

TITLE Intercultural Leadership: A Mixed Methods Study of Leader Cultural Intelligence and Leadership Practices in Diversity-Oriented Churches

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Unpublished doctoral dissertation: December 2013

OBJECTIVE The purpose of this research was to examine and explain the factors contributing to leadership in diversity-oriented churches in the United States.

METHODOLOGY

The study's population comprised of senior pastors and members of the top-management teams (TMTs) of Protestant and Evangelical churches in the United States. An online survey was mailed to 210 senior pastors who voluntarily shared information about their churches on MOSAIX Global Network website, an open directory of 'multi-ethnic' churches. Thirty-six senior pastors responded (response rate 17%). Another 16 responses were collected from various networks of diversity-oriented churches and 13 responses were collected from homogenous churches. Of these 65 senior pastors, 52 were from diversity-oriented churches and 13 were from racially homogenous churches. The average age of the senior pastors was 48 and the average length of employment was 11 years; the average years of practice was 21 years. The typical senior pastor respondent was male (90%), Caucasian (71%), not Hispanic (92%), and with a Master's degree or higher (73%).

The senior pastors filled out an online survey, which consisted of a demographics survey, the Cultural Intelligence Scale (Van Dyne, Ang, & Koh, 2008) and the adapted Perceived Group Openness to Diversity (Hobman, Bordia, & Gallois, 2004) scale. The senior pastors asked two to six TMT members to complete the LPI-Observer. The TMT members completed the demographics survey, the LPI-Observer and the adapted Perceived Group Openness to Diversity scale. Reported internal reliability coefficients for the LPI were Model = 0.73, Inspire = 0.86, Challenge = 0.82, and Enable = 0.86. The author also conducted interviews with the senior pastors in two churches, and used information in sermon transcripts and the churches' websites.

KEY FINDINGS

A statistically significant correlation was found between the senior pastors' overall Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and the TMTs perceptions of senior pastors' leadership practices (LPI Observer scores) for Encourage, but not with the other four leadership practices. There was a statistically significant and positive relationship between TMTs' openness to diversity and all five leadership practices. Moderated regression analysis revealed that TMTs openness to diversity explained the relationship between overall CQ and the TMTs perception of the senior pastors' ability to Encourage Challenge.

Integrating the empirical results with the qualitative cases, the author concludes that, “The leadership practices of senior pastors in the diversity-oriented churches are consistent with the leadership practices of exemplary leaders described by Kouzes and Posner (2012)” (p. 140). He goes on to say:

The findings of this study and the themes that emerged from the data analysis provide empirical evidence to support the postulation that leaders in diversity-oriented churches in the United States demonstrate leadership practices found in other multicultural organizations in the United States, and have leadership competencies similar to those of global leaders operating in multinational organizations (p. 185).