)

planning, (d) recruiting, and (e) training/evaluation. Horner explained that one must have a clean

and unselfish heart to seek God's guidance concerning all aspects of the team-building process,

including who to select as team leaders and team members for the varied ministries. Horner also

included praying for what teams need to be established. James 1:5a, "If any of you lacks

wisdom, he should ask God…" is the scriptural reference Horner used for prayer as the first step

in his model. This step included the pastors answering the following three questions.

1. Am I dedicating sufficient time to praying for the type of team God wants to

   create, discernment about team members, and the formation of the team?

2. As I pray, what am I hearing from God about future teams?

3. Who do I know that can pray with me for the future team? (p. 74)

For preparation, the second step, Horner noted concern about how the team would assist in

accomplishing the mission. The following questions were asked of the pastors:

1. What specific ministry team is being proposed?

2. Specifically, how will the addition of this team help accomplish the overall

   mission of the church?

3. What is the overall goal of the ministry team? (p. 75)

4. What are the specific, measurable, and achievable responsibilities of the team? (p.

The purpose of the third step, planning, was to create descriptions for all team members. This structure, according to Horner, would enable the team leader to manage the team. Questions the pastors were asked to answer are listed below:

1. How is the team broken into a five-person simple structure?

2. What are the five different responsibilities of the team?

3. Does any responsibility need to be broken into by another team resulting in an additional level to the overall team?

4. What are the job descriptions of each person on the team? (p. 78)

The purpose of the fourth step—recruiting was for the pastors to consider the resources God had provided them in the laity. They were asked to brainstorm and answer the following questions:

1. Who do you think would fit on this team?

2. Why do you think he or she would be a good fit?

3. What type of positive or negative dynamics would occur within the team if that person was added to it? (p. 79)

The purpose of the fifth step, training/evaluation, was two-fold: (a) to ensure the team was prepared and (b) to assess the team to determine deficiencies and areas needing additional attention. The questions asked of the pastors were:

1. What type of training does the ministry team need?

2. When will the training be provided?

3. What resources and tools do the ministry team need to be successful?

4. When and how will the team be evaluated? (p. 82)

Horner contended that these five steps will assist church leaders in developing new ministry teams with clear objectives, ensure they recruit the right members for the teams, and that they are

prepared to accomplish their established objectives which will aid in fulfilling the established vision.

Team members, in general, according to Gordon, are filled with desire and are dedicated to completing the mission and fulfilling the vision. Gordon added that team members work enthusiastically and collaboratively with a shared vision and an enhanced purpose. Gordon served several other qualities of positive teams: They change and rid themselves of negativity, doubt, or gloom as team leaders of positive teams do not permit pessimism to disrupt the activities. Team members are considerate and connected as they have a good rapport with one another. The team members are always searching for ways to improve. They believe that collectively they are better, and they are only concerned about the advancement of their teammates (Gordon, 2018).

Hartwig and Bird (2015) noted that successful teams are authentic. One way to recognize bona fide or authentic teams, according to Hartwig and Bird, is to observe the team members in unity of purpose and in sharing the vision. Authentic teams, according to Hartwig and Bird, are also identified by the level of commitment regarding the established purpose. Additionally, they establish well-defined performance objectives and commitment to them. They not only know the purpose, but they also understand it and can communicate it at any time. Weir (2018) stated that the success of a team hinges on the make-up of the team. Optimistic, not pessimistic team members positively contribute to the team. Individuals, according to Weir, who value team environments tend to be not only more confident but also more cooperative.

Team members must be committed to reflection and consistent assessment if they want their team to improve or be progressive (Stein, n.d.) High-performance teams know the importance of understanding how the team is progressing. (Stein, n.d). In alluding to Tuckman's

framework for the stages teams go through, Stein (n.d.) noted that they are an effective outline for identifying patterns of behavior of team members. In the forming stage, the team is created, and goals and instructions for meeting them are established. Team members are excited but inquisitive (Stein, n.d.). Roles are also defined in this stage (Stein, n.d.). An orientation is recommended in this stage to help team members better understand the task and goals (Stein, n.d.).

Stein (n.d.) indicated that not all teams remain intact after the completion of a task. Attention, according to Stein, should be given to the concerns and feelings of the team members about the approaching dissolution, which Stein referred to as the ending stage. Team members may feel anxious and sad about the imminent dissolution or just deeply satisfied with their accomplishments (Stein, n.d.). They may experience conflicting feelings of all these emotions simultaneously (Stein, n.d.). Thus, in the ending stage, a rise or fall in morale may be experienced (Stein, n.d.). Productivity may also increase or decrease, depending on the degree of focus (Stein, n.d.). If team members become less focused on the tasks, productivity may drop. However, if they become more focused on the tasks, productivity may increase (Stein, n.d.).

Stein (n.d.) noted that the team should accept the impending dissolution and how team members may be feeling about it. Three tasks on which the team should be focused, explained by Stein, are (a) complete tasks and other outstanding work; (b) conduct an assessment, with a specific focus on recognizing lessons learned; and (c) celebrate the contributions of individual team members and accomplishments of the team.

Lotich (2022) noted that work teams are created within organizations to complete specific tasks. The members of the teams work collaboratively, attempting to reach a shared goal (Lotich, 2022). Because of diverse skill sets, team members bring their various creative ideas to the

project (Lotich, 2022). Lotich (2022) asserted that for a team to be high-performance, the team members must be developed. To become developed, team members must be involved in training that teaches them to understand the diverse gifts of each member and how to work toward a shared goal (Lotich, 2022). Training team members in this manner build strong teams because the team members learn how to be unified and acquire the ability to meet established goals (Lotich, 2022). The training also promotes a healthy environment and makes team members feel valued.

Glaze (2016) stressed that scheduling time for relaxation is characteristic of a successful team. Outlined below are 10 directives, Glaze called commandments. According to Glaze, they are adhered to by successful teams.

1 Remember to have fun and remain positive.

2 Always give and request clear expectations.

3 Frequently share appreciation and thanks.

4 Continue to grow and stay coachable.

5 Be aware of and encourage others.

7 Respect the clock and the calendar.

8. Know your role and contribute your strengths.

9 Prioritize team goals ahead of personal gains.

10. Claim personal responsibility for results. (pp. 5-6)

High-Performance Teams

Gleeson (2022) noted that leaders have much work to do if their goal is to create a positive culture and constant improvement. Concurring with Bryant (2018), Craig (2019), and Mugavin (2022), Gleeson expressed that thorough and concrete processes coupled with standard

procedures of operation, adaptability, and stability must be in place. High-performance groups

pursue excellence in performance through the sharing of goals and leadership, "collaboration,

open communication, clear role expectations, and group operating rules, early conflict resolution

and a strong sense of accountability and trust among its members" (Gleeson, 2022, So what is a

high-performance team?). Gleeson discussed relationships and results and outlined three

supports for each.

Relationships

Transparency, trust, and tone are needed to support the relationship dimension (Gleeson,

2022). Gleeson stated:

1. *Transparency* – the cornerstone of our culture of accountability begins with our ability to

   engage in peer-to-peer learning, candid feedback, and having critical conversations

   rooted in respectful truth over artificial harmony.

2. *Trust* – outside of accountability, trust is the other most important cultural pillar for high-

   performance teams and must be nurtured, creating environments of psychological safety

   and a deep sense of belonging.

3. *Tone* – leaders get the behaviors they tolerate and therefore must define and reward

   behavioral norms that support the mission, values, and desired results the team must

   accomplish. (Gleeson, 2022, So what is a high-performance team?)

Relationships

Transparency, trust, and tone are needed to support the relationship dimension (Gleeson,

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4. *Transparency* – the cornerstone of our culture of accountability begins with our ability to engage in peer-to-peer learning, candid feedback, and having critical conversations rooted in respectful truth over artificial harmony.

5. *Trust* – outside of accountability, trust is the other most important cultural pillar for high-performance teams and must be nurtured, creating environments of psychological safety and a deep sense of belonging.

6. *Tone* – leaders get the behaviors they tolerate and therefore must define and reward behavioral norms that support the mission, values, and desired results the team must accomplish. (Gleeson, 2022, So what is a high-performance team?)

Results

Alignment, agility, and accountability are the supports needed in the results dimension (Gleeson, 2022). Gleeson concluded that alignment is a major element, and many leaders and teams find it difficult to maintain. All organizational levels within the organization need to be continuously aligned (Gleeson, 2022). The mission, roles, responsibilities, accountability, goals, and objectives must be aligned. Agility involves being action-oriented and focused on learning (Gleeson, 2022). Gleeson states that adversity is embraced, and much time is spent on developing professionally. This permits the team to acquire the necessary skills necessary to be able to adapt to disorganized environments. Accountability, according to Gleeson, is the most important support in the results dimension. All members of the team accept ownership over victories and losses. All are focused on what they can do to advance the mission or to make it a success (Gleeson, 2022).

Common Roadblocks Faced by High-Performance Teams

Gleeson (2022) outlined several barriers confronted by high-performance teams:

1. Nonparticipating leadership. One obvious but common factor in teams that are failing to meet objectives involves inadequate leadership participation. This fuels confusion regarding belief in the mission and drives disengagement and lack of participation at all levels.

2. Lack of process and procedure. Standard operating procedures and tools even for the most mundane or seemingly simple tasks are imperative for streamlining efficiencies. Process improvement through even the most basic digital transformation is key to gaining more time back from priority initiatives.

3. Diversity is not valued. When diversity of thought, experience, cultural background, and everything in between is not valued in an organization, leaders reap what they sow.

4. Inability to manage conflict. This is a common hurdle for many well-intentioned leaders and teams. Typically, we don't like to engage in conflict. But navigating conflict in any team – especially high-performance teams - is not only inevitable, it's crucial for survival.

5. Lack of goal clarity. What? How could this be? Lack of clarity – and alignment – on the WHAT, WHY, and HOW is another common barrier to reaching peak levels of team performance. Luckily, this is relatively low-hanging fruit but often requires a bit of outside facilitation from a nonbiased party to reach maximum clarity.

6. Poorly defined roles and responsibilities. Role clarity and a solid RACI model (defining who is responsible, accountable, consulted, and informed) from the macro strategic level

down to the project execution level is imperative. High-performance leaders understand this and make it a priority. Sometimes simple, but not easy.

7. Relationship issues. Our research shows that the number one issue infecting organizational (and personal) workplace performance and resilience is challenging interpersonal relationships. These must be resolved by fostering mutual respect among team members.

8. Broken culture. Team culture encompasses everything we've reviewed thus far. Essentially, it can be defined as how team members collectively think, act, and behave. The culture of a high-performance team is well-designed, managed, and structured to achieve specific outcomes. (Gleeson, 2022, Roadblocks section)

Gleeson (2022) indicated that no perfect recipe exists for any organization. However, if leaders make the aforementioned qualities, i.e., behavioral and structural necessities high priorities for their teams, the result will be high performance and desired results (Gleeson, 2022).

Qualities of High-Performance Team Leaders

To advance the kingdom of God, church leaders need individuals who are knowledgeable of the Word of God on their ministry teams (Byrd, 2018). High-performance teams are led by competent, highly respected, and experienced leaders (Gleeson, 2017) who are goal-oriented, mission-oriented, and vision-oriented. Gleeson (2017) expressed that a strong leadership team is required in the transformation process. Brown (2017) also found that team members expect their team leader to be competent, experienced, and skilled. Because followers follow their assigned leader, team leaders must be effective in the role. Effective leadership, according to Macmillan (2001), is necessary to acquire team success. Warren (2018) noted that highly effective leaders are those who keep the organization, including the church, on point in accomplishing the mission

needed to fulfill the vision. Thus, team leaders must participate in leadership training. Caine (2018) contended that team leadership training should be continuous and involve a mentor or coach. Some sessions should be supportive, and others should include independent learning activities. Altering instructional methods should also be included (Craine, 2018).

Dyer et al. (2013) found that successful teams consider the knowledge and skill level of team members, and every team member contributes to the team in his or her way, given his or her skill set. The leader of a successful team, according to Dyer et al., spends much time building the team and helping the team members learn how to work collectively to complete the mission and fulfill the vision. The team leader is inclined to (a) issue additional responsibilities to the team members, (b) provide an open line of communication, (c) promote collaboration, (d) encourage reciprocal assistance among team members, and (e) permit differences but assist resolving them (Dyer et al., 2013).

Weir (2018) indicated that team composition is crucial and that qualities such as gender, age, and reputation are not too significant. Significant qualities of team members, according to Weir, include ability, personality traits, and values. Researchers called the attitudes, behaviors, and cognitive states that impact successful teams the ABCs of teamwork (Weir, 2018). The makeup of the team is contingent upon the conditions and objectives established for and by the team (Weir, 2018). High-performance ministry teams welcome change. Gleeson (2017) expressed that ministry teams must be comprised of team members who embrace change (Gleeson, 2017).

High-performance teams are diverse and function smoothly. Weir noted that variety in terms of abilities and skills is needed and that if the objective is to operate effectively, diversity in attitudes may not be as important. Individuals who experience the benefits of working on a

team and individuals with high ability tend to be great team members (Weir, 2018). A comparison of successful teams and unsuccessful teams revealed that successful teams operate easily. Team members who work together amicably and collaboratively experience success. Teams that operate differently are not as successful. Dyer et al. (2013) noted that teams with unmotivated and unskilled members are destined to fail from inception. Thus, it is extremely important to select enthusiastic and competent individuals because they will be able to accomplish the mission and see the vision fulfilled. Jesus knew the character traits and competencies of every disciple He selected. Church leaders should also know the skill levels and character of those they select to do Kingdom work. High-performance team leaders know the skill levels of selected team members.

High-performance teams consist of members who are committed to the established vision long-term (Byrd, 2018). Seeking team members who will commit long-term is a difficult task. Luke explains why: "…The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few." (New International Version, Luke 10:2). Kingdom work is huge, but the number of church members that are willing to work is small. Guzik (2018) noted that if enough professed Christians do not step up to the plate, souls will not be saved, and needs will not be met. Byrd explained that long-term commitment from team members is needed because it takes time for a vision to be fulfilled. Specific tasks must be completed to meet short-term goals before the vision is realized (Byrd. (2018). Byrd also noted the importance of team members remaining on the team for an extended period to grow individually and to experience achievement.

Task-related competencies necessary for building high-performance teams. Dyer et al. (2013) found five task-related competencies to be vital in building high-performance teams.

1. The team sets clear, measurable goals and generates the commitment of all members to team goals by all team members.

2. The team knows how to make assignments clear and shows team members how their work contributes to the goals of the entire team.

