Congregational leadership for growing Arab churches: A critical-contextual and systemic study of Middle Eastern Arab Protestant churches

Perry W.H. Shaw

This dissertation is presented for the degree of Doctor of Education of AGST Alliance 2012
DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I declare that this dissertation is my own account of my research and contains as its main focus and substantial content work which has not previously been submitted for a qualification at any tertiary education institution.

.......................................................................................................................

(Perry W.H. Shaw)

Date: 8 June 2012
To my Arab brothers and sisters
in the evangelical churches of the Middle East,
who have welcomed my family and me into their hearts and lives,
and
To Karen, my partner of life and ministry
ABSTRACT

Numerous studies have postulated the value of contextualisation for healthy congregational life. However, the focus in field research studies has been on the role of senior leadership, with little attention to broader systemic patterns. Uncritical approaches to culture have also been problematic. The current study has examined the hypothesis that “healthy church life in the Arab world is reflective of critically contextual systemic patterns of congregational leadership.”

A “family systems” model of congregational life was used as the base theoretical framework for the field research. Parsons and Leas’ (1993) Congregational Systems Inventory was completed by 201 Arab Protestant Church members, and data compared with that received in 1992-3 by Parsons and Leas among Protestants in North America. Responses from numerically growing, stagnant and declining Arab congregations were also compared and discussed. Interviews were conducted with ten Arab church leaders to supplement the results.

The field research found that two clusters of behaviour were typical of numerically growing Arab churches. Either within the study itself or in research elsewhere elements of the first cluster of planned strategy, mandatory process, and collegial relatedness were found to be somewhat characteristic of the broader Arab society. However, the second cluster of dispersed authority, visionary pastoral and lay leadership, and metamising learning patterns was found to be atypical of Arab society. A dialogue with biblical-theological reflections on leadership suggests that both typical and atypical characteristics of healthy Arab churches find affirmation in Scripture, pointing to the significance of critical-contextual patterns of leadership.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The pilgrimage of learning represented by this study would never have been accomplished without the faithful encouragement and support of a wide circle of instructors, co-workers, church leaders, members of local congregations, friends and family. They deserve to share in whatever contribution this dissertation has been able to make.

A great deal of thanks goes to my primary advisors, Dr. Rowland Edwards of Pacific International University, Dr. Paul Sanders, Executive Director of the International Council of Evangelical Theological Education, and Dr. Allan Harkness, Dean of the AGST Alliance. Dr. Edwards guided me through my initial work through PIU, helping to direct my interests to an area of study that would be beneficial both to my ministry in the Middle East and to the Arab church I have been called to serve. Drs. Harkness and Sanders supported and encouraged me in the transfer of my initial work from PIU to AGST Alliance, and through the process of revising and expanding my research and analysis.

I am very grateful to the Alban Institute, and especially to Dr. Speed Leas, whose interest and assistance were a great encouragement. The use of an organic systems approach to congregational life for inter-cultural leadership research was largely the result of material the Institute was able to provide. I am particularly grateful for permission to use the Congregational Systems Inventory at no charge, as this questionnaire has played such a central role in my research.

Translation is always a complex and tedious task, and the patient assistance provided by Dr. Samaan of Damascus and Nabil Abdulmalek of Amman throughout the preparation of this study has been of inestimable value. I would also like to thank Dr. Vic Drastik for his willingness to review the statistical procedures used in the research, and for the invaluable suggestions he made for improving the strength of the data processing.
The leadership of Middle East Christian Outreach (MECO) have been a wonderful help in every way, most notably in their willingness to support my studies in prayers and finances. The continuous encouragement I have received from our friends and co-workers in MECO has been much appreciated.

Numerous pastors and church leaders in the Arab world have given encouragement and assistance in my work, and all deserve heartfelt thanks. In particular I would like to mention Rev. Joseph Kassab, Director of Educational Ministries and Moderator of the Synod of Syria and Lebanon, Rev. Kamal Yusuf, Moderator of the Synod of the Nile, and Rev. Gamal Zaki, Director of Educational Ministries of the Synod of the Nile. Their enthusiastic support and gracious introductions gave me access to a far wider circle of churches than would have been possible without their help.

I am especially grateful to the 201 pastors, congregational leaders and members who took from their valuable time to assist in the completion of the questionnaire. A special thanks to the ten pastors and lay leaders who agreed to interviews and passed on so many valuable insights into congregational life in the Arab world.

My wife Karen has been a patient and sacrificial team-mate, discussing ideas, giving suggestions, editing and re-editing my work. Without her help this thesis would never have been completed.

And finally, the highest gratitude must go to the Lord Jesus Christ, who has graciously called us to serve his people in the Middle East, and who has given me the strength and patience to finish this part of the course set before me.
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CSI. The Congregational Systems Inventory.
CMA. Christian and Missionary Alliance.
MCSI. The Modified Congregational Systems Inventory.
PTEE. The Program for Theological Education by Extension.
GLOSSARY

Collegiality. A focus in operation on co-operative rather than individual effort (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 44).

Contingency model. A model in which leadership is seen as “in dependence on something else” (*The Shorter Oxford Dictionary*), that is the followers and the dynamics of the situation.

Evangelical. Applied to those Protestants who emphasise the authority of Scripture, the importance of preaching as contrasted with ritual, and salvation by faith through personal conversion (*Webster’s New Dictionary and Thesaurus*). In the Arab world the term “evangelical” is applied generally to all Protestants.

Hadith. A prophetic tradition, relating deeds and utterances of the Prophet Muhammad and his Companions (*Wehr, A Dictionary of Modern Arabic*).

Homeostasis. The tendency for a system, relationship, or organisation to mold the behaviour of others into predictable patterns (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 7).

Long- and short-term orientation. The extent to which the members of a society are willing to adapt traditional values to change, and are oriented to long-term rather than short-term goals (Hofstede 1991, 171).

Maximising learning. An orientation towards the past in the search for ways to improve the operation of an organisation (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 52).

Metamising learning. An orientation towards the future in the search for ways to improve the operation of an organisation (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 52).

Power Distance. The extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally (Hofstede 1991, 28).

Uncertainty avoidance. The extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations (Hofstede 1991, 113).

Wasta. Mediator or intermediary, or the instrument or agent of mediation (*Wehr, A Dictionary of Modern Arabic*).
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

The biblical calling of God to his people through the ages has been to carry
to all the world the message of new life and freedom from sin through Jesus Christ.
However, the Church of Jesus Christ has not always been successful in the fulfilment
of this Great Commission. Particularly in the countries of the Muslim, Hindu and
Buddhist world, the Church, where it exists, is all too often a struggling minority,
and there remain to this day literally millions who have never heard a reasoned
presentation of the Gospel. Many reasons may be posited for the relative weakness of
the Christian community in these countries, both internal and external. While societal
challenges are endemic, of equal importance are inadequate patterns of leadership in

The Arab evangelical churches are no strangers to the general difficulties
experienced throughout South and West Asia, and several denominational leaders
have expressed to me their concern about the current state of the Protestant church in
the Middle East. They have reported on the paucity of growing churches, and the
number that are in their death throes or already closed.

The situation has been exacerbated by economic and socio-political factors.
The difficulty of life as a Christian in the Middle East has led thousands to seek a
better lifestyle in North America, Europe or Australia. The generally high levels of
education and connections with the West enjoyed by the Arab Protestant community
have enabled a higher level of emigration than has been experienced by the rest of
Middle Eastern society. Lower birth rates among evangelical Christians than those
known by the Muslim majority have further contributed to a steady decline in the
percentage of the population that calls itself Protestant. Often a spiralling effect
ensues, with declining Christian populations leading to a sense of increasing Islamic
dominance of society leading to a greater desire to emigrate.

Emigration is particularly high among the leaders, and a significant
proportion of those who train for the ministry do not remain in the Middle East to
serve the church in their home countries. Many churches have little or no leadership, and are dependent on outside visits from pastors to keep their doors open. Moreover, even where leadership is available, congregational leadership patterns often seem destructive, hindering rather than contributing to the healthy life of the church. Some more pessimistic pundits (Dalrymple 2010, Pipes 2001) are predicting the total demise of the evangelical community in the Middle East within the foreseeable future. Similar phenomena have been observed in India (Bennett 1990, 2-4), pointing to the need for a wider understanding of the nature of healthy congregational dynamics in contexts where the believing community is small.

Over the past twenty years, I have been involved in various forms of leadership training in the Middle East – initially in the Program of Theological Education by Extension in the Middle East while I was living in Syria, and then at the Near East School of Theology and the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary in Lebanon. I have also served at a grassroots level with the churches of the Presbyterian Synod of Syria and Lebanon and the Lebanese Baptist Convention. Through this ongoing contact with the Arab church it has seemed that many of the leadership problems within the church are due to an uncritical modelling of traditional patterns in the wider Arab society, even when some of these patterns have destructive consequences. And yet it is clear that the expression of Christian faith must be truly contextual if the church hopes to be effective in relating the message of the Gospel to its society. Thus the question has continually recurred in my mind: Are there culturally and biblically appropriate forms of leadership in the Arab world that might produce positive results? For this reason I have chosen as the focus research statement for this study:

“That healthy church life in the Arab world is reflective of critically contextual systemic patterns of congregational leadership.”

In choosing this topic for research and determining the research methodology I consulted with several Arab leaders to determine what church-related topics have been inadequately studied, and what sort of study would be of value to the church. It became clear that little quantitative research of any form has been conducted on the internal dynamics of the churches, and that virtually any study would contribute to a more detailed understanding of the Protestant Arab church
scene. I was particularly encouraged to investigate the patterns of leadership that exist within local congregations, and in particular to seek to delineate approaches which are beneficial to the life of the church.

An initial investigation confirmed that only three pieces of research on the Arab Protestant churches of the Middle East have been conducted. Ghabrial’s (1997) extensive study of leadership in the Egyptian Evangelical Church focused primarily on the role of the pastor, through extensive qualitative interviewing in dialogue with the analysis of denominational records. Malak’s (2007) study of congregational patterns in his own Lebanese congregation focused on members’ attitudes towards spiritual values and the implementation of a training process for strengthening congregational life. The work of the “Fruitful Practices Taskforce” (Fish, Allen, and Adams 2009) has focused on church-planting practitioners, providing several suggestive insights. Unfortunately, the directive nature of the research design limits the value of the study’s results. While the insights offered by each of these studies are significant, dialogue with local Arab Protestant leaders has revealed that quantitative research into broader patterns of congregational life in the Arab world would be a useful contribution to understanding the present and future trajectory of the Arab Protestant churches.

Chapter Two presents a brief introduction to the overwhelming amount that has been written in the secular world on the subject of leadership. The complex nature of leadership has been increasingly recognised and investigated, and this has resulted in increasingly complex theories and models. Although secular research initially focused on leadership in the West, more recently recognition has been given to the impact of culture on the form leadership takes in different societal contexts. In particular the “cultural distance” model of Hofstede (1980b, 1991, 2001, 2005) has received especially broad acceptance as a basis for an inter-cultural understanding of leadership.

The Christian community has also recognised the priority of sound leadership for the health and growth of the church (Chapter Three). In response, a number of writers have sought to adopt and/or adapt one of the dominant secular models of leadership to the life of the local church. Others have endeavoured to
develop uniquely Christian approaches to understanding leadership. Most of these models have tended either to be narrowly focused on the role of key leaders such as the pastor, or to be too Western to be readily applicable in other cultural settings.

A “family systems” approach to understanding church life has been a particularly compelling model for inter-cultural leadership studies, and was used alongside broader organic systems models as the basic theoretical frame for the field research of the present study. Building on the biblical image of the church as the “family of God,” a number of similarities were seen in the way families and local congregations work. This has led to the development of a model which portrays church life as an elaborate tapestry of interwoven phenomena, an approach which is particularly suitable for investigating the complexities of congregational leadership in a variety of cultural settings.

Over the past twenty years a growing number of Christian intercultural research studies have been conducted, investigating Christian leadership patterns in non-western cultural contexts. While most have tended to focus on the role of the pastor, a handful have pointed to the value of broader systemic analysis and a small number of other studies have demonstrated the need for critical contextual approaches to intercultural leadership study.

A more focused overview of sociological and management studies of the Arab world (Chapter Four) points to notable differences between the cultural contexts of the Arab Middle East and North America. A study of the extent to which these differences exist within the respective Protestant Christian communities would be a helpful contribution to understanding possible ways in which the Arab church could engage in critical-contextual growth strategies.

Culture is not values-neutral, and Chapter Five has sought to give some biblical-theological foundations for a critical evaluation of cultural leadership patterns. More specifically the lenses of salvation history point to the need to acknowledge the extent to which culture reflects God’s character and to what extent the Fall, and the need for embracing the radical inverted structures demonstrated by Christ in word and deed. A close inductive reading of Acts and the epistles points to the need for flexible structures which serve the church’s missional purpose. These
foundational principles enable leadership to be “critically contextual” (Hiebert 1994, Shaw 2009), allowing the values of the Kingdom of God to be formative in the life of the local church.

Chapters Six and Seven present the field research, in which a study was designed to investigate the extent to which congregational leadership patterns are impacted positively or negatively by culture. More specifically, the field study examined the hypothesis:

“that culturally appropriate congregational leadership will have a positive effect on numerical church growth in the Arab Middle East.”

This hypothesis was tested by comparing patterns of congregational leadership in the two different societal settings of North America and the Arab Middle East, and in numerically growing, stagnant and declining churches in the Arab world. Two clusters of characteristics for numerically growing churches were observed, and this formed the focus of the final conversation between theory and field observation.

Chapter Eight discusses the results of the field study (Chapters Six and Seven) in light of the theoretical material (Chapters Two to Five). A particular focus is placed on the extent to which congregational leadership patterns in numerically growing churches reflect common cultural patterns in the Arab world and/or biblical principles of congregational leadership, and hence the extent to which the results of the field study are consistent with a critical contextual approach to congregational leadership.

It is not possible to investigate every aspect of congregational life, nor to undertake a comparison between a multiplicity of cultural settings, and the study has consequently been limited in scope. Only two cultural contexts were compared, those of North America and the Arab Middle East, and neither of these is renowned for the sort of explosive church growth that is seen in, say, Korea, China, Nepal, or East Africa. Further research into Protestant church life in a wider variety of cultural settings is needed so as to determine the extent to which the results of this study are more broadly applicable.

In terms of the realities of church life, the focus of the field research was on a limited selection of external phenomena related to form and structure. The internal
dynamics of spirituality and the central role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church were not addressed. Nonetheless, while a significant goal of the church is the nurture of the inner person, God has chosen to build his spiritual people through earthly human structures, and a deeper understanding of those forms of church life which can help or hinder is crucial to the effective fulfilment of the Great Commission. On an albeit limited basis, the current study has sought to provide a deeper understanding of approaches to effective congregational life in one cultural context – that of the Arab Middle East.
CHAPTER TWO
LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE

However you look at it, leadership is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon. This is perhaps seen most graphically in the over 8000 references included in Bass’s encyclopaedic fourth revision of the Handbook of Leadership (2008), and in the multiplicity of definitions and categories addressed in the course of Bass’s Handbook. The terms “leader” and “leadership” do not even exist in some languages, although some concept of authority, influence, and power are generally present. While Maxwell’s (1998) provocative definition that “leadership is influence – nothing more, nothing less” is an overstatement, nonetheless leadership increasingly is being defined in terms of how persons and processes influence people to change (Bass 1990, Chaise 2011), and I posit this construct as a reasonable starting definition for the present study.

A full evaluation of material pertaining to leadership is beyond the scope of this literature survey. In light of the research statement, “That healthy church life in the Arab world is reflective of critically contextual systemic patterns of congregational leadership,” the review of literature in this and the following two chapters has been confined to the following:

- A short overview of the dominant secular theories of leadership in the West, followed by a critical discussion of the intercultural leadership theory of Geert Hofstede in light of the ensuing field research. Hofstede’s model will be used to provide parameters for discussing cultural elements in the field research analysis.
- A brief study of Christian perspectives on leadership, with a particular focus on systemic approaches to congregational life as a suitable paradigm for intercultural examinations of patterns of leadership.
- A survey of Christian intercultural leadership research, placing the current study in its global context.
A more focused analysis of leadership patterns in the Arab world as documented in the intercultural social-psychological and management research. This analysis will provide a basis for assessing to what extent growing, stagnant, and declining Arab congregations have engaged in biblical-critical reflection or have simply adopted the cultural patterns of the wider society.

Chapter Five will provide a biblical-theological reflection on congregational systems that will be the foundation of the “critical-contextual” component of the current research.

**Western Secular Perspectives on Leadership**

The imperative of promoting excellence in leadership has led to the development of a wide variety of theories and approaches that seek to understand the meaning and nature of leadership.

In the first half of the 20th century “Great Man” (sic) and “Trait” theories of leadership were ascendant, popularised by researchers such as Woods (1913), Smith and Krueger (1933), and Jenkins (1947). According to “Great Man” theories leadership is either an inherited dynastic characteristic or results from the emergence of great people in times of crisis: great men and women make great leaders. “Trait” theories asserted that all leaders are endowed with certain characteristic qualities. The idea was that, if we could identify central leadership characteristics, we would then be able to screen leaders from non-leaders, focusing our resources on those with inherent potential for leadership. However, as research expanded during the first half of the 20th century literally thousands of leadership characteristics became evident, demonstrating the inadequacy of the search for a general theory of leadership traits.

While “Great Man” and “Trait” theories were too limiting and have been shown to be inadequate explanations of leadership emergence (Stogdill 1948), it is clear that personal characteristics cannot be wholly ignored in leadership development (Clinton 1989a, 4), and adapted forms of “Great Man” and “Trait” models have continued to be influential to this day. In many ways the recent focus on transformation and excellence in leadership (Badaracco and Ellsworth 1989, Bass

From the 1950s onwards the focus of leadership studies shifted from traits to behaviour. Building on the earlier work of Taylor (1911), Lewin and Lippit (1937), and Mayo (1945), the “continuum of leadership behaviour” (Fiedler 1967, 1976a, McGregor 1960, Tannenbaum and Schmidt 1957, 1976) was posited as a basis for examining the impact of democratic versus autocratic leadership styles. While a significant amount of research has lent support to the model (Baumgartner 1989, 20; Hersey and Blanchard 1982, 87-88), a failure to examine other aspects of leadership behaviour led to a number of documented inconsistencies (Halpin 1959, Stogdill and Coons 1957). In response, a more thorough model of leadership behaviour, incorporating the horizontal dimension of relational behaviour, was developed by Blake and Mouton (1964, 1978) in their still widely-used and popular “Managerial Grid”.

More recently the significant role of the follower and the dynamics of the situation itself have been observed (Jassy 1974, 6; Kelley 1992, 19-20), and a variety of “contingency” models have been developed: leadership effectiveness has been seen as contingent not only on the leader’s behaviour, but equally on the followers and situation. The “Situational Leadership” model of Hersey and Blanchard (Blanchard 1983, Blanchard and Johnson 1982, Hersey and Blanchard 1982, Hersey et al. 2000), and Yukl’s (2009) more complex taxonomy of management behaviour, have been perhaps the best known of recent contingency models. Over the past twenty years contingency models have been further enhanced through the discussion of “organisational culture” led by Schein (2010) and Argyris (2010), and the focus on leadership as the sculpting of a “learning organisation” (Kline and Saunders 2010, Renesch and Chawla 2006, Senge 2006).
Leadership in Other Cultural Contexts

The leadership theories mentioned above help provide overall contours for the present study, and give credence to a more systemic analysis of congregational leadership. However, the theories are universally Western and predominantly North American. As such all have shown varying degrees of cultural bias. Leadership traits valued in one culture are disdained in another. Behaviour expected of those in positions of leadership are not the same in North America as in West Africa – or even in Western Europe. The vastly different situations encountered in various cultures have a marked impact on the interaction of leader and follower. The values associated with transformational leadership, being based on deeply felt cultural assumptions, vary significantly from country to country – even from community to community.

The recognition that models of leadership have a significant cultural component, and that North American models do not necessarily apply in other cultural contexts, has been a relatively recent phenomenon. Early studies into aspects of leadership in other cultural contexts (Bass 1990, 762-771) tended to focus on particular settings and/or particular aspects of culture, giving indicators but little in the way of an overarching theory as to the implications of cultural differences for leadership.

Hofstede’s Dimensions of Cultural Distance

It was with Hofstede’s monumental study of IBM managers and employees (Hofstede 1980a) that broad and general evidence emerged demonstrating the central significance of culture in patterns of leadership. Between 1967 and 1973 Hofstede’s team administered over 116000 questionnaires in two rounds of data collection in 72 countries, comparing employees’ values by means of standardized self-report paper-and-pencil scales.

Through the application of ecological factor analysis Hofstede and his team were able to observe fundamental differences in four value areas which significantly impacted the form and function of leadership in the various cultural contexts that were studied. These four dimensions accounted for 49% of the country differences in
the sample (Hofstede 1991, 252). A fifth value area was subsequently identified through the work of Michael Bond and his “Chinese Culture Connection” (1987) team.

Even though Hofstede’s original multinational study has not been replicated in its entirety, several independent and relatively large scale partial replications, each conducted in 14 or more countries, suggest that the scores obtained in the original IBM survey have not changed significantly over the three decades since Hofstede conducted his original research (Draguns 2007).

Following is a brief summary of Hofstede’s five dimensions:

1. **Power Distance.** “Power distance” measures the extent to which subordinates expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. In the relationship between leaders and followers “power distance” measures the extent to which a leader can determine the behaviour of the follower, and the extent to which the follower can or cannot influence the leader (Hofstede 1991, 28). Hofstede’s “power distance” dimension closely parallels the authoritarian-democratic continuum of leadership behaviour mentioned in the previous section (see above page 9).

2. **Individualism-Collectivism.** “Individualism-Collectivism” measures the extent to which the relational ties between individuals are loose or strong. Collectivist societies have tight social networks in which the wider “in” group places broad expectations on the individual. Communal harmony is considered of primary importance, and there is an emphasis on “shame” and “face”: when communal rules are broken, either by the individual or by another towards the individual, an individual will feel ashamed and humiliated due to the infringement of the collective obligation (Benedict 1946, Hofstede 1991, 58-61). Collectivism has widespread repercussions in the workplace. Hiring is frequently done on the basis of one’s group, even if training or background is inadequate. Nepotism is a standard phenomenon, based on the belief that one can only trust those from one’s own group (Hofstede 1991, 64).

   In contrast, individualistic societies have a loosely knit social framework in which ultimate concern rests primarily on oneself and one’s immediate family (51). In such contexts speaking one’s mind is seen as a virtue, and addressing issues with clarity and directness is seen as the characteristic of a sincere and honest person (58). In contrast to the practice of collectivist societies, individualist societies encourage employment on the basis of ability, any semblance of nepotism generally being regarded as undesirable, perhaps leading to a conflict of interest (64).

3. **Masculinity.** “Masculinity” measures the extent to which a society promotes a clear distinction between social gender roles: men are expected to be
assertive, tough and focused on material success, while women are supposed
to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. In contrast, in
“feminine” societies gender roles overlap: both men and women are
supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. (82-83).
In “masculine” societies there is a tendency to expect women to remain
in the home, bear children and raise the family. Unmarried women are not
common and are often ostracised. In contrast “feminine” societies give a
greater liberty of choice among social roles (89). This is not to say that
women are not found in the “masculine” workforce; on the contrary
countries like Australia and the United States demonstrate a high level of
gender differentiation while also seeing an increasing number of women
entering senior levels of management. The difference lies in the approach to
management: senior women in “masculine” societies tend to be more
aggressive and ambitious than their counterparts in “feminine” societies.
Hofstede recognised that gender roles and expectations will always vary
somewhat, and that the actual focus of this dimension is a “tough-
tender/task-relationship” continuum (85). Consequently Clinton’s (1989d,
187-189) assertion seems reasonable that this dimension effectively
measures the extent of societal focus on tasks as against relationships. Such a
classification is a more familiar dichotomy in analyses of leadership, and has
been reflected in the horizontal dimension of Blake and Mouton’s
“Managerial Grid” and Hersey and Blanchard’s “Situational Leadership”
model (see above page 9).

4. **Uncertainty Avoidance.** “Uncertainty avoidance” measures the extent to
which members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown
situations (Hofstede 1991, 113). On a societal level a high degree of
“uncertainty avoidance” leads to the formalisation of a greater number of
social mores, intolerance towards deviant ideas and behaviour, and belief in
absolute truth. Societies with low uncertainty avoidance evidence a greater
level of flexibility and relativism.

Drawing on Douglas’s (1966) work, Hofstede asserted that high
“uncertainty avoidance” countries maintain a broader spectrum of things
which are considered “dirty” or “dangerous,” extending even to ideas: rigid
concepts of truth are promoted, deviation from this “truth” being considered
dangerous or even polluting. Little room is given for doubt or relativism
(Hofstede 1991, 118). In the classroom teachers are expected to be the
experts, and students do not generally confess to intellectual disagreement
with their teachers (119-120). In the workplace rigid systems of rules and
regulations (both formal and informal) are common, carefully controlling the
rights and duties of employers and employees. In every setting as little as
possible is left to chance (120-121).

Countries that scored “weak” on “uncertainty avoidance” also have their
framework of “dirty” and “clean,” but the dimensions tend to be broader and
more fluid, and deviation is not necessarily considered dangerous (119). In
the classroom students accept, even respect, a teacher who says “I don’t
know,” and students are encouraged to disagree with their professor (120).
The work situation minimises regulation, and in fact there is often almost a horror of formal rules. Rules are only established in case of absolute necessity, such as to determine whether traffic should keep to the left or the right (121). Weak “uncertainty avoidance” settings are more conducive to innovation as they maintain a greater tolerance to deviant ideas. On the other hand they seem to be at a disadvantage in developing these innovations to full-scale implementation. For example, Hofstede has made the observation that Britain (low “uncertainty avoidance”) has produced far more Nobel Prize laureates than Japan (high “uncertainty avoidance”), but Japan has put far more products on the world market (122-123).

5. **Long or Short Term Orientation.** Recognising a tendency to cultural bias even in the formation of these categories, and drawing on the findings of Michael Bond and his “Chinese Culture Connection” (1987), Hofstede (1991, 161-173) suggested a fifth dimension of “cultural distance,” which he originally named “Confucian dynamism,” but subsequently renamed “Long or Short Term Orientation” (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005, 30). The focus of this dimension is the extent to which the society is willing to adapt traditional values to change, and the orientation to long-term rather than short-term goals. Hofstede has seen long-term orientation as the key to understanding the economic success of Far Eastern societies in spite of their limited resources, as against the economic stagnation of countries with far greater natural resources – notably the oil rich Muslim nations of the Arabian peninsula (Hofstede 1991, 172).

More recently Hofstede (2007) has suggested a sixth dimension, “Dependence on Others”, in response to intercultural concerns raised by personality theorists. However, to date no research has been completed on this dimension.

Seeking to understand cross-applicability of cultural concepts of leadership, Hofstede has presented a number of two-dimensional comparisons, gathering countries into cultural clusters. Hofstede’s thesis has been that the extent to which management models are transferable is directly proportionate to the cultural proximity between the country in which the model originated and the country in which the model is being applied.

**A Brief Evaluation of Hofstede’s Model**

Hofstede’s research has been far from unique. The five dimensions mentioned above have been observed singly in a wide variety of anthropological and cross-cultural leadership studies.
In the 1930s Margaret Mead (1939) presented a study on collectivism as against individualism in 13 primitive societies. This dimension was one of the earliest to be subject to empirical research (Nida and Wonderly 1963; Onyemelukwe 1973), and has continued to be studied extensively in a wide variety of countries (e.g. Chan and Drasgow 2001; Den Hartog et al. 1999; Gibson 1999; Gomez, Kirkman, and Shapiro 2000; Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars 1997, 51-69; Jung and Avolio 1999; Kirkman and Shapiro 2000; Martella and Maass 2000; Nelson and Shavitt 2002; Oueini 2005; Paquet and Kline 2009; Peterson 2004, 41-52; Schwartz 1990; Schwartz 1999; Schwartz and Sagie 2000; Triandis 1995; Vodosek 2009).

In recent years increasing attention has been paid to the tendency of collectivist societies to use high context communication as against the low context communication typical of individualist societies (Connerly and Pedersen 2005; Francesco and Gold 1998; Hall 1976; Gudykunst 1998; Hodgetts and Luthans 2003; Lewis et al. 2008; Masuda et al. 2008; Richardson and Smith 2007; Nisbett 2003; Wang 2008). Equally significant has been research into the contrast between the polychronic approach to time in collectivist societies, in which people prefer to engage in family, business, and social activities at the same time, as against the monochronic approach of individualist societies, in which these various activities are engaged separately (Adams and van Eerde 2010; Hurn 2007; Ballard and Seibold 2004; Levine 1997; Trompenaars and Voerman 2010, 126-133; Zakay and Fleisig 2011). While Hofstede did not specifically address these characteristics in his research the growing awareness of these areas of difference add validity to the collectivist-individualist dimension of cultural difference.

The contrast between autocratic/paternalistic and democratic/egalitarian leadership has been a particular focus of intercultural managerial and leadership studies, of which there have been a plethora (Bu, Craig, and Peng 2001; Den Hartog et al. 1999; Earley 1999; Eylon and Au 1999; Haier, Ghiselli and Porter 1966; Likert 1963; Nida 1990, 157-181; Oueini 2005; Peterson 2004, 34-37; Sagiv and Schwartz 1999; Shipper et al. 2003; Sinha 1995; Smith et al. 2002). The parallel notion of
achieved versus ascribed status has also been widely researched (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars 1997, 105-122; Trompenaars and Voerman 2010, 46-49).

In one of her later studies, Mead (1962) discussed the impact of gender role in culture, and the importance of this dichotomy has been reiterated in other studies (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars 1997, 227-249; Hoppe 1990, Otaki et al. 1986). Elements of Hofstede’s masculinity-femininity dimension are paralleled in Trompenaar’s work on controlled versus passionate expressiveness (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars 1997, 70-82; Trompenaars and Voerman 2010, 96-99).

As already mentioned, Hofstede’s work on “uncertainty avoidance” drew on Douglas’s (1966) work on “dirt” and “pollution.” More recently, several studies have focused specifically on areas related to “uncertainty avoidance,” and the results have largely confirmed Hofstede’s findings (Den Hartog et al. 1999; Helgstrand and Stuhlmacher 1999; Horovitz 1980; Rauch, Frese, and Sonnentag 2000; Schein 2001). Hofstede’s work on uncertainty avoidance is also closely paralleled in Trompenaar’s studies on universalist and particularist societies (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars 1997, 29-50).

Hofstede’s dimension of “long- versus short-term orientation” (“Confucian dynamism”) has been seen to a certain extent in the traditionalism/modernity dichotomy of Inkeles (1966), in the risk/caution scale of Peterson (2004), and past, present, or future time orientation described by Trompenaars (Trompenaars and Voerman 2010, 126-133). More precise studies (Bond 1988, Cheung et.al. 1996, Guyer 1994, Whitehill 1991) have served to highlight the significance and validity of this dimension.

At a more complex level, the cross-dimensional grid (horizontal versus vertical power structures)/group (individualist versus collectivist) analysis developed by Douglas (1982), Lingenfelter (1992), and Arbuckle (1993) has paralleled exactly the comparison between Hofstede’s dimensions of “power distance” and “individualism,” and been subject to a number of research studies (Kemmelmeier et al. 2003; Triandis and Gelfand 1998). Chan and Cheung (2008) have found Hofstede’s dimensions of power distance and uncertainty avoidance to be highly reliable in explaining patterns of corporate governance across cultures, and Tsai and
Chi (2009) found a direct correlation between Hofstede’s five cultural value dimensions and dispute resolving strategies in the Taiwanese construction industry. Likewise Ronen and Shenkar (1985), in their synthesis of a number of intercultural leadership studies, found significant validity in Hofstede’s cultural clusters. More recently, parallel multicultural studies of organisational dynamics (Grisham 2006, Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars 1997; Hampden-Turner, Trompenaars, and Lewis 2000; Smith, Shaun, and Trompenaars 1996; Offermann and Hellmann 1997, Trompenaars and Woolliams 2003; Trompenaars and Voerman 2010) have provided strong empirical support for each of Hofstede’s five dimensions, and for his multidimensional analyses of management. A significant and extensive survey of leadership research (Dickson, Den Hartog, and Mitchelson 2003), while recognising the limitations of Hofstede’s research, concluded with an overall positive assessment of Hofstede’s cultural dimensions and acknowledged its paradigmatic influence on inter-cultural leadership studies.

A significant recent study that has lent credence to Hofstede’s work has been the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) Research Project (House et al. 2004). In the late 1990s and the first few years of the new millennium the GLOBE team collected data from 17300 middle managers in 951 organizations in 62 countries. Hofstede’s five dimensions formed the basis of the GLOBE research project, and the results have both validated and extended Hofstede’s research.

Hofstede’s research has not been without its detractors. Critics note that Hofstede’s work suffers from the problem of over-generalisation commonly faced by anthropologists and inter-cultural researchers. At best Hofstede has presented general patterns of thinking within societies in which a wide variety of individual attitude and approach to life are evident. His work ignores the existence of substantial within-country cultural heterogeneity, and assumes that culture is static over time (Baskerville 2003, Kirkman, Lowe, and Gibson 2006, McSweeney 2002, Schwartz 1994, Signorini et al. 2009, Sivakumar and Nakata 2001, Smith 2002, Voronov and Singer 2002). Nonetheless, support for the general applicability of Hofstede’s model is widespread, and as a basis for establishing guidelines for leadership development
in a variety of cultural settings it has probably been the most thorough model available to date (Nicholson, Stepina and Voich 1994, 29, Offermann and Hellmann 1997, 349).

A second concern is that Hofstede’s research was based on a very limited sector of society – those employed world-wide by IBM. These IBM employees tended to be relatively well educated and come from the middle and upper classes of society (Voronov and Singer 2002). The vast numbers of the lower classes and the poor were not included in the studies. However, it must be remembered that Hofstede’s primary audience was the business world and not the halls of anthropological academia. In fact, by adopting a large single employer Hofstede was able to study a wide variety of employer-employee relations with a high level of intercultural commonality: secretaries in Holland were compared with their counterpart secretaries in Australia, Saudi Arabia, Japan and West Africa, not with engineers or computer operators in these various countries. Moreover, the extent to which Hofstede’s work has been supported by other research would suggest the general applicability of Hofstede’s model despite its limited sample.

Concerns have also been raised about the psychometric validity of Hofstede’s Values Survey Module (VSM), the main instrument that continues to be applied by Hofstede and his colleagues. Some researchers have had difficulty replicating Hostede’s results (Berry et al. 2002, 401; Oyserman et al. 2002), and a major meta-analysis found poor internal consistency (alpha coefficient) statistics for the VSM (Spector et al. 2001), although Hofstede (2002), although others (Schimmack et al. 2005) have questioned the thoroughness of these statistical critiques.

Not so much a criticism as an expression of concern and desire, Draguns (2007) notes with dismay the lack of any significant interface between the valuable quantitative results of Hofstede and those who have extended his work, and the rich global repository of ethnographic data found in the Human Research Area Files (HRAF, http://www.yale.edu/hraf/). While recognising the stark contrast between Hofstede’s “dimensional and etic” approach and the focused in-depth “emic” qualitative research of cultural anthropologists, Draguns believes that the two
approaches can and must be reconciled. Such integration of operations, methods, and concepts between the various branches of the social sciences has yet to take place.

Some further concerns emerge in considering the appropriateness of Hofstede’s model in inter-cultural studies of congregational life. Particularly notable is Hofstede’s (albeit guarded) disdain of adherence to absolute truth. When seen in light of his concern for maximising business effectiveness, this may be understandable; but when considered from a Christian perspective this is less than acceptable. The focus on business management itself must be dealt with circumspectly: the church is not simply a business, but the visible presence of the living Christ on earth.

However the rejection of Hofstede’s model on the basis of the above review would be to reject valuable research. As long as the limitations of the model are kept in mind, Hofstede’s dimensions of “cultural distance” can provide an invaluable framework for dialogue with intercultural understandings of church life.

The great strengths of Hofstede’s work lie in the wide variety of dimensions incorporated into the model, his emphasis on the impact of culture on patterns of leadership and management, and the extent and quality of statistical research presented in support of his “distance factors.” Hofstede’s model demonstrates a broad coverage of leadership characteristics and behaviour, the nature of leader-follower dynamics, the central significance of situation and culture, and even the role of values in the formation of leadership patterns.

Hofstede’s model is particularly valuable in the evaluation of the cross-applicability of leadership models. In this regard Hofstede (1980b, 56-57) has noted that the majority of popular contemporary leadership theories – notably McGregor’s (1960) Theories X and Y, Blake and Mouton’s (1964, 1978) “Managerial Grid,” and with them Hersey and Blanchard’s (1982) “Situational Leadership” model – are built on a North American preference for limited participatory leadership (low-medium “power distance”). While applicable in settings belonging to a similar cultural cluster to the United States (as for example Australia), the use of these models can barely be justified in other cultural contexts.
While recognising its weaknesses, it would appear that Hofstede’s work provides a sound framework for considering cultural differences not simply in the work place, but also in congregational life.
CHAPTER THREE
CHRISTIAN APPROACHES TO LEADERSHIP THEORY

Recognising the importance of leadership, many Christian writers have sought to find answers to the “what,” “how” and “why” of leadership in the church (Clinton 1989a, 6-7). To a greater or lesser extent, either intentionally or otherwise, these approaches have generally paralleled secular approaches of leadership theory.

Leadership Characteristics

The various listings of leadership qualities offered by secular writers such as Bennis and Nanus (1985), Gardner (1986b) and Hitt (1992) have found ready parallels in the Christian literature (Dugan 1994; Habecker 1987, 21-25; Hahn 1994, 173; McNeal 2006; Weems 1993, 125). While the general shortcomings of traditional “Great Man” and “Trait” theories are widely recognised, the Scriptural focus on key leaders has made inevitable a concern to emulate the example of biblical heroes such as Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, Peter and Paul, and Christ himself, often eisegetically seeking evidence of contemporary leadership theory in stories and personalities recorded in the Bible (e.g. Batten, Batten, and Howard 1997; Beausay 1998; Briner 2005; Jones 1996; Jones 2002; Manz 1998; Murdock 1997; Senske 2003, Weems and Berlin 2011, 1-10; Wright 2000).

In recent years a plethora of works have been written, citing the characteristics of effective Christian leaders. The majority of these have had little if any documented support, generally being anecdotal in style. However, as the authors have been primarily pastors or teachers with years of fruitful ministry experience to draw on, the insights offered are worthy of serious consideration.

Some of the more common characteristics of quality Christian leaders that have been suggested include the following:

1. The ability to lead (Borden 2008, 14-15; Callahan 1983, 41-42; Chaffee 1993, 13; Cueni 1991, 19-31; Gibbs 1981, 386-387; Kibbey 2006, 37-59; Janvier and
Thaba 1997, 104; Malphurs 2003, 119-130; Schaller 1986, 78; Shawchuck and Heuser 1993, 23) …


5. The ability to perceive people’s giftedness (Hudson 2004, 71-75; Williams 2002, 59-118) …


9. A love of people (Barna 1993, 127; Borthwick 1989, 67-81, 154-155; Callahan 1990, 84-88; Chaffee 1993, 13; Chase 1987, 26; Cueni 1991, 55-65, 105-114;


congregation. Milton (2006) found that visionary leadership is only effective when accompanied by organisational leadership, and research in various North American contexts (Barstow 2002, Cummins 1997, McLean 2003, Roberts 1997, and Sloan 2001) has found a close relationship between team ministry and healthy church functioning. Cummins’ (1997) and Roberts’ (1997) research emphasises the value of trust relationships as an environmental imperative for congregational growth. In another study MacDonald (1983, 48) cited risk-taking as one of the main conditions for church growth in North American churches, while Samelson (1999) and King (2007) point to the need for leaders to be affirming models in pointing the way towards congregational growth. Samelson’s (1999) extensive study also highlights the importance of leader integrity and purity of life for congregational health.

**Leadership Emergence Theory**

Another perspective on leadership formation has been the “Leadership Emergence Theory” developed by Clinton (1988, 1989b, 1989c) and Elliston (1988, 1989, 1992, 73-93).

Concerned with the extent to which the Christian community seems to have bought into the “leadership training” myth – that more and “better” training will solve our problems of leadership shortage (Fiedler 1976b) – Clinton made nearly 500 case studies of great men and women of God, from earliest Biblical times to the present day (Clinton 1989b, 25), seeking basic principles of how Christian leaders emerge. From his research Clinton observed a certain predictable pattern in the lives of these great men and women of God. He divided this pattern into six principal stages of leadership emergence and development (Clinton 1988, 43-47; 1989c):

1. Sovereign foundations – circumstances, family, friends, religious upbringing, education and other factors which God uses to shape the individual in preparation for leadership, even before conversion (Clinton 1988, 44)

2. Inner life growth – the initial work of God subsequent to conversion, forming spiritual life and character, and teaching obedience and the guidance of the Word of God (Clinton 1988, 58-73).

3. Ministry maturing – during which stage the emerging leader becomes increasingly involved in ministry, and begins to discern and develop
spiritual gifts and skills, and to clarify his or her sense of call and a vision for a life of ministry (Clinton 1988, 77-124).

4. Life maturing – when the leader comes to recognise that “mature ministry flows from mature character,” and there occurs a shift in focus from “doing” to “being” (Clinton 1988, 63, 153-174).

5. Convergence – in which God “brings it all together,” as the leader sees a converging of giftedness and role (Clinton 1988, 86).

6. Afterglow. For a few remarkable leaders, their declining years of health and strength provide opportunity for honouring God for His years of faithfulness by bringing encouragement to other younger leaders, and seeing the fruit of life-long ministry (Clinton 1988, 47).

Throughout these stages God’s intervention can be seen, shaping the leader towards His purposes. Clinton (1989b, 25) has called this work of God “processing,” and has identified and labelled over 50 “process items” – “providential events, people, circumstances, special interventions, inner-life lessons, and/or anything else that God uses” to develop the leadership potential of the individual (Clinton 1988, 253; 1989b, 28). It is as the leader responds positively to these “process items” that he or she experiences maturity in ministry.

As with traditional “Great Man” and “Trait” theories, the “Leadership Emergence” Model suffers from a focus on the “greats,” whereas the overwhelming majority of congregational leadership is provided by ordinary lay people. Nonetheless, the model has highlighted a number of important principles:

1. Christian leadership is fundamentally the work of God through his Holy Spirit. It is he who “… works all things together for good …” (Romans 8:28) in the development of his leaders, and his sovereign hand can be seen in many of the events of life.

2. While formal leadership training is helpful, ultimately effective Christian leadership is the result of the dynamic interaction of the individual, God’s work in that individual’s life through people, experiences and events, and the individual’s response to God’s “processing.”

3. For the Christian the goal of effective leadership emergence is a convergence of personal qualities, spiritual gifting and role.
Adaptations of Behavioural and Contingency Models

A number of Christian writers have taken the insights of secular behavioural and contingency theories of leadership, and sought to apply them within the framework of the local church.


In light of the centrality of relationships to Christian leadership, it is not surprising that the “Managerial Grid” model of Blake and Mouton has been variously adapted to congregational settings (Dale 1984, 26-28; Dale 1986, 40-45; Fagerstrom 2006, 69-72; Janvier and Thaba 1997, 116-118; Parker 2002; Reeder 2008, 124-127; Saunders and Woodbury 1996, 67-72; Sweetser and Holden 1987, 15-20).

Others (Barclay 1998; Baumgartner 1989, 21; Hahn 1994, 14-42, 182-183; Jinkins and Jinkins 1991, 37; Keating 1978, 13; Lindgren and Shawchuck 1980, 45-46; Malphurs 2003, 131-156; Minshall 1992; Rendle and Beaumont 2007, 105-120), as in Hersey and Blanchard’s “Situational Leadership” model, have observed the extent to which congregation situations and “follower maturity” vary, and have urged flexibility in the face of ever-changing conditions.

Some writers have expressed concern at the focus in much Christian writing on management and style. They have pointed out that it is not style which matters so much as the maintenance of integrity and the reliance on legitimate bases for the use of any particular leadership strategy (Adams 1978, 48-56; Banks and Ledbetter 2004, 95-112). In this regard Gibbs (1981) has suggested that Christian leadership should seek a different path – through “theocratic leadership.” Under the direction of the
Holy Spirit, the Christian leader seeks to work through the ancient tradition, bringing “innovation” appropriate to changing circumstances (Gibbs 1981, 363-364).

For many years Callahan (1983, 1990, 1999, 2010) has been advocating a form of “missional” leadership, in which the role of the Christian leader is to guide people in their spiritual pilgrimage, lifting them to a greater level of discovery and fulfilment in Christ, in tune with the greater Missio Dei (Foss 2002, 79-94; Hudson 2004, 32; Nessan 1999, 80-123) – an understanding of leadership that resonates well with the recent so-called “missional church movement” (Van Gelder 2000, 27-44). In contrast to management, which is “reactive, responsive and institutional” in its approach to leadership, the “missional” leader is “proactive, intentional and relational,” leading people forward with a consistent sense of direction (Anderson 1986, 88-93; Callahan 1990, 75-77). Callahan has asserted that “missional” leadership can be developed and nurtured in the local church only when a sound learning environment is in place, an environment which shows the following features: objectives rather than activity; delegation of authority not responsibilities; participatory rather than autocratic decision-making; continuity of leadership; competency rather than willingness; compassion not legalism; and grass roots rather than centralised development (Callahan 1983; 1990, 153-175). Throughout his work Callahan has repeatedly returned to the same basic themes: spiritual leadership is not business management; the local church must be central in any study of leadership; and leadership in the church is a whole congregation issue.

Gibbs’s “theocratic leadership,” Callahan’s “missional leadership,” and Clinton and Elliston’s “Leadership Emergence” model have shared an important focus on the work of God in the development of Christian leaders.

Systemic Approaches to Congregational Leadership

The complexities involved in the functioning of leadership in the local church have led some writers to adapt systems theory to the congregation. The key to systems theory is “holistic” thinking, the assumption being that the whole cannot be understood simply by examining the parts without consideration being given to the relationship between the parts (Stevens and Collins 1993, xxi).
Several have adapted the organisational systems approach used in business and sought to apply it to the church (Beaumont 2011, Lindgren and Shawchuck 1977; Luecke and Southard 1986, 59-67; Olsen 1985; Pattison 1977; Rendle and Beaumont 2007; Shawchuck and Heuser 1993, 205-235; Weber 1993; Wright 1983; Van Gelder 2007, 121-152; Zartman 1988). Within this model, the interaction of several factors are observed as they impact the “system”:

1. Inputs, the raw materials that enter from the surrounding environment – new people, money, personnel, methods, materials

2. Internal transformation, by which these raw materials are changed into the desired results – conversions, spirituality, trained workers

3. Outputs, by which the church uses a part of its energy and resources to influence the wider environment or support other “systems”

4. Feedback, by which the system’s state of health can be constantly monitored (Lindgren and Shawchuck 1977, 35-43).

More recently the language of “organisational culture” has been adapted from the business world, and attention has been given to addressing the “congregational culture” of a church (Bennison 1999, 62-86; Klopp 2002, 75-92; Lewis and Cordeiro 2005; McManus 2001, 112-130; Miller 1999, 58-73; Robinson 2003; Roxburgh 2010, 125-188; Senske 2003, 30-59; Smith and Sellon 2008, 32-44; Weems 2003, 57-74). Organisational culture is evident in local churches through the types of group characteristics that dominate their lives, such as norms, stereotyping, group-think, group polarisation, and group roles. In this regard Miller (1999, 60-67) described 21 different patterns of congregational culture that are commonly evident in North American churches, ranging from the “affirming-optimistic church” to the “cold personality church” to the “nostalgic church” to the “poverty-syndrome church.” Most of these patterns are readily observed elsewhere around the globe, not least in the Middle East. For the church to institute meaningful change the congregational culture must be identified and understood, and dysfunctional elements addressed intentionally.

As with the other managerial models borrowed from the secular world, the “organisational systems” and “organisational culture” approaches have been valuable...
in drawing attention to the complexity of congregational life, and giving constructive
and oftentimes creative insights for improving efficiency and wise stewardship of
resources within the church. However, a major concern with these, as with all the
models adapted from the business world, has been a tendency to a mechanistic
understanding of the church, with little room given to the work of the Holy Spirit
(Wheeler 1993, 36-38).

