

Chapter 4

THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR AND MEMBERS IN EXCHANGE RELATIONSHIPS

This chapter focuses on the results of the research into exchange relationship between leaders and followers in the processes of leadership in Baptist Churches with particular emphasis on the perceptions followers have of leadership, and the legitimating function follower's exercise in the leadership processes.

4.1 THE SERVANT LEADER IN THE RESEARCH

Traditionally, Baptists have insisted on the principles of personal liberty and freedom of belief, which concur with the Baptist understanding of the Church as a free association of believers functioning along the lines of democratic principles, where authority is invested in the people who make up the local Body of Christ, and decisions are exercised through democratic vote of the members. God's will, mostly (but not always) is seen in the majority decision, at duly constituted Church meetings operating under Robert's Rules of Order. Hence the association with democracy previously mentioned.

Baptist Church members also insist that leaders are not the "owners" of the Church, neither are they the "Fathers" to whom everyone else is a minor with no responsibility. Neither are leaders the "teachers" and everyone else the "learners". Rather, under the belief of the "priesthood of all believers", Baptists believe in the right of every individual to approach the Throne of Grace, and contribute in many different ways to the Body of Christ in extending Christ's Kingdom. This being the case, member's contribution should extend to the matter of leadership as well. However the research demonstrates that dyadic relationships between pastor and followers can either be pleasing or disappointing.

A chi-squared analysis of variables v108 and v106 demonstrates statistically significant association between the efforts of the pastor in establishing and maintaining relationships with church members and positive outcomes, while disappointment happens when the pastor makes no effort in the relationship. This was borne out in the research where there were comments made that the pastor “does not visit people”, and “is not accessible” and these correlated with negative affection. In the data (p-value <0.0001), where p-values <0.05 indicate there is statistically significant association between the two variables.

The number of people who indicated that the pastor had made an effort to get to know them, but the relationship was disappointing was 4, whereas the number of people who indicated that the pastor had not made an effort to get to know them and they were disappointed was 21.

On the positive side, the number of people that indicated a relationship effort by the pastor was made, and had a positive affection was 93, while 17 people indicated that the pastor had made no effort, and they experienced no disappointment.

De Pree (2004: 19) in his writing on leadership puts it succinctly when he suggests that the signs of outstanding leadership are to be found among the followers, while Romberger (1999:9) gives a hint of the reciprocal nature of leadership when he states:

“The spiritual condition of the pastor is reflected in the church body.”

And Richard Baxter, one of the great puritan pastors wrote (1982:54):

“Take heed to yourselves first, that you be that which you persuade your hearers to be, and believe that which you persuade them to believe, and heartily entertain that Savior whom you offer to them.”

If a corporate mentality prevails in the church, with the pastor as the C.R.O. (Chief Religious Officer), then it will produce followers who will be shareholders, while *ipso facto*, if the Pastor embraces the biblical paradigm of servant leadership, it will produce servant followership. If leadership only means influencing the church community to follow the vision of the leader, it will produce different behavior than if leadership involves the community to face its own problems and formulate its own vision.

Other research (Pierce: 1998) has demonstrated that one of the significant reasons for the increase in the number of pastoral terminations in Baptist Churches has been associated with problems in leadership, particularly when leaders have adopted a more controlling paradigm resulting in the non-inclusivity of followers in decision making in the life of the local Church. This often brings to light the existence, involvement and influence of individuals known as “subterranean pastors” (Faulkner: 1986: 28) in the life and especially the leadership processes of the Church. When some followers are deliberately excluded, they seemingly work “underground”, and while such leadership has the potential for a positive influence on the life of the church, it is mostly seen as a threat to the pastor.

These “subterranean pastors” often conflict with the authority of the Pastor, and sometimes apply subversive methods to do so. Faulkner (1986: 29) also refers to such people as “powerful role players in the leadership processes”, whose voices may not be heard at Church meetings, but whose wishes are nonetheless highly valued by the congregation. They can have a very powerful legitimating influence on the leadership of the Church, if through conflict or “personality clashes” they choose not to support the Pastor, a crisis of legitimization may occur.

The continual frustration in leadership, decision making, and the questioning of their leadership competence by often less than competent Church members is often expressed by Pastors at annual Baptist assemblies, and is proof enough

that the issue of leadership and the sub-themes of power, control and authority are extremely current, but very unpredictable.

Pastors freely express the frustration of trying to bring together different groups of people in pursuit of common purposes, and the unintended discrimination that occurs when some followers, for some reason do not seem to be “part of the program”. They seem to understand that leadership should not create inequalities, but those inequalities become a fact of life. And frankly most pastors have no clue how to motivate out-group followers towards deeper commitment and closer relationships. Pastors also often “inherit” the divisions in the church, and after studying the leadership landscape among the followers in the church, they will either work with one or two groups or create a new landscape. This also may lead to a bifurcation of membership into an “in-group” and an “out-group”. The in-group, according to LMX theory enjoys special attention by the pastor, and furthermore enjoys higher levels of satisfaction in their church experience.

The analysis of the data gives support to the important role of pastors in the initiating and maintaining of relationships in the local churches. However, this is only part of the story. The question was posed (variable v102) whether respondents had put in an effort in their relationship with the pastor, and if they were able to concretize their answer by giving examples.

LMX theory asserts (and research has supported) that LMX quality is associated with important organizational objectives and characteristics that require participation and effort on the part of followers.

Graen, *et al.* (1982) demonstrated that employee turnover relates negatively to LMX. The parallel could be drawn in the church context to what I refer to as the “front door/back door syndrome” Where churches are keen to get people in the front door and welcome them, but when members leave, little is done in the way of “damage control”. I have personally witnessed this twice in my 30 years as a pastor, that when I have left a church, large numbers of people have also left. This created a “dark tension” in the Body.

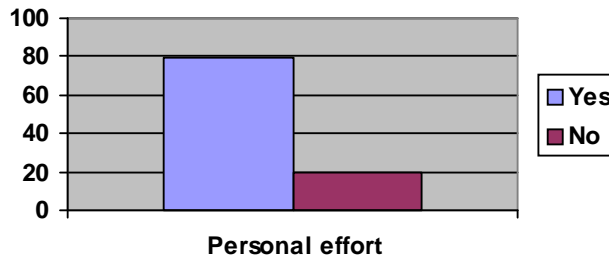
Stepina, *et al* (1991) relates high LMX to job satisfaction. Scandura & Graen (1984) relate it to loyalty. The point is that high levels of LMX will produce positive outcomes such as greater effort. The question remains as to how we measure “effort” in a local church setting.

Graen, *et al* (1982) and Tanner and Castleberry (1990) measured “effort” in terms of task performance, but I am not aware of studies that measure the effect of “effort” in LMX theory. None the less, the presence of a high degree of trust in pastor/member relationships (for example in seeking counseling on sensitive matters) is indicative of a high level of LMX and suggests greater effort on the part of members.

The results of the research are as follows:

Research variable v102

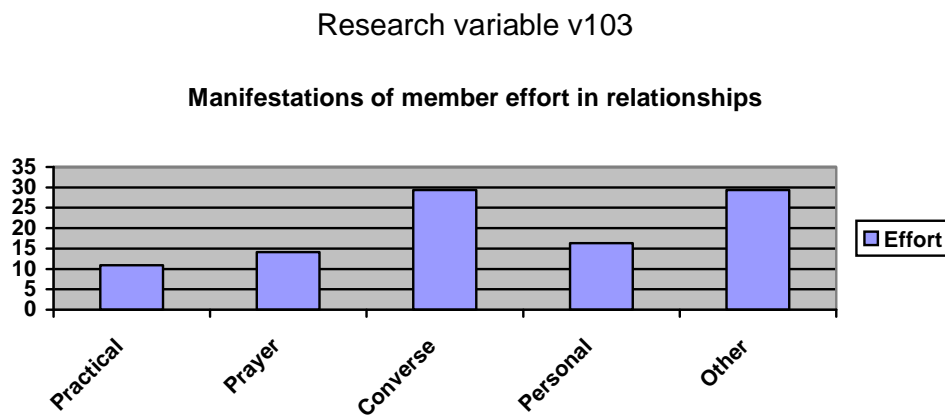
Personal effort by members in relationships



In a Chi-squared analysis of v102 (personal effort by members in relationships) and v54 (Do members trust the leadership) the p-value was 0.0676, indicating that statistically there was no significant evidence of association that the matter of trust was associated with personal effort.

This may indicate that “effort” in relationships is based on other values or criteria, e.g. traditionally the Baptist pastor has enjoyed a higher social status because of his or her position, which perhaps warrants personal effort on the part of church members.

How this effort was concretized was indicated in the next variable, v103, which I have divided into 5 categories:



In the data relating to practical effort, members indicated that they had provided personal practical, physical, financial assistance in some way to the leader as an indication of their effort.