3. The team has clear processes for making decisions, and team members influence decisions through appropriate participation.

4. The team knows how to establish high-performance standards and hold members mutually accountable for results.

5. The team knows how to run effective meetings so that time spent together is productive. (p. 61)

Gleeson noted that no perfect leadership team exists, but its record should be good. Genuineness is apparent, according to Gleeson, when teams have an established culture of trust and accountability and when the vision is aligned with the organization's values. Trust and accountability are basic, and if missing, functioning as a team would be difficult (Gleeson, 2017). Gleeson found that the creation of a strong vision, speedy action, conduct coherent with the established vision, and continuity is an excellent way to re-establish trust and build a high-performance team.

Leader Development

For leaders to be effective, they must first be trained. Once they are trained, they must utilize the skills acquired to train others. Caine (2018) listed and explained four tips (secrets) for building and implementing a program designed to train leaders. Caine emphasized that one leadership training session is not enough to develop effective leaders. Building effective leaders requires continuous development. Caine indicated that after the primary training session,

potential leaders must take the initiative to learn and acquire skills on their own. Some things they must do continuously include studying independently, participating in peer-group sessions for support, and altering training strategies regularly. They must also be under a coach or mentor who can help guide them through situations that would otherwise be difficult or in which they would need assistance (Caine, 2018).

Creating/Writing the Unity Statement

Fundamental principles, according to Gleeson (2017), must be incorporated in the vision change writing process. They include (a) simplicity, (b) authenticity, (c) multichannel, (d) repetition, (e) consistent behavior, and (f) feedback (Gleeson, 2017). Martin et al. (2014) expressed that the vision and the associated underlying values must be reasonable and attainable. Gleeson concurred, stating, "They can't be too far from reach for anyone to believe in, but also not so mundane that nobody gets excited about the outcome" (Gleeson, p. 3). Gleeson noted that if the vision and associated underlying values are not reasonable and attainable, the vision may never be attained, causing the team members to possibly become disheartened and unmotivated. Creating a vision inspires team leaders and team members, increases enthusiasm, and helps motivate them to commit to a shared goal. It provides direction and insight for team leaders and team members (Martin, 2014).

Hartwig and Bird (2015) indicated that team members should know why they are writing a vision. Thus, a purpose statement is needed. According to Hartwig and Bird, a purpose statement must be clear, concise, compelling, and written in such a way that it motivates all the team members. If it is neither clear nor challenging, team members will not be able to communicate it (Hartwig & Bird, 2015). A common purpose is major, and it should, according to

Hartwig and Bird, possess the 5 C's: (a) clear, (b) compelling, (c) challenging, (d) calling-

oriented, and (e) consistently held).

Communicating the Vision

The Leading Effectively Staff (2020) noted that vision communicates an accomplishment

or position the organization desires to attain. To encourage team members to buy in, simplify the

vision so the members can understand it and promote or emphasize it, it must be shared (Leading

Effectively staff asserted that leaders must communicate the vision in a manner that will make

team members own, believe, and communicate it to others. While there are several ways of

communicating the vision and keeping it flowing, the Leading Effectively Staff provided nine

tips:

1. Tell a story.

2. Perfect your "elevator speech."

3. Use multiple forms of media.

4. Have one-on-one conversations.

5. Draw a crowd internally.

6. Go outside the organization.

7. Make memories.

8. Guide the expedition.

9. Back up what you're talking about. (Section 1, What Exactly is Vision?)

A story, told in the right way, causes the hearers to visualize it, be reminded of it, and talk

about it (The Leading Effectively Staff, 2020). The team leader must communicate the vision in

a well-defined and concise manner to team members initially. (The Leading Effectively Staff,

2020). Whenever possible, the team leader must communicate the vision to anyone at any given time, in any location (The Leading Effectively Staff, 2020).

How team leaders communicate their vision is important. Several channels of communication are needed to keep the vision in the minds of the team members and other stakeholders (The Leading Effectively Staff, 2020). Recent technologies in communication should be used. However, noticeable paraphernalia is also recommended (The Leading Effectively Staff, 2020).

Involving team members is major (The Leading Effectively Staff, 2020). Simply connecting with team members provides opportunities for leaders to spread information and build and/or gain support (The Leading Effectively Staff, 2020). Involving and connecting with team members generates energy around the established vision (The Leading Effectively Staff, 2020). In addition to communicating the vision to team members, team leaders must communicate it to others highly connected with the organization (The Leading Effectively Staff, 2020). These connections may be stakeholders and supporters within the organization (The Leading Effectively Staff, 2020). Additional connections include clients, associates, and merchants (The Leading Effectively Staff, 2020). These merchants should include clients in the business of advertising, communications or public relations, and announcements (The Leading Effectively Staff, 2020).

The Leading Effectively Staff (2020) suggested creating symbols or images and mottos. These items will remind team members, individuals of interest, and/or individuals closely connected to the organization of the vision. The Leading Effectively Staff also suggested depicting the vision and updating interested individuals on the progress made toward reaching

the vision. Team leaders should strengthen their credibility by applying what they communicate. (The Leading Effectively Staff, 2020).

The Leading Effectively Staff (2020) noted that team leaders who are not in senior management had the vision passed down to them. However, their job is to communicate the vision to their team in a way they can understand and communicate it (The Leading Effectively Staff, 2020). They should also be knowledgeable and able to answer major questions, i.e.:

1. What exactly is the company's vision?

2. How do I connect to my organization's vision, and what's my role in achieving that vision?

3. How do I show my passion and enthusiasm for the vision and the organization?

4. Are there any obstacles in my way to prevent me from communicating this vision? If so, how can I surmount those obstacles? (The Leading Effectively Staff, 2020, Back Up What You are Talking About, #9)

The Leading Effectively Staff (2020) emphasized being excited and impressive in communicating the vision.

Warren (2018) emphasized that the most important task of a church leader is to continuously remind the congregants of the vision. Thus, any leader—the pastor, leader, administrative team leader, or a designated individual is expected to communicate the vision to his or her followers. The pastor is to communicate the vision to the entire church, and the leader is expected to communicate the vision to members within the ministry he or she leads. Warren emphasized that a vision cannot be delegated. It must be deliberately communicated. In essence, the vision must be cast eloquently.

Increased membership is the desire of all churches because we are instructed to "compel them to come" as God wants the church to be full (Luke 14:22). Thus, increased church membership has its advantages. However, according to Warren, increased church membership makes it more difficult to communicate the vision, but it must be done as it is extremely important in the growth phase (Warren, 2018).

Warren listed six ways to continuously communicate the vision. They involve (a) scripture, (b) specific steps, (c) representations, (d) slogans or mottos, (e) stories, and (f) specifics. Regarding scripture, Warren noted that the vision must be biblically based, and the congregants should be assured that the vision is based on scripture and that it did not come directly from the pastor. Warren added that the rationale for writing the vision must be reinforced by scriptures. Specifically, the pastor needs to assist the congregants in acquiring elevated respect for the body of Christ, which is the church, and why God instituted the church (Warren, 2018).

Warren (2018) noted that the activities required to complete the mission to accomplish the vision should be kept before the congregants. This, according to Warren, will keep the vision at the forefront of their minds. Because people need visual presentations to help them understand and remember, Warren suggested using symbols to communicate the vision as symbols can portray convincing images in comparison to words alone and that creativity is key. Using slogans is another strategy suggested by Warren who found that slogans are remembered and can inspire individuals to do things they would otherwise not do. Slogans should be simple, and they must communicate the vision. A thorough review of the vision is needed to create slogans that describe sections of the vision (Warren, 2018). Using stories, another strategy suggested by Warren, helps individuals connect with the vision. Warren also noted that the use of testimonies

from individual congregants about experiences related to the vision enables other congregants to better understand the vision. Gleeson (2017) suggested that team leaders and members should utilize three or four opportunities every day during meetings or while conversing to fabricate stories of how the vision can be fulfilled.

Warren (2018) explained that specific actions as to how to achieve the vision must be communicated, and events should be planned around them. Staff, according to Warren, should even be employed around the vision. Warren contended that the vision must be specific. Gleeson (2017) concurred with Warren and stated that the vision should be concise and simple. Otherwise, according to Warren, it will not capture the congregants' attention, nor will it encourage their commitment. Warren warned that compelling visions without an intentional and consistent focus will result in vision drift. Therefore, church leaders must do whatever is necessary to keep the shared biblical vision at the forefront of the congregants' minds.

Gleeson (2017) concurred with Warren (2018) that how and when a vision is articulated is extremely important as communication is the key to success. Gleeson also concurred with Warren (2018) that it takes time to create, define, and communicate the vision. Like Warren, Gleeson noted that creating, defining, and communicating the vision incorrectly will result in failure. Gleeson noted that different forms of the vision should be created, and the leaders must be able to articulate it in the short- as well as the long form. Regarding the length of time needed to communicate the vision to a listener, Gleeson found that longer than five minutes is too long. Findings indicate that the amount of time taken to create a vision statement is an indicator of how long it will take to articulate it (Gleeson, 2017). If it takes longer than five minutes to articulate it, the vision statement should be revamped (Gleeson, 2017). Gleeson, in concurrence with Warren, emphasized taking the time to perfect the vision because over-articulating a poor or

skewed vision through many channels would be damaging. Suggested channels include (a)

newsletters, (b) a database, (c) meetings, (d) posters, (e) one-on-one meetings, and (f) casual

conversation (Gleeson, 2017). Gleeson found that using the channels and all opportunities

presented throughout the process to communicate essential information regarding the

development throughout the process instills the vision. With the support of storytelling, which is

also suggested by Warren, and regularly repeating it, a vision has a greater tendency to be

fulfilled more quickly (Gleeson, 2017). There is also a strong possibility that additional support

will be obtained. Gleeson stressed that if consistent behavior on the part of the leaders does not

express or represent the vision, the result will be disbelief in the vision.

Gleeson emphasized that feedback should be collected during the development of the

vision and throughout the entire process and suggested that the questions listed below or

questions like them be asked:

How do you think we are doing with the implementation of the new vision?

Do the quick wins we have established resonate with you?

From your perspective, are we still on the right path? If not, what adjustments should be

made? (p. 8)

Decker and Decker (2015) developed a communication approach that will help build

high-performance teams. The approach has four key elements: (a) listeners, (b) point of view, (c)

actions, and (d) benefits. For team members, Decker and Decker suggest stepping backward and

considering their team. They are advised to think about the team members' attitudes, and skills,

how they can help each member, how they may accept the vision, etc. These thoughts should be

considered by team leaders, according to Decker and Decker, before sharing their vision. Next,

Decker and Decker suggested team leaders should inform the team members exactly what they

want them to know. This is their point of view, which they are establishing. Thirdly, Decker and Decker suggested team leaders should transform their vision into action by leading them in the direction so they can begin working to accomplish the mission. Next, Decker and Decker advised team leaders to reconsider each team member and give them what is needed to motivate them to accomplish the tasks to fulfill the vision.

Warren (2012) listed seven things leaders should help others understand when sharing their vision:

1. Who you are.

2. Where you are going.

3. Why you are going there?

4. What it feels like to be going there.

5. What people can do.

6. How you're going to do it.

7. What the rewards will be.

Team members must understand the above-listed items about the vision if it is to be fulfilled.

Rationale for Study and Gap in Literature

Team building is important (Arrey, 2014). Building high-performance ministry teams is extremely important as it is what Jesus did with His disciples. He was a team leader (Matthew 4:19). His model is to be followed, and church leaders are to do so. He communicated His vision, and pastors must do likewise and prepare church leaders to do so as well (Matthew 28:19-20).

More and more churches have begun to operate using the team approach. Others are transitioning to team ministry, which is widely used by progressive or growing churches in accomplishing established objectives to fulfill the vision Jesus shared while doing ministry on

the earth. Pastors in these progressive churches are no longer directly supervising every ministry. Instead, they are busy establishing ministry teams that work collaboratively to meet the objectives to fulfill the vision. Not all churches, however, know how to build high-performance ministry teams, which are needed to do the work God has assigned to the church—to make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20). To be successful in making disciples and in advancing the Kingdom of God, members of the team must have a common purpose, work together in developing the vision, know and understand it, and how to communicate it (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

A review of the literature reveals an abundance of literature exists on the topic of shared vision, ministry teams, and teams in general. Much of the literature provides awareness, thoughts, beliefs, and experiences regarding how to develop new teams or how to improve existing teams. However, very little exists on building high-performance ministry teams, and very little exists on the experiences of leaders regarding building high-performance ministry teams. Findings from this transcendental phenomenological research study, which will include responses from pastors, ministers, and leaders to open and closed-ended questions about their experiences using a shared vision to build high-performance ministry teams could add to the small amount of literature that is currently available, narrowing the gap. The findings could also be beneficial to churches that are transitioning to the team approach to ministry and to those that are establishing team ministries for the first time.

Profile of the Current Study

Chapter One of this study outlines the interest in the study on the use of a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams. Chapter Two provides a literature review of many related sources to the study topic. Chapter Three explores the selected methodology to be used.

Chapter Four will display the analysis of the collected data, including research findings, and conclusions will be presented in Chapter Five.

This study sought to describe the experiences of pastors, licensed ministers, and leaders in Baptist churches regarding their use of a shared vision to build high-performance church ministry teams. The researcher desired to identify strategies that would help churches that are establishing new ministries and those that may be revamping ministries be more reflective of God's plan for ministry. This study may contribute to existing research on ministry team building, expanding the literature on the experiences of pastors, ministers, and leaders who use a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams. This research may also expose issues, challenges, or barriers that even high-performance church ministries face and shed light on how they resolve them.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Overview

This qualitative study sought to explore the development of high-performance church ministries. The study employed transcendental phenomenology to better understand and describe the experiences of pastors, ministers, and leaders. Included in this chapter is a synopsis of the selected research design for the proposed study. The setting, description of the participants, the role of the researcher, ethical considerations, data collection/analysis procedures, and chapter summary are included.

Research Design Synopsis

The Problem

Team building requires assistance from team leaders who share the vision (Arrey, 2014).

Jesus used the team approach in ministry and built high-performance ministry teams with a

shared vision. He communicated His vision and made sure His team understood it and could

complete the tasks needed to fulfill it (New International Version, Mark 16:15; Luke 24:45-49).

The local church has the responsibility of preparing the laity to serve in leadership (Laird, 2019).