Several writers (Cole 2005; Davis 1998; Easum 1993, 45-56; Easum 2000,
84-92; Foss 2002, 39-64; Galindo 2004, 11-48; Hunter 2000, 77-90; Simson 2009;
Whitesel 2006) have pointed to the consistently organic terminology used in the
Scripture, such as the church as body or a family, or the recognition that
“membership” in the New Testament is a biological term of intimate attachment to a
larger whole as against its modern usage of joining a club or society. These writers
urge that churches move away from the organisational language common in
institutional understandings of the church to more organic language consistent with
seeing the church as a missional movement. Postmodern suspicion of institutions
makes more organic understandings of the church a particularly pressing need in the
contemporary world (Cole 2009, 2010; Dale 2005, 23-39; Easum and Travis 2003,

Nisbett’s (2001; 2003, 62-63, 83-84) groundbreaking research has pointed to
the Western predilection for viewing social relations as an organization existing for
the accomplishment of tasks. This organizational approach is rooted in atomistic
thought patterns which tend to focus on specifics, isolating and analysing the
elements as the necessary step towards generalisation. Western organizational
understandings of social relations stands in stark contrast to the Oriental preference
for organic approaches which focus on the overall field, seeing wholes, and
emphasising interdependence. In light of the cultural similarities between East Asian
and West Asian societies, an organic systems approach to understanding
congregational life in the Arab churches seems imperative.
Organic Systems Research on Healthy Faith Communities

Over the past twenty years a number of studies have confirmed the importance of viewing the local church as a dynamic organism with multiple factors contributing to its communal health.

In the late 1990s two major studies of North American Catholic (Wilkes 2001a) and mainline Protestant (Wilkes 2001b) congregations were conducted under a Lilly Foundation endowment. These studies found that healthy, growing congregations in both traditions exhibited a complex of characteristics, the more notable being:

1. A joyful spirit is evident.
2. The community is welcoming and accessible to everyone.
3. Worship is innovative, thoughtful, alive, and relevant.
4. A significant bond exists between members, and true community exists.
5. Teaching and preaching are scripture based.
6. The church reaches out to people and needs in the immediate area and beyond.
7. Leadership is conscious of the diversity of members, and able to adapt.
8. The ministry emphasizes deep relationship with God and true spirituality.
9. Decisions are made collaboratively, involving broad lay leadership.
10. Worship honours Christian tradition but is not static.
11. Leadership boldly confronts real problems within membership and community.
12. The church is not content with its successes.

Another major research project conducted in 2001, involving over 300,000 worshipers in more than 2000 congregations across the United States yielded similar results, highlighting ten particularly prevalent characteristics of strong churches (Woolever and Bruce 2002, 2004):

1. Growing spiritually
2. Meaningful worship
3. Participating in the congregation
4. Having a sense of belonging
5. Caring for children and youth
6. Focusing on the community
7. Sharing faith
8. Welcoming new people
9. Empowering leadership
10. Looking to the future
Woolever and Bruce (2004, 120-121) then conducted systemic cross-analysis, and discovered that three of these ten characteristics – growing spiritually, having a sense of belonging, and empowering leadership – positively impacted other factors, pushed the congregation into the “extraordinary” in other areas of strength, hence demonstrating their particular significance for healthy church growth.

Since 1991 a series of National Church Life Surveys (NCLS) have been held every five years in Australia, jointly sponsored by the Uniting Church NSW Board of Mission, the Anglican Diocese of Sydney, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, and the Australian Catholic University, and embracing tens of thousands of local churches from virtually every denomination. The substantial and broad sampling and the longitudinal nature of the research gives the ongoing NCLS research particular significance. As a result of their research the NCLS team (National Church Life Survey 2011) has suggested nine core qualities of healthy churches:

1. An alive and growing faith
2. Vital and nurturing worship
3. Strong and growing belonging
4. A clear and owned vision
5. Inspiring and empowering leadership
6. Open and flexible innovation
7. Practical and diverse service
8. Willing and effective faith-sharing
9. Intentional and welcoming inclusion

All of these research studies have been invaluable in clarifying the current shape and possible future direction of North American and Australian church life. The following factors are notable in their repeated mention as particularly significant for healthy, growing churches: innovative and meaningful worship times, strong sense of belonging and participation, welcoming of new people, visionary and empowering leadership, faith sharing, sensitivity to the needs of the surrounding community, an emphasis on personal spirituality and growth in faith, innovative looking to the future. While it is probable that similar issues are significant elsewhere in the world, the question design and the analysis of results were such that the cross-cultural transferability of the results cannot be guaranteed.
One of the most influential approaches in recent years has been the “Natural Church Development” (NCD) research and consultancy movement (Schwarz 2000, Schwarz and Schalk 1998). In the early 1990s Schwarz (2000) sought to investigate patterns of both quantitative and qualitative church growth. Based on his original survey of over 1000 churches in 32 countries Schwarz suggested eight quality characteristics that are more developed in growing churches than in stagnant or declining congregations:

1. Empowering Leadership
2. Gift-Oriented Ministry
3. Passionate Spirituality
4. Functional Structures
5. Inspiring Worship Services
6. Holistic Small Groups
7. Need-Oriented Evangelism
8. Loving Relationships

Since their original work the research of Schwartz and his associates has continued and now claims over 70,000 churches surveyed with over 4,000,000 individual respondents (Schwarz, Schalk, and Johnstone 2011). There have been numerous critiques of Schwarz’s approach, particularly in terms of unscholarly use of uncited sources (Hunter 2004), cultural bias (Miller 2008, Van Engen 2004, 138-140), an almost exclusive focus on the internal life of the congregation (Van Engen 2004, 138-140) to the neglect of any form of holistic social ethic (Hunter 2004), poor data-gathering procedures (Hunter 2004), reading as fact what are no more than paper-and-pen self-reported self-perceptions (Hunter 2004), simplistic and unscientific statistical analysis (Carroll 1999, Ellas and Yeakley 1999), creating a “closed” system in which other possible church-growth factors are excluded from consideration (Hunter 2004), and inadequate reporting (Gilbert 2008, Hunter 2004). To their credit, the NCD team have responded to these critiques by continuing to modify and develop their resources and survey, and it is probable that NCD will remain highly influential in the years ahead. In terms of the present research the strength of Schwarz’s approach is also its weakness: in the breadth of sampling the NCD results are too general to provide the sort of culture-specific tools necessary to analyse the relationship between culture and congregational life.
“Family Systems” Theory and the Congregation

An alternative application of organic systems theory to the church has sought its primary metaphor in the dynamic of family life. Family therapist Edwin Friedman (1985) was the first to recognise the applicability of family systems therapy for congregational life, an approach developed and detailed by Parsons and Leas (1993a), Richardson (1996), and Steinke (1996, 2006), and extensively researched by Parsons and Leas (1993b). Numerous features common to the way churches and families function have been observed. Of these the notions of “homeostasis” versus “overfunctioning,” and the nature of “agreements” are particularly relevant to congregational life (Friedman 1985, 202-249; Parsons and Leas 1993a, 7-18).

Homeostasis versus overfunctioning. The tendency of people to desire, develop, and maintain stable patterns of relationship to others is what systems theorists have called “homeostasis” (Friedman 1985, 23-25; Jones 2009, 15-16). The human tendency toward constant and predictable behaviour is a valuable means of social understanding, without which we would have to redesign our relationship with others every time we came together (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 7; Savage and Boyd-Macmillan 2007, 5-6). However, a social system such as a family or a church cannot grow if homeostatic patterns predominate (Steinke 2006, 52). Growth means change and the incorporation of new people, new patterns, and new relationships between people (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 7). Nonetheless, human nature can only cope with so much change, and a new equilibrium in relationship needs to be reached for the system to function effectively. A healthy tension between change and homeostasis is an essential feature of a well-functioning system. When the system focuses unduly at one end of the spectrum or the other, it is said to be “overfunctioning,” and in need of greater balance (Friedman 1985, 210-212; Jones 2009, 23-26; Parsons and Leas 1993a, 7-8).

Agreements. Churches, as with families and other relational systems, continue because of the “agreements” people make with one another (Mitchell 1988), contractual and transactional relationships that provide mutual understanding and stability (Berne 1984, Steiner 1990). Occasionally these are formal – public and written, such as marriage vows, job descriptions and church constitutions. At other
times the agreements are informal – generally verbalised, as for example an agreement between husband and wife as to who will collect the children from school, or in a church as to who will be responsible for leading games at the next youth meeting. Perhaps the most powerful and least appreciated agreements are “tacit” in nature – the expectations that emerge from the habits and patterns of relationship that develop over time. Such tacit agreements can be very subtle, but they are known at some level, and the keeping and breaking of these agreements is felt by the relational system as a whole. Tacit agreements are not invariable, but when changed or broken the system notices that something is out of balance and will try to restore equilibrium by reverting to previous patterns (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 11).

These forms of formal, informal and tacit agreement can further be broken down by type: rules, roles, rituals and goals.

**Rules.** Rules provide clear guidance as to what is and what is not acceptable within a relational system. Such guidelines are crucial to the smooth running of any system. Problems occur, however, when the system adheres rigidly to one end of the spectrum or another. Within families, the attempt to apply strict rules and rigid control to adolescents frequently produces rebellion in the child. At the other extreme, inadequate rules produce confusion and anxiety in children, often leading to behaviour similar to that found amongst over-controlled children. In the same way over- or under-control within congregational life can have detrimental effects (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 11-12). If, for example, a tacit rule is “perfection” of performance, the members of a congregation may find themselves being continually critical of one another over trivialities. However, a failure to set any sort of guidelines may lead to a permissiveness that brings dishonour to the Gospel. Congregations need continually to assess the appropriateness of their rules for the healthy functioning of the local Body of Christ (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 13-14).

**Roles.** Roles help provide clarity to the functioning of relationships within a system. Almost every healthy congregation in the world has one or more members who play the role of “greeter” – seeking to welcome visitors and newcomers. Other roles can include “steward” – the one who monitors every financial move of the church, “communications centre” – the one who collects and disperses the local
gossip, even “church clown” – the one who keeps the congregation laughing with his or her jokes and antics. In many congregations these roles can become institutionalised: as a “vacancy” occurs for a particular role in the church, that “vacancy” will be filled, the validity of the existence of that role never being questioned (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 15-16).

**Rituals.** Rituals facilitate change – moving in and out of relationships, taking new positions, and recognising and coping with changes in the system or in the wider environment (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 16). A wedding, for example, communicates to the community a change in status in the couple, and consequently a change in the way that couple should be related to. In the same way there are certain ways for instance in which churches welcome and farewell pastors, respond to births and deaths in the congregation, or commission new workers in the Sunday School, which create forms of congregational “rites of passage”.

But rituals do more than this: they also help a system to define itself (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 16). Every church has its own particular liturgy, a regular pattern of worship traditionalised in the congregation through frequent usage. In the same way many congregations have standardised ways of greeting, of conducting Christmas and Easter pageants, even of eating together, which help members of that congregation distinguish themselves from “outsiders” and hence develop a sense of belonging. While such rituals are invaluable to the development of social cohesion, a rigid adherence to traditional forms can prevent the church from adapting to changing conditions in the wider environment, and hence stifle growth. When taken to their extreme, rituals can become so complex that newcomers are prevented from being integrated effectively into the church. In such a situation, the church becomes inward looking and stagnant. As with other forms of agreement, a certain level of flexibility in rituals is necessary for congregational health and growth (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 17).

**Goals.** Goals enable a system to establish its ongoing bases of action. The greatest difficulty in this regard is encountered when the formal, stated goals differ from tacit goals. Invariably the tacit goals form the actual working framework for any system, and congregations are no exception (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 17). There
are numerous churches that state as a goal “reaching the world for Christ,” while the actual goal of the church may be “to grow old together” or “to have a place we can feel safe from a changing world.” A frequent basis of conflict within a church, and particularly between a pastor and the Board, is differing perspectives on goals (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 18). The functioning of a congregational system is greatly enhanced by a clear understanding of tacit (and not merely formal or informal) goals, and a willingness to evaluate and modify such goals as changing circumstances dictate.

**Thinking Systemically.** Many problems within churches have come from a failure to recognise the dynamic interrelation of a multiplicity of causes and effects at work within the congregation (Armour and Browning 2000, 21-38; Bandy 1998, 43-81; Campbell 2000, 15-25; Everist and Nessan 2008, 172-183; Halstead 1998, 26-41; Jones 2009; Lewis and Cordeiro 2005, 3-36; McLaren 2000, 41-51; Wimberly 2010, 7-38). If individuals see their own particular needs or desires or vision for the church as being the correct perspective, and fail to empathise with other perspectives, it is very difficult for those persons to work with or for others in the congregation (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 18). Thinking systemically helps defuse tension by recognising that cause-and-effect is a complex multi-faceted phenomenon, and provides means by which appropriate and realistic change can be facilitated. The congregation is hence able to gain clarity of direction as it seeks to live out the life of Christ in contemporary society.

The survey of Western Christian perspectives given above points to the diversity of approaches taken in seeking to understand the nature of leadership for local congregations. While recognising the importance of quality senior leadership, given both individuals and structures influence local church members a thorough understanding of congregational leadership invites a more systemic reflection. Systemic approaches are particularly relevant as we seek to understand congregational leadership patterns in the more collectivist contexts of the non-Western world.
Christian Leadership in Cross-Cultural Perspective


Concern for cultural appropriateness is particularly important in the consideration of the nature and form Christian leadership should take in different cultural contexts. While a number of the leadership traits suggested by Western writers (see above page 20-22) are grounded in solid Biblical principles – such as the ability to lead, giftedness, love, integrity, and a willingness to train new leadership – other features demonstrate varying degrees of cultural bias. For example, factors such as vision development and management, so central to ministry in the low-medium power distance, highly individualistic society of the West, may need considerable adaptation in more collectivist societies. In such societies the valuing of personal relationships and the leader’s responsibility to promote the maintenance of congregational harmony would receive a far higher priority than has generally been seen in the West (Kirkpatrick 1988; Osei-Mensah 1990, 62-67; Snook 1993). Janvier and Thaba’s (1997, 58-61) reflection on Christian leadership in Africa suggests that, in contrast with popular Western perspectives, the more autocratic patterns of “high power distance” societies can be seen to be consistent with biblical teaching so long as relational and communal concerns are kept to the forefront. From another perspective, the focus on risk-taking, creativity, and even a commitment to excellence reflects the relatively high “masculinity” and low “uncertainty avoidance” of the United States, patterns that may not be readily applicable in other contexts.
This is not to deny the importance and validity of the above characteristics within Anglo-American cultural settings. On the contrary, the existence of leaders who demonstrate such traits can only serve to strengthen the life of the church in these contexts. However, when seeking to develop leadership in cultural settings with notably different value systems, the expectation must be for notably different priorities in the emergent leaders.

Likewise, utmost caution must be exercised in the use of standard behavioural or contingency models of leadership in non-western churches. If secular writers have cast doubt on the applicability of these models in non-American managerial contexts, even greater circumspection must be used in applying them in non-American congregational settings.

Beginning in the 1960s a significant number of Christian missionary-anthropologists began applying anthropological theory to an understanding of leadership patterns in the Christian faith communities of the cultural context in which the particular writer was serving (Butler 1994, Emery 1963, Gottneid and Tibajuka 1976, Hayward 1992, Keidel 1994, Lucas 1990, Michelson 1991, Nida and Wonderly 1963, Osei-Mensah 1990, Pajaron 1992, Ridley 1990, Smutko 1971, Snook 1993, Srinivasan 1987, Thornton 1984, Turner 1968). These studies have tended to be descriptive rather than analytical, providing theory based on careful observation, but generally without notable quantitative or qualitative evidence to support their theses. The work of these writers has nonetheless been invaluable, drawing attention to the need for developing church leadership models on the basis of observable forms in the prevailing culture, rather than simply mimicking Western forms of leadership.

Until 1990 only two significant research studies (Elliston 1982, Bennett 1990) had provided significant statistical documentation on Christian leadership in non-western cultural contexts. The earlier study by Elliston (1982) applied a leadership questionnaire among eighty Samburu elders from north-central Kenya, and hence provided statistical evidence for the value of using traditional patterns of leadership emergence in the formulation of a curriculum for Christian leadership development in West Africa. The latter study by Bennett (1990) questioned leaders
and members of ten congregations in the city of Pune, India, seeking to determine the nature of leadership patterns in the churches of the sub-continent. Bennett concluded that in many cases destructive traditional cultural patterns have emerged, these taking precedence over Biblical principles of leadership.

The past twenty years has seen a growing number of qualitative and quantitative research studies analysing Christian leadership in a variety of cultural contexts.

A unique and particularly intriguing global meta-study conducted by Rosson and Fields (2008) conducted multivariate analysis comparisons between Hofstede’s (2001) parametric results and five-year growth statistics of evangelicalism over the periods 1985-1990, 1990-1995, and 1995-2000, based on Johnstone’s (2001) world database figures. Rosson and Fields found that higher levels of power distance and lower levels of individualism were both positively related with growth in evangelical Christianity in a country, particularly where the country already had a strong nominal Christian population. However, in countries where Christians are a small minority the correlation was found to be negligible. While the writers acknowledge the numerous limitations of their study, the results are suggestive, especially in terms of the high power-distance, low individualist context of the Arab world which is the focus of this study.

A number of studies have (largely uncritically) applied the NCD materials to assess reasons for decline in mainline Protestant churches in South Korea (Y.S. Kim 2007, S.K. Kim 2007), growth factors in cell-based church planting (Noh 2008) and young adults ministry (Ahn 2007) in South Korea, and means of promoting growth in North American Korean Presbyterian churches (Jang 2011). Adapting concepts from the NCD materials, Son’s (2007) South Korean local church project connected nurturing systems, spiritual growth, and congregational health. Similar South Korean local church projects conducted by Park (2003), Byun (2006), Kang (2007), Lee (2007), and S-M. Kim (2007) pointed to the need for continual training of lay leadership for the promotion of lived “Kingdom values” and shared vision, perceived by the NCD materials as central components of healthy church life. In two cases, doctor of ministry projects focused on the local church have sought to apply foreign
church growth “packages” in the South Korean context: the G-12 cell model (Joe 2007); the D-12 nurturing system (H.S. Kim 2007). However the lack of critical evaluation of the process and results limits the value of these projects for intercultural leadership studies.

In a study of Middle Eastern Protestant Armenian congregations I undertook with Evelyn Kamarzarian (Shaw and Kamarzarian 2005), we discovered that most Armenians view congregational growth as a largely internal issue – that even in a context of political and societal difficulty, a church which is willing to engage the local community in service and evangelism, which nurtures healthy internal relationships, and which is willing to be creative and innovative in ministry has every potential for health and growth. The close parallel between these results and the parameters suggested by the NCD movement was notable. Certainly the intertwining of systemic factors is clearly reflected in the study.

Other studies have pointed to the importance of quality pastoral leadership for vision-retention and church growth in Brazil (Coelho 1998), South Korea (Son 2003), Indonesia (J.K. Kim 2004), the Democratic Republic of Congo (Li-M 2009), India (Palla 2010), and in Hispanic churches in the United States (Guzman 2002), and for vision-driven societal impact in South Africa (Ledwaba 2005) and Liberia (Kulah 2010). A similar study has examined the importance of healthy interdependent relationships and communication for vision-retention and growth among Canadian Korean Churches (Ko 2008), while Blinkov (2007) has pointed to the need for social ministries, cultural sensitivity, and flexible structures in nurturing healthy growth in Russian evangelical churches.

K. Kim’s (2004b) inductive study of Korean Foursquare Churches through interviews and questionnaire revealed the following factors in church-planting effectiveness: empowerment of women church-planting leaders; intentional education and training; financial support from established churches for new church plants; clearly communicated vision; team ministry; a strategic approach based on a careful assessment of the needs of the community; balanced ministries in the life of the church. These points bear a striking similarity to many of the factors that contribute to church growth in North America (see above page 22), although the
centralised direction advocated by Kim is probably reflective of the relatively high power-distance of Korean society (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005, 43).

The growth of the church in Korea over the 20th century is a remarkable story. Lee’s (1998) narrative analysis of key leaders in Korean church history pinpointed common leadership characteristics: strong personal devotional life, outstanding preaching, the development of lay leadership, a vision for national evangelization, Christian patriotism, ecumenical cooperation, and an emphasis on educating. While these observations are suggestive, the inductive analysis in Lee’s work is weak, and there is little evidence that Lee’s observations of “great men” in Korean church history can be more generally applied as necessary components of strong Christian leadership – even for the Korean context.

Systemic approaches to congregational life are evident in two intercultural research studies. Block’s (2006) intriguing study of a large and growing Pentecostal church in Nairobi Kenya pointed to the need for overcoming the cultural traditionalism which often nurtures superficiality. His project sought to implement specific steps for moving this African congregation from shallow homeostatic understandings of Christian faith towards the practices of a learning community through intentional training of key leaders in the pastoral team. B.B.J. Kim’s (2011) ethnographic study of a Korean American congregation revealed seven phases in the members’ transformative learning: involvement, building of trust, critical acceptance of new perspectives, exploration and testing of these perspectives, struggling to practice new roles and responsibilities, internalization, and reintegration. The close parallel between these seven phases and Krathwohl’s (1964) well-known stages of affective learning (receiving, responding, valuing, organisation, and characterisation) is striking. The awareness of the need to address foundational systemic patterns, evident in the works of Block and Kim, is a major contribution to the Christian intercultural research.

Two significant pieces of intercultural research for Christian faith communities in Latin America have been van der Woerd’s (2004) ethnographic analysis of an autochthonos (“rooted to the earth”) church in Mexico City, and Prillaman’s (1998) study of Bolivian evangelical church leaders. In each of these
cases fruitful ministry emerged when the cultural norm of patriarchal organisation was tempered with self-sacrificial servant leadership and an affirmation of spiritual gifts. Despite the impression of authoritarian leadership, in both cases growing churches have a strong record of empowering and nurturing new leaders, with transformational outcomes. The most notable feature of these studies is the positive outcome of “critical contextual” leadership where the general cultural pattern is moderated by biblical-theological principles. The other face of the issue is evident in Coleman’s (2007) study of Christian executive leadership in Ecuador, in which he found a high level of disappointment and mistrust resulting from uncritical adoption of broader cultural patterns in the leadership of Christian organisations. Similarly, Wierenga’s (1996) study of Venezuelan churches found that significant conflict arises when the cultural norm of caudillismo leadership is applied uncritically in the Christian leadership.

Despite the growing body of literature examining Christian leadership in the majority world, only three substantial works produced in the past twenty years have focused on the Arab world. In the earliest of these Ghabrial (1997) provided an extensive study of leadership in the Egyptian Evangelical Churches. Ghabrial began with a survey of the historic and religious context of the church in Egypt, pointing to the ways in which broader cultural and religious patterns of pharaonic (autocratic) leadership have entered the church. Ghabrial then brought this context into dialogue with the church growth models of Wagner, and the leadership emergence materials of his Fuller mentors Clinton (1988) and Elliston (1992). A series of questionnaires and interviews generated significant insights into the factors that leaders perceive as barriers to growth, barriers that are both contextual (the challenges of poverty and discriminatory laws) and internal (inter-leader conflict, autocratic control, a lack of vision, and the failure to train new leaders). The breadth of Ghabrial’s work is substantial, and the numerous observations he offers into the contextual challenges are invaluable. Nonetheless Ghabrial tended to see both the source of congregational stagnation and the key to growth in the attitude and character of the pastor and elders of the church, with little attention to the role that congregational systems play in the life of the local church.
Malak’s (2007) more limited doctor of ministry project sought to implement in his own Lebanese congregation a training programme based on the values of the International Leadership Institute (intimacy with God, passion for the harvest, visionary leadership, culturally relevant evangelism, multiplication of leaders, stewardship, family priority, and integrity). While there was evidence of significant qualitative growth in the membership, the narrow sample and the narrow focus on members’ attitudes towards spiritual values provided limited insight into broader patterns in the Arab church.

Over the past few years a cooperative effort among mission agencies serving in the Arab world has developed a “Fruitful Practices Taskforce” that has sought to gather information from practitioners as to healthful church-planting practices in the Arab world. In their report Fish, Allen, and Adams (2009) pointed to the priority of communication, encouraging and modelling, equipping, prayer, and multiple leadership. Unfortunately the research design was fairly directive and the results are consequently limited in value. Nonetheless the study was helpful in its recognition of the value of a multidimensional assessment of interplaying factors when evaluating Arab church ministry.

While all the above cross-cultural studies of Christian leadership patterns have been of value, the focus of most has tended to be on the role of the pastor in relating to the congregation, or on one or two systemic factors. On the whole there has been a notable lack of a broader examination of the interface of systemic patterns in non-western contexts, and in the area of comparative analyses between congregational life in the West and elsewhere. Considering the importance of lay leadership in the life of the church (Elliston 1992, 26-35), and the importance of determining the level of applicability of Western models of leadership, this lack has been disappointing. Certainly a statistical study of the broader patterns of congregational leadership observable in different cultural contexts, particularly in growing congregations, has not to date been presented. Some form of quantitative comparative study of congregational systemic patterns would clearly be of value.
CHAPTER FOUR
LEADERSHIP IN ARAB SOCIETY

Defining what it means to be “Arab” is a complex and controversial question. The *Webster’s* (1989) definition as “inhabitants of Middle Eastern countries” would be severely disputed by minority groups such as the Armenians, Kurds, or Amaziri Berbers, who are neither Semitic nor speak Arabic in the home. The more nuanced *Short Oxford* (1973) definition of Arab as “a member of any of the Arabic-speaking peoples tracing their descent to the seventh century inhabitants of Arabia” is little better, in that the region has experienced so many waves of conquest that it is impossible to distinguish those who would fit this categorisation from those who do not. Moreover, many Christian minorities, while culturally and linguistically barely distinguishable from the Muslim majority, seek to distance themselves from the Muslim majority (many of whom themselves have no ancestry in the Arabian peninsula) by describing themselves as Coptic or Phoenecian. For the sake of the present study it is perhaps best to define “Arab” as those people whose families have spoken Arabic in the home for several centuries, share the basic contours of Arab patterns of life, and have some level of pride in Arab language and heritage. All the churches in the current study would satisfy this definition.

In approaching research conducted on Arab culture, it should be noted that studies conducted in the Arab world have tended to generalise. In attempting to simplify what is ultimately a very complex phenomenon, many studies have taken a monolithic, static approach to study – viewing the Arab personality as a constant unchanging phenomenon across the Middle East throughout time. In light of the vast variety of peoples and cultures that exist in the Middle East, and the rapid changes evident in the contemporary Arab world, such generalisations must be viewed with caution.

There has also been the tendency in many studies to be overly critical of the Arabs. In some cases there has been a clear pro-Israel political agenda at stake (*Glidden* 1973, *Milson* 1973, *Patai* 1969, 1973, *Sanua* 1974). Elsewhere,
explanations for the disastrous Arab losses of the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli conflicts have been sought in some basic weakness of the Arab personality (Azm 1968, Beit-Hallahmi 1972, Harkabi 1967), or the atrocity of 11 September 2001 has been blamed on some fundamental religio-cultural flaw in Arab Islam (Dhaoui 2002).

Compounded with this negativity has been a tendency to take a \textit{hadith} ("sayings") approach to analysing the Arabs (Abu-Lughod 1987), with one author quoting another who has quoted another. Thus, for example, Patai (1969) drew on scholars such as Berger, Lewis and Gibb, who in turn quoted earlier Arab writers (Barakat 1990, 137). The end result has been a certain internal consistency of orientalist study irrespective of any correspondence (or lack thereof) to the real world of the Arab Middle East (Said 1978, 5).

Despite these concerns, comparative research has universally found significant differences between the general trends that exist within Arab culture and in the West. Consequently, while considering the fluidity and variety that exists, it is valuable to isolate distinctive aspects of Arab society, and especially as they relate to the functioning of leadership in the Arab world.

**Tribe, Village and City**

Basic to any understanding of Arab life is a recognition of the historic cleavages between the tribal nomadic Bedouin, the rural villager and the city dweller, and the interaction of these three groups one on the other.

**The Bedouin Way of Life.** Despite a marked decline in numbers due to the inroads of 20th century urbanisation (Hamadeh 2009; Lewis 1987), many Bedouin have continued to practise their traditional nomadic lifestyle in several areas of the Middle East, particularly in the desert regions of the Arabian peninsula (Ibrahim 1982, 6-8; Jabbur 1995, 524-537).

Although in practice often viewed with disdain, the Arab Bedouin have continued to exert a disproportionate influence on popular social thinking in the Middle East, and there remains a deep respect for the classic courage, hospitality and "noble character" of the Bedouin (Barakat 1993, 68; Dik 2011, 71-72; Piggott 2005).
For many the Bedouin ethos is an ideal to which, in theory at least, they would like to measure up (Patai 1973, 73).

Tribalism is at the very core of Bedouin thinking, and most of the traditional Bedouin values ultimately serve the great and fundamental goal of Bedouin life – the strengthening of group cohesion (Mizel 2009; Patai 1973, 93; Jabbur 1995, 286). The exercise of hospitality (Patai 1973, 84), personal acts of courage, and even the concern for preserving personal nobility of character are seen as related to the strengthening of group cohesion (Patai 1973, 93). Tribal solidarity is all-embracing, and marriage outside one’s tribe rare (Barakat 1993, 51).

While authority is patriarchal and patrilineal, broader decisions tend to be made through consultation and consensus, through a sheikh or emir with the tribal council (Barakat 1993, 51; Hamadeh 2009). In spite of the prominence and wealth of the tribal leaders, a remarkable level of egalitarianism has existed in male Bedouin society. In particular, socio-economic disparities within tribes have been minimised by the importance attributed to blood and symbiotic ties, and by the concept of communal ownership of property (Barakat 1993, 51).

The Village Peasantry. Until the middle of the 20th century almost three-quarters of the population of the Middle East lived in villages (Tannous 1942). While the rapid urbanisation of Arab society has dramatically reduced this proportion, village attitudes continue to be pervasive in the Middle East. Even second and third generation urbanites continue to look on their village as their true home, returning there for vacations and family occasions. While city dwellers are often contemptuous of the backwardness of their rural counterparts, there remains a longing for the “simplicity, quiet, ease, and natural beauty of village life” (Barakat 1993, 68), and it is common for city dwellers to maintain family homes in their villages of origin, linking them in an ongoing fashion to the village.

The notion of a “tribe” is uncommon in the rural Middle East, but the extended family as a basic kinship unit is central. Family expectations are strong that each member will participate in a “labour team” appropriate to his or her age or sex, to maximise the productive capacity of the extended family unit (Barakat 1993, 55-56).
Rural society has been conspicuously class-based and hierarchical, historically divided into the few wealthy families that own land but do not work, and the many who work but own no land (Bates and Rassam 1983, 136). The notable families have formed the core of local political life, providing a link between the peasants and the outside world, and acting as intermediaries in local disputes. Although the intrusion of political parties and central governments is beginning to erode the influence of these families, particularly since the formation of nation-states in the early postcolonial era, class consciousness remains powerful in the rural psyche (Barakat 1993, 68).

**Urban Life in the Middle East.** The proportion of Arabs living in cities has risen from 10% at the beginning of the 20th century to an estimated 70% in the 1990s, and the growth continues unabated (Barakat 1993, 61). Some Arab countries such as the Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar or Bahrain have become effectively city-states, while urban conglomerations such as Cairo, Baghdad, Damascus and Algiers have grown to megacity status.

Despite the massive influx to the cities of Bedouin and rural peoples, much of urban life has remained community oriented – neighbourhoods based largely on religious, ethnic and socio-economic background (Abu-Lughod 1961). While this phenomenon is being gradually undermined by the fragmentation associated with modern urbanisation, the influence of community life has continued to be strong, particularly in older, more traditional neighbourhoods. Cohesive extended family and kinship relations, minimal privacy, and limited residential mobility still mark urban life in the Middle East (Barakat 1993, 63; Prothro and Diab 1974, 66-70). Even in new urban developments a desire for a sense of community remains strong, with religious affiliation often being the primary binding factor (Ghannam 2009).

Considerable variety exists between and even within nomadic, rural and urban life, heightening the complexity of Middle Eastern life. Nonetheless, certain common themes are evident, particularly in terms of the centrality of family and community ties, and in the hierarchical distinctions and patriarchal attitudes that prevail in every facet of society. These widespread patterns are currently being challenged among the more educated and westernised communities of the region,
notably educated and/or Christian youth, creating significant lines of tension. However, traditional relationships remain dominant in shaping the ethos of society.

**The Family in the Arab World**

Despite the challenges presented by the state and other social institutions, the family continues to be the basic unit of social organisation in contemporary Arab society. Irrespective of the living setting – desert, village, or city – members of extended families tend to co-operate to secure the livelihood of the family, and to improve the family’s standing in the community. The success or failure of the individual is seen as the success or failure of the family as a whole. Consequently the family expends a great deal of personal energy and financial support, while exercising a wide range of social, psychological, and even physical sanctions on the individual member (Barakat 1985, 36-37).

Family life is almost universally patriarchal in nature: the father sees himself as responsible for the family, and expects respect from and obedience of both wife and children (Barakat 1993, 23; Hamadeh 2009; Joseph 2009; Krenawi and Graham 2000; Moran and Harris 1996, 348-349; Prothro and Melikian 1953, 355). While family patterns in the Middle East have seen dramatic changes over the course of the 20th century (Prothro and Diab 1974, 202-210), traditional forms still maintain sway in the majority of Arab homes. Certainly, to this day the desired pattern of family life in the Middle East is for the wife/mother to remain at home to keep house and raise the family, while the husband/father functions as family protector and shoulders the full financial responsibility for the family (Hoodfar 2009; Ibrahim and Wassef 2000; Ismail 2009; Moran and Harris 1996, 348-349; Tomeh 1983, 39). The hierarchical structure of the Arab family traditionally requires the young to obey the old and adhere to their expectations (Joseph 2009). Barakat has claimed that in the typical Middle Eastern family downward communication generally takes the form of Orders, instructions, warnings, threats, reprehensions, shaming, etc. Upward communication, on the other hand, often takes the form of silence, pleas, appeals, apologies, explanations, inquiries, etc. (Barakat 1985, 37).

Often religion is used to validate unquestioning authority in the family. Arab proverbs such as *rida al-ab min rida ar-rubb* (father’s satisfaction is part of God’s
satisfaction) or *gadab al-ab min gadab ar-rubb* (father’s anger is part of God’s anger) serve to reinforce patterns of submission to paternal direction in the family (Barakat 1985, 44).

Underlying much of this patriarchal behaviour has been the concern for strengthening family cohesion. A loyal and obedient family is more likely to be strong and united when called on to defend family interests against competing families, and can thereby provide support for the individual and protection for family honour (Patai 1973, 93), as well as providing a protective hedge against the precariousness of life and health.

The same patriarchal values can be seen in virtually every facet of Arab society – be it in the school (Arishi 1984; Barakat 1985, 46; Howard 1970; Massialas and Jarrar 1991, 143; Miller 1977), the workplace (Ali 1990, 14-16; Ali 1995, 15-16; Taleghani et al. 2010; Kubaisy 1985; Shaw 2008; Thomas 2002), religious or social establishments (Ali 1990, 9-14; Ali 1995, 11-12; Jennings 1977, 30-32; Miller 1977, xiv; Sharabi 1988, 88; Sick 1994, 39), or the government (Aburish 1985; Barakat 1985, 44-46; King 2010; Patai 1969, 358-359; Sharabi 1988, 132). As Barakat has observed,

In all of these settings a father figure rules over others, monopolizing authority, expecting strict obedience, and showing little tolerance of dissent. Projecting a paternal image, those in positions of responsibility (as rulers, leaders, teachers, employers, or supervisors) securely occupy the top of the pyramid of authority. Once in this position, the patriarch cannot be dethroned except by someone who is equally patriarchal. (Barakat 1993, 23)

Despite the vast social and political upheavals witnessed over the past fifty years, the extended family remains the core unit in Arab society (Barakat 1985, 37; Barakat 1990, 146; Barakat 1993, 23, 55-59, 63; Jennings 1977, 18; Joseph 1985, 242-247; Joseph 2009; Krenawi and Graham 2000; Muna 1980, 35; Patai 1973, 94; Prothro and Diab 1974, 66-70; Sharabi 1988, 28-31). Marriage within the family, often to one’s first cousin, is still common, and a wide range of mutual social expectations contribute to the strengthening of family ties (Hoodfar 2009; Joseph 2009; Parshall and Parshall 2002, 153). In case of financial need, admission to school, need for employment, starting a business, the quest for a wife, health
concerns, even emigration, Middle Easterners continue to turn to their family for help and direction (Prothro and Diab 1974, 71; Yamani 2009).

It is noteworthy that the English word “nepotism” with its very negative connotations is thoroughly Western: in the West the general belief is that employment should be on the basis of a person’s individual abilities and initiative, and the employment of someone (particularly to a senior position) simply on the basis of family connections is generally seen as inappropriate. There is no equivalent word to “nepotism” in Arabic: it would appear that the approach is so normal and expected that the practice is not even worthy of a descriptive word (Shaw 2008).

However, there are hints of change, especially amongst wealthier and more secular youth who are influenced by globalised and networked youth culture, and consequently are beginning to question traditional patterns of family relationship (Azaiza 2005, Yamani 2009). In the mid 1990s surveys conducted in Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, and Palestine revealed high levels of alienation among those under 25 towards the inertia of the prevailing political and economic system (Muñoz 2000). Irrespective of the final outcome, it was the growing social network practices of Arab youth that catalysed the upheavals of early 2011 throughout the region of the Middle East and North Africa.

The Power of the Community

Social pressure in Arab society is all-powerful. Throughout life Arabs seek to be surrounded by other people, and one of the most widely held fears is to be isolated or left alone. Arabs rarely travel alone unless necessitated by circumstances, and generally cannot comprehend Westerners who seek solitude. A favourite Arab saying well illustrates this proclivity towards group behaviour: *al-jinna biduun in-nas la tindas* – “heaven without people is not trodden upon.” In other words, no one would want to go to heaven if they were alone there.

Particularly in tribal and rural settings, community life is replete with social interaction, with a seemingly endless round of visiting. Traditional Arab hospitality is renowned, and throughout the Middle East the expectation continues to be that one will drop everything if a guest comes to the door. As with the Bedouin, so in all of
Arab society hospitality is linked with family honour: one “whitens” one’s face through the lavishness of one’s hospitality (Patai 1973, 86), and great efforts will be undertaken to enhance the reputation of oneself and one’s family. The relational approach to business dealings and the “open door” approach of community and business leaders almost certainly find their roots in the Arab proclivity to showing hospitality (Muna 1980, 32-33).

Concern for community solidarity can be seen in the conciliar approach to communal decision-making. Local community leaders will play host to seemingly interminable discussions and negotiations over community issues, the goal being a community consensus which ultimately will be verbalised and enacted by the “headman” (za’eem). Even the proliferation of gossip, despite its many negative aspects, is not entirely without profit: it is often a mechanism for spreading information, influencing decisions, and controlling the behaviour of wayward members of the community (Bates and Rassam 1983, 244).

**Wasta**

Central to an understanding of family and community life in the Middle East is the role of mediation or *wasta* (Aljbour 2011; Bates and Rassam 1983, 245-246; Cunningham and Sarayrah 1993, 13-14, 19-22; Joseph 1985, 246-247; Pryce-Jones 1989, 39-40, 93; Sharabi 1988, 46-47). The notion of *wasta* (literally “between-ness”) emerged from the traditional role of the tribal sheikh or the village or community “headman” (za’eem) as arbitrator of disputes and intercessor for the prevention of inter-family violence (Cunningham and Sarayrah 1993, 9). With the advent of modern civilisation, and the particular complexities of the highly bureaucratic systems evident in the Middle East, the notion of *wasta* expanded to include intercession with government agencies and business establishments, not only for family members but also for friends, acquaintances, and even those with whom one has no relationship and to whom no social obligation is due (Cunningham and Sarayrah 1993).

*Wasta* comes in three basic forms – family, friends, and contractual. The exercise of extended family networks in the obtaining of “favours” is an expected
practise in the Middle East (Agnala 1997, 38; Joseph 1985, 246-248; Moran and Harris 1996, 360; Muna 1980, 37-38). In the granting of jobs, even when an outsider has higher qualifications and greater experience, members of senior managers’ families are given preferential treatment, as it is assumed that they can be more easily controlled and therefore trusted (Aljbour 2011). The pattern of favouritism towards members of the extended family is particularly prevalent where high unemployment prevails (Abdalla et al. 1998): granting jobs to family members ensures that the limited available resources remain in the hands of the clan. Nepotism of this kind is found in government as well: in most Middle Eastern countries several powerful families control the political apparatus (Jreisat 2009; Pryce-Jones 1989, 92-93).

Community obligation and the importance of reputation are important factors in the practice of friendship-based *wasta*. Friendship-based, non-family *wasta* operates like a bank account:

One can call on a friend for services and draw down one’s balance; or one can increase the balance by providing a service for that friend. If one overdraws by numerous requests, the other stalls to indicate dissatisfaction or a perceived lack of balance in the account. (Cunningham and Sarayrah 1993, 14)

When one faces a difficulty with no one to intercede, resort must be taken to contractual *wasta*. Under these circumstances material compensation of some form is expected to offset the *wasta*’s “expenditure” of a part of his influence (Muna 1980, 77).

While aspects of *wasta* can help the disadvantaged in a complex system, other aspects have contributed to the evils of society by enhancing the wealth and influence of the powerful at the expense of the weak and poor (Cunningham and Sarayrah 1993, 21).

**Research on Aspects of Arab Leadership**

Certain common themes evident in the preceding sociological reflections have also been researched statistically, particularly as they impact international business relations. The studies into Arab attitudes towards authority, group loyalty,
affiliative behaviour, rules and regulation, and traditionalism are especially pertinent to the current research.

Authority and Authoritarianism. Beginning in the 1950s staff and graduate students at the American University of Beirut (AUB) conducted a series of studies investigating authoritarian behaviour in Levantine Arab society. Over the years, elementary (Brunner 1963) and secondary (Samara 1970) school students, and AUB students (Diab 1959, Diab and Prothro 1975, Prothro and Melikian 1953) and staff (Develtian 1973, Moracco and Develtian 1978), were tested, in each case revealing a significantly higher tendency towards authoritarian-dependency relationships in the family and the classroom, than was found with parallel groupings in North America. In a similar vein, Melikian (1959) found a significantly higher level of authoritarian attitudes among Egyptians than Americans. In another study Melikian (1981) assessed students in various countries of the Middle East, and found Egyptian students tended most towards authoritarianism, followed by students from Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon, in that order.

A more comprehensive study on a culturally disparate group of American university students (Meade and Whittaker 1967) found that while Arabs show a greater level of authoritarianism than Americans and Brazilians, they are not as authoritarian as Indians and East Africans, a result not dissimilar to that found by Hofstede (1991, 26). In fact Ashkanani’s (1984) use of Hofstede’s Values Survey Module on a group of Arab, American and Iranian graduate students in the United States demonstrated an even lower level of “power distance” for Arabs than Hofstede himself found.

Over the past thirty years a growing body of research has investigated specific elements of managerial style in the Arab world. Badawy’s (1980) study of organisational preference among 248 Arab middle managers in the Gulf revealed a notable tendency towards authoritarian behaviour with organisational power and authority focused at the top. Other research (Abbasi and Hollman 1993, Anwar and Chaker 2003, Aboyassin 2005, Dik 2011, Oueini 2005) has supported Badawy’s results, pointing to a preferred organisational design in the Arab world that is...
centralised and bureaucratic, with decision-making exclusively in the hands of highest management. A rigid chain of command, with a clear hierarchy of communication and directive, is considered standard, even ideal.

Khadra’s (1990) Jordanian study produced similar results. The base sample was 75 managers in public administration, who provided strikingly authoritarian responses – 80% seeing no need for consultation in decision making, and 60% expressing the expectation of total obedience from subordinates irrespective of their desires. Aboyassin’s (2005) more recent study of Jordanian employees’ involvement in decision-making found that the Jordanian managers in his study controlled the whole process, suggesting that the high power-distance patterns evident in Khadra’s earlier study continue to prevail in Jordan.

As an expansion of his study, Khadra (1990) applied his questionnaire in four further surveys, obtaining similar results among other managerial groups, while significantly higher authoritarian-dependency attitudes among high school and university students. Although not highlighted in Khadra’s study, the higher scores for students than business managers may indicate the existence of a general authoritarianism in Arab society which is somewhat diluted among the better educated or more Westernised sectors of society.

A different picture has emerged in studies conducted among Saudi (Ali and al-Shakhis 1985; Moran and Harris 1996, 358-359), Gulf (Ali 1989, Khalifa and Aspinwall 2001) and Kuwaiti (Yasin and Stahl 1990) managers, which have shown a high predilection for consultative styles of management. Several reasons have been suggested for the difference between these and previous studies. The more traditional Bedouin roots of Gulf society, with its view of the sheikh as the first among equals, and the widespread practice of tribal councils (shura), may well impact the way managers in the Arab Peninsula see their role (Dik 2011, 70-71; Thomas 2008). Equally, the impact of Western management styles through education, business contacts and the mass media has increasingly influenced Middle Eastern business practice (Ali 1989, 33), and may have contributed to a weakening of traditionally authoritarian practices.
Despite an increasing preference for consultation, delegation is not common in Arab business: the general managerial pattern is for the top executive to seek intimacy with all operations of their organisations through consultation and regular reporting, while maintaining total authority over the decision-making process (Ali 1989, 33). This pattern was also observed in Jafary and Hollingsworth’s (1983) comparative study of local and American-born managers in the Gulf, in which it was found that while consultation was a common value amongst Arab managers, participatory decision-making was rare. Ali (1989, 34) has concluded that much of what appears to be consultation is effectively “pseudo-consultation,” although this is perhaps too harsh a judgement on what may simply be a contextually sensitive way for engaging subordinates in the decision-making process in a high power-distance society.

Muna’s (1980, 44-62) study on decision-making also found a significant preference for consultative styles. However, upon further questioning he discovered that consultation was used almost exclusively for personnel-related decisions; in other circumstances a more autocratic style was evident. Results also varied according to country, with Egypt and Jordan showing higher levels of autocratic decision-making than the countries of the Gulf and Saudi Arabia (Muna 1980, 50-51). The age of the executive also had an impact on the results, older executives universally demonstrating a higher level of authoritarian behaviour than younger executives (Barakat 1994, 32; Muna 1980, 54-55). Another observation was the general dislike Arab executives have for committee or group meetings. Where decisions are to be made involving more than one subordinate, “the executives seem to prefer individual-to-individual consultation with each subordinate thereby, de facto, avoiding majority decisions” (Barakat 1994, 32; Muna 1980, 60). Under these circumstances it could be argued that “consultation” is merely a diluted form of autocracy.

A central issue in discussion of vertical versus horizontal leadership patterns is the extent to which status is achieved or ascribed. Numerous studies (Trompenaars and Voerman 2010, 46-49) point to the priority given in Arab societies to ascribed status when compared with the common Western value of achieved status. This is
well reflected in the contrast between the Arabic expression, *ta’rif il-kitab min ‘anwanu* — “you know the book by its title,” as against the common English expression, “you can’t know the book by its cover.”

In summary, while certain forms of consultative practice are commonly observable in parts of the Middle East, in general statistical research has confirmed the tendency towards authoritarian behaviour in Arab leadership observed in the works of sociologists.

**Individual and Group.** Early work completed at the American University of Beirut found a high level of group affiliation amongst students at the university, with family, religion and ethnic loyalty, in that order, being the primary centres of collective affiliation (Melikian and Diab 1959). A later study (Melikian and Diab 1974) found that these loyalties continued to dominate the collective mindset of AUB students. A comparative study between students at AUB and at Memphis State University (Consalvi 1971) likewise found a high level of family and religious loyalty among Arab students when compared with their American counterparts. A contemporaneous study of students at the University of Damascus (Abyad 1968) found similar sets of loyalties operative, but noted a weakening of the collective bonds when compared with the students’ parents.

As would be expected, group loyalties are stronger in tribal and village settings than in the growing urban sprawl. Witty’s (1980) study of life in a Beqaa village found religious and family membership were the chief factors in the determination of individual identity (Witty 1980, 33-44). The high level of endogamous marriages in the village (90% among Muslims, 75% among Christians) served to strengthen clan ties (Witty 1980, 35). Witty’s observations replicated the results of earlier anthropological studies of village life elsewhere in the Middle East (Ammar 1966, Duvignaud 1970, Rosenfeld 1976, Seddon 1976).

The extent to which collectivist sentiment is pervasive in the Arab world was starkly clear in responses to Trompenaar’s (2010, 81-82) question “How can you increase the quality of your life?” Of respondents from 40 different countries Egypt topped the list in preferring the more collectivist response, “If the individual is
continuously taking care of his or her fellows, then the quality of life for us all will improve, even if it obstructs individual freedom and individual development” over a more individualist response.

The growing body of managerial research has demonstrated the importance of group affiliation in the Arab workplace (Anwar and Chaker 2003). Muna (1980) found a widespread acknowledgement of the centrality in managerial decision-making of family influence and pressure from the individual’s wider community (Muna 1980, 31; cf. Taleghani et al. 2010). The managers interviewed in his study repeatedly mentioned the importance they gave to “reputation,” often “family reputation” (Muna 1980, 31). The practice of nepotism in the workplace was generally reported as normative, even preferable (Agnala 1997, 38; Jreisat 2009; Muna 1980, 33).

Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (1997, 104-108) consistently found the Arab countries in their samples scoring highest in the globe when it came to seeing family background as the central component in the respect shown a person. The importance Arabs vest in their family membership is clearly seen in such practices as the standard process of introductions in the Arab world that asks a person’s name, family, and village, and the prevalence of honour-killing for the preservation of the family “name.”

Over three-quarters of the managers interviewed by Muna (1980, 36) reported a variety of forms of assistance that their extended family demanded and received from them, including the following:

1. Consultation on personal problems or family decisions
2. Employment in the organisation or other organisations with which the manager is associated
3. Contacts with or pressure on government agencies or other institutions (that is to act as the intermediary)
4. Family visits and/or maintaining family contacts and ties
5. Financial assistance and loans
The expectation on executives to provide intermediary assistance (*wasta*) was frequently mentioned (Muna 1980, 36, 37-39, 74-78). Darwish and Huber (2003) found comparable in-group loyalties among Egyptian students.

Most Arab executives expect employees to extend their affiliative tendencies to the workplace, viewing the office as a second family, with the manager functioning as a “parent” figure (Mueller 1996; Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars 1997, 160-163; Taleghani et al. 2010; Thomas 2002; Thomas and Inkson 2004, 127-128). In this regard Scott-Jackson (2008, 5) observed that:

The ‘father’ role requires the fulfillment of many expectations from employees. For example: advice on personal problems/family issues; help with employment; use of contacts or pressure on government or other agencies (mediation); carrying out family visits and hospitality and providing financial assistance/loans. The role also involves wider social obligations: to develop industry and country; provide financial support for community/charities; intermediate via *wasta* and provide a link between the organisation and community.

Muna’s study of Arab executives found that a large majority of managers valued loyalty to the company more highly than efficiency, the idea being that “if the employee is loyal we can always train him and improve his efficiency” (Muna 1980, 78-80). In concluding his discussion on group affiliation, Muna noted that patterns in the Middle Eastern workplace are “in accordance with the larger societal values of group loyalty, nepotism, and paternalism” (Muna 1980, 80).

Many of Muna’s results have been seen in other studies. As with Muna, Badawy (1980, 57) noted the importance of family influence in decision making, and the expectation of undivided loyalty on employees. Likewise, Yasin and Stahl (1989) found that family and religion were the two most formative influences in the Middle Eastern workplace. In a subsequent study Yasin and Stahl (1990) were able to demonstrate a significant tendency among Arab top-level managers to be affiliation rather than achievement oriented, again with family as the formative influence.

In a study which compared American managers with Arab managers, mostly from the Gulf and Saudi Arabia, Ali (1986) found a significantly higher level of sociocentrism and tribalism among the Arab than the American sample. As with
Muna, social solidarity and family loyalty were seen as central influences in the practice of Arab management (Ali 1986, 97).

Interestingly, despite a traditional group mindset, a certain level of individualistic behaviour has been seen in the Arab world (Barakat 1974, 196; Barakat 1990, 146; Berger 1964, 136). In the workplace Arab employees generally prefer to work alone and the development of team projects is difficult if not impossible (Mizel 2009). There is a tendency for individual employees “to take sole credit for good deeds and to pass the blame to others, or to circumstances, when things go wrong” (Muna 1980, 30). For many Arab executives this individualism is an ongoing source of frustration (Muna 1980, 29-30). Barakat’s (1994) study of the Lebanese executive found that employees’ individualistic approach to work, poor devotion to jobs, and a low respect to commitments, were among the most frequent frustrations mentioned by managers (Barakat 1994, 15-16).

More recently Kabaskal and Bodur (2002) found that managers from the Arab region scored significantly lower than those from elsewhere on team-oriented or participative qualities, and significantly higher on ‘self-protective’ traits, namely self-centredness, status-consciousness, face-saving, conflict induction and reliance on procedure. As a part of the GLOBE research project Dorfman et al. (2004) similarly found a high endorsement of leader self-protection in the Arab world. The existence of a certain level of ambivalence between collectivist and individualist behaviour may help explain why, in Hofstede’s study, Arabs scored towards the middle of the sample of countries in the Individualism index, rather than at the extreme of collectivism (Hofstede 1991, 53).

In another study, Ali (1988), reflecting work done by Ayoubi (1986), reported the difficulty of developing teamwork in the Arab world. Khadra’s (1990) study revealed more precisely the high level of individualistic attitudes in the Arab workplace, observing the following: a strong preference of Arab employees for working alone; the belief that no-one else can fulfil their particular position; and the tendency to seek complete credit for any success achieved in their department (47-49).
Following on Ali’s extensive research on the Arab workplace, Abu-Saad (2003) found that three predominant factors shaped the work-values of Arab teachers: (1) personal and organizational obligations; (2) personal investment and dividends; and (3) personal effort and achievement, largely confirming the predominance of collectivist attitudes balanced by some level of individualistic attitude. The particular significance of Abu-Saad’s research lies in the generational impact of teachers, pointing to the likely continuance of these patterns of values in the near future. More recently the continuing influence of collectivist cultural values on emerging generations in the Middle East was seen in a study (McCabe et al. 2008) of the relationship between patterns of academic dishonesty and individualist-collectivist attitudes held by Lebanese university students.

In summary, documented research has confirmed the theses of sociologists as to the priority of family and community relationships to the Middle Easterner, with certain individualist behaviour being evident in contexts where traditional loyalties are not affected.

**Affiliation versus Achievement.** While clearly defined sex roles are a standard phenomenon in Middle Eastern society (Barakat 1985, 37; Barakat 1993, 23; Diab 1959, 182; Jennings 1977, 33-34; Hamadeh 2009; Joseph 2009; King 2010; Krenawi and Graham 2000; Mallouhi 2004, 26; Najarian 1959, 34; Tomeh 1983, 39), affiliative behaviour has been found to be highly valued in Arab men and women alike.

Friendship and relationship are seen as fundamental for getting things done (Muna 1980, 12). This finds expression in an “open door” managerial policy (Ali 1995, 16; Muna 1980, 80-81), and in the Arab tendency to fuse business, social and personal life (Barakat 1994, 18; Hamady 1960, 73; Muna 1980, 30-31). The preference for employee loyalty over efficiency further highlights the Arab emphasis on relationships in the workplace (Muna 1980, 79-80).

Muna found that Arab managers, while expressing their annoyance at the custom of friends “to drop in to the office for non-business chats over coffee or tea” (Muna 1980, 32), experienced great difficulty in discouraging social visits in the
workplace, irrespective of how busy they were, due to the strong societal norm of hospitality (Hamady 1960, 75-83; Patai 1973, 84-87) and the priority of relationship over task. The importance and value of showing hospitality before engaging in business was almost universally acknowledged. Reasons given for this custom included getting to know the guest on a person-to-person basis, evaluating the person, establishing trust, cementing relations, and putting people at ease (Morrison, Conaway and Borden 1994, 97, 213; Moran and Harris 1996, 360; Muna 1980, 72).

The strong emphasis on relationships is pervasive in Middle Eastern social institutions. Studies from both Libya (Agnala 1997) and Kuwait (Kazemi and Ali 2002) discovered that management training programs in the Arab world tended to focus almost exclusively on improving social relations at work facilities, with near neglect of improving the quality of production. Similarly, the centrality of quality rapport in Arab marketer-consumer relations was clearly seen in Wugayan and Rao’s (2004) investigation of Kuwaiti business practices. Cohen and Kirchmeyer (2005) found the need of Arab Israeli nurses for affiliative relationships in the workplace one of the major factors that distinguished them from their Jewish Israeli colleagues.

The avoidance of open conflict is also typical of affiliative societies (Hofstede 1991, 96). Publicly expressed disagreements as are typical in the American workplace, would be considered evidence of personal animosity in the Arab world (Bates and Rassam 1983, 246). Rather than open confrontation, the widespread use of consultation and mediators (wasit) is considered the appropriate means of resolving conflict (Augsburger 1992, 192-193; Hamady 1960, 72; Muna 1980, 63-65; Witty 1980, 6).

Muna has observed the contrast between what has been described as the “hit-and-run” school of business behaviour, so popular in North America, with the person-oriented approach of Arab managers – the Arab executive preferring a personalised relational approach to impersonal and transient relationships when conducting business (Muna 1980, 73-74; cf. Moran and Harris 1996, 360).

Several other studies have confirmed Muna’s findings. Badawy’s (1980) study of 250 executives from the Peninsula region revealed a marked preference for personalised business relationships, and an aversion to “technique” and high pressure
salesmanship (Badawy 1980, 57). Similarly, Yasin and Stahl’s (1990) study of motivational orientation among Arab as against American managers found a significantly higher level of affiliation orientation among the former. Bakhtari (1995) found that while American executives prefer a “pace-setting” style of management, their Arab counterparts tended to use affiliative approaches, further pointing to the centrality of relationships in Arab business dealings, even if this is at the expense of goal accomplishment.

While many Westerners – and even some Middle Easterners – see the time spent on relationship-building as “wasted,” one recent piece of research (Anwar and Chaker 2003) suggests that the Arab emphasis on face-to-face communication and direct personal relations can be helpful in solving problems and saving time by minimizing misunderstanding, when compared to the more formal electronic communications increasingly being used by managers in Western countries.

Ali’s (1986) comparative study on value systems adhered to by Arab and American managers, found that the former demonstrated a significantly higher tendency toward sociocentric behaviour, a result also seen in Ali and Wahabi’s (1995) study of Moroccan middle managers. Ali (1986, 100) went on to claim that Arabs prefer to conduct business with “friends” in a warm and calm environment, with trust and openness being primary considerations.

A distinctive feature of Arab society is the tendency towards affective expressiveness and elaborate high context communication. In Trompenaars and Voerman’s (2010, 96-99) research four out of the six most emotionally expressive countries were Arab, and Hodgetts and Luthans (2003, 201) found the Arab countries to typify cultural contexts that use elaborate verbal styles. Both these features are consistent with a priority of relationship over achievement.

In all the above studies the results were far from universal and a notable minority of Arab executives showed the more Western tendency towards an achievement focus. Nonetheless, the common assertion of the priority of relationships in Arab society has certainly been supported by the documented research.
**Structure, Form and Regulation.** In general statistical studies have found a certain level of ambivalence in the Arab world in the area of “uncertainty avoidance” (Hofstede 1991, 114). The one exception, Alshaya’s (2002) study of Saudi school administrators, scored high on uncertainty avoidance, but the conservative context of the study is such that the results probably cannot be generalised to other parts of the Middle East.

The inconclusiveness of research is possibly the product of a love for relational spontaneity on the one hand, and the bureaucratic structures common to high power-distance cultures on the other. The Arab peoples are renowned for their spontaneity of emotion and function, and their low regard for formal rules (Barakat 1974, 198; Qabani 1981, 59). In fact among the greatest complaints expressed by Arab managers about their employees have been the low value placed on time and the lack of industrial mentality (aversion to systems and procedures, inadequate organisation, and a non-professional attitude towards business) (Muna 1980, 29). A lack of clear institutional guidelines and a tendency toward ad hoc decision-making procedures have also been observed (Badawy 1980, 57; Khadra 1990, 44).

In general in the Arab world, rules and regulations are considered flexible and to a certain extent superfluous. Arab executives prefer to minimise formal legal, accounting, contractual and other necessary procedures, to that required by law (Muna 1980, 84-85). Even then a certain disregard for existing rules and regulations has been seen, as for example in Khadra’s (1990) study, in which 80% of the surveyed public administration managers agreed with the statement, “The prescribed procedures for work are mostly constraints that should not be adhered to” (Khadra 1990, 44).

This is consistent with my own observations:

Many Middle Easterners cannot understand the meaning and significance of rule books. Written job descriptions are only now beginning to be used in the work place, and they are virtually unheard of in Middle Eastern churches. Generally work parameters are developed in broad terms of understanding through an oral agreement. To a large extent this approach emerges naturally out of the highly relational basis of Middle Eastern life.

There are several reasons for the resistance to rule books and job descriptions: not only is there lack of experience in Middle Eastern society, but … a written agreement can be interpreted to imply a lack of trust.
Another factor is the absurd Middle Eastern bureaucracy, and a legal system which is contradictory and impossible to comprehend. Many Middle Easterners spend their lives working around the system and/or seeking loopholes that will enable them to do the best of a bad lot. Survival can depend on it.

Often instinctually Middle Easterners can view any form of rule-book … with the same attitude, as a document to be worked around rather than as healthy guidelines for practice. (Shaw 2010a, 17)

Ali (1990, 21) has suggested that many Arab executives institute form and regulation simply to appear “modern” – without ever intending to implement what they have put on the books. Systems are established for selecting and promoting according to qualification and merit, but hiring and rewarding continue to be on the basis of social ties and personal relations. Organisational structures and design are established, but remain simply as decoration, adherence to them being the exception rather than the rule. Kubaisy (1985) has used the term “sheikhocracy” to describe the form of leadership common in the Middle East in which rules and regulations are based on respect for those who made the rules rather than for their rationality. Rules thus have symbolic importance but will not be implemented if they go against autocratic-tribal traditions (Thomas and Inkson 2004, 127-128).

In many ways the widespread practice of wastā finds its roots in this disregard for officialdom. Cunningham and Sarayrah have observed,

Laws and regulations are treated as suggestions that one may observe, ignore, or use as a basis for negotiation. Regulations accumulate over time and are often in conflict with each other. The official familiar with the laws and many rules relevant to a situation can select among them, interpreting the contradictions and ambiguities as he sees fit. … Every law and rule requires implementation, which opens the opportunity for wastā. (Cunningham and Sarayrah 1993, 10-11)

While the formal structures of Arab life are generally unstructured and at times chaotic, informal rules and regulations are highly standardised and rigidly adhered to. Arab culture is full of social taboos and predetermined roles which provide form and continuity to the society. Numerous writers have referred to the importance of honour to the Arab, and to a large extent honour is maintained by a rigid compliance to traditional patterns of behaviour (Cunningham and Sarayrah 1993, 9; Diab 1959, 182; Patai 1973, 90-94; Zeid 1966, 258).
Standardised forms of courtesy and decorum are ingrained in the public conduct of Arab relations. The tradition of hospitality is universal in the Arab world, and the ritualised entertainment of guests is taken for granted. Muna (1980, 71-73) observed the high priority given by executives to an introductory period of social intercourse prior to the conducting of business. Similarly, visits at feast times, on the departure or arrival of a friend or relative, in cases of birth, sickness, weddings, or deaths, are all obligatory, and the form these visits take is highly formalised (Hamady 1960, 75-83).

Barakat (1993, 24-25) has suggested that the existence of rigid social norms, and the flexible and spontaneous approach to institutions, are simply two sides of the one coin. The existence of religious and social taboos, and the practice of self-censorship in order to conform to ritualised standards, serve to constrain emotional and spontaneous expression. Consequently, as opportunity arises and in areas where social constraints are more lenient, the Arab seeks to express his individuality in a disregard for external rules and regulations, and a more spontaneous approach to life.

However, there is some evidence that change is occurring with respect to rules. A recent study (Smith et al. 2007) found that Arab managers relied on both written and unwritten rules more than elsewhere in the world, but that more formal rules are subject to relational considerations and in general unwritten rules take precedent over written regulations. My own experience (Shaw 2011) is that the legislative systems in the Middle East are generally seen as an “enemy” to all but the rich and powerful, and Arabs devote inordinate amount of time and energy to working around whatever formal systems they encounter.

In light of the general ambivalence of Arabs towards regulation, it is not surprising that Hofstede (1991, 114) found Middle Eastern respondents falling to the middle of his “Uncertainty Avoidance” scale.

**Traditionalism versus Cultural Dynamism.** One of the most sensitive and highly debated issues in the contemporary literature has been the extent to which Arab society is debilitated by a bondage to tradition.
Several writers (Barakat 1990, 148-150; Muna 1980, 94-98) have sought to refute the accusation that Islam promotes fatalism. Mohessin’s (2001) claim that Islamic teachings are “futuristic in nature and encourage openness, innovativeness, and proactiveness” is typical of contemporary Arab Muslim writers. Certainly there exist Qur’anic verses (most notably Sura XIII:11, “God changes not the condition of a people until they (first) change that which is in their hearts.”) which seem to promote activism, and part of the blame for Arab cultural stagnation can probably be laid at the feet of the Ottomans and their four centuries of “misrule” (Ali 1990, 16).

Nonetheless, the untranslatability of the Qur’an and Islamic ritual (Sanneh 1989, 211-214), the highly standardised and doctrinaire approach to Islamic education, and the emphasis on unquestioning submission, all serve to promote a rigid adherence to the religious and societal status quo (Shaw 1995a, 34). As Lamb (1987, 5) has observed, for Arabs to this day “the future is rooted in the past – in their own unique and rich heritage, [and] in their belief that what Mohammed the Prophet taught thirteen centuries ago is a precise guide for today’s life.” Dwairi (2004, 84) has suggested that Arab “managers as well as customers will be told by tradition what they ‘can do’ and ‘cannot do,’ and Islamic teachings dictate what they are ‘allowed to do’ or ‘not allowed to do,’ while Western cultures open the door ‘to be what you want to be.’” Hofstede (1991, 172-173) has argued that it is precisely the rigid concern for a traditionalised form of Truth common to all Muslim cultures, that limits the ability of Arab society to find an adequate means of adapting to a rapidly changing world.

Many of the features mentioned earlier in this study on Arab culture – patriarchal authoritarianism, clan loyalty, highly formalised rituals and taboos, even the practice of wasta – all serve to further institutionalise traditional patterns of behaviour and restrict Arab society’s capacity for fundamental change (Taleghani et al. 2010; Sharabi 1985, 85; Sharabi 1988, 48). Addressing the urgent need for change in Middle Eastern public policy, Jreisat (2009) likewise bemoans that “[i]ssues of patronage and nepotism in Arab governance, and their effects on public administration, are too complex and entrenched, resisting all efforts of reform.”
Entrenched societal patterns by which those in power can exploit the successful also serve to undermine initiative and limit creative growth in the Arab world. In one of Ali’s later articles he observes:

In the Western world, poor performance by a company may lead to a takeover. By contrast, in the Middle East, poor performance is met with lack of interest, but good performance often results in efforts by politicians and other government officials to extract partial ownership. Hard work and ingenuity thus are often rewarded negatively, and previously owners may be much less inclined to assume risks. (Ali 1999, 107)

Muna (1980, 99) has made the important distinction between minor societal change, in which the structure, values and norms do not change substantially, and major societal change, in which “fundamental and substantial shifts [occur] in a society’s social structure, its institutions, or in its values and norms.” While notable change and modernisation is observable throughout the Middle East, in general the social structure and most of the traditional institutions have not changed drastically. “Modernization and industrialization are taking place but within, more or less, the same traditional, political, religious, economic, or social systems” (Muna 1980, 100).

While much has been said about Arab traditionalism, documented statistical research has been limited. Hofstede’s claims regarding Islamic traditionalism have been based on research conducted among Muslims in the Indian subcontinent, with the assertion that Arab Muslim culture is of a similar ilk (Hofstede 1991, 172). Even Muna, whose research so thoroughly investigated other aspects of Arab managerial practice, based his assertions on a few random comments made by those interviewed (Muna 1980, 99).

Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars’ (1997, 142-147) investigation found the Arab countries scoring at the extreme fatalistic end of the countries they surveyed. However, as their questions revolved around fatalism towards natural forces it is probable that the Islamic view of submission to God greatly influenced the responses, and extrapolation of these results to a discussion of future orientation would probably be inadvisable.

One piece of research (Ali et al. 1997) found that expatriate managers in the United Arab Emirates were more likely to take risks than their indigenous counterparts, but expatriates are not necessarily typical of monocultural managers
from the same home country. Some evidence of a tendency towards low levels of future orientation is found in Abu-Rahma’s (1999) study of Jordanian managers, in which his Jordanian sample scored lower on risk propensity and openness to change than did a comparable sample of American managers. In contrast Dwairi’s (2004) research revealed no significant correlation between culture and entrepreneurial orientation and performance of banks in Jordan.

Consequently, of all features of Arab culture, the suggestion of traditionalistic tendencies must be made with great circumspection.

In summary, while by no means universal, when compared with North American society, research on Arab society has pointed to:

1. A greater level of authoritarianism in leadership
2. A tendency towards collectivism rather than individualism
3. A preference for affiliation rather than achievement orientation
4. An ambivalence towards rules and regulations
5. A possible tendency towards traditionalism rather than cultural dynamism.

**Drawing Together the Literature Review**

The wide variety of literature which has been presented in Chapters Two to Four has sought to lay the contours and bases for the field research project. The increasingly elaborate models proffered have pointed to the complex nature of leadership. Among the multiplicity of cross-cultural leadership theories suggested, Hofstede's model of “cultural distance” has been widely regarded as the most thorough basis for understanding leadership in inter-cultural studies offered to date.

Christian authors have adopted or developed a wide variety of leadership models. Of these the application of “family systems” theory to the local church has been found to be especially comprehensive. Because it focuses on a multiplicity of interacting phenomena, a “family systems” model of congregational life would seem in general to be a very suitable approach for multicultural analyses of congregational leadership. The centrality of the family in Arab culture, and the extent to which
patriarchal structures permeate Arab society, suggest the particular relevance of a “family systems” model for evaluating congregational patterns in the Middle East.

Contemporary missiological literature has increasingly pointed to the need for developing indigenous patterns of church leadership in different cultural contexts. Over the past twenty years a growing number of research studies have been conducted, investigating Christian leadership patterns in non-western cultural contexts. While most have tended to focus on the role of the pastor, a handful have pointed to the value of broader systemic analysis and a small number of other studies have demonstrated the need for critical contextual approaches to intercultural leadership study. It seems apparent that a combined critical contextual and systemic analysis of the particular local context of the Arab world would be a valuable contribution to the field of Christian intercultural leadership studies.

An overview of literature pertaining to leadership in the Arab world found notable differences between the cultural contexts of the Arab Middle East and North America. A study of the extent to which these differences exist within the respective Protestant Christian communities to date has not been forthcoming. Such a comparative study would assist in an understanding of the impact of the broader Arab society – both positive and negative – on patterns of congregational leadership in the Arab evangelical churches, and this is what the current study has been designed to address.
CHAPTER FIVE

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

The previous three chapters of this project have provided a survey of contemporary theories and studies on leadership, with special attention to how Christians have sought to understand and apply a variety of leadership theories to local church ministry, and a more focused study on the general contextual realities of leadership in the Arab world. While this material provides helpful indicators for how effective leadership might function in the churches of the Arab world, there is also a need to provide theological foundations if congregational leadership is to be genuinely “Christian”. This chapter presents a series of biblical and theological reflections on leadership that will provide some critical contextual principles for assessing patterns of congregational leadership.

The term “contextualisation” has become something of a shibboleth in much of contemporary mission discussion. While the zeal for cultural sensitivity is laudable and has clear theological roots in the Christian doctrine of Incarnation, the lack of critical reflection can be at best naïve and at worst a recipe for long-term disaster. In light of Christian belief in both human creation in God’s image and human sinfulness, every culture must be seen as having both healthy and unhealthy elements. Consequently, those who claim heavenly citizenship (Philippians 3:20) are called on to engage in what Hiebert (1994, 75-92) has described as “critical contextualization,” or what I have elsewhere referred to as “decontextualization” (Shaw 2009), through which culture is held up to the scrutiny of foundational biblical-theological considerations. A commitment to biblical authority is a major contributing factor in the formulation of the research question of this thesis: “That healthy church life in the Arab world is reflective of critically contextual systemic patterns of congregational leadership.”

The majority of Christian writers in the field of leadership studies have recognised the need for biblical roots to Christian leadership. A number of popular writings (e.g. Batten, Batten, and Howard 1997; Beausay 1998; Briner 2005; Jones...
1996; Jones 2002; Manz 1998; Murdock 1997; Senske 2003, Weems and Berlin 2011, 1-10; Wright 2000) have tended to take a rather eisegetical approach, finding a plethora of modern managerial practices in the life and ministry of Jesus and other biblical characters. The more common (and sober) process (e.g. Anderson 1986; Ford 1991; Gangel 1989; Gangel 1997; Haley 2005; Le Peau 1993; Malphurs 2003; Newton 2005; Parks and Birch 2004; Richards and Hoeldtke 1980; Samuel 2006; Shaw 2004; Steele 1986; Whitworth 2005; Wilkes 1998) seeks to develop a biblical understanding of leadership through the expository study of some of the great biblical leaders such as Moses, David, and in particular Jesus. While the latter approach is unquestionably more helpful than the former, it tends to focus on the character and practices of the leader, and takes little account of the complex intertwining of process, structures, and relationships that emerge in the more systemic understanding of leadership that is at the heart of the current study. Also, even with the best of effort, there is always a natural attraction to characters and parts of Scripture that affirm one’s own subconscious cultural values. As Plueddemann (2009, 64-65) has observed, “It’s easy to find verses to prove any style of leadership. … Both authoritarian and egalitarian cultures can find biblical evidence for their opposing leadership values.”

A more comprehensive approach is found in the metanarrative understanding of “salvation history” (*Heilsgeschichte*), in which individual texts are placed in the broader context of God’s work in history, at its most foundational level through the human experience of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. Such an approach situates the church and its members as living with confidence in the redemptive work of Christ and the hope of complete healing at the return of Christ.

Some of the greatest theologians of history, either indirectly (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*; Tertullian, *Against Praxeas*) or directly (Bengel 1742/1971; Cullman 1977; Edwards 1739/2003; Vos 1948/1996; Wright 2006; Wright 2008), have found the comprehensive picture of salvation history a particularly helpful basis for understanding the unfolding work of God in relationship to created humanity. As such it has great potential for developing a broader range of biblical-theological lenses for critically assessing patterns of congregational leadership. This chapter will
use salvation history as its overall structure, with a more focused reflection on the missional self-understanding of the early church, and the key leadership terminology that emerged, particularly as these features pertain to systemic understandings of the church. I have previously used the “salvation history” approach to reflecting on leadership (Shaw 2006). What follows is a significant development of my earlier thinking, including insights gained from students in classes I have taught in seminary and church on the theology of leadership.

**Creation: In the Image of God**

Central to the biblical account of creation are two key teachings: (i) the fiat creative work of God – the triune God commands and it is – and it is good, and (ii) the creation of humans in the image of God. Through these two foundational teachings we can see the way in which God functions in relationship to his creation, and hence discover an ideal pattern upon which we can model human leadership. Leadership in the image of God reflects the one who is good, the maker of the good (Genesis 1:31), the giver of the good, the one who works good in the world. As those created in God’s image, the more we reflect the character of God in leadership the more we rediscover the sort of authority and divinely delegated leadership that was intended for us from the beginning.

God’s fiat act of creation was above all an exercise of power and authority, and in granting to created humanity dominion over the rest of creation, we came to have delegated power and authority, and an essential element of leadership in the image of God is delegation of authority for the good. It is noteworthy that first words of God to Adam and Eve recorded in the Scriptures (Genesis 1:28) are words of command to exercise authority (Packer 1973). However this divinely delegated authority calls for responsible care of the ruled (Genesis 2:15) – not self-centred exploitation. God has made humans both rulers over creation and steward/servants of creation (Wright 2010, 49-52).

Equally significant to leadership in the image of God is creativity. The repeated refrain in Genesis 1, “Let there be …” (Genesis 1:3,6,9,14,20,24,26), points to the joy God has in the creative act. When we express our creativity we reflect
God’s character. When we allow others to express their creativity we open the way for God’s character to be revealed in others. However the divine creative act was also an act of creating order out of chaos. While it is clear that God takes great joy in creativity, he also sees creativity within structured and ordered relationships. Human desire for organisation and system is a natural outworking of being created in the image of an orderly God.

God’s fiat act of creation was also in some mysterious way a Trinitarian action – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit cooperated in the creative act (Genesis 1:1; 1:2; Colossians 1:16). This first great Trinitarian act recorded in Scripture has multiple implications for a biblical-theological reflection on leadership. Of foremost significance is that just as God is in himself a social being, so humans created in God’s image are social beings. Consequently, the existence of societies and cultures, and social institutions such as families and churches, are all a natural outworking of humanity’s creation in God’s image, but as with individuals so with social groupings the measure of the ideal is God’s own character. In particular the mutual indwelling of the Trinity (what has been described as the “perichoretic” nature of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) moves beyond questions of power-distance or individualism-versus-collectivism to an understanding of Christian relationships and community in the image of God characterised by “mutuality and service rather than domination, hierarchy, and lordship” (Chalke 2006, 137), where unity in community is found through diversity, not in spite of diversity (Stevens 1999, 61-62).

The Trinitarian act of creation more specifically points to the centrality of teamwork in leadership. The Father did not create without the Son, nor was the Spirit excluded; all played a crucial role. Moreover the creative triune God saw that Adam needed a “helper” (עֵזֶר; ozr; Genesis 2:18) (a term used primarily in the Hebrew Scriptures to refer to God himself) in the work and dominion care of the creation. In the same way, as those created in God’s image, human leaders follow the divine model in as much as they seek the synergy of teamwork. Conversely, when a leader functions as a “lone ranger” – believing that he or she, and no other, can do the work of leadership – there is a denial of the God-image that is within us.
But the Trinitarian teamwork was not democratic. Throughout the Scripture we see a clear movement of delegation of authority within the Godhead: the Father sends the Son, the Father and the Son send the Spirit, the Son sends us, empowered by the Holy Spirit. This “economy of the Trinity” is not a form of “subordinationism,” which sees the Son and the Holy Spirit as somehow inferior to the Father, but an affirmation of the missional and apostolic heart of God (Stevens 1999, 194-198) worked out in delegated authority and empowerment. As in the Trinitarian act of creation, so in Christian communities leadership and stewardship are closely interwoven (Wright 2008, 207), with both the authority to delegate authority and the means of empowerment finding their ultimate source in the leader’s own delegated authority from God.

Overwhelmingly throughout the Scriptures the ideal model is not that of democracy or autocracy but theocracy: God calls on his leaders to see themselves above all as servants and followers under his own divine authority and leadership. For those nurtured in a context where the ideal of democracy is revered, such a statement may seem shocking. And yet, in contrast to the democratic practices that permeate Western (and particularly American) church structures, nowhere in the New Testament do you find leaders being voted into office. Rather the pattern was of leaders who appointed leaders who appointed leaders. Jesus’ appointing of the apostles (Mark 3:14) was completely his own initiative, “calling to himself whom he himself desired” (Story 2004). Likewise it was the apostles’ (and not the church’s) initiative to appoint the Seven (Acts 6:3-6), Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for the churches in the region of Lystra and Iconium (Acts 14:23), and Titus was called on to appoint elders in Crete (Titus 1:5). Even Acts 15 was not so much democratic as it was the typical Middle Eastern phenomenon of a “tribal leader” (in this case James) seeking to represent the wisdom of council.

While theocratic leadership sounds good in theory, it is difficult to apply in practice. It is far too easy for church leaders to claim theocratic leadership as a spiritualized guise for autocratic control, particularly in high power-distance societies such as the Middle East or Latin America (Lingenfelter 1992). While there is no doubt a strong cultural influence in the advocacy for democratic leadership patterns
in western churches, it is probable that fear of the abusive practices so common in autocratic leadership plays an equally significant role. The ubiquitous reporting of spiritual abuse recorded in Christian books, journals and magazines (Arterburn and Felton 2001, Blue 1993, Johnson and Van Vonderen 1991, Purcell 1998, Ward 2007) makes democratic Church leadership a most attractive alternative. However, the implications of the Fall raise further questions concerning leadership.

**Fall: Cultural Patterns as both Good and Evil**

In the Fall the good of creation was not lost but corrupted. Consequently in every person there is something good that reflects the image of God, but something evil that reflects the Fall, and in every situation we do well to name both the good and the evil. Only in the naming of good and evil does there come the possibility of repentance and redemption, worked out in longing for the consummate perfection that will come at Christ’s return. But God also created us as social beings, and consequently, not only individuals but also societies and cultures reflect something of God’s image and something of the Fall. Put simply, culture is not values-neutral. While sensitivity to context is (as we shall see) a natural outworking of the incarnational mandate given by Christ to his followers (John 20:21), there is also a time and a place for challenging the cultural context with the countercultural values of the Kingdom of God – for “decontextualizing” the faith (Shaw 2009). Hiebert (1994, 86) was very aware of this when he observed that:

…uncritical contextualization has a weak view of sin. It tends to affirm human social organizations and cultures as essentially good. Sin is confined largely to personal evil. But social systems and cultures are human creations marked by sin. In scripture, more than seventy-five percent of the occurrences of such Greek terms as *arche* and *archon* (organizational power), *exousia* (authority), *dynamis* (power), and *thronos* (throne) refer to human institutions. There is a need, therefore, to take a stand against corporate evil as well as against individual sin.

The problem with much of the language of contextualisation is its idealistic understanding of culture. For example, in the Middle East there is a widespread uncritical belief that if only we distance ourselves from the established churches and develop “insider movements,” we will have none of the problems endemic in the
established national churches. Unfortunately, when so-called “insider movement” communities develop, it is not long before many of the very same problems evident in the established churches rear their heads in the newly-developing groups. Applying Travis’ (1998) well-known paradigm, highly contextualised (C5) faith communities are beset with many of the same cultural sins as the so-called C2 faith communities that have imported their community patterns from elsewhere.

The imperative of continual self-evaluation is clearly evident in the Genesis record of God’s invitation to our ancestral parents to confession, repentance, and renewal, and their total failure to respond appropriately to that invitation (3:9-13). The same challenge of blindness to sin and an unwillingness to seek leadership in the image of God continues today. Our ethnocentricity leads us to see the goodness in our own culture and the fallenness in other cultures, while remaining blind to the fallenness in our own culture and the goodness in other cultures. Ultimately all cultures stand under the judgement of God. Effective Christian organisations are those which recognise that all cultural patterns of leadership reflect something of the divine image and something of the Fall, and seek from each contributing culture to maximize the impact of the former and minimize the impact of the latter.

With respect to the specific question of leadership systems, the Scriptures are uncompromising in their declaration that the divine ideal of theocratic delegated authority became distorted through the Fall. The ideal of dominion as a stewardship from God degenerated into domination, and lies and mistrust undermined the bases for teamwork. Individualistic self-centredness replaced self-sacrificial love. As in so many other areas of life there has been a rejection of God’s Kingdom, and the attempt to replace it with our own little kingdoms. This is readily seen in autocratic leaders; it is less readily acknowledged but equally true in democratic leadership patterns – for democracy is in fact thoroughly human-centred in its orientation, usually reticent to acknowledge the need before God to embrace such words as obedience and submission.

In the Genesis record the Fall is characterised by shame (2:25; 3:7), pride (3:5-6), fear (3:10), and blame (3:12-13), and these key words are central to any critical evaluation of congregational systems. It is noteworthy the extent to which
these words are characteristic of the human exercise of both autocracy and democracy. Autocracy is built on the leader’s desire for honour and self-pride, and a fear of loss of control, and is fed through both the fear of the followers and the followers’ desire to cover shame through the experience of affiliative identification with the honour of the leader. Democracy is built on the fear of autocratic leadership, and the focus on individual dignity and pride, and is equally fed by the fear of the group. In the end you are left with the choice between the tyranny of the one or the tyranny of the many. While the latter may be a preferable option to the former, little consideration is given to the possibility that there may in fact be a better alternative.

But what alternative is there? The one great attempt at “theocracy” in the Scriptures (Israel under the leadership of Moses and the Judges) was ultimately rejected by the people in favour of the autocracy of a king. Throughout history virtually every attempt at theocratic rule has led to dictatorship or some other form of heavy-handed leadership. And Christians are not the only ones who struggle with this: such so-called “theocratic Islamic” states as Saudi Arabia and Iran are among the most oppressive autocratic nations in the world today. Is theocracy simply a nice romantic ideal but a totally unworkable option? Is it not inevitable that Christians see autocracy and democracy as the only viable approaches to leadership? It is at this point that the discussion must turn to the redemptive work of Christ – an act not restricted to the Cross but embedded in the whole “Christ-event” of incarnation, crucifixion, and exaltation.

**Redemption: The Authority to Serve**

The incarnation stands as one of the most remarkable events in the history of salvation. That in Jesus the perfect God should enter our fallen world is so shocking that this foundational Christian belief is for many a major barrier to the message of the gospel. And yet this belief is not simply a nice piece of doctrinal philosophizing, but the exact opposite – in Jesus God provided Christians with a tangible model of the divine ideal for which they are called to strive.

The imperative of critical contextualisation is embedded within the incarnation. Jesus profoundly contextualized the message of the kingdom in the
dramatic act of incarnation. By becoming a child in the village of Bethlehem, experiencing the life of a refugee in Egypt, and earning the skills of a carpenter in Nazareth, Jesus affirmed the value of society and context, and in so doing provided a model for contextualised ministry. However, the missional model of Jesus did not end there. For while Jesus dwelled in and responded to a specific culture, he nonetheless lived a life that was unapologetically counter-cultural. His teachings, seen perhaps most vividly in the repeated “It has been said to you…but I say to you” of the Sermon on the Mount, were matched by a life of association with outcasts and “sinners” that invited the derision of the contemporary religious leadership. In short, Jesus both contextualised and “decontextualised” the message of the Kingdom of God (Shaw 2009). Or as Ramachandra (2008, 146) observes, “[In the incarnation the] New Testament elevates and desacralizes all cultures. It thereby celebrates and critiques them all.”

The gospels consistently draw a contrast between the way of the world, represented most starkly by the religious and political authorities, and the way of the Kingdom, represented by Christ. Listeners to the story of Jesus are being invited to make a choice between these two ways, the intent (of course) being a choice for the way of the Kingdom (Rhoads 1993).

In particular, Jesus demonstrated the counter-cultural nature of divine leadership, “who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant … and humbled himself … even to death on a cross” (Philippians 2:6-8). Jesus’ model was a thoroughly vertical (“high grid”) leadership pattern, but a vertical pattern turned on its head. In a cultural context where “so-called” rulers (Story 2004, 184) lorded it over others, and high officials enjoyed their power, Jesus presented a radically different model – “… not so with you … whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant … the slave of all” (Mark 10:42-44).

As a respected leader, so much of Jesus’ behaviour was culturally scandalous: he prioritized his attention to those others rejected; he showed little concern with his own image; he stunned even his own disciples by washing their feet (John 13:1-17); he humbled himself even to death on a cross – an event so shameful that Muslims
refuse to accept that it happened. So easily the shocking fact is forgotten that God did not merely model fiat power; he also modelled self-giving and humiliating/humble (the Greek term “ταπεινός; tapeinos” means both) love. And Jesus calls on his disciple-leaders to be like God in self-giving love, even in the willingness to be humiliated. In other words, Christians can become like Jesus only when they stop trying to be God. Chalke (2006, 105) observes,

In [Jesus] we discover someone who was vulnerable but whose vulnerability was a self-imposed choice rather than a condition that was thrust upon him by any external agent or force. The source of his vulnerability was his own sense of purpose and self-determination rather than any outside pressure he faced. He chose to be powerless; he was intentionally fragile. In Christ we encounter self-imposed vulnerability, the result of power purposely given up.

While the terminology may be recent, the imperative of servant leadership for Christian ministry was not the birth-child of “the tumultuous 1960s and early 1970s” (Cooper 2005, 49), but finds its roots in the earliest pages of the Hebrew Scriptures. One of the great paradoxes of the Old Testament is the consistent offensiveness of the term “slave” – the bondage of slavery in Egypt being the “nadir point of [Israel’s] historical tradition” (Hanson 1986, 4) – and yet the use of the term “slave of Yahweh” to describe the most revered of Israel’s leaders: Abraham (Psalm 105:42), Jacob (Ezekiel 37:25), Moses (Exodus 14:31), Joshua (Joshua 24:29), David (II Samuel 3:18), Elijah (II Kings 9:36), and the “Suffering Servant of Yahweh” of Isaiah 42-53, God’s great agent of salvation.

The New Testament presents Jesus as the fulfilment of the “Suffering Servant.” He himself interpreted his entire ministry in the light of this role, and in pointing to himself as the model and example of servanthood set a servant posture as the basis for Christian ministry (Segler 1987, 431). Throughout the Gospels we repeatedly find Jesus instructing his disciples as to the importance of a servant posture in ministry. Jesus’ own summary of his ministry – “For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45) – comes as the climax of a series didactic pericopes in which he instructs his disciples in the way of “servant leadership”: in contrast to those who “lord it over” and “exercise authority over” the Gentiles, within the Kingdom of God “whoever would be first among you must be the slave of all” (Mark 10:42-44; cf. 9:33-35). Within the
honour-shame context of first century Palestine such a suggestion would have been perceived as cultural lunacy. For Jesus the Kingdom of God and its ideals must take precedence over the prevailing values of the local context.

Throughout the Gospels Jesus’ clear intent for his disciples was that they would become the core leadership of the emerging believing community, but Jesus’ focus in preparing them for leadership is universally on “following”. As Thompson (1993, 23) has observed, “a spiritual leader is … not just a manager with spiritual sensitivity. Instead, a spiritual leader is one who is first led,” who has learned how to hear the voice of Christ and follow in obedience. In instructing his disciples, Jesus uses terms such as “witness”, “servant”, “salt”, and “disciples”. The message is clear: Jesus saw Christian leadership as firstly and primarily a matter of faithful following: through faithful followership Christian leaders are most able by word and deed to lead others to faithful followership.

The theme of servant leadership is found no less in the New Testament letters. No doubt borrowing from Old Testament images, Paul habitually refers to himself as a “slave of Christ” – as one who belongs totally and unreservedly to Christ. And it is to this “servant” model that he calls others to imitate him (I Corinthians 11:1). On numerous occasions Paul refers to his co-workers as “servants” (I Corinthians 3:5; II Corinthians 3:6; 6:4; Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 1:7; 4:7), or “slaves” or “fellow-slaves” (Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:7; 4:7; 12; II Timothy 2:24). In Paul’s language these are designations of honour pointing to their partnership with him in entailed missionary work (Schnabel 2008, 249).

Even more powerful is Paul’s use of the great Christological hymn of Philippians 2, no doubt an early Christian declaration of faith, as a basis for Christian servanthood: as Christ humbled himself even unto death (2:6-8), so we also should humble ourselves in servanthood to others (2:1-4). In I Corinthians 1-6 we see Paul rebuking the Corinthian believers for their failure to comprehend the inverted leadership model of Christ, rather adopting the “fleshy” values of the surrounding society in their loyalty to particular persons, their emphasis on status, their boasting with regard to people, their love of human wisdom and successful oration, their tolerance of the open sexual immorality of a high status member of the church, and
their willingness to take one another to court. In contrast Paul points to Christian leadership not based on personal authority, status symbols, or prestige, but servants who have been placed “last of all, as though sentenced to death” (I Corinthians 4:8-13; Schnabel 2008, 240-241).

Two key words in the New Testament corpus are “servant” (diakonos) and “slave” (doulos). Harper (1977, 75) makes the interesting observation that diakonos is a functional word, meaning a person who renders acts of service, particularly waiting at table; while doulos is a relational word, speaking of one owned by another, a person with no rights or independent status whatsoever. The interchangeable nature of these terms (cf. Matthew 20:26 and Mark 10:44; Romans 1:1 and Colossians 1:23) points to their equal relevance in shaping a Christian understanding of servant leadership: to the extent that Christian leaders acknowledges the overlordship of Christ, they will follow in the Master’s footsteps and live a life of service. “The stress in the New Testament is on service rather than order, on what we do for others rather than what we tell them to do for us” (Harper 1977, 77).

It is perhaps at this point more than any other that Christian leaders have been affected by the fallen society around them, and there is a need for decontextualisation whatever the cultural context. The “business” model of church (Budde and Brimlow 2002, Sine 2003, White 1979) and mission (Bonk 1991, Engel and Dryness 2000) with its preoccupation with methods, numbers, finances, and marketing has too often (albeit subtly) shifted the focus from internal transformation to external appearances – expensive buildings and the material success of the organisation, even to the honour and respect of the surrounding society.

Particularly among Christian leaders who come from humble backgrounds, the tendency to crave recognition and control is an ever-present danger. Paulo Freire (1982, 30) once observed, “It is a rare peasant who, once promoted to overseer, does not become more of a tyrant towards his former comrades than the owner himself.” The seeking after the respect of this world is indeed seductive – and dangerous. By nature Christians are called to be different from the society around. When status and image become prime factors in institutional decision-making, the model presented by
Jesus would suggest that those in leadership are living as those fallen but not redeemed.

The problem of course is that most leaders are very adept at putting on a public face to those who don’t know them personally, and Christian leaders are no exception. So easily leaders can appear very humble and loving people, while those who know them see their craving for the public eye, and their reluctance to surrender authority even to those more gifted than they are. Christian history provides all the tools for hypocrisy. As Nouwen (1989, 60) describes it, “The long painful history of the Church is the history of people ever and again tempted to choose power over love, control over the cross, being a leader over being led.”

Does this mean that the divine model is that of the total forfeit of one’s selfhood in response to the felt needs of others? Bradley (1999, 52) has rightly pointed out the dangers associated with a “servant leadership” model, particularly when the person in leadership is perceived as weak or indecisive, a problem particularly prevalent in high-grid societies. Akuchie (1993, 43), commenting on Jesus’ interaction with the disciples in Matthew 20:20-28 (cf. Mark 10: 41-45), makes the interesting observation that Jesus in no way disapproved of his disciples’ aspiration and ambition to greatness: “What He disapproved of was the route and methodology through which such heights of greatness are attained among the Gentiles … There is nothing intrinsically wrong with a Christian aspiring to attain positions of greatness in the Body of Christ, provided his or her motivation is primarily to serve” (cf. I Corinthians 12:31; I Timothy 3:1; II Timothy 2:21, 34).

As with the life of Christ himself there is a prophetic, dynamic nature to servant ministry, through which the true meaning of spiritual power through servanthood is demonstrated (Callahan 1990, 83). Jesus was one of all power and authority (Matthew 28:18; Luke 10:22; John 3:35; 17:2), and yet exercised this authority in order that the Kingdom might be established in word and deed (Matthew 4:23; 9:35; Mark 1:39; Luke 4:18-19; 4:40-44; 7:22): with high power Jesus chose to be a lowly servant, responsive to the needs of the people (Matthew 9:36; 11:29; 14:14; 15:32; Mark 8:2), even to the touch of those declared “unclean” by the surrounding society (Matthew 9:20; 14:36; Mark 3:10; 6:56; Luke 6:19). Likewise
the authority Jesus gave to the disciples was not for self-aggrandisement, but in service of healing and exorcism, and the spreading of the gospel of the Kingdom of God (Matthew 10:1; Mark 3:14-15). True servant-leaders are those “… who can act as exemplars of self-offering for repentance and renewal (Romans 12:1f.) and of a public cross-bearing that results in resurrection life for everyone who beholds their ministries (II Corinthians 4:10-12)” (Koenig 1993, 30).

The affirmation of “servant leadership” has become increasingly prevalent also in more secular literature. In particular Greenleaf (1977, 1998) and De Pree (1989, 1992) have sought to demonstrate the importance of serving as the basis for legitimate power and greatness. Particularly in a growing period of societal complexity and mistrust of institutions, people “… will freely respond only to individuals who are chosen as leaders because they are proven and trusted as servants” (Greenleaf 1977, 10). Within the Christian community a servant posture is particularly imperative.

**Empowering Authority**

Rather than seeking to control those they have been called to lead, Christian leaders follow the divine model given in Christ when they seek above all else to serve their best, to seek their growth and enhancement, and to empower them in their own emerging leadership. The pattern of empowering delegation evident in the godhead is seen throughout the Scriptures: in the Old Testament God delegated and empowered Adam (Genesis 2:19), Moses (Exodus 3:12), Samuel (I Samuel 3:19-21), David (I Samuel 16:12), and others. Most significantly God delegated and empowered Jesus who delegated and empowered the apostles: “As the Father has sent me so I send you” (John 20:21). In each case the pattern is one of freedom under authority: Jesus did not seek to control the apostles’ every movement, but gave them the freedom to exercise authority under his authority – even when that exercise was imperfect and sinful. In their sinfulness and weakness Jesus gave the Twelve (including his future betrayer Judas) the power needed “to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness” (Matthew 10:1), and in the Pentecostal sending of
the Holy Spirit the empowerment of those called to lead under Jesus’ divine authority was made complete.

The scriptural model of leadership is not one of studious oversight and control, but one in which those in leadership first delegate to those who are gifted and then seek to empower them to do the tasks for which God has gifted them – and all for the good of the whole Body of Christ. When leaders function as though they have all the gifts, they are in effect claiming to be God. In reality no leader has all the gifts. Rather all believers are called on to complete one another and to let others complete them; only in this way can the community of faith truly aspire to be the Body of Christ.