In the data under prayer the members indicated they made the pastor and his family a matter of personal prayer.

In the data group marked converse, respondents indicated that they made a personal effort to engage the pastor in conversations.

In the data relating to personal effort, respondents mostly indicated that they

spent time with the pastor in some way, either having coffee or over a meal.

In the larger data group representing the category, “other”, were many different examples of effort exerted by members, including encouragement, praying publicly for the pastor, giving special leave in times when compassion was needed, making sure that the pastor did not carry too much responsibility and simply “support”.

Messick & Kramer (2004:87) has a very interesting outline of what rewards he believes leaders get from followers:

- Focus and self-direction
Leaders provide focus and direction, and in return they get followers who know where to go, what they are there for, and the ability to govern themselves without external monitoring and surveillance.
- Gratitude and Loyalty
Followers may express loyalty for example to those who have shielded them from harm, or have prayed for them, or shepherded them through a crisis, visited them or counseled them in a time of need. In the research this was particularly noticeable in Church “BUSA” when a church meeting took a turn for the worse and the pastor came under attack (Vid A.1.10). Immediately a group of people came to his defense and explicated their loyalty to the pastor by joining arms together to demonstrate their unity, and by their vocal support for his point of view. After the meeting this supportive group warmly expressed their gratitude and loyalty for him and his ministry.
- Commitment and Effort
When followers achieve significant results in the life of the church, the level of commitment and effort becomes enhanced, as people realize that hard work can achieve results.

- Co-operation and Sacrifice

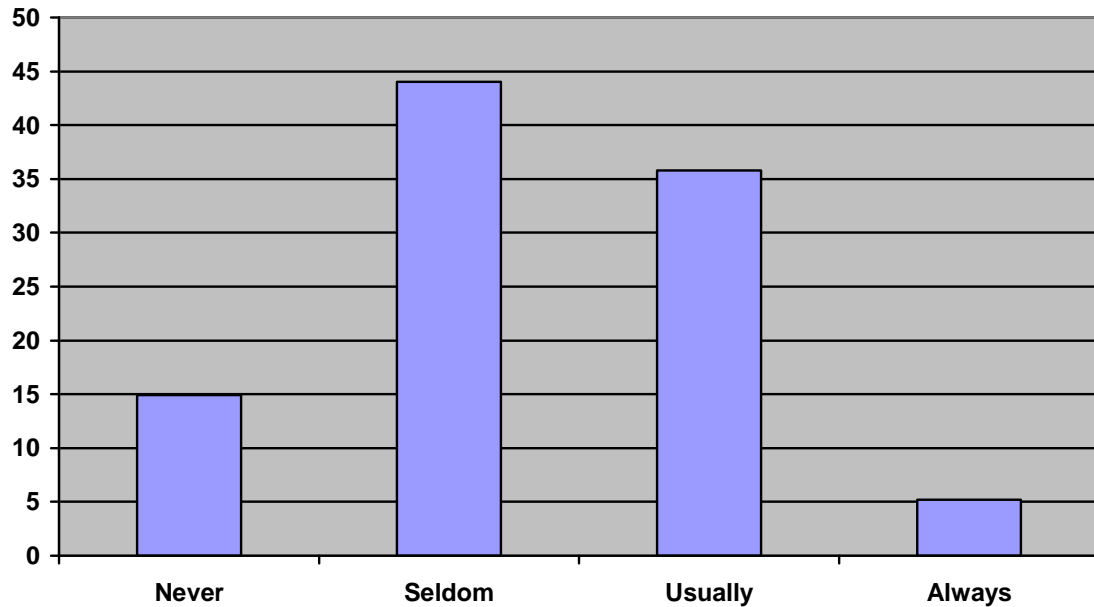
Messick asserts that when people are made to feel part of a group they behave differently towards other members of the “in-group” and others who are not members – the “out-group”. He says that people are willing to co-operate and make sacrifices for in-group members, more than out-group members.

- Respect and Obedience

When leaders impart pride and self-respect to their followers, in return they experience respect, and obedience to the norms and values that the leader may hold (Tyler 1990).

Research variable 97

The encouragement of contrary opinions

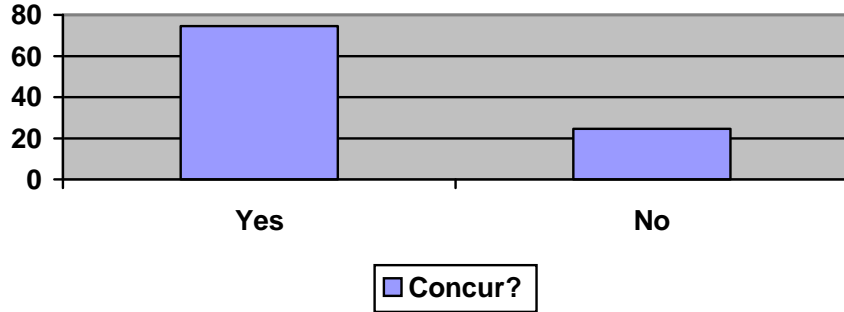


In the transformational leadership paradigm where partly the purpose of the leader is to get the followers to “buy into” his or her vision, it stands to reason that contrary opinion would be counterproductive to the process of leadership. In the research, variable v97, the question was posed, “Does the pastor encourage contrary opinions?”

The question then must be asked whether the respondents have concurred with the vision of the pastor?

Research variable v101

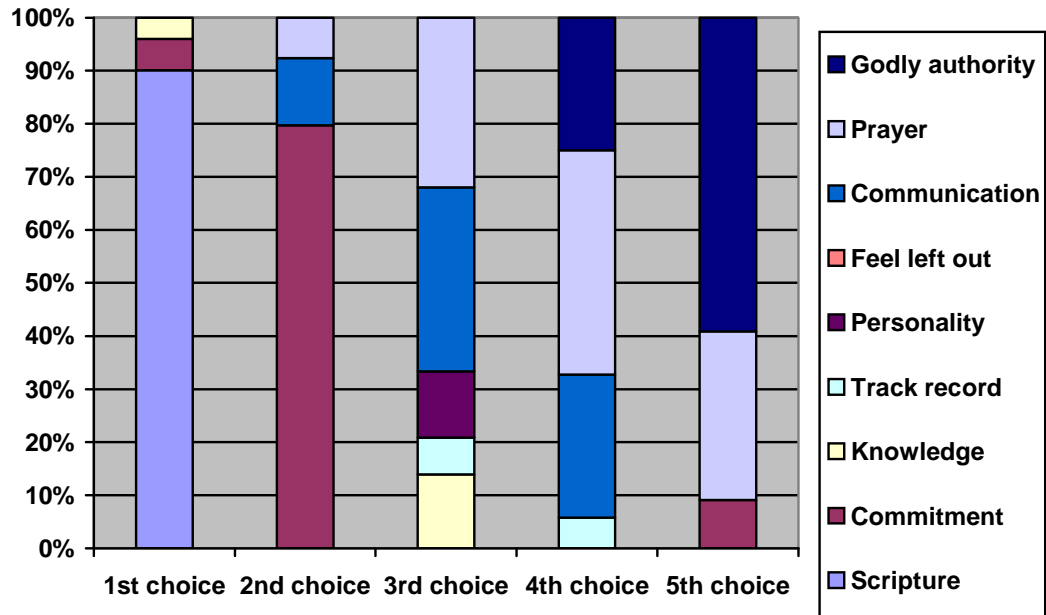
Do members concur with the pastor's vision



Furthermore, how did this agreement come about? What was it that brought about a synergy of opinion?

The research variables v117 to v121 give an indication of the means of influence by the leader.

Research variables v117 to v121



- **Godly authority** was based on the perception that some members have that the authority of leaders is from God and they don't question it
- **Prayer** response was based on the perception of the respondent that the leaders spend significant amounts of time in prayer over the matter of the direction of the church.
- **Communication** responses indicated that the leaders had the ability to clearly explain the benefits of their ideas.
- **Personality** responses refer to the charismatic leadership trait of having a convincing personality.
- **Track record** responses refer to the proven background record of the leaders in previous churches.
- **Knowledge** responses indicate that the perception of followers is that the leaders know much more than they do about such matters.
- **Commitment** responses indicate the perception by followers that leaders are personally committed to their vision and direction.
- **Scripture** responses indicate that leaders use the Scriptures as a means of influencing members to follow their vision.
- **Other** There were a very small percentage of respondents who indicated that they sensed their church was in bad shape and they felt that the leadership could help sort it out.

The graph above gives an indication of the high value of the Scriptures in Baptist leadership practice. It seems, from the research that when pastors use the Word of God to give credence to their vision, it is highly valued by followers.

Secondly the perceived commitment of the leaders to their vision and to the church is of importance. However, I add a word of caution of making more of the data than is there, because I never detailed any aspect of commitment in the questionnaire, but merely stated that in order to believe that the direction the church is taking is right, the "prove it by their commitment". Perhaps in the minds of the people, they understand the virtue of commitment as tenure in the church?

