ETHNIC REPRESENTATION AMONG PASTORS OF

ECUADORIAN INTERNATIONAL CHURCHES:

A MULTI-CASE STUDY

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A Thesis

Presented to

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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Doctor of Education

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by

Michael Douglas Small Jr.

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**APPROVAL SHEET**

ETHNIC REPRESENTATION AMONG PASTORS OF

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A MULTI-CASE STUDY

Michael Douglas Small, Jr.

Read and Approved by:

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Timothy Paul Jones (Chair)

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John David Trentham

_____
Paul M. Akin

Date_____

For Sarah.


Thank you for encouraging me to pursue this endeavor. I can't imagine a better partner through this journey. You are my very favorite person in the world, and I am beyond fortunate to be called your husband.


I love you desperately.


"He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord."

Proverbs 18:22 NIV

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PREFACE

When I began this program, I was asked what I would do with a Doctor of Education. At that time, I said I didn't know. My wife had encouraged me to pursue my doctorate, and God had opened the doors to make what I believed to be impossible a reality. I still don't know what God's plan is for this doctorate, but I am reminded that there have been several people in Scripture whom God led down a path where they did not know where it would lead. In this sense, I am glad to be in good company.

During our studies, Dr. Timothy Paul Jones reminded our cohort that we are debtors not just to those we currently serve but to all of those who invested in us along the way. The truth is that this point in my life is the product of thousands of small investments by hundreds of people. I have had the good fortune of having a Christian mother, Vicki Cobble, who took me to church, helped me attend a Christian school, and paid my tuition so I could get my bachelor's degree. I have had many godly educators and friends along the way who encouraged me in my faith and studies. I am thankful to my mother-in-law and father-in-law, Susie and Andy Broome, who have been a support and encouragement through this process. In addition, I am thankful to our many missionary supporters who have allowed us to serve on the mission field while I have been engaged in doctoral studies.

I would also like to extend a special thanks to the EdD department, particularly Dr. Timothy Paul Jones, Dr. John David Trentham, and Dr. Dean Clark, for their help and encouragement in making this project possible. To my fellow cohort members, I would like to express my appreciation for your words of encouragement and the example of excellence that many of you have modeled for me; it was a pleasure walking this road together with all of you. In addition, the SBTS Writing Center (particularly Torey Teer,

who completed the final edit of this thesis), deserves special recognition for all of their feedback. You all are miracle workers.

Finally, and above all, I would like to thank my incredible wife, Sarah, and my four amazing children, Jacob, Natalie Grace, Hannah, and Jonathan. Thank you for the sacrifice of time you had to make from your husband and your dad. I love you all deeply and feel so proud to have such an amazing family.

However, all glory belongs to You, O Lord. I was a wretch, and You saved me. You called me your son when there was nothing good in me, and You made me a new creation in your Son, Jesus Christ. All I am and all that I will ever be is only a result of your glorious grace.

> For from him and through him and to him are all things.
> To him be glory forever. Amen. (Romans 11:36 ESV)

Michael Douglas Small, Jr.

Louisville, Kentucky

December 2021

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the Bible, God celebrates the diversity of his people. In the Old Testament, Abraham is promised that "in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen 22:18).[1] In the Great Commission, Jesus commands the church to make disciples of παντα τά ἔθνη, which is typically translated "all nations" but is better understood to mean "every people group."[2] Thus, the early church was intended to be multiethnic with no hierarchy based on one's ethnicity.

Ethnic equality was a value of the early church, which when faced with a crisis of division between Hebrew and Hellenistic believers (Acts 6), appointed men whose names reflected a Greek background.[3] Paul will later state this value clearly, saying, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:28)—demonstrating that all of these groups commonly worshipped together. Finally, in the apostle John's description of his vision of worship in the presence of God, he sees people "*from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb*" (Rev 7:9-10; emphasis added). It stands to reason, then, that if churches are making disciples who will, in turn, make disciples, then multiethnic congregations should be raising up leaders from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

[1] Unless otherwise noted, all Bible references are from the *English Standard Version* (ESV).

[2] Cf. Craig L. Blomberg's treatment of this passage in *Matthew: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, New American Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: B&H, 1992), 360.

[3] I. Howard Marshall, *Acts*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 100.

**Research Problem**

While Jacqueline Lewis notes that "the very first church was a culturally, racially, economically, generationally diverse gathering of men and women, girls and boys,"[4] such diversity does not seem to be equally exemplified in many of the congregations in the United States today. In 1960, Martin Luther King Jr. stated, "It is appalling that the most segregated hour of Christian America is eleven o'clock on Sunday morning."[5] While progress has been made in the U.S. with congregations becoming more diverse, a 2008 *USA Today* article reported that 14 percent of primarily white congregations still had no minorities and "black churches are as segregated as ever."[6] While this phenomenon of ethnic segregation is clearly present in the U.S., it raises the haunting question of whether this phenomenon is being carried over into the mission field by American missionaries.

Historically, this seems to indeed be the case. William McCoy claims that while missionaries are often to thank for rejecting "the deterministic outlook that accompanied scientific racism," this should not be interpreted to mean that "missionaries were free of all assumptions about racial hierarchies."[7] McCoy claims that missionaries often aided in producing legal systems that resulted in racial segregation and apartheid in South Africa and Rwanda.[8] Rather than celebrating the ethnic distinctiveness of various people groups, missionaries have often sought to conform them to their own likeness, the underlying message being that "the white way is the right way." Brian Stanley claims that the World Missionary Conference of Edinburg in 1910 marked "the culmination of a

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[4] Jacqueline Lewis, "On Earth as It Is in Heaven: Rehearsing the Reign of God," *Theology Today* 65 (2008): 3.

[5] Martin Luther King Jr., *Meet the Press*, April 17, 1960.

[6] Cathy Lynn Grossman, "Congregations More Diverse," *USA Today*, December 2, 2008, 1a.

[7] William McCoy, "Comments on 'Missions and Race in Africa'," *Fides et Historia* 50, no. 2 (Summer/Fall 2018): 112.

[8] McCoy, "Comments on 'Missions and Race in Africa'," 111.

century of Protestant enthusiasm for the regeneration of 'heathen' societies to make them fit a Western blueprint of Christian civilization."[9]

International churches make an ideal case for exploring whether ethnic discrimination is still practiced on the mission field today. In these congregations, two elements seem to be working hand in hand. First, international churches are typically planted, pastored, and attended by American missionaries. David Pederson, in his seminal work on international churches *Expatriate Ministry: Inside the Church of Outsiders*, explains that "prior to the outbreak of WWII, ICs [international churches] were located in major cities with diplomatic and commercial ties to the United States. In most cases, the services were geared toward the American expatriate missionary, person of commerce, or officer in the military."[10] While it is true that missionaries often plant churches among people of various cultures and ethnicities, such plants do not demonstrate an attitude of ethnic equality because missionaries do not necessarily intend on being members of the church (i.e., serving under an indigenous pastor), and even when they do, it can be because no other options are available to them or because they are motivated by financial factors.[11]

Additionally, international churches are, by definition, "multi-cultured, multi-denominational, local fellowship [sic] of expatriate people who are united in Christian

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[9] Bryan Stanley, "From 'the Poor Heathen' to 'the Glory and Honour of All Nations': Vocabularies of Race and Custom in Protestant Missions, 1844-1928," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 34, no. 1 (January 2010): 4.

[10] David Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry: Inside the Church of Outsiders* (Seoul: David Pederson, 1999), 5. Note: This book is out of publication. I obtained my copy by contacting the author personally at dave.pederson@wheaton.edu.

[11] Documenting missionary work is an important part of support-raising. Steve Shadrack states, "If you can show them [the missionary supporters] what God is doing through you and the difference you and your ministry are making, their personal (and financial!) investment in you will continually grow." For this reason, some missionaries could be tempted to stay in an indigenous church so they may send photos and updates to their financial supporters. Steve Shadrach, *The God Ask: A Fresh, Biblical Approach to Personal Support Raising* (Fayetteville, AR: CMM Press, 2016), chap. 15, "Through Vision Casting," para. 1, Kindle.

belief and who share an identity as foreigners with English as a common language."[12] This being the case, they typically have a wide sampling of ethnic backgrounds from which to draw. A litmus test for whether missionaries bring attitudes of ethnic superiority to the mission field can be seen in whether such attitudes are present in international congregations.