This transformation of leadership from a controlling follower-developing pattern to an empowering leader-developing pattern can emerge only in as much as leaders are freed from the need to find their significance in their role as leaders. Allen (1998) comments that through finding our significance solely through our relationship with God, “[Jesus] seeks to free us of the need to have our person established by domination over others. He seeks to free us of the need to gain recognition at the expense of others.” The route to this realization is eschatological: “We therefore do not have to compete with each other in order to become ourselves; for what we are to become is not to be gained in the realm of earthly dominance … it is by following him that we can enter the kingdom in which we can serve each other.”

**Consummation: Vulnerable Authority**

Being free to serve and exercising empowering authority is the redemptive ideal modelled in Christ. Unfortunately, the reality with which all Christians struggle is that, although redemption has been won in Christ, the Bible teaches that human nature will continue to be tainted by sin until Christ’s return. Only in the consummation will all things be renewed. Only in the consummation will the Christian’s eyes be opened to see his or her true relationship to God, and hence experience the trust and love that was God’s ideal from the beginning. Only in the
consummation will it fully be understood what it means to be both servants and kings (Revelation 5:10).

But for now the biblical reality for Christians is that they live between the already and the not yet, experiencing the first-fruits of the *eschaton* but awaiting the final consummation. Such a position has implications not simply at the individual level, but also at the corporate – even the national and international level. Followers of Jesus Christ need to recognise that even Christian organisations and institutions are tainted by sin, and that part of their faithful discipleship is to do all they can to reflect the consummate glory of Christ both as individuals and as faith communities, empowered by the Holy Spirit. The letters of Revelation 2-3 are noteworthy in the judgements declared not only on individuals but on congregations as a whole, pointing to the imperative of honest self-evaluation at both the individual and corporate level. As such Christian leaders must continually place their churches and organisations under scrutiny – and this through lenses more impacted by God’s purposes than by the cultural patterns of the world around. Such honest self-evaluation can only be accomplished if leaders have the courage both to exercise authority and to have themselves and their leadership held accountable – what could be described as “vulnerable authority.”

Unfortunately, particularly in high power-distance societies, being vulnerable is seen by many leaders as a great weakness (Lingenfelter and Mayers 2003, 101-102), and the cultural pressure on leaders is to maintain an impression of strength, even perfection. The confession of wrongdoing is tantamount to the acknowledgement of fundamental weakness, and is widely discouraged. Too often “image” becomes an all-consuming concern. But “image” is simply another word for hypocrisy – in Greek the “hypocrite” is the one who acts a part (Wilckens 1972). While recognising the biblical exhortation to respect and honour leaders, in the gospels we see the Middle Eastern Jesus reviling the image-conscious Pharisees as “whitewashed tombs” – an epithet the avoidance of which is a major challenge for leaders serving in image-conscious honour-shame societies. However, the same concern for image is also endemic in the West, if in somewhat more subtle forms. Particularly as the media progressively dominates the psyche, and as churches and
Christian organisations find themselves competing in a sort of ecclesiastic marketplace, Christian leaders very often find themselves focusing on appearances – both of themselves as individuals and of the organisations they lead (Budde and Brimlow 2002).

The process of confession, repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation is foundational to the Christian message. It is noteworthy that it was one of the most Semitic of all the New Testament writers who urged public confession of sin on the Middle Eastern believing community he served (James 5:16). An embrace of a vision of consummation necessitates a decontextualisation of the cultural norm of “face-whitening” so that the gospel leadership pattern can become not just word, but a lived reality.

In many high power-distance contexts it is difficult to stand against the tide – but to do otherwise is a denial of the whole redemptive work of Jesus. When leaders avoid at all costs being vulnerable, when they are reluctant to make appropriate acknowledgement of weakness and fault, when they resist allowing their leadership to be subject to evaluation, they are effectively claiming that they are not between the already and the not yet, but have already attained perfection and consequently have need for neither the Cross nor the resurrection, nor the daily renewal of the Holy Spirit.

It is noteworthy that the one person in the Scriptures described as “a man after God’s own heart” (I Samuel 13:14; Acts 7:46; 13:22) was a man who lied, stole, and committed murder and adultery. David was a man who exercised enormous authority and often severely abused his position. And yet he was a “man after God’s own heart” precisely because even from his position of authority he was willing to be vulnerable before God and the people he served. In the face of Nathan’s scathing rebuke, David carried all the authority to cover his sin and weakness, to displace his guilt on others, to find a way to save face. And yet in a context where “image” was everything, David publicly repented and produced in response one of the greatest and most beloved of the Psalms (II Samuel 12; Psalm 51).

Only when leaders are willing to be vulnerable – with self and with God – can they avoid the pitfalls of the abuses of autocracy and the potential paralyses of
democracy, and truly serve with authority. Only when they are willing and able to hear and receive valid criticism without being controlled by it, only then can they aspire to excellence as individuals and as leaders of God’s people.

There is always more that can be said, and it would be a pretentious writer who would claim to have made the definitive interpretation of leadership through the lenses of salvation history. Nonetheless, the model of theocratic servant leadership provided in the person and work of Jesus impresses itself as an imperative on all Christian leaders. Such an ideal can be attained only in as much as leaders are able to find personal significance in their relationship to God rather than through their status and position.

As Christian leaders living between the “already” of Christ’s redemption and the “not yet” of the consummation, the challenge remains for every Christian leader to engage in continuous and honest self-reflection and community evaluation in the light of Christ’s model of self-giving theocratic leadership. By so doing we can strive towards God’s way of excellence in Christian leadership – the excellent way of love and vulnerable authority.

The Missional-Ecclesial Leadership Vision of the Early Church

The comprehensive picture of God’s salvific work shaped the life of the early church. While the specific language of “already and not yet” was not used, the apostolic leaders’ self-understanding that they were living “in the last days” provided them with a missional impetus that they saw as the heart of the church’s life. This was particularly the case with Paul, whose theological training and dramatic Damascus road experience profoundly shaped his missional life and teachings, and in turn the churches he founded and the individuals he mentored.

In reflecting on early church leadership there is a frequent tendency among Christian writers to seek justification for contemporary church governance and administrative practice through eisegetical reading of texts that describe the developing life of the early church. In so doing the fundamental missional-ecclesial vision of the apostolic writers is often lost. A classic example is the way in which Acts 6 is used to justify various forms of church governance (all of congregational,
Presbyterian, or Episcopal patterns are possible), and such practices as committees and food distribution for the poor. There are legion examples of books (and often the paragraph headings in Bible translations) that refer to this passage as “the choosing of the seven deacons,” a designation not applied until Irenaeus (1885/1987) in the late second century. The term “deacon” does not appear once in the passage and those chosen are neither here nor elsewhere referred to as “deacons,” but as the Seven (see for example Acts 21:9). A more careful reading of this text in its literary context reveals the deeper issues which shaped the early church’s vision of congregational leadership systems.

The book of Acts opens with a period of evangelism and growth (chs. 1-3), followed by the first external challenge to the church with the arrest of Peter and John (4:1-22). The church’s response of courageous faith (4:23-30) is met with a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit (4:31), and a dynamic community life experience (4:32-37). Acts 5:1-10 describes the first internal challenge to the church, the result of which is the power of God expressed in multiple ways, and growth in reputation and numbers (5:11-16). This led to the second external challenge to the church, the arrest of the apostles and their subsequent release (5:17-40), which resulted in rejoicing and the further spread of the Gospel (5:41-42). The conflict over the distribution of food (6:1) led to the appointment of the spirit-filled Seven (6:2-6), and the spread of the word of God (6:7). One of the Seven, Stephen, began performing miracles and preaching with authority (6:8-10), leading to the third external challenge – Stephen’s arrest and martyrdom (6:11–7:60). Central to this passage is Stephen’s “sermon” (7:1-53), the longest recorded in Acts, and less an actual “sermon” than a theological defence before a religious court that paved the way for the acceptance of Gentiles into the church (Shaw 2000, 97-106). The end result of Stephen’s martyrdom is the scattering of the believers (8:1-2), and an introduction to Saul of Tarsus (8:1, 3), who is to become the great apostle to the Gentiles. Among those scattered is another of the Seven, Philip, who uses the opportunity to preach the gospel in Samaria (8:4-13) leading to large numbers of Samaritans being accepted into the church (8:14-25). Philip is then led south where he encounters, teaches, and
baptises the first Gentile convert – the Ethiopian official (8:26-39), after which we see Philip preaching in all the towns along the coast (8:40).

When taken in its context it becomes clear that Luke’s concern in Acts 6:1-6 was not to prescribe a model for church governance and decision-making procedures. In point of fact we have no precise details how the Seven were actually chosen – whether by election, consensus, or appointment. However there is a detailed description of the positive qualities sought in new leaders. Nor was Luke’s concern the administrative shape for distributing food to the poor. Rather we read nothing further about food distribution in Acts, and we next see Stephen not in the ministry of social services but in the ministry of preaching and miracle-working. Shortly thereafter Philip has left his appointed ministry completely and is evangelising Samaria and beyond, and is later referred to not as a deacon but as an evangelist (21:8). If the point of the passage is to give a biblical mandate for committees and/or food distribution, at least two of the Seven failed pretty miserably in the task!

Rather the context of this story drives us to see Luke’s purpose in including it as being to provide an introduction to the Seven as men filled with the Holy Spirit; to demonstrate how Spirit-driven and creative decision-making leads to the spread of the Gospel; and to emphasise that all are welcome in the people of God. The concerns embedded in the text are not administrative but: the missional-ecclesial vision of the spread of the word of God; the power of the Holy Spirit at work in the church and the need to depend on his guidance in decision-making; and, the comprehensive nature of the church racially and linguistically, and the love and acceptance that should characterize our churches; the holiness and integrity of character expected in Christian leaders.

The only thing that a careful literary-contextual approach to Acts 6 says with respect to governance and church administration is that the preferred approach is one which best promotes the spread of the gospel. That this was the “prescribed” approach of the early church is evident in the changing shape of leadership recorded in the book of Acts and the letters. Carter (1997, 19) comments on the early church, “At every stage persons are arranged to do ministry in the most effective way …
Changing mission means … new positions and persons, sometimes through new roles for those already at work.”

In the opening of Acts we see authority vested in the Eleven, who in turn oversee the casting of lots for Matthias to replace Judas and complete the Twelve. Through Acts 1-5 the Twelve apparently assumed sole responsibility for leadership, including oversight of the early church’s finances (4:37; 5:2). As the church grew the responsibilities became unwieldy and the Twelve oversaw the appointment of the Seven (6:1-6) who would take the administrative responsibility from their shoulders so that the Twelve could devote themselves to “prayer and the ministry of the word” (6:2,4). With Stephen’s martyrdom (Acts 7) and Philip’s growing evangelistic ministry (Acts 8) one can only speculate as to what happened to the caring ministry to which they had been appointed, but while absolutely nothing is recorded it seems probable that the apostles continued to appoint others to these sorts of ministries.

Through Acts 8-11 the Twelve, and in particular Peter and John, continue to play a senior leadership role: the new movement in Samaria is only confirmed and established with the arrival of Peter and John (8:14-25); Barnabas saw apostolic approval as crucial to Saul’s acceptance (9:27); Peter is the agency for the acceptance of Cornelius and his Gentile household into the church (10:1-11:18). Luke’s record sees the Spirit’s work at the heart of the church’s centrifugal missional movement to Samaritans and Gentiles (8:15-19; 10:44-48; 11:15-18; cf. Sundkler 1937), crossing boundaries and becoming contextualised in new cultural settings, frequently in spite of the church’s reluctance (11:1-3; cf. Van Gelder 2007, 40).

It is with the growth of the multi-ethnic Antioch church that we first see new official roles being described. Agabus was clearly only one among many who were recognised as “prophets” (propētēs) (11:27-28), and apparently the leadership of the Antiochian church comprised a group of “prophets and teachers” (13:1). Judas and Silas “leaders among the brothers” (15:22) are also designated “prophets” (15:32). While some have questioned whether these were official designated roles in the church (Farnell 1990, Gaffin 1996, MacArthur 1993, Waldron 2007, White 1992), the nominal grammatical structure would suggest that they were. Certainly in the Revelation (11:18; 16:6; 18:24) prophets are singled out as those who have been
targeted for persecution, suggesting an official leadership role in the late first century church. Likewise the *Didache* (10:7; 11:7-12; 13:1-7) speaks of prophets as individuals worthy of high respect and financial support, although by this time they may have had a predominantly itinerant influence rather than being leaders in specific local churches (Kydd 1984, 6-11).

In Acts 14:14 we see the designation “apostle” (*apostolos*) extended to Barnabas. That this became a standard designation for certain leaders beyond the Twelve is confirmed through: Paul’s standard use of the term as a self-appellation; the reference to the apostles Andronicus and Junia (Romans 16:7), Apollos (I Corinthians 4:6 cf. 4:9), and Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy in (I Thessalonians 1:1; cf. 2:6-7); and the instructions given on apostles in the *Didache* (11:3-6). In I Corinthians 12:28 Paul speaks of God’s appointment of first apostles, second prophets, third teachers. Irrespective of whether this is a chronological or hierarchical priority or both, or a prioritisation based on benefit to the faith community (Banks 1994, 96), or simply a listing device, the repeated mention in Ephesians 4:11 suggests that these are stable, permanent roles that were widespread in the early church (Crowe 1997, 141). A discussion of the precise nature of each leadership role is subject to debate and has been discussed in some depth elsewhere (Berding 2006; Blackaby and Blackaby 2004; Carraway 2005; Lester 2005; Patzia 2001, 154-166; Prince 2007; Turner 1996; Wagner 2010). My point here is to indicate the fluid nature of governance and structure in the early church, and the continual restructuring that took place for the accomplishment of the missional mandate.

It is not until Acts 11:30 that we first hear of “elders” (*presbuteros*), some 15 years or more after the Pentecostal founding of the church. But James has also come to prominence, and the apostles and elders look to James’ leadership in the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:13). Schnabel (2008, 48) suggests that the development of leadership by elders in Jerusalem had resulted from the departure of the Twelve from Jerusalem at the time of the Agrippan persecution of 41/42 AD mentioned in Acts 12. It is probable that “eldership” was first developed in the very Jewish environment of the Jerusalem Church, based on the model of the Sanhedrin (Von Campenhausen 1969). Whatever the reasons for the establishment of leadership by elders, from this
point forward elders play a dominant leadership role in the church. Paul sees the appointment of elders as an essential element of his missional activity, and both appoints (Acts 14:23) and reports to (Acts 20:17; 21:18-19) elders as he travels. Even then it would seem that the term “elder” was loose and fluid, and Acts 15:23 (“the elder brethren” – hoi presbuteroi adelphi – is the best attested reading of the Greek text) suggests that in Jerusalem at least the term may have simply referred to senior believers who, like James, had been followers of Christ since the resurrection or even earlier (Beckwith 2003, 45), a usage also found in Papias (1885/1987) and Irenaeus (1885/1987).

Eldership continues to be a prevailing pattern of church governance throughout the New Testament (Acts 20:17; 21:17-18; I Timothy 5:17-19; Titus 1:5-6; James 5:13-15; I Peter 5:1-5; II John 1; III John 1; Revelation 4:4,10; 5:6,8,14; 11:16; 19:4), although the terminology is rather fluid between “elder” and “overseer” (episkopos; sometimes translated “bishop”), particularly seen in the interchange of the terms in Acts 20:17,28 and Titus 1:5-9. The use of the term “overseer” is widespread (Acts 20:28; Philippians 1:1; I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:7), and may have been used to refer more specifically to those leaders in whose homes churches would meet, and who supported the faith community in various ways as “patrons” (Schnelle 2005, 573).

The first we see of the leadership role of “deacon” (diakonos) is in Philippians 1:1 and in reference to Phoebe (Romans 16:1). Despite the widespread translation of the term in Romans 16:1 as “servant” or “deaconess,” neither can be justified linguistically, as the use of the masculine form (diakonon) in reference to a woman points strongly to a formal position held in the church. Deacons are also mentioned as local church leaders in I Timothy 3:8-10. It is noteworthy that Ignatius refers to deacons as not simply “ministers of food and drink” but servants of “the mysteries of Jesus Christ” (Trallians 2:3), pointing to their holistic ministry of word and deed in the service of the church’s mission (Beckwith 2003, 65).

It is probable that the early church gave multiple titles to leaders, for example elder (or deacon) and apostle, prophet, evangelist, and/or shepherd-teacher. This is suggested by Paul’s tendency to introduce his letters with greetings to the elders,
overseers, and/or deacons, but (with the exception of the pastoral letters to Timothy and Titus) the application of more “charismatic” titles in the body of the text. The use of multiple titles is also indicated by a comparison between I Corinthians in which the emphasis is on the leadership of apostles and prophets, and I Clement 42:4 (addressed to the Corinthian church) in which Clement recaps their early leadership in the words, “[the apostles] appointed their first converts … to be bishops [episkopous] and deacons.”

Despite that deacons and elders clearly played a significant part in the life of the early church we are nowhere informed as to the precise nature of their leadership roles, although clearly pastoral (Acts 20:28; James 5:14; I Peter 5:1-2) and teaching (I Timothy 3:2; 5:17; Titus 1:9) ministries, and oversight of missional advancement (Acts 21:18-19), were key responsibilities. Of far greater concern to the New Testament writers than leadership roles was the quality of life expected from these leaders (I Timothy 3; Titus 1:5-9; I Peter 5:1-4), as an essential necessity in the spread of the gospel (Acts 14:23; 20:28-32; Titus 1:5). Paul clearly saw true righteousness in leaders as having foundational missional implications: the good reputation (marturia) of leaders (I Timothy 3:7) is directly related to the witness (marturia) of the church (Schnabel 2008, 247). Fee (1989, 10) observes, Apart from the authority of the apostles over the churches they had founded, there seems to be very little interest in the question of ‘authority’ at the local level. To be sure, the people are directed to respect, and submit to, those who laboured among them and served them in the Lord (I Corinthians 16:16; Hebrews 13:17). But in their roles as those who care for the others. The concern for governance and roles within church structures emerges at a later time.

Fluidity of governance and administration in service of the church’s missional-ecclesial vision is also emphasized in the consistent biblical use of organic rather than organisational language in describing the church: body (Romans 12:4-6; I Corinthians 12:12-26; Ephesians 4:4,25; 5:29-30; Colossians 2:19; 3:15); family (Matthew 12:49-50; Romans 12:10; Galatians 6:10; Hebrews 13:1; I Peter 1:22; 3:8); bride (II Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 19:7); wife (Ephesians 5:25-28); olive tree (Romans 11:17-24); a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation (I Peter 2:9). In the New Testament the word “member” is consistently used with a biological
rather than organisational meaning. Paul likewise saw his relationship to the churches he had established in parental (as father in I Corinthians 4:14-15; II Corinthians 12:14; I Thessalonians 2:11, and as mother in Galatians 4:19; I Thessalonians 2:7) rather than organisational terms (Banks and Ledbetter 2004, 37). The familial character of the early church’s self-understanding is equally seen in that Luke uses some form of the Greek term *adelphos* (“brother/sister”) fifty-seven times in the book of Acts when speaking of the community of faith. These images point to the church as: people more than programmes; dynamic and growing rather than static and stagnant; heterogeneous rather than homogeneous.

While certain positions (notably “apostles”, “prophets”, “elders”, “overseers”, and “deacons”) seemed to hold some level of precedence, the notion of a distinct “clergy” class was foreign to the early Church. The word *kleros*, from which the word “clergy” derives, referred not to a separate group within the church, but to all who had received the inheritance of God’s redemption (Acts 26:18; Colossians 1:11-12; cf. Arn 1986, 108). Within the early Christian community each believer was called on to fulfil the ministry for which God had gifted him or her, so that corporately all may together grow to maturity (Ephesians 4:11-12). Spiritual gifts found their source in God himself, and consequently “… the authority to exercise a gift was the right of any person who had a call from God and could demonstrate it by the ability to use the gift properly. As a result, a large group of diverse people often shared the leadership” (Steele 1986, 9). Gaillardetz (2008, 30-31) asserts that the “charism-versus-office” debate is a product of Protestant-Catholic polemics, and that a more “fluid continuum” existed between office and gift in the early church.

Comparative studies suggest that a significant cultural element came into the formation of structures within the early church. Meeks (1983, 75-84), for example, observes clear parallels between the structure of local Christian communities in the first century and the concurrent models of the household (*oikia*), the voluntary associations that proliferated in the early Roman Empire, the synagogue (cf. Hesselgrave 1980, 351; Steele 1986, 27), and even the philosophical and rhetorical schools. There can be no question but that patterns of congregational leadership in the early Church reflected predominant models observable in the local culture.
However, the end goal differed: in contrast to a world that was shaped by Caesar the early church leaders recognised their primary calling to form an alternate community built on an identity rooted in Jesus Christ (Roxburgh and Romanuk 2006, 118). With this self-understanding, the focus on character rather than role in early Christian leadership should not surprise.

Even within the relatively brief period represented by the New Testament documents, change and development in church structure is observable. Lingenfelter (1992, 194-201) notes that in the early days, while the community was small and localised around Jerusalem, and group-identity was a central concern, a “collectivist” approach to leadership was adopted by the early Christians. As the church grew, incorporated first Samaritan, then Gentile believers, and expanded far beyond the Levant region, a more complex organisation evolved. However, structures remained fluid until the close of the first century. While the first hints of more formalised categories appear in the pastoral letters to Timothy and Titus and in the Didache, it is only in the writings of Ignatius (Ephesians 6; Magnesians 6; Trallians 3; Philadelphians 1; Smyrnaeans 8) in the early second century that more hierarchical and rigid ecclesial leadership structures begin to appear. If anything, a study of New Testament terminology teaches us that congregational leadership forms must be understandable to the cultural context, and yet flexible enough to cope with changing needs both outside and inside the church, with the ultimate purpose that the community of faith will best live out its missional-ecclesial identity.

Summary

A number of foundational biblical principles for a critical-contextual analysis of leadership emerge from the discussion in this chapter. In terms of salvation history, the following are significant:

- Leadership in the image of God affirms: creativity and order; the stewardship of delegated authority; mutuality and service, rather than domination and hierarchy; team leadership.

- The Fall points to the need for continual self-evaluation both individually and corporately, and highlights the need to decontextualise leadership
characteristics that are driven by culture rather than the values of the Kingdom of God.

- The Incarnation demonstrates the missional heart of God, and both affirms and critiques culture.

- Christian leadership is servant leadership. The model of self-sacrificial servanthood exemplified in the life of Jesus is the pattern towards which Christian leaders are to aspire.

- Authority is granted by God for empowering leader-development rather than controlling follower-development.

- The process of confession, repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation is foundational for Christian leaders who live in the power of the Spirit between the redemption of Christ and his consummate return.

A careful reflection on leadership patterns in the early church suggests the following general principles:

- The missional-ecclesial vision of the early church shaped its governance. Organisational change occurred whenever the shape of governance was hindering the spread of the gospel and the formation of a community that reflected the incarnate character of God.

- The variety and flexibility of New Testament leadership terms seem to make any definitive statements on church governance or Christian leadership practice singularly unwise. Where any form of structured ministry is considered it is seen as a call to service of the faith community rather than as an opportunity to exercise power (Gaillardetz 2008, 32).

- General processes of institutionalisation (Hiebert, Shaw, and Tiénou 2000, 333-346) were at work even in the early church. However, its commitment to missional-ecclesial vision with its balance between “prophets” [apostles and prophets] and “priests” [elders and deacons] (Hiebert, Shaw, and Tiénou 2000, 341-342) slowed the process of institutionalisation at least until the early years of the second century.

- The Holy Spirit is the source of wisdom for both the choice of leaders and their ongoing ministry. It is the Holy Spirit who provides both the gifting and authority necessary to fulfil particular leadership functions. Consequently, one of the chief responsibilities of existing leaders is to acknowledge and empower whom the Holy Spirit has already appointed. Church governance in the early church is fundamentally a “pneumatic” order (Brunner 1968).
• While certain individuals within the community of faith are called to take positions of supervisory leadership, there is nonetheless a wide variety of leadership roles and these roles will be filled by many different members of the Body of Christ. Multiple leadership is based on Holy Spirit giftedness.

• Personal integrity, quality of life, being filled with the Holy Spirit, and a recognition that leaders are no more (or no less) than stewards entrusted with an authority which ultimately is not their own, are more important leadership issues than are position and task. Christian leadership finds its power base in spiritual rather than other forms of power.

• Church membership is by nature relational, emphasising mutual care and responsiveness to needs. The purpose of leadership is corporate growth in Christ, a growth that will not occur individually in an isolated setting.

Theoretical Foundations for Critical-Contextual Analysis

Chapters Two to Five have sought to provide theoretical foundations for a critical-contextual analysis of congregational leadership in Arab churches which was tested empirically in the field research presented in Chapters Six and Seven.

I began by examining the complexity of leadership studies, and have discussed the value of contingency and systemic approaches for understanding the processes of influence and authority in organisations in general and Christian congregations in particular. I have suggested that Hofstede’s model of cultural distance provides a framework for a multidimensional understanding of how leadership patterns function in different cultural contexts, and a more specific analysis has been presented of leadership patterns in the Arab world.

Bringing all these features into dialogue with the current biblical-theological chapter I suggest the following synthetic observations for a critical-contextual assessment of leadership in the Arab churches:

• Power Distance. Arab leadership tends towards a fairly paternalistic high level of power distance (pages 52-55). The Scriptures affirm the value of authority, but see it as a stewardship for empowering others. Consequently it may be expected that a critical-contextual approach to congregational leadership in the Arab world would see a fair level of centralised authority, but with a clear empowerment of new emerging leaders.

• Individualism-Collectivism. Arab society tends towards being highly collectivist (pages 55-61). Since the Scriptures affirm the relational nature of the community of faith, and so it would be expected that a critical-
contextual approach to congregational leadership in the Arab world should place a high value on relationships. However, this focus on relationships should not be stifling and self-serving but aimed at corporate growth for the spread of the Gospel.

- Masculinity (tough-tender/task-relationship). Arab society is highly ambivalent in this parameter of Hofstede’s model (pages 59-61). In light of the scriptural focus on mutuality and service in leadership, a critical-contextual approach to Arab congregational leadership may be expected to affirm affiliative and paraletic patterns in which leaders point to the future from alongside rather than above.

- Uncertainty Avoidance. The ambivalence of Arab society on this parameter appears to be due to the Arab love of relational spontaneity with a prevalence of bureaucratic structure that is common in high power distance societies (pages 62-64). In light of the biblical-theological reflections given in this chapter a critical-contextual approach to Arab congregational life may expect to affirm spontaneity and change, but with structures that evolve in response to the changing challenges of society. The missional-ecclesial vision would provide the basis upon which order and structures are designed.

- Long or Short Term Orientation. Although the research is not conclusive, the general pattern in Arab society appears to be a tendency towards traditionalism and short term orientation (pages 64-67). In light of the centrality of the missional-ecclesial vision to healthy congregational life in the New Testament it is possible that the greatest level of decontextualisation of Arab churches may need to take place on this parameter, with a greater level of vision and future orientation than would appear common in the wider Arab society.

The extent to which these observations are reflective of numerically growing Arab congregations was the subject of the field research, the details of which follow.
CHAPTER SIX
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this thesis has been to examine the extent to which healthy church life in the Arab world is reflective of critically contextual systemic patterns of congregational leadership. In order to assess the relationship between culture and healthy church life, the field research component was designed to observe differences in congregational leadership style between Western and Arab churches, and between numerically growing and stagnant churches in the Arab world. The field research therefore examined through seven systemic dimensions the following hypothesis:

“that culturally appropriate congregational leadership will have a positive effect on numerical church growth in the Arab Middle East.”

This chapter presents the field research methodology, and Chapter Seven will report on the results for each of the seven dimensions. Chapter Eight will then discuss the results of the field research in light of the biblical-theological principles presented in Chapter Five, thereby assessing to what extent healthy church life in the Arab world is reflective of critically contextual systemic patterns of congregational leadership.

Research Statements

The field research hypothesis involved the examination of three field research statements:

1. There are measurable differences in congregational leadership style between North American and Arab Middle Eastern cultural settings.

2. There are measurable differences in congregational leadership style between Arab Middle Eastern churches that have seen numerical growth and those that have not.

3. Congregational leadership styles which take into account local cultural forms positively impact the numerical growth of local churches in the Arab world.
Placed in null hypothesis form the field research statements tested in this study were as follows:

H₀¹: Congregational leadership patterns do not vary between the North American and Arab Middle Eastern cultural settings.

H₀²: There is no significant difference in congregational leadership patterns between numerically growing and numerical stagnant or declining churches in the Arab world.

H₀³: The use of local cultural forms in congregational leadership does not have a significant impact on numerical church growth in the Arab world.

The Research Methodology

Research Statement One

A comparison between congregational leadership styles in different cultural contexts was undertaken by applying a questionnaire that had previously been applied in North America to a sample from the Protestant churches of the Arab world.

During the early period of literature survey (November 1995 to April 1996), a number of extant questionnaires which had previously been used in North America were reviewed. The possibility of developing an original questionnaire was also considered. The Congregational Systems Inventory (CSI)¹ (Parsons and Leas 1993b) (given in its original form in Appendix 3) was chosen as a suitable instrument for the research because of these factors:

1. The multi-faceted nature of organic systems models, upon which the CSI was built, was considered particularly appropriate for inter-cultural leadership studies.

2. The similarity between the dimensions examined in the CSI and the five dimensions of Hofstede’s model of “cultural distance” pointed to the questionnaire’s suitability for an inter-cultural comparative study of leadership (see Appendix 6).

3. A North American data base was readily available through Parsons and Leas’ (1993a) original work. The summary of this data base, as given by Parsons and Leas, is shown in Appendix 7.

¹ Used with permission of the Alban Institute, Inc., 4550 Montgomery Avenue, Suite 433N, Bethesda, MD 20814. Copyright 1993. All rights reserved.
4. The Alban Institute’s reputation for scholarly excellence and their sponsorship of the original development and application of the CSI lent credibility to the questionnaire as a research instrument. The Alban Institute is a Christian organisation established in the mid 1970s with the express purpose of strengthening the congregational life of primarily mainline Protestant churches in North America through the provision of congregational resources and the encouragement of academic research into church life. The institute is responsible for the production of a scholarly journal and frequent broadsheets on practical congregational issues, as well as the regular publication of monographs on church-related issues.

5. The instrument was found to be easily administered and scored.

6. The CSI’s use of forced response rather than use of a Likert-style scaled response approach was seen as culturally appropriate. Trompenaars (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars 1997, 83-104; Hampden-Turner, Trompenaars, and Lewis 2000, 123-158; Trompenaars and WOolliams 2003, 23-61; Trompenaars and Voerman 2010, 109-124) has written extensively about the difference between “specific” and “diffuse” cultures, the former being those which are more comfortable with forced response, the latter with scaled response. According to Trompenaars and Voerman’s (2010, 112-113) research both Arab and North American cultures fall high on “specificity.”

In summary, the application of the CSI among Arab Protestant church members seemed a reasonable basis for comparing congregational leadership patterns in the Middle East to those that exist in North America.

**Research Statement Two**

In order to assess the second research statement, a means was needed for evaluating the numerical growth of the Arab churches in the sample. The evaluative element was introduced through an introductory page which was provided with the copies of the CSI that were distributed among Arab Protestants. This page (shown in English in Appendix 8) requested personal information on the respondent’s church affiliation, role in the church, and the size and perceived numerical growth or decline of the respondent’s church. The respondent’s church was assessed for numerical growth by applying a “growth score” to the response given on the church’s numerical growth as follows: significant growth (+2), growth (+1), no growth (0), decline (-1), significant decline (-2). A correlation between numerical growth and the results
under the CSI was calculated to evaluate the impact on numerical growth of different patterns of congregational leadership style in Arab churches. Where this correlation was statistically significant, support would be assumed for the second research statement, that there are measurable differences in congregational leadership style between Arab churches that have seen numerical growth and churches that have not ($H_{o}^{2}$ rejected).

**Research Statement Three**

Evaluation of the hypothesis of the study hinged on the third research statement: if $H_{o}^{3}$ was rejected, then this was equivalent to statistical support for the hypothesis. $H_{o}^{3}$ in turn depended on $H_{o}^{1}$ and $H_{o}^{2}$. If a cultural factor was observable in the responses to the CSI ($H_{o}^{1}$ rejected), and a statistically significant correlation was found between numerical growth and style of congregational leadership ($H_{o}^{2}$ rejected), and the trend from the American data to the Arab data matched the trend towards numerical growth (for example, if the Arab data was greater than the American data and the correlation figure was positive), then support would be assumed for the third research statement – that congregational leadership styles which take into account local cultural forms positively impact the numerical growth of the church ($H_{o}^{3}$ rejected).

Parsons and Leas’ (1993a) North American CSI results and the results received using the modified version of the CSI (MCSI) in the Arab Middle East thus formed the basic approach to the evaluation of the research statements and, ultimately, the hypothesis of the study.

**Development of the Research**

Following the choice of the CSI as the research instrument, in May 1996 permission was requested of the Alban Institute to use the CSI (Appendix 1). Permission was granted by the Institute the same month (Appendix 2).

During June and July 1996 I prepared a translation of the CSI into Arabic, which was revised and polished by Dr. Galeb Samaan, an instructor in Arabic living in Damascus. During August 1996, and as a part of the pilot study, Nabil
Abdulmalek, a full-time translator working at the centre of the Program for Theological Education by Extension in Amman, was also asked for his comments, and several further amendments were made to the Arabic version into a slightly modified version of the CSI (MCSI). An example of the final Arabic version of the MCSI, as administered, has been given in Appendix 9. Throughout the translation process considerable effort was made to ensure that the original intent of the CSI items was communicated effectively into Arabic, and that the items would be contextually understandable.

The twelve months from September 1996 to August 1997 were allocated to the collection of data. This time framework provided sufficient opportunity for travel and follow-up of completed questionnaires. The possibility of invalidation of results due to the impact over time of changes in leadership, administration, or attendance numbers in the respondent churches, was also minimised by limiting the period of data collection.

A test for external validity had not previously been conducted for the CSI (see the Alban Institute letter in Appendix 2). In order to test the validity of the instrument, at least in the Arab world, a series of ten interviews with Arab church leaders was conducted in parallel with the administration of the MCSI. English versions of the interview guides are given in Appendices 10 and 11, and the guides in Arabic as used are given in Appendices 12 and 13. A sample transcript of one of these interviews, translated from the Arabic, is given in Appendix 14, and a summary of the more relevant comments from the various interviews is given in Appendix 15. The responses to the interviews were generally consistent with the responses given by Arab church members to the MCSI. These results lent support to the external validity of the MCSI for the Arab churches of the Middle East.

Originally a cover page was prepared, introducing the researcher and explaining the purpose of the study. The first two pastors who were approached to request participation of their churches in the study for security reasons asked for the removal of these pages; it was preferred that the questionnaire be perceived as strictly internal to the local congregation, rather than the work of any outside individual or group. Discussions with Rev. Adib Awad (Moderator of the
Presbyterian Synod of Syria and Lebanon) and Rev. Farid Khoury (President of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Syria and Lebanon) confirmed this as a general preference, and so the MCSI was administered without an explanatory page.

Samples were taken from Arab Protestant churches in each of the four countries of Syria, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon.

In Syria over the twelve month period from September 1996 to August 1997, a sampling was taken from every Protestant congregation with a regular attendance of 50 or above, as well as from most of the smaller urban congregations – a total of 105 satisfactorily completed questionnaires from 17 different Syrian congregations. Accessing Syrian churches was a relatively straightforward process due to my residence in Syria and ongoing involvement with the local churches, and in particular the role I then had as co-ordinator of the Program for Theological Education by Extension (PTEE) in Syria. Although precise figures are difficult to obtain, distribution of questionnaires in Syria certainly exceeded 10% of the total regular attendance of the evangelical churches in the country, with a return rate of distributed questionnaires of 54%.

Distribution of the questionnaire in Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan was less extensive and less methodical, but nonetheless provided a basis for assessing the more general applicability of the results throughout the Middle East beyond Syria. Nevertheless, 96 members from 23 Egyptian, 6 Lebanese, and 4 Jordanian churches returned completed questionnaires that were acceptable for analysis.

Where possible I personally distributed, administered, and collected the questionnaires, in each case pre-facing the administration of the MCSI with an explanation of the nature of the questionnaire along the following lines:

1. I explained to participants in the study that the first page was a personal information page. Participants were also assured that, while a number of details were requested, all completed questionnaires would remain anonymous and confidential.

2. It was then pointed out that the actual questionnaire begins on the second page.

3. The instructions at the beginning of the MCSI were then repeated orally, and elaborated upon if not fully understood.
4. Respondents were urged not to spend too much time on any one question, but to give the answer that most closely resembled their congregation: for example, if it was felt that response a. was 55% accurate, and response b. 45% accurate, response a. should be given.

5. It was explained that the MCSI sought to examine trends on seven dimensions, and that, as there were ten questions for each dimension, if one answer was not totally accurate the trend would emerge through the other nine questions.

6. Respondents were given up to 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

7. Participants were thanked in anticipation for their participation in the study.

Where I was unable personally to oversee the distribution of the MCSI, the pastor or one of the church’s senior lay leaders was asked to be responsible. An explanation was given to the person administering the questionnaire in a fashion similar to that given above, and if possible I had the person responsible for distribution of the MCSI complete a questionnaire while I was present to ascertain any perceived problems. The pastor or lay leader was then urged to be careful in his or her explanation of the questionnaire when distributing it.

Completed questionnaires were processed according to the instructions given in the original CSI (see Appendix 3, page 238) by circling the scoring response for each question, and giving a score of 1 when this matched the response given and 0 when it did not. An example of how this process was completed for an actual returned questionnaire is shown in Appendix 9. Resulting scores for each question were recorded, collated and analysed using Microsoft Excel.

A number of statistical tests were applied to the data received from completed CSI questionnaires. For each dimension a t-test was used to compare the North American sample mean with the Arab sample mean, and a Pearson’s correlation co-efficient was calculated for the Arab sample to observe any relationship between numerical growth and the given dimension. If a significant difference was observed between the North American and Arab samples ($H_{01}$ rejected), and a significant correlation with Arab church growth occurred ($H_{02}$ rejected), and the direction from the North American data to Arab data matched the direction of correlation against numerical growth for the Arab sample, then for that
particular dimension statistical support was claimed for the assertion that culturally appropriate patterns of leadership contribute to Arab church growth ($H_0$ rejected, lending support to the hypothesis of the study).

My statistical processes and results have been reviewed and checked by Victor Drastik (Ph.D. in applied statistics, University of New South Wales; and formerly lecturer in applied statistics at the University of Wollongong). His assessment is that the processes are adequate. However, on the basis of Drastik’s advice a quality control check was conducted on the Arab data by means of a comparison between the actual sample and a truncated sample, removing approximately 5% of “outliers” – half from above and half from below. The results of this check are given in Appendix 16.

The Instrument

In developing the CSI Parsons and Leas used several key foundational elements of “family systems” theory such as the issues of homeostasis versus overfunctioning, and the significance of agreements, rules, roles, rituals and goals, but in the specifics of the Inventory drew from a wide range of informants in the field of organic systemic understandings of the church. The end result is therefore rooted in “family systems” theory but in practice provides a quantitative tool for assessing broader systemic patterns.

While recognising that a systemic approach to understanding congregational leadership does not answer every question related to church life, I consider that it demonstrates certain distinct advantages over other models. These advantages include the following:

1. It provides a total framework of thinking, a way of looking at reality, not merely a functional *modus operandi* (Stevens and Collins 1993, 148-150).

2. The way is opened for leaders to relate to the church as a whole rather than simply focusing on special interest areas (Stevens and Collins 1993, 148-150).

3. A humbler approach to church leadership is encouraged, inviting the leader to regard him- or herself as an influential member who can give leadership to the process, rather than the absolute leader of the people (Stevens and Collins 1993, 148-150).
4. Church leaders are helped to reconceptualise the mission of the church by putting the church system in relationship to other systems in its environment (Lindgren and Shawchuck 1977, 26-27).

5. The model clearly reflects the dynamic and holistic view of reality revealed in the Bible, and particularly in the synergetic teaching of Paul in I Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4 (Stevens and Collins 1993, xix).

As a theoretical framework for understanding the nature of congregational life in different cultural settings, the organic systemic approach seemed a particularly useful model. The recognition within an organic systemic model that congregational life is a complex phenomenon built on a variety of factors opens the way for cultural diversity to be observed in its multiplicity of dimensions. The use of this particular model was therefore adopted for this study.

As a means of testing the functioning of organic systems in local congregational settings, Parsons and Leas (1993b) developed the Congregational Systems Inventory to measure seven specific dimensions of congregational dynamics:

1. Strategy. The “strategy” scale seeks to assess the goals of a congregation, ranging from rigid planning to total spontaneity.

2. Authority. The “authority” scale measures the extent to which decision-making is concentrated in the hands of a few people, or dispersed more widely in the congregation.

3. Process. The “process” scale examines the rules of a congregation, as to whether they are clearly defined or regulated (mandatory process), or left to individual discretion.

4. Pastoral Leadership. The “pastoral leadership” scale assesses whether the pastor tends to be managerial or visionary in his leadership.

5. Relatedness. The “relatedness” scale evaluates the extent to which the ministry of the congregation is done co-operatively (collegial relatedness) or independently (individualism).

6. Lay Leadership. The “lay leadership” scale examines whether the senior laity in the congregation are managerial or visionary in their leadership.
7. Learning. The “learning scale” measures the congregation’s orientation toward the past (maximising learning) or the future (metamising learning) as it seeks to develop its life and ministry.

The CSI was designed to determine the perceived tendencies within any particular congregation under each of these seven dimensions. To this end Parsons and Leas designed 70 pairs of alternatives (10 for each dimension), and the respondent in each case was asked to choose that which most closely described his or her congregation. Recognising the tendency towards choosing an alternative which places one’s congregation in the best light, Parsons and Leas endeavoured to design each pair to be of equal type – either both being positive or both being negative.

The design pattern can readily be seen in the following examples:

1. a.___ As a congregation, we have a clear, overall plan that we follow together. (Planned strategy)
   b.___ As a congregation, we encourage boards or committees to create and follow their own plans. (Spontaneous strategy)

   Both questions are positive in tone. The central issue for the “strategy” dimension – the extent to which church planning is structured (response a.) or more spontaneous (response b.) – can be clearly seen. The same issues are addressed but in more negative terms in questions 15 and 64:

15. a.___ Sometimes I think we spend too much time planning. (Planned strategy)
    b.___ Sometimes I think we spend too little time planning. (Spontaneous strategy)

64. a.___ We undercommit to our plans by not identifying and pursuing clear, measurable outcomes. (Spontaneous strategy)
    b.___ We overcommit to our plans by not considering new opportunities along the way. (Planned strategy)

Other questions are rather more descriptive and neutral in tone, as for example question 50:

50. a.___ Our congregation’s direction and priorities are shaped by current needs and issues. (Spontaneous strategy)
    b.___ Our congregation’s direction and priorities are determined by a long-range plan. (Planned strategy)
In some questions one response tends to be more positive than the other. However Parsons and Leas sought to balance the questions so that where, for example, one question would favour a spontaneous strategy response, another question would favour a planned strategy response. This can be seen in, respectively, questions 29 and 36:

29. a. Our lay leaders are committed to a long-range plan. (Planned strategy)  
   b. Our lay leaders are willing to change the plans in response to changing circumstances. (Spontaneous strategy)

36. a. Our overall direction as a congregation is unclear. (Spontaneous strategy)  
   b. Our overall direction as a congregation is clear. (Planned Strategy)

In this way the same issue was reiterated in a variety of ways with a variety of tones, and the extent to which an individual viewed his or her congregation as tending toward either spontaneous or planned strategy could be readily assessed.

A similar pattern of question design can be seen for the authority dimension:

58. a. We have evolved a participatory and collaborative decision-making process in our congregation. (Dispersed authority)  
   b. We have evolved an efficient chain of command in our congregation. (Concentrated authority)

Both responses could be seen as positive, with the distinction between dispersed and concentrated authority evident. A more negative choice of responses can be seen in question 9:

9. a. We have some entrenched groups or individuals that tend to run things around here. (Concentrated authority)  
   b. We are so concerned about consensus and collaboration that we suffer for a lack of decisive leadership. (Dispersed authority)

A similar pattern of question design is found for each of the seven dimensions, with a mixture of positive, negative and neutral responses, but continually returning to the same repeated theme.

The CSI as originally administered by Parsons and Leas is printed in Appendix 3. Appendix 3 also includes Parsons and Leas’ scoring instructions and scoring sheet, as well as their summary explanation of congregational systems theory, and an outline summary for interpreting results on the CSI. Parsons and Leas
had developed this material in more depth in their book *Understanding Your Congregation as a System* (1993a); a summary of the more detailed explanations given by Parsons and Leas (1993a) is given in Appendix 5.

Appendix 4 gives a clearer picture of the design of the questions, showing the CSI broken down according to each of the seven dimensions, with scoring responses marked. For each dimension five questions scored on response a. and five on response b. The systematic movement through the seven dimensions (question 1 being on “strategy,” 2 on “authority,” and so forth up to “learning” for question 7, and then the same order repeated 10 times), and the alternation in scoring responses from a. to b. and back again, makes it more difficult for respondents to manipulate the results. At the same time, scoring and data collection is a very straightforward process.

Parsons and Leas (1993a) applied the CSI among a variety of American Protestant congregations, receiving 515 completed responses in their initial study. In their analysis of this data Parsons and Leas provided the overall sample mean and standard deviation for each dimension. In addition, means and standard deviations were calculated according to different sizes of congregation, based on Rothauge’s (1983) categories of family (regular attendance less than 50), pastoral (50-150 regular attendance), programme (150-350 regular attendance), and corporate (regular attendance more than 350) churches. A summary of the North American data is presented in Appendix 7. Parsons and Leas (1993a, 120-129) found that their results were generally found to be consistent with the “family systems” framework on which the inventory was based, pointing to a level of internal validity of the CSI as an instrument for measuring congregational dynamics.

**Material Added to the CSI**

In Parsons and Leas’s original work (1993b), a generalising approach was used in which denominational differences and the status of the interviewee were not taken into account, and no evaluative element was included as to whether particular styles contributed to congregational health. In the current study a supplementary information page was added, seeking information regarding the following:
1. denominational affiliation

2. the individual’s status in the church, and

3. the individual’s personal assessment of his or her church’s current average attendance, and of the extent to which the church has grown over the previous five years.

The supplementary informational page has been given in English in Appendix 8. I translated the page into Arabic, and it was reviewed and revised by Dr. Samaan and Mr. Abdulmalek, as for the CSI as a whole. The translated version of the introductory page is the first page of Appendix 9.

While recognising the subjectivity of the last of the informational items, it seemed a reasonable approach for gathering basic congregational statistics. Obtaining precise demographic data of any kind in the Arab world is difficult, and the situation in the Arab evangelical churches is no exception. Few churches keep attendance records, and even those that do are rarely consistent or accurate. Although a personal assessment may simply measure the individuals’ attitudes towards their churches rather than the actual attendance past and present, it was considered a reasonable assumption that over a relatively large sample the personal factor would be minimised and general trends in reality would emerge. As no other means of obtaining statistical data on congregational growth was available, the use of personal assessment was considered to be an appropriate approach.

**Validity of the Instrument**

Through personal correspondence Speed Lees acknowledged to me that no analysis of external validity had been conducted on the CSI in North America. An assessment of the validity of the translated version of the MCSI for use among Arab Protestants was undertaken in two phases: an initial pilot study, and a series of personal interviews held concurrently with the administration of the questionnaire.

**The Pilot Study**

During August 1996 a pilot study of the translated version of the MCSI was undertaken. Five Arabs from evangelical churches in Jordan – a pastor and elder
from the Nazarene church, and two elders and a senior woman leader from the Free Evangelical Church – were asked to complete the MCSI. Participants in the pilot study were requested to suggest possible modifications in the translation, observe any difficulties encountered in understanding specific questions, and comment on the suitability of the study for Arab churches.

On the basis of translation suggestions given, a number of modifications were made to the wording of the Arabic version of the MCSI.

The only questions that caused fundamental difficulties in understanding were 25 and 41, since the use of the term “organisation” to refer to the local church was not widely known among the five participants in the pilot study.

The alternatives for question 25 were therefore modified to read:

“a. Our pastor focuses first on making the present management of the church effective.
“b. Our pastor focuses first on changing the system of management in the church into new and more effective ways.”

Similar alterations were made to question 41.

The final translated version of the MCSI as administered has been given in Appendix 9, following the interviewee information page.