There is also an undertone of a perceived lack of personal prayer of matters of leadership vision, which comes into the equation only as a second, third or fourth choice. However, the track record of the pastor, their convincing personality, and the perception that leaders know more about such matters than the average church member is reflective of a “great man” paradigm of leadership, which should sound a word of caution for us Baptists.

For Baptists, the preaching of the Word of God is extremely important, as I have already mentioned. It is a highly valued gift, and the bearers of this gift have greater influence. Even in the secular literature, strength of delivery of the vision is an important determinant of the perception that the members have of the leader’s effectiveness (Awamle & Gardner, 1999). In the context of preaching, and the high place it holds in the life of the church members, the question was asked (variable v99) whether members perceived that the pastors generally plagiarized their sermons. The question addressed the matter of trust and honesty and openness, which virtues were seen to be important by the members of Baptist Churches.

The answer from the research was 84.06 percent of the respondents believed that pastors did NOT plagiarise their sermons while 15.94 percent believed that they did.

Research variable v15

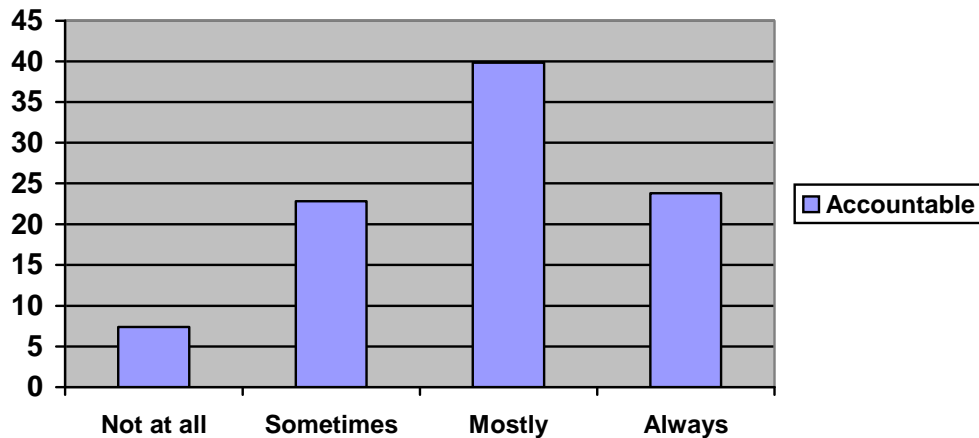
In seeking to understand the concept of accountability, I use the definition by Lerner and Tetlock (1999) “the implicit or explicit expectation that one may be called upon to justify one’s beliefs feeling and actions to others and that a lack of justification may lead to negative repercussions for the accountable individual.”

This is something of an enigma to many pastors in the Christian sense of personal freedom, liberty, the call of God on one’s life, studying at a higher level than most, sacrificing career, family, time, and so much more, yet having to submit and be accountable to other human beings. Furthermore the sense one

gets when reading “great man” leadership literature is that such individuals enjoy a greater “zone of consent” than the average pastor. However it is the call to servant hood, which the Scriptures clearly set out clearly demonstrates leadership is a matter of choosing from competing philosophies.

Jesus Himself contested the authority of the Pharisees, who used their position to “lord it over” the people they led. While leaders in God’s Kingdom are accountable in many ways to diverse individuals and groups, kingdom leaders are to be servants of ALL. In the Old Testament, Solomon’s son Rehoboam, stood on the fence choosing the model of leadership he would follow (1 Kings 12:1-24) He chose to ignore the wise advice of his elders, but chose to be a harsh and demanding leader. The result of which was civil war, and the death of over half a million men.

Leadership Accountability



In a chi-squared analysis of v15 (accountability) and v61 (Is the leadership in touch with you?) The focus was placed on the leader’s sense of accountability to the membership as demonstrated through open communication, sharing of ideas, with the possibility of mutual influencing, an important aspect of LMX.

The data demonstrated that when the leadership is rarely or never accountable, they rarely or ever are in touch with the membership of the church (63.64%).

However, when the leadership is accountable (Usually/Always) they always are in touch with the people (65.63%) i.e.

Row %	Always/ Usually	Sometimes	Rarely/ ever
Not	18.18	18.18	63.64
Sometimes	12.50	50.00	37.50
Mostly	57.14	25.71	17.14
Always	65.63	28.13	6.25

It is also statistically significant that in the situations where the leadership is always accountable, rarely or never is the leader NOT in touch with the members.

4.2 THE SERVANT FOLLOWER IN THE RESEARCH

In examining the relational dynamics of leadership in Baptist churches, we cannot stop after looking at the role of the Pastor. My understanding of Baptist leadership is that it is connective, reciprocal and relational, and therefore must include the role of followers at significantly higher levels than some of the other leadership theories.

Churches are complex social entities that cannot be led through the acts and will of a single individual (Stacey, *et al* 2001 & Streatfield, 2001). No matter if that person was a great woman or man whose leadership is inspiring. In relational approaches to leadership the shared mutual influence between leaders and followers is studied. Therefore in this next section of the analysis, the data regarding servant followership is studied.

Sixteen questions are asked in the first section of the research document in order to place the respondents into their particular context of church leadership. Not all Baptist churches are led by the congregation. Respondent churches PSA and PUSA were led by elders. Respondent P2SA was led by deacons, while BUSA was led by a pastoral team.

The results of the research of variables v4 – v9 regarding leadership structures in Baptist churches have already been addressed under chapter 2.5

The next question seeks to identify members' perceptions of current trends in leadership practice, particularly any inclination towards coercive types of authority.

The results of the data from variable 10 to variable 16 at the very least indicate that members **do** have perceptions about their leaders, and that continual evaluation of leadership is taking place by followers. In a nutshell, leader behavior determines followers' perceptions. Followers are the ones who experience the actuality of a leader's approach to leadership, and are uniquely able to evaluate it and its effects. There was only a frequency missing of approximately 7 in the data, which is indicative of the willingness of the majority to explicate their perceptions about leadership.

Research variable v10

Is Baptist leadership coercive or persuasive?

					ANALYSIS
70					<p>These data could be indicative of the tendency in Baptist leadership to focus on the skills, traits and abilities of the leader, and one quality of a good leader in the “great man” and transformational paradigm would be their ability to persuade others that their vision would indeed be the best for the group, and to truly lead, to sell your plan, program, idea, or your concept...you must first sell yourself. While in LMX theory, three factors of respect, trust, and obligation determine the three-dimensional conceptualization of LMX quality. Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) explain that a high level exchange relationship will not be made and accepted without:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mutual respect for the capabilities of the other, • the anticipation of deepening reciprocal trust with the other and • the expectation that interacting obligation will grow over time as exchanges blossom into deeper relationships. <p>This cannot take place in an environment of coercion. Hence the data demonstrates that among the churches in the research at least, healthy attitudes toward leadership exist</p> <p>The data on the vertical axis was rounded off to the nearest 5%</p>
65					
60					
55					
50					
45					
40					
35					
30					
25					
20					
15					
10					
5					
Respondents	Strongly coercive	Fairly coercive	Fairly persuasive	Strongly persuasive	

In the chi-squared analysis between v10 (the issue of persuasive or coercive leadership) and v17, (the willingness to overlook mistakes if the leader is perceived as “doing a good job”) the data indicated a warning as a result of cells having a count of <5, hence the chi-squared analysis may not be a valid test. The Fisher’s Exact test provided data (p-value 0.3944) which indicated that statistically there was no evidence of association, which translated into the praxis means that there was no evidence that the cause of the willingness to overlook leader’s mistakes was as a result of coercion or persuasion on the part of the leader.

In a further chi-squared analysis between variables v10 (the issue of coercion and persuasion) and variable v60 (do others also set the vision?) some of the data were combined (Always/Usually, Rarely/Never). However, in the research, there was 15% of the data missing due to no response. What we are able to discover from the raw data is that there is a tendency for Baptist pastors to lean toward persuasion rather than coercion, but I am unwilling to draw further conclusions without statistical support.

Research variable v13

Is Baptist leadership open or closed?