While many churches like to think of themselves as inclusive because they have a diverse congregation, diversity alone should not be considered a sign of ethnic equality. In many cases, international churches are ethnically diverse by default rather than by the intentional effort of church leaders. Many expatriates from a variety of countries are simply looking for a place to belong. David Young explains, "Consider the pressure that a global urbanite is under: they may be using a second language, living in an unfamiliar country, living among people of different ethnicities, and navigating a densely populated urban landscape."[13] Beyond this, virtually all churches could use more workers and donors. More members, regardless of their color, represent more labor and money for a local church. Rather, an attitude of equality is better demonstrated in whether churches willingly elevate such people to leadership positions, particularly the position of pastor.

Though there are clear biblical reasons for multiethnic churches to have ethnically representative pastors, instituting such a model is not merely for the sake of principle. Dominic Packer, Christopher Miners, and Nick Ungson have noted that "for groups to benefit from the cognitive heterogeneity of diverse members, those individuals must be able to express different perspectives/ideas and exert influence on other group members."[14] Additionally, Lewis states that "each social group speaks its own unique

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[12] Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry*, 36.

[13] David W. Young, "Redirecting the International Church from an Oasis Paradigm to Missional Thought, Community and Practice" (DMin thesis, George Fox University, 2017), 3.

[14] Dominic J. Packer, Christopher T. H. Miners, and Nick D. Ungson, "Benefiting from Diversity: How Groups' Coordinating Mechanisms Affect Leadership Opportunities for Marginalized Individuals," *Journal of Social Issues* 74, no. 1 (March 2018): 59.

language, in which members express shared values, perspectives, and norms."[15] For this reason, diverse congregations need a diversity of pastors who can "speak their language" and understand their perspective.

While it is true that some congregations around the world do not have an ethnically diverse pool of people from which to draw, this is virtually never the case in international churches. Young states, "Such churches are multi-ethnic, often with dozens of nations represented: they cross denominational lines, with many Christian heritages represented, and they are diverse in the socio-economic status of their attendees."[16] Further, Ernest Klassen claims, "The International Church is strategically positioned to help reach the unreached peoples of the world."[17] International congregations, however, will be deterred from achieving this goal if there is an underlying current of ethnic superiority carried over from U.S. culture.

<div align="center">

**Current Status of the Research Problem**

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It is easy to see how attitudes of ethic superiority could carry over from the United States into international congregations; the ethnic divide among congregations in the U.S. is deep seated. Since the earliest foundations of Christianity in America, the attitude of white supremacy was so powerfully connected to the faith that even Martin Luther King Jr. seems to have presented Jesus as a white man. Commenting on this, Edward J. Blum and Paul Harvey note that "like other Americans of his age, King inhabited a world populated by images of white Christ figures."[18] That King held this

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[15] Lewis, "On Earth as It Is in Heaven," 3.

[16] Young, "Redirecting the International Church," 1.

[17] Ernest Klassen, "Exploring the Missional Potential of International Churches: A Case Study of Capital City Baptist Church, Mexico City" (DMin thesis, Asbury Theological Seminary, 2006), 23. Note: "International Church" is capitalized in this instance because Klassen is referring ICs in a global sense.

[18] Edward J. Blum and Paul Harvey, *The Color of Christ: The Son of God and the Saga of Race in America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 206.

belief is significant because it demonstrates that many American Christians can hold ethnic stereotypes of which they themselves may not be consciously aware.

The great irony of this fact is that the U.S. is growing increasingly diverse. Curtiss DeYoung et al. show that from 1980 to 2000, "the African American population grew by nearly 30 percent, the Native American population by 75 percent, the Latino population by 142 percent, and Asian American population by 185 percent."[19] Yet in spite of these growing numbers, congregations where one ethnic group does not comprise at least 80 percent of the congregation only make up 7.5 percent of American churches.[20]

Yet even multiethnic congregations can be organized into what DeYoung et al. refer to as an "assimilation model." In such a model, "one racial group is obviously the dominant group within the congregation."[21] This can be true, the authors claim, even in churches that were initially established as multiethnic congregations "if there is one racial group whose power and racial culture is imposed on church culture."[22] But is this the case in international churches? Are the (typically) U.S. missionaries who lead these multiethnic churches more willing to accept and promote pastors of different ethnic backgrounds than their stateside counterparts?

The reality is that we simply do not know the answers to these questions. In fact, we know very little about ethnic diversity among church leaders anywhere in the world. While there is virtually no end to the books and articles that address leadership in the church, very few of them deal with ethnic diversity among church leaders. Many note the characteristics of the leader. Timothy Laniak, in *Shepherds after My Own Heart*, states that church leaders must exercise "the benevolent use of authority," be "responsible

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[19] Curtiss Paul DeYoung et al., *United by Faith: The Multiracial Congregation as an Answer to the Problem of Race*0 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1.

[20] DeYoung et al., *United by Faith*, 2.

[21] DeYoung et al., *United by Faith*, 164-65.

[22] DeYoung et al., *United by Faith*, 166.

for the flock and responsible to the owner," and be "humble before God and responsive to God's people."[23] In their book *Leadership Mosaic*, Daniel Montgomery and Jared Kennedy devote a short section to "diversity," yet they refer to "diversity of role," "diverse gifting," and "economic diversity."[24] To their credit, they mention the need for racial reconciliation, but they never broach the topic of ethnic diversity among pastors or those in church leadership. Timothy Paul Jones and Michael Wilder perhaps go the furthest in noting that the "the Christ-following leader—living as a bearer of God's image in union with Christ and his people—*develops a diverse community of fellow laborers* who are equipped and empowered to pursue shared goals that fulfill the creation mandate and the Great Commission in submission to the Word of God."[25] Yet this is the exception as nearly all of the Christian leadership material that is written tends to focus on the *how* of leadership (i.e., the principles of leading) rather than the *who* of leadership.

While little research exists on diverse or minority pastors in American congregations, there is even less research devoted to *any topic* regarding international churches. This fact is not entirely surprising; international congregations make up only a very small percentage of churches on the mission field, and to some, these may feel more like niche congregations. Thorsten Prill, for example, claims that it cannot be determined whether international congregations are "a valid church model."[26]

Nevertheless, a few recent works have focused on international church ministry. Both Ernest Klassen (Asbury Theological Seminary) and David Young (George

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[23] Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds after My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible*, New Studies in Biblical Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 247-48.

[24] Daniel Montgomery and Jared Kennedy, *Leadership Mosaic: Five Leadership Principles for Ministry and Everyday Life* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), chap. 4, "diversity," Kindle.

[25] Timothy Paul Jones and Michael S. Wilder, *The God Who Goes before You: Pastoral Leadership as Christ-Centered Followership* (Nashville: B&H, 2018), chap. 1, "An Operative Definition of the Role and Practices of a Christian Leader," para. 2, Kindle (emphasis added).

[26] Thorsten Prill, "Expatriate Churches: Mission and Challenges," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (2009): 450-54.

Fox University) have written dissertations on the missional potential of international congregations.[27] The most extensive work, to my knowledge, is David Pederson's *Expatriate Ministry*. In his book, Pederson devotes an entire chapter to pastor selection, noting suggestions for both the searching church and the searching candidate.[28] Yet he, like the rest, leaves the issue of the ethnic diversity of pastors in these churches unaddressed.

With this case study, I hope to contribute to the literature that exists regarding ethnic diversity among pastors and leaders in Christian congregations, particularly those on the mission field. I have chosen to focus specifically on international congregations because they are by nature multiethnic congregations and are typically established by missionaries from the United States. It is also worth noting that as a missionary to Ecuador and a small group leader in an international congregation, I have unique access to observe this population.

## Research Purpose

The purpose of this research was to gain a deeper understanding of the perspectives of Ecuadorian international pastors concerning the obstacles and factors that aid in the development of diverse, ethnically representative leadership in their congregations. My country of residence, Ecuador, was not chosen merely for the sake of convenience, but also because Christianity as well as the expatriate population is growing exponentially there. Todd Johnson et al. stated that in 2014 Latin America had surpassed Europe as "the continent with the most Christians."[29] Of the countries in Latin America,

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[27] Klassen, Missional Potential of International Churches"; Young, "Redirecting the International Church."