Two of the respondents in the pilot study had no reservations as to the applicability of the MCSI for the Arab churches. Two commented that it was obvious from its design that the questionnaire was a translated version of a questionnaire originally designed in the West, but that the questions were relevant and applicable to the evangelical churches in the Middle East. The fifth respondent, Mr. Abdulmalek, stated that while he personally had no difficulty completing the questionnaire, perhaps other participants in the study would not find the process straightforward. It was primarily upon his recommendation that questions 25 and 41 were modified as above, and a number of further translation amendments made.

**Interviews with Arab Church Leaders**

As a means of establishing the validity of the Congregational Systems Inventory for the Arab population, and also for strengthening and supplementing the research, guides were developed for interviewing lay and pastoral leaders. English
versions of the Lay and Pastoral Leader Interview Guides are given in, respectively, Appendices 10 and 11. The translated Arabic versions are given in, respectively, Appendices 12 and 13.

The interview guides provided open-response questions under each of the seven dimensions suggested by Parsons and Leas. So, for example, the “strategy” dimension was tested with the question:

Do you consider time spent on developing a structured plan for the future of the church helpful or a waste of time? Why?

Similarly, the “authority” dimension was assessed through the question:

How is your church organised? Who makes decisions as to: financial expenditure; special events; curriculum used in Sunday School; attendance at conferences?

In each of the above cases the questions sought to reflect the central issues being examined in the CSI. Additional questions were added investigating attitudes towards cultural factors and the current health of the church:

What leadership roles in Arab society do you feel are most similar to that of a pastor? In what ways are they similar or dissimilar?

Have you seen any evidence of spiritual awakening in your church the last year or so? Has there been any notable change in the giving or attendance at the church?

Introductory and concluding questions provided the interviewee with the opportunity for more general responses as to his or her personal pilgrimage and current role in the church:

How did you come to enter pastoral ministry? What were the main influences - both people and events - that led to this decision? (Introductory)

What do you find most satisfying and enjoyable to you in your present ministry? What do you find difficult or frustrating? (Introductory)

What advice would you give a young person considering entering pastoral ministry in the Arab world today? (Concluding)

For what three concerns would you most like prayer in your ministry? (Concluding)
Dr. Samaan and I worked together on the translation of the Lay Leader and Pastoral Leader Interview Guides to ensure accuracy and clarity. A field test was conducted (but not recorded) with two lay leaders (elders) in Jordan, and no apparent difficulty was encountered by the interviewees.

During the twelve months to August 1997 ten interviews were conducted with a variety of lay and pastoral leaders. These are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Interviews Conducted with Arab Church Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>Free Evangelical Elder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Apostolic Grace Pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Presbyterian Christian Educator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Presbyterian Pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Presbyterian Pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>C&amp;MA Christian Educator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>C&amp;MA Pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>Presbyterian Elder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>Presbyterian Pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>Presbyterian Pastor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I recorded the interviews on cassette and then prepared a translated transcription. A sample translated transcript of one of these interviews has been given in Appendix 14, and a summary of the more significant comments under each of the seven dimensions can be found in Appendix 15. In general the material recorded in the interviews was consistent with the results received through the administration of the MCSI, lending support to the external validity of the MCSI as an instrument for measuring congregational leadership patterns in the Middle East.

The Survey Population: The Arab Churches

The vast array of Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant Christian communities in the Middle East reflects a long, varied, and oftentimes difficult history that goes back to the very beginnings of Christendom.
The Orthodox churches trace their roots back to the first centuries of the Christian era (Badr, Slim, and Nohra 2005, 219-376; Bailey and Bailey 2003, 54-78, 130-136; Betts 1978, 1-19; Horner 1989, 6-36; Moffett 1992, 45-104, 149-215; Wessels 1995, 46-61), and are to this day represented by communities of Coptic Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, Assyrian Orthodox (Nestorian Church of the East), and Syrian Orthodox (Jacobite) Christians.

The formation of Eastern-rite Catholic churches began with the Maronite adherence to Rome during the period of the Crusades (Wessels 1995, 102-124), and became more widespread through Catholic missionary activity from the early 17th century onwards (Badr, Slim, and Nohra 2005, 631-655; Bailey and Bailey 2003, 79-96; Betts 1978, 16-19, Horner 1989, 36-52). From each of the Orthodox churches, members sought allegiance to Rome, but under the direct leadership of their own Patriarchs. As a result the Coptic Catholic, Armenian Catholic, Syrian Catholic, Chaldean Catholic, and Greek Catholic communities emerged from the Coptic, Armenian, Syrian (Jacobite), Nestorian, and Greek Orthodox communities. Small communities of Latin-rite Catholics are also found throughout the Middle East.

The emergence of Protestantism in the Middle East began with the missionary activity of American Congregationalists and Presbyterians in Syria, Lebanon and Egypt, and British Anglicans in Palestine (Badr, Slim, and Nohra 2005, 713-757; Jessup 1910; Shaw 1995b; Wessels 1995, 165-187). By the late 19th century a number of interdenominational faith missions had also entered the region. These were followed in the early years of the 20th century by Baptist, Methodist (in Egypt), Christian and Missionary Alliance (in the Levant), and other denominational missions.

The original goal of the Protestant missionaries was to enliven the dormant traditional churches to active evangelism of the Muslim majority. The Scriptures and other materials were translated into Arabic and widely distributed, and schools were established as a means of spreading the evangelical message. Unfortunately, with several notable exceptions, the number of Muslim converts has been disappointingly small, and the Protestant churches of the Middle East were and continue to be formed
primarily of converts from traditional Christian (Orthodox and Catholic) backgrounds.

Obtaining precise statistical data about the Middle Eastern Christian communities is extraordinarily difficult. For clearly political reasons the governments of most Muslim majority countries have tended to deflate the reported proportion of Christians in the country, while the Christians themselves have tended to inflate the figures. However, it is clear from all estimates that the countries in which the Christian population forms a significant minority are (in order from the largest percentage of population down) Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Israel/Palestine, and Iraq. In all other Middle Eastern countries the proportion of Christians is less than 1.5%. Therefore this study focused on the Levant region and Egypt.

Only two authors have sought to quantify the status of the Church in the Middle East in the past thirty years. Horner (1989, 96-117) provided a fairly detailed breakdown of the estimated Christian demography of the whole region from Morocco to Iran. For the Protestant community in the countries under this study, Horner’s estimates were as given in Table 2.

Table 2. Protestant Christian Population of Select Middle Eastern Countries
(Adapted from Horner 1989)
(The percentage of the total population of the country is given in parentheses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Syria (%)</th>
<th>Lebanon (%)</th>
<th>Jordan (%)</th>
<th>Egypt (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>12,000 (0.13)</td>
<td>15,000 (0.50)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100,000 (0.23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Protestant</td>
<td>3,000 (0.03)</td>
<td>5,800 (0.19)</td>
<td>3,800 (0.17)</td>
<td>33,000 (0.08)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More recently, Johnstone and Mandryk (2001, 233, 375, 400, 611) have provided figures, summarised in Table 3. The *Operation World* team base their figures on reports from local church leaders. Based on my own personal knowledge of the churches of the Middle East, Johnstone and Mandryk’s figures for “Other
Protestant” for all countries seem heavily inflated, and the reality for these groups is probably far lower than reported in *Operation World*. The figures for Presbyterians seem more reflective of the reality.

Table 3. Protestant Christian Population of Select Middle Eastern Countries
(Adapted from Johnstone and Mandryk 2001)
(The percentage of the total population of the country is given in parentheses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Syria (%)</th>
<th>Lebanon (%)</th>
<th>Jordan (%)</th>
<th>Egypt (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>8,000 (0.04)</td>
<td>1,600 (0.04)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>300,000 (0.44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Protestant</td>
<td>17,950 (0.11)</td>
<td>19,864 (0.60)</td>
<td>23,420 (0.35)</td>
<td>288,666 (0.42)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While neither Table 2 nor 3 can be taken as precise, each provides an indication of the relative size of the Protestant Christian communities in the region. Of particular significance are the following points:

1. With the exception of Egypt, the Protestant community is a very small minority in each country. Even in Egypt the evangelical community, though large, comprises less than 1% of the total population.

2. The largest Protestant communities are in Egypt and Syria. A primary focus on these two countries therefore seemed warranted.

3. The Presbyterians continue to be numerically the largest Protestant denomination in the region. This Presbyterian predominance has been reflected in the sampling used in this study.

It is important to point out that the above figures reflect adherence to a social/political/religious sector of society, a matter of personal identity in the highly sectarian world of the Middle East. Figures for regular active participation in local congregations would be significantly lower than those given by Horner (1989) and Johnstone and Mandryk (2001). In line with my involvement in leadership training in Syria and Lebanon, I have travelled extensively throughout the region, visiting
churches and worshipping with the local believers. Based on this experience, a more realistic estimate of regular Sunday attendance at the Protestant churches around Syria would be a total of approximately 800 for all Presbyterian churches and 500 for all other Protestant churches. Similarly deflated figures would more accurately reflect actual church involvement in the Protestant churches of other countries around the Middle East.

**The Arab Sample**

The research already conducted by Parsons and Leas (1993a), incorporating results from 515 respondents to the Congregational Systems Inventory, provided the data base for North America (see Appendix 7).

For my sample, during the twelve months to the end of August 1997 a total of 436 MCSI questionnaires were distributed among 50 different churches from several different Arab Protestant denominational backgrounds. 201 satisfactorily completed questionnaires were returned, an overall usable return rate of 46.1% of the distribution. A summary of MCSI distribution and return among Arab churches is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Satisfactorily Completed CSIs from Arab Evangelical Christians
(Number of churches represented given in parentheses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Syria (x)</th>
<th>Egypt (y)</th>
<th>Lebanon (z)</th>
<th>Jordan (w)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>59 (10)</td>
<td>43 (19)</td>
<td>18 (6)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>120 (35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C&amp;MA</td>
<td>39 (6)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (1)</td>
<td>39 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazarene</td>
<td>7 (1)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11 (2)</td>
<td>18 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Evangelical</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9 (1)</td>
<td>9 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apostolic Grace</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6 (2)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (1)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>105 (17)</strong></td>
<td><strong>56 (23)</strong></td>
<td><strong>18 (6)</strong></td>
<td><strong>22 (4)</strong></td>
<td><strong>201 (50)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Distributed</strong></td>
<td><strong>195</strong></td>
<td><strong>175</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
<td><strong>38</strong></td>
<td><strong>436</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% Return</strong></td>
<td>53.8%</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>64.3%</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assuming my figure for actual regular attendance in Syrian Protestant Churches, then distribution of questionnaires in Syria was made to approximately 15%, and correctly completed questionnaires were received from 8%, of the total active attendance. Similar deflation of figures for the other countries gives distribution in Jordan and Lebanon at approximately 5%, and returns at about 3%, of total regular attendance at the Protestant churches. Egyptian figures are below 1% for both distribution and return. Consequently the results for Syria more accurately reflected the actual nature of church life in that country than the results for Lebanon and Jordan, and the Egyptian results are the least representative.

Return rates of acceptable completed questionnaires for Syrian, Lebanese and Jordanian churches were all above 50%, and this is considered to be acceptable. The Egyptian return rate of 32.0% was notably lower. Ease of follow-up and the extent to which the author is known in the former countries, as compared with the greater distance from the Egyptian churches – relationally and geographically – no doubt accounted for the marked difference in return rates.

Weaknesses and Limitations of the Study Methodology

The following specific weaknesses and limitations of the current field study methodology are noted:

1. Process. Pen and paper quantitative studies such as the CSI can be reflective more of how participants desire the situation to be than of actual reality. Quantitative questionnaires may also “force” people into categories that might not “fit” simply in order to make meaning (Miles and Huberman 1994, 40ff.). An attempt to address these limitations in a level of triangulation was sought through the addition of qualitative interview components.

2. Correlation and causation. Assessing correlation between systemic functions and church growth was carried out through a somewhat arbitrary allocation of figures ranging from -2 (significant decline) through 0 (stagnation) through +2 (significant growth). Even these were based on the subjective impressions of the respondents rather than actual records kept by local churches. The rationale behind these processes is given above (page 110). These limitations together with Aldrich’s
(1995) caution that “correlation does not imply causation” means that any results must be seen as suggestive rather than definitive.

3. Time. I restricted the collection of data to a twelve month period. While a more extensive period of time may have enabled a broader sample, church dynamics vary over time and a limited duration was considered a means of minimising the impact of any changes that may occur in any given congregation due to changes in leadership, administration or attendance.

4. Geography. The primary sampling was conducted among Syrian Protestant churches. My residence and ministry in Syria at the time greatly simplified data collection in this country. Limitations of time and finances, and the difficulties of supervising the administration of the MCSI from a distance, restricted opportunities for visits to other parts of the Middle East. Sampling from Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt was consequently smaller and less representative.

5. Language. The study was restricted to Arabic speaking congregations. While in Syria and Lebanon there are many Armenian-speaking and a handful of Syriac-speaking Protestant congregations, the culture of the members of these churches tends to differ markedly from the culture of the Arab Protestant community. The inclusion of these churches would probably have distorted the results of the study.

6. Literacy. The study has, by its very nature, been restricted to literate Arabs. While the level of literacy throughout the Middle East has risen considerably over the past generation, there are still many illiterate Arab Christians, particularly in the poorer rural areas of Egypt. However, as the overall percentage of illiterates in the Protestant church would be very small, it is improbable that their exclusion has greatly affected the study.
CHAPTER SEVEN
RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The field research component of the study investigated the hypothesis “that culturally appropriate congregational leadership will have a positive effect on numerical church growth in the Arab Middle East.” This hypothesis was assessed through testing each of three research statements in turn:

1. Research Statement 1. In order to compare the CSI data in North America against the Arab Middle East, a two-tailed t-test was applied for each of the seven dimensions, (a) taking the sample as a whole, and (b) broken down according to size of church. In each case the null hypothesis $H_{o1}$, “that congregational leadership patterns do not vary between the North American and Arab Middle Eastern cultural settings,” was rejected if the probability of acceptance was less than 5%.

2. Research Statement 2. For evaluating the impact of congregational leadership style on numerical growth, scores were applied to the response on “growth rate” as follows: significant growth (+2), growth (+1), no growth (0), decline (-1), significant decline (-2). These figures were set against scores given on each of the seven dimensions measured in the Congregational Systems Inventory. In each case a Pearson’s correlation coefficient was calculated and a two-tailed t-test applied. Where particularly significant results were observable, a Pearson’s correlation coefficient was calculated for individual questions from the CSI. In each case the null hypothesis $H_{o2}$, “that there is no significant difference in congregational leadership patterns between numerically growing and numerical stagnant or declining churches in the Arab world,” was rejected if the probability of acceptance was less than 5%.

3. Research Statement 3. If for a particular dimension the rejection of both the null hypotheses $H_{o1}$ and $H_{o2}$ occurred, and the trend from the American data to Arab data matched the trend towards numerical growth (for example, if the Arab data was greater than American data and the correlation figure was positive), then the null hypothesis $H_{o3}$, “that the use of local cultural forms in congregational leadership does not have a significant impact on numerical church growth in the Arab world,” was also rejected. If all these conditions were not in evidence, then the null hypothesis $H_{o3}$ was accepted.

Testing the Hypothesis. The rejection of the null hypothesis $H_{o3}$ implied statistical support for the hypothesis of the study, at least in terms of the particular dimension of the CSI being tested.
Table 4 (given on page 117) has described the distribution of the 201 satisfactorily completed questionnaires according to country and denomination. Respondents’ assessments of their leadership roles, the size of their churches, and the extent to which they believe their churches have grown or declined, is given in Tables 5, 6 and 7, respectively.

Table 5. Distribution of Completed CSI Questionnaires by Level of Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Leadership</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Leader</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>201</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Distribution of Completed CSI Questionnaires by Size of Congregation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Congregation</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family (0-50)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (50-150)</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (150-350)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (350+)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>201</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7. Distribution of Completed CSI Questionnaires by Reported Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Growth</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significant Decline</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stagnation</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant Growth</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>201</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the remainder of this chapter each of the seven dimensions tested in the CSI is examined in turn. In each case the review begins with a multivariate analysis of variance on the particular dimension according to denomination, country, and level of leadership, assessing the broader applicability of the results. This is followed by the application of the statistical processes mentioned above as a test of statistical significance on that dimension for each of the research statements in turn, and for the hypothesis.

Following the examination of the seven dimensions individually, the results are summarised. Overall trends for each of the three research statements are observed in turn, and conclusions are drawn as to the extent to which the results of the research supported the hypothesis.

1. **Strategy**

**Analyses of Variance**

Tables 8, 9 and 10 show the mean and standard deviation on the “strategy” dimension for the Arab sample, broken down by denomination, country and level of leadership respectively.
### Table 8. “Strategy,” by Denomination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>μ</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>5.74</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian &amp; Missionary Alliance</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5.32</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazarene</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7.50</td>
<td>1.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Evangelical</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apostolic Grace</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>2.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.25</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.67</td>
<td>1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>2.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ F_{(6,194)}=4.47 \ (p<0.01) \]

### Table 9. “Strategy,” by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>μ</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>5.46</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6.82</td>
<td>2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6.06</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>2.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ F_{(3,197)}=2.24 \ (p>0.05) \]

### Table 10. “Strategy,” by Level of Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Leadership</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>μ</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6.95</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Leader</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>2.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>2.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ F_{(4,196)}=2.20 \ (p>0.05) \]
A multivariate analysis of variance on “strategy”, by denomination, gave a result of $F_{(6,194)}=4.47$ (p<0.01). However, most of the differences between denominations could be attributed to results from the denominations which were less thoroughly sampled. A two-way analysis of variance, comparing the major foci of the sample, the Presbyterian and CMA churches, produced a result of $F_{(1,160)}=1.33$ (p>0.05). Both these denominations demonstrated significantly higher levels of planned strategy (lower spontaneity) than the overall North American sample at confidence levels of less than 0.0001, lending support to the general applicability of the results at least for the Presbyterian and CMA samples.

There was no evidence to question the general statistical validity of the results by country or level of leadership. A multivariate analysis of variance on “strategy”, by country, gave a result of $F_{(3,197)}=2.24$ (p>0.05). Here, as throughout the research results, the Jordanian sample scored atypically, having a particularly high mean result. If only the Syrian, Egyptian and Lebanese samples had been included, the overall Arab mean would have been 5.77, giving an even more statistically significant result in favour of planned strategy (lower spontaneity) when compared with the North American sample. A multivariate analysis of variance on “strategy”, by level of leadership, gave a result of $F_{(4,196)}=2.20$ (p>0.05).

**Research Statement One**

Under the “strategy” dimension, low scores point to a more planned approach to strategy, while high scores indicate greater spontaneity, as shown in the 0 to 10 scale of Figure 1.
Figure 1. The CSI “Strategy” scale, showing overall American and Arab means.

Table 11 shows that for the “strategy” dimension the null hypothesis \( H_0 \) – that patterns of leadership do not vary according to culture – was rejected with an overall alpha level of less than 0.0001. For each variety of size of church, as well as for the overall sample \( t = -5.08, p<0.0001 \), the Protestant churches of the Arab Middle East were found to reflect a higher level of planning (lower spontaneity) than their counterparts in North America.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Church</th>
<th>North America</th>
<th>Arab Middle East</th>
<th>t-stat</th>
<th>P( (H_0) )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>( \mu )</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family (0-50)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7.53</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (50-150)</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>6.87</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (150-350)</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>7.05</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (350+)</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>6.71</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the overall Arab sample showed a more planned approach than their North American counterparts, its overall tendency nonetheless remained more towards the spontaneous than the planned end of the “0 to 10” scale (see Figure 1).
Eight of the ten questions on this dimension (see Appendix 17) had mean responses ranging between 0.52 and 0.72. Only questions 36 (0.28) and 57 (0.44) produced low mean results. For these two cases, the Arab sample showed the existence of sound planning in terms of, respectively, clarity of structure and a commitment to accomplishing goals.

**Research Statement Two**

Table 12 shows that for the “strategy” dimension the null hypothesis $H_0$ – that there is no significant difference in patterns of congregational leadership between numerically growing and stagnant churches – was rejected for the Arab sample with an overall alpha level of less than 0.001. For each size of congregation, a positive correlation was found between congregational growth and planned strategy (that is a negative correlation against spontaneity), and the correlation was statistically significant for the sample as a whole ($r = -0.24$, $t_{(199)} = -3.42$, $p<0.001$). The trend in numerically growing Arab churches towards planned approaches to strategy can be seen in the “line of best fit” given in Figure 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congregation Size</th>
<th>Pearson’s coefficient</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
<th>$P(H_0)$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family (0-50)</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
<td>-1.78</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (50-150)</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>-1.21</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (150-350)</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.38</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (350+)</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
<td>-0.90</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>-0.24</strong></td>
<td><strong>-3.42</strong></td>
<td><strong>&lt;0.001</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While several individual questions (see Appendix 17) produced a negative correlation of numerical growth against spontaneity, only four questions produced statistically significant results. Question 1 which refers to overall (planned) rather than individual (spontaneous) planning in the church gave a correlation against numerical growth of -0.18 ($t_{(199)} = -2.51$, $p<0.05$). Question 36 which asked about the
clarity of overall direction for the church, clarity being perceived as planned strategy,
gave a correlation against numerical growth of -0.43 \( (t_{(199)}=-6.63, p<0.0001) \).
Question 57 which saw as planned strategy the expectation that set goals will be
attained, gave a correlation against numerical growth of -0.41 \( (t_{(199)}=-6.25, 
p<0.0001) \). And question 64, which asked respondents to choose between the
tendency towards overcommitment or undercommitment to plans, gave a correlation
of “overcommitment” against numerical growth of -0.18 \( (t_{(199)}=-2.56, p<0.01) \).
Questions 36 and 57, which demonstrated the strongest relationship between planned
strategy and numerical growth, also produced the lowest overall results for the Arab
sample (page 126).

![Figure 2. “Line of best fit” showing the Arab trend towards planned strategy for growing churches.](image)

Question 22, which measured the tendency towards regular re-visioning
(spontaneous strategy) against “doing the same thing year after year” (planned
strategy), was an exception to the general pattern of the remainder of the questions,
producing a significant positive correlation against numerical growth of 0.31
\( (t_{(199)}=4.62, p<0.0001) \). This question as much measured the congregation’s approach
to learning as it does strategy, and as such the result supported the observation that
metamising learning patterns are conducive to church growth (page 160).
Research Statement Three and the Hypothesis

The null hypothesis $H_0^3$ – that the use of local cultural forms in congregational leadership does not have a significant impact on Arab church growth – was rejected for the “strategy” dimension. For the “strategy” dimension both $H_0^1$ and $H_0^2$ were rejected, and the trend from the American data to Arab data matched the trend towards numerical growth (Arab data being lower, and the correlation between “strategy” and numerical growth being negative).

For the “strategy” dimension, the rejection of $H_0^3$ lent support to the hypothesis of the study, that culturally appropriate congregational leadership will have a positive effect on numerical church growth in the Arab Middle East.

2. Authority

Analyses of Variance

Tables 13, 14 and 15 show the mean and standard deviation on the “authority” dimension for the Arab sample, broken down by denomination, country and level of leadership respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>$\mu$</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian &amp; Missionary Alliance</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>1.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazarene</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Evangelical</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>1.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apostolic Grace</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>201</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.03</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.78</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$F_{(6,194)}=1.30$ (p>0.05)
Table 14. “Authority,” by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>μ</th>
<th>S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F(3,197)=3.94 (p<0.01)

Table 15. “Authority,” by Level of Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Leadership</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>μ</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Leader</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F(4,196)=0.67 (p>0.05)

A multivariate analysis of variance on “authority”, by country, gave a result of F(3,197)=3.94 (p<0.01). Most of the differences could be attributed to results from the small samples of Jordan and Lebanon. A two-way analysis of variance, comparing the samples from Egypt and Syria, produced a result of F(1,159)=1.66 (p>0.05), lending support to the general applicability of the results at least for these two countries. Again, the Jordanian sample produced atypical results, being the only Arab country to show more concentrated leadership than the North American sample.
There was no evidence to question the general statistical validity of the results by denomination or level of leadership. A multivariate analysis of variance on “authority”, by denomination, produced a result of $F(6,194)=1.30$ (p>0.05), and a multivariate analysis of variance on “authority”, by level of leadership, gave a result of $F(4,196)=0.67$ (p>0.05).

**Research Statement One**

Under the “authority” dimension, low scores indicate a tendency to concentrated authority, while high scores point to a greater dispersion of authority in the church, as shown in the 0 to 10 scale of Figure 3.

![Figure 3. The CSI “Authority” scale, showing overall American and Arab means.](image)

Table 16 shows that for the “authority” dimension the null hypothesis $H_0$ that patterns of leadership do not vary according to culture – was rejected with an overall alpha level of less than 0.05. The Protestant churches of the Arab Middle East were found in general to reflect more dispersed authority structures than their counterparts in North America ($t = 2.20$, p<0.05).
Table 16. “Authority,” by Size of Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Church</th>
<th>North America</th>
<th>Arab Middle East</th>
<th>t-stat</th>
<th>P(H₀)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>μ</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family (0-50)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (50-150)</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (150-350)</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (350+)</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While family, medium and large sized churches in the Middle East were all more dispersed in authority than their North America counterparts, only the medium sized congregations were so at a significant level. However, the null hypothesis $H_0$ for medium sized churches under the “authority” dimension was not rejected: t-statistical testing assumes equality of variance, and a notable difference in variance was observable between the middle sized congregations in North America and those in the Arab world ($F_{(142,28)}=2.69, p<0.01$). The small sized congregations, which represent the majority of the Arab sample, showed virtually the same results for both the Arab and North American samples. Moreover, the Arab churches, while showing more dispersed patterns than those in North America, nonetheless gave an overall score close to the middle of the “authority” scale, as can be seen in Figure 3. The rejection of the null hypothesis $H_0$ for the “authority” dimension was therefore made with considerable reservation.

Results on individual questions (see Appendix 17) were varied. While the Arab respondents indicated dispersed authority for questions 30 (0.76) and 65 (0.73), they showed a preference for more concentrated authority in their responses to question 51 (0.20). The remainder of the questions produced mean results towards the middle of the range. Questions 30 and 65 address the concentration of authority.
in certain groups; the Arab sample tended to disperse leadership away from any particular group in the church. Question 51 addresses the concentration of authority in the hands of certain individuals, the Arab sample tending to concentrate authority in the hands of their leaders, particularly the pastor.

**Research Statement Two**

Table 17 shows that for the “authority” dimension, the null hypothesis $H_0$ – that there is no significant difference in patterns of congregational leadership between numerically growing and stagnant churches – was *accepted* for the Arab sample ($r = 0.11, t_{(199)}=1.50, p>0.05$). For family, small and medium sized congregations, and for the sample as a whole, a positive correlation was found between congregational growth and the extent to which leadership is dispersed, but in no case was this correlation found to be statistically significant. For large sized congregations the correlation was negative, but not at a statistically significant level. The lack of any significant trend in numerically growing Arab churches of patterns of authority is reflected in the “line of best fit” shown in Figure 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congregation Size</th>
<th>Pearson’s coefficient</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
<th>P($H_0$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family (0-50)</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (50-150)</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (150-350)</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (350+)</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.11</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.50</strong></td>
<td><strong>&gt;0.05</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Six individual questions produced a significant correlation between numerical growth and “authority”, four in a positive direction and two in a negative direction (see Appendix 17). Question 2, showed a correlation between congregational growth and the tendency of the congregation to be influenced by many groups and many
individuals of 0.17 ($t_{(199)}=2.45$, $p<0.05$). Question 16 found that numerically growing churches brought new people into leadership roles on a regular basis, with a correlation of 0.15 ($t_{(199)}=2.20$, $p<0.05$). Numerically growing churches tend to have participatory decision-making processes (question 58), with $r = 0.19$ ($t_{(199)}=2.73$, $p<0.01$), and to nurture working groups which co-operate rather than seeking to dominate over one another (question 65), with $r = 0.16$ ($t_{(199)}=2.42$, $p<0.05$). On the other hand, question 30 found that numerically growing churches tend to emphasise excellence rather than co-operation in the music programme, with $r = -0.16$ ($t_{(199)}=2.26$, $p<0.05$), while question 44 found that numerically growing churches do not question leaders (concentrated authority) with a correlation of -0.23 ($t_{(199)}=-3.35$, $p<0.001$).

![Figure 4](image.jpg)

Figure 4. “Line of best fit” showing the lack of any significant trend in patterns of authority for numerically growing as against declining Arab churches.
Research Statement Three and the Hypothesis

The null hypothesis $H_0^3$ – that the use of local cultural forms in congregational leadership does not have a significant impact on Arab church growth – was accepted for the “authority” dimension. For the “authority” dimension, $H_0^1$ was rejected but with some reservation, while $H_0^2$ was accepted.

Consequently, the hypothesis of the study did not receive statistical support under the “authority” dimension: results were inconclusive and $H_0^3$ was accepted.

3. Process

Analyses of Variance

Tables 18, 19 and 20 show the mean and standard deviation on the “process” dimension for the Arab sample, broken down by denomination, country and level of leadership respectively.

Table 18. “Process,” by Denomination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>$\mu$</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian &amp; Missionary Alliance</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>1.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazarene</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Evangelical</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.44</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apostolic Grace</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.75</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>201</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>2.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$F_{(6,194)}$=4.89 (p<0.01)
A multivariate analysis of variance on “process”, by denomination, gave a result of $F_{(6,194)}=4.89$ (p<0.01). However most of the differences could be attributed to results from the denominations which were less thoroughly sampled. Both the samples from the Presbyterian and Christian and Missionary Alliance churches demonstrated significantly higher levels of mandatory process (lower levels of discretionary process) than the overall North American sample at confidence levels of less than 0.0001, consistent with the overall findings of the field research, lending support to the general applicability of the results at least for these two denominations.

A multivariate analysis of variance on “process”, by country, gave a result of $F_{(3,197)}=4.14$ (p<0.01). National differences could largely be attributed to the
Jordanian sample. As with the “strategy” and “authority” dimensions, the Jordanian score was atypical, with a mean “process” score reflecting procedures that were slightly more discretionary than the North American sample. A three-way analysis of variance, comparing the samples from Syria, Egypt and Lebanon, produced a result of $F_{(2,176)}=0.91$ (p>0.05), lending support for the general applicability of statistical results for the Arab sample outside of Jordan.

There was no evidence to question the general statistical validity of the results by level of leadership. A multivariate analysis of variance on “process”, by level of leadership, gave a result of $F_{(4,196)}=2.02$ (p>0.05).

**Research Statement One**

Under the “process” dimension, low scores point to a more mandatory approach to process, while high scores indicate a tendency towards discretionary procedure, as shown in the 0 to 10 scale of Figure 5.

![Figure 5. The CSI “Process” scale, showing overall American and Arab means.](image-url)

Table 21 shows that for the “process” dimension, the null hypothesis $H_0$ – that leadership in churches does not vary according to culture – was rejected with an overall alpha level of less than 0.0001. For each variety of size of church, as well as for the overall sample ($t = -8.11$, p<0.0001), the Protestant churches of the Arab Middle East were found to reflect a statistically significant higher level of mandatory (lower level of discretionary) process than their counterparts in North America.
Table 21. “Process,” by Size of Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Church</th>
<th>North America</th>
<th>Arab Middle East</th>
<th>t-stat</th>
<th>P(H₀)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>µ</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family (0-50)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7.20</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (50-150)</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>6.07</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (150-350)</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>6.43</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (350+)</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Arab tendency towards responses which favour mandatory process was general. All questions (see Appendix 17) received an Arab mean response of 0.60 or less, and particularly low mean figures were recorded for questions 10 (0.37), 24 (0.37), 52 (0.38) and 66 (0.30), reflecting a strong tendency in the Arab churches towards clarity of information (questions 10, 24, 66), and a desire for clear means of evaluating new ideas (question 52).

**Research Statement Two**

Table 22 shows that for the “process” dimension the null hypothesis $H_0$ – that there is no significant difference in patterns of congregational leadership between numerically growing and stagnant churches – was rejected for the Arab sample with an overall alpha level of less than 0.0001. For each size of congregation, a positive correlation was found between congregational growth and mandatory process (that is a negative correlation against discretionary process), and the correlation was statistically significant for the sample of small Arab churches, as well as for the sample as a whole sample ($r = -0.30$, $t_{(199)} = -4.41$, $p<0.0001$). The trend in numerically growing Arab churches towards mandatory procedures can be seen in the “line of best fit” given in Figure 6.
Table 22. “Process” against Growth, Pearson’s Coefficient by Size of Congregation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congregation Size</th>
<th>Pearson’s coefficient</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
<th>P(H₀)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family (0-50)</td>
<td>-0.31</td>
<td>-2.00</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (50-150)</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
<td>-2.74</td>
<td>&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (150-350)</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>-0.65</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (350+)</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>-0.30</td>
<td>-4.41</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Six of the ten questions produced a statistically significant correlation of numerical growth against mandatory process. Question 10, which refers to the ease with which assistance and resources are accessed, gave a correlation against numerical growth of -0.16 (t(199)=-2.22, p<0.05). Question 17 refers to clear channels of communication in the congregation, and resulted in a correlation against numerical growth of -0.26 (t(199)=-3.73, p<0.001). Question 24, on the extent of shared knowledge about the rest of the congregation, produced a correlation against...
numerical growth of \(-0.30\ (t_{199}=-4.52, \ p<0.0001)\). Question 31, which refers to clear delineation of authority and responsibilities, gave a correlation against numerical growth of \(-0.27\ (t_{199}=-3.88, \ p<0.0001)\). Question 38, concerning the tendency towards consistent and reliable decision-making processes in the church, produced a correlation against numerical growth of \(-0.20\ (t_{199}=-2.93, \ p<0.01)\). And finally, question 66, on the clarity of complaint-lodging centres, resulted in a correlation against numerical growth of \(-0.30\ (t_{199}=-4.64, \ p<0.0001)\). Questions 24 and 66, which produced two of the lowest overall results also produced the most statistically significant correlation results: for these two questions in particular the Arab respondents showed a strong preference for mandatory process, and numerically growing churches tended to be more mandatory than stagnant and declining churches.

**Research Statement Three and the Hypothesis**

The null hypothesis \(H_0^3\) – that the use of local cultural forms in congregational leadership does not have a significant impact on Arab church growth – was rejected for the “process” dimension. For the “process” dimension both \(H_0^1\) and \(H_0^2\) were rejected, and the trend from the American data to Arab data matched the trend towards numerical growth (Arab data being lower, and the correlation between “process” and numerical growth being negative).

For the “process” dimension, the rejection of \(H_0^3\) lent support to the hypothesis of the study, that culturally appropriate congregational leadership will have a positive effect on numerical church growth.

4. **Pastoral Leadership**

**Analyses of Variance**

Tables 23, 24 and 25 show the mean and standard deviation on the “pastoral leadership” dimension for the Arab sample, broken down by denomination, country and level of leadership respectively.
Table 23. “Pastoral Leadership,” by Denomination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>μ</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian &amp; Missionary Alliance</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>2.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazarene</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5.67</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Evangelical</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apostolic Grace</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.67</td>
<td>4.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>201</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>2.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ F_{(6,194)}=1.99 \text{ (p>0.05)} \]

Table 24. “Pastoral Leadership,” by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>μ</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>6.55</td>
<td>2.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5.44</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>201</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>2.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ F_{(3,197)}=10.27 \text{ (p<0.01)} \]

Table 25. “Pastoral Leadership,” by Level of Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Leadership</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>μ</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.81</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Leader</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>201</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>2.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ F_{(4,196)}=2.19 \text{ (p>0.05)} \]
A multivariate analysis of variance on “pastoral leadership”, by country, gave a result of $F_{(3,197)}=10.27$ ($p<0.01$). While a statistically significant difference could be seen between the Syrian and North American samples ($t = -5.40$, $p<0.0001$), the variety of means evident in the samples taken in other Middle Eastern countries threw doubt on any generalisation of the Syrian-North American results.

There was no evidence to question the general statistical validity of the results by denomination or level of leadership. A multivariate analysis of variance on “pastoral leadership”, by denomination, gave a result of $F_{(6,194)}=1.99$ ($p>0.05$), and by level of leadership, gave a result of $F_{(4,196)}=2.19$ ($p>0.05$).

Research Statement One

Under the “pastoral leadership” dimension, low scores indicate a more managerial approach to leadership, while high scores point to greater vision in pastoral leadership, as shown in the 0 to 10 scale of Figure 7.

![Figure 7. The CSI “Pastoral Leadership” scale, showing American and Arab means.](image)

Table 26 shows that for the “pastoral leadership” dimension the null hypothesis $H_0$ – that patterns of leadership do not vary according to culture – was rejected with an overall alpha level of less than 0.0001. For family and small sized congregations, as well as for the overall sample ($t = -4.29$, $p<0.0001$), the Protestant churches of the Arab Middle East showed a statistically significant higher level of managerial pastoral leadership (lower scores on the scale) than their counterparts in North America.
Table 26. “Pastoral Leadership,” by Size of Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Church</th>
<th>North America</th>
<th>Arab Middle East</th>
<th>t-stat</th>
<th>P(H₀)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>μ</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family (0-50)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.71</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (50-150)</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>6.29</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (150-350)</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>5.32</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (350+)</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>6.52</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>6.11</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, most of this statistical significance could be attributed to the particularly low “pastoral leadership” scores of family and small congregations in the Middle East. The difference between large churches in the Arab world and North America was negligible, and pastors in medium sized churches in the Arab world tended to be more visionary than their North American counterparts. The high F statistic for the analysis of variance by country (page 141), also suggested caution. The rejection of H₀¹ was therefore made with some reservation.

Although the Arab sample gave their pastors scores lower than the North American sample, the overall score was towards the centre of the scale, marginally on the visionary side, as can be seen in Figure 7.

Individual questions (see Appendix 17) elicited a variety of mean responses. On the one hand only 31% of the Arab population saw their church as one in which the pastor sought to change management structures for greater effectiveness (question 25), and only 34% saw their pastor as looking to the possibilities of tomorrow (question 67). On the other hand 73% saw their pastor as one who motivates and inspires people to work together (question 11), 69% felt that their pastor focuses on long rather than short term goals (question 46), and 62% saw their
pastor as one who helped the congregation catch a vision and fulfil it (question 53). The wide variety of response further cast doubt on the rejection of the null hypothesis $H_0^1$ for “pastoral leadership”.

**Research Statement Two**

Table 27 shows that for the “pastoral leadership” dimension the null hypothesis $H_0^2$ – that there is no significant difference in patterns of congregational leadership between numerically growing and stagnant churches – was rejected for the Arab sample with an overall alpha level of less than 0.001. For family, small and medium sized Arab congregations, a positive correlation was found between congregational growth and visionary pastoral leadership, and the correlation was statistically significant for the sample as a whole ($r = 0.24$, $t_{(199)}=3.43$, $p<0.001$). The tendency of numerically growing Arab churches to have visionary pastoral leadership can be seen in the “line of best fit” given in Figure 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congregation Size</th>
<th>Pearson’s coefficient</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
<th>P($H_0$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family (0-50)</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (50-150)</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>&lt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (150-350)</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (350+)</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A statistically significant positive correlation was observable in four of the ten questions under the “pastoral leadership” dimension (see Appendix 17). Numerically growing churches tended to have pastors who motivated people, inspiring them to work together (question 11), with a correlation of 0.15 ($t_{(199)}=2.08$, $p<0.05$). Question 18 found that pastors of numerically growing churches inspire people to create change, with a correlation of 0.21 ($t_{(199)}=3.07$, $p<0.01$). Question 25 gave a positive correlation between numerical growth and pastoral leadership for change towards more effective management of 0.23 ($t_{(199)}=3.36$, $p<0.001$). And question 39 found that numerically growing churches have visionary pastors who value change, with a correlation of 0.18 ($t_{(199)}=2.62$, $p<0.01$). Only one of these four questions (question 11) was among the three questions (11, 46, 53) with overall high scores, mentioned above (page 142).

**Research Statement Three and the Hypothesis**

The null hypothesis $H_0^3$ – that the use of local cultural forms in congregational leadership does not have a significant impact on Arab church growth – was accepted for the “pastoral leadership” dimension. Although for the “pastoral leadership” dimension both $H_0^1$ and $H_0^2$ were rejected, the trend from the American
data to Arab data was opposite to the trend towards numerical growth (Arab data being lower, and the correlation between visionary pastoral leadership and numerical growth being positive).

The hypothesis of the study did not receive statistical support under the “pastoral leadership” dimension. The results for this dimension were directly opposed to the hypothesis: the prevalent Arab pattern (managerial pastoral leadership) was found to be negatively correlated to numerical church growth.

5. Relatedness

Analyses of Variance

Tables 28, 29 and 30 show the mean and standard deviation on the “relatedness” dimension for the Arab sample, broken down by denomination, country and level of leadership respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>μ</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian &amp; Missionary Alliance</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazarene</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>1.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Evangelical</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apostolic Grace</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>1.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>201</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.75</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.02</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ F_{(6,194)}=2.36 \text{ (p<0.05)} \]
Table 29. “Relatedness,” by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>μ</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>2.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>2.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[F_{(3,197)}=1.67 \ (p>0.05)\]

Table 30. “Relatedness,” by Level of Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Leadership</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>μ</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>2.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>1.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>1.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Leader</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>1.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>2.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[F_{(4,196)}=1.54 \ (p>0.05)\]

A multivariate analysis of variance on “relatedness”, by denomination, gave a result of $F_{(6,194)}=2.36 \ (p<0.05)$. Most of these differences could be attributed to results from the denominations which were less thoroughly sampled. A two-way analysis of variance, comparing the major foci of the sample, the Presbyterian and Christian and Missionary Alliance churches, produced a result of $F_{(1,160)}=3.80 \ (p>0.05)$, lending support to the general applicability of the results for these two denominations.

There was no evidence to question the general statistical validity of the results by country or level of leadership. A multivariate analysis of variance on “relatedness”, by level of leadership, gave a result of $F_{(4,196)}=1.54 \ (p>0.05)$. A multivariate analysis of variance on “relatedness”, by country, gave a result of
The Jordanian sample again produced an atypical result, being the only country to show higher individualism than North America. If the Jordanian sample had not been included, the Arab mean would have been 3.64, a result which is significantly lower than the North American mean at an alpha level of less than 0.05. The difference between the other three samples was minimal ($F_{(2,176)}=0.07$), pointing to the general applicability of the results for Arab countries, particularly those outside Jordan.

**Research Statement One**

Under the “relatedness” dimension, low scores indicate greater collegiality in relationships, while high scores point to a more individualistic approach, as shown in the 0 to 10 scale of Figure 9.

![Figure 9. The CSI “Relatedness” scale, showing overall American and Arab means.](image)

Table 31 shows that for the “relatedness” dimension the null hypothesis $H_0$ – that patterns of leadership do not vary according to culture – was accepted. The overall sample did not show a significant difference in “relatedness” between churches in the Arab Middle East and churches in North America ($t = -1.54$, $p>0.05$).
Table 31. “Relatedness,” by Size of Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Church</th>
<th>North America</th>
<th>Arab Middle East</th>
<th>t-stat</th>
<th>P(H₀)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>μ</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family (0-50)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (50-150)</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (150-350)</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (350+)</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lack of overall statistical difference between the Arab and North American samples could largely be attributed to the relatively high result for family congregations in the Arab world. Small, medium and large sized Arab churches all showed greater collegiality (lower individuality) than their North American counterparts, the medium sized churches at a statistically significant level. A comparison between the total result for small, medium and large congregations of the two regions showed a significantly higher level of collegiality in the Arab churches ($t_{(657)}=-2.43$, $p<0.05$). As mentioned above (page 147), the impact of the Jordanian sample was also significant. With the Jordan figures excluded, the sample taken from Arab churches in the three countries of Syria, Egypt and Lebanon showed significantly more collegial approaches to relatedness than the North American sample at an alpha level of less than 0.05. Moreover, the overall Arab result tended strongly towards the collegial end of the 0 to 10 “relatedness” scale, as can be seen in Figure 9. Consequently the acceptance of $H₀$ was made with considerable reservation.

No question under the “relatedness” dimension scored higher than 0.53, and low Arab results were general (see Appendix 17). Four questions produced mean results of less than 0.30 on relatedness. 80% of respondents considered the
preservation of fellowship of central importance, even at the sacrifice of individual initiative (mean result of 0.20 on question 47). 76% saw co-operation rather than competition between groups as typical of their congregation (mean of 0.24 on question 54). A desire to emphasise mutual agreement as against individual creativity was strong (mean result of 0.23 on question 5). And 71% of respondents valued group effort over individual initiative (mean result of 0.29 on question 33). While the Arab scores were not significantly lower those scored by the North American sample, the consistently low Arab results on the “relatedness” dimension showed a general tendency towards collegiality in the Arab Protestant churches.

**Research Statement Two**

Table 32 shows that for the “relatedness” dimension the null hypothesis $H_0^2$ – that there is no significant difference in patterns of congregational leadership between numerically growing and stagnant churches – was rejected for the Arab sample with an overall alpha level of less than 0.0001. The correlation coefficient for the truncated sample on the “relatedness” dimension (Appendix 16) was -0.30, a difference of 21.1% from the actual result. The t-statistic from the Pearson’s figure for the truncated sample was -4.32, $p<0.0001$. Although correlation for the truncated sample was less than that for the actual sample, the rejection of $H_0^2$ at an alpha level of less than 0.0001 was not affected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congregation Size</th>
<th>Pearson’s coefficient</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
<th>$P(H_0)$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family (0-50)</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
<td>-2.07</td>
<td>&lt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (50-150)</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>-3.90</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (150-350)</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>-0.54</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (350+)</td>
<td>-0.58</td>
<td>-1.90</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>-0.38</strong></td>
<td><strong>-5.72</strong></td>
<td><strong>&lt;0.0001</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For each size of congregation, as well as the Arab sample as a whole, a positive correlation was found between congregational growth and collegial patterns of relatedness (that is negative against individualism). The results for family and small sized congregations, and for the overall sample \( r = -0.38, t_{(199)} = -5.72, p<0.0001 \), were statistically significant. The trend in numerically growing Arab churches towards collegiality in relationships can be seen in the “line of best fit” given in Figure 10.

Every question under the “relatedness” dimension except question 40 gave a negative and statistically significant correlation between numerical growth and individualism (see Appendix 17). Four questions had results at alpha levels of less than 0.01. Question 19, which evaluates the extent to which leaders function as team players, gave a correlation against numerical growth of \(-0.34 (t_{(199)} = -5.06, p<0.0001)\). Question 33 found that in numerically growing churches people value group effort and are cautious about excessive individualism, \( r = -0.22 (t_{(199)} = -3.23, p<0.01) \). Question 54 found that groups in numerically growing congregations tend to co-operate rather than compete, with a correlation of \(-0.20 (t_{(199)} = -2.92, p<0.01) \). Question 68, found that numerically growing churches monitor the performance of
committees and programme groups, with a correlation of -0.21 (t_{199} = -2.97, p<0.01).

**Research Statement Three and the Hypothesis**

The null hypothesis $H_0^3$ – that the use of local cultural forms in congregational leadership does not have a significant impact on Arab church growth – was accepted for the “relatedness” dimension but with considerable reservation. For the “relatedness” dimension $H_0^1$ was accepted, but with considerable reservation. If Jordanian figures had been excluded $H_0^1$ would have been rejected. $H_0^2$ was rejected and the trend from the American data to Arab data matched the trend towards numerical growth (Arab data being lower, and the correlation between “relatedness” and numerical growth being negative).

For the “relatedness” dimension, some support was seen for the hypothesis of the study, that culturally appropriate congregational leadership will have a positive effect on Arab church growth. $H_0^3$ was accepted with considerable reservation, the general results pointing to the prevalence of collegial relatedness in the Arab world, and the tendency of numerically growing Arab churches towards collegiality.

6. Lay Leadership

**Analyses of Variance**

Tables 33, 34 and 35 show the mean and standard deviation on the “lay leadership” dimension for the Arab sample, broken down by denomination, country and level of leadership respectively.
Table 33. “Lay Leadership,” by Denomination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>μ</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian &amp; Missionary Alliance</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>2.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazarene</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>1.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Evangelical</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apostolic Grace</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>1.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>2.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[F_{(6,194)}=2.83 \text{ (p<0.05)}\]

Table 34. “Lay Leadership,” by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>μ</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>2.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>2.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[F_{(3,197)}=12.64 \text{ (p<0.01)}\]

Table 35. “Lay Leadership,” by Level of Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Leadership</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>μ</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td>1.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Leader</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>2.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>2.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[F_{(4,196)}=1.18 \text{ (p>0.05)}\]
A multivariate analysis of variance on “lay leadership”, by denomination, gave a result of $F_{(6,194)}=2.83$ (p<0.05). Despite differences between denominations, the Arab mean score for each denomination was higher than the overall North American score, in the case of the Presbyterian and Christian and Missionary Alliance samples at statistically significant levels (p<0.0001), lending credence to the general applicability of the results.