In advancing the Kingdom of God, ministry teams must be operational, and members of the team

must share the established vision. Byrd (2018) noted that church leaders must have competent

individuals in their circle, and they must share the vision. They must work closely together and

be on the same path (Byrd, 2018). Churches establishing new ministries and churches in the

process of revamping ministries to reflect the vision Jesus shared need guidelines and strategies.

Church leaders in these positions need first-hand information regarding the process, which would

be derived from the experiences of church leaders who have developed high-performance

ministries. The problem is that there is not much research on the experiences of pastors and

leaders who have built high-performance ministries and have shared their strategies, guidelines,

and recommendations.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this transcendental qualitative phenomenological research was to explore

the experiences of pastors, ministers, and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia

regarding the impact of a shared vision on the development of high-performance ministry teams.

The goal of the study was to understand how a shared vision could be used to motivate pastors

and church leaders to do what is necessary to improve church ministries so they would function

in a way that would advance the Kingdom of God. Emphasis was placed on understanding the

experiences of the pastors and church leaders. The transcendental phenomenology method was

used in guiding this study (Moustakas, 1994). It focused on the experiences of the research

participants, which would be described (Adams & vans Manen, 2017; Creswell & Poth, 2018;

Martirano, 2016).

Research Questions

RQ1. What are the similarities and differences among pastors of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia regarding how they communicate their vision for ministry?

RQ2. How do licensed ministers and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia use the shared vision to build high-performance ministry teams?

RQ3. How do licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia describe the benefits of using a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams?

RQ4. What barriers, if any, have pastors, licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with

selected churches in Macon, Georgia experienced in using the shared vision in building high-

performance ministry teams?

Research Design and Methodology

A qualitative phenomenological approach was the design for this research study.

Creswell (2014) found that qualitative research is essential in understanding individuals'

experiences. Qualitative research, according to Creswell (2013), is an exploratory method, and

the emphasis is on acquiring an understanding and developing thoughts or hypotheses.

Qualitative research assisted the researcher in depicting the core of pastors' and church leaders'

experiences regarding the use of a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams

and the barriers encountered in the process (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative research also allowed

the researcher to collect and examine insightful data that would aid in answering the research questions. Additionally, Creswell (2013) noted that the qualitative design permits the researcher to collect information from surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions.

The focus of phenomenology is on individual experiences, and it focuses on subjective lived experiences and an awareness of the structure of those experiences (Adams et al., 2017). Because the focus of the study was on interpreting the lived experiences of the participants, the phenomenological approach was the best. Another reason the phenomenology approach was best for this study is that the researcher collected data from several sources to make meaning of the lived experiences of the pastors and church leaders (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Martirano, 2016).

Setting

This study was conducted in the central part of a state located in the southeastern region of the United States. The organizations were religious—Baptist churches within the southeastern region of the United States. The churches were selected because of their successful implementation of team ministry as outlined in the Bible. This location was selected because the south is known for conservatism, and findings regarding team ministry may appeal to conservative churches and may cause them to at least attempt to implement it.

To obtain geographical and demographic information on the setting, the researcher obtained information from the Internet and the Chamber of Commerce in the selected areas. The researcher also conducted research online to discover Baptist churches with high-performance team ministries in place to generate a list. Required attributes included (a) evidence of the use of a shared vision, (b) uniqueness in roles, (c) positive engagement, (d) size, and (e) leadership in all team members (Michel, 2015). Other required attributes included the establishment of clear goals, monitoring of tasks, recruitment procedures (Byrd, 2018), skill levels (Dyer et al., 2013),

and continuous learning or scheduled training sessions (Homer, 2013). The researcher purposively selected Baptist churches with high-performance ministry teams and made telephone calls to those pastors within the selected region who had high-performance ministry teams in place.

Participants

Asiamah, Mensah, and Oteng-Abayi (2017) defined the research population as the entire group on which the study is conducted. The research population in this study consisted of pastors, ministers, and leaders. The focus of interest was on these groups within Baptist churches located in the southeastern United States. All participants will be asked to complete a demographic survey. A ten-day window was established, and notification reminders were generated to keep the respondents alert to the timeframe for completing the survey.

Research Sample

The research sample in this study consisted of one pastor, three licensed ministers—one was designated to serve in the interview group—and eight ministry leaders—one was designated to serve in the interview group. All were affiliated with three Baptist churches located in the central section of a state located within the southeastern section of the United States. The sampling technique was purposive, a nonprobability technique that captures the significant experiences of the phenomenon studied (Creswell, 2014). Iker et al. (2016) noted that individuals with like characteristics are the focus of purposive sampling. Since high-performance ministry teams are the phenomenon, the researcher selected participants who were directly or indirectly involved in church ministry.

Criteria

The established criteria included church denomination (Baptist), length of time as a pastor (at least two years), length of time licensed as a minister (at least two years), and length of time served as a church leader (at least one year). The required location was within Central Georgia, and the type of operation was team ministry. All participants were selected from progressive Baptist churches within the central section of the southeastern United States that utilize the team approach to ministry. All pastors had served in the position of pastor at the selected churches for at least two years. All ministers selected had been licensed for at least two years. Additionally, all leaders will have served in the position at the selected churches for at least one year.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher is the pastor of a church in which some ministries are established as teams. The church he pastors is located in the central part of the southeastern section of the United States. He developed an increased interest in team ministry after being more enlightened during the pandemic about God's true purpose for establishing the church and His intended design. During this time, he observed some areas of deficiency in churches throughout the country. One area was in how ministries are established. Thus, with a deep desire to at least narrow the gap in research regarding the role pastors and church leaders should play in building high-performance team ministries, this researcher desired to examine strategies used to build high-performance ministries—an expectation of God for all churches. Therefore, the objective of this study was to explore the experiences of pastors and church leaders affiliated with churches that have proven successful in team ministry.

This researcher was eager to learn all he could about building high-performance team

ministries. It is possible, however, that his positive view may have impeded objectivity in the way he presented the questions during the interview sessions. As a result of this potential for bias in the collection and analysis of the data, he needed to establish credibility because according to Gaus (2017), being biased could adversely affect the entire study.

To eliminate biases in representing information the participants shared with the researcher during the interview process, he checked notes to ensure the transcriptions were accurate and obtained feedback from all participants. This was completed through bracketing, which helped the researcher refrain from manipulating the data collected from the participants and ensured that the study was free of bias (Hurlburt, 2018). He also attempted not to influence the participants in any way. Because he had not conducted qualitative research, he took advantage of the guidance he received in conducting research from the university.

Ethical Considerations

Creswell (2014) explained that ethical considerations are to be applied to research studies to make sure all data are credible and accurate. To support the validity of this study, ethical practices were followed. In compiling the data, this researcher was truthful regarding the data collected and in sharing the responses and findings. This researcher was also open and transparent with all participants. This researcher shared background data and described the phenomenon studied so that comparisons could be made (Creswell, 2014).

The participants were not coerced into participating or answering questions (Creswell, 2014). According to Creswell (2014), participants must agree to established standards and provide written consent before research can begin. The participants may withdraw from the study at any time. For confidentiality purposes, pseudonyms in the form of a number or alphabet were used in this proposed research study to identify participants (Draneseika, Piasecki, & Waligora, 2017).

This researcher explained the informed consent documents on a level where anyone could easily understand them (Creswell, 2014). The consent forms were locked in the researcher's file cabinet until the time designated by the university to delete them (Creswell, 2014). For clarity, this researcher reframed and conducted probing while interviewing (Creswell, 2014). All data collected were stored in a protected area. Data collected online will be stored in a password-protected area on the designated website. Survey data were removed and secured on the researcher's computer at the home of the researcher in a safe environment (Chaudhary & Lucas, 2014).

Data Collection Methods and Instruments

The purpose of phenomenological research, a qualitative research approach, is to provide the reader with graphic and detailed meanings of a lived experience of the phenomenon studied (van Manen, 2017). The focus of qualitative research is on obtaining an understanding and generating ideas, which would assist the researcher (Creswell, 2013). In essence, it is used to increase the researcher's understanding of the individuals' experiences associated with the phenomenon. The phenomenological approach permits the collection and study of data that would aid in answering the research questions (Creswell, 2013). The qualitative design allows the researcher to gather information from interview sessions, focus group discussions, and surveys. This design also allows the researcher to identify commonalities (Creswell, 2013).

This researcher used a demographic survey to obtain basic information about all participants and to conduct interviews and focus group sessions to make meaning of the participants' lived experiences. This researcher attempted to understand the experiences of church leaders on using shared vision to build high-performance ministry teams. During the entire process, the participants were inferring the importance of having a shared vision. This

researcher gathered data from several sources and attempted to make meaning of the participants' lived experiences regarding building high-performance ministry teams.

Because this researcher examined how the participants made meaning of their experiences with the phenomenon, the proposed approach was transcendental phenomenological (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). Other methods of data collection, i.e., an ethnography study, grounded research theory, and case study were not appropriate because this researcher was not searching for a cultural description. Neither was he searching to build a theory or to study a case (Percy, Kostere, & Kostere, 2015).

Collections Methods

To acquire an understanding of the importance of having a shared vision to build ministry teams, a phenomenological qualitative method was used to test the research questions. Data were collected via a demographic survey, interviews, and focus group sessions. The participants included a pastor, associate ministers, licensed ministers, and ministry leaders affiliated with the selected Baptist churches. A pastor, associate minister, and a ministry leader—trustee— comprised the interview group. An associate minister and two ministry leaders comprised the focus group in two of the three churches. A ministry leader and two ministry leaders titled trustees comprised the focus group in the other church. Demographic survey data were collected from participants in the interview group and the focus group.

Instruments and Protocols

Three instruments were used in this study: (a) demographic survey, (b) interview, and (c) focus group. The creation of the instruments was done in five phases. In the first phase, this researcher assessed the suitability of the semi-structured interview to determine if it was a

rigorous data collection method relative to the research questions. In the second phase, this researcher acquired a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied by retrieving previous knowledge or by conducting literature reviews to obtain more knowledge. In the third stage, this researcher formed the questions for the interview and focus group sessions. In the fourth phase, this researcher validated the coverage and significance of the content by testing the protocol and decided if there was a need to modify the content or questions. In the fifth phase, this researcher presented the finished product—the interview protocol to collect data.

Interviews. The interview is a type of research instrument used in data collection (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Interviews, according to Creswell and Poth (2018), may be structured (closed-ended) or semi-structured (open-ended). The semi-structured interview is used in qualitative research to acquire more in-depth knowledge. It was used in this study because it included information necessary to answer the research questions by capturing the responses regarding the experiences of the participants. It included a combination of predetermined and open-ended questions and helped acquire more in-depth knowledge (Creswell & Poth, 2018). When more information was needed, probing, a form of asking additional questions (reframing questions) was used (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The interview questions and interview protocol used in this study were researcher-created. This researcher presented the questions and interview protocol to his committee chair for review and approval. The questions were based on the researcher's review of the literature. The pastor of each church or a designated minister or lay leader comprised the interview group. Before the scheduled discussion, this researcher asked the participants to complete a ten-minute online demographic survey about their involvement in church ministry. During the interview, the interviewees provided an opportunity to candidly share their opinions, views, and potential

barriers. The interview was conducted for approximately 40 to 50 minutes. The semi-structured

interview process consisted of open-ended questions, based on two of the four research

questions:

RQ1. What are the similarities and differences among pastors of selected Baptist churches
in Macon, Georgia regarding how they communicate their vision for ministry?

RQ4. What barriers, if any, have pastors, licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with
selected churches in Macon, Georgia experienced in using the shared vision in building high-
performance ministry teams?

 Member checking was conducted to ensure accuracy. The interviews were conducted by

this researcher. The interview process involved restating or summarizing information and asking

questions to determine accuracy. This method permitted this researcher to make eye contact,

observe gestures, and monitor the flow of conversation while capturing all comments. This

researcher used open-ended questions to acquire more in-depth responses. To acquire further

information on specific responses, this researcher used probing questions.

 This researcher shared a summary of the transcript of the interview with each participant

within three weeks after the interview, via e-mail, and asked them to review it for accuracy

(Creswell, 2014). If corrections were needed, this researcher made them and sent a note, via

email, to all participants thanking them for contributing to the study. A statement informing them

that all files and recordings were secured in adherence to Liberty University guidelines was

included in the email.

Demographic survey. A demographic survey was used in this study to determine

diversity and eligibility (see Appendix B). Creswell and Poth (2018) indicated that surveys are

frequently used in qualitative studies. A website popup, or a unique survey URL, was emailed to

the participants. The URL was the link to Google Forms, a web-based survey. Instructions on

how to use the tool were included. A ten-day window was established, and notification reminders were generated to keep the respondents alert to the timeframe for completing the survey.

Focus Groups. Focus groups were used in this research study. A focus group is a method of research used in qualitative research studies. It is a small group of individuals discussing a selected topic. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative research permits the use of focus groups to reveal commonalities in beliefs, attitudes, feelings, and experiences regarding how to build high-performance ministries. With three participants (one licensed minister or designated lay leader and two other leaders) from each of the three selected churches, this researcher conducted a 40 to 50-minute interview session asking open-ended questions based on three of the research questions:

RQ2. How do licensed ministers and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia use the shared vision to build high-performance ministry teams?

RQ3. How do licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia describe the benefits of using a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams?

RQ4. What barriers, if any, have pastors, licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected churches in Macon, Georgia experienced in using the shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams?

This researcher conducted member checks to ensure accuracy and understanding by restating or summarizing information and asking questions to determine accuracy. When necessary, this researcher asked probing questions, using follow-up questions that allowed for more in-depth responses. The researcher reemphasized that confidentiality is assured. The transcription process was manually completed in the researcher's home.

Three weeks following the focus group meeting, this researcher shared a summary of the transcript with each participant via e-mail. This researcher asked the participants to review the transcript for accuracy and respond within seven days if corrections were needed. No corrections

were needed, so this researcher sent an email to all participants thanking them for contributing to the study. Next, the researcher analyzed the collected data, utilizing the MAXQDA content analysis software.

Procedures

The researcher submitted the prospectus and application to the Institutional Review Board at Liberty University for review and clearance to conduct the study. Upon approval, the researcher outlined procedures for the selection and protection of the participants. Procedures were also outlined for the expert review. All procedures for collecting and analyzing the data were outlined in adherence to established standards. This organized process enabled leaders, laity, or interested parties to easily replicate the study.