[28] Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry*. Each of these works will be explored in greater detail in chap. 2.

[29] Todd M. Johnson et al., "Christianity 2016: Latin America and Projecting Religions to 2050," *International Bulletin of Mission Research* 40, no. 1 (2016): 23.

Ecuador was named the top expatriate destination in the world in 2015[30] and third in the world in 2018.[31] An extensive worldwide study showed that Ecuador received more immigrants from 2005 to 2010 than any other country in Latin America.[32]

Such a phenomenon naturally means that Ecuador has a rich ethnic diversity. For example, one of the English-speaking international congregations in Quito, English Fellowship Church, typically has had about thirty nationalities represented on a given Sunday.[33] The international school in Quito likewise boasts that they are "now an international school that serves Ecuadorians and expatriates from over 30 different countries."[34] Such diversity, by its very nature, provides a greater lens by which the issue of ethnic diversity in church leadership can be examined.

Additionally, though Ecuador is a Spanish-speaking country, it attracts many North American expatriates for a number of reasons. The official currency of the country is the U.S. dollar, and the cost of living is low; in 2019, Ecuador ranked third in the world in terms of expatriate satisfaction in this area.[35] Additionally, friends and relatives can easily visit with only a U.S. passport; Ecuador allows U.S. citizens to visit for up to ninety days a year without needing a special visa. The result of this policy is that substantial English-speaking communities exist in Ecuador, a phenomenon that naturally

[30] InterNations, "The Best & Worst Places for Expats 2015," 2015, https://www.internations.org/expat-insider2015/the-best-and-worst-places-for-expats.

[31] InterNations, "The Best & Worst Places for Expats 2018," 2018, https://www.internations.org/expat-insider/2018/best-and-worst-places-for-expats-39583.

[32] Ecuador received 139,000 immigrants, followed by Mexico (123,000), Costa Rica (119,000), and Venezuela (111,000). Guy J. Abel and Nicola Sandler, "Quantifying Global International Migration Flows," *Science* 343, no. 6178 (March 2014): 1520-22.

[33] This information reflects a casual observation from one of the pastors and was made before the COVID-19 pandemic forced churches to suspend meeting in person.

[34] Alliance Academy International, "About: Quick Facts," last modified 2019, https://alliance.k12.ec/about/quick-facts/.

[35] Caroline Harsch, "Expat Insider 2019 Survey Reveals: The Best and Worst Destinations to Live and Work in 2019," InterNations, September 5, 2019, https://www.internations.org/press/press-release/expat-insider-2019-survey-reveals-the-best-and-worst-destinations-to-live-and-work-in-2019-39881.

lends to the development of English-speaking congregations, particularly in major cities like Quito and Cuenca. English-speaking congregations, by their very nature, become a hot spot for expatriates from many countries who are seeking community around a shared language.[36] Ecuador was therefore an ideal location for this study as the factors relevant to this study—cultural diversity, international congregations, and North American missionaries—are present in abundance.

## Delimitations of the Research

Because this study aimed to discover the motivations and hindrances for establishing ethnically diverse leadership, the scope was limited to churches where leaders are chosen from within the local church. For this reason, Roman Catholic congregations as well as those governed by an outside presbytery (or similar form of governance) were excluded from this study. Thus, this case study was limited to Protestant self-governing churches.

Beyond these delimitations, accessibility played a factor in the research conducted. Ecuadorian churches do not possess the same type of internet presence that exists in many of the churches in the United States. As a result, though I sought to speak to every pastor of every international church in the country, it was necessary to rely on referrals from other expatriates, social media groups, missionaries, and knowledgeable Ecuadorian friends. Because of this, it is possible that some Ecuadorian churches, which might have fallen into the above-mentioned parameters, were not included in this study simply because they are not well known. To the best of my knowledge, however, every pastor of every international church in Ecuador was contacted and asked to participate in this study. I surveyed online resources for churches and contact information in addition to

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[36] Cf. Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry*, 3-4.

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asking fellow missionaries and expatriate groups. I also contacted each church and requested interviews with each church's pastor(s).

Finally, it should be noted that this research does not aim to provide an ideal percentage for ethnic representation in pastoral leadership. There are a number of factors that relate to choosing pastors for a particular congregation. While I will argue that ethnicity is one of these factors, it would be impossible and unbiblical to create a "hard and fast" rule by which congregations should abide.

## Terminology

*American missionary*. Ada Lum defines a missionary as "a prepared disciple whom God sends into the world with his resources to make disciples for the kingdom."[37] I use the term "American missionary" to refer to individuals who were raised in the United States but are serving, or have served, in other countries doing Christian missionary work.

*Church leader*. Jones and Wilder define a church leader as someone who "develops a diverse community of fellow laborers who are equipped and empowered to pursue shared goals that fulfill the creation mandate and the Great Commission in submission to the Word of God."[38] For the purposes of this thesis, and the research questions in particular, a church leader is understood as anyone whom the church has appointed to teach or exercise authority in the congregation.

*Discrimination*. This word can have both active and passive forms and carries the same idea as "racialization" coined by Michael Emerson and Christian Smith, who define the term as follows: "Embedded within the normal, everyday operation of

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[37] Ada Lum, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to Missions* (Grand Rapids: InterVarsity Press, 1984), 21, quoted in A. Scott Moreau, Gary R. Corwin, and Gary B. McGee, *Introducing World Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), chap. 1, "Missionary," para. 2, Kindle.

[38] Jones and Wilder, *The God Who Goes before You*, chap. 1, "An Operative Definition of the Role and Practices of a Christian Leader," para. 2.

institutions, this framework understands that people need not intend their actions to contribute to racial division and inequality for their actions to do so."[39] Specifically in this research, I am looking at neglecting the promotion of minorities to pastoral positions. It merits noting here that this neglect is not always driven by dislike for various ethnic groups but may sometimes be reflected in stereotypes that those in power may not even be aware they hold. This phenomenon, however, is still be considered discriminatory because such stereotypes cause individuals to consider a person of a different ethnicity for a pastoral position less readily.

*Diversity*. When used in this thesis, this term typically refers to cultural/ethnic diversity. Jones and Wilder state that "every congregation of believers should be actively pursuing diversity that is at least as variegated as its community."[40]

*Ethnicity*. Thabiti Anyabwile states that unlike the unbiblical notion of "race," ethnicity "is a fluid construct comprised of nationality, language, culture, and sometimes religion. Unlike 'races,' ethnic differences are observable and real."[41]

*Expatriate*. An expatriate (sometimes abbreviated as "expat") is "a person who is living in a foreign environment due to business, education, travel, mission, or personal necessity."[42]

*Intercultural*. Gérard Boucharde notes that interculturalism emphasizes "interactions, connections between cultures, the development of feelings of belonging,

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[39] Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith, *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 9.

[40] Admittedly, Jones and Wilder understand diversity as "not only of a multiplicity of ethnicities but also of generational and socioeconomic diversity," though such a definition is broader than the scope of this study. Jones and Wilder, *The God Who Goes before You*, Followership, "Delegated Power, and the Necessity of Community," para. 8. Kindle Edition.

[41] Thabiti Anyabwile, "Many Ethnicities: One Race," 9Marks: Preaching and Theology, February 26, 2010, https://www.9marks.org/article/many-ethnicities-one-race.

[42] Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry*, 2.

and the emergence of a common culture." It is distinct from multiculturalism, which places "more emphasis on the promotion and validation of individual 'ethnic' groups."[43]

*International church/international congregation.* An international church is a "multi-cultured, multi-denominational, local fellowship of expatriate people who are united in Christian belief and who share an identity as foreigners with English as a common language."[44] The term refers to specific congregations and is to be distinguished from denominations that simply have an international presence (e.g., Churches of Christ International). Additionally, such churches typically exist in cultures where English is not the primary spoken language.