A multivariate analysis of variance on “lay leadership”, by country, gave a result of $F_{(3,197)}=12.64$ (p<0.01). A number of differences between countries were evident. The Jordanian sample again produced results at one of the extremes, here demonstrating the most managerial patterns of lay leadership. On the other hand, the Egyptian sample perceived their lay leaders as particularly visionary, with results considerably higher than the other three countries. Despite the differences between countries, the Arab mean score for each country was higher than the North American score, in the case of the samples from Syria, Egypt and Lebanon at statistically significant levels (p<0.0001). The consistency with which the Arab data was higher than the North American data lent support to the general applicability of the results, at least as they related to the first research statement.

No notable differences were found by leadership role, a multivariate analysis of variance on “lay leadership”, by level of leadership, giving a result of $F_{(4,196)}=1.18$ (p>0.05).

**Research Statement One**

Under the “lay leadership” dimension, low scores point to a more managerial approach to leadership, while high scores indicate greater vision in lay leadership, as shown in the 0 to 10 scale of Figure 11.
Table 36 shows that for the “lay leadership” dimension the null hypothesis $H_0$ – that patterns of leadership do not vary according to culture – was rejected with an overall alpha level of less than 0.0001. For each variety of size of church, as well as for the overall sample ($t = 11.99$, $p<0.0001$), the Protestant churches of the Arab Middle East were found to have more visionary lay leadership than their counterparts in North America. At all levels except for family sized congregations the result was statistically very significant.

Table 36. “Lay Leadership,” by Size of Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Church</th>
<th>North America</th>
<th>Arab Middle East</th>
<th>t-stat</th>
<th>$P(H_0)$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>$\mu$</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family (0-50)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (50-150)</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (150-350)</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (350+)</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the Arab Christians gave a far less managerial assessment of their lay leadership than did their North American counterparts, in absolute terms the overall
Arab result nonetheless tended towards the managerial rather than the visionary end of the “lay leadership” scale, as can be seen in Figure 11. The higher Arab results were largely the result of the very low American score, rather than any particular tendency towards visionary lay leadership in the Arab world.

No individual question showed a high overall mean (see Appendix 17), and the only question to which over half the sample gave “visionary” responses was question 62, where 56% of respondents saw their lay leadership focusing on long rather than short term goals. The Arab population tended to be quite managerial on a number of questions. Mean results below 0.35 were seen in question 69, where only 29% of the sample saw their lay leadership as idealistic rather than realistic, and in question 27, where only 31% of respondents felt that their lay leaders would respond on the basis of ideals rather than practical realities. Although the Arab sample certainly showed more visionary aspects than their North American counterparts, the tendency was nonetheless to view the lay leadership as more managerial than visionary in style.

**Research Statement Two**

Table 37 shows that for the “lay leadership” dimension, the null hypothesis \( H_0 \) – that there is no significant difference in patterns of congregational leadership between numerically growing and stagnant churches – was *accepted* for the Arab sample \( (r = 0.10, t_{(199)}=1.42, p>0.05) \). No significant correlation was found between congregational growth and style of lay leadership at any size of congregation, nor for the sample as a whole. The lack of any significant tendency towards visionary or managerial lay leadership in numerically growing Arab churches is reflected in the “line of best fit” shown in Figure 12.
Table 37. “Lay Leadership” vs. Growth, Pearson’s Coefficient by Size of Congregation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congregation Size</th>
<th>Pearson’s coefficient</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
<th>P(H₀)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family (0-50)</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (50-150)</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (150-350)</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (350+)</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the ten questions under the “lay leadership” dimension (see Appendix 17) only two showed any significant correlation when measured against congregational growth. It was found that numerically growing churches tended to have lay leaders who focus on transforming the organisation (question 41, r = 0.15, t(199)=2.18, p<0.05), and who are visionary people who value change (question 55, r = 0.16, t(199)=2.34, p<0.05). The lack of significant correlation at all levels of congregational size, and the relative insignificance of results on individual questions led to the very confident acceptance of the null hypothesis H₀.²

Figure 12. “Line of best fit” showing the lack of any significant trend in patterns of lay leadership for growing as against declining Arab churches.
Research Statement Three and the Hypothesis

The null hypothesis $H_0^3$, that the use of local cultural forms in congregational leadership does not have a significant impact on Arab church growth, was accepted for the “lay leadership” dimension. While for the “lay leadership” dimension $H_0^1$ was rejected, $H_0^2$ was accepted with considerable confidence.

Consequently, the hypothesis of the study did not receive statistical support under the “lay leadership” dimension.

7. Learning

Analyses of Variance

Tables 38, 39 and 40 show the mean and standard deviation on the “learning” dimension for the Arab sample, broken down by denomination, country and level of leadership respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>$\mu$</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian &amp; Missionary Alliance</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazarene</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>2.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Evangelical</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apostolic Grace</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.33</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$F_{(6,194)}=3.48$ (p<0.01)
Table 39. “Learning,” by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>μ</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL        | 201 | 4.50| 2.56|

F(3,197)=9.68 (p<0.01)

Table 40. “Learning,” by Level of Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Leadership</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>μ</th>
<th>s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Leader</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>2.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL        | 201 | 4.50| 2.56|

F(4,196)=0.62 (p>0.05)

A multivariate analysis of variance on “learning”, by denomination, gave a result of F(6,194)=3.48 (p<0.01). A multivariate analysis of variance on “learning”, by country, gave a result of F(3,197)=9.68 (p<0.01). A number of differences between countries were observed. The Jordanian sample again produced results at one of the extremes, here showing particularly maximising approaches to learning. On the other hand, the Egyptian churches showed a greater tendency towards metamising learning patterns than the other Arab samples, with a mean score that was higher than both that of the North American sample and that of the remaining Arab sample at a statistically significant level. The mixture of results from the different Arab samples necessitated caution in drawing any decisive conclusions for the “learning” dimension of the CSI.
A multivariate analysis of variance on “learning”, by level of leadership, gave a result of $F_{(4,196)}=0.62$ (p>0.05).

**Research Statement One**

Under the “learning” dimension, low scores indicate a tendency towards maximising (traditionalistic) approaches to congregational learning, while high scores point to a greater willingness to incorporate new ideas into the life of the congregation (metamising learning), as shown in the 0 to 10 scale of Figure 13.

![Figure 13. The CSI “Learning” scale, showing overall American and Arab means.](image)

Table 41 shows that for the “learning” dimension the null hypothesis $H_0$ – that patterns of leadership do not vary according to culture – was accepted with considerable confidence (t = -0.26, p>0.05). No significant difference was found between the North American sample and the Arab sample under the “learning” dimension for any size of congregation, nor for the sample as a whole.
Table 41. “Learning,” by Size of Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Church</th>
<th>North America</th>
<th>Arab Middle East</th>
<th>t-stat</th>
<th>P(H₀)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>μ</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family (0-50)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (50-150)</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (150-350)</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (350+)</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both the Arab and North American samples gave an overall mean score towards the middle of the “learning” scale, as seen in Figure 13. With only one exception, individual questions (see Appendix 17) received mean responses from the Arab sample of between 0.38 and 0.62. The one exception for the Arab sample was on question 63, in which 76% of respondents claimed that their church has stayed too long with a few successful projects or programmes (mean result of 0.24). While this one question reflects a maximising approach to learning, the variety seen in the remainder of the questions pointed to a general ambivalence on the “learning” dimension.

**Research Statement Two**

Table 42 shows that for the “learning” dimension the null hypothesis $H_0$ – that there is no significant difference in patterns of congregational leadership between numerically growing and stagnant churches – was rejected for the Arab sample with an overall alpha level of less than 0.001. For all sizes of church a positive correlation was found between congregational growth and metamising patterns of learning. For both small sized churches, and for the sample as a whole ($r = 0.24$, $t_{(199)}=3.56$, $p<0.001$), the result was statistically significant. The trend in
numerically growing Arab churches towards metamised approaches to learning can be seen in the “line of best fit” given in Figure 14.

Table 42. “Learning” against Growth, Pearson’s Coefficient by Size of Congregation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Congregation Size</th>
<th>Pearson’s coefficient</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
<th>P(H₀)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family (0-50)</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (50-150)</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>&lt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (150-350)</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (350+)</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 14. “Line of best fit” showing the Arab trend towards metamising learning patterns for growing churches.

A number of individual questions produced a statistically significant correlation against congregational growth (see Appendix 17). Numerically growing churches were found to introduce new programmes on a regular basis (question 7, r = 0.24, t₁(199)=3.42, p<0.001). Their members saw an appropriate motto as “nothing ventured, nothing gained” (question 28, r = 0.21, t₁(199)=3.08, p<0.01), and are likely to launch new experiments in ministry (question 56, r = 0.19, t₁(199)=2.66, p<0.01).
Leaders of numerically growing churches tend to be risk takers (question 42, \( r = 0.17, t_{(199)}=2.49, p<0.05 \)), emphasise learning new ways well (question 14, \( r = 0.20, t_{(199)}=2.84, p<0.01 \)), and seek to develop new strengths (question 21, \( r = 0.22, t_{(199)}=3.20, p<0.01 \)).

**Research Statement Three and the Hypothesis**

The null hypothesis \( H_0^3 \) – that the use of local cultural forms in congregational leadership does not have a significant impact on Arab church growth – was accepted for the “learning” dimension: \( H_0^2 \) was rejected, but \( H_0^1 \) was accepted with considerable confidence.

Consequently, the hypothesis of the study did not receive statistical support under the “authority” dimension: results were inconclusive and \( H_0^3 \) was accepted.

**Summary of Results**

Table 43 presents a summary of the results of my field study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>( H_0^1 )</th>
<th>( H_0^2 )</th>
<th>( H_0^3 )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>rejected</td>
<td>rejected</td>
<td>rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>rejected*</td>
<td>accepted</td>
<td>accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>rejected</td>
<td>rejected</td>
<td>rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral Leadership</td>
<td>rejected*</td>
<td>rejected*</td>
<td>accepted*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatedness</td>
<td>accepted*</td>
<td>rejected</td>
<td>accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lay Leadership</td>
<td>rejected</td>
<td>accepted</td>
<td>accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>accepted</td>
<td>rejected</td>
<td>accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(results marked with a star * are with reservation)
**Research Statement One**

There was considerable evidence to support the first research statement, that there are measurable differences in congregational leadership style according to the cultural setting. For every dimension except “relatedness” and “learning” a significant difference was observed between the North American and Arab sample ($H_o^1$ rejected).

**Research Statement Two**

The second research statement, that there are measurable differences in congregational leadership style between churches that have seen numerical growth and churches that have not, received statistical support in five of the seven dimensions examined in this field study. A significant correlation was observed between congregational growth and patterns of leadership in the church ($H_o^2$ rejected), for every dimension except authority and lay leadership.

**Research Statement Three**

The third research statement, that congregational leadership styles which take into account local cultural forms positively impact the numerical growth of the church, received direct statistical support on two of the seven dimensions, and a level of support on a third dimension. For both the “strategy” and “process” dimension there was a significant difference between the Arab and North American samples, a significant correlation was observed between numerical growth and the pattern of leadership, and the trend from the American data to Arab data matched the trend towards numerical growth ($H_o^3$ rejected). Although not at a statistically significant level, the Arab churches showed a greater tendency towards collegiality in their responses on the “relatedness” dimension than their North American counterparts. They also showed a consistent, strong and significant correlation between collegiality and numerical growth. The trends under the “relatedness” dimension were also suggestive of the importance of culturally appropriate patterns of congregational leadership for church growth.
The Field Research Hypothesis

In summary, the Arab responses to the CSI, when compared with their North American counterparts, indicated that:

1. Arab Protestant churches tend towards planned strategy rather than spontaneity, and numerical growth in Arab congregations is related to the extent to which the church’s strategy is planned.

2. Arab Protestant churches tend to prefer mandatory processes rather than procedures based on individual discretion, and congregational growth in the Arab world is related to the extent to which the processes of the congregation are clearly delineated.

3. Arab Protestant churches tend to be collegial rather than individualistic, and numerical growth in Arab congregations is related to the extent to which cooperation, consultation, harmony and team work are promoted in the church.

In these three distinct areas the hypothesis of the study, that culturally appropriate congregational leadership will have a positive effect on numerical church growth, received statistical support. On the other four CSI dimensions support was not seen for the hypothesis of the study.

Trends and Patterns in the Field Research

The seven dimensions examined under the CSI are not independent of one another, and by its very nature systems theory portrays life as a complex tapestry of interrelated phenomena. In order to examine overall patterns of Arab church life, a cross-correlation was calculated for the Arab sample on each pair of dimensions, as shown in Table 44.
Two particularly dominant clusters of phenomena were observed:

The first cluster consisted of planned strategy, mandatory process, and collegial relatedness, which gave a correlation between each pair of a high order (p<0.0001). The interconnectedness of these dimensions was suggested by Parsons and Leas (1993a, 28) in their original work on congregational systems theory. The results of the current field research have suggested that, at least for Arab Protestant churches, a shared vision for the future, worked out through careful consultation, together with clearly defined procedures, help to nurture strong collegial bonds within the congregation. Moreover, it would seem that this is not a one-way street. The mutuality of correlation among these three factors has also suggested that a sense of collegiality and team work facilitate the development of shared vision, and provide strong networks of communication which enable effective and clear procedures to be established.

The centrality of group affiliation in Arab society has been repeatedly reported in other Middle Eastern studies (pages 55-61). It was therefore not surprising that it was collegial relatedness, and the related phenomena of planned strategy and mandatory process, that for the Arab Protestant church proved most different from the North American sample, and proved most significant for the numerical growth of the church in the Middle East.

### Table 44. Cross-Correlation of Dimension Against Dimension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Authority</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>P. L’ship</th>
<th>Relatedness</th>
<th>L. L’ship</th>
<th>Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>0.46$</td>
<td>-0.22$</td>
<td>0.41$</td>
<td>-0.15$</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.24$</td>
<td>0.24$</td>
<td>-0.15*</td>
<td>0.26$</td>
<td>0.27$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>0.46$</td>
<td>-0.24$</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.15*</td>
<td>0.51$</td>
<td>-0.16*</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. L’ship</td>
<td>-0.22\†</td>
<td>0.24\‡</td>
<td>-0.15*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.18\†</td>
<td>0.61\§</td>
<td>0.60\§</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatedness</td>
<td>0.41\§</td>
<td>-0.15*</td>
<td>0.51\§</td>
<td>-0.18\‡</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.16*</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. L’ship</td>
<td>-0.15$</td>
<td>0.26\‡</td>
<td>-0.16*</td>
<td>0.61\§</td>
<td>-0.16*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.59$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.27\§</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.60\§</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.59\§</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistical significance: * p < 0.05    † p < 0.01   ‡ p < 0.001   § p < 0.0001
The second cluster of interrelated phenomena were dispersed authority, visionary pastoral and lay leadership, and metamising learning patterns, which resulted in a statistically significant correlation for each pair at an alpha level of less than 0.001. For the Arab Protestant population studied here, it would seem that visionary pastors tend to empower their congregations (dispersed authority). Laity empowered in this way in turn tend to respond to the challenge of such involvement, themselves looking increasingly to metamising ways of learning and adding their own vision to the church.

In contrast to the first cluster of planned strategy, mandatory process, and collegial relatedness, none of the four phenomena of dispersed authority, visionary pastoral and lay leadership, and metamising learning patterns, provided support for the hypothesis of the study. On the “learning” dimension there was no significant difference between the American and Arab samples. For the “authority” and “lay leadership” dimensions there was no significant evidence of a preferred pattern in numerically growing churches. The results under the “pastoral leadership” dimension actually worked against the hypothesis: in general Arab pastors tend to be less visionary than their North American counterparts, while pastors of numerically growing Arab churches tend towards more visionary patterns of leadership.

While two of these dimensions (visionary pastoral leadership and metamising learning patterns) produced a significant correlation against numerical growth, the other two (“authority” and “lay leadership”) did not. In each case the correlation was less significant than those which resulted for the dimensions in the first cluster. The results of this study have tended to indicate that, for the Arab Protestant community, while visionary pastoral leadership and empowered laity do contribute to congregational growth, these factors are not as significant to the numerical growth of the church as those related to affiliative behaviour. This stands in contrast to the North American scene where participatory styles of leadership and pastoral vision have consistently been found to be among the most important factors in the promotion of church growth (pages 20-23).
Conclusion

While the results of the field study have indicated that certain aspects of culture do make a positive contribution to the life of the church, the impact of culturally influenced forms of leadership is not an absolute. In some cases the impact may in fact be negative, as seen in the results for the cluster of dispersed authority, visionary pastoral and lay leadership, and metamising learning. In the next chapter these results will be brought into dialogue with the theoretical material presented in Chapters Two to Five so as to determine whether the inconsistent nature of the field research results can be explained through a critical-contextual understanding of Arab leadership patterns.
CHAPTER EIGHT
SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter summarises the main findings of the study, reviewing both the chief themes presented in the literature survey and the biblical-theological chapter, and the form and results of the research. A discussion of the central hypothesis of the thesis – that healthy church life in the Arab world is reflective of critically contextual systemic patterns of congregational leadership – is then presented through a dialogue between the theoretical material of Chapters Two to Five and the field research presented in Chapters Six and Seven.

Finally, a number of basic principles are proposed for understanding the nature of leadership in different cultural contexts, and some specific recommendations are made for the strengthening of leadership in the Arab Protestant churches of the Middle East. Several possibilities are suggested for further research in the area of inter-cultural leadership studies.

An Inter-Cultural Study of Congregational Leadership Patterns in Arab Faith Communities

The plethora of books and articles written on the subject of secular leadership during the past hundred years (pages 7-9) have pointed to the prevailing widespread concern for locating, training and developing effective leaders. The narrowness and inadequacy of traditional single focus theories has led to the development of increasingly complex multi-faceted models for explaining the nature and function of leadership.

Until recently the majority of secular leadership studies emerged from Western sources, and many/most of them have proved unsuitable in non-western cultural contexts. A more adequate approach came with Hofstede’s (1980a, 1991, 2001) model of “cultural distance,” in which Hofstede observed cultural differences along five specific leadership-related dimensions (power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and long- and short-term orientation). The
breadth and general applicability of Hofstede’s model has led to its widespread acceptance among secular authors as the most thorough basis for understanding leadership in inter-cultural studies offered to date (pages 10-19).

In seeking to improve the quality of leadership in the local church, Christian authors have tended to adopt or develop secular models of leadership, or to seek a uniquely Christian approach to understanding the nature of leadership through the development of new models (pages 20-26). While the work of almost all these Christian writers has been of some value, most of the models suggested have tended to be too Western to be suitable for use in other cultural contexts, or to have a narrow focus on the leadership role of the pastor.

A broader and more widely applicable model of congregational life has been suggested through the modification of “family systems” theory for use in local churches (pages 26-35). Common features have been observed in the way churches and families function. Of particular note are the dynamic operation of change and homeostasis in well-functioning systems, and the central role of formal, informal and tacit agreements. Because of the comprehensive nature of a “family systems” model of church life, and the pervasive influence of family structures in Arab society, this approach, informed by broader organic systems models, was adopted as the theoretical framework for a study on patterns of Arab congregational leadership.

The importance of culturally appropriate leadership has increasingly been recognised in contemporary missiological literature (pages 36-42). Particularly over the past twenty years a growing body of research has sought to assess the interface between culture and leadership in Christian faith communities. Unfortunately, the bulk of these studies tend to be derivative from Western sources, or focused on the role of the pastor, and only a small number have taken a more systemic approach to intercultural leadership studies. Specific research in the Arab world has been particularly limited and a multi-faceted statistical study of patterns of congregational leadership in the churches of the Arab world to date has been lacking.

A more specific study of literature on leadership in the Arab world (pages 43-68) has found that generally the Arab world, when compared with North American society, tends to greater authoritarianism, more collectivist and affiliative
behaviour, an ambivalence towards rules and regulations, and a possible tendency
towards traditionalism. A comparative study of the extent to which these patterns
have influenced the life of local Protestant congregations in the two respective
cultures of the Middle East and North America has not been undertaken to date.

Reflecting on leadership through the lenses of salvation history, with a
particular focus on the missional-ecclesial vision of the early church, reveals several
significant patterns that provide critical-contextual lenses for evaluating leadership
(pages 69-96). Of particular importance are the missional heart of God, the servant
model of Christ, the imperative of delegated authority, empowerment and team
leadership, and the organic-relational nature of the church.

As a part of the overall investigation into the value of critically contextual
leadership patterns for the Arab Protestant churches my field study investigated the
impact of culture on systemic patterns of congregational leadership in the Arab
world. More specifically, the field study tested this hypothesis:

“that culturally appropriate congregational leadership will have a positive
effect on numerical church growth in the Arab Middle East.”

“Family systems” theory was taken as the theoretical framework for the
study. Parsons and Leas’ (1993b) Congregational Systems Inventory (CSI), which is
built on family systems theory, incorporating elements of broader organic systems
models, was chosen as the basic research instrument. A translated version of the CSI
was administered among members of Arab Protestant churches, and results compared
with Parsons and Leas’ North American data base. A comparison was then made
between CSI results recorded in numerically growing, stagnant and declining Arab
congregations.

Two clusters of systemic patterns of congregational leadership were found to
have a statistically significant correlation with each other and with numerical church
growth in Arab Protestant congregations. For the first of these clusters – planned
strategy, mandatory process and collegiality – there was also found to be a
statistically significant difference between North American and Arab congregations.
For this cluster support for the field study hypothesis was seen in that a culturally
typical pattern contributed to numerical church growth.
A second cluster of inter-related phenomena was also observed in the Arab data: that between visionary pastoral and lay leadership, dispersed authority, and metamising patterns of learning. None of these four phenomena provided support for the field study hypothesis of the importance of culturally appropriate forms of leadership. On the “learning” dimension there was no significant difference between the American and Arab samples. For the “authority” and “lay leadership” dimensions there was no significant evidence of a preferred pattern in numerically growing churches. And for the “pastoral leadership” dimension the trend for numerically growing Arab churches was the opposite of the trend from North American to Arab churches.

Towards a Critical-Contextual Approach to Congregational Leadership in the Arab World

The field research focused on actual systemic practices, and the impact of cultural variation on numerical church growth in Middle Eastern Arab churches. The deeper concern of the study as a whole is an investigation of the extent to which systemic patterns of numerical church growth reflect foundational biblical principles – that is, critical-contextual values. Suggestive indications of critical-contextual appropriateness can be gleaned by first painting a picture of the “growing” Arab church based on the field research, taking particular note of CSI items with high correlation against congregational growth. Numerical growth is not necessarily ideal. However, a dialogue between the field research and the principles noted at the conclusion of the chapter on biblical reflections (pages 94-96) can be indicative of the possible relative impact of culture and scripture on church life. Of particular significance are those systemic elements which have been found to contribute significantly to numerical church growth, but which seem contrary to standard cultural patterns in the Arab world.

As noted above (page 165) the “growing” Arab church is characterised by planned strategy, mandatory process, and collegial relatedness. Of central importance is the focus on harmony, collegiality and strong relational bonds (pages 149-151). The leaders function as a team, and decisions are made through careful
consultation and consensus. For the sake of corporate harmony, people will support these decisions, even at the cost of individual creativity and initiative. The ministry of the “growing” Arab church is through teams which work in co-operation with one another, with clear and regular communication between the teams. In general, each part of the congregation knows what the other parts of the congregation are doing. Processes and procedures are understood by all (pages 137-139). Committee members know what is expected of them and where to go for assistance and resources, and where and how to lodge complaints and to voice concerns and criticisms. Consistent and reliable decision-making processes are clearly delineated, and understood by the members of the congregation.

Both in the field research and in the review of pertinent literature the above characteristics were found to reflect broader Arab cultural patterns (c.f. pages 59-61). However, the strong emphasis on relationship and collegiality, as well as the nurturance of team ministry, are also strongly affirmed in the Scriptures (pages 94-96). It would seem that these are areas in which standard Arab patterns reflect something of the image of God. The more ambivalent element is the tendency to restrict creativity for the sake of communal harmony. As noted in Chapter Five (page 94), foundational to our being created in the image of our Creator God is the affirmation of both order and creativity. It would seem that in seeking a balance between order and creativity, numerically growing Arab churches have inclined towards order for the sake of preservation of relationship in the highly communal Middle Eastern context (pages 55-61).

The second cluster of interrelated phenomena observed in numerically growing Arab congregations were dispersed authority, visionary pastoral and lay leadership, and metamising learning patterns (page 166). Authority in the “growing” Arab church is dispersed among a wide circle of groups and individuals, and decision-making is participatory and collaborative (pages 132-133). There is no sense of any group dominating the life and ministry of the church, and new people are brought into leadership roles on a regular basis. A key word in the “growing” Arab church is “consultation”. The “growing” Arab congregation has spent time discussing and developing a long range plan for the church, and the people seek to
follow this plan together (pages 126-127). Short term goals are established on the basis of the overall plan, and it is expected that these goals will be met. The pastor of the “growing” Arab church is a visionary leader, capable of inspiring the people to both creative change and co-operative ministry (pages 143-144). Under the pastor’s leadership, the church has developed a forward-looking ethos. New programmes are introduced on a regular basis and the congregation is willing to experiment with new approaches to ministry. However, this is not done in an erratic, whimsical fashion, but carefully and in accord with the church’s long-range plan. Although open to new ideas, the “growing” Arab church would prefer to stay with “tried and true” approaches to ministry for the sake of harmonious congregational life, rather than fragment itself with a multitude of new projects and programmes (pages 127, 160-160).

The field research (as noted above – page 166) found that none of these four major systemic patterns seemed to be significantly driven by culture. This is consistent with the literature which suggests that Arab leadership tends towards a more pharaonic pattern in which change is directed from above rather than through grass roots initiative (pages 52-55). However, the patterns of dispersed authority, visionary pastoral and lay leadership, and metamising learning patterns seem in tune with the biblical principles that emerged in Chapter Five (see pages 94-96).

God’s missional heart demonstrated most clearly in Christ’s incarnation led the early church to a visionary focus on the spread of the gospel. Structure was seen as a servant to the missional vision, and appropriate changes occurred when the structure was hindering the work of the gospel. Jesus’ model of servanthood in leadership is expressed in an authority that empowers rather than controls. A recognition that all authority is ultimately from God results in an emphasis on team ministry based on spiritual giftedness. That dispersed authority, visionary pastoral and lay leadership, and metamising learning patterns are characteristic of numerically growing Arab churches points to a significant critical-contextual component to effective congregational systems.

This picture is very limited, and covers only a segment of congregational life. Little mention has been made of the spiritual dimension and the role of the Holy
Spirit, without which effective ministry is impossible. Nonetheless, God has chosen to work through human agency, and structures can either enhance or inhibit the work of God. While numerical growth is not always the ideal, the structures seen in this study as characteristic of the “growing” Arab church are significant. No church in the Arab world meets all the characteristics of the “growing” church described above. However, the evidence of this study is that as an Arab congregation takes seriously foundational biblical principles and is able to emulate the features of the “growing” church its life will be strengthened and renewed.

While the field research appears consistent with a critical-contextual approach to leadership patterns, of equal significance must be consideration of the extent to which the biblical-theological principles discussed in Chapter Five are reflected in the research. In the summary given on pages 94-96 the following were observed:

1. **Leadership in the image of God affirms: creativity and order; the stewardship of delegated authority; mutuality and service, rather than domination and hierarchy; team leadership.**

While not all these features are clearly evident in the field research, a number of elements in the field research affirm the imperative of God-imaged leadership patterns. The predominance of planned strategy and mandatory processes in “growing” Arab churches points to the biblical value of order, while the existence of metamising patterns in “growing” churches affirms the importance of creativity. The strong collegial relatedness in “growing” Arab churches suggests the application of the principle of mutuality and service. And the tendency to dispersed authority affirms team leadership and stewardship of delegated authority.

2. **The Fall points to the need for continual self-evaluation both individually and corporately, and highlights the need to decontextualise leadership characteristics that are driven by culture rather than the values of the Kingdom of God.**

3. **The Incarnation demonstrates the missional heart of God, and both affirms and critiques culture.**
The principle of decontextualisation is extended in these linked/interconnected principles. To a certain extent these are the thrust of the whole thesis, but in particular can be seen in the extent to which “growing” Arab churches embrace elements of culture that are consistent with Scripture, while exercising counter-cultural patterns in situations where the culture is contrary to biblical principles. There is also a hint of this principle in the tendency of “growing” churches towards metamising learning, through which appropriate learning and change are embraced.

4. *Christian leadership is servant leadership. The model of self-sacrificial servanthood exemplified in the life of Jesus is the pattern towards which Christian leaders are to aspire.*

This issue was not specifically addressed in the field research and needs further investigation, although elements of the qualitative interviews would suggest that it is assumed as a foundational principle in Arab churches that are perceived to be healthy. My own experience suggests that while there is much talk on servanthood and sacrifice in the Arab churches the tendency towards high power-distance makes the implementation of servant leadership a challenge. Further research on the practical outworking of servant leadership in the Arab world and other honour-shame societies would be an invaluable contribution to the global church.

5. *Authority is granted by God for empowering leader-development rather than controlling follower-development.*

This biblical pattern was found to be highly significant in “growing” Arab churches where leadership is dispersed and the role of existing leaders is more of visioning than controlling.

6. *The process of confession, repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation is foundational for Christian leaders who live in the power of the Spirit between the redemption of Christ and his consummate return.*
This foundational value was not specifically addressed in the field research, and the role of this process in the highly volatile region of the Middle East merits further investigation.

7. *The missional-ecclesial vision of the early church shaped its governance.* Organisational change occurred whenever the shape of governance was hindering the spread of the gospel and the formation of a community that reflected the incarnate character of God.

8. *The variety and flexibility of New Testament leadership terms seem to make any definitive statements on church governance or Christian leadership practice singularly unwise.* Where any form of structured ministry is considered it is seen as a call to service of the faith community rather than as an opportunity to exercise power.

The field research was fairly ambivalent on these two interrelated points: while metamising patterns affirm the need of change, the tendency of “growing” Arab churches towards mandatory process suggests that responsive structural change does not emerge as easily in the Arab world as it may elsewhere. My own experience would suggest that the relational nature of Arab society means that change needs to be through corporate ownership rather than individual initiative. It may be that mandatory processes facilitate the communication that is necessary for the church to work together in the process of change, but deeper investigation would be needed to assess the validity of this suggestion.

9. *General processes of institutionalisation are moderated by a commitment to missional-ecclesial vision.*

The correlation in “growing” Arab churches between visionary pastoral and lay leadership and metamising learning patterns would be consistent with this principle. Anecdotally there are several key Egyptian and Lebanese churches that are known for their high commitment to a missionary vision, and which in service of that vision have developed new patterns of leadership that run counter to their denominational heritage; for example a Presbyterian church that is led by ministry leaders rather than elders. In these churches the missional-ecclesial vision has
enabled an embrace of change without losing the roots that are so valued in the Arab world.

10. *The Holy Spirit is the source of wisdom for both the choice of leaders and their ongoing ministry.*

The current field research tended to be descriptive of systemic patterns rather than investigating the spiritual dimensions of local churches and their leaders. A more in-depth focus on the extent to which “healthy” Arab churches seek Holy Spirit guidance is worthy of further research.

11. *Multiple leadership is based on Holy Spirit giftedness.*

Again, the evidence of dispersed authority under visionary leadership in “growing” Arab churches would be consistent with the biblical pattern of multiple leadership.

12. *Personal integrity, quality of life, being filled with the Holy Spirit, and a recognition that leaders are no more (or no less) than stewards entrusted with an authority which ultimately is not their own, are more important leadership issues than are position and task. Christian leadership finds its power base in spiritual rather than other forms of power.*

The issues of integrity and power were not adequately addressed in the field research, even though their central significance to the Middle East context must be highlighted. Repeatedly in training seminars and seminary classes Arab participants have bemoaned the high general level of corruption in the Arab world, and the challenge of living with integrity where bribes and the practice of *Wasta* (see page 50) are endemic. Further research in these areas is definitely needed.

13. *Church membership is by nature relational, emphasising mutual care and responsiveness to needs.*

The priority of collegial relatedness in “growing” Arab churches is a clear affirmation of the priority of relationships in the people of the Triune God.
Conclusion: Culture and Leadership

The incarnational nature of the church involves an interaction between the human and the divine. It is therefore not surprising that certain aspects of human culture, when incorporated into the life of the church, will contribute significantly to the health of the local congregation. Widely suggested in the literature, this assertion has received statistical support in this study.

However, in light of the Christian belief that the goodness of creation has been tainted by the sinfulness of the Fall, it can only be expected that the impact of culturally influenced forms of leadership is not an absolute, and in some cases the effect may in fact be negative. This has also been seen in the current field research. Most notably, the Arab sample surveyed here was found to tend towards managerial forms pastoral leadership, a pattern which has proved to be generally unfavourable to church growth. Concerned leaders and congregations need continually to search for more appropriate and effective approaches to church life if they wish to see the work of God extended in the society which God has called them to serve.

One of the difficulties is that cultural features evident in the wider society may be helpful in certain aspects of church life, but not in others. It may well be that providing opportunities for spontaneity in, for example, worship would be beneficial in Arab churches. However, it has been clear from this study that spontaneity in planning and organisation is generally detrimental to the ongoing ministry of the church in the Arab world. Similarly, the rather ambivalent approach to rules and regulations in Arab society (pages 62-64) may point to the need for a certain amount of flexibility in the day-to-day operation of the church. On the other hand, this study has found that when it comes to the ongoing processes and procedures of congregational life, a closer adherence to established order is preferable for maintaining trust and harmony.

For those serving the church cross-culturally the challenge is particularly demanding. The tendency in the past was simply to import Western cultural forms into non-western cultural settings, and in many cases the results have been at the least debilitating, at the worst devastating. However, contemporary, more “sophisticated” approaches can be equally damaging. All too easily, in seeking to
contextualise the ministry, expatriate and local Christian workers alike can uncritically incorporate patterns of leadership from the surrounding society without considering their suitability for the Church of Jesus Christ. Great care must be exercised to distinguish between those aspects of culture that are fallen and evil, and those aspects which are acceptable and beneficial to congregational life.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

While the research of this study has examined a number of features of congregational leadership from an inter-cultural perspective, many further issues have surfaced. Following are some of the more outstanding issues that merit research:

1. A more in-depth study of the Arab Protestant sub-culture, investigating the ways in which it differs from other streams of Arab society, may help to explain the phenomena of the less spontaneous approach to strategy, the lack of any notably concentrated approach to authority, and the lack of any particularly traditionalist patterns of learning, observed in this study. These general trends were unexpected, as they did not match previous research into leadership in the Arab world (pages 52-55).

2. Consistently extreme results were recorded by the Jordanian sample throughout the research. More in-depth study of the Protestant sub-culture of Jordan, in comparison with other parts of the Middle East, would help determine whether the current results were more universally applicable or merely typical of the relatively small Jordanian sample investigated here.

3. Denominational differences were not taken into account in the original CSI research in North America. In the current Arab study, the focus has been on Presbyterian and CMA churches (which represent the largest proportion of the Protestant community in Syria and Egypt). Further study would help determine the impact of denominational sub-culture on church growth in different cultural contexts.

4. The common assertion that Arabs tend towards traditionalism in general has not been adequately investigated. The results under the “learning” dimension of current field research were inconclusive. More focused study would help clarify the
extent to which other segments of Arab society are tied to traditional patterns or open to change and new developments.

5. The comparison between North American and Arab churches has shown distinct differences and important trends between the two samples. These differences have lent support to the importance of identifying aspects of culture which are beneficial for congregational health. However, for both these samples the general trend in recent years has been to stagnancy or relatively minor church growth. An investigation into the nature of congregational leadership in a cultural context which has seen more explosive church growth may produce patterns of a markedly different order. At the very least further investigation would be invaluable to the broader understanding of Christian leadership in non-western settings.

6. While externals such as administrative and authority structures, and patterns of planning and learning, are all important to the life of the Church, it is clear that the growth of the inner person towards maturity in the image of Christ and the development of the people of God as a spiritual “nation” must be of preeminent concern. A body of research investigating the interaction of external forms and internal spirituality, especially as it is expressed in different cultural contexts, would be of great value.

7. The contextual impact on Arab churches of certain foundational biblical-theological principles of Christian leadership needs further research. In particular the application of contextually appropriate models of servant leadership, the role of confession, repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation, processes of Holy Spirit guidance, and the impact of personal integrity and the application of power, are all highly significant issues for the Arab church which merit further research.
Endword

As I write the final words of this thesis most nations of the Arab world are in a state of upheaval and change. For example, the country of Syria, whose churches have played such a significant role in this thesis, appears on the edge of civil war. Believers throughout the region speak of a future in which the church is likely to experience increasing levels of discrimination and persecution.

For the Church to face this future with integrity it is imperative that new models of “doing church” are developed and embraced which responds to both cultural patterns and scriptural principles. A critical-contextual approach to congregational leadership lies at the heart of the accomplishment of a missional-ecclesial vision for the Protestant churches of the Arab world. My hope is that the issues and observations raised in this thesis may provide some level of direction in this process as they are communicated to Arab church leaders and theological students in the region.
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APPENDICES
APPENDIX 1

LETTER TO THE ALBAN INSTITUTE

REQUESTING PERMISSION TO USE THE

CONGREGATIONAL SYSTEMS INVENTORY
Dear Sir/Madam,

I am currently at the beginning stages of preparation for a doctoral dissertation. My area of study will be an investigation into the extent to which cultural differences in congregational style affect church health and growth. Specifically I will be investigating congregations in Syria and Egypt - hopefully doing comparative study with Western church models. In my investigations I came across the Congregational Systems Inventory, which it appears would provide me with precisely the statistical tool I need.

I am writing to ask permission to use the Congregational Systems Inventory in my doctoral research.

If acceptable, I would need to translate the material into Arabic, and perhaps modify some of the items minimally to suit the setting. Hence I would not be purchasing materials in English. As a servant of the Arab churches of the Middle East (I work as coordinator of the program of theological education by extension in Syria) my funds are very limited, and if a charge is levied I would greatly appreciate this being kept to a minimum.

Additionally, I need to know if the CSI has been tested for consistency and reliability, and if so what results emerged. If this information could be made available it would be greatly appreciated.

Of course, if I am permitted to use the material, the Alban Institute would be given a full description of the results as soon as my research is complete. As I am hoping to survey at least 200 Arab Protestant church members I expect that this material will be of interest to the Institute, especially as a comparative study with churches in America.

I look forward to a positive response from you in the very near future.

Very sincerely,

Perry Shaw
APPENDIX 2

LETTER FROM THE ALBAN INSTITUTE

GRANTING PERMISSION TO USE THE

CONGREGATIONAL SYSTEMS INVENTORY
May 15, 1996

Perry WH Shaw
1389 Hanover Ave.
South Meriden, CT 06451

Dear Mr. Shaw:

In response to your request of May 8, we hereby give you permission to use the Congregational Systems Inventory by Speed B. Leas in your doctoral dissertation.

We ask that you give credit to The Alban Institute as follows: Reprinted from Congregational Systems Inventory by Speed B. Leas with permission from The Alban Institute, Inc., 4550 Montgomery Avenue, Suite 433N, Bethesda, MD 20814. Copyright (insert year). All rights reserved.

It is understood that this material will not be sold or used beyond your dissertation. Please send us the results of your research when completed.

In response to your question, the CSI has not been tested for consistency and reliability.

We appreciate your interest in our publications.

Sincerely,

Migina Melón-Wilmot
Editorial Assistant
APPENDIX 3

THE CONGREGATIONAL SYSTEMS INVENTORY

AS ORIGINALLY GIVEN BY PARSONS AND LEAS (1993b),

WITH SCORING INSTRUCTIONS, SCORING KEY, AND

INTERPRETATIVE SUMMARY
Inventory Instructions

- In each pair of choices, check the response that most clearly describes your congregation, even if neither choice is completely accurate.

- Focus on your congregation as it is currently, not how it used to be or how you wish it to be.

- There are no right or wrong choices. Give your first impression.

- Make a choice for every pair. If you check neither option or both options, the inventory results will be invalid.

- Terminology:

  "Lay leader" refers to those serving on the Board and those heading committees or other groups in the congregation.

  "Pastor" refers to the paid, ordained clergyperson or head of staff (or multiple staff).

NOTE: If your congregation has a co-pastor (equals) arrangement, you may want to complete these items twice.
Congregational Systems Inventory

1. a. As a congregation, we have a clear, overall plan that we follow together.
   b. As a congregation, we encourage boards or committees to create and follow their own plans.

2. a. Decisions in our congregation tend to be influenced by many groups and many individuals.
   b. Decisions in our congregation tend to be influenced by a few groups or individuals.

3. a. Conscience members do what they are expected to do.
   b. Conscience members take initiative to define their responsibilities.

4. a. Our pastor places emphasis on producing new directions for ministry.
   b. Our pastor places emphasis on organizing the resources to develop current directions.

5. a. In the extreme, our congregation might overemphasize mutual agreement to the detriment of creative ideas.
   b. In the extreme, our congregation might overemphasize individual creativity to the detriment of good team decisions.

6. a. Sometimes our lay leaders overfocus on the larger vision and lose sight of the basic management of the congregation.
   b. Sometimes our lay leaders overfocus on cost, budget, and building maintenance and lose sight of the larger picture.

7. a. Our leadership (clergy and lay together) stays with tried and true approaches to ministry.
   b. Our leadership (clergy and lay together) introduces new programs and approaches to ministry on a regular basis.

8. a. Our planning process is informal and varies from year to year.
   b. Our planning process tends to be well organized and consistent.

Understanding Your Congregation as a System
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| 9. | a. We have some entrenched groups or individuals that tend to run things around here.  
  b. We are not concerned about consensus and collaboration that we suffer for a lack of decisive leadership. |
| 10. | a. Committee members feel pretty much on their own to get what they need to do their work.  
  b. Committee members know what is expected of them and where they can go for assistance and resources. |
| 11. | a. Our pastor organizes people to carry out plans.  
  b. Our pastor motivates people by inspiring them to join together. |
| 12. | a. When engaged in the work of ministry, we expect people to come forth with dissenting points of view.  
  b. When engaged in the work of ministry, we expect people to work as part of harmonious team. |
| 13. | a. Most of our lay leaders are likely to place greater emphasis on the practicalities of today.  
  b. Most of our lay leaders are likely to place greater emphasis on the possibilities of tomorrow. |
| 14. | a. Our leadership (clergy and laity together) places emphasis on learning to do things well.  
  b. Our leadership (clergy and laity together) places emphasis on improving what we already do well. |
| 15. | a. Sometimes I think we spend too much time planning.  
  b. Sometimes I think we spend too little time planning. |
| 16. | a. We bring new people into leadership roles on a regular basis.  
  b. Leadership in our congregation is recycled among same circle. |
| 17. | a. We have regular ways, understood by everyone, for passing information from one group to another.  
  b. We rely on people's best judgment about what information needs to be passed from group to group. |
| 18. | a. Our pastor leads by inspiring people to create change.  
  b. Our pastor leads by guiding people to do systematic problem solving. |
| 19. | a. In general our leaders would be characterized as team players.  
  b. In general our leaders would be characterized as individualists (seldom who step up when necessary). |
| 20. | a. Most of our lay leaders place no emphasis on producing new directions for ministry.  
  b. Most of our lay leaders place an emphasis on organizing our resources to develop current directions. |
| 21. | a. Our leadership (clergy and laity together) is putting more effort into developing our current strengths as a congregation.  
  b. Our leadership (clergy and laity together) is putting more effort into developing new strengths as a congregation. |
| 22. | a. We tend to evaluate our direction from time to time.  
  b. We tend to do pretty much the same thing each year. |
| 23. | a. Among our lay leaders we have some real standouts who have greatly influenced our decisions.  
  b. Among our lay leaders we have many capable people but no real standouts. |
| 24. | a. Each part of our congregation is relatively uninformed about what the others are doing.  
  b. Each part of our congregation usually knows what the other parts are doing. |
| 25. | a. Our pastor focuses first on making the organization work.  
  b. Our pastor focuses first on transforming the organization. |
| 26. | a. We expect groups to contend and produce “minority reports” if necessary.  
  b. We expect groups in our church to seek consensus whenever possible. |
| 27. | a. Most of our lay leaders are likely to make decisions on the basis of organizational priorities.  
  b. Most of our lay leaders are likely to make decisions on the basis of ideals. |

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Understanding Your Congregation as a System
28. a. A meme that would describe our approach to ministry is “nothing ventured, nothing gained.”
b. A meme that would describe our approach to ministry is “stay the course.”

25. a. Our lay leaders are committed to a long-range plan.
b. Our lay leaders are willing to change the plans in response to changing circumstances.

30. a. We need to emphasize participation in our music program.
b. We need to emphasize excellence in our music program.

31. a. Committees, boards, and other program groups know their responsibilities and their range of authority.
b. Committees, boards, and other program groups need to be clear about their responsibilities and range of authority.

32. a. As a leader, our pastor emphasizes new directions and change.
b. As a leader, our pastor emphasizes good administration and organization.

33. a. In our congregation people value group effort and are cautious about excessive individualism.
b. In our congregation people value individual initiative and are cautious about excessive collaboration.

34. a. Most of our lay leaders inspire people to create change.
b. Most of our lay leaders guide people to do systematic problem solving.

35. a. Programmatically, our leadership (clergy and laity together) tends to repeat the same thing year to year.
b. Programmatically, our leadership (clergy and laity together) tends to go with the trends.

36. a. Our overall direction as a congregation is unclear.
b. Our overall direction as a congregation is clear.

37. a. We are more comfortable letting decisional leaders shape our ministry.
b. We are more comfortable including as many people as possible in the shaping of our ministry.

38. a. Decision-making ability varies a good deal from committee to committee.
b. Boards and committees use consistent and reliable ways of making decisions.

39. a. Our pastor is a detail person who values results.
b. Our pastor is a visionary person who values change.

40. a. When it comes to the work of ministry, our usual strategy is to divide up the tasks and get people free to do the job.
b. When it comes to the work of ministry, our usual strategy is to do most everything in committee.

41. a. Most of our lay leaders focus first on making the organization work.
b. Most of our lay leaders focus first on transforming the organization.

42. a. When it comes to trying new approaches to ministry, our leaders (clergy and laity together) are likely to be risk takers.
b. When it comes to trying new approaches to ministry, our leaders (clergy and laity together) are likely not to take risks.

43. a. We believe it's better to follow a carefully developed plan.
b. We believe it's better to remain open to changing needs and opportunities.

44. a. Our members question leaders (pastors) and Board frequently.
b. Our members do not question leaders (pastors) and Board.

45. a. When it comes to getting things done, our congregation tends to emphasize policies and procedures.
b. When it comes to getting things done, our congregation tends to emphasize individual freedom and initiative.

46. a. Our pastor tends to focus on longer-term goals.
b. Our pastor tends to focus on shorter-term goals.

47. a. We sometimes sacrifice individual initiative to preserve our fellowship.
b. We sometimes sacrifice harmony to encourage the autonomy of groups and individuals.
48. a. Most of our lay leaders emphasize new directions and change.
   b. Most of our lay leaders emphasize good administration and organization.

49. a. At our worst our congregation might be described as stuck in the same old rut.
   b. At our worst our congregation might be described as a jack of all trades, master of none.

50. a. Our congregation's direction and priorities are shaped by current needs and issues.
   b. Our congregation's directions and priorities are determined by a long-range plan.

51. a. Most important decisions in our congregation are made by those at the top.
   b. Most important decisions in our congregation are made at the grass-roots level.

52. a. Within our congregation's leadership (clergy and laity together), new ideas or proposals need to get a welcome hearing and can be quickly adopted if they have merit.
   b. Within our congregation's leadership (clergy and laity together), new ideas or proposals are taken through a series of steps and given lengthy consideration before they are adopted.

53. a. Our pastor is devoted to helping people develop a careful plan and then methodically bring the plan into action.
   b. Our pastor is devoted to helping people catch a vision and then move together toward that vision.

54. a. Groups within our congregation need to cooperate.
   b. Groups within our congregation need to compete.

55. a. Most of our lay leaders are detail-oriented people who value results.
   b. Most of our lay leaders are visionary people who value change.

56. a. Our congregation is likely to launch new experiments in ministry.
   b. Our congregation is likely to gradually build on past successes in ministry.

57. a. We set goals and expect them to be attained.
   b. We set goals but often forget about them.

58. a. We have evolved a participatory and collaborative decision-making process in our congregation.
   b. We have evolved an efficient chain of command in our congregation.

59. a. Within our congregation's leadership (clergy and laity together), we have a clear system for receiving, addressing, and solving problems that arise.
   b. Within our congregation's leadership (clergy and laity together), we handle problems that arise on a case-by-case basis.

60. a. Our pastor is at his best when challenging us toward some new direction.
   b. Our pastor is at his best when keeping the structures of our congregation working smoothly.

61. a. Most decisions are made to support those decisions.
   b. Most decisions are made to allow room for dissent.