Selection of participants. Selecting appropriate participants is very important. Creswell (2014) suggested that the researcher selects participants based on their knowledge and readiness to participate and to openly share. This method is called purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2014) and was used in this study. Web pages of Baptist churches within a selected region in the central part of the southeastern United States were reviewed to identify pastors of Baptist churches operating with team ministries to obtain their email addresses. A recruitment email was sent to the identified pastors (see Appendix B). The recruitment email included an introductory note from this researcher, explaining the study. It also included a consent form that provided permission to participate in the study and the researcher's contact information. The in-depth information about the study included a statement that the acquired information would be used in compiling and summarizing the prospective participants' experiences on the use of a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams.

This researcher asked the prospective participants to respond by email if they were interested in participating. Seven days after sending the recruitment email, this researcher sent another email to those pastors who had not returned the consent form, requesting them to return it. A link to an online demographic survey was emailed to the pastors who returned their consent forms. The pastors were asked to complete it within ten days. Notification reminders were generated to keep the participants alert to the timeframe for completing the survey. The first three pastors who returned the consent form and the demographic survey were purposively selected to participate. This researcher emailed the selected pastors and informed them they had been selected to participate and requested submission of three dates convenient for the semi-structured interview, a time preference, and a location if it was not feasible to meet at the church. This researcher also asked the selected pastors to provide names and email information for ministers and leaders who may have been interested in participating in a focus group session.

A recruitment email was sent to the prospective focus group participants, and a link to the online demographic survey was sent to those who returned the consent form. Survey information was reviewed to determine eligibility, and the first 12 eligible respondents were selected to participate. This researcher asked the prospective participants to respond by email if they were interested in participating. This researcher also informed the prospective participants that the consent form had to be signed before the interview and focus group sessions were conducted.

Seven days after sending the recruitment email, this researcher sent another email to those who had not responded. The first 12 respondents (two church leaders—one pastor, one minister) from each of the three selected churches who submitted the demographic survey and consent form and who met the inclusion criteria were selected to participate in the focus group session and informed that they were selected. This researcher emailed the church leaders selected

to participate in the focus group sessions, requesting them to submit three dates convenient for

the focus group session. They were asked to indicate a time preference and a location if it was

not feasible to meet at the church. The researcher sent an email to the remaining respondents

thanking them for their interest in the study and informing them that the participants had been

selected for the study. Upon receiving the three dates, the preferred time, and the site for the

semi-structured interview and focus group sessions, confirmation was obtained from each

participant via email.

Protection of participants. This researcher emailed an informed consent form to the

participants. Their involvement, possible risks, and benefits of the study were outlined. This

researcher asked the participants to sign the informed consent form before the interview or focus

group sessions. This researcher assured the participants that their identification and personal

information were confidential. This researcher also informed them they would remain

anonymous and that they were assigned a pseudonym for identification purposes. This researcher

also assured the participants their identity would not be revealed in any reports or documents.

This researcher explained that there was no anticipation of harm or stress during the study. This

researcher also informed the participants that they could stop participating at any time, especially

if they were not comfortable. The researcher informed the participants that their responses would

be entered and secured on a web server, but there was a small possibility that unauthorized

individuals such as computer hackers would view their information.

Notes from all interviews, focus group sessions, and transcripts were gathered throughout

the study. A computer file was used to organize and store all records. Each record was filed

under the assigned pseudonyms, and the consent forms were locked in a file cabinet for security

purposes. The demographic data were initially stored in the researcher's computer under a

password in the survey area on the Google Forms website. The results from the demographic survey were removed when the survey was closed and saved on the password-protected computer. All records were stored according to Liberty University guidelines.

Only this researcher knows the participant identifiers, which were used instead of the participants' names during each interview and focus group session. The digital recording was completed using an IPAD, and the transcription was completed manually on a computer. This researcher removed all names and replaced them with the corresponding participant identifier. The transcription process was completed in this researcher's home, with the use of headphones. A transcript summary of the interviews was mailed to each participant within three weeks after each interview and focus group session. This researcher requested that the participants review and verify that the transcript was accurate (Creswell, 2014). This researcher emailed a note to all participants thanking them for their contributions to the study. This researcher included a statement informing the participants that all data collected, including the transcription files, were stored in a locked cabinet according to Liberty University's guidelines.

Expert Review. This researcher believes feedback from the dissertation chair and committee members was very beneficial. The researcher also believes that because of positive feedback, discrepancies or errors within the research study were reduced. The research questions were evaluated, critiqued, and approved by assigned committee members at Liberty University. The university's dissertation curriculum prepared this researcher for conducting the study in an organized manner, which made the process less stressful.

Data Analysis

The method used to analyze the demographic survey, interview, and focus group data in this proposed study was content analysis. Luo (2019) noted that content analysis is a research

method that is used to classify relationships or patterns in a recorded exchange or communication. In qualitative research and content analysis, the focus is on interpreting and understanding (Luo, 2019). Elo et al. (2014) indicated that content analysis is commonly used in qualitative research. Elo et al. explained that qualitative content analysis can be used inductively or deductively. Three phases involve preparing, organizing, and reporting the results.

Analysis Methods

Content analysis was used to develop categories. This researcher read all comments and noted beliefs, ideas, and experiences discussed about using a shared vision to build ministry teams. Categories were created from units formed and identification of keywords, using the MAXQDA content analysis software. The results were used to answer the research questions regarding the impact of a shared vision on building ministry teams:

Responses to each question were analyzed to acquire an understanding of the phenomenon studied. Because the open-ended questions used in this study generated words, phrases, or complete sentence responses, the amount of data collected from each question was different and was treated individually. MAXQDA content analysis software was used to aid this researcher in effectively analyzing the data, including developing themes, organizing, sorting, categorizing, and coding.

Trustworthiness

In evaluating the trustworthiness of this research study, this researcher will work hard to ensure credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability (Creswell, 2014). This researcher will be using a demographic survey and a researcher-developed interview protocol for the interview and focus group sessions. Kallio et al. (2016) concluded that the development of a

thorough semi-structured interview guide improves the trustworthiness of the study. In creating

the semi-structured interview protocol for this study, this researcher followed the five steps

outlined by Kallio et al. (2016).

1. Identify the prerequisites for using semi-structured interviews.

2. Retrieve and use previous knowledge.

3. Formulate the preliminary semi-structured interview guide.

5. Present the complete semi-structured interview guide. (pp. 2956-2961)

When reviewing the data collected from the survey, interview, and focus groups, this

researcher used content analysis to develop categories. All comments were read by this

researcher who noted the ideas discussed about building high-performance ministry teams. This

researcher also developed categories that were created from units and identification of keywords

via the MAXQDA content analysis software. The results were used to answer the research

questions.

Credibility

The use of multiple groups of participants with experience in collaborating, combined

with various methods of collecting the data should increase the credibility of the conclusions

drawn in the study (Creswell, 2014). The interviews with a pastor, minister, and lay leader from

three churches and discussions with focus group members from three churches generated

credible data. In collecting and analyzing data, the possibility of bias is apparent. Thus, it was

necessary to establish credibility in this phenomenological qualitative research study because it

can adversely affect the research process (Gaus, 2017). In the data collection process, this

researcher put forth a conscious effort to keep from influencing the participants. During the data

analysis process, this researcher consciously attempted to lessen possible adverse effects of biases by checking notes for inaccuracies or discrepancies to ensure that the transcriptions mirror what the participants said. This researcher requested feedback from all participants. This was done by member-checking to ensure that the transcripts were accurate.

Triangulation is a method used in analyzing data (Fusch, Fusch, & Ness, 2018). It involves the use of multiple sources of data to improve the reliability of a study's findings. In this study, three instruments were used to generate varied responses, which were compared. Triangulation added depth to the collected data (Fusch, Fusch, & Ness, 2018).

Dependability

A study is thought to have dependability when its findings remain steady over time and can be repeated (Amankwaa, 2016; Creswell, 2014). One method of determining dependability is to have a researcher not involved in the study to examine the study, including the process. Next, the researcher assesses the accuracy and determines if the data supports the findings, interpretations, and conclusions drawn (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, as cited in Amankwah, 2016). This researcher made sure the raw data were aligned with the findings so if other researchers reviewed the data, their findings and conclusions would be comparable. This study's research was reinforced by research, methods, and frameworks (Liberty University, n.d., p. a5). The research method, transcendental phenomenological qualitative, was distinctly sketched to allow other researchers to replicate the study.

Confirmability

A study is considered to have confirmability if the findings and recommendations are consistent with the information contained in the study. Pastors and church leaders affiliated with

churches with high-performance ministry teams analyzed the study to check for consistency. This researcher used an audit trail to explain that the findings are indicative of the information gathered from the study participants and are a description of how this researcher collected and analyzed the data. An audit trail was appropriate because it outlined steps, actions, corresponding dates of the work of the researcher, and the rigor of the work. It authenticated the work (Amankwaa, 2016). This researcher was transparent by making the data available for review by other researchers if requested.

Transferability

This study was conducted in only one state in one church denomination in the southeastern United States. However, this researcher believes that the findings will be transferable in other states throughout the United States, in Baptist churches. This researcher also believes the findings will be transferable in any church denomination considering establishing ministry teams. It is hoped that this study will motivate pastors and church leaders of any denomination not operating on the principle established by Jesus Christ—team ministry—to decide to revamp so that their churches will mirror the church that Jesus established. The experiences of the participants in this study are added to available research, which should be beneficial to pastors and church leaders who are considering establishing team ministries or expanding existing team ministries, regardless of location.

Chapter Summary

This chapter defined the research methods used in this transcendental phenomenological study to examine the lived experiences of selected pastors and designated individuals, ministers,

and other ministry leaders regarding team building. Specifically, the focus of this chapter was on how these church leaders use shared vision to build high-performance ministry teams. The goal of the research questions was to acquire a better understanding of how high-performance ministry teams are built. The instruments used in the study to collect data included a demographic survey, interview sessions, and focus group sessions. The use of each instrument and methods of analyzing the data were explained.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Overview

Descriptive data, and an analysis of results from interviews conducted on pastors, ministers, and ministry leaders of churches are presented in this chapter. Also presented are results from focus group discussions with ministry leaders, ministers, and lay leaders. Compilation protocol and measures, demographic and sample data, analysis, and findings are also presented. Additionally, an interpretation and evaluation of findings are also presented.

Transcendental phenomenology was used to focus on pastors, ministers, and lay leaders who have developed high-performance ministries using the team approach and a shared vision. Collected data were first inserted in a spreadsheet and then organized and analyzed using MAXQDA content analysis software. To validate trustworthiness, the researcher used descriptive strategies through interviews and focus groups (Creswell, 2018). One pastor, one associate minister, and one trustee were interviewed to determine how they used shared vision in developing high-performance team ministries. Three ministry leaders and six other lay leaders participated in the focus group sessions. To understand the lived experiences of the participants, the central research question established for this study was "What are the experiences, if any, of

pastors and church leaders regarding the impact of a shared vision on building ministry teams?"

The following sub-research questions are listed below.

Research Questions

RQ1. What are the similarities and differences among pastors of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia regarding how they communicate their vision for ministry?

RQ2. How do licensed ministers and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia use the shared vision to build high-performance ministry teams?

RQ3. How do licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia describe the benefits of using a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams?

RQ4. What barriers, if any, have pastors, licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected churches in Macon, Georgia experienced in using the shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams?

Contained within this chapter are the results associated with the research questions. A description of the participants and an overview of the instruments used in collecting data are presented. Demographic and sample data are depicted in a chart, and an in-depth discussion of the data collection and analysis procedures is presented. For confidentiality reasons, a pseudonym was assigned for identification purposes. The results are provided as themes in summative tables**.**

Participants

The researcher attempted to interview three pastors of churches considered to have high-performance team ministries. However, only one pastor was interviewed because one pastor was not available. Thus, a designated associate minister was interviewed. The other selected church was without a pastor, and a trustee was interviewed. All were Americans of African descent. Focus groups were formed in each church. The focus group in Church A consisted of an associate minister and two ministry leaders, of which one served as chairman of the Deacons Ministry. The focus group in Church B consisted of an associate minister and two ministry

leaders, of which one served as youth pastor. The focus group in Church C was comprised of three ministry leaders, of which two served as trustees. All were Americans of African descent. The interviewees and focus group members were church leaders who operated and promoted team ministry in Baptist churches located in various sections of Macon, Georgia. As indicated in Table 1, all the interviewees were male. Three of the five ministry leaders in the focus groups were female, and of both groups, one of the three associate ministers was female.

Compilation Protocol and Measures

Purposive sampling was used in the selection process from observations based on the definition of high-performance ministries. All churches used in this research were located within the same city but in different areas. All interviewed had acquired more than three years of experience. The first focus group consisted of members who had more than three years of experience. The second focus group consisted of one member with less than two years and two with more than three years. The third focus group consisted of two members who had between two and three years of experience and one member who had more than three years of experience. To ensure confidentiality, each participant was assigned a pseudonym (see Tables 1-4).

Upon receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board, the researcher emailed the prospective interview participants a recruitment letter asking them to participate in the study, a link to a demographic survey, and a consent form that contained detailed information about the study. The first three participants who returned the consent form and demographic survey were selected to participate. The selected participants were asked to submit three dates and times for a semi-structured interview. An agreed-upon date and time was set for an interview with each participant. Interview data related to the following research questions were collected from the interviews: (a) What are the similarities and differences among pastors of selected Baptist

churches in Macon, Georgia regarding how they communicate their vision for ministry? and (b) What barriers, if any, have pastors, licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected churches in Macon, Georgia experienced in using the shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams? The three interviews lasted approximately 50 minutes. The researcher used an interview protocol as a guide in asking the questions (see Appendix E).

The focus groups were formed from individuals recommended by the church leaders selected in the interview group. The researcher sent a recruitment letter, a link to the demographic survey, and a consent form to the named individuals. After a review of the survey information to determine eligibility, 12 individuals—three from each of the three churches—were selected to participate. Focus group data related to the following research questions were collected from the focus group discussions: (a) How do licensed ministers and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia use the shared vision to build high-performance ministry teams? (b) How do licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia describe the benefits of using a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams? and What barriers, if any, have pastors, licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected churches in Macon, Georgia experienced in using the shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams? The focus group discussions lasted approximately 50 minutes.

Demographic and Sample Data

Demographic and sample data were collected from the interview and focus group sessions. Aggregated demographic data on interview participants (IP) is summarized in Table 1. Aggregated demographic data on focus group participants (FGP) are summarized in Tables 2 through 4. All tables display the pseudonym for each participant and church. The gender, race, role, and years of experience of each participant are also included.