Multiethnic. Mark Lou Branson identifies the term "multiethnic" as referring to "broadly representative of various ethnic groups." In this thesis, the term is used to refer to multiple ethnicities being present, for example, in a congregation or pastoral body.[45]

*Pastor.* For the purposes of this thesis, this title refers to individuals who have been selected by the local congregation to serve in a position of authority over the church. For this reason, such individuals may have the titles "bishop" or "elder" but are still referred to as "pastor" in this study. Bruce Ware explains that "the terms elders, overseers, pastors refer to one and the same office held by those with a richness and integrity of spiritual life and experience, oversight responsibility for the spiritual well-being of the church."[46]

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[43] Gérard Boucharde, "What Is Interculturalism?," *McGill Law Journal* 56, no. 2 (2011): 463-64.

[44] Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry*, 36.

[45] Mark Lou Branson and Juan F. Martinez, *Churches, Cultures & Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2011), chap. 1, para. 1. Kindle.

[46] Bruce A. Ware, "Putting It All Together: A Theology of Church Leadership," in *Shepherding God's Flock: Biblical Leadership in the New Testament and Beyond*, ed. Benjamin Merkle and Thomas Schreiner (Grand Rapids: Kregel Ministries, 2014), 290.

## Research Questions

This research aims to understand the current status of ethnic representation in Ecuadorian international congregational leadership as well as pastor perspectives on the factors that aid and hinder such representation. For this reason, the study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. According to pastors in the cases studied, what is the current status of ethnic diversity among Ecuadorian international congregations and their pastoral/elder bodies?

2. According to pastors in the cases studied, what factors relate to the hindrance of a diverse, ethnically representative leadership body in Ecuadorian international churches, and how might they be overcome?

3. According to pastors in the cases studied, what factors relate to the increased development of a diverse, ethnically representative leadership body in Ecuadorian international churches, and how might they be promoted?

## Methodological Overview

### Proposed Methodological Design

The research instrumentation used in this study was used in compliance with and approved by The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to the execution of the study. Once permission to conduct research was granted, this phenomenological case study employed a purposeful sampling of participants following the methodology outlined in John Creswell and Cheryl Poth's *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*.[47] As outlined above, participants were pastors of Protestant self-governing international congregations in Ecuador. This case study was conducted through interviews with those pastors who consented to participate. These interviews were recorded by an audio recorder, transcribed, and encoded, then the data was

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[47] John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oak, CA: Sage, 2018), 148, Kindle.

interpreted. Temi, an online transcription service, performed the transcription,[48] and I verified the transcription.

To assess the experience and perspectives of the pastors interviewed, I asked open-ended questions that emphasized their individual perceptions, and I asked additional questions only when needed for clarification or elaboration. Once the interviews were transcribed, I assessed the transcripts, looking for significant statements or concepts. I categorized these significant statements, counted them, and scored them based on the number of interviews in which they appeared. I utilized NVivo coding software in order to organize my findings and examine them for significant themes.[49]

**Limitations of Generalization**

Because this is a qualitative study, its findings are by nature subjective, in relation to both the interviewees and myself (the researcher), and can only be generalized to the specific churches surveyed. However, other multiethnic congregations, particularly international congregations, and multiethnic ministries will likely benefit from this study. Findings may be transferable to other ministry contexts, particularly international congregations in Latin America.

**Proposed Instrumentation**

I have attempted to answer the research questions above with a participant survey and audio interviews. The participant survey has allowed me to construct a matrix of the current status of ethnic representation in Ecuadorian international congregations and to assess whether there is a distinction between the answers from pastors from a North American background and those from pastors from another background. The audio

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[48] Temi (https://www.temi.com) is a speech-to-text transcription service that I have used in the past. The service includes timestamps, speaker distinction, and the ability to export transcripts for final editing in Word and PDF.

[49] NVivo, https://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo-qualitative-data-analysis-software/home/.

interviews have allowed the pastors to speak freely with respect to the research questions. Interviewees were insured anonymity and were asked to answer the questions to best of their knowledge.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has demonstrated the biblical priority for an ethic of diverse, ethnically representative leadership in churches as well as the need for research in the missional community to determine the degree to which ethnic discrimination from the United States is carried over into the mission field. International churches in Ecuador make an ideal case study because they represent an ethnically diverse body of believers and because Ecuador is a country that is growing in both Christian and expatriate communities. This study has sought to discover the factors that promote or hinder the development of a diverse, ethnically representative pastor body by interviewing pastors of Protestant self-governing international congregations in Ecuador. It is my hope that this research will benefit international congregations around the world by helping them to equip pastors from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

The following chapters outline the prior research relevant to this study, the methodology by which this study was conducted, and the results and implications of this study. In chapter 2, I explore the current literature that relates or has implications regarding the research problem. In chapter 3, I detail the methodology, delimitations, and assumptions that guided this study. In chapter 4, I interpret and discuss the findings of this study. In chapter 5, I draw conclusions from the findings, make suggestions based on these findings, and suggest areas of further research in this field. The purpose of this project is to aid missionaries and congregations and to call us all to greater self-examination so that we, like David, may say, "Search me, O Lord, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me and lead me in the way everlasting!" (Ps 139:23-24).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the previous chapter, I discussed the theological and practical rationale for examining international congregations in Ecuador to discover the factors that aid and hinder the establishment of more ethnically representative leadership in their congregations. In this chapter I argue that an ethnically representative structure in congregations is both biblically supported and sociologically beneficial to multiethnic groups of people. In doing so, I first demonstrate that God has created humans to be ethnically diverse and desires leadership that represents the ethnic diversity of our congregations.

Second, I provide a theoretical foundation for this research by demonstrating that ethnically diverse leadership is beneficial to Christian organizations as well as the people they serve. I further show that homogeny and assimilation have been historically destructive to cultures and resulted in division among churches. At the same time, because diverse leadership does not come without its obstacles, I address these as well.

Finally, I have provided an overview of the existing literature regarding this research project. It should not come as much of a surprise that no definitive work has been written on international churches in Ecuador; in fact, there is very little written on international congregations at all. For this reason, I have given a survey of the literature that exists regarding international churches, address the void that exists regarding ethnically representative leadership in the field of Christian literature, and demonstrate how this research helps to address this void.

## Theological Foundations for Ethnically Representative Leadership

Before addressing the above-stated issues, it is important to clarify the distinction between ethnicity and race. Race, as the term is commonly used, is an entirely human creation. Jemar Tisby has noted, "Race is a social construct . . . . The development of the idea of race required the intentional actions of people in the social, political, and religious spheres to decide that skin color determined who would be enslaved and who would be free."[1] Alicia Fedelina Chavez and Florence Guido-DiBrito have further suggested that the concept of race was created by Europeans who used biological categories to group people hierarchically "by physical ability and moral quality with Caucasians as the pinnacle, followed by Asians and Native Americans, and Africans as the last on the social ladder."[2] Prior to the European expansion, it seems that people understood biological factors such as skin color to be an adaptation of one's geographic location. Hippocrates, for example, who lived during the fifth century BC, stated, "Where the changes of the seasons are most frequent, and where they differ most from one another, there you will find their forms, dispositions, and nature the most varied . . . ; in general, you will find the forms and dispositions of mankind to correspond with the nature of the country."[3]

In the Bible, the concept of "race" is entirely absent. While ethnic distinctions such as skin color (see Jer 13:23) or language (See Gen 10:31; Rev 7:9) are apparent in the Bible, these distinctions are not considered qualitative in nature. Instead, the Bible teaches that we are all the same race because we are all created in the image of God (Gen 1:26-27, 5:3, 9:6; 1 Cor 11:7) and we are all descendants of Adam and Eve (Gen 3:20;

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[1] Jemar Tisby, *The Color of Compromise: The Truth about the American Church's Complicity in Racism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019), 27.

[2] Alicia Fedelina Chavez and Florence Guido-DiBrito, "Racial and Ethnic Identity and Development," *New Directions for Adult & Continuing Education* 1999, no. 84 (1999): 40.

[3] Hippocrates, *On Airs, Waters, and Places* part 24, trans. Francis Adams, accessed September 3, 2020, http://classics.mit.edu/Hippocrates/airwatpl.24.24.html.