62. a. Most of our lay leaders tend to focus on long-term goals.
   b. Most of our lay leaders tend to focus on short-term goals.

63. a. We have stayed too long with a few successful projects or programs.
   b. We fragment ourselves too many new projects and programs.

64. a. We procrastinate with our plans by not identifying and pursuing clear, measurable outcomes.
   b. We procrastinate with our plans by not considering new opportunities along the way.

65. a. Some committees or working groups in our congregations need to consolidate the others.
   b. Working groups and units in our congregation tend to cooperate with each another.

66. a. Our members are not likely to know where and how to lodge a complaint, concern, or criticism.
   b. Our members are likely to know where and how to lodge a complaint, concern, or criticism.
67. a. Our pastor is likely to place greater emphasis on the personalities of today.
b. Our pastor is likely to place greater emphasis on the possibilities of tomorrow.

68. a. We do time to review the performance of our committees and program groups.
b. We endeavor to monitor the performance of our committees and program groups.

69. a. Most of our lay leadership needs to be realistic.
b. Most of our lay leadership needs to be idealistic.

70. a. Changing circumstances over the years have led us to develop new capabilities for ministry.
b. Changing circumstances over the years have led us to enhance proven capabilities for ministry.

Scoring Instructions

STEP #1
Transfer the check marks from your Inventory to the corresponding boxes on the Scoring Sheet – Part I. Leave the box blank when the response indicated was not checked.

Example:

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STEP #2
Add the total number of boxes containing check marks in each column.

STEP #3
Transfer column totals to Scoring Sheet – Part II.

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Understanding Your Congregation as a System
## Scoring Sheet – Part I

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Understanding Your Congregation as a System

17
Introduction to Congregational Systems Theory

All organizations live between the extremes of chaos and overcontrol. Congregations are likely to be at their best when they maintain a healthy tension between the requirements of living in community (integration) and the need in each person to be an individual (differentiation).

Living in tension means living with convention. When the level of convention drops too low, congregations tend to become barren or brittle. No challenge means patients of doing and thinking become too rigid. On the other hand, too much change or convention can also be a problem. When anger levels are high or we don't know what to expect next, life in a congregation can be chaotic and the organization loses its ability to get on with its work.

We have selected seven dimensions of a congregation’s system. In each dimension a healthy tension is needed in your congregation. At both ends of each dimension we have placed valued tendencies or polarities. These opposing tendencies are both needed for effective and vital congregational functioning. The challenge is to live in the tension between these opposing and to use the tension as a source of energy for ongoing renewal.

Interpreting Your Scores

Your response to the inventory produces a score between 0 and 10 for each dimension. Placed on the continuum for each dimension, your scores indicate the degree of relative tension that currently exists in your congregation.

Scores placed toward the center (4-6) would indicate an approximation of optimum tension between opposing tendencies.

Scores placed toward one end (0-3) or the other (7-10) would indicate a loss of tension and a dominance by one opposite or the risk of excessive reliance on that tendency.

Looking at these dimensions in relation to one another will provide important clues for your change efforts as leaders.

You will gain a more complete assessment of your congregation by “pooling” the scores of a group of lay leaders and staff and creating a combined score for each dimension.

Understanding Your Congregation as a System
Strategy

Definition: Strategy is the way congregations put their vision into practice. This dimension might also be called planning or direction.

**PLANNED**
- Developing a clear sense of mission and direction...
- Connecting goals and objectives to this purpose...
- Bringing organizational criteria to bear on the evaluation of ministry...

**SPONTANEOUS**
- Maintaining an openness to God's leading...
- Remaining responsive to emerging opportunities and needs...
- Using members' gifts and talents flexibly...

Excesses at the Planned End of the Scale
- Congregation's field of vision is limited to "what fits the plan."
- Ongoing planning process absorbs leader's time and energy.
- Management by objectives process is more important than the objectives.
- Inability to respond to new opportunities or new needs.
- Looking good on paper replaces effectiveness.
- Spontaneous leaders lose interest or are driven out.

Excesses at the Spontaneous End of the Scale
- Goals may be defined at a planning event but then forgotten.
- Congregational identity or direction is unclear.
- Leadership is vulnerable to current trends and fads.
- Congregational projects become disconnected from one another.
- Lack of goal agreement produces repetitive conflicts.
- Matching needs of the congregation with clergy skills is guess work.

Living in the Tension
- The congregation knows its goals and priorities.
- Members are conscious of this year's priorities.
- The leadership is in agreement about the goals.
- Clergy leadership is focused on the basis of the congregation's clear sense of identity and direction.
- Resources are used in relation to the goals and priorities.
- Creative initiatives that may not fit the plans are sought and encouraged.
- Envisioning activity is done on a regular basis.
- Leadership is regularly studying the congregation's environment.
- The congregation's goals are consistent.
- A spirit of open inquiry is created to periodically reshape the plan.
- Leadership treats unplanned outcomes as opportunities.

Understanding Your Congregation as a System
### Authority

**Definition:** Authority is the ability to influence decision-making in the congregation. This dimension refers to the extent to which authority is concentrated in the hands of a few people or dispersed to larger groups or the entire congregation.

**Concentrated**
- Shaping ministry with decisive leadership.
- Empowering talented groups and individuals to act.
- Maintaining consistency in leadership roles.

**Dispersed**
- Consulting the larger congregation about corporate issues.
- Bringing new people into leadership roles.
- Encouraging "grass roots" decision-making.

**Excesses at the Concentrated End of the Scale**
- Small groups or individuals have the "power" to control leadership decisions.
- Leadership is recycled; new people are excluded.
- Power groups become entrenched and dominate others.
- In-group/Out-group phenomenon develops.
- Those with authority become blind to their impact on others.

**Excesses at the Dispersed End of the Scale**
- People are confused about who makes which decisions.
- Leaders are scattered, discouraging competency development.
- Strong leadership is dismantled.
- The decision-making process is slow.
- Individuals are reluctant to move forward to lead.
- Consensual decisions create inertia and common dominator results.

**Living in the Tension**
- Talented people can function interdependently.
- Groups and individuals are given permission to use their power.
- Lay leaders stay in a position long enough to develop expertise but have defined limits and "boundaries."
- The official leaders staff and Board are able to give clear leadership while staying in touch with the congregation.
- New people are brought into positions of authority.
- People with expertise are given authority and responsibility.
- Competing groups of individuals are brought together to work cross-functionally.
- The range of authority granted to individuals or groups is clearly defined and periodically re-evaluated.
- The exercise of authority in congregational life is a subject for periodic discussion.

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### Process

**Definition:** Process refers to the information sharing and decision-making procedures in a congregation and the extent to which these procedures are clearly defined and regulated or variable and left to the discretion of individuals.

**Mandatory**
- Developing and following clear guidelines for decision making.
- Providing a conflict management map.
- Connecting the parts of the congregation with good information flow.

**Discretionary**
- Encouraging individual initiative toward problem solving.
- Adjusting group (task) to superego law (rules).
- Adjusting decision-making processes to fix the situation.

**Excesses at the Mandatory End of the Scale**
- Operating procedures become rigid and awkward.
- Leadership becomes obsessed with following the rules.
- Creativity is stifled, especially regarding how the congregation can better do the work of ministry.
- Staff becomes burdened with monitoring policies and procedures.

**Excesses at the Discretionary End of the Scale**
- People don't know where to go or who to ask.
- Members don't know what the Board or various committees are doing.
- People don't know what to do when a person or group behaves unexpectedly.
- Committees lack clear guidelines and a defined range of authority.

**Living in the Tension**
- Members are expected to follow the rules but apply rules with some flexibility.
- Policies and procedures are re-examined periodically so that they accurately reflect the congregation's values.
- Lay leaders and staff have clear guidelines for handling problems and complaints, but also exercise discretion.
- The congregation has adopted a clearly defined conflict management strategy.
- Committees and work groups have job descriptions and know their range of authority.
- Leaders are trained to various effective, efficient, and user-friendly meetings.
- Leaders know who to consult or inform regarding particular decisions.

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Understanding Your Congregation as a System
Pastoral Leadership

effectiveness: Pastoral leadership is the ability of the pastor(s) to generate intended change in an organization.

ANALYTICAL ........................................... TRANSFORMATIONAL

- Spreading resources to develop current resources...
- Involving people in decision making...
- Recognizing people's contributions...
- Focusing on future possibilities...

Experience at the Managerial End of the Scale
- Pastors develop a vision focused on the control of resources and programs.
- Risk taking in the congregation is reduced.
- Keeping things running smoothly emphasizes longer purposes.
- Principal priorities dominate decision making.
- Creative possibilities have to be "run through the planning process."
- Transformational staff and lay leaders are viewed as "those cannon."

Experience at the Transformational End of the Scale
- Pastors don't see vision as practical issues.
- Changes are constantly introduced at the expense of time-tested strengths and approaches.
- Core purposes of the congregation are obscured by programmatic change efforts.
- Pastors are seen as "out in front" and how much with the membership.
- Transformational staff and lay leaders are characterized as rigid.
- Oversight of the congregation's structural and institutional needs is neglected.

Rigging the Tension
- The vision is well managed.
- The pastor encourages an ongoing discussion about how much change and risk to introduce and when to stop the change.
- The pastor leads efforts to keep differing leadership styles in balance.
- The pastor is willing to take risks toward new directions and stay in touch with the congregation while doing so.
- Pastors who make strong at one end of the continuum seek the counsel and advice of those who reassert the opposite end.

Experience involved in the life of the congregation are incorporated by the necessary staffing, budgeting, leadership-overight.

Pastors on one side of the leadership discretion set continuing education opportunities to develop the other side.

The Alban Institute

Relatedness

Definition: Relatedness is the way members of an organization work together, especially whether their work is done cooperatively or independently.

COLLABORATIVE .................................. INDIVIDUAL
- Encouraging cooperative efforts to do the work of ministry...
- Collaborating to make decisions as a team...
- Empowering team play and autonomous relationship...

Experiences at the Collaborative End of the Scale
- Everything is done in committees.
- An increasing number of individuals rely on an "organized system.
- People are able to state clearly what they need from others to do their work.
- Changes move slowly since many need to be consulted and most need to agree.
- Those willing to risk change are labeled as troublemakers.

Experiences at the Individual End of the Scale
- Patience and stamina to work collaboratively is limited.
- The division of labor among leaders creates "soft" issues and a loss of coordination.
- Antagonistic urban culture in power struggles with one another.
- Relationship "rules" is weakened and a disrupted system develops.
- Open conflict becomes a常态.

Living in the Tension
- People are expected to take the initiative, but explore its impact on others.
- The work of individuals and smaller groups is tied to the overall purposes of the congregation and the work is reviewed.
- Collaborative decision making is encouraged where possible, but dissent and "minority reports" are respected.
- Leaders are encouraged to face differences around the issues of congregational life while taking risks of one another in the midst of these differences.
- Consensus and work groups are large enough to get good samples of opinion, but small enough to get the work done.
- Committees are given an adequate range of autonomy so that the Board does not often act as a commission of the whole.
- People are valued. Work groups devote time to relationship building and spiritual development.

Understanding Your Congregation as a System
Lay Leadership

Definition: Lay leadership is the ability of lay leaders to generate needed change in an organization.

MANAGERIAL
Organizing people to do their part toward the larger goals.
Overseeing projects and committees to complete tasks.
Focusing on practical results in the short run.

TRANSFORMATIONAL
Helping members capture a vision or new direction.
Empowering people to create change.
Focusing on future possibilities.

Excesses at the Managerial End of the Scale
- The Board develops inaction vision, focusing only on "maintaining" needs.
- Leaders dismantle innovative or expensive ideas.
- Transformational staff and lay leaders are ignored or excluded.
- Leaders react to current demands and are not able to think into the future.
- Change is stunted (declining financial support or Sunday attendance, changing neighborhood, emerging conflict among membership) without ignoring in favor of meeting current goals.

Excesses at the Transformational End of the Scale
- Lay leaders sacrifice good stewardship of the congregation's resources to meet funding needs of a new program or project.
- Risk-taking endeavors are not grounded in good management.
- Change efforts in the congregation are disconnected and poorly organized.
- The Board repeatedly misinterprets the congregation's willingness and ability to adapt to change initiatives.
- Mission-related staff and lay leaders are pushed aside as rigid bureaucrats and are excluded from leadership circles.

Living in the Tension
- The Board and other lay leaders put forth a clear vision for the congregation's future and they struggle to maintain it.
- Leaders who envision lay leaders look for both kinds of leadership.
- Transformational staff and needs are not represented on Board and committees and efforts are made to encourage the acceptance of one by the other.
- Lay leaders are helped to become visionaries and not fill assigned slots.
- Change initiatives are accomplished by good management.
- Leaders are willing to take risks toward new directions and stay in touch with the membership while doing so.

The Alban Institute

Learning

Definition: Learning is a congregation's orientation toward the past or future as it experiences with improving its life and ministry.

MAXIMIZE
- Building on the congregation's strengths.
- Going beyond current strengths to develop something new.
- Learning from past successes to develop something new.
- Learning from what is new and carried.
- Enhancing the congregation's distinctive competencies.
- Building new competencies that are dissonant with the past.

METAMORPHIZE
- People with new ideas or approaches become discouraged.
- Incremental improvements in existing programs and projects fail congregational leaders into believing that they are effectively responding to the needs of the membership and the community.
- Environmental changes catch the congregation by surprise.

Excesses at the Maximizing End of the Scale
- The congregation is vulnerable to current trends and fads.
- Leaders respect or abandon basic strategies of their congregation.
- Leaders initiate discontinuous change without bringing the congregation along; the leadership becomes isolated.
- The current board or members are frustrated by the congregation, increase discontent, and cause the tradition board members to quit.
- The congregation runs the risk of losing its identity as a result of the changes.
- Experiential programs are initiated without adequate resources.

Living in the Tension
- Leaders know what the congregation's current "distinctive competencies" are and help the congregation evolve these into something .
- The congregation is able to make successful initiatives but regularly experiences with new opportunities for ministry.
- Maximizing and renewing voices are kept in dialogue.
- Leaders recognize that developing a new congregational strategy takes time; adequate time lines and evaluation procedures are established to avoid premature abandonment of an experiment.
- New projects are connected to a long-range plan.

Understanding Your Congregation as a System
## APPENDIX 4

### THE CONGREGATIONAL SYSTEMS INVENTORY

(By Category)

#### Strategy

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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>a.___ As a congregation, we have a clear, overall plan that we follow together.</td>
<td>b.✓ _ As a congregation, we encourage boards or committees to create and follow their own plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>a.✓ _ Our planning process is informal and varies from year to year.</td>
<td>b.___ Our planning process tends to be well organised and consistent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>a.___ Sometimes I think we spend too much time planning.</td>
<td>b.✓ _ Sometimes I think we spend too little time planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>a.✓ _ We tend to re-vision our direction from time to time.</td>
<td>b.___ We tend to do pretty much the same things each year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>a.___ Our lay leaders are committed to a long-range plan.</td>
<td>b.✓ _ Our lay leaders are willing to change the plans in response to changing circumstances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>a.✓ _ Our overall direction as a congregation is unclear.</td>
<td>b.___ Our overall direction as a congregation is clear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>a.___ We believe it’s better to follow a carefully developed plan.</td>
<td>b.✓ _ We believe it’s better to remain open to changing needs and opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.</td>
<td>a.✓ _ Our congregation’s direction and priorities are shaped by current needs and issues.</td>
<td>b.___ Our congregation’s direction and priorities are determined by a long-range plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57.</td>
<td>a.___ We set goals and expect them to be attained.</td>
<td>b.✓ _ We set goals but often forget about them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64.</td>
<td>a.✓ _ We undercommit to our plans by not identifying and pursuing clear, measurable outcomes.</td>
<td>b.___ We overcommit to our plans by not considering new opportunities along the way.</td>
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</table>
Authority

2. a. ✓ Decisions in our congregation tend to be influenced by many groups and many individuals.
   b. ___ Decisions in our congregation tend to be influenced by a few groups or individuals.

9. a. ___ We have some entrenched groups or individuals that tend to run things around here.
   b. ✓ We are so concerned about consensus and collaboration that we suffer for a lack of decisive leadership.

16. a. ✓ We bring new people into leadership roles on a regular basis.
    b. ___ Leadership in our congregation is recycled among the same circle.

23. a. ___ Among our lay leaders we have some real standouts who have greatly influenced our decisions.
    b. ✓ Among our lay leaders we have many capable people but no real standouts.

30. a. ✓ We tend to emphasise participation in our music programme.
    b. ___ We tend to emphasise excellence in our music programme.

37. a. ___ We are more comfortable letting decisive leaders shape our ministry.
    b. ✓ We are more comfortable including as many people as possible in the shaping of our ministry.

44. a. ✓ Our members question leaders (pastor(s) and Board) frequently.
    b. ___ Our members do not question leaders (pastor(s) and Board).

51. a. ___ Most important decisions in our congregation are made by those at the top.
    b. ✓ Most important decisions in our congregation are made at the grass-roots.

58. a. ✓ We have evolved a participatory and collaborative decision-making process in our congregation.
    b. ___ We have evolved an efficient chain of command in our congregation.

65. a. ___ Some committees or working groups in our congregation tend to dominate the others.
    b. ✓ Working groups and units in our congregation tend to co-operate with one another.
Process

3. a. ___ Committee members do what they are expected to do.
b. ✔ _ Committee members take initiative to define their responsibilities.

10. a. ✔ _ Committee members feel pretty much on their own to get what they need to do their work.
b. ___ Committee members know what is expected of them and where they can go for assistance and resources.

17. a. ___ We have regular ways, understood by everyone, for passing information from one group to another.
b. ✔ _ We rely on people’s best judgement about what information needs to be passed from group to group.

24. a. ✔ _ Each part of our congregation is relatively uninformed about what the others are doing.
b. ___ Each part of our congregation usually knows what the other parts are doing.

31. a. ___ Committees, boards, and other programme groups know their responsibilities and their range of authority.
b. ✔ _ Committees, boards, and other programme groups tend to be unclear about their responsibilities and their range of authority.

38. a. ✔ _ Decision-making ability varies a good deal from committee to committee.
b. ___ Boards and committees use consistent and reliable ways of making decisions.

45. a. ___ When it comes to getting things done, our congregation tends to emphasise policies and procedures.
b. ✔ _ When it comes to getting things done, our congregation tends to emphasise individual freedom and initiative.

52. a. ✔ _ Within our congregation’s leadership (clergy and laity together) new ideas or proposals tend to get a welcome hearing and can be quickly adopted if they have merit.
b. ___ Within our congregation’s leadership (clergy and laity together) new ideas or proposals are taken through a series of steps and given lengthy consideration before adoption.

59. a. ___ Within our congregation’s leadership (clergy and laity together) we have a clear system for receiving, addressing, and solving problems that arise.
b. ✔ _ Within our congregation’s leadership (clergy and laity together) we handle problems that arise on a case by case basis.
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| 66. | a. ✔ Our members are not likely to know where and how to lodge a complaint, concern, or criticism.  
|   | b. ___ Our members are likely to know where and how to lodge a complaint, concern, or criticism.  
|   |   |
|   |   |
|   |   |
| **Pastoral Leadership** |   |
| 4. | a. ✔ Our pastor places emphasis on producing new directions for ministry.  
|   | b. ___ Our pastor places emphasis on organising the resources to develop current directions.  
|   |   |
| 11. | a. ___ Our pastor organises people to carry out plans.  
|   | b. ✔ Our pastor motivates people by inspiring them to join together.  
|   |   |
| 18. | a. ✔ Our pastor leads by inspiring people to create change.  
|   | b. ___ Our pastor leads by guiding people to do systematic problem solving.  
|   |   |
| 25. | a. ___ Our pastor focuses first on making the organisation work.  
|   | b. ✔ Our pastor focuses first on transforming the organisation.  
|   |   |
| 32. | a. ✔ As a leader, our pastor emphasises new directions and change.  
|   | b. ___ As a leader, our pastor emphasises good administration and organisation.  
|   |   |
| 39. | a. ___ Our pastor is a detail person who values results.  
|   | b. ✔ Our pastor is a visioning person who values change.  
|   |   |
| 46. | a. ✔ Our pastor tends to focus on longer-term goals.  
|   | b. ___ Our pastor tends to focus on shorter-term goals.  
|   |   |
| 53. | a. ___ Our pastor is devoted to helping people develop a careful plan and then methodically bringing the plan into action.  
|   | b. ✔ Our pastor is devoted to helping people catch a vision and then move together toward that vision.  
|   |   |
| 60. | a. ✔ Our pastor is at her/his best when challenging us toward some new direction.  
|   | b. ___ Our pastor is at her/his best when keeping the structures of our congregation working smoothly.  
|   |   |
| 67. | a. ___ Our pastor is likely to place greater emphasis on the practicalities of today.  
|   | b. ✔ Our pastor is likely to place greater emphasis on the possibilities of tomorrow.  
|   |   |
Relatedness

5. a.___ In the extreme, our congregation might overemphasise mutual agreement to the detriment of creative ideas.
   b.✓_ In the extreme, our congregation might overemphasise individual creativity to the detriment of good team decisions.

12. a.✓_ When engaged in the work of ministry, we expect people to come forth with dissenting points of view.
    b.___ When engaged in the work of ministry, we expect people to work as part of a harmonious team.

19. a.___ In general our leaders would be characterised as team players.
    b.✓_ In general our leaders would be characterised as individualists (soloists who team up when necessary).

26. a.✓_ We expect groups to contend and produce “minority reports” if necessary.
    b.___ We expect groups in our church to seek consensus whenever possible.

33. a.___ In our congregation people value group effort and are cautious about excessive individualism.
    b.✓_ In our congregation people value individual initiative and are cautious about excessive collaboration.

40. a.✓_ When it comes to the work of ministry, our usual strategy is to divide up the tasks and set people free to get the job done.
    b.___ When it comes to the work of ministry, our usual strategy is to do most everything in committee.

47. a.___ We sometimes sacrifice individual initiative to preserve our fellowship.
    b.✓_ We sometimes sacrifice harmony to encourage the autonomy of groups and individuals.

54. a.✓_ Groups within our congregation tend to compete.
    b.___ Groups within our congregation tend to co-operate.

61. a.___ Once decisions are made we expect people to support those decisions.
    b.✓_ Once decisions are made we allow room for dissent.

68. a.✓_ We do little to monitor the performance of our committees and programme groups.
    b.___ We endeavour to monitor the performance of our committees and programme groups.
Lay Leadership

6. a. √ Sometimes our lay leaders overfocus on the larger vision and lose sight of the basic management of the congregation.
   b. ___ Sometimes our lay leaders overfocus on cost, budget, and building maintenance and lose sight of the larger picture.

13. a. ___ Most of our lay leaders are likely to place greater emphasis on the practicalities of today.
    b. √ ___ Most of our lay leaders are likely to place greater emphasis on the possibilities of tomorrow.

20. a. √ Most of our lay leaders place an emphasis on producing new directions for ministry.
    b. ___ Most of our lay leaders place an emphasis on organising our resources to develop current directions.

27. a. ___ Most of our lay leaders are likely to make decisions on the basis of organisational practicalities.
    b. √ ___ Most of our lay leaders are likely to make decisions on the basis of ideals.

34. a. √ Most of our lay leaders inspire people to create change.
    b. ___ Most of our lay leaders guide people to do systematic problem solving.

41. a. ___ Most of our lay leaders focus first on making the organisation work.
    b. √ ___ Most of our lay leaders focus first on transforming the organisation.

48. a. √ Most of our lay leaders emphasise new directions and change.
    b. ___ Most of our lay leaders emphasise good administration and organisation.

55. a. ___ Most of our lay leaders are detail-oriented people who value results.
    b. √ ___ Most of our lay leaders are visionary people who value change.

62. a. √ Most of our lay leaders tend to focus on longer-term goals.
    b. ___ Most of our lay leaders tend to focus on shorter-term goals.

69. a. ___ Most of our lay leadership tends to be realistic.
    b. √ ___ Most of our lay leadership tends to be idealistic.
Learning

7. a. ___ Our leadership (clergy and laity together) stays with tried and true approaches to ministry.
b. ✓ _ Our leadership (clergy and laity together) introduces new programmes and approaches to ministry on a regular basis.

14. a. ✓ _ Our leadership (clergy and laity together) places emphasis on learning to do new things well.
b. ___ Our leadership (clergy and laity together) places emphasis on improving what we already do well.

21. a. ___ Our leadership (clergy and laity together) is putting more effort into developing our current strengths as a congregation.
b. ✓ _ Our leadership (clergy and laity together) is putting more effort into developing new strengths as a congregation.

28. a. ✓ _ A motto that would describe our approach to ministry is “nothing ventured, nothing gained.”
b. ___ A motto that would describe our approach to ministry is “stay the course.”

35. a. ___ Programmatically, our leadership (clergy and laity together) tends to repeat the same things year to year.
b. ✓ _ Programmatically, our leadership (clergy and laity together) tends to go with the trends.

42. a. ✓ _ When it comes to trying new approaches to ministry, our leaders (clergy and laity together) are likely to be risk takers.
b. ___ When it comes to trying new approaches to ministry, our leaders (clergy and laity together) are likely not to take risks.

49. a. ___ At our worst our congregation might be described as stuck in the same old ruts.
b. ✓ _ At our worst our congregation might be described as a jack of all trades, master of none.

56. a. ✓ _ Our congregation is likely to launch new experiments in ministry.
b. ___ Our congregation is likely to gradually build on past successes in ministry.

63. a. ___ We have stayed too long with a few successful projects or programmes.
b. ✓ _ We fragment ourselves with too many new projects and programmes.

70. a. ✓ _ Changing circumstances over the years have led us to develop new capabilities for ministry.
b. ___ Changing circumstances over the years have led us to enhance proven capabilities for ministry.
APPENDIX 5

A SUMMARY OF PARSONS AND LEAS’ EXPLANATION OF THE CONGREGATIONAL SYSTEMS INVENTORY

As a means of testing the functioning of “family systems” in local congregational settings, Parsons and Leas developed the Congregational Systems Inventory (1993b) to measure seven specific dimensions of congregational dynamics.

**Strategy.** The “strategy” scale assesses the goals of a congregation. This dimension examines the church’s attitude toward the future, and the way vision is developed (if at all) and put into action, varying from rigid planning to total spontaneity (Parsons and Leas 1993a, 25).

According to Parsons and Leas, the strength of a planned strategy lies in the clarity of direction and the consistent means of evaluation it gives a congregation. However, if too much time and effort is exerted on planning, planning can become an end in itself rather than the means to an end (page 26). New ideas and possibilities that don’t fit the system are filtered out, and the congregation is impoverished by a rigid over-commitment to established objectives.

A spontaneous strategy on the other hand provides greater freedom and flexibility, giving the Holy Spirit room to direct as He wills. Recognising the unpredictability of the future and the impossibility of anticipating every situation that may arise, a spontaneous approach seeks to remain open enough to exploit opportunities and adapt to changing circumstances. The danger is that, when no clear overall plan is set, individuals and smaller groups are left to set their own agendas; congregational projects become disconnected, and expenditure of time, money and effort is wasted (page 28).

According to Parsons and Leas, a healthy approach to strategy involves the establishment of a basic framework of planning in order to give overall direction to the congregation, while constantly re-evaluating and adapting the specific short-term goals and strategies in response to changing circumstances (page 28).

**Authority.** The “authority” scale measures the extent to which decision-making is concentrated in the hands of a few people or dispersed to larger groups or the entire congregation (page 30).

Parsons and Leas have seen the great advantage of concentrated authority in the speed and efficiency with which decisions can be made (page 32). The congregation knows who is responsible, and very often can anticipate the answer before the decision is made. The greatest danger, particularly in voluntary organisations such as a local church, is an undermining of motivation: when the individual recognises that his opinion has little import, he or she questions the value of participating at all (page 32).
Dispersed systems of authority have the advantage of ‘ownership’. Every member senses that his or her opinion is of significance, and consequently commitment to the final decision is more likely. The way is facilitated for new people to enter higher levels of decision-making on boards and committees, and the congregation can thereby exploit the skills and expertise that new members may bring with them. The danger of dispersement is the convoluted decision-making processes that can develop, which often lead to procrastination even on important and urgent issues (page 34).

**Process.** The “process” scale examines the rules of a congregation, and in particular the extent to which the decision-making and information-sharing procedures are clearly defined and regulated, or variable and left to the discretion of individuals (page 37).

According to Parsons and Leas, when a mandatory approach is in place people and groups have a clear understanding of how and where they can solicit information and/or influence the decision-making process. Boards and committees know whom to consult and whom to inform in the course of their work. People know how and where to take complaints and understand the process that will be taken in solving conflict situations. The great advantage of a mandatory approach is the clarity it gives to the general operation of church life (page 37). As with over-planning, the danger of a commitment to ‘mandatory’ procedure is the tendency to view the process as an end in itself rather than a means to an end: the system becomes preoccupied with adherence to the regulations, and new approaches to communication, conflict resolution or decision-making are discouraged to the detriment of the congregation as a whole (page 37).

In contrast discretionary approaches encourage greater personal initiative in the communication and decision-making process, giving greater freedom for flexible adaptation to changing circumstances (page 38). However, an over-commitment to discretionary procedures can lead to a lack of definition and poor communication. Tasks agreed to are left undone because no process exists for assignment or evaluation. Conflict can arise due to inadequate job demarcation. Furthermore when conflict develops, as there is no established process of effective conflict-resolution, inadequate *ad hoc* processes of resolution are applied, often exacerbating the situation (page 40).

Parsons and Leas have asserted that when a healthy tension is maintained between the poles of formal operational maps and individual freedom, then the congregation knows both clarity and flexibility, hence facilitating fruitful ministry of the fellowship as a whole (page 40).

**Pastoral leadership.** The “pastoral leadership” scale examines one of the more important roles in any congregation--that of the pastor. In particular this dimension seeks to assess the way in which the pastor tries to generate change in the church, on a spectrum ranging from visionary/motivational to managerial/organisational (page 41).

Parsons and Leas have described managerial pastors as those who focus on current needs and seek to organise congregational resources to meet those needs (page 42). Managerial pastors value careful planning, the establishment of specific and achievable goals, and the organising of people to meet those goals. Although facilitating clarity and efficiency, managerial pastors can all too easily develop a
‘tunnel’ vision that may obscure wider considerations and the need for major structural change (page 42).

In contrast, transformational pastors focus on long term vision and future possibilities, and seek to inspire members to join them in attaining that vision. Unfortunately, many pastors place premature and unrealistic expectations on their congregations, alienating the very people whose support is needed. Time-tested strengths are ignored and long-established congregational identity lost or fragmented. Taken to its extreme, a transformational approach can neglect the day to day running of the church, leading to resentment and a sense of neglect, particularly among the more pragmatic members of the congregation (page 43).

Parsons and Leas noted a variety of options in responding to the need for both management and transformation in the congregation (page 44). Many pastors have sought to develop both characteristics within themselves—endeavouring to lead with vision while managing that vision’s implementation. However, most tend to prefer one style or the other, and Parsons and Leas have suggested that a better approach is to seek one or more leaders within the congregation (or an associate pastor in a multi-staff congregation) who demonstrate the alternative style, and who can work alongside the pastor and provide balance (page 44).

**Relatedness.** The “relatedness” scale looks at the way people in a congregation relate to one another, and in particular the extent to which the ministry of the congregation is done co-operatively or independently (page 44). Collegial approaches focus on harmony and peaceful relationships, working through collaboration in boards and committees, with very little room for independent action. According to Parsons and Leas, the mood in collegial congregations is generally positive. However, a rigid commitment to co-operation can stifle and delay creative change, as decisions are processed through a complex system of deliberation and consultation (page 46).

Individualistic approaches on the other hand give more room for personal initiative and the free expression of ideas, promoting creativity and healthy competition in the congregation (page 45). The danger of individualism is that it can all too easily lead to a fragmentation of leadership, and degenerate into a competitiveness that is more concerned for “preserving one’s turf” than for the accomplishment of ministry.

Parsons and Leas have suggested that when a congregation is able to free individuals to take initiative while recognising the impact of decisions on others, the way is open for harmonious and creative change. Again, the goal is not to find some insipid compromise, but to give room for both ends of the spectrum to function as appropriate (page 47).

**Lay leadership.** The “lay leadership” scale examines the role played by congregational leaders other than the pastor. As for “pastoral leadership”, this dimension seeks to measure the tendencies towards visionary or managerial lay leadership (page 48).

In any congregation there will be those who prefer to function as managers, and others as visionaries. Healthy congregational life is developed when both types are heard and respected in the decision-making process of the local church (page 51).

**Learning.** The “learning” scale measures the congregation’s orientation toward the past or the future as it experiments with improving its life and ministry
In this regard Parsons and Leas have drawn a distinction between “maximising” and “metamising” approaches to learning. “Maximising” congregations focus on the past, drawing on current resources and the experience of past successes in the establishment of policy and programme. However, growth and effectiveness can easily become stifled when past successes become present ruts and a commitment to the “same old way” prevents creative response to changing circumstances (page 53).

“Metamising” congregations look beyond current strengths to future possibilities. While not necessarily breaking from traditional patterns, these congregations seek to find new creative ways of ministry. Although metamising approaches provide a valuable contemporisation in the context of a rapidly changing world, when taken to an extreme the congregation can develop an unhealthy fickleness. Long term commitment falls prey to trends and fads, and the basic strengths of the congregation are lost, replaced by discontinuity and fragmentation (page 53).

According to Parsons and Leas, a healthy tension between these extremes is maintained when leadership is able to recognise and celebrate in the congregation’s distinctive competencies, while regularly seeking to experiment with new opportunities for ministry (page 54). Seeing the need for change according to the circumstances, leadership in such a setting also recognises that new ideas and projects need time and patience to be cultivated and brought to fruition.

No church is absolute in any of these seven dimensions, and a variety of features and perspectives is usually evident in any particular situation. Nonetheless congregations generally tend towards one direction or the other.
APPENDIX 6

A COMPARISON BETWEEN HOFSTEDE’S DIMENSIONS OF CULTURAL DISTANCE AND THE SEVEN DIMENSIONS MEASURED IN THE CONGREGATIONAL SYSTEMS INVENTORY

A number of close similarities exist between the “cultural distance” factors of Hofstede (1980a, 1991) and the dimensions suggested by Parsons and Leas in the development of their Congregational Systems Inventory (1993b).

1. Hofstede’s “Power Distance” factor measures the preference within a particular culture for autocratic or paternalistic styles of leadership, as against broader consultative approaches—the extent to which decision-making is in the hands of a few (1991, 27-28). A similar characteristic is measured under the “Authority” dimension of the CSI.

2. Hofstede’s “Individualism” index measures the extent to which a society values individualism, in which ties between people are loose, as against societies in which membership in strong, cohesive in-groups is considered of pre-eminent importance (1991, 51). This bears a close resemblance to Parsons and Leas’s “Relatedness” dimension.

3. Hofstede’s “Uncertainty Avoidance” index seeks to measure the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations, and hence show a preference for rules, written and unwritten (1991, 113). A similar perspective is found in the “Process” dimension and to a lesser extent in the “Strategy” dimension of Parsons and Leas.

4. Hofstede’s “Long- and Short-Term Orientation” factor considers the extent to which a culture is willing to adapt traditional patterns to changing conditions, as against the fixedness which clings to traditional patterns and expends all for the sake of firmly held beliefs (1991, 173). A similar aspect is examined under Parsons and Leas’s “Learning” dimension which seeks to measure the extent to which a congregation holds to traditional approaches or seeks to apply new approaches (1993a, 52). To a lesser extent Parsons and Leas’s “Lay Leadership” and “Pastoral Leadership” dimensions are also reflected in Hofstede’s “Long- and Short-Term Orientation” factor.

While Hofstede’s “Masculinity” index does not find a ready parallel in Parsons and Leas’s work, the similarities between the two models are nonetheless marked. The widespread acceptance of Hofstede’s work as a basis for studying leadership in cross-cultural settings, and the similarity between Hofstede’s indices and Parsons and Leas’s dimensions, have lent credence to the suitability of the Congregational Systems Inventory for cross-cultural research into congregational leadership patterns.
APPENDIX 7

THE CONGREGATIONAL SYSTEMS INVENTORY

NORTH AMERICAN DATA BASE

AS ORIGINALLY GIVEN BY PARSONS AND LEAS (1993a)
Mean and Range Data for Each Dimension

Means for all scales:
Number of valid observations (listwise) = 515.00

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Means for all scales by congregation size:

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Understanding Your Congregation as a System

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Summaries of PASTORAL LEADERSHIP
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1. Your country:

2. Your city/region:

3. The name of your church:

4. What is your position in the church (place a mark in one box only):
   - [ ] Pastor
   - [ ] Elder
   - [ ] Leader of committee or group
   - [ ] Assistant leader of committee or group
   - [ ] Member without any particular leadership role

5. According to your estimate, what is the average current attendance at your church?
   - [ ] less than 50
   - [ ] 50-150
   - [ ] 150-350
   - [ ] more than 350

6. In your opinion, is the current attendance
   - [ ] a lot more
   - [ ] more
   - [ ] the same
   - [ ] less
   - [ ] a lot less
   than it was five years ago?
APPENDIX 9

ARABIC VERSION OF THE CONGREGATIONAL SYSTEMS INVENTORY, WITH INTRODUCTORY INFORMATIONAL PAGE, AS ADMINISTERED AND SCORED
1 - الدولة:

2 - المدينة–البلدة:

3 - اسم كيبستن:

4 - ما منصبك في الكيسية (وضع علامات في مربع واحد فقط).
   - فسیس أو واعظ.
   - نشیب.
   - رئيس لجنة أو هيئة أو مجموعة.
   - نادي مساعد في لجنة أو هيئة أو مجموعة.
   - كفاءة عضو ليس له أي دور في نادي خاص.

5 - حسب تقديرك ما هو معدل الحضور حالياً في كيبستن؟
   - أقل من 5.
   - 5-15.
   - 15-35.
   - أكثر من 35.

6 - حسب رأيك هل الحضور الحالي:
   - أكثر بكثير.
   - أكثر.
   - العدد نفسه.
   - أقل.
   - أقل بكثير.

ما كان نيل خمس سنوات؟
توجهات عامة

من كل روز من الاختبارات، ضع علامة على الجواب الذي يصف كيسنطك بوضوح أفضل، حتى ولو لم يكن أي

منهما دقيقاً تماماً.

ركز على كيسنطك في حالها الزاهية وليس كما كانت أو كما تود أن تكون.

من أنهم حدا أن يختار اختيار واحد فقط من كل روز. فإذا وضع علامة على الاختيارين كلهما أو لم تضعهما

لا على هذا ولا على ذلك، فستطل الاستبان كله وستضيع نتائجه.

في الاستبان تعب ظاهرة "الفادة العلمانيين" أولئك الذين يندمرون في الكنيسة كشيوع أو رؤساء بجان أو هيئة.

1- كنيسة لدينا خطوة شاملة تبعها معًا.

اكتساب اللحاني والتحسينات القائمة على أن تكون وتعتبر خططها الخاصة.

2- لا يوجد اختلافات في كنيسة إلى التأثر من جماعات وأفراد عديدة.

تميل إلى أن تكون في كنيسة إلى التأثر من جماعات وأفراد قليلة.

ب بجد أعضاء اللحاني حسب ما يطلب منهم ويملؤهم عليهم.

ب- جدي أعضاء اللحاني إلى تعيين وتنفيذ مهامهم بتفصيل.

ب- بجد أعضاء اللحاني على إعطاء الجهود لتحقيقها.

3- برز كنستنا على تعليم الموارد الإنسانية والذاتية لكي يطور الاجهادات القائمة حالياً.

4- بفضل أن كنستنا تركز على تحسين المشترك وأن تحصد الأقدر الفردي المدعة كأفضل ما يمكن

أن نحقق.

5- بفضل أن كنستنا تركز مثلا على إعداد الفردي مستعدة الأقدار الجماعية الجيدة كأفضل ما يمكن أن

6- إذا أراد كنستنا أن يكون من كل الازم على الصورة العامة للكنيسة ويعتبر المنظر

إلى الإدارة الرئيسية لديها.

7- أخيراً برز كنستنا العلمانيون أكثر من الازم على الإدارة اليومية العامة للكنيسة ويعتبر المنظر

العامة لديها.
265

1- يظل قادتنا (الراحي والعلمانيون معاً) مع الطريقة الدينية الأصيلة في الجدية.
2- يختلف في كنيسة لا تتمتع بمعايير عامة على مر السنين.
3- عمليات التخطيط في كنيسة منظمة وثيقة.
4- لدينا بعض جوامع ذات حضور تمكينها من إدارة كل شيء في كنيسة.
5- تصميم الإجتماع والانسجام حتى أننا نتفق من نقص في القيادة الحالية.
6- كل أعضاء اللجان بالاستقلال الخاصة في الحصول على لوازم الجدية ومواردها.
7- يعرف أعضاء اللجان ما هو مطلوب منهم وأين يفترض أن يضمنوا المعاونة والموارد.
8- تشير قساتنا الناس لتبليغ خطط الكنيسة.
9- نجد أن قادتنا الناس عن طريق دمجتهم الارتباك بعضهم مع بعض.
10- عندما نفهم في عمل الخدمة توفر من الناس أن يقدموا وجبات نظر مختلفة.
11- عندما نفهم في عمل الخدمة توفر من الناس أن يقدموا كثيرة من الخدمات.
12- من الأرجح أن تركز أغلبية قادتنا العلمانيين على تلبية متطلبات اليوم.
13- من الأرجح أن تركز أغلبية قادتنا العلمانيين على إمكانات الفضاء.
14- يركز قادتنا (القسيس والعلمانيون معاً) على التعليم الجيد للطرق الجديدة.
15- يركز قادتنا (القسيس والعلمانيون معاً) على تحسين ما قصده الأثرة.
16- أحياناً أعتقد أننا نضمي وجه وقائدة عن الحجم في التخطيط.
17- هما ما نضحيه وقائدة جيدة في أوراق نهاية النظام.
18- يكون الخلاص على مستوى القيادة في كنيسة بين الناس الأشخاص.
19- توجد في كنيسة طرق نظامية مفروضة من الكل تغيل بها البيانات من جامعات.
20- بخصوص على أجزاء الأشخاص الغريبة حول البيانات التي يجب أن تتمكّن من جامعات.
21- يقود قساتنا الكنيسة بدفع الناس إلى القيام بالغير.
22- يقدم قائمة الكنيسة معتمداً على إرشاد الناس بواسطة الحلول النظامية المألوفة للمسائل.
23- إجمالاً فقد يتصدّفنا كما لم كنا أعراضنا فين ما.
24- إجمالاً فقد يتصدّفنا كرديين بدعون عند الضرورة فقط.
25- تركز أكثرية قادتنا العلمانيين على صنع اتخاذات جديدة للخدمة.
26- تركز أكثرية قادتنا العلمانيين على تنظيم مواردنا لتطوير الانتهاكات الموجودة حالياً.
266

- يُبذل قادتنا (الراعي والطلاب والآباء) أكثر جهودهم في تطوير مقرراتهم الحالية في الكنيسة.
- يُبذل قادتنا (الراعي والطلاب والآباء) أكثر جهودهم في تطوير مقررات جديدة في الكنيسة.

267
- غرباً وشمالاً وشرقاً وجنوباً للحدود من وقت لآخر.
- عموماً تتخلل ببساطة القليل من الزمن.

268
- يوجد بين قادتنا العلمانيين أشخاص يكتملون على الباقين وهؤلاء يؤثرون على قرارات كنيستنا كثيراً.
- يوجد بين قادتنا العلمانيين أشخاص يكتملون كثيراً ولكن لا يوجد أحد منهم يكتمل على الباقين بشكل ملحوظ.

269
- في هذه المرة لا تعني أي هيئة من الكنيسة شيئاً ما تدعوه باني الميناء.

270
- يركز قادتنا قبل كل شيء على أن تصل الإدارة المرحلة حاصلة على الكنيسة قابلاً.
- يركز قادتنا قبل كل شيء على تحقيق نظام الإدارة في الكنيسة مقدماً على الطرق الجديدة والأكثر فعالية.

271
- توفر من شئ الجماعات أن تسعى إلى الأضواء فيما بينها كما كان ذلك في الإمكان.
- توفر من شئ الجماعات أن تسعى إلى النعاس فيما بينها كما كان ذلك في الإمكان.

272
- من الأرجح أن يصنع قادتنا العلمانيون قراراً مهماً على أساس المبادئ العامية والعملية.
- من الأرجح أن يصنع قادتنا العلمانيون قراراً مهماً على أساس المبادئ العامية والعملية.

273
- الشاعر النابض الذي يصف نظام زيادة كنيسة هو "التجديف الطريق يؤدي إلى المجد الناجح".
- الشاعر النابض الذي يصف نظام زيادة كنيسة هو "الذي يواصل على ذات الطريق يصل".

274
- إن قادتنا العلمانيين ملتزمون بنظام الإدارة.
- إن قادتنا العلمانيين ملتزمون بنظام الإدارة.

275
- تدور حول التركيز على الاشتراك في رياحنا الواسعة.
- تدور حول التركيز على النفوذ في رياحنا الواسعة.

276
- تدور حولlokحيات بكيستنا مستقلة ومدى سلطتها.
- تدور حولlokحيات بكيستنا مستقلة ومدى سلطتها.

277
- تدور حولlokحيات بكيستنا إلى عدم الوضع بشأن مسؤوليتها ومدى سلطتها.
- تدور حولlokحيات بكيستنا إلى عدم الوضع بشأن مسؤوليتها ومدى سلطتها.

278
- كلاً يركز قادتنا على النظام والإدارة الجديدة.
- كلاً يركز قادتنا على النظام والإدارة الجديدة.

279
- في كنيستنا ينام الناس المعترفة المشتركة ويتعرّفون على الاستقلالية الزائدة عن الحد.
- في كنيستنا ينام الناس المعترفة المشتركة ويتعرّفون على الاستقلالية الزائدة عن الحد.

280
- في كنيستنا ينام الناس المبادرة المستقلة ويتعرّفون من الجهود التي يقوم بها التشكيل ضمن الكنيسة.
ب- ترشد أكتر قادة العلمانيين الشعوب لقيام بفعل التغيير.

267

25- من ناحية البرامج في الكنيسة يمثل قادة (الراعي والعلمانيون معاً) إلى تكرير نفس الأفكار ستة بعد ستة.

26- من ناحية الرواج في الكنيسة يمثل قادة (الراعي والعلمانيون معاً) إلى تبين أحدث المستجدات حتى وق.

27- ف技术 المهام في كنيستنا غير واضح.

28- إن الإخاء العام في كنيستنا واضح.

29- ف تنشيط النشاط في كنيستنا في تشكيك خدمة كنيستنا.

29- إن الكنيسة هو الشخص الذي يقيم التفاصل والذي يقدم النتائج.

30- إن الكنيسة هو الشخص الذي يملك الرؤية الذي يقيم المتغير.

31- ف تلقي الكنيسة تقوم الاستراتيجية العامة على تقسيم المهام وإطلاق الحرية للمسؤولين لإكم.

32- ف في عملخدمة في كنيستنا تقوم الاستراتيجية العامة على إتمام كل شيء تقريباً من خلال اللجان.

41- ف يركز أكثر قادة العلمانيين قبل كل شيء على أن تعمل الإدارة الموجودة حاليًاً للكنيسة فعالة.

42- أن بالمنزلية للمؤسسات الجديدة بالخدمة من الأرجح أن يكون قادة (الراعي والعلمانيون معاً) قادر على ع

43- أن بالنسبة للإشارات الجديدة بالخدمة من الأرجح لا يأتي قادة (الراعي والعلمانيون معاً) أي مبادرة لم

44- أن يتعلق أعضاءة في الخدمة (الراعي والшибاك) كثيراً.

45- لا يرتبط أعضاءة في الخدمة (الراعي والшибاك) أبداً.
من أجل إتمام عملية الخدمة عمل كنيستنا إلى التركيز على الطلب والسياسات.

ب - من أجل إتمام عملية الخدمة عمل كنيستنا إلى التزام النزاهة المطلوبة.

27 - من أجل إتمام عملية الخدمة عمل كنيستنا إلى التركيز على الأهداف المطلوبة.

ب - من أجل إتمام عملية الخدمة عمل كنيستنا إلى التركيز على الأهداف المطلوبة.

28 - قيمةً نضحي بالمبادرة الفردية للحاجة وقيادة شركنا.

ب - قيمةً نضحي بالقيادة لكي نسجع استقلال الجماعات والأفراد.

29 - تركز الأكبر من قادتنا العلمانيين على الاتجاهات الجديدة وعلى التغيير.

ب - تركز الأكبر من قادتنا العلمانيين على النظام والإدارة الحديثة.

30 - في أسوأ الأحوال يمكن أن توصف كنيستنا بأنها من تنمية في نفس الروتين.

ب - في أسوأ الأحوال يمكن أن توصف كنيستنا بأنها عامل على كل الأصدقاء لكنها نفدت النجاح.