70					<p style="text-align: center;">ANALYSIS</p> <p>It seems logical to assume (as LMX theory does) that leader’s relationships with people is not equivalent, but casts people in an “in group” and an “out group” role.</p> <p>This data is indicative of the general tendency among Baptist leaders toward openness.</p> <p>In question 8, (v20 – v29) the Biblical values espoused by respondents was compared to the same values they perceive in leadership, and in the matter of openness, a featured quality in LMX, there are indications that a significant percentage of respondents placed openness in one of the top four categories of personal values they hold dearly.</p> <p>The data on the Y axis was rounded off to the nearest 5%</p>
65					
60					
55					
50					
45					
40					
35					
30					
25					
20					
15					
10					
5					
Respondents	Very Closed	Fairly closed	Fairly open	Very open	

Variable 17 provides data from the following question:

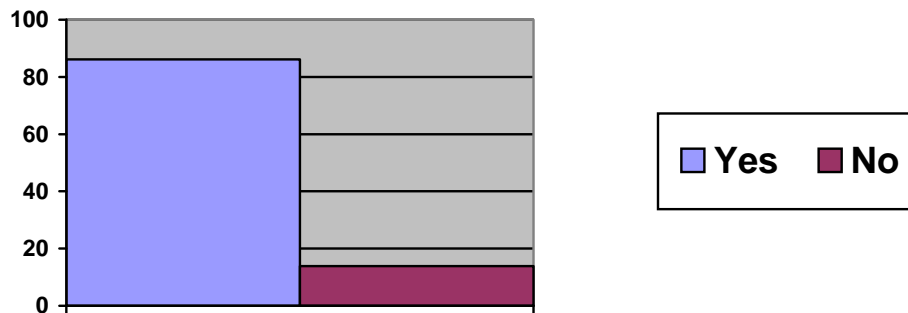
If the leadership is doing a “good job” are you willing to overlook their mistakes?

This question relates to the “industrial paradigm” of Rost where leadership is veified in the person of a charismatic leader, their talents and gifts. When leadership is perceived in this manner, they become almost “indispensable” to the church, and even in the face of immorality, there is a tendency to “water-down” principles.

The data demonstrated significant tendency to either forgive mistakes or overlook them, thus:

Research variable v17

Willingness to overlook leader's mistakes



The data provides interesting avenues for speculation, since the churches that were included in the research had pastors with tenure of over 3 years, and were larger than average, (not scientifically estimated around 80 members). The opportunities for filling the position for pastor for such larger churches is an extremely arduous process, particularly since the internet makes church vacancies common knowledge.

Churches of this size in the USA will receive anything up to 500 applications for

the position according to my personal research. Furthermore mid to larger sized churches are not particularly willing to “take the risk” of calling a younger unknown inexperienced person. Hence the data may simply reflect the need that churches have to keep their pastor, even in the face of “mistakes”.

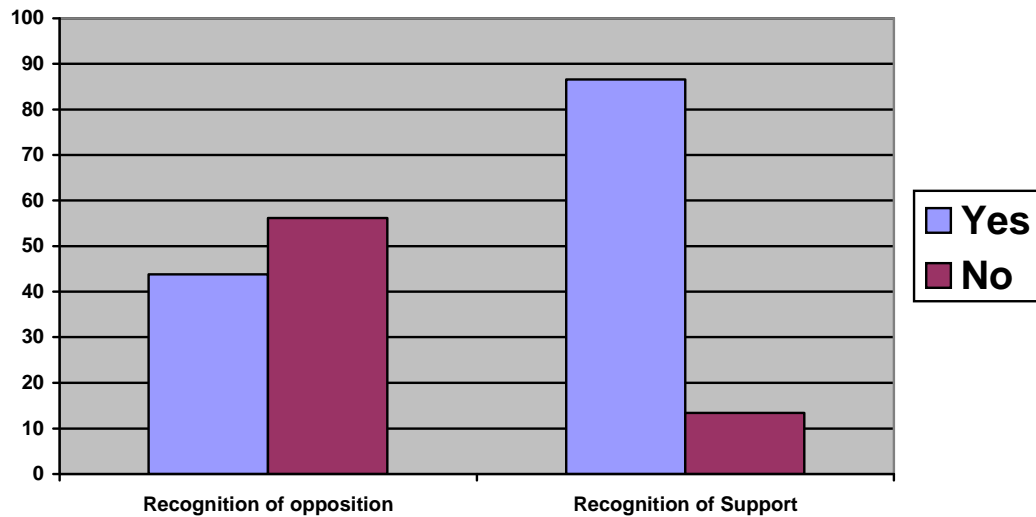
Furthermore, all 4 of the churches that took part in the research had all experienced traumatic moral problems with previous pastors, and perhaps in the light of such significant devastation in their church life, merely to overlook what I had termed “mistakes” would not amount to much importance.

I would also like to think that the Baptist community is a forgiving community, and having been forgiven much by God Himself, they offer the same forgiveness to others, even in leadership.

Variables 18 and 19 seek to discover the existence of protagonist and antagonist groups in the local church. The results of the data demonstrated that those who were able to identify strong opposition groups were approximately evenly divided, whereas those who were able to identify strong support groups for the leadership were overwhelmingly in the majority.

Research variables 18 and 19

Recognition of opposition and support groups for leadership



Research variables v20 – v29

The congruence of value systems between leaders and followers

In the literature on LMX, factors like respect, trust and obligation, openness honesty and integrity play a large part in moving from low-level exchanges toward higher levels of exchange and a leadership paradigm, which is more relational.

Uhl-Bien (2005: 69) and Krishnan, (2003), point out that there are prototypical behaviors that leaders and followers in relationships ought to demonstrate, and when this occurs, relational favorability is higher, and the development of the relationship towards in group level is more likely. The opposite is also true that when prototypical beliefs are not met, the favorability of group development is inhibited.

According to Krishnan (2003) values can be conceptualized in two different ways:

- IPSATIVE in which values are rank ordered
- NON-IPSATIVE in which values are measured independently of each

other.

“Only an ipsative measurement model can capture the unique value configuration of an individual”. (Krishnan, 2003: 15)

This is the reason why I use this method to examine Baptists fundamental values which they “hold dearly”. It is to be noted that the data demonstrates above all that Truth is the predominant value, and a case could be made that all the other values could be viewed in its light.

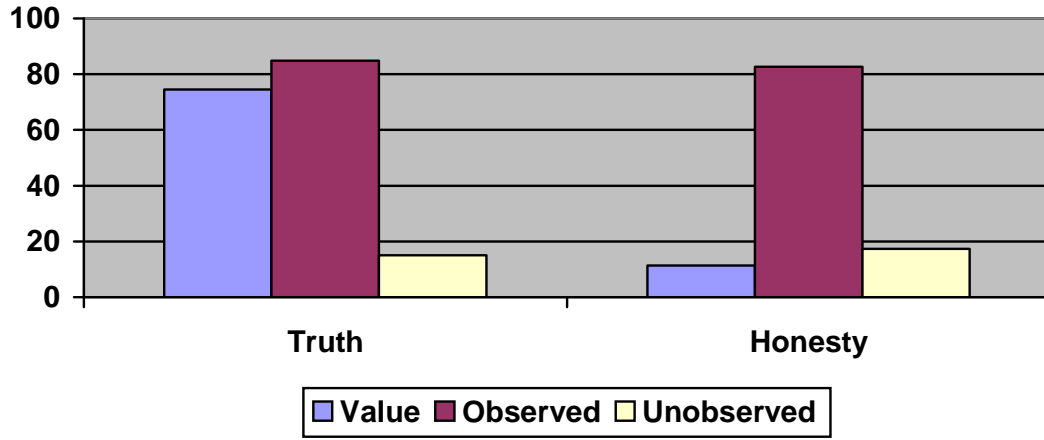
In question 8, references were made to what I perceive are prototypical values of Baptist believers, to try to identify if there is correlation with the belief system of the leadership in these important areas. The question also specifically asked people to respond in the light of them being a Baptist believer, as opposed to being a member from another denomination.

This question also relates to the fact that leadership should represent, uphold and defend the values and norms that the members of the church hold dearly. When the members/followers perceive that leaders are doing this, it follows that follower satisfaction will be enhanced.

(I.d. refers to insufficient data). Responses less than 10% of the population were not included.