9:8, 12; Rom 5:12; 1 Cor 15:22). Jaap Durand states, "The human race is one in its common origin, its fall into sin, its salvation in Christ and its eschatological destination."[4] Rodney Sadler Jr. further affirms the "one race" understanding of humanity in the Bible, stating that "the Hebrew Bible is void of racial thought or racial hierarchies of any type . . . . All peoples arise from a single family with a common genesis; there is no explicit attempt to define color differences as indicative of ontological differences in human types."[5]

I would argue beyond this point that racism, at its core, is the belief in different races of mankind. Discrimination and oppression are simply the byproducts of this belief system because we naturally add values and characteristics to those things we differentiate. Thabiti Anyabwile states, "We could say that our allegiance to 'races' is a form of idolatry . . . . We build them, and then they shape us . . . . [T]he first step forward in advancing a new anthropology is to affirm the negative—that there is no such thing as 'races' as we have construed and practiced them."[6]

The fact that the Bible defines mankind in terms of a single race certainly does not mean that people have not tried to make theological arguments for racism,

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[4] Jaap Durand, "Bible and Race: The Problem of Hermeneutics," *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* (September 1978): 5.

[5] Rodney S. Sadler Jr., *Genesis*, in *Fortress Bible Commentary: The Old Testament and Apocrypha*, ed. Gale A. Yee, Hugh R. Page Jr., and Matthew J. M. Coomber (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), 105. "Black" or "White" (with a capital letter) in this thesis refers to the ethic identification of a people group rather than a distinction of skin color. Ethnicity or culture is not necessarily tied to our biological makeup but to our common shared experience with other people. This said, it is important to note that some people have a shared cultural experience because of their skin color, and this experience creates a social identity. For this reason, ethnicity can sometimes be associated with skin color because of these shared experiences, particularly when other cultural factors have been lost. For example, many Black Americans, because their African cultural heritage was stripped from them through slavery, have had to form a new social identity around their shared experience that came as a result of skin color. Aerika A. Brittian, "Understanding African American Adolescents' Identity Development," *Journal of Black Psychology* 38 (2012): 8. Author and social media influencer Ally Henny has stated, "We wouldn't need to call ourselves Black if our tribal and ethnic identities had not been stolen from us in the transatlantic slave trade." Ally Henny, Facebook, June 25, 2020, https://www.facebook.com/allyhennypage/posts/1577786009 038370. However, a shared ethnic identity can also be true for many White Americans whose various ancestries of English, Polish, Italian, etc. have been forgotten and assimilated into the American culture.

[6] Thabiti Anyabwile, "Many Ethnicities: One Race," 9Marks: Preaching and Theology, February 26, 2010, https://www.9marks.org/article/many-ethnicities-one-race.

particularly when "racial" inequalities have benefitted them. In their book *Divided by Faith*, Michael Emerson and Christian Smith state that "racism was an ideology created to justify slavery, not vice versa."[7] Stephen Haynes demonstrates that the antebellum South, in an effort to uphold their sense of dignity against the charge by abolitionists that the proslavery South was a "modern day Sodom," began to point to Abraham's curse of Ham/Canaan in Genesis 9 as a biblical justification for black enslavement. Haynes states, "The so-called curse of Ham was the religious rationale for slavery invoked most frequently by antebellum Southerners."[8]

In some early Jewish and Christian traditions, Abraham's curse against Ham, who "saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside" (Gen 9:22-25) was seen as the origin of slavery. Additionally, Ham was believed by some of these same traditions to have a genealogical connection to Africa, yet it was not until slavery was introduced into the United States that preachers began to accuse Ham with "sexual depravity."[9] Such a view of Ham was contrasted with that of Shem and Japheth (the fathers of other nations), who were seen "as gentlemen who behave toward their father in a 'delicate and thoughtful manner'."[10] Such an interpretation gave rise to the view that people of African descent were—by nature of Abraham's curse—little more than animals following basic instincts.

In spite of such an interpretation, there is nothing in the Scriptures that connects Ham to the continent of Africa or that suggests there is any degree of superiority

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[7] Michael Emerson and Christian Smith, *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 9.

[8] Stephen Haynes, *Noah's Curse: The Biblical Justification of American Slavery* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), chap. 4, "Noah's Curse and Southern Honor," para. 1, Kindle.

[9] Haynes, *Noah's Curse*, chap. 2, "The Legend of Noah and His Sons," para. 1.

[10] Haynes, *Noah's Curse*, chap. 4, "Antebellum Readings of Genesis 9 and the Interpretive Tradition," para. 3.

(or inferiority) among any ethnic group of people.[11] Charles Isbell notes that any distinction between Israelites and Canaanites culturally, materially, and linguistically is virtually unintelligible by historians. He states that "however the sin of Ham is defined . . . , the story has nothing to do with 'race,' a marker that to modern science, has lost all meaning and validity."[12] Thus, I argue that the ethnic and cultural diversity of humanity are not the results of any "curse" but are part of God's creative design for mankind.

**Old Testament**

The very onset of Genesis shows that God created everything with diversity. God created plants and trees with seeds "each according to their kind" (1:11-12); he created a greater light and lesser light as well as and stars and planets (1:16). "God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, *according to their kinds*, and every winged bird *according to its kind*. And God saw *that it was good*" (1:21; emphasis added). Though there is a great degree of diversity in God's creation, he sees all of it as good. The apostle Paul demonstrates that each part of creation has a distinct glory: heavenly bodies, earthly bodies, the sun, the moon, and even "star differs from star in glory" (1 Cor 15:40-41). In addition, the psalmist celebrates the diversity of God's creation, stating, "O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. Here is the sea, great and wide, which teems with creatures innumerable, living things both small and great" (Ps 104:24-25).

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[11] In fact, Haynes notes that "the assignment of Ham to Africa, Shem to Asia, and Japheth to Europe was not inscribed on the European mind until the Age of Exploration." Haynes, *Noah's Curse*, chap. 1, "Dispersion and Differentiation," para. 5.

[12] Charles David Isbell, "The Curse of Ham: Biblical Justification for Racial Inequality?," *Socio-Historical Examination of Religion and History* 2, no. 2 (2020): 9.

This diversity is even seen in God's creation of man—even though God formed only two sexes/genders, male and female, he made them in distinct ways yet both fully in his own image. Derek Kidner states, "The sexes are complementary . . . . Eve is the very stuff of Adam, yet a wholly new being."[13] Kenneth Mathews affirms this distinction between the man and woman, stating, "Although they [the man and woman] share all in common, Genesis also acknowledges that there are differences. Their sameness does not mean exactness."[14] Thus, the very first humans created demonstrate God's design and desire for variety in the human race.[15]

Because humans are created as diverse, the charge that God gave to man to be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth carries with it the implicit goal that mankind should diversify the earth by naturally creating ethnic, cultural, and linguistic differences (Gen 1:28). Harry Gardiner defines culture as a "cluster of learned and shared beliefs, values, practices, behaviors, symbols, and attitudes that characterize people and are communicated from one generation to the other."[16] In other words, culture or ethnicity is the result of shared experiences among a group of people that are influenced by geography, familial traditions, and community experiences. Such a point is clearly demonstrated in Noah's family's obedience to the repeated command to be fruitful and multiply (Gen 9:7). Further, Genesis 10:5 reads, "From these the coastland peoples spread in their lands, *each with his own language, by their clans, in their nations*" (emphasis added; cf. 10:20, 31-32). Theodore Hiebert summarizes this chapter, stating,

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[13] Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*, *Kidner Classic Commentaries* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1967), 70.

[14] Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, New American Commentary, vol. 1A (Nashville: B&H, 1996), 143.

[15] Some may argue that God also created the animals male and female, so this sense of distinctiveness is not exclusive to humans. Such an argument, however, only serves to advance the point of this section rather than nullify it, for it demonstrates that God desires variety in all aspects of his creation.

[16] Harry W. Gardiner, *Lives across Cultures: Cross-Cultural Human Development*, 6th ed. (New York: Pearson Education, 2018), 158.