List of Tables

Table 1

Participant Overview (Interviewees)

Participant	Church	Gender	Race	Role	Years of Experience
IP1	A	M	African American	Pastor	3+ years
IP2	B	M	African American	Assoc Minister	3+ years
IP3	C	M	African American	Trustee	3+ years

Table 2

Participant Overview (Focus Group1: Church A)

Participant	Church	Gender	Race	Role	Years of Experience
FGP1	A	M	African American	Assoc Minister	3+ years
FGP2	B	F	African American	Ministry Leader	Less than 2 years
FGP3	C	M	African American	Ministry Leader (Deacons Chair)	3+ years

Table 3

Participant Overview (Focus Group2: Church B)

Participant	Church	Gender	Race	Role	Years of Experience
FGP1	A	F	African American	Assoc Minister	3+ years
FGP2	B	F	African American	Ministry Leader	Less than 2 years
FGP3	C	M	African American	Ministry Leader (Youth Pastor)	3+ years

Table 4

Participant Overview (Focus Group3: Church C)

Participant	Church	Gender	Race	Role	Years of Experience
FGP1	A	F	African American	Ministry Leader	2-3 years
FGP2	B	M	African American	Trustee (Vice Chairman)	3+ years
FGP3	C	F	African American	Trustee Ministry (Secretary)	2-3 years

Data Analysis and Findings Summary

Response data from the participants in the demographic survey, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions were analyzed. The interviews were manually typed in spreadsheets. Next, the researcher extensively reviewed the data and conducted an in-depth

analysis, which included utilizing MAXQDA, a qualitative research software. The MAXQDA software developed themes, and organized, sorted, and coded the data. Emphasis was placed on responses to the semi-structured interview questions and focus group discussions. Connections, patterns, and themes were identified. The software was used to connect all findings and itemize major themes generated from sorting the data. Arranging or categorizing the data assisted in the drawing of conclusions regarding high-performance ministries.

The researcher used member checking. All participants were asked to review the transcribed copy of their interview or discussion and respond with any corrections or additions. No participants indicated needed changes, and all approved the transcript. The collected data enabled the researcher to better understand the phenomena studied and provided the theoretical framework for the review of the established research questions and the associated emerging themes: (a) shared vision, (b) communication process, (c) benefits of a shared vision, (d) team building and (d) encountered barriers.

Shared Vision

The theme—a shared vision—responded extensively to the first research question posed in the study: "What are the similarities and differences among pastors of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia regarding how they communicate their vision for ministry?" Strategies used in communicating the vision for ministry were examined, and comparisons were made to determine similarities and differences.

Communication Process

The theme—communication process and strategies—answered the second research question posed in the study: "How do licensed ministers and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia use the shared vision to build high-performance ministry teams?" The

communication process used in sharing the vision to develop high-performance ministry teams was examined. Strategies used by licensed ministers and church leaders to build high-performance ministry teams were also examined.

Benefits of a Shared Vision

The theme—benefits—answered the third research question posed in the study: "How do licensed ministers and leaders affiliated with selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia describe the benefits of a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams?" The benefits listed by this group and the impact of the implementation of a shared vision on building high-performance ministry teams were explored. Gains experienced because of the use of a shared vision in building high-performance team ministries were also explored.

Encountered Barriers

The theme—encountered barriers—answered the fourth research question posed in the study: "What barriers, if any, have pastors, licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected churches in Macon, Georgia experienced in using the shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams?" Barriers encountered when sharing the vision were explored. Methods of removing the barriers were also examined. Additionally, barriers encountered while serving in the position of team leader were also explored.

Theme 1: Shared Vision

Sharing the vision is linked to the successful completion of the mission and fulfillment of the vision. This theme presented a thorough response to the first question posed in this study. The analysis of data indicated that there must be a shared vision. The analysis also revealed that the sharing of the vision must be done by church leaders—especially pastors. All participants interviewed agreed that having a vision is biblical and that not having one is disastrous.

Theme 2: Communication Process

The process of communicating the vision to ministry team members and other congregants was reviewed in detail. This theme also presented a thorough response to the first question posed in this study. All participants interviewed agreed that the vision must be communicated. The interview questions were created to obtain knowledge from the interviewees on the process used in communicating the vision. To acquire a better understanding of the diverse facets of the theme, those facets were divided into several discussion segments: (a) the method of communicating the vision, (b) the amount of time it takes to communicate the vision, (c) the importance of understanding the vision, (d) the method of ensuring that the vision is understood, (e) positive experiences of sharing the vision, and (f) the role pastors and church leaders play in producing high-performance ministries.

All participants interviewed concurred that the method of communicating the vision should be verbal and written. Interviewees and focus group members agreed that time is a factor in communicating the vision. P3 and FG1 indicated the nature of the vision would determine the time needed to communicate it. All agreed it is very important that the vision is understood by those who will complete the mission to fulfill it. Taking advantage of every opportunity to repeat and explain the vision was one of the major methods used by the interview and focus group participants to ensure understanding. Positive experiences while sharing the vision were expressed by the participants interviewed. Assisting where and when necessary was the indicated role played by church leaders in producing high-performance ministries.

Theme 3: Team Building

The focus group participants indicated that building teams is needed to advance the kingdom. This theme presented a thorough response to the second question posed in this study.

The consensus of the focus group participants was that team leaders are servants developing other servants. To acquire a better understanding of the elements involved in team building, specific elements were discussed: (a) criteria used in recruiting team members, (b) the importance of considering skills and skill levels of team members, (c) how ministry teams function, and (d) expectations of ministry team members.

In general, the focus group participants noted that the main criterion used in recruiting team members is a willingness to serve. The consensus among the focus group participants was that skill level is very important. The focus group participants indicated that ministry teams serve as support under the leadership of the pastor. Ministry teams, according to the focus group members, are expected to be cooperative and operate in a spirit of excellence.

Theme 4: Benefits of a Shared Vision

The research data revealed that a shared vision results in benefits. This theme presented a thorough response to the third question posed in this study. The focus group participants noted that the benefits are rich. A closer association with other ministries was among the listed benefits. Most importantly, increased evangelism was major.

Theme 5: Encountered Barriers

A review of the data, which is stored in a confidential file on the researcher's computer, reveals that some barriers exist in the team-building process. This theme presented a thorough response to the fourth question posed in this study. The barriers may not be readily apparent, but they are present. One of the focus group members listed several barriers. Unwillingness to participate was noted. The review also revealed two key potential barriers that should not be overlooked:

1. Skill level assessment in assigning certain vision tasks is critical to fulfilling certain comprehensive vision components.

2. Failure to evaluate if team members are spiritually mature enough to receive the vision. Ask yourself "is it the right time to share it?"

Research Question Responses

The themes that emerged during the analysis of data collected in this study are the responses to the established research questions. These themes are also responses to the questions asked during the interview and focus group sessions. Research Questions 1 and 4 were designed for the interview participants, and Research Questions 2, 3, and 4 were designed for the focus group participants.

Research Question 1 (RQ1)

RQ1. This research question was directed to the interview participants who served as pastors and/or designated church leaders responding on behalf of the pastor: What are the similarities and differences among pastors of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia regarding how they communicate their vision for ministry? Pastors should be visionary and communicate what God has revealed to them to church leaders and the congregants. How pastors communicate the vision may vary. However, in some ways, their methods of communicating it may be similar. This question was created to obtain more detailed responses from the interview participants in the study and to examine likenesses and differences in how the pastors or designated church leaders communicate the vision. The participants were asked ten questions. Some were follow-up questions and have been combined for conciseness.

Interview Research Questions 1 and 2. Do you consider yourself a visionary church leader? Please explain. The second question was Do you share your vision? An examination of

the response data obtained from this question revealed insight into whether the pastor or the designated church leader interviewed has great expectations or envisions great possibilities of what can occur and if he shares the vision. All participants answered in the affirmative—that they are visionaries. P1 and P2 alluded to scriptures relating to vision. P1 stated, "Yes because the scriptures say where there is no vision, the people perish." P2 stated, "Yes. Everything that God has shown in visions and dreams is shared." P3's statements also affirmed he is a visionary and focused on what a visionary does: "Yes. Future fulfillment; looking beyond what's now; expectation of growth…"

Interview Research Questions 3 through 5. The interview participants were asked (a) with whom they share their vision, (b) how they communicate the vision, and (c) how long it takes to share it. All participants noted the vision is shared with church leaders, team members, and the congregants. P3 added that he shares the vision with God. All participants indicated they communicate the vision verbally and non-verbally—in writing. P2 noted that he shares what the Spirit has revealed to him through the scriptures and dreams. P3 noted that he shares in a "nonconfrontational" manner and "moves in faith."

Interview Research Questions 6 through 8. The four questions in this group are centered around understanding the vision. The participants were asked: (a) Is it important that your vision is understood? (b) Why is it important or not important that your vision is understood? (c) Do you ensure your vision is understood? (d) How do you ensure your vision is understood? (e) What do you do to ensure your vision will be fulfilled? All the participants noted that understanding the vision is key and that they ensure their vision is understood. P1 indicated that understanding the vision is key because it is scriptural. He stated, "The scriptures say write the vision and make it plain." P2 stated, "To please God and to do His will, the vision must be

understood." P3 stated that "understanding is the foundation of vision—everyone needs to know direction." P1 stated he ensures the vision is understood by repeating it. P2 stated he ensures the vision is understood "through conversation and prayer," and P3 noted that active listening and evaluation are ways he ensures the vision is understood.

P1 stated that he ensures the fulfillment of the vision "by challenging the leaders and congregation to be serious about God's Word." P2 indicated he prays continuously and seeks God for insight. He also stated that he pours into those whom God has given him. P3 stated that he ensures fulfillment of the vision through "communication, consistency, and leading by example."

Interview Research Questions 9. The participants were asked to note some positive experiences in sharing their vision. All participants responded that they have had positive experiences in sharing the vision. P1 listed serving others and assisting in the completion of the mission and fulfillment of the vision. P2 noted his positive experiences revolved around lives being changed, and P3 listed "goal accomplishment, high interest, and participation."

Interview Research Questions 10. The participants were asked if their church had a high-performance ministry. If so, they were asked to note the role their vision plays in causing the ministries to operate at a high level. All participants noted that their church has high-performance ministries. However, two of the three provided comments regarding the role their vision plays in promoting high-performance ministries. P1 stated that his role as pastor "certainly helps the ministries perform at a high level." P3 listed consistency and preparation as two of the roles his vision plays in promoting high-performance ministries.

Research Questions 2 and 3 (RQ2)

Research Questions 2 and 3 were asked of the focus group participants. Research Question 2: How do licensed ministers and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia use the shared vision to build high-performance ministry teams? All the participants noted that they considered themselves servants assigned in their various positions to be of assistance. When asked what role they play in the team-building process, FGP1 stated that he was a role model contributing "a piece of the puzzle to complete the picture." He alluded to Jesus as being the example. He indicated that he is to be an example to those he has been assigned to serve. FGP2 noted that he plays the role of assistant—to be available to assist when needed. FGP3 indicated that his role is to assist with the upbuilding of the Kingdom, provide suggestions, and give feedback.

Criteria. Focus group members were asked about the criteria they used to recruit team members. FGP1 noted that he focuses on several questions: "Are the volunteers equipped with the basic needs of the position? Are they trainable, teachable?" He also noted that he looks at leadership qualities, i.e., effective communication. FGP3 indicated he looks for willing workers and team players with a shared vision. When asked how they use the criteria to assess volunteers, FGP1 stated that it is used as an assessment tool for "hands-on training/verbal communication, role modeling, and good communication skills." FGP3 noted that they look at the experience with the person, the importance of scripture, new members/skill discovery,"

All focus group members stated that they provide training for team members. When asked to explain the importance of considering the skills/skill levels of team members, FGP1 stated, "Skill level is needed to make a well-rounded team. You need skill levels on each side to keep the team going. Skill levels are important so that you don't overwhelm people outside their comfort level." FGP2 stated, "Skills help to make the group stronger so that one can help the

other." FGP3 responded, "It's very important to teach skills for the duty they are asked to do. Spiritual maturity. Loyalty. It is important because it may make someone a more effective asset to the whole body.

Team Function. FGP1 stated that all teams "function to contribute to the overall performance of the church—choir sings, ushers assist, teachers instruct, prayer warriors pray. The teams function from top down." FGP2 stated, "We all come together as one, listening to one another and communicating with one another." FGP3 stated that their ministries function under the leadership of the pastor.

Expectations. FGP1 explained that he expects all team members to be effective and meet their established goals. He stated, "I expect each member to enhance the team by performance at a passing level to continue adding growth and progress for the team." FGP2 stated she expects to be on one accord, and FGP3 stated, "To provide the best service that they can (trustworthy people). To stay teachable, to be of one accord, have a spirit of excellence. Cooperation—more hands, less work. Spirit of excellence."

All the focus group members responded to the question regarding the method of communicating the vision to the team members. FGP1 responded that he communicates the vision virtually or in the form of role modeling. He stated, "Seeing is best believing." He also noted that he communicates the vision by meeting with the team members and providing suggestions on how to meet the established goals. FGP2 stated that he communicates the vision by prayer calls and collaborating directly with the group. FGP3, like FGP1, noted that he conducts various meetings to maintain structure. He also indicated that he makes sure he discusses the vision with all team members. Additionally, he noted that he leads by example.

The focus group members were asked how they set the tone for completing the tasks to accomplish the mission and fulfill the vision. They were also asked how long it takes for them to communicate the vision to team members. FGP1 responded that he uses timelines and leads by example. FGP2 noted that he sets the tone by communicating with all team members and being positive. FGP3 stated that he sets standards, communicates with everyone positively, utilizes his time management, maintains a prayer-can-do spirit and attitude, and schedules meetings. Regarding how long it takes to communicate the vision, two of the three focus group participants responded. FGP1 indicated it would depend on the vision and whether it is long-term or short-term. He indicated possibly two to five years. FGP3 concurred with FGP1, noting relevancy to the situation. His indication of the time period was quite different as he stated, "anywhere from immediately to a week or two," with one to three meetings. He noted that his team has monthly meetings.

All focus group participants expressed that all team members must understand the vision. They also believe that everyone should be on the same page. FGP1 noted that if everyone is not on the same page, the vision will be "wasted."

All focus group members noted that they ensure that their vision will be fulfilled. FGP1 noted that he does so by presenting the information clearly and concisely, asking follow-up questions, and conducting quality/production reviews on the tasks assigned to each member. FGP2 responded, "By leading and doing my job and not waiting on others." FGP3 echoed FGP2, noting leading and doing his job. He also listed one-on-one collaboration, praying, staying in contact with members, and welcoming feedback. Additionally, he expressed that he ensures every member of the team "feels that the comments, thoughts, and efforts matter and that they are the most important piece of the puzzle in thought and ideas."