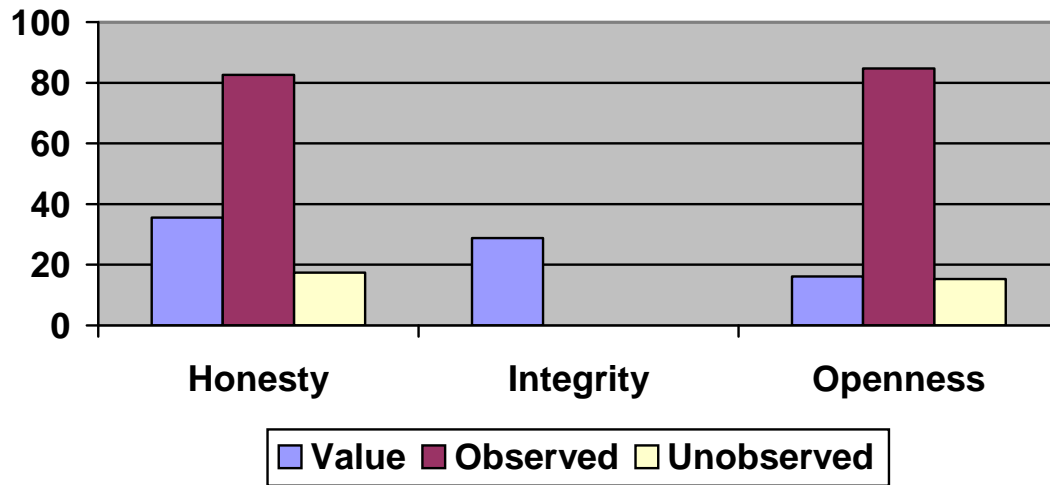
Variables v20 and v21

Values and perceptions - 1



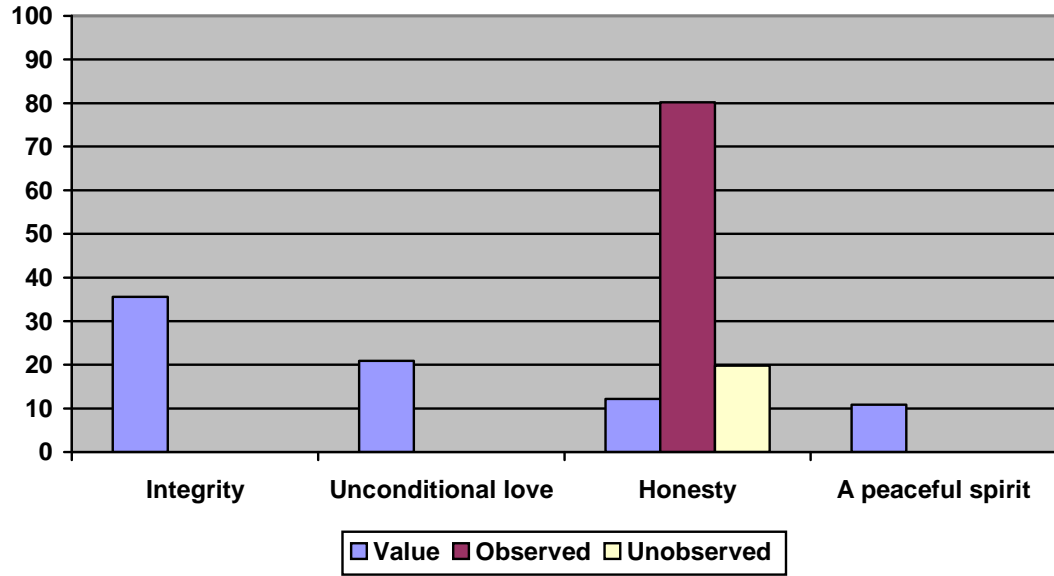
Variables v22 and v23

Values and perceptions - 2



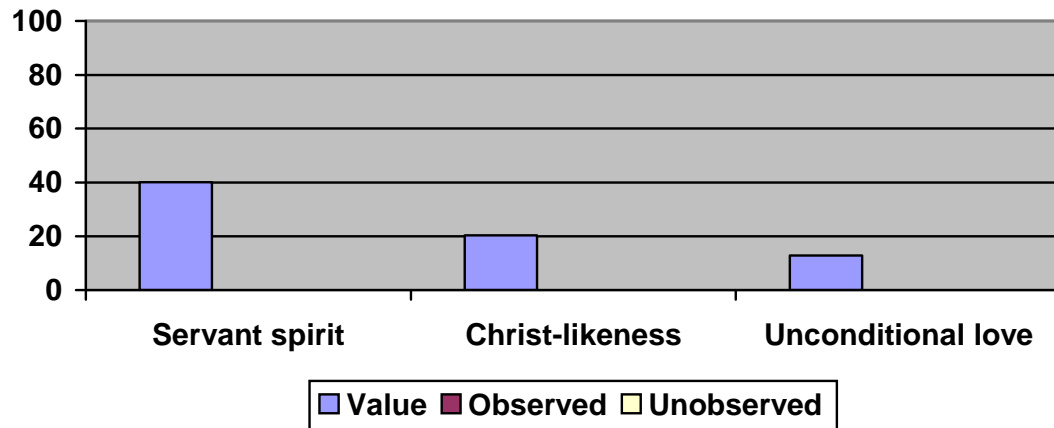
Variables v24 and v25

Values and perceptions - 3



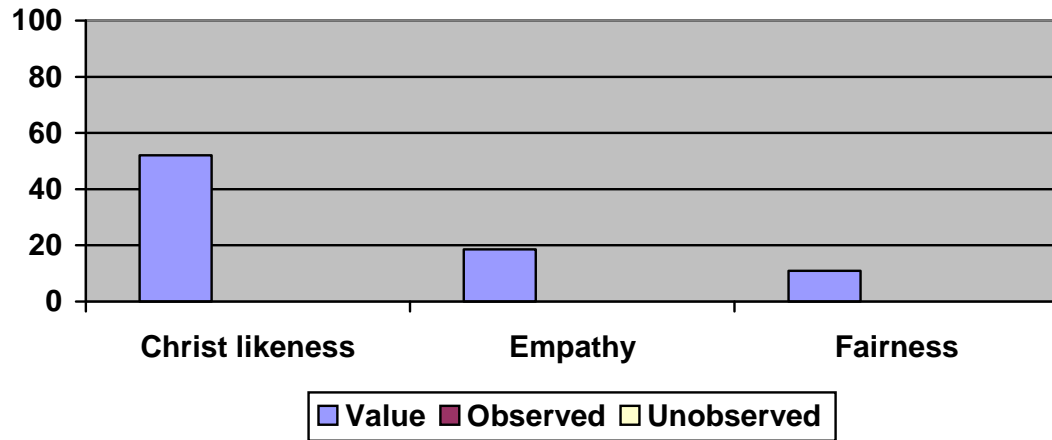
Variables v26 and 27

Values and perceptions - 4



Variables v28 and v29

Values and perceptions - 5



Research variables v30 to 39

Incidents of perceived good leadership

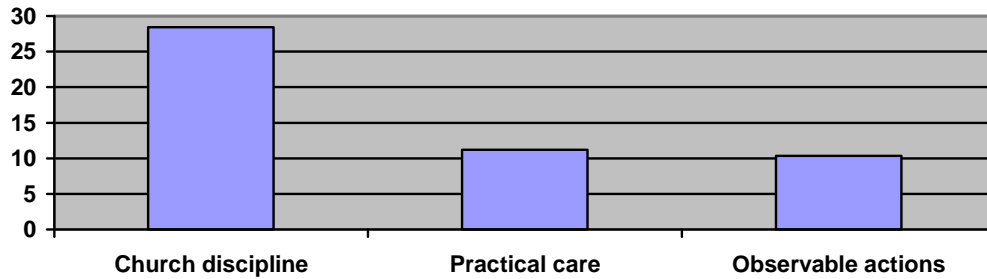
The purpose of this question relates to satisfaction with the leadership, and the understanding that nothing tests a relationship as much as conflict.

In the data there were a larger number of frequency missing than would be expected. (38).

Three significant responses were noted in the perceptions of the respondents with regard to incidences of good leadership however there were a large variety of data of noticeable different positive leadership actions (16)

Research variable v30

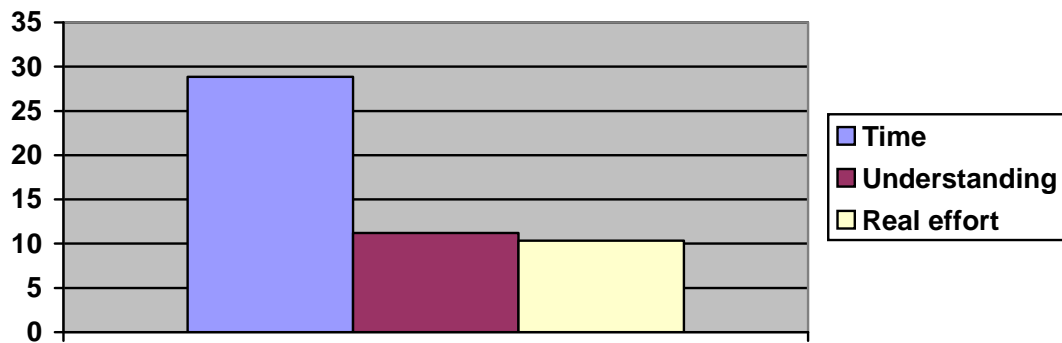
Members' perceptions of good leadership



The next question was posed to the respondent about that particular aspect of leadership, which caused the response in v30 above. A possible 8 suggestions were offered, but only 3 answers provided meaningful data.

Research variables v31 to v39

Particular aspects of meaningful leadership action



While I make no comment about the intricacies of problem solving *per se* it is encouraging to note that at this level of pastoral leadership, 3 simple activities like taking time to deal with an issue, seeking to understand all the implications of the problem and making a real, observable effort deserve commendation.

Research variables v40 to 50

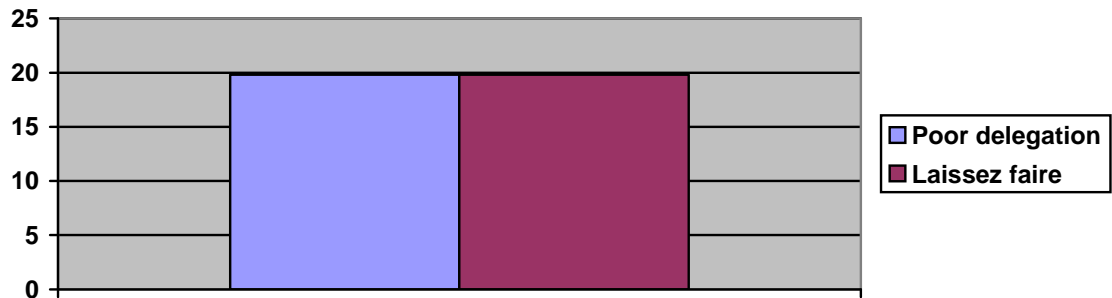
Incidents of perceived poor leadership

Respondents were asked to describe a single incident in which they perceived poor leadership being exercised in their local church. There seemed to be an unwillingness to divulge this data as the frequency missing was 53, but this is understandable as the questionnaire began to probe a little deeper into the members' experience of leadership.

Of the 15 different responses to this question, only 2 are included in the research that represented a percentile of over 10, which indicates that there were a multiplicity of problems, but it was the commonality of the two most important that were of interest to the research.

Research variable v40

Members' perceptions of poor leadership



Two responses stood out in the research, namely that of the inability of leadership to delegate and to take too much responsibility upon themselves, and also the matter of *laissez-faire*, where the leadership did not act at all, or in a perceived manner that the situation warranted.

In the responses to this question, there was also an indication of frustration on the part of members for decisions taken by the leadership where people were affected, e.g. the dismissal of a staff member, the moral problems of a pastor, and other sensitive information. It is my understanding that the average Baptist

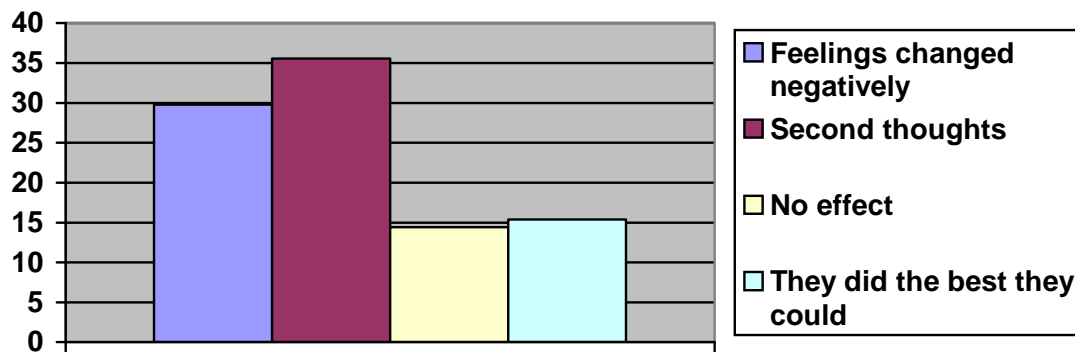
Church member is mostly unaware of the problems associated with litigation, hence the caution with sharing information with the larger membership.

But this does tie up with the principal value of trust and openness, discussed under research variable v20. The question must remain unanswered as to how far this trust extends.

The next question (A13) asked for respondents to describe the affect of perceivable poor leadership upon themselves and their relationship with the leadership. In the literature (Townsend, Phillips & Elkins, 2000) the authors clearly identify there were contra-indications of retaliation by employees toward poor leadership.

Research variable v50

Indications of affect of poor leadership performance



There was a large frequency missing in this response of 59 (38%)

In a chi-squared analysis between variables v50 (Indications of affect of poor performance) and v106 (the effort put in by the pastor to get to know the respondent) I had hoped that where there is a perceived effort on the part of the pastor to get to know people, and things go wrong or bad leadership is noticed,

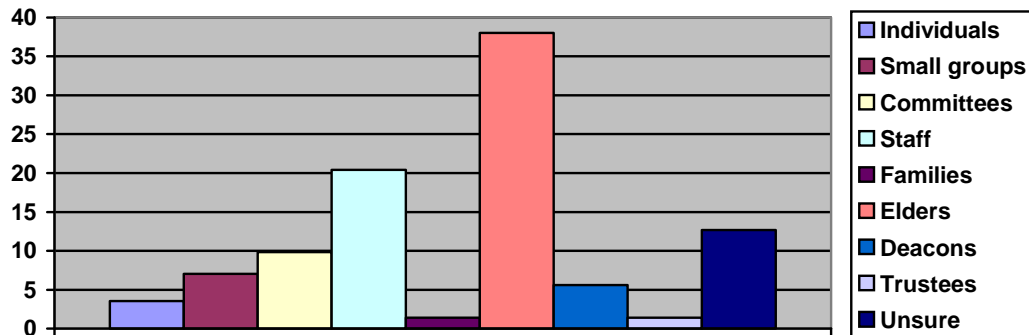
people attitudes change less, because of the higher level of relationship between the pastor and member. However, this thesis is not very clear from the data. The raw data indicates that where the pastor had not put in an effort to get to know individuals there was a tendency to think negatively when poor leadership was perceived

Research variable v51

Perceived decision makers in the local church

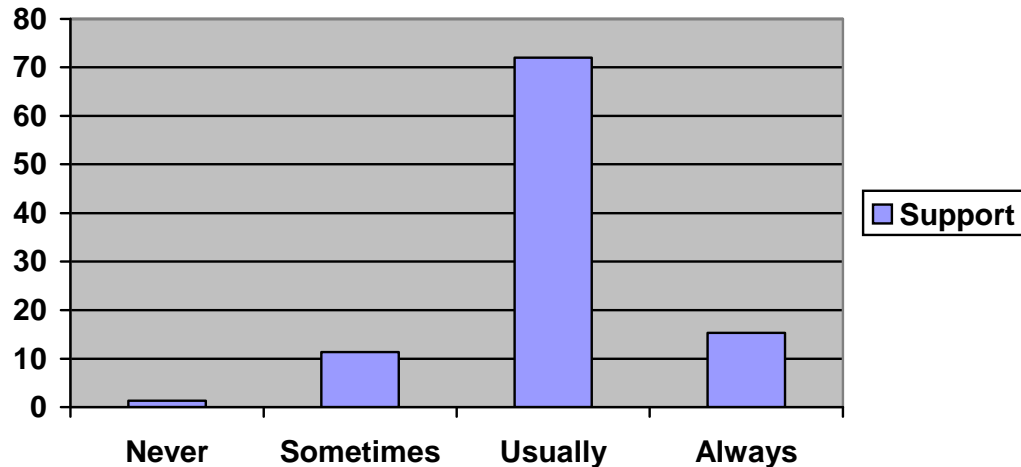
This was indeed an unusual shift from traditional Baptist leadership praxis in that I deliberately excluded the option to choose the “congregation” from the answers, thinking that respondents may choose option 1, (Individuals); 2, (Small groups) and especially 7, (Deacons), the latter which traditionally have wielded the power of decision making, particularly among Southern Baptists in the USA. The influence of the pastoral team led paradigm of church BUSA was found in the research with what seemed to be the 20.42% response toward option 4.

Research variable v51



Research Variable v53

Leadership supported by members



Frequency missing was 4

This is interesting data in the sense that the pastors of these churches were not novices as leaders and furthermore, their tenure had been long enough to get over what is termed the “honeymoon” period. The 1st level analysis gives an indication that Baptists generally are not “blind followers” but their followership may be deemed the result of a reasoned response, indicated by the data that they did not just “always” support the leadership

In a chi-squared analysis of this variable and variable v96 (Has there been a loss of confidence in the judgment, experience and wisdom of the leadership? - 60.27% indicated “No” while 39.73% indicated Yes) there is statistical proof to demonstrate that where there is a loss of confidence in the experience and wisdom of the leadership, then that leadership ceases to have the support of the majority of the membership. The other side of the coin is that where there is NO loss of confidence in the leadership, they usually/always enjoy the support of the members.