"The descendants of Noah have spread abroad on the earth according to their lands, languages, families, and nations."[17]

Some have tried to argue that various ethnic groups are a result of the punishment of Babel (Gen 11). Allen P. Ross states, "This narrative provides a fitting conclusion for the primeval events. It describes the families of the earth *hopelessly scattered* throughout the then-known world."[18] Such an interpretation, however, ignores the creation mandate that God had given in the first chapter of Genesis that man would fill the earth. Rather than seeing God's dividing people into groups as a punishment, it is more appropriate to see the confusion of languages as a means of *expediting* God's plan for humanity. Diane Bergant states, "Having been stripped of their arrogance, people now speak various languages as they are scattered around the world *just as God had originally intended*."[19] In relation to ethnic diversity in this regard, Bernhard Anderson concludes, "There is no basis for the negative view that pluralism is God's judgment upon human sinfulness. Diversity is not a condemnation."[20] Jarvis Williams echoes this sentiment, explaining that ethnicity is not the result of sin or a "curse of Babel;" rather, mankind's suspicion and contempt of ethnic differences is a result of sin.[21]

**New Testament**

In the New Testament, we find in Jesus a unifier of ethnic groups who himself is a descendant of various cultures. When recounting Jesus's genealogy, Matthew goes

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[17] Theodore Hiebert, "The Tower of Babel and the Origin of the World's Cultures," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 126, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 32.

[18] Allen P. Ross, *Genesis*, in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures: Old Testament*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 45 (emphasis added).

[19] Diane Bergant, *Genesis: In the Beginning* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013), commentary on Gen 11:1-9 (emphasis added), ProQuest Ebook Central.

[20] Bernhard W. Anderson, "Unity and Diversity in God's Creation: A Study of the Babel Story," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 5, no 2 (1978): 79.

[21] Jarvis Williams, *Redemptive Kingdom Diversity: A Biblical Theology of the People of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2021), 15-16, Kindle.

out of his way to mention that Jesus is a descendant of Tamar the Amorite, Rahab the Canaanite, Ruth the Moabite, and Bathsheba the Hittite (1:1-17).[22] Furthermore, Jesus dismisses any attitude of ethnic superiority when he states, "My mother and brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it" (Luke 8:21). John A. Martin explains that "Jesus' remarks showed that the gospel is not limited to a people, the Jews, but is for all who believe, including Gentiles."[23] It is for this reason that the church has become the great unifier of people of various ethnicities; the apostle Paul stated that "for [Christ] himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility" (Eph 2:14). John Fredrick and Ryan Brandt are correct in their conclusion that "cultural, theological, and ethnic diversity… is not just a politically correct issue; it is a gospel issue."[24]

Intercultural unity in Christ does not mean, however, that ethnic and cultural distinctions have disappeared—as some have claimed in response Paul's statement that there is "no Jew or Greek" (Gal 3:27-28).[25] To the contrary, the statement simply means that all ethnic groups are considered to have equal standing through faith in Christ. J. Todd Billings, for example, in his book *Union with Christ*, states, "Paul does not seem to be suggesting that these differences no longer matter but rather that they are made penultimate because of the eschatological identity of Jew and Greek—indeed, of all tribes

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[22] Cf. Samuel B. Hakn, "Women in the Genealogy of Matthew," *Exchange* 43 (2014): 109-18.

[23] John A. Martin, *Luke*, in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures: New Testament*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 226.

[24] Ryan A. Brandt and John Fredrick, *Spiritual Formation for the Global Church: A Multi-Denominational, Multi-Ethnic Approach* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2021), 222, Kindle.

[25] Cf. John Calvin, *Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians* (London: Arnold Hatfield, 1599*)*, commentary on Gal 3:28; Charles F. Pfeiffer and Everett F. Harrison, eds., *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary: New Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1962), commentary on Gal 3:26; Charles Spurgeon, *Galatians*, ed. E. Ritzema (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013), commentary on Gal 3:28.

and nations—being part of one new humanity in Christ."[26] Billings therefore calls the church a "multicultural family in Christ." Moreover, Charles Cousar notes that "this passage focuses not on the discrimination of the two groups [i.e., the distinction between Jew and Greek] but their common plight—in bondage to the law and in redemption from the law."[27] Thus, though all persons in Christ are "all sons of God," have all "put on Christ," are all "one in Christ," and are all "Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise" (Gal 3:27-29), we still maintain our distinct ethnic identities. While our primary identity as Christians is found in the *imago Dei* and our union with Christ, ethno-cultural distinctions between individuals still matter and should impact how Christian ministers do ministry.

At its earliest foundations, this attitude of distinction yet equality in the church is reflected by representative leadership. In Acts 6, when the "Hellenists" had a dispute regarding the daily distribution of food, the apostles had the church choose seven men to "appoint to this duty" (v. 3) These men, however, appear to be a leadership that is representative of the widows who were being disadvantaged. This is in contrast to the apostles who were primarily Aramaic-speaking Jews. Craig Keener explains that "even in Rome, under 40 percent of Jews had any Greek in their name, and only one or two of the apostles had a Greek name. That all seven of these men have Greek names suggests that they are known to be Hellenists (6:1), first-or second-generation Jewish immigrants to Palestine—hence members of the offended minority."[28]

First Corinthians depicts that there seemed to be a party conflict between the followers of Paul, Peter, and Apollos. Paul writes, "What I mean is that each one of you

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[26] J. Todd Billings, *Union with Christ*: *Reframing Theology and Ministry for the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 155.

[27] Charles B. Cousar, *Reading Galatians, Philippians, and 1 Thessalonians: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2001), 66.

[28] Craig Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), commentary on Acts 6:5, Logos Bible Software.

says, 'I follow Paul,' or 'I follow Apollos,' or 'I follow Cephas,' or 'I follow Christ'"

(1 Cor 1:12). While each of these men are Jewish by birth, they certainly have ethnic

distinction between them. Peter, was a fisherman who was born in Bethsaida but lived in

the small fishing town of Capernaum that boasted approximately twelve to fifteen

thousand people at the time of Christ.[29] By contrast, Apollos was from Alexandria, which

was the capital of Egypt at the time and a Greek commercial epicenter.[30] Paul himself,

though "a Hebrew of Hebrews" (Phil 3:5), was from Tarsus, the capital of the Roman

province of Cilicia.[31] George Montague has argued that Paul, a Roman citizen himself,

was more like "the Stoic and Cynic philosophers" than the rabbis.[32]

Certainly, the cultural experience of these men could not have been more

different, yet Paul does not dismiss either Peter or Apollos but elsewhere refers to Peter

as a pillar (Gal 2:9) and here (i.e., to the church in Corinth) declares that Apollos is

equally a servant of God like himself: "What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants

through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but

God gave the growth" (1 Cor 3:5-6). Montague comments, "The laborers are equal, even

though the value of their work may not be, for each will receive wages in proportion to

his labor. The equality comes not from the differing quality of their work but from their

belonging to the Master."[33] The very fact that these three men could all be considered

authoritative in the same congregation speaks to the fact that ethnically diverse leadership

was something to be celebrated in the early church.

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[29] Amanda Cookson Carver, "Capernaum, Archeological Overview," in *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*, ed. John D. Barry (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Logos Bible Software.

[30] Zachary Smith, "Alexandria," in Barry, *Lexham Bible Dictionary*.

[31] Sherman Johnson, "Tarsus and the Apostle Paul," *Lexington Theological Quarterly* 15, no. 4 (October 1980): 107.

[32] Johnson, "Tarsus and the Apostle Paul," 109.

[33] George T. Montague, *First Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 111, ProQuest Ebook Central.

In his discussion of how the body of Christ should be arranged, the apostle Paul seems to further suggest that churches should bestow greater honor in their congregation upon those populations of people who tend to be marginalized by society: "On those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor" (1 Cor 12:23). Keener suggests that Paul is employing a sociological analogy in this passage. When the plebians (i.e., the lower class) in Rome proposed a revolt, Menenius Agrippa encouraged them that though they had differing roles, they were of equal importance; the Stoics later applied this image to the universe, where the logos was the head and each part was an equal.[34] Timothy Paul Jones notes that the contrast between New Testament and modern sources is that rhetoricians of the Roman empire often used body imagery "to call less honored members of society to submit to those that enjoyed greater skills or social status." Jones demonstrates that the apostle Paul calls the church to have the same care for all of its members despite their social standing.[35]

In addition, J. Brain Tucker makes a sociological connection, stating, "[Paul] structures the first part of his illustration (12:15-6) from the perspective of the marginalized . . . . Paul argues for an increase in 'honor' for those who might otherwise feel shame based either on the evaluation of others or of themselves (12:23-25)."[36] Further, B. J. Oropeza states that "Paul's social body, moreover, calls into question assumptions of political bodies that favor those who are considered by society to be significant: the elitists and upper classes. Honor instead goes to those considered less honorable."[37]

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[34] Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, commentary on 1 Cor 12:12-26.