All focus group members reported positive experiences in sharing the vision. FGP1 stated that their ministry is thriving as a result. FGP2 listed "a greater ministry and more powerful visions." He also stated, "Dreams were brought to life to serve others." FGP3 listed "increased involvement, cooperation, and membership as positive outcomes.

The focus group members were asked if they felt that their church had high-performance ministry teams. They were asked if they answered in the affirmative, to explain the role, if any, that sharing the vision plays in causing those ministries to operate at a high level. All expressed that their churches' ministry teams performed at a high level. FGP1 indicated that being involved in the initial initiative and in "incorporating the steps to complete the tasks" causes the ministries to operate at a high level. FGP2 noted that just being in prayer to "keep others positioned to fulfill what the Lord has intended" causes the ministries to operate at a high level. FGP3 stated, "Our pastor has a vision, and as a church, we listen and follow. Yes, he is always intentional about ministry, reflection, evaluation, and communication/reminders. Yes, being intentional causes the ministries to operate at a high level."

All focus group members recommended strategies for building high-performance church ministries. Recommendations from FGP1 included: (a) observe other high-performance ministries similar to the structure in place at your church, (b) be "inclusive" with other ministry leaders in sharing your specific vision, (c). Maintain constant relational meetings of the minds on each challenge," and (d) show yourself friendly. Recommendations from FGP2 concurred with FGP1, listing shows yourself friendly as a strategy. Additionally, FGP2 stated, "Stay on one accord" and "Always put God first in everything you do." Recommendations from FGP3 included: (a) "Do not be judgmental, (b) accept everyone, (c) have clear communications, (d) treat all with respect, (e) make sure the goal is understood, (f) share information, and be transparent."

Focus group members were asked to list gains, as a leader, that they have experienced in using a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams. FGP1 explained that he had been able to see his vision successfully fulfilled. He noted that he was able to share with other ministries that were like the one at the church where he serves. Additional experiences included increased participation, acquired trust and confidence with the ministries, and increased willingness to participate. FGP2 expressed that as a leader, his gain was in evangelism—bringing more souls to Christ. FGP3 indicated that personal gain was an improvement in his thought processes. He listed (a) higher youth involvement, (b) growth—spiritually—which increased connection to other ministries, (c) increased evangelism, (d) closer personal relationships, (e) youth involvement, and (f) shared vision in other ministries.

Regarding the implementation of a shared vision in building high-performance ministries, focus group members were asked if the implementation has been conducive to individual growth and corporate growth. All focus group members answered in the affirmative to both questions. Referencing individual growth, FGP1 stated, "Yes. The overall ability to reach the set standards offered growth in his overall life. He stated, "Yes. It produced continuity for a level playing field." FGP3 noted that it helped by increasing his confidence and leadership skills. He added that individual growth is key in church. He stated that implementation helped him be more open to other points of view, increased his faith in God, and proved to others that "we can get it done."

Regarding implementation being conducive to corporate growth, FGP1 stated "Yes. The vision that helps the church helps the people. Better people make a better world." FGP3 stated, "Yes. Transformation of lives and morale builder ignites excitement for ministry. We are growing and building together. It builds morale as a unit. It also makes volunteering easier and our tasks lighter."

Research Question 4 (RQ4)

RQ4. Research Question 4 was four-fold for the interview participants and three-fold for the focus group participants. The interview participants were asked to explain barriers, if any, that they have encountered when sharing their vision for ministry with team members. They were also asked to list issues encountered in getting their vision for ministry fulfilled and to explain how they dealt with or resolved the issues. Additionally, the participants were asked to explain barriers, if any, that they have encountered in the position of team leader.

Two of the three interview participants explained barriers encountered when sharing their vision for ministry with team members. P1 listed "Cultural and worldliness in the church." P1 also stated, "Not everyone is willing to participate." P3 stated personality traits, selfishness, church hurt, naysayers, and traditions are barriers he has encountered when sharing his vision for ministry with team members. Regarding issues encountered in getting the vision for ministry fulfilled, two of the three participants responded. P1 stated, we mostly have unbiblical, unsolicited advisors with self-injected experience." P3 responded, "Spiritual maturity levels, traditional consciousness, rejection of vision, presence of evil, and the pandemic."

In explaining how they deal with or resolve the issues, P1 stated, "We overcome it with scriptural humility of Christ and rely on it to be the summation and final source of our understanding and acceptance." He added that the practice is to continue to "share information until people begin to see the total vision." P3 stated that he deals with or resolves issues by operating above, not taking things personally, "praying, going above the fray, spiritual maturity, and prayers."

In explaining barriers encountered in the position of team leader, two of the three participants responded. P1 described one barrier as a thorn. He noted that the team players want to have perfect ideas, through their eyes of personal experience, which does not line up biblically. He also

listed "opposition due to someone having personal issues with leadership." P3 stated, "The fray,

education—continually, low cooperation, and people not realizing ability" have been barriers.

Two of the three focus group members explained barriers encountered when sharing the

established vision for ministry with their team members. FGP1 noted a lack of faith was a

barrier. He noted that he encountered this at times. FGP3 listed non-receptiveness and unbelief as

barriers. Responding to how they dealt with these issues, FGP1 stated that he challenges

individuals to grow in faith. FGP3 indicated that he uses the vehicle of prayer for those who

appear to have issues embracing the vision. When asked about barriers encountered as a team

leader, FGP1 responded, "Same as Moses." FGP2 did not indicate any barriers. FGP3 listed a

lack of trust, envy, and jealousy.

EVALUATION OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The design most appropriate and beneficial for this study was the "Transcendental

phenomenological research design (Qualitative). This design permitted the use of surveys,

interviews, and focus groups. These three tools enabled the researcher to describe participants'

lived experiences and to collect data needed to answer the research questions without bias.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Overview

This study explored the lived experiences of pastors, ministers, and church leaders in

Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia who operate high-performing ministry teams. A description

of the conclusions drawn from the research findings, implications, and applications on high-

performing team ministries are included in this chapter. The results outlined in Chapter 4 are also

expounded upon. Additionally, limitations of the study and recommendations for future research

are included. Specifically, data were collected on the use of shared vision in team ministry, how

the vision is communicated, how team members are recruited, and recommended strategies for building high-performing ministries. The findings are analyzed to determine whether the research questions have been answered.

Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological research was to explore the experiences of pastors, ministers, and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia regarding the impact of a shared vision on the development of high-performing ministry teams. To understand the lived experiences of the participants, the central research question established for this study was "What are the experiences, if any, of pastors and church leaders regarding the impact of a shared vision on building ministry teams?" The following sub-research questions are listed below.

Research Questions

RQ1. What are the similarities and differences among pastors of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia regarding how they communicate their vision for ministry?

RQ2. How do licensed ministers and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia use the shared vision to build high-performing ministry teams?

RQ3. How do licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia describe the benefits of using a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams?

RQ4. What barriers, if any, have pastors, licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected churches in Macon, Georgia experienced in using the shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams?

Research Conclusions, Implications, and Applications

The study's theological review, theoretical review, and research findings developed the basis for drawing the conclusions, implications, and applications. Data collected from interviews

and focus group discussions were analyzed, and five themes presented in Chapter 4 emerged: (a) shared vision, (b) communication process, (c) benefits of a shared vision, (d) team building, and (d) encountered barriers. The researcher's observations and knowledge acquired while examining the four research questions that guided the study are recapped in this section.

Research Conclusions

The participants in this study served in Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia. All were servant leaders and operated using a team approach to ministry. The pastor and designees comprised the interview group. The individuals designated to serve in the interview group were a pastor, an associate minister, and a trustee from three different Baptist churches. The three focus groups were comprised of three ministry leaders from each of the three targeted churches. The research findings could be applied to encourage additional research on team ministry and team performance.

Research Question One (RQ1) asked What are the similarities and differences among pastors of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia regarding how they communicate their vision for ministry? Shared vision, communication process, and encountered barriers were the major themes related to Research Question 1, which provided detailed information about how the pastors convey the vision. The data collected made it possible to examine whether the vision was shared and to compare the methods used in communicating the vision. The pastor and designees described their experiences in one-on-one interview sessions. The research findings indicated that all interview participants are visionary leaders and share their vision. The participants noted that they share their vision with team members, other ministry leaders, and the congregants. Regarding the method used, all participants indicated they communicated the vision verbally and in writing.

The time needed to communicate the vision to team members varied among the participants. However, all participants agreed it depends on the vision. Thus, it could be short-term—immediately to a week or two, or long-term—two to five years.

The consensus was that the vision must be understood and from a biblical perspective, it should be clear and concise. The participants expressed that they ensure their vision is understood by consistently communicating it, praying, and challenging the leaders. In noting that their experiences in sharing their vision were positive, the participants specifically indicated they had experienced increased participation, accomplished goals, and changed lives. The perceptions of the participants were that their ministries performed at a high level and that their roles involved assisting in the effort to ensure high performance.

Research Question Four (RQ4) asked What barriers, if any, have pastors, licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected churches in Macon, Georgia experienced in using the shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams? Encountered barriers was the theme related to Research Question 4, which provided detailed information regarding obstacles and issues the participants experienced while using the shared vision approach to building high-performance ministry teams. The collected data assisted the researcher in identifying and understanding specific obstacles and issues the participants encountered, how the obstacles were removed, and the issues resolved. While sharing the vision was positive overall, the participants noted that it was not easy because they had to deal with some adverse personality traits which included pessimism, church hurt, and an unwillingness to participate. Issues encountered in fulfilling the vision included unbiblical unasked-for advice, refusal to embrace the vision, and consequences of the pandemic. The participants also noted that some team members opposed leadership, expressed unbiblical ideas, underperformed, and were uncooperative. These issues

were resolved by being consistent in communicating the vision, not internalizing everything, and remaining prayerful.

Research Questions 2, 3, and 4 were directed to the ministry leaders who participated in focus group sessions. Research Question 2 asked Do you consider yourself a servant leader? Because servant leaders should be adept at building ministry teams, several sub-questions were generated involving team building—the theme related to this research question. An examination of the data revealed detailed information regarding the role of the servant leader in the team-building process. All participants viewed themselves as servant leaders assisting where needed and their role as providing input, giving suggestions, and listening. The participants either recruit or accept individuals as volunteers. Either way, they look for willing and faithful church members who embrace the vision and want to work. They consider skill level, which is important, but they also teach skills needed to complete the mission to fulfill the vision. All the participants noted that their ministry teams function in harmony and operate under the leadership of the pastor. All team members are expected to work cooperatively, and effectively, and to meet the established goal. All participants communicate their vision in meetings. In setting the tone, the participants lead by example. They set standards, and timelines, and communicate positively. Regarding how long it takes for them to share their vision, all participants were in concurrence with the time provided by the pastors—dependent on the mission but everywhere between immediately and two to five years. The participants also concurred with the pastors that sharing the vision is important and that it should be presented clearly and concisely. The participants noted that leading and communicating effectively and following up with answers to questions ensure that the vision will be fulfilled. Like the pastors, the focus group participants have had

positive experiences sharing their vision for ministry. Increased participation was major as it resulted in thriving ministries.

Research Question 3 asked Would you say that your church has high-performing ministry teams? If so, what role does your sharing the vision play in causing those ministries to operate at such a level? The theme related to this question is the benefits of a shared vision. Detailed information was provided on advantages and gains. The focus group members indicated that ministries in their churches are high-performing, and their roles of being intentional, reflecting, evaluating, consistently communicating with team members, and praying to keep team members in place to complete the mission cause the ministries to operate at a high level. The focus group members indicated a major gain—an increased number of individuals accepting Christ was experienced. Other gains included increased involvement and fulfillment of the vision. Implementation of a shared vision has resulted in increased morale, confidence among team members, and individual growth in team members and team leaders. The focus group members noted that the implementation of a shared vision is conducive to corporate growth.

Research Question 4 asked the focus group members to explain barriers, if any, that they have encountered when sharing the established vision for ministry with their team members. The members of the focus group explained that the challenges they experienced when sharing the vision with team members were almost identical to those experienced by the pastors. They included lack of participation, negative attitudes, church hurt, and worldliness. They indicated they conquered the challenges by being consistent in explaining the vision, answering questions, remaining focused, and praying until the team members they were attempting to reach embraced the vision.

Research Implications

The implications are both theoretical and theological. While this study may not close the gap that exists regarding the experiences of church leaders building high-performing ministry teams, it should narrow it. This study suggests that all churches can have high-performance ministries if they are led by pastors and ministry leaders who possess certain qualities and competencies. It suggests that God gives the vision to the pastor, who communicates it to ministry leaders, who subsequently communicate it to team members. The implication is that pastors and ministry leaders of high-performance team ministries are visionary, and the vision must be shared or communicated in a manner that is fully understood by those introduced to it. It is, therefore, contingent upon pastors and ministry leaders to be able to explain the vision clearly and concisely. If the vision is not communicated well, the result will be frustration and confusion among individuals who have no direction.

The study suggests that the method used in communicating the vision is extremely important. It should be communicated in various ways. Some suggested forms of communicating the vision, as noted in Chapter 2, include newsletters, databases, meetings, posters, one-on-one meetings, and casual conversation (Gleeson, 2017). Another way is to explain the vision in story form. Also implied is that consistency is the key. The vision should be communicated repeatedly (The Leading Effectively Staff, 2020). The participants in this study indicated that they operate in this manner. P3 stated that through "communication, consistency, and leading by example," he ensures the vision will be understood and fulfilled. Pastors and ministry leaders must, therefore, possess the ability to appropriately communicate the vision, i.e., they must be skilled in delivering their thoughts and ideas. and ministry leaders must undergo training on delivering the vision. However, one training session is not enough (Caine, 2018). To be effective, ministry

leaders must be involved in continuous development activities. Once ministry leaders are trained, they are expected to train team members.

It was implied in this study that in high-performance ministries, team members are selected by the pastor and ministry leaders. The literature suggests that a recruiting team should be formed (Garcia, 2023). Forming such a team would make the selection process easier. However, it is suggested that if recruiting teams are considered, it should be part of the vision. It was also suggested that the selection of recruiting team members must be carefully considered as they must be skilled in recruiting. Church members not recruited or selected but desire to be on a ministry team may voluntarily become a team member. Participants in this study indicated one or both methods are used in their churches. FG1 stated that team members are recruited. FG2 stated that team members volunteer. FG3 stated that some team members are recruited, and some are volunteers.