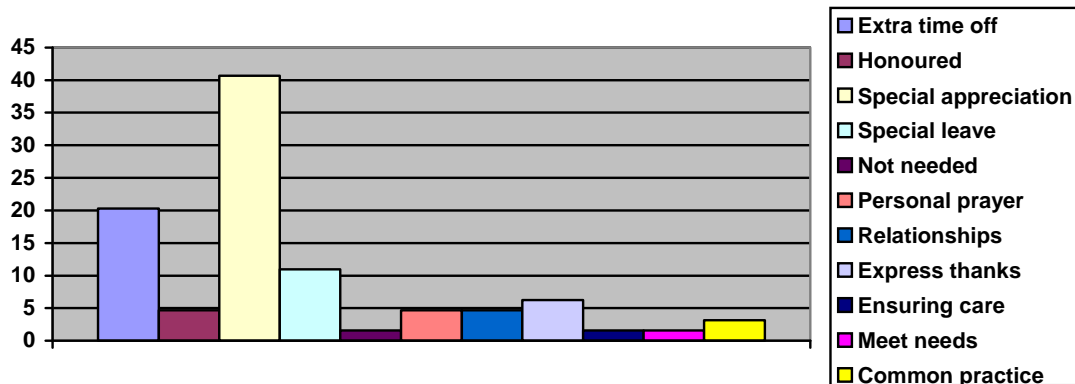
Research variable v103

Means employed by the membership in leadership legitimization

It follows reason that if there are higher levels of leader-member exchange in Baptist churches, that in a sense, the “return” for the highly valued gift of preaching would be an extended “zone of consent” or more “idiosyncratic credit” (Hollander).

This question sought to explore whether this was concretized in some way by the members. The results of the research data showed that there were 11 different responses. Some of these were single responses. However what is mentionable is that the frequency missing to this question was 90! This suggests that respondents perhaps did not know or were unwilling to supply the data.

I also took into account the length of the questionnaire, and perhaps by the time the last responses were needed, the people were losing interest, and wanted to get it over. The raw data is interesting in the sense that there is an effort on the part of the membership to recognize the pastor’s work in the church, and an effort is being made with the introduction of Pastors’ Appreciation Day, a once yearly effort to demonstrate support.



Some of these responses were quite close, but there were nuances of differences that I felt warranted their inclusion under a separate category.

- Extra time off** Pastors generally do not punch a time clock, and are left to their own devices regarding the use (or abuse) of their time, but there was a significant response in the data that gave their pastor extra paid time off.
- Honored** This data refers to the introduction of a relatively new idea in churches that in the month of October (usually) pastors are honored in some special way in the church with a gift or a word of thanks, and a card indicating people's appreciation
- Special Appreciation** refers to the fact that the pastor and his wife are usually honored on their birthday or anniversary, though the rest of the membership are not.
- Special leave** In the course of the year, pastor are sometimes granted special leave and weekends off for different needs in their lives. Also they have 5 or 7 year sabbaticals, where they may take 3 months off for further study or some other pursuit. This is usually written into the "call" a pastor receives when going to a church.
- Is not needed** This was the response from a small sample of the population
- Prayer for them personally** indicates that pastors are drawn into the private prayer lives of some of the members. This is an exceptionally great honor.
- Personal relationships** indicated a response where members of the church have gone out of their way to make an effort toward a personal relationship with the pastor.
- Expressing thanks** is the response of people who have made an effort to come to the pastor personally and thank them for some perceived meaningful personal contribution in their lives.
- Ensuring care** Is the response of members that make sure the pastor's personal needs are addressed and taken care of
- Meet needs.** Respondents indicated that they made it their practice to meet the pastor's personal family needs.

There was one other group that indicated that they knew it was common practice to express practical means of support and legitimization, but it did not happen in their own church.

4.3 THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH WITH REGARD TO LMX IN BAPTIST CHURCHES

In my definition of leadership, following in the tradition of Rost, **“leadership is a two way Christ-like influence relationship between elders and members whose intention is real change in their furtherance of God’s Kingdom.”** Influence exchange relationships between leaders and followers are of utmost importance, and effective influencing and understanding springs largely from healthy relationships among the members of both groups.

Literature research demonstrates that legitimization is given and taken away as part of dynamic exchange processes. Failure to meet the terms of the exchange means the risk of losing legitimacy.

The research indicated that indeed members do have perceptions about their leadership, whether that is a person (the Pastor) a group (the elders) or a team (pastoral team). The perceptions are influenced positively when the leadership makes an effort in the relationship.

There was a tendency in the research to view leadership from a “great man” or even “charismatic leadership” perspective, and predominantly there is a transformational paradigm in place in local Baptist churches, where the pastor/s are seen as those who cast the vision, and the members are those who need to be uplifted. However the breadth of response, even in this smaller population leads me to conclude that leadership is far more complex than many Baptists would admit, and cannot fit into the Newtonian, cause and effect analysis, and would better be described in terms of “quantum leadership”, which can be analyzed by means of LMX theory.

Another useful perspective on quantum leadership is provided by Fairholm (1998) in describing leadership “mindsets”. He suggests that five distinct ways of conceptualizing (and enacting) leadership, in which the first 3 represent the transformational paradigm, while the latter 2 represent quantum thinking:

- **Leadership as a science of management** – Emphasis is placed on efficiency (the best ways) and effectiveness (productivity).
- **Leadership as excellence management** – The focus is on systematically striving for improvements in the quality of the organization’s people, processes, and products.
- **Leadership as values-displacement activities** – Goal achievement is pursued through activities aimed at aligning members’ values and visions with those of the organization.
- **Leadership as building culture of trust** – The focus is on establishing and maintaining an ethos of trust, based on shared values and an ethic of respect and equal worth.
- **Whole-soul or spiritual leadership** – The focus is on fostering members’ continuous growth, improvement, self-awareness, and self-leadership by accommodating not only their professional selves but also their private selves; working with the spirit (the soul, the heart, or the character) of followers at the emotional, value, intellectual, and technical levels.

The sense of building a culture of trust featured significantly in the data from the research, and most notably in church PSA.

Trust was the value that Baptist people held the most “dearly”, and it had positives outcomes in terms of LMX theory and the legitimation of leadership who had taken the time to focus on relationships in their ministry.

In church PSA, I gained a sense (and the data confirmed) of healthy support for their pastor and a deep understanding of his frustrations and joys in the ministry.

The data supported my casual observations during the actual research, with the quality of responses from this church. The personal comments in particular reflected a maturity and insight into leadership in terms of leader-member exchanges. Members in this church knew what was happening in the church, in personal conversation with them; they had opinions on important matters that not only affected the local church, but the whole denomination as well.

It is my considered opinion that the people who comprise the Body of Christ in this church have demonstrated a higher level of LMX than for example church P2SA, where there were undertones of negativity and a sense of dark tension between the leadership and the members.

The chi-squared analysis of some of the data (v54 and v102) indicates that when members of the dyad put in an effort in their relationship, there is a direct correlation to trust, a positive value and indication of higher levels of LMX, with members being included in decision making and enjoying the confidence of the leadership. Furthermore when the leadership stays in touch with the people through communication, making an effort or whatever means, there is a heightened sense of accountability between members of the leader-follower dyad.

Baptist church members are continually evaluating the leadership in the church, and when poor leadership is perceived, there is a statistically verifiable loss of confidence in the wisdom, experience and judgment in the leadership. Thus we may be able to conclude that the perception of leadership authority on the part of Baptist church members should not be studied in terms of the Weberian schema, but rather in the exploration of a new paradigm, namely that of LMX theory.

This is particularly true of LMX relationships in structures that have voluntary membership.

Leadership is not just found in the actions, personality and traits of a pastor, because they may not be the most influential person in the church. Take the example of Lech Walesa or the Ayatollah Khomeini, before they took office.

Heifetz (1996:19) correctly states:

“Leaders not only influence followers, but are under their influence as well.”

An understanding of exchange theory of leadership is also important to the Baptist paradigm of leadership, in the sense that one of the most fundamental axioms of social behavior is found in the axiom “you scratch my back and I’ll scratch yours”. When a Baptist leader demonstrates an understanding, or belief or acceptance in the value system of a follower, it will result in the enlargement of their “zone of influence”, particularly as they relate to the values of truth and honesty, which the research demonstrates are the most highly valued among Baptist believers.

The research also shows the high value that followers place on the gift of preaching and using the Word of God. A fine example of this exchange is found in the way in which South African Baptists have admired the life, ministry, and especially the teaching of the late Dr Rex Mathie. Dr Mathie was revered as one of the greatest expositors of Scripture that has ever served churches in the Baptist Union of Southern Africa. His giftedness in preaching and teaching and mentoring your pastors earned him the respect (sic. legitimization) of the whole denomination. His counsel was sought on every matter. The reciprocation was one of gratitude and loyalty and not through legalistic obligation.

In the research, in Church “BUSA” there was a clear delineation between the “in-group” represented by the pastoral staff and few selected church members, who, interestingly were younger in chronological age and had shorter tenure in the church; and the “out-group” represented mostly (but not solely) by the older (60+) age group who had longer tenure in the church, but whose opinion was less and

less solicited. It was clearly evident that the pastors sought an individualized relationship with the “in-group”, to the extent that they went on holiday together, played golf and met socially outside the Church. At church meetings they linked arms together to demonstrate solidarity and support.