[35] Timothy Paul Jones, "The City of Corinth and the Metaphor of the Body in 1 Corinthians" (accessed from author).

[36] J. Brian Tucker, *Reading 1 Corinthians* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017), 116.

[37] B. J. Oropeza, *1 Corinthians* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017), 167.

Such a "bestowing of greater honor" can be seen in Paul's own ministry as by his employment of Timothy. Timothy was the son of a Jewish woman, but his father was a Greek (Acts 16:1). Such a mixed marriage would typically be despised by many Palestinian Jews, and because Timothy had not been circumcised, he would not have even been accepted as Jewish.[38] Yet on Timothy, who culturally would have held lesser honor than others, the apostle bestows greater honor not only by taking Timothy on as his protégé but also by promoting him among the churches. In Paul's various letters, he refers to Timothy as a fellow worker (Rom 16:21), a brother (2 Cor 1:1; Col 1:1; Phlm 1:1), a fellow servant (Phil 1:1), and God's coworker (1 Thess 3:2). Paul even says of Timothy, "He is doing the work of the Lord, *as I am*. So let no one despise him" (1 Cor 16:10-11; emphasis added), and he sets Timothy as an authority over the church in Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3, 4:11). Certainly, if Paul was willing to elevate this young man who would have been disregarded by society, then churches today should be willing to elevate people of those cultures and ethnic groups in their own congregations that face marginalization.[39] Jarvis Williams maintains that for minority voices to truly be heard, white Christians "must share their privilege and power with those sensible voices among the underrepresented minorities and suffer with them."[40]

In contrast to this point, Richard Hardison has argued that "the Bible contains no particular command, theological reason, or normative pattern that calls churches to strive to become as ethnically diverse as their communities. Therefore, there is room

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[38] Bobby Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*, vol. 2 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997), 197; Keener, *IVP Background Commentary*, commentary on Acts 16:1-5.

[39] I would refer those who would argue that elevating those with less honor creates a new inequality to Paul's command in Phil 2:3-4: "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit*, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves*. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others" (emphasis added).

[40] Jarvis Williams, "Racial Reconciliation, the Gospel, and the Church," *9Marks Journal* (Summer 2015): 15.

for—even strategic value in—monoethnic churches in the kingdom of God."[41] Hardison's statement is, at best, an argument from silence and, at worst, a betrayal of the heart of the gospel message. It is true that there are some churches that are situated in communities where they do not have a multiethnic reach. I have found on the mission field, for example, tribes of one culture that live in villages accessible only by canoe. But such an example can hardly be seen as normative for most places in the world, especially the U.S.

Hardison's implication that churches need not seek to be multiethnic stands in contrast to Jesus's prayer that God's be done in earth *as it is in heaven* (Matt 6:10). In the heavenly throne room depicted in Revelation 7:9, there is "a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb." Beyond this, there is no interpretation of being Christ's witnesses "to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8) or making disciples "of all nations" (i.e., *ethnos*; Matt 28:19) that does not also involve crossing lines of ethnicity—even in our own communities. Darrell Bock notes, "The phrase 'end of the earth,' then, is geographic *and ethnic* in scope, *inclusive of all people* and locales . . . . The world is the end goal, pointing to complete deliverance that drives the present mission and gives it focus."[42] Further, Jason Goroncy states, "An ecclesiology fittingly determined by the ontological scandal of the 'extendible' and 'transposable' character of the body of Jesus compels Christian communities to work for multiethnic rather than homogenous churches in ethnically and culturally diverse contexts."[43]

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[41] Richard Hardison, "A Theological Critique of the Multi-Ethnic Church Movement" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014), 14.

[42] Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 65-66 (emphasis added), ProQuest Ebook Central.

[43] Jason Goroncy, "Ethnicity, Social Identity, and the Transposable Body of Christ," *Mission Studies* 34 (2017): 227.

Beyond these theological considerations, it has been demonstrated that homogenous congregations actually contribute to greater ethnic discrimination in society at large. Emerson and Smith have claimed that because religious life is an important aspect of social life, ethnic segregation in this area contributes to "reduced opportunities for intergroup relations and social ties." The absence of such relations can contribute to the reduction of opportunities of "intergroup mobility" but also more sharply divides people in terms of their differences.[44] Emerson and Smith also argued that all people intrinsically have an ingroup bias whereby we think of those with whom we have a closer connection more generously than those we do not know. This ingroup bias not only serves to benefit some and disadvantage others but also contributes to stereotypes in our own minds.[45] As a result, homogenous congregations ultimately contribute to a more "racialized" society. In response to this problem, Aubrey Sequeira has stated, "It is naïve and far too hopeful to assume that sinful people who have an inherent disposition toward ethnocentric prejudice will some grow out of it without being called to in community with those different from them."[46]

## Theoretical Considerations for Ethnically Representative Leadership

For churches to faithfully minister to ethnically diverse groups of people, they must both affirm their cultural distinctives as well as provide avenues for ethnic representation in their leadership structures. These attributes of multiethnic ministry are treated, in turn, below.

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[44] Emerson and Smith, *Divided by Faith*, 155.

[45] Emerson and Smith, *Divided by Faith*, 156-57.

[46] Aubrey Sequeira, "Re-Thinking Homogeneity: The Biblical Case for Multi-Ethnic Churches," *9Marks Journal* (Summer 2015): 40.

**The Importance of Ethnic Distinction**

Because ethnic identity matters deeply to many people, especially among minority populations, failure to acknowledge ethnic distinctions among those we serve is a failure to love our neighbor and shepherd well the flock of God. Studies have repeatedly shown that these ethnic identities play an important role in a person's development and self-understanding. Robert Sellers et al. have noted that for Black Americans, identification with their ethnicity typically grows stronger as they age. For young children, being Black is not as significant to their identity. However, as they grow and have experiences related to their ethnicity, Black Americans typically move from becoming more pro-Black to having an inner satisfaction with their cultural identity to eventually internalizing this identity so that they desire to translate it into action.[47]

Researchers have shown similar trends among other ethnic minorities in the U.S. Derek Kenji Iwamoto et al. report that second-generation Americans of Asian Indian descent desire to "fit in" during their childhood and adolescent years, but as they approach adulthood, they find comfort in friends who share their ethnicity. The researchers explain, "Many participants began to realize that their AIA [Asian Indian American] peers had similar experiences and that they could relate to one another."[48] Eventually, AIAs were able to take "pride" in the "beauty" of their own culture, and "participants stated feeling comfortable with their cultural self and being able to freely express it to others."[49]

Jason Chan argues that many Asian Pacific Islander Desi Americans (APIDAs) face a similar experience during their young adult years: "College is often the first time

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[47] Robert Sellers et al., "Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity: A Reconceptualization of African American Racial Identity," *Personality & Social Psychology Review* 2, no. 1 (1998): 22.

[48] Derek Kenji Iwamoto et al., "The Racial and Ethnic Identity Formation Process of Second-Generation Asian Indian Americans: A Phenomenological Study," *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development* 41 (October 2013): 233-35.

[49] Iwamoto et al., "Racial and Ethnic Identity Formation Process," 235-36.

Asian American students become aware of and actively explore what it means to identify as Asian American." Chan states that because of the diversity of the APIDA label, students have varying levels of connectedness to it, and some prefer more concrete descriptions, such as Chinese, Korean, or Taiwanese.[50] However, Chan maintains, the interconnectivity of race, ethnicity, and culture is "central to identity of many APIDAs."[51]

While some might see strong ethnic identification as a negative phenomenon, research suggests that it is quite the opposite. Aerika Brittian has noted that for adolescent African Americans, a strong sense of Black identity directly correlates to better mental health, well-being, and academic achievement.[52] Likewise, Black college students that participated in Black studies programs have shown a higher sense of self-esteem, higher levels of self-efficacy, a greater likelihood of graduation, and more meaningful relationships with faculty.[53] Second generation AIAs, having accepted their ethnic identity, felt such a strong connection to it that many would organize communal events with the hope of passing Indian cultural values onto their children.[54] Gardiner has shown that a strong cultural identity among African and Asian immigrants has been tied to a lower risk of violence, drug abuse, and teenage pregnancy. Additionally, he claims, people of all ethnic backgrounds follow a similar pattern of ethnic identity formation that results in "the internalization of the ethnic identity into the self," whether it is manifested in outward expressions of language, clothing, and ritual or simply in one's "intrinsic

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[50] Jason Chan, "Complexities of Racial Identity Development for Asian Pacific Islanders Desi Americans (APIDA) College Students," *New Directions for Student Services* 2017, no. 160 (Winter 2017): 15.