Study findings suggest that pastors and ministry leaders in high-performance ministries welcome team members who possess the knowledge and skills needed. Ministry leaders provide all team members with the opportunity to work cooperatively and with the assurance that ministry leaders are available when needed. This study also suggests that ministry leaders welcome non-skilled individuals who embrace the vision and demonstrate a desire to learn. Once the desire is expressed, ministry leaders will ensure that the new team members know what they need to know and have what they need. The ministry leaders assure them that their role is to assist in the endeavor. Effective ministry leaders express that they exist to help team members enhance existing skills (Arrey, 2014), and they are available to assist them in acquiring skills needed to fulfill the vision. The participants in this study indicated they welcome skilled and non-skilled individuals. In any case, two of the focus group members responded. FG1 noted that

he seeks answers to the following questions: (a) "Are the volunteers equipped with the basic needs of the position?" (b) "Are they trainable, teachable?" FG1 also noted he wants to know if they possess leadership qualities, i.e., effective communication. FG3 noted he looks for "people who are willing to work and willing to attend church." He added that he also looks for "people who can and want to be a team player and people who have shared vision.

This study implies that once the ministry teams are in place, ministry leaders should guide the members through a process that causes them to consider the skills and views of fellow team members. They should also consider how they can be of assistance to one another and seek to discover if they have a common purpose (Decker & Decker 2015). The next step should involve team leaders explaining and establishing expectations. Team leaders should then lead by example and provide directions that would aid them in completing the mission to fulfill the vision. An interviewee, P3, noted he leads by example.

This study suggests that working in harmony is of paramount importance in churches with high-performance ministry teams. Team members are expected to demonstrate that they embrace the vision. They are also expected to have a common purpose, communicate effectively, collaborate, and accomplish the goal. Pastors and ministry leaders are so inspirational while establishing values and sharing the vision that the selected and volunteer team members wholeheartedly not only embrace the vision but also become vision ambassadors. As ambassadors, they promote the vision and communicate issues to their ministry team leaders, who will communicate with the pastor or designated individual.

The implication is that pastors of churches with high-performance ministries are transformational, i.e., they operate under at least two models (a) Theory Y model and James MacGregor Burns' (b) the transformational model described in Chapter Two. Theory Y was one of two models designed by Douglas McGregor. The transformational model was designed by

James MacGregor Burns (ResearchGate, n.d.). Both models promote inspiration and participation. As indicated in Figures 1 and 2, leaders are purpose-driven mentors and encouragers. Operating under this model, leaders possess a genuine concern for their followers and encourage them to be creative and to continuously improve by changing behaviors or activities, if or when necessary. Leaders empower their followers to do what is needed to complete the mission and fulfill the vision. The participants in the interview and focus groups unambiguously agreed that they empower their team members and encourage them to be creative in their work toward fulfilling the vision.

This study implies that micromanaging has no place in churches with high-performance ministry teams. The vision is shared by the pastor and ministry leaders, and the followers work on the plan to accomplish it. This management style does not, however, omit team building and monitoring. Pastors and ministry leaders in high-performance ministries consistently provide training, team-building activities, and progress monitoring. The participants in this study attested to the fact that they did not micromanage their team members. P3 stated that he always stays in his lane and is always available when and if needed. All the participants noted that they provide training sessions and do progress monitoring.

This study suggests ministry teams are confronted with barriers that could have an adverse effect on performance (Gleeson, 2022). As listed in Chapter 2, a lack of participation by the leader is a barrier, confusing the vision and lack of participation from team members. Other barriers include out-of-place procedures and processes, lack of appreciation for diversity, lack of conflict resolution skills, unclear goals, unclear duties and responsibilities, relationship problems, and an unmanaged and poorly defined culture. Of these listed barriers, relationship problems appeared as the top issue. While the participants in the study did not list these barriers, they listed

a few. P1, a member of the interview group, listed "cultural and worldliness in the church" and "not everyone is willing to participate." P2 stated he had not encountered any barriers, and P3 listed "personality traits, selfishness, church hurt, naysayers, and traditions." Two members of the focus group responded. FG1 also listed selfishness, stating the reason being "people and their attempts to put a stop to your growth because of selfishness." FG1 also listed "opposition due to someone having personal issues with leadership and "individuality of the different teams." FG3 listed "low cooperation" and "people not realizing ability." This study suggests, then, that even high-performance ministry teams have issues. The issues may be different from those experienced by low-performance ministry teams, but they exist.

A study of the Bible revealed that Jesus brought followers on board. He selected His disciples. The implication is that if there are no followers, there will be no leadership (Byrd, 2018). Thus, it is contingent upon leaders to select or recruit those they desire to lead (McGavin, 2023). A close study of the Bible indicated that Jesus, considered to be the ultimate role model by Christians, was a visionary leader who effectively communicated His vision to His followers and received desired results. This finding suggests that if ministry leaders follow in the footsteps of Jesus in leading their team members by effectively communicating their vision, the mission will be completed, and the vision will be fulfilled.

Implied in the research on writing the vision was that if it is not logical and impossible, it will not be embraced. Thus, it will not be fulfilled (Gleeson, 2017). The research review also revealed the importance of consistently communicating the vision (Craig, 2019). The implication is that if ministry leaders keep the vision at the forefront of their communications with their team leaders and the congregants, they will receive more buy-in.

In sharing his vision, the Apostle Paul outlined instructions for completing the mission to fulfill the vision (New International Version, Eph 4: 2-3, 2011). The implication is that if

followers are guided throughout the process, there is a strong probability that the vision will be fulfilled. Another implication is that if ministry leaders monitor or check progress and provide feedback, team members will most likely stay on track, which will increase the probability that the vision will be fulfilled (Mugavin, 2019).

An intense study of the Bible revealed that Jesus was a master teacher. He taught His followers how to be disciples and taught them to follow the same pattern (New International Version, Mark 16:15; Luke 24:45-49, 2011). Thus, if ministry leaders lead by example, the team members will follow (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). The implication is that if acquired knowledge is passed along, it would multiply for the highest good of all. Research findings indicate that values must be established.

A review of related research revealed that expectations regarding the performance behavior of team members must be clearly explained when sharing or communicating the vision (Bryant, 2018; Craig, 2019). The implication is that if team members are told what is expected of them and that monitoring performance is a part of the process, they will understand the importance of working hard to complete the mission to fulfill the vision. They will also understand that they may be dismissed if they do not meet the set performance standards.

Research Applications

Data collected from the participants, emerging themes, and the analysis of data confirmed the research findings detailed in this study. Like the existing literature, this study's findings contained several methods and tools that pastors, and church leaders should apply in building high-performing ministry teams. Prayer is at the top of the list. Pastors and ministry leaders must pray for vision, and once received, they must write it. In writing the vision, ministry leaders must

"make it plain" (New International Version, Hab 2:2,). They must continue praying throughout the mission—until the vision is fulfilled.

After writing the vision, pastors must check to ensure their vision is understood by the ministry leaders before releasing them to communicate the vision to team members. Once ministry leaders demonstrate an understanding of the vision and that they embrace it, they should recruit and/or select their team members. A serious undertaking, selecting, and recruiting team members requires a lot of time (Bailey, 2018). Therefore, pastors and church leaders must allocate time for selecting and recruiting ministry team members. Once the selection/recruitment process is over, pastors and ministry leaders must share/communicate their vision to team leaders and the congregants consistently. Standards, goals, and expectations for team members must be established by the ministry leaders, and they must lead by example. Timelines should also be set by ministry leaders to ensure team members stay on track. Once set, ministry leaders must monitor performance and provide feedback throughout the process.

Research Limitations

This study contained several limitations. One limitation was the sample size and location. Only 12 participants were selected to participate in the study. Twelve is a sufficient size for a qualitative research study, according to Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2016). However, it is significantly small in comparison to many studies. Another limitation is that the findings cannot be completely generalized because the study was conducted in only three churches in one city in one region. If the participants had been selected from all regions within the state, the findings would have been more generalized.

The recruitment process for the study participants is a limitation. Purposive sampling was an appropriate method used in this study as the location and participants were selected, and it

was based on precise criteria. Its use, however, makes the process vulnerable to bias as the

method has no provisions for generalizations (Purposive Sampling, 2019). Detailed findings

were produced, but only one of the three participants interviewed was a pastor. The reasons were

valid, and individuals knowledgeable of the pastor's role were designated, but pastors would

have provided a more extensive perspective.

<div align="center">**Recommendations for Further Research**</div>

Findings from this study created a foundation for exploring additional research and an

understanding of how to build high-performing ministry teams. The analysis of data linked to

strategies used by church leaders in building high-performing ministry teams revealed several

components needed to understand more clearly how to recruit and prepare team members: (a)

communicating the vision, (b) time allocated to communicating the vision, (c) barriers to

implementing a shared vision, and (d) methods of breaking down those barriers. These

components are discussed below:

Communicating the Vision

A vision is only a vision until it is communicated. It begins in the mind of the visionary

and remains there if he or she does not vividly explain it to those expected to bring it to

fulfillment. Since pastors receive their vision from God, they must communicate it first to the

ministry leaders, who must demonstrate understanding and acceptance. Next, it must be

communicated to a team of individuals expected to assist in making the vision a reality. The

recruitment process should include a demonstration of understanding the vision. Next, it must

include a demonstration of embracing the vision as the vision must become the vision of those to

whom it was communicated. Visionaries need to know that the individuals selected to bring the

vision into reality are all in. While some research has been conducted on what to look for in

prospective ministry team members, e.g., competency and time management skills, additional

transcendental phenomenology qualitative research is needed on indicators that a vision

communicated by pastors to ministry leaders has been effectively communicated, i.e., understood

and embraced, and on indicators that the vision communicated by ministry leaders to prospective

team members have been effectively communicated, i.e., understood and embraced.

Time Allocated to Communicating the Vision

Since the vision must be communicated effectively for the listening audience to

understand and embrace it, the amount of time dedicated to communicating it is crucial. A

significant amount of research exists on how long it should take to articulate a vision statement,

but very little research is available on how long it should take to communicate a vision. The

length of time varies throughout the existing research, including the findings in this study, which

suggest: "relative to the situation, a week or two," "one to three meetings," "approximately one

month through preaching and Bible study," "sometimes days and others, longer," and "based on

the vision itself—short-term or long-term (2-5 years)" Other existing research findings suggest

one to two hours per presentation, depending on the number of people in the group. Six is the

recommended group size. Fifteen minutes per person, plus feedback per presentation is the

maximum time suggested. Thus, additional research is recommended regarding the amount of

time needed to communicate a vision. While no recipe can be created for every vision, a general

guideline for pastors and ministry leaders may prove beneficial. Perhaps a quantitative research

study based on how much time a set number of pastors and ministry leaders in various

denominations across the country spend communicating a vision could produce such an

instrument.

Barriers to Implementing a Shared Vision

Much research exists on communication barriers but not on barriers to implementing a shared vision. Pastors and ministry leaders must understand that everyone may not embrace the vision. There may be valid reasons for the refusal, and the individual or individuals may or may not disrupt the process. However, wherever human beings exist, there is a strong possibility that issues will occur. Existing research findings indicate some barriers encountered by high-performance team members with a shared vision, but more emphasis appears to be placed on ineffective leaders than on team members. Thus, there appears to be an imbalance in this regard. Gleeson (2022) found relationships to be the top barrier encountered by high-performance team members, which would certainly interfere with implementation. Lack of participation, selfishness, opposition, and personality differences were some barriers to implementing a shared vision that surfaced in this study. Additional transcendental phenomenology qualitative research is recommended on the impact of barriers to implementing a shared vision, with emphasis on pastors and ministry teams in varied religious denominations across the country. This researcher found and recommends two areas of further research needed to overcome barriers: (1) include skill set analysis in assigning certain vision tasks is critical to fulfilling certain comprehensive vison components and its potential to derail a vision. (2) research on failure to evaluate team members to assess if they are spiritually mature enough to receive the vision at certain intervals in implementing the vision.

Methods of Breaking Down Barriers to Communicating a Vision

This researcher did not find much research on breaking down barriers to communicating a vision. However, a review of existing literature revealed much information regarding breaking down communication barriers. The key finding regarding breaking down barriers to

communicating a vision in this study was prayer. This was the overall response from the pastors and ministry leaders. Because of the limited amount of research on this topic, transcendental phenomenology qualitative research is recommended with a focus on how pastors and ministry leaders in various denominations across the country break down barriers to communicating the vision. While a significant amount of research exists regarding the importance of these components which are involved in sharing a vision, additional transcendental phenomenology qualitative research is needed on the impact of the use of a shared vision in building high-performing ministry team ministries.

Summary

The purpose of this research study was to explore the experiences of pastors, ministers, and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia regarding the impact of a shared vision on the development of high-performing ministry teams. Theological and theoretical frameworks on which this study was created were assessed for significance. The study findings proved that the related scriptures and theoretical frameworks—visionary, servant, team, situational, and transformational leadership—were significant as the participants referenced scriptures and led their teams using these management styles.

The findings revealed that all participants concurred that pastors and ministry leaders must be visionary and share their vision with their followers. The study functions as a guide for future directions in research on building high-performing ministry teams. Regarding research, the study added to existing literature and established a framework for future studies. Because Jesus, the ultimate role model, and teacher, established the standards designed to ensure the church has high-performing ministries, there is a need to develop church leaders who follow His

standards. His standards involve making disciples who make disciples and completing God-

ordained tasks to fulfill the vision Christ has for the church.

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APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL LETTER

Dear Michael Johnson, Joseph Judd,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data-safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.
Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants' research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,
G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research

APPENDIX B

RECRUITMENT LETTER

Dear

As a graduate student in the John H. Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. The purpose of my study is to explore the experiences of pastors, ministers, and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia regarding the impact of a shared vision on the development of high-performance ministry teams. The goal of the study is to understand how a shared vision can be used to motivate church leaders to function in a way that would advance the Kingdom of God. It would be a pleasure to have you participate. Your contribution would be helpful to other church leaders. Most importantly, it would add to the existing research on the topic.

The participants will be asked to:

1. Complete a brief online demographic survey.
2. Be available to take part in an interview if a pastor.

3. Be available to take part in a focus group discussion if a licensed minister or leader.
4. Review an emailed summary of the interview or focus group discussion, whichever is applicable, and provide feedback, verifying or noting needed changes.