Using LMX theory, one recognizes that there is no such thing as consistent behavior between leader/followers relationships, and that greater support is given to “in-group” members by the leadership. Furthermore, “in-group” members are more dependable, understand the vision of the church, work harder, and display more satisfaction than the “out-group”. In these positive dyads the result is mutual trust, respect, and a greater degree of reciprocal influence. This was demonstrated at a controversial church meeting called to question the leadership paradigm of the pastor (“BUSA” 5.3.06) The meeting was perceptibly polarized along “in-group”/“out-group” lines.

In researching this particular situation, it was consistently reported that the “out-group” received less information, were given fewer important tasks to do in the church, and had a more formal relationship with the pastor. These criteria have commonality with Drury’s (2004) understanding of “out-group” dynamics. In this church, the pastor had adjusted to the expectations of the “in-group” of followers, and it was primarily from this group that his legitimization emerged.

As early as the 1950’s, Thibault & Kelley (1959) viewed leadership as an exchange relation in which the followers surrendered some of their status and autonomy in return for the services of a leader in maintaining goal direction and unity in action for the group. In other words, the leader gains legitimization, but pays for it by assuming a heavier load of responsibility and interactional stress.

In BUSA I was able to observe this in the course of completing the research. The leadership had developed a “laager mentality”, and sought advice and support from a selective group, mostly defined by age. There was a sense of polarization in the church, and a clear sense of positive affection by the in-group and a sense of frustration and unhappiness on the part of the out-group.

4.5 THE ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURIAL FOLLOWERSHIP IN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

The definitive environment for any exchange between leaders and followers has to be the ecclesiastical leadership paradigm in which leadership takes place.

If leadership is based on the corporate, “profit and loss” model, and if the church is growing (profit), and the people are happy (customer satisfaction), then the pastor is rewarded, he/she stands in high favor with the people, the zone of influence is extended, and legitimization is powerful. However if attendance is declining and people are dissatisfied, pastors are criticized and possibly terminated. Romberger points out (1999:10) that in the corporate paradigm of leadership personnel evaluations often fail to incorporate Christ-like qualities and character in their assessment.

If the Church has a servant leadership/followership paradigm satisfaction will be determined by different criteria, and particularly in Baptist Churches where preaching is highly prized, it will have close connection to follower satisfaction.

In the two churches researched in the USA, the sense of the church operating as a business appeared strongly, with an emphasis on numbers and dollars as indications of success, and tied to pastoral legitimation. The focus was placed on the pastor as the source of information about current church trends, latest programs and “what will work and what won’t”. There was a strong indication of professionalization and management of church resources, with preaching the Word a distant second.

The assumption, I believe, among many pastors today is that new life in a church can be created only when people shed their suits, don golf shirts and trendy trousers, and think and act like the most passionate entrepreneurs. The problem is, they rarely understand when it makes sense to do those things--or how to do them. Mark Maletz and Nitin Nohria (2001) conducted a unique research project

that attempted to answer those questions.

Their project focused on “whitespace leadership”: (a metaphor borrowed from the printing industry that refers to the space on a page not occupied by the printed letters) and which they adapted to the large but mostly unoccupied territory in the life of every organization (*sic.* Church) where rules are vague, authority is fuzzy, budgets are nonexistent, and strategy is unclear--and where entrepreneurial activity that helps reinvent and renew an organization most often takes place.

This was brilliantly demonstrated in the research in church BUSA, where a small but vocal part of the population sought to hold on to traditional values, but the larger and younger majority (by far) wanted more contemporary worship, innovative ideas in preaching. The pastor actually did dress trendier, used entrepreneurial ideas in worship and preaching, and the result has been a dramatic growth in the church.

Maletz and Nohria shadowed entrepreneurial managers operating in the whitespace and met with top managers about their efforts to oversee whitespace activities. Using examples from the financial services, computer, and e-commerce industries, the authors explain when it's imperative to operate in the whitespace--and when it's wiser to stay in the traditional blackspace.

Even with the best trained Bible expositor as pastor, and the godliest men and women as deacons or elders, and every good intention to realize the purposes of the church as outlined in the Scriptures, unless there is a shift from central control of ministry committees by the few called to leadership; toward the people themselves given the opportunity to use their God given gifts in leadership, the Church may languish in mediocrity. The inclusion of followers in the process of implementing real change and the establishment of mutual purposes is essential to healthy leadership practice in that it opens a whole new arena of entrepreneurial opportunity.

Heifetz (1996:183) points out that there is a scarcity of leadership with people in authority, and this is true especially when leadership is not veified in the person of a leader, their traits and giftedness. This statement is borne out in real life when one continually hears of churches engaged in “power struggles” which involves a win-lose mentality.

I believe that leadership is also exercised by people without authority. However, such people, often called “entrepreneurs” (Heifetz) in the literature are often perceived as a threat to the vision of the church, or mavericks, troublemakers by those in pastoral authority, mostly as a result of our perception that we cannot have leadership without authority.

The question remains: Can we have leadership “from the foot of the table”, from “outside the in-group”. Gandhi said a resounding “Yes!” So did Martin Luther King Jr. and others whose formal authority was within a particular group of people, but whose entrepreneurial leadership extended across formal and informal boundaries.

The question is what sort of people does the followership of Baptist churches comprise? As has previously been mentioned, the membership of the Baptist church is restricted to those who have a clear testimony to having been regenerated by the Spirit, and usually are willing to testify to this experience by means of believers’ baptism. Some churches hold rigorous interview programs so that “meaningful membership” is implemented. New members are instructed in how things work, the vision of the church, and the responsibilities of membership and where they can fit into the programs of the church. But I know of no situation where a church instructs new members in the responsibility of their role as leaders. Thus they miss the opportunity of assimilating potential new leaders because of the restrictions of authority. Many pastors fail to see that members are *ipso facto* leaders in some aspect of their lives, in their homes, school, business or sport, and the insights and experience they bring to the table is invaluable.

Chapter 5

TOWARDS AN ADJUSTED PRAXIS

The fear that many Baptist have is related to Newton's second law of thermodynamics, which in simplicity states that everything has a tendency to deteriorate.

This I believe is applicable to Church structure. I believe that congregational church government in itself is not the single criteria for Baptist church structure, and that the research demonstrates an interesting and arguably new paradigm shift in Baptist leadership toward leadership that is more relational, which extends the zone of consent of the pastor beyond its historic boundaries, as pastors understand the relational dynamics that LMX theory suggests. This may result in churches adopting a different form of governmental structure, which in theory does not make them less Baptist.

I believe, and the research supports, that church members understand this relational element already, and are willing to extend and embrace meaningful relationships with the leadership of the church, but the effort in relationships must be made by the pastor and other leaders of the church understanding the *quid pro quo* of LMX

Among us Baptist pastors there is a tendency to think that we have to be involved in every act that requires a decision. De Pree (2004) refers to this as the "pink ice in the urinal" attitude in micro management of everything.

As leadership is shared and created jointly, so is the responsibility for re-structure of the church. This means that as people work together in defining and developing their relational leadership, bring about change that furthers the advancement of the Kingdom of God, questions of structure will emerge, which will need to be engineered to fit each situation.

The structure then becomes the product of the leadership relationship, and we Baptists influence our structure instead of it influencing us and forcing us into a paradigm that historically has worked, but which has led to the exclusion of the majority that make up the membership of the Baptist church.

Much more research is needed in the context of how people decide, act and present themselves to each other in the context of our Baptist church family. I can remember personally being taught to hold oneself apart from people, not to allow people to get close, to be careful of close relationships, never allow someone to give you a warm embrace. This probably relates more to the antiquated Victorian era than it does to modern day Baptists, who desire closer relationships with their leadership.

An Important lesson I have discovered for ministry from this research has been the freedom to move from the focus on church growth, the frustration of having to fill in documents recording baptisms, and income, and growth in membership, towards a focus on the health of the church particularly in relationships.

I have discovered that Baptists are likeable people. They may not agree with every step a leader takes, but they will be found to be in prayer for their pastors often, to offer words of encouragement, and support, to understand their humanity, and brittleness after the many years of hard fought battles.

Church members are willing to overlook the leaders' mistakes because they understand the doctrines of grace. They are grateful to pastors who serve in long tenures, who invest their lives in the families of church members. They are grateful for pastors who share the load with them and in so doing empower them for ministry, much like Jesus did with His disciples recorded in Luke 10:1 when He sent the 72 out two by two to preach, heal and apply in practice what they had learned from Jesus.

There is a need for change. Not a demolition of the old and a construction of the new, but a reconstruction of what has stood for centuries.

I appeal that pastors be released from the impossible task of vision casting, and church growth, to focus on what is possible and reachable and within their reach, namely Church health.