[51] Chan, "Complexities of Racial Identity Development," 13.

[52] Brittian, "African American Adolescents' Identity Development," 11.

[53] Jakia Marie, "Racial Identity Development of African American Students in Relation to Black Studies Courses," *Journal of Pan African Studies* 9, no. 8 (October 2016): 65, 76.

[54] Iwamoto et al., "Racial and Ethnic Identity Formation Process," 237.

confidence in his or her ethnicity."[55] Joshua Watson has identified a similar phenomenon among Native Americans, concluding that "the more individuals are able to accept their differences and expand their self-awareness and acceptance of others, the more well-adjusted they will become."[56]

**The Importance of Ethnic Representation**

Ethnic identity matters, but so does ethnic representation. Yet more often than not, those of us from a majority culture are often blind to the absence of representative minority leaders in our own congregations or to how this absence might be perceived by those of other cultures. Shelly Trebesh, in her book *Made to Flourish*, describes a church who sought to reach other cultures by offering citizenship and English language classes. Yet when participants of these classes attended church services, they felt uncomfortable with the style of worship and leadership structures. Trebesh states, "Organizations and teams must *behave* their values. It may seem obvious that if a monocultural church is to become diverse, it must change. But often monocultural churches somehow think they can become diverse without changing in significant ways."[57] Creating ethnic equality—and thereby an ethnically welcoming environment—in our congregations will require intentionality in the way we worship, plan, and even recruit and develop church leaders.

**Models of multiethnic congregations.** Curtiss DeYoung et al. wrote *United by Faith: The Multiracial Congregation as an Answer to the Problem of Race*, which investigates various models of multiethnic congregations. In the book, the authors argue that multiethnic churches can follow one of three models. The assimilation model reflects

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[55] Gardiner, *Lives across Cultures*, 90-91.

[56] Joshua C. Watson, "Native American Racial Identity Development and College Adjustment at Two-Year Institutions," *Journal of College Counseling* 12, no. 2 (2009): 127.

[57] Shelly G. Trebesh, *Made to Flourish: Beyond Quick Fixes to a Thriving Organization* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 58.

one dominant culture in the congregation and has one dominant culture in the leadership. The pluralist model contains "separate and distinct elements of all racial cultures represented in the congregation" and is led by representatives of the different ethnic groups in the congregation. The integration model "maintains aspects of separate cultures and also creates a new culture from the cultures in the congregation" and is led by representatives of the different ethnicities in the congregation.[58]

DeYoung et al. claim that of these models, the integration model is the most desirable: "In our opinion, a truly effective multiracial congregation not only reflects aspects of the cultures represented by congregation members, but it reflects a new and unique culture that transcends the worldly cultures."[59] While such a model is certainly ideal, it is not apparent that any such church exists or will exist on this earth. In virtually every church mentioned in the New Testament, there are cultural divisions that have to be addressed.[60] Even DeYoung et al.—who collectively spent three years in intensive research, conducted over 2,500 phone interviews, and carried out more than 200 face-to-face interviews—state, "We are hard pressed to cite definitive examples of such congregations from our study."[61] Beyond this, I imagine it would be very difficult to tell if and when a church has become an integration model church, and depending on who is examining the church, an assimilation model church (detailed below) could easily be mistaken for an integration model.[62]

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[58] Curtiss Paul DeYoung et al., *United by Faith: The Multiracial Congregation as an Answer to the Problem of Race* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 165.

[59] DeYoung et al., *United by Faith*, 169.

[60] Cf. Acts 6:1; 11:2-3; 15:5; Rom 14:3; 1 Cor 1:20; Gal 4:8-10; Eph 2:11-16; Phil 1:27-28; Col 3:9-11; 1 Tim 1:3-7; Titus 1:10-14; Jas 2:1-4.

[61] DeYoung et al., *United by Faith*, 168.

[62] This is to say, a church may outwardly have a model that makes it appear that all cultures have a voice and a totally new culture has been created; but, the truth may be that while there are different cultures represented in the leadership body, these do not necessarily have an equal voice in decisions, methodology, etc. While it may appear that a transformative culture has developed, in reality, the church culture may still favor a particular population of the church while making only mild token accommodations for other cultures. In reality, the model is an assimilation model that has merely been "spiritualized."

**The danger of assimilation.** The longstanding model of multiethnic American churches has been the assimilation model. In such a model, as stated above, the majority group wields control over the way the church is run and tends to be exclusively represented among the leadership. It is easy to see why so many churches adopt such a model. It is by far the least challenging of the three models, is the least likely to receive pushback from the majority of the congregation, and tends to be more efficient in accomplishing tasks. The problem with the assimilation model is that it has been the most destructive of the three models to minority cultures. In his book *The Color of Compromise*, Jamar Tisby demonstrates that prior to the emancipation of black Americans, whites and blacks would worship together in churches. "Yet this interracial interaction did not come from the egalitarian aspirations of white Christians; rather, interracial congregations were an expression of paternalism and a means of controlling slave beliefs and preventing slave insurrection."[63] Assimilation was more than a systematic attempt to suppress minority cultures; it was also sometimes an attempt to eradicate them altogether. DeYoung et al. note that in relation to Native Americans, "early colonial Puritan minister Cotton Mather said, 'the best thing we can do for our Indians is to Anglicize them.'"[64]

An assimilation approach not only reflects a sinful attitude of ethnic supremacy but also has historically kept many people from becoming part of congregations where their culture is not the dominant one. When one ethnicity in the church wields most (or all) of the authority, then minority populations can have legitimate reasons to fear the loss of their own cultural identity in the church. In *Divided by Faith*, Emerson and Smith show that African Americans left the white church not because of theological differences

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[63] Tisby, *The Color of Compromise*, 66.

[64] DeYoung et al., *United by Faith*, 102.

but because they were not treated as equal members within the church.[65] Tisby says it well: "Harsh though it may sound, the facts of history nevertheless bear out this truth: there would be no black church without racism in the white church."[66] While I suspect that many modern churches seeking to be ethnically inclusive are motivated less by oppression and more by loving their neighbor, it cannot be ignored that if they do not reevaluate their model of ministry, then the end result of ethnocentrism and suppression will likely be the same. That is, though we might feel that our doors are open to the outside world, other cultures may enter our congregations feeling that to be a part of our church body, they must conform to our cultural identity and, in doing so, lose their own cultural distinctiveness.

It is not unreasonable that minority cultures might fear such a danger in the "white man's" church. DeYoung et al. relay a few stories that may help illustrate this point. In one such story, an Asian American pastor named Ken Fong invited his white seminary professor to attend his church after the professor claimed that "we should all go to the same church." The professor clarified that what he meant was that Fong should attend the professor's church, not the other way around. Fong would later state, "This fine Christian gentleman and world-class theologian could clearly imagine the cultural peculiarities of our church, but he was blind to those of his own."[67] In another story, Richard Twiss, a Native American, was told by a pastor—in reference to Galatians 3:28—"Don't worry about being Indian; just be like us."[68]

Because the assimilation model has been so harmful to many cultures and because the integration model can easily be mistaken for an assimilation model (not to

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[65] Emerson and Smith, *Divided by Faith*, 39.

[66] Tisby, *The Color of Compromise*, 52.

[67] DeYoung et al., *United by Faith*, 113.

[68] DeYoung et al., *United by Faith*, 128.

mention that the integration model unattainable), multiethnic churches should seek to adopt a pluralistic model of inclusion rather than a homogenous model. That is, instead of assuming a "melting pot" view of ethnic diversity that sees all cultures merging together into one collective whole