All information, including names, will be requested but will be kept confidential. All potential participants will be asked to read a consent form, which will be sent via email. They will be asked to respond via email, stating they would like to participate in the study. After receiving the email, the researcher will send a link to the demographic survey. The survey information will be reviewed to determine eligibility, and eligible participants will be notified.

Thanks for considering this opportunity to participate in my study.

Michael Johnson
Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University

APPENDIX C

Consent Form

Title of the Project: *Building High-Performance Ministry Teams: Pastors, Ministers, and Leaders of Selected Baptist Churches in Macon, Georgia*

Principal Investigator: [Name, credentials, institutional affiliation]
[**Co-investigator(s):** Name(s), credentials, institutional affiliation]

Invitation to be part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be affiliated with a progressive Baptist church that utilizes the team approach to ministry. The church must be located within the central section of the southeastern United States.
If you are a **pastor**, you must have served in the position of pastor at the church where you presently serve for at least two years.
If you are a **minister,** you must have been licensed for at least two years.
If you are a **church leader**, you must have served in the position at the church where you presently serve for at least one year.

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

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

The purpose of the study is to explore the experiences of pastors, ministers, and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia regarding the impact of a shared vision on the development of high-performance ministry teams. The goal of the study is to understand how a shared vision can be used to motivate church leaders to function in a way that would advance the Kingdom of God.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:
1. Complete a brief online survey (10 minutes).
2. Be available (if selected) to take part in an interview (40 to 50 minutes), if you are a pastor.
3. Be available (if selected) to take part in a focus group session (40 to 50 minutes), if you are a licensed minister or leader.
4. Review an emailed summary of your interview (or focus group discussion), whichever is applicable, and provide feedback, verifying or noting needed changes (20 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. However, churches establishing new ministries or revamping ministries will benefit from a description of your experiences, strategies, suggestions, and recommendations regarding the use of a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

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

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

• Participant responses will be kept confidential as pseudonyms will be used only by the researcher to identify participants. They will be stored in a password-protected file.
• Interviews will be conducted in a closed location. Therefore, no one will be able to hear the interviewer asking questions.
• Collected data will be stored on a password-protected computer and may be used in future presentations. After five years, all electronic records will be deleted.
• Interviews will be conducted and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password-protected computer and deleted in five years. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

| **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. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting this relationship.

| **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—OR—inform the researcher that you wish to discontinue your participation, and do not submit your study materials. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

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

| **Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?** |
The researcher conducting this study is Michael Johnson. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at █████████████████ ████████████████. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, [name], at [email].

| **Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?** |
If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515, or email at irb@liberty.edu.

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** |

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

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

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

_____
Printed Subject Name

_____
Signature & Date

APPENDIX D: DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

The purpose of this survey is to determine eligibility to participate in a doctoral research study titled *Building High-Performance Ministry Teams: Pastors, Ministers, and Leaders of Selected Baptist Churches in Macon, Georgia*. The eligibility requirements revolve around residential location, church affiliation/denomination, church position, amount of service in the current position, or length of certification.

1. What is the name of the church where you are affiliated?

   _____

2. Where is the church located?
   A. In the northern section of the southeastern region of the United States
   B. In the southern section of the southeastern region of the United States
   C. In the central section of the southeastern region of the United States
   D. Other_____

3. What is your church affiliation?

      A. Baptist
      B. Catholicism
      C. Presbyterian
      D. Other

4. What is your current title at this church?
      A. Pastor
      B. Associate Minister
      C. Leader
      D. Other_____

5. If you are a pastor, how long have you served as pastor at the church where you currently pastor?
      A. One year
      B. Two Years
      C. Three or more years

6. If you are a minister, how long have you been licensed?
      A. One year
      B. Two years
      C. Three or more years

7. If you are a leader, how long have you served in that capacity at the church where you currently serve?
   A. One year
   B. Two years
   C. Three or more years

8. On what level would you rate your church ministries in terms of performance?
   A. High
   B. Medium
   C. Low

9. Do you consider yourself to be a visionary leader?
   A. Yes
   B. No

10 Gender

   A. Female
   B. Male

11. Race/Ethnicity

   A. African American
   B. American Indian
   C. Asian
   D. Caucasian
   E. Hispanic
   F. Multiracial
   G. Other (Please Indicate) _____

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

I.   Basic information about the interview

      A. Instructions and recording permission.
      B. Time expectation.
      C. You will talk about your ministry experiences.
      D. Know that there are no correct or incorrect answers.

II.   Introduction of the researcher and the purpose of the study

      A. Doctoral student at Liberty University
      B. Pastor of Fulton Baptist Church in Macon, Georgia

III.   Study's Purpose
To explore the experiences of pastors, ministers, and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia regarding the impact of a shared vision on the development of high-performance ministry teams.

A shared vision is generally defined as "a clear and common view of the future as communicated to members of a team who let the vision resonate within, with the result being them taking ownership of it" (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

IV.   Opening icebreaker questions
Please briefly tell me about your background.
Would you please describe your current ministry?

V.   Content questions that include probes to ask for more information or explanation.

VI.   Closing instructions
A summary of the transcript of the interview will be shared with all participants within three weeks after the interview or focus group session, via e-mail, and you will be asked to review it for accuracy (Creswell, 2014). Please email your approval or corrections back to the researcher.

Thank you for your time and assistance in participating in this interview.

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT

RQ1. What are the similarities and differences among pastors of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia regarding how they communicate their vision for ministry?

1-1   Do you consider yourself a visionary church leader? Please explain.

1-2   Would you say that you share your vision for ministry?

1-3   To whom do you share your vision for ministry?

1-4   Would you please describe how you communicate your vision for ministry?

1-5   How long does it take you to articulate your vision for ministry?

1-6   Is it important to you that your vision is understood? Why? or why not?

1-7   Do you ensure that your vision for ministry is understood? Please describe how you ensure that those to whom you communicate the vision understand the vision.

1-8   What do you do to ensure that your vision for ministry will be accomplished?

1-9   What positive experiences have you had in sharing your vision for ministry?

1-10   Would you say that your church has high-performance ministry teams? If so, what role, if any, does your sharing the vision play in causing those ministries to operate at such a level?

RQ4. What barriers, if any, have pastors, licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected churches in Macon, Georgia experienced in using the shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams?

 4-1   Have you encountered any issues when sharing your vision for ministry? If so, please explain.

4-2   Have you encountered issues in getting your vision for ministry fulfilled? If so, please explain.

4-3   Please explain how you have dealt with issues associated with your vision for ministry.

APPENDIX G: FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

I.   Basic information about the focus group discussion.

    A. Instructions and recording permission.
    B. Time expectation.
    C. You will talk about your ministry experiences.
    D. Know that there are no correct or incorrect answers.

  II. Introduction of the researcher and the purpose of the study

    A. Doctoral student at Liberty University
    B. Pastor of Fulton Baptist Church in Macon, Georgia

III.   Study's Purpose

To explore the experiences of pastors, ministers, and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia regarding the impact of a shared vision on the development of high-performance ministry teams.

A shared vision is generally defined as "a clear and common view of the future as communicated to members of a team who let the vision resonate within, with the result being them taking ownership of it" (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

IV.   Opening icebreaker questions
Please briefly tell me about your background.
Would you please describe the church ministry that you presently lead?

V.   Content questions that include probes to ask for more information or explanation.

VI.   Closing instructions
A summary of the transcript of the interview will be shared with all participants within three weeks after the interview, via e-mail, and you will be asked to review it for accuracy (Creswell, 2014). Please email your approval or corrections back to the researcher.

Thank you for your time and assistance in participating in this interview.

APPENDIX H: FOCUS GROUP INSTRUMENT

RQ2. How do licensed ministers and leaders of selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia use the shared vision to build high-performance ministry teams?

2-1   Do you consider yourself to be a servant leader? Describe why or why not.

2-2   Team building is described as the process of helping a group of individuals working in teams, depending on one another to enhance performance in completing assigned tasks (Arrey, 2014; Fapohunda (2013). Please explain the role you play in the team-building process at your church.

2-3   Do you recruit team members, or do they volunteer?

2-4   If you recruit team members, what criteria do you use or qualities you seek?

2-5-   How do you use that criteria to assess volunteers?

2-6   Do you provide training for the members of your team?

2-7   Explain the importance of considering the skills and skill levels of the members of a

team.

2-8   Please explain how the ministry teams function in your church.

2-9   What are your expectations of members of your ministry team?

2-10   How do you communicate the established vision to your ministry team?

2-11   How do you set the tone for completing tasks to accomplish the mission to fulfill the vision?

2-12   Approximately how long does it take you to articulate your vision for ministry to your team members?

2-13   Is it important to you that your vision is understood by all your team members? Why? or why not?

2-14   Do you ensure that your vision for ministry is understood by all your team members? Please describe how you ensure that your team members understand the vision.

2-14   What do you do to ensure that the established vision for ministry will be accomplished?

2-15   What positive experiences have you had in sharing your vision for ministry?

2-16   Would you say that your church has high-performance ministry teams? If so, what role, if any, does your sharing the vision play in causing those ministries to operate at such a level?

2-17   What strategies do you recommend for building high-performance church ministries?

RQ3. How do licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected Baptist churches in Macon, Georgia describe the benefits of using a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams?

3-1   What gains have you, as a leader, experienced in using a shared vision in building high-

performance ministry teams?

3-2   Has the implementation of a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams been conducive to individual growth? Please explain.

3-3   Has the implementation of a shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams been conducive to corporate growth? Please explain.

RQ4. What barriers, if any, have pastors, licensed ministers, and leaders affiliated with selected churches in Macon, Georgia experienced in using the shared vision in building high-performance ministry teams?

4-1   Please explain barriers, if any, that you have encountered when sharing the established vision for ministry with your team members.

4-2   Please explain how you dealt with or resolved these issues.

4-3   Please explain barriers, if any, that you have encountered in the position of team leader.

Lists of Abbreviations

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Liberty University (LU)

Research Question (RQ)

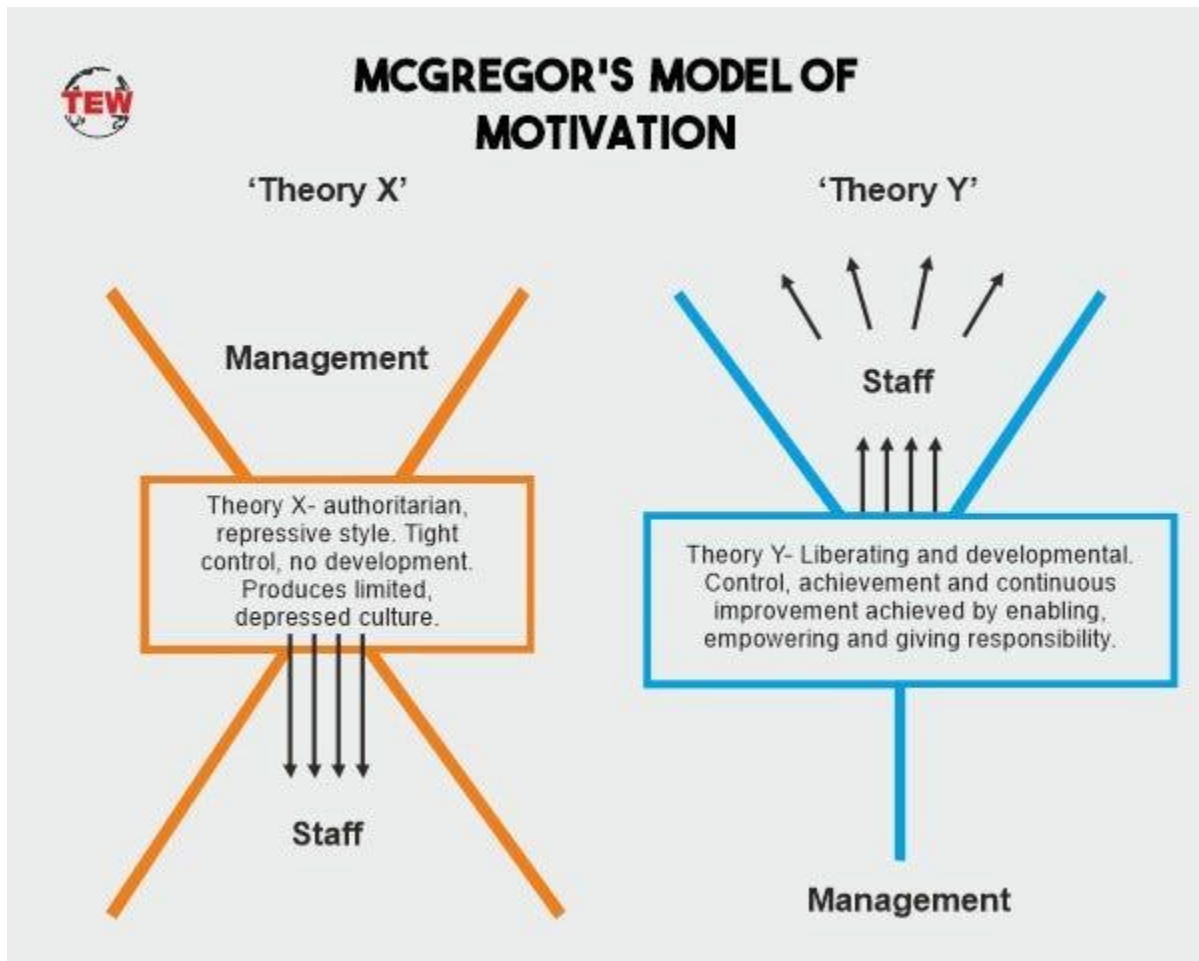**Interview Participant (IP)**

Focus Group Participant (FGP)

Pastor (P)

Maximum Qualitative Data Analysis (MAXQDA)

Figure 1

McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y Model of Motivation

From the *Enterprise World Magazine*. Published in *The Enterprise Diary*, September 10, 2020.

https://medium.com/the-enterprise-diary/mcgregors-theory-x-and-theory-y-of-motivation-

2a12b53731fb

Figure 2

Transformational Leadership Model: The 4 I's:

Transformational Leadership

Idealized Influence	Purpose Driven. Role Model. "Walk the talk"
Inspirational Motivation	Inspiring. Inspire followers
Individualized Consideration	People Driven. Genuine concern for needs of followers
Intellectual Stimulation	Innovating. Challenges followers to be innovative and creative

From Transformational leadership. *ResearchGate*.

https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Transformational-Leadership-Model-The-4-Is-or-4-

components-of-TL_fig1_348633830