31 - علاجات الفراغات المهمة في كنيستنا نتوقف على الناس الموجودين في القاعة.

ب - توقف الفراغات المهمة في كنيستنا نتوقف على الناس الموجودين في القاعة.

32 - دعم قادة (الراغبي والعلمانيون معاً) إلى الترحيب بالأكاديميين والمترشحين الحديثة وتبنيها.

ب - دعم قادة (الراغبي والعلمانيون معاً) ودعمهم للأكاديميين والمترشحين الحديثة وتبنيها.

33 - يبحث قادة (الراغبي والعلمانيون) ودعمهم لأنفسهم الفعالين والمترشحين الحديثة بعمق ودقة قبل تبنيها.

ب - يبحث قادة (الراغبي والعلمانيون) ودعمهم لأنفسهم الفعالين والمترشحين الحديثة بعمق ودقة قبل تبنيها.

34 - 1 - يقدم قسيسنا مساعدة الناس في تكوين حيطة دقيقة وممتلئ في وضع هذه الحيطة موضع التنفيذ.

ب - يقوم قسيسنا مساعدة الناس في تكوين حيطة ممتلئ وممتلئ في بعضه المشتركة نحو تحقيق تلك الرؤيا.

35 - 1 - عمل الجماعات في كنيستنا إلى التناس.

ب - عمل الجماعات في كنيستنا إلى التناس.

36 - 1 - تبادل الأكبر من قادتنا العلمانيين التفكير في الرؤيا المستقبلية للكتابة وهم يدمرون التغيير.

ب - من الأحرج أن نتى كنيستنا تحارب جديد في الجماعة.

37 - 1 - نعين أهدافاً وتوقع أن نصممها.

ب - نعين أهدافاً ولكن كثيراً ما نسامها.
1- قد طُرِبَنا عمليّة مشتركة ومتزامنة في صنع القرارات في الكنيسة.
2- قد طُرِبَنا نظرةً عامةً لإصدار الأوامر وتفسيرها في الكنيسة.
3- لدى قادة كنيسة (النيسサイトي والعلمانيين معاً) نظام واضح وحاسم للتعامل مع المشاكل وحلها.
4- تعتمد التعليم أكثر من المشاكل لدى قادة كنيسة (النيسサイトي والعلمانيين معاً) على أساس الحالات الفائقة.
5- يكون قاعدة بأحس الأحوال عندما نحن على الأرجل بأنفسنا.
6- يكون قاعدة بأحس الأحوال عندما يشهد الطريق وفق النظام في الكنيسة.
7- إذا تم صنع القرارات توقع من الناس تأديتهم لكل القرارات.
8- صنع القرارات ليس الممارسة.
9- كثر الأكثرة من قادة العلمانيين على الأهداف الطويلة المدى.
10- تركز الأكثرة من قادة العلمانيين على الأهداف القصيرة المدى.
11- قد يرى أكثر مما يرى من هناك بعض مشاريع وبرامج تجاهها.
12- نحن نفضل فكرة المشاريع والبرامج الجديدة.
13- القضم نفطنا أقل مما نحب لأننا لا نعين أهدافاً واضحة ولا نسعى من أجل تحقيقها.
14- القضم نفطنا أكثر مما نحب لأننا لا نأخذ بين الأعياد الإمكانية الجديدة في كنيسة.
15- يوجد في كنيسة جوان وبيوتات قوية تسيطر على اللجان والهياكل الأخرى.
16- يكفل اللجان والهياكل في كنيسة إلى التعاون مع بعضها البعض.
17- إذا لم يعرف أعضاها كنيسة كيف، وأن يكون الذي يقموا بكيفية أو حتى.
18- إذا لم يعرف أعضاها كيف، وأن يكون الذي يقموا بكيفية أو حتى.
19- ليس في العام يذكر قيسنا قبل كل شيء على عملية الخدمة المدنية.
20- ليس في العام يذكر قيسنا قبل كل شيء على إمكانية الخدمة.
21- ليس في العام يذكر قيسنا قبل كل شيء على إمكانية الخدمة.
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8
APPENDIX 10

LAY LEADER INTERVIEW GUIDE

(In English)

Introductory Questions:

1. How did you become involved in your current ministry in the church? What were the main influences - both people and events - that have most affected your Christian life and service?

2. What do you find most satisfying and enjoyable to you in your present ministry? What do you find difficult or frustrating?

Lay Leadership:

3. What do you consider the most important aspects of your ministry? What do you feel unnecessarily consumes your time?

4. What do you see as your basic responsibilities in the church? Do your perceptions of these responsibilities differ from the expectations of the pastor and other members of the congregation?

5. How would you describe your leadership style?

6. What is your vision for the church? What role do you hope to play in seeing this vision come to fruition?

Strategy:

7. Who are the most capable people in your church in developing plans and bringing them to fruition?

8. Do you consider time spent on developing a structured plan for the future of the church helpful or a waste of time? Why?

Authority:

9. How is your church organised? Who makes decisions as to: financial expenditure; special events; curriculum used in Sunday School; attendance at conferences?
10. For whom are you responsible in the church? With whom do you need to consult before taking action?

11. How much authority do you have in the church?

**Process:**

12. How do you see your role in the decision-making process of the church?

13. If you have a new ministry idea about which other leaders in the church are doubtful, how do you deal with the situation?

**Pastoral Leadership:**

14. How would you describe the ideal pastor? What are the most common errors you have seen in the ministry of other pastors?

**Relatedness:**

15. What committees function within your church? Are they a help or a hindrance to the overall ministry of the church? Why?

16. Do you consider it acceptable for individuals to develop ministries without working through committees?

**Learning:**

17. Do you find new trends in church programmes and curricula helpful in your local congregation? How often and in what ways do new ideas get incorporated into the organisation of the church?

**Culture:**

18. What leadership roles in Arab society do you feel are most similar to your own? In what ways are they similar or dissimilar?

**Growth:**

19. Have you seen any evidence of spiritual awakening in your church the last year or so? Has there been any notable change in the giving or attendance at the church?

**Concluding Question:**

20. For what three concerns would you most like prayer in your ministry?
APPENDIX 11
PASTORAL LEADER INTERVIEW GUIDE
(In English)

Introductory Questions:

1. How did you come to enter pastoral ministry? What were the main influences - both people and events - that led to this decision?

2. What do you find most satisfying and enjoyable to you in your present ministry? What do you find difficult or frustrating?

Pastoral Leadership:

3. What do you consider the most important aspects of your ministry as pastor? What do you feel unnecessarily consumes your time?

4. What do you see as your basic responsibilities in the church? Do your perceptions of these responsibilities differ from the expectations of the members of the congregation?

5. How would you describe your leadership style?

6. How would you describe the ideal pastor? What are the most common errors you have seen in the ministry of other pastors?

7. What is your vision for the church? What role do you hope to play in seeing this vision come to fruition? How do you hope to involve others in accomplishing this vision?

Strategy:

8. Who are the most capable people in your church in developing plans and bringing them to fruition?

9. Do you consider time spent on developing a structured plan for the future of the church helpful or a waste of time? Why?
Authority:

10. How is your church organised? Who makes decisions as to: financial expenditure; special events; curriculum used in Sunday School; attendance at conferences?

11. Who are the people who report to you? Do you need to consult with anyone before taking action?

12. How much authority do you have in the church?

Process:

13. How do you see your role in the decision-making process of the church?

14. If a lay leader has a new ministry idea about which you are doubtful, how do you deal with the situation?

Lay Leadership:

15. How many lay people are actively involved in the ministry of the church? In which ministries do they serve?

16. What do you see as the greatest strengths and weaknesses of your current lay leaders?

Relatedness:

17. What committees function within your church? Are they a help or a hindrance to the overall ministry of the church? Why?

18. Do you consider it acceptable for individuals to develop ministries without working through committees?

Learning:

19. Do you find new trends in church programmes and curricula helpful in your local congregation? How often and in what ways do you incorporate new ideas into the organisation of the church?

Culture:

20. What leadership roles in Arab society do you feel are most similar to that of a pastor? In what ways are they similar or dissimilar?
Growth:

21. Have you seen any evidence of spiritual awakening in your church the last year or so? Has there been any notable change in the giving or attendance at the church?

Concluding Questions:

22. What advice would you give a young person considering entering pastoral ministry in the Arab world today?

23. For what three concerns would you most like prayer in your ministry?
APPENDIX 12

LAY LEADER INTERVIEW GUIDE

(In Arabic)
دليل مقابلة القائد العلماني

1) كيف التحقت بخدمتك الحالية في الكنيسة؟ وما هي التأثيرات الرئيسية عليك من قبل الأشخاص والأحداث التي لعبت دورًا في حياتك وخدمتك المسيحية؟
2) ما هي الأشياء التي تجدها مستمتعة ومريحة في خدمتك الحالية؟ وما الذي تجد صعباً أو مشابهاً؟
3) ما هي أهم الجوانب في خدمتك؟ وما هي الأشياء التي تستمتع بالوقت أكثر من اللازم؟
4) كيف تنظر إلى مسؤولياتك الأساسية في الكنيسة؟ كيف تتعاون معًا حول هذه المسؤوليات عن توفر الأعضاء الآخرين في الكنيسة؟
5) كيف تصف أساليب قيادتك؟
6) ما هي رؤيتك للكنيسة؟ أي دور تريد أن تلعبه في تنفيذ هذه الرؤية؟
7) من هو أبرز الأشخاص داخل الكنيسة في تطوير الخطط وتخطيطها؟
8) هل تعتبر أنك من المفيد أم من النادر أن تصرف الكنيسة وفقًا طويلاً في تنفيذ خطة دقيقة وواضحة حول مستقبل الكنيسة؟ وإذاً ماذا؟
9) ما طبيعة النظام السائد في كنيستك؟ من يضع القرارات في مجال: إجهاض المصادر المالية، تنظيم المناسبات والحفلات، وضع النهج المستخدم في مدارس الأحد، حضور المؤتمرات؟
10) على من تمارس مسؤولياتك في الكنيسة؟ من يجب أن تطلب الثقة قبل تقوم بعمل ما؟
11) كم من السلطة تملك في الكنيسة؟
12) كيف ترى دورك في عملية صنع القرارات في الكنيسة؟
13) إذا كانت لك فكرة جديدة حول الخدمة وكان هناك قادة آخرون في الكنيسة يشكون فيها كيف تتعامل مع الوضع؟
14) كيف تصف الخصائص المثلى؟ ما هي الأخطاء الأكثر تواجها التي تراها في خدمة الرعاية؟
15) ما هي المبادرات التي تعمل في كنيستك؟ هل هي مفيدة أم سلبية للخدمة العامة في الكنيسة؟ ماذا؟
16) هل تعتقد أنه من المفيد إذا ما طور بعض الأفراد الخدمات في الكنيسة دون العودة إلى اللجان؟
17) هل تجد مستجدات في المناهج والبرامج الكنسية مفيدة في كنيستك المحلية؟ في أي أحوال وطرق تندمج الأفكار الجديدة في نظام الكنيسة؟

18) ما هي الأدوار القيادية الموجودة في المجتمع العربي التي تشعر بأنها تشبه دورك في الكنيسة؟ من أي النواحي تتشارك أو تختلف؟

19) هل رأيت أي دليل على النهضة الروحية في كنيستك خلال السنوات الماضية؟ هل حدث أي تغيير ملحوظ في الالتزامات أو الحضور؟

20) كيف أقدر أن أصل لأجلك في خدمتك الآن؟ أعطني أهم نقطة الصلاة.
APPENDIX 13

PASTORAL LEADER INTERVIEW GUIDE

(In Arabic)
دليل مقابلة الراعي:

1) كيف تحقق بالخدمة الرعوية؟ وما هي التأثيرات الرئيسية عليك - من قبل الأشخاص والأحداث - التي أدت إلى اتخاذ هذا القرار؟

2) ما هي الأشياء التي تجة مما، ومرضية في خدمتك الحالية؟ وما الذي تجد صعباً أو مضايقاً?

3) ما هي أهم الجوانب في خدمتك؟ وما هي الأشياء التي تستهلك وقت أكثر من اللازم؟

4) كيف تنظر إلى مسؤولياتك الأساسية في الكنيسة؟ كيف تتفاعل مفاهيم هذه المسؤوليات عن توقعات أعضاء الكنيسة؟

5) كيف تصف أساليب قيادتك؟

6) كيف تصف القسم الثاني؟ ما هي الأخطاء الأكثر تواجداً التي تراها في خدمة الرعاة؟

7) ما هي رؤياك للكنيسة؟ كيف تتميّز أن تحت آلرين على تنفيذ هذه الرؤيا؟

8) من هم أبرز الأشخاص داخل الكنيسة في تطوير الخطط وتنفيذها؟

9) هل تعتقد أن مفيد لم من الناقل أن تصرف الكنيسة وقفاً طولاً في تطور خطة دقيقة وواضحة حول مستقبل الكنيسة؟ وماذا؟

10) ما طبيعة النظام السائد في كنيستك؟ من يضع القرارات في مجال: إتفاق الصاريف المالية، تنظيم النشاطات والانفصالات، وضع النماذج المستخدمة في مدارس الأشخاص، حضور المؤتمرات؟

11) على من يتوجب أن يقدم ذلك تقريراً على أعماله؟ هل عليك أن تتناول مع أحد قبل أن تفعل عملًا ما؟

12) كيف يمكن أن أن تكون تعلماً في الكنيسة؟

13) كيف ترى دورك في عملية صنع القرارات في الكنيسة؟ إذا كانت لدى قائد علمي، فكرة جديدة حول الخدمة تشكو في صحتها ككيف تتعامل مع الوضع؟

14) كم من أعضاء الكنيسة نشطون في خدمة الكنيسة؟ في أي مجال يخدمون؟

15) ما هو أكبر نفاق القوة والضعف الذي تراها في قادة كنيستك الريانيين حالياً؟

16) ما هي اللجان التي تعمل في كنيستك؟ هل هي مفيدة أم معيبة للخدمة العامة في الكنيسة؟ لماذا؟

17) هل تعتقد أنه من المقبول إذا ما طُور بعض الأفراد الخدمات في الكنيسة دون العودة إلى اللجان؟
20) هل تجد مستجدات في المناهج والبرامج الكنيسية مفيدة في كنيستك المحلية؟ في أي أحوال وطرق تنمذج الأفكار الجديدة في نظم الكنيسة؟

21) ما هي الأدوار القيادية الموجودة في المجتمع العربي التي تشعر بأنها تشبه دورك في الكنيسة؟ من أي النواحي تتشابه أو تختلف؟

22) هل رأيت أي دليل على النيازة الروحية في كنيستك خلال السنوات الماضية؟ هل حدث أي تغيير ملحوظ في البقاع أو الحضور؟

23) كيف تقدر أن تنمو شابًا يفكر في الدخول إلى الخدمة الروحية في العالم العربي اليوم؟

24) كيف أقدر أن أصلي لأجلك في خدمتك الآن؟ أعتني بأهم نطق الصلاة.
APPENDIX 14

SAMPLE TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH A PASTOR

Pastor I
Presbyterian, Syria.
Date: 10/6/97

Introductory Questions:

1. How did you come to enter pastoral ministry? What were the main influences - both people and events - that led to this decision?

   I thought about theological study while I was in secondary school. My father was a pastor, and my friends, whenever they had a problem with religion they would come to me and ask me--since I was a pastor’s son, and as such I should know. I was constantly feeling a huge lack of knowledge among these young men who I first spoke to about the Bible and about the Christian way of thinking. And I felt that it was a great pity that these young people didn’t know anything about the faith--about the Christianity they were born into. Their knowledge was little. It is possible that this was what first of all gave me a leaning towards studying theology--built on a message, a task, not simply following some form of employment. And so the earliest influence was the lack of knowledge--in me and in others. And so it was in many ways the young men who impacted me. With respect to events--I was a pastor’s son and heard sermons constantly. At that stage I was constantly reading--especially philosophical books. I felt that the Christian way of thinking had to be immersed in philosophical thought. In summary I felt a problem between science, theology and philosophy--from my readings. And I felt that if one has a scientific mind--and my high school specialisation was science--and has faith in his heart and has a love for analysis and philosophy and logic--if those three could be brought together in one person, the result could be something good. I even thought at the beginning of doing a doctorate in philosophy--to study philosophy as far as I could go. And I felt that philosophy was something great--something that helps us understand ourselves and the world. So I studied philosophy--a bachelor’s degree in philosophy--and then studied theology, so as to bring these things together.

2. What do you find most satisfying and enjoyable to you in your present ministry? What do you find difficult or frustrating?

   Of course there are many things, but most of all pastoral ministry: when I encourage or comfort or strengthen a person, when I feel that a person is taking strength from what I’m saying, or when through my ministry a person is caused
to read the Bible and learn about Christ, I feel that this is something that brings
great joy and satisfaction. What I see as difficult and what frustrates me is
ignorance—when you face ignorance or narrow-mindedness or lack of
knowledge in religious matters and so on. Even among cultured young people,
when they know nothing about religion I get frustrated. This is my difficulty:
how can I bring the message, or how can I get the person to take a fresh look at
things which maybe he thinks are not of importance to him.

**Pastoral Leadership:**

3. What do you consider the most important aspects of your ministry as pastor? What
do you feel unnecessarily consumes your time?

   The most important aspects of my ministry? We’ve got pastoral ministry
among the needy—and all this is important. But for me the most important is
interpreting the Word. If there are visits to homes, or a spiritual evening, or
Bible study, or the Sunday sermon, or a personal relationship with a person, all
of these I seek to do on the basis of my message. I don’t have friends in the
sense of we sit and drink tea and eat cake. Always the Word is in my life, always
I am thinking How can I present Christ to the people, and explain him to the
people. And so before me is always the gospel, always the Word, as I seek to
explain it. What takes my time? It was earlier … I came to the church here in
[location], to a place where there was nothing except the church building—there
wasn’t even a toilet next to the church. And so I worked at building this salon
which you see here before you, and we want to build above it a second floor.
And overseeing this building has taken a lot of my time. Now, the second floor
we are handing the responsibility over to other people. There was a time when I
didn’t read as I wanted to. I consider the time in which you don’t read … one
**must** read. The things that take my time—visiting people and so on—I don’t
consider this as taking my time, except those things which prevent me from
reading—these things I consider as wasting my time.

4. What do you see as your basic responsibilities in the church? Do your perceptions
of these responsibilities differ from the expectations of the members of the
congregation?

   I see as my most important responsibility to bring the message to the
people, to bring my expertise and experiences, about Christ and his message and
its effects on life. I’m not able to change people, but at the very least I’m able to
bring to them my own expertise and experience—not just nice words—sermons
and such like. All my teaching and preaching seeks to bring through it the
experience of my life which I’m living in the Word. How does this differ from
the expectations of the congregation? Most people tend towards routine and
tradition. What seeks to bring renewal or change to people takes time and creates
some tensions and differences of opinion. People treat their faith in a very
superficial way—using Christ’s name—“I’m a believer and that’s just fine.” And
what I find difficult is moving the people from routine and tradition to real
experience. The difference is that people are traditional and I’m not—and this
traditionalism is something everywhere in our society, and affects the church because the people are from that society.

5. How would you describe your leadership style?

Me--my style is democratic, to the utmost extent. I’m willing to listen to any opinion. And my democratic style is built on the ideas I expressed earlier. However if I give freedom to the internally bound--then this can be a mistake. For the truly free one is he who, as Christ has said, “If the Son shall set you free then you will be free indeed.” The free person--this is a big word. But if a person has not been liberated by Christ and I give him freedom--then I have done wrong.

6. How would you describe the ideal pastor? What are the most common errors you have seen in the ministry of other pastors?

The ideal pastor is the one who doesn’t forget that he is the donkey that Christ rides upon. I’m not ridiculing the person--for me the person is very important. But Christ said that we need to know the truth about ourselves, and if we weren’t important Christ would never have died. So my expression is not to ridicule but that the pastor doesn’t become proud. And pride is a great temptation for pastors. The second point of the ideal pastor is intelligence which he uses to grasp hold of the wisdom which pleases our Lord. There are those who have dedicated their lives--they’re good and simple. For example in our town, one of the priests--everyone loves him--sweet and nice and moral. But you are asking me about the ideal pastor, and this is a different subject to sweet and nice. There is intelligence and wisdom and knowledge; he needs to have wide-ranging knowledge. And the wisdom must be spiritual wisdom, the wisdom which is acceptable to our Lord, not simply human wisdom. Another thing is that the ideal pastor doesn’t say what he doesn’t do, but does what he says.

7. What is your vision for the church? What role do you hope to play in seeing this vision come to fruition? How do you hope to involve others in accomplishing this vision?

My way of seeing the church is that the church is light and leaven--not an organisation, nor an entity satisfied with itself. We have a puzzle here in the East--I don’t know about you in the West. We are the Orthodox--we are the original church. We are the Catholics--we are the universal church. We are the Protestants--we are the renewed church. What do you mean by this talk? Are we an organisation? What do you mean? When we talk about the church we’re not talking about your heritage or your fathers or your reformers--even the Protestants and others. Tell me today how are your bringing light to society, how you are leavening society. I hope to encourage people to share this vision by helping them to experience a true relationship with Christ. He alone brings out of us all sorts of things - it’s not from the church or from the message itself.

Strategy:

8. Who are the most capable people in your church in developing plans and bringing them to fruition?
There are well-educated and trained people in the church, and are able to move and execute a particular programme--this is good. But I say, in spite of the intelligence and ability of people, they’ve got to be dedicated. They’ve got to have in them faith. Not a person who says “Look at me!” Even if this attitude is only 1% it becomes like a worm working into the ministry. Who are the most capable people? Those who have a life that has dedication and trustworthiness--in spite of the level of education and training.

9. Do you consider time spent on developing a structured plan for the future of the church helpful or a waste of time? Why?

If it’s possible for the church to spend time in putting together a precise and far-reaching plan--if you’re able to do this--of course God blesses. But if you’re spending time and in the end nothing comes of it then this is another story. I was just saying yesterday, if we had the possibilities of the orthodox here in [location]--in terms of money and materials--of course I’d spend time in putting together a plan. But this plan must play a part in lighting and leavening the society. But to sit down and put together a plan, its end is not sure or even probable or not within our capabilities--then this is a waste of time.

Authority:

10. How is your church organised? Who makes decisions as to: financial expenditure; special events; curriculum used in Sunday School; attendance at conferences?

We’re Presbyterian of course--we are the National Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Syria and Lebanon. Is this what you mean? Of course expenditure is in the hands of the Board; the Board is who decides on how the money is spent. Special events? Of course the Board takes information on these--for example, the ladies group or the young people may organise--but the Board has oversight. The curriculum? The Synod puts this out. We don’t have this ability. Attendance at conferences: if the church wants to help financially, the Board makes the decision; but if there is no call for financial help each group can decide by themselves who they want to send. The Board oversees it, and the pastor leads the Board--we generally don’t present any objection. I’m the sort that is relaxing, I don’t try to create problems unnecessarily.

11. Who are the people who report to you? Do you need to consult with anyone before taking action?

The ladies group, the Sunday School, the young people, the Board, all submit annual reports. We’ve only recently begun with committees. And of course in the future each committee will present periodic reports. Do I need to consult with anyone before taking action? Of course! There are people who say that the pastor acts from himself. This is not so. Who says this is one who is not near the matter--he’s the one who doesn’t know that I’ve consulted with so many people--he’s far from the matter, and from afar he’s talking. But practically speaking: first of all I’ve got the Board--and of course I consult with the Board in any important issue; even in simple matters where the Board
doesn’t need to enter the matter—issues related to the ladies or the young people—
-I consult with people.

12. How much authority do you have in the church?
   Our system is Presbyterian: the pastor is chairman of the Board, but he
   has no vote. And so there is no individual authority. If there is any type of
   authority it is the authority of trust and affecting others with my opinion.

Process:

13. How do you see your role in the decision-making process of the church?
   Basic. My role is basic.

14. If a lay leader has a new ministry idea about which you are doubtful, how do you
    deal with the situation?
    If a person has an idea about which I am doubtful I don’t justify it easily.
   Whether it will succeed or not—this often is dependent on the wisdom of the
   pastor. I try to work with wisdom, and with all love, and say, “Brother, there’s a
   difference of perspective between us,” and I don’t lie to him. Let me give you an
   example. Yesterday a person came to me wanting to hang in the church the
   Apostles Creed and the Lord’s Prayer in wood. The person was an elder and his
   brother wants to do this. He called me up and said, “Pastor, where do we want to
   put these? Maybe we’ll come tomorrow and we want to know where we can put
   these two boards.” I said, “What boards?” I said, “I don’t know what it’s all
   about.” Imagine: here they are taking a decision, and acting upon it, and hadn’t
   told me. This is a very sensitive issue. We want to put something in the church.
   This is a major issue—we want to study it. He said, “There are churches which
   put these things up.” I said, “This isn’t the point—the point is, is it reasonable?
   We need to study it as a Board.” And there may be other issues behind the
   scenes. For example, I don’t want to put them up in the name of a person—but
   the Board may decide to do so. This man doesn’t give to the church, doesn’t
   appear in the church, falls short in contributing to the life of the church—and his
   coming, wanting to put up these things in his name—“So and so put up these
   boards.” Of course this is not ministry—but it is the type of matters we face. How
   do I deal with the matter? As best as I can before God—but I’m not comfortable
   if it’s not for the benefit of the church.

Lay Leadership:

15. How many lay people are actively involved in the ministry of the church? In
    which ministries do they serve?
   If I take from everyone registered Protestant in [location] probably about
   10% are active members, but from those who attend regularly probably 50% of
   them are active. If I ask something from them they don’t say “No”. We have
   about 70 come regularly, and from these probably 30, if I ask from them they
   don’t say “No”. This is in general. Specifically those who are very active are the
   women’s group, and those who serve in the Sunday School.
16. What do you see as the greatest strengths and weaknesses of your current lay leaders?

As I mentioned before--the experience of faith lived out--who dedicate their time and effort and money, and prays for the ministry in his home, and thinks about the ministry and thinks about our message with seriousness. I’ve begun to find people like this among our members. But it wasn’t like this. It was, as I said earlier, traditionalism. There are those who have begun to feel that they must contribute. For example, just last week I was preaching about giving--our giving is poor--I encouraged them to put away even 5 lira a day (as they might give to their child). This would be nothing for you--but for us it would be an enormous amount. God would bless and perform miracles among us. Returning to your question … points of weakness? It’s the giving. Points of strength? There are people who rejoice in the ministry if it succeeds. But I want people who will not merely rejoice--but share in the ministry. So that my success is their success--not simply the success of the pastor.

Relatedness:

17. What committees function within your church? Are they a help or a hindrance to the overall ministry of the church? Why?

Only recently have we had a financial committee and a spiritual committee. In the beginning these weren’t here. I didn’t mention it earlier, but when I came to the church here the doors were locked. There was no pastor, and people just began coming along. If I had not come, they would simply have died off one by one. There were no young people--nothing new. And so these committees are new to us. As to their contribution to the church--as yet we haven’t experience. Let’s see how it goes.

18. Do you consider it acceptable for individuals to develop ministries without working through committees?

What do you mean? Everyone work according to his own taste? Of course “No”. If we do this we waste effort. When you organise movement in the church then there is system and order, and the effort is shared. There are those perhaps who like to … One may come and say, “Today we want to do a seminar,” without me being ready for it. No. I think that the work done through the committees will accomplish far more.

Learning:

19. Do you find new trends in church programmes and curricula helpful in your local congregation? How often and in what ways do you incorporate new ideas into the organisation of the church?

As to the first question--not always. There are programmes and curricula that don’t fit in with our church. There are curricula, for example, coming from Egypt, translated from the West. Sometimes, it’s not that they aren’t helpful, but we prefer to have a programme that comes out of our own environment--from
the local church—that has taken the local society into consideration and has benefited from all the various other programmes. The reasons are many, related to issues of education and developmental psychology—even your understanding of the Bible. For example in Egypt there is a conservative stream and a more liberal stream. What then is your stream? All of this needs to be studied. Then you need to think through how you understand personhood and how we build a person. Are we planting in the child a need to be dependent or fatalistic or free or relating to God in a particular way? I wish that something would come out of the Synod in co-operation with us, in which we could give our ideas and opinions about this curriculum before we use it or are required to use it. As to the second question, when the church has a particular opinion and the new idea comes and they interact well—then it is straightforward. But when some idea comes along, and you haven’t had a chance to place your own ideas forward—there’s bound to be inadequacies.

Culture:

20. What leadership roles in Arab society do you feel are most similar to that of a pastor? In what ways are they similar or dissimilar?

If I want to measure my role as a leader in spiritual matters or in the church a measure it on the highest level. I consider a thinking man of religion who really has a message to bring—his responsibility is like the responsibility of the president of the republic, the country. Just as the president of the country is like a shepherd to his country, bears its concerns and hopes and dreams—so the president, also his responsibility is great and God help him. I see the man of religion, the theologian, when truly dedicated, his responsibility is of this magnitude. And so if I want to compare leadership roles, I compare the role of the president of the country with pastoral leadership. This is a very high level of comparison, true, but we must feel this way in order to know how great our responsibility is. The two have great responsibility. I don’t compare the pastor with the governor of a district or such like, because the governor is responsible before the president of the republic or before the Prime Minister. The President is responsible before whom? Before the highest authority—the people. Me … I am responsible before the highest authority—God. And so I have become like the president of the republic—not like a governor. If only every man of religion felt this responsibility—truly the church would become leaven and light in society. And the country and everyone would bless her.

Growth:

21. Have you seen any evidence of spiritual awakening in your church the last year or so? Has there been any notable change in the giving or attendance at the church?

Yes. It’s happened. There has been a change in giving. It was nothing, and it’s increased—and as I mentioned earlier we’re looking for ways to encourage more. If we are not able to apply our faith in giving to make the ministry more extensive—then what does this faith mean? What does coming to
church mean? What is the value of all these sermons? Why are you coming to church? In the end we want to sacrifice in our time and effort and money to ensure that this message continues to be effective. We’ve got this kindergarten, for example, and we’ve got a debt of 250 000 lira [US$5000] on the building: the million lira given by the Synod—we need to pay ¼. If we don’t contribute then we won’t benefit from the kindergarten--financially or in terms of morale. I’m trying to find ways to encourage giving by letting them know that the lira they are paying is going to a specific place to make an impact. And so there has been an increase in giving. And the attendance I hope that it will be more and increase more. And this is a long trek, but it has increased from what it was, because there was no pastor before. Perhaps if a different pastor came the attendance would increase more. Perhaps some people don’t like my way of doing things--want the church to remain traditional.

Concluding Questions:

22. What advice would you give a young person considering entering pastoral ministry in the Arab world today?

I advise as I was of course--that he is thoughtful, intelligent, open-minded, loves philosophy, respects science, has the heart of a believer, truly faithful, doesn’t upset others, God is with him, and knows of God’s oversight of him--and if he goes to theological college, he knows that God is with him, and chose him for a lofty and holy ministry. He comes into ministry not simply to benefit, not coming to an exalted position, but is coming to give and sacrifice. This is the meaning of the heart of a believer. Also he needs to have the thoughtfulness of a philosopher who loves to analyse and study, and has the spirit of a scientist in the love of discovery. But the most important thing is that he has a strong faith without ulterior motives--either materially or emotionally. As I mentioned earlier--to be the donkey that Christ rides upon, and to say what he does. I prefer that those who go to study theology are among those who have succeeded with high results in school, and are able to study in any faculty at university, and left all this to go study theology. And also has done his military if he’s from Syria--so that no-one can say that you went to theological college so that you could get out of your military service. If he finishes his military and this faith remains strong in him--then there’s no question but that his faith is true.

23. For what three concerns would you most like prayer in your ministry?

After all this talk, you choose what you want to pray for me. Pray that God will be with us and will guide and keep us in these days and in this ministry which is not small. Pray that I won’t every forget who I am before God. Pray that if God looked to me he would find me ready and walking in His ways. Pray that I might me able to fulfil my dreams in the ministry which I hope to fulfil. We have material and social difficulties - but God is with us.
APPENDIX 15

A SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH ARAB LEADERS

Strategy

I thank the Lord that I don’t need to hold fast to a careful and exact plan, but am totally dependent on the Lord. It’s not that we don’t want to plan, and we are careful to make careful accounts, but we take into consideration mostly the power of faith and that God is able to do things which we are not able to do (lay leader A).

It’s crucial that a church has a plan, because the church without a plan, without a clear vision, remains haphazard, based on emotional reactions … There’s got to be a unified plan within the church, which we are agreed upon. True, there’s got to be flexibility, but flexibility within the plan. But to be without a plan is one of the main things that prevents a church from growing (pastor B).

Of course it is beneficial for a church to have a plan. But even more beneficial is for the church to have a vision for its future. Today we see amazing developments in the world--means of reaching people and to draw them away from the church. If the church doesn’t think about these matters, nor about the future--it will become weak and won’t be able to continue effectively, and won’t be able to reach people because there are more effective means--aural and visual--and the pressures of society. If the church doesn’t spent time thinking and doesn’t spend value time in laying down a precise and broad plan for the future--it will die after a not very long time (lay leader C).

My role is oversight of all the meetings, to ensure that the planning for each of these committees functions along the lines of the general planning that I am thinking through with the church (pastor D).

Our vision as a church is to bring the gospel to every new person to the area. So we try to contact every person from a “Christian” background that is in the region, and try to visit them. If they are from another church [in another part of Cairo] we will contact the pastor and say, “It’s hard for them to come and worship with you [because of the distance], so why not get them to worship here with us.” We have an evangelistic vision, we have a vision to see people grow in their knowledge of the Bible, we have a social vision we’re thinking about--to serve the social dimension in the region--even Christ was concerned with the social dimension, when He would heal the sick before He opened the way to come to a saving faith in Him. We’re also thinking, as a part of our vision for the church, to reach out into the areas around us where there is no church or any kind of ministry, we hope to reach out there to enable people to come to know the Lord Jesus (pastor D).

Of course it is very important that the church spend time in developing a plan. Because a church that does not spend time developing a plan is a church without direction. And the church--it has to have a goal. But we don’t sit down every
day in planning. Planning: we sit down once a year in developing a plan. And then we develop stages in the plan along the way. A general plan, and then stages one after the other. As I said, we don’t want administrative work to take the place of spiritual work. To put a plan is good organisation, but don’t let administrative matters take over from the spiritual (pastor D).

Every committee and meeting has complete freedom in organisation and planning. I help them in giving vision to the committee or meeting, and they form their plans with ease (pastor E).

I think that for any church to succeed there must be evident three basic features. First of all is evangelism, the primary responsibility of the church. The second aspect is teaching. And the third aspect is training. If these three aspects are evident then the work of the church will progress. And we’ve prepared a plan to the end of the year 2000 (pastor E).

I think it very important to spend time in laying out a plan for the church, and the plan be flexible, able to be continually developed. If we do this we will succeed in the work (pastor E).

Never is it wasteful … for the church to spend time in the laying out of a structured plan, and in putting it into action. Why? If the church doesn’t lay out a plan and put it into action, then the church will shrink and disappear (lay leader F).

I don’t think a church should spend a lot of time in planning. … So much of our lives is routine--like sleep and work and eating and our reading--so much of what happens in our homes. And so if our church remains basically in a routine--every year we publish a calendar, and every year we sing Christmas carols, and every year we have Easter--this is not wrong (pastor G).

The church must give time to developing plans. The church needs to think through the next year or two, what can it do, how can it spread the message through its various activities (lay leader H).

If it’s possible for the church to spend time in putting together a precise and far-reaching plan--if you’re able to do this--of course God blesses. But if you’re spending time and in the end nothing comes of it … then this is a waste of time (pastor I).

In order to develop a detailed plan for the future, it is necessary to spend time. Without vision the people perish, and without expenditure of time in planning--it means that when a project which has not been thoroughly studied, such a project absorbs a lot of time in order to be put into practice. … We need to give time to studying, to developing a precise plan, so that in the end the project might be successful and that in a short time (pastor J).

**Authority**

Our church has a committee of seven people, chaired by the pastor of our church, and this committee is responsibility for all financial and administrative matters in the church … The pastor usually dominates this committee, he is usually the one who makes the decisions, while the committee makes suggestions and modifications, but the final decision is with the pastor (lay leader A).
If I want to do anything in the church I need to ask the committee, and the committee needs to decide (lay leader A).

The ideal pastor is a democratic pastor. The pastor that doesn’t try to do the ministry by himself. First of all because the pastor is not able to. Secondly because he will fall short if he tries to do the ministry by himself. And also because it is not biblical (lay leader A).

The church has got to have as many people as possible free for ministry, helping the pastor. And so that the pastor doesn’t have to do everything we need specialisation—in the administration of the church, in teaching the people, in visitation, in evangelism (pastor B).

Perhaps 90% of the authority is in my hands as pastor (pastor B).

We have as the primary authority in the church the Council. And the church Council is made up of the pastor and four elders, and the pastor is the Chairman of the Council. We also have committees responsible … for example for the expenditure of money—the finance committee. The committee is responsible to the Council, and doesn’t make any move that is not within the framework laid down by the Council. Organisation of special events is in the hands of the committee that is responsible for it. The curriculum for Sunday School is chosen by the Sunday School teachers themselves. But within the basic framework of the church’s overall plan (pastor D).

The primary authority is in the hands of the church Council … the primary word of authority in our church is the authority of consensus (pastor D).

We have a democratic form of leadership. Most of the work is done through committees and meetings (pastor E).

The democratic system in society is not a correct democracy; in our church we try to work towards a true democracy, and truly all of us share and all of us make decisions together, and follow up the work together (pastor E).

The decisions in our church--the most important person in making them is the pastor. This is clear. In general it seems that the general committee is responsible for the expenditure of money, organising events, and so forth. However, in reality the pastor is the person who is ultimately responsible for the decision making. But if a person appeared in the church, and it seems that he is working in the service of the church, the pastor will consult with that person—and so truly that person has an impact on decision-making (lay leader F).

My leadership style is a collective style. I don’t believe at all in individualistic leadership (pastor G).

In our church, the prevailing system, as I said before, is a collective system. And decision-making is collective, although occasionally--and not very often--it is necessary for me to make an individual decision (pastor G).

The system of our church is Presbyterian. Who makes the decisions? The members of the Board, or the elders, they are who organise special events. Of course if there are things that involve the expenditure of a lot of money then we need to go to a meeting of the full membership of the church to take the decision (lay leader H).

My style is democratic, to the utmost extent. I’m willing to listen to any opinion (pastor I).
Our system is Presbyterian: the pastor is chairman of the Board, but he has no vote. And so there is no individual authority. If there is any type of authority it is the authority of trust and affecting others with my opinion (pastor I).

My leadership style is of course participatory leadership, through the members of the church, the Board of elders--and this is my style of leadership. I don’t like at all authoritarianism or dictatorial leadership or individualistic leadership. I like the decision to emerge from the determination of the people and the group that are serving with me and are sharing in my ministry in the church (pastor J).

The system in our church is a Presbyterian system. Of course, as I’ve already mentioned, our decisions--whether in the expenditure of money, or in the organisation of special events or celebrations, or in the selection of curricula in the Sunday School, or in attendance at conferences--all these matters (from our Presbyterian system) we decide on through the Board of elders (pastor J).

**Process**

My role in decision-making is through the committee. Usually the committee discusses and consults and decides on everything, as I said, sometimes the discussion extends and heats up, but in the end it is a decision of the committee (lay leader A).

I am from a Presbyterian background, and the Presbyterian church is systematic by its very nature. And I see that there has to be a system and a Council, because always the thinking of one person is weak, and he is not able to cover every aspect. And so there has to be a Council, and we don’t put the authority in the hands of an individual but in the hands of a group. This is the best approach to the work of the ministry of the church (pastor B).

Of course before anyone makes any decision it’s important that they study this decision. And the decision is not made until a variety of opinions have been consulted. And this is where the Council is important (pastor B).

The existence of committees in the church is crucial. An individual as an individual is not able to complete the work. Much better that a group complete the work, and the more that the work is divided up the more the work is done precisely (pastor B).

Among the disciples there were committees that did the work and planned the work. In the church we have to stop haphazard work; committees must study things before they are done (pastor B).

I think it is very important that we have an administrative system, and in fact I think it is wrong if we distinguish between “administrative” and “spiritual”--because in my opinion the administrative activities of the church are spiritual activities, if we’re going to take about administration correctly (pastor E).

In general it is not acceptable in our churches [to develop ministries without working through committees], because our churches love discipline and order. Why do we go back to the committees? If we work in harmony with the committees of the church it will produce positive results (lay leader F).

A small church needs just a few and limited committees. Sometimes the number of committees is an impediment because when you want to keep a committee
in touch and informed, this ends up being a lot of lost time and work from what you do (pastor G).

If someone has an idea we try to encourage it and adopt it if possible. We prefer people to work through committees so as to ensure that the work remains organised and systematic. If everyone wants to get up and develop his own plans as he likes, the result may well be chaos. By working through committees things remain more systematised and organised (lay leader H).

We’re Presbyterian of course … Of course expenditure is in the hands of the Board; the Board is who decides on how the money is spent. Special events? Of course, for example, the ladies group or the young people may organise--but the Board has oversight (pastor I).

Everyone work according to his own taste? Of course not! If we do this we waste effort. When you organise movement in the church then there is system and order, and the effort is shared (pastor I).

**Pastoral Leadership**

I’m the one who thinks through the vision of the church, and so I have to make the plans, and put the plans into action--very difficult indeed. And I seem to exhaust myself in administration (pastor B).

I feel that the primary responsibility I have in the church is to teach the people, and put before the people a vision for the church and work towards accomplishing that vision. But unfortunately I don’t do these things. I find myself pushed into things that have to be done--like administrative matters (pastor B).

The pastor needs to understand people’s needs. He needs to be a person with vision (pastor B).

I try as much as possible to motivate my people through various meetings, through the church Council, through my various ministries, through the shared vision that we put out together as a church (pastor D).

I find a certain amount of frustration in the administrative matters of the Presbytery and the Synod. If I speak frankly, there is a rather routine system in the work of the Presbytery and the Synod, and this system is not effective enough to accomplish its ministry. There are many committees which consume a lot of the minister’s time (pastor E).

I think that for any church to succeed there must be evident three basic features. First of all is evangelism, the primary responsibility of the church. The second aspect is teaching. And the third aspect is training. If these three aspects are evident then the work of the church will progress. And we’ve prepared a plan to the end of the year 2000 (pastor E).

It’s natural that the pastor give leadership to the work, and I try to keep before them the vision which we’re trying to fulfil in the work, and then all of us share in putting things together (pastor E).

I see as my most important responsibility to bring the message to the people, to bring my expertise and experiences, about Christ and his message and it’s effects on life. I’m not able to change people, but at the very least I’m able to bring to them my own expertise and experience--not just nice words--sermons and such like. All
my teaching and preaching seeks to bring through it the experience of my life which I’m living in the Word. How does this differ from the expectations of the congregation? Most people tend towards routine and tradition. What seeks to bring renewal or change to people takes time and creates some tensions and differences of opinion. What I find difficult is moving the people from routine and tradition to real experience. The difference is that people are traditional and I’m not—and this traditionalism is something everywhere in our society, and affects the church because the people are from that society (pastor I).

**Relatedness**

The ideal pastor is the pastor that gets all the members to share in the ministry. And I love this sort of shared ministry. Where there are people in groups for administration and visitation and teaching the word and prayer and different activities (lay leader A).

Everyone who is involved in the church must be involved in putting together the church’s plan. There’s no advantage in laying down a plan, then telling the Young Adults to work according to this plan; until they are convinced they won’t do anything towards completing the plan. We must share in the planning (pastor B).

I think that individual decisions are a problem. The church in which everyone does their own thing is a divided church (pastor B).

The ministry stands on two legs: the first leg is visiting and pastoral care; the second leg is study of the word of God. And these are what consume most of my time (pastor D).

We don’t want to have decisions made from above brought down with the people expected to swing along with them; but much better for the decisions to emerge from the people themselves, as they will be committed to those decisions and want to put them into action (pastor D).

The greatest point of strength I see in our lay leadership at the moment is sense of belonging, and this helps them love the church and love the ministry (pastor D).

By nature I am a villager, I grew up in a rural family, and so I love pastoral ministry very much (pastor E).

all of us share in the putting together of our vision, and I try to take the opinions of great and small … all of us are involved in the consultation process: I’m not the only one who evaluates, but all of us together evaluate the work (pastor E).

The most important aspects of my ministry is preaching and pastoral care. … I love to visit, and consider that a very important part of my ministry is to visit homes (pastor G).

Our current lay leaders have one major point of strength, and this is that they don’t like disagreements. That is, they don’t strive towards dissension. I haven’t once seen them put a spanner in the works [lit: a stick in the wheels] (pastor G).

The leadership roles that exist in Arab society are mostly individualistic, but we in the church if we took this manner of functioning it would hurt us in the long run (pastor G).
I feel that consultation is always important and crucial for one to take (lay leader H).

The love of people is something really wonderful to me and it is very enjoyable to feel that there is satisfaction, and there is agreement, and that there is commitment, and mutual co-operation (pastor J).

Lay Leadership

My vision for the church is that it is inevitable that the church bears many children. It is not enough just to serve in the church, but it crucial that the church grows and expands … And so we have opened branches in [location] and in [location] and we’re thinking about opening a third branch very soon. I try to encourage and urge the members of the church to see this as the role of the church—that the church is successful when she gives birth to other churches, new believers, new leaders, new pastors, committed members … And my role is to encourage and exhort and give ideas—so that the brothers might be encouraged and urged on, and the result has been good; when we look around us there are few that have branches like we have (lay leader A).

Sometimes my authority is significant in that I have lots of experience and training, and good ideas, and for this reason my influence is quite effective in the making of the decision (lay leader A).

In general I am simple in ministry—flexible, and work hard, and I am always very concerned for those I am working with. In particular it concerns me very much indeed that the group I am working with changes. And the main way I measure myself is by the changes I see in the people I am working with (lay leader F).

My vision and hope for the future of the church is that the church will grow and expand, and there will be renewal in the church. And I think that the role I will play in seeing this vision come to fruition, I have very high aspirations that I might have a role (lay leader F).

The major point of weakness in [our church] is that people are not able to carry out their commitments (pastor G).

I love to see always the spread of the message from and within the church—this is the basic role of the church itself. And my vision is always according to this perspective: we need to broaden the field of proclamation—and any means for doing this, I need to study it to see if it is appropriate, whether I can put it into practice (lay leader H).

Points of strength [in the lay leadership of the church]? There are people who rejoice in the ministry if it succeeds. But I want people who will not merely rejoice - but share in the ministry. So that my success is their success—not simply the success of the pastor (pastor I).

Learning

Everything new and everything aimed at the renewal of the church has its fruit and aspects of success. Every time we have sought to bring renewal to our
church we have experienced success and good fruit. The problem in the church is
when it doesn’t try to renew itself (lay leader A).

Of course with the developments and everything coming out of the
publishing houses, every day new ideas are emerging, and if we tried to follow every
one of these ideas we’d end up getting nowhere and accomplishing nothing. It’s
important that one restricts oneself, and choose a few ideas that are appropriate to the
community he is working in, to the situation, to the possibilities at hand (pastor B).

We in our church general resort to the curricula put out by the Synod. There
are curricula for the Sunday School which they benefit from; there are curricula used,
but we try to develop further every curriculum as it suits the particular situation here
in [location], and we develop them as relates to the needs, circumstances, difficulties,
the problems of life, and environment (pastor E).

In ministry new ideas (by new ideas I mean innovation)—there are none! …
If we tried these ideas formerly and found them helpful, but with the passing of time
neglected them, then we take them up again. But if they are ideas which are overly
innovative, we need to say, “What’s the reason, what is it that spurred someone to
originate the work?” (pastor G).

New trends in church programmes and curricula—we don’t fight them.
Anything that comes, we occasionally adopt and apply them, but we apply them on
the basis of the extent to which the source is trustworthy (pastor G).

Of course whenever there are new developments in curricula and
programmes, this is beneficial. We are not able to develop curricula ourselves, but
we benefit from the work of others. This is good in that perhaps after a time we may
be able to see how much we can take in and adopt. And perhaps at least some
positive changes will occur. But whatever, there needs to be new ideas coming all the
time so that we can benefit (lay leader H).

Not everything new is acceptable. However, if the programmes are well
studied and in tune with our teachings and our environment and the circumstances of
our society, so we accept them after study (pastor J).
## APPENDIX 16

### QUALITY CONTROL TEST ON ARAB CSI DATA

**THROUGH A COMPARISON OF ACTUAL AND TRUNCATED RESULTS**

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Note: Truncated results excluded the five highest and five lowest “outliers” on the dimension. Where several respondents scored equally, exclusion was based first on extremity of dimension score, and then on extremity of growth score.
### APPENDIX 17

**Arab Results on the Congregational Systems Inventory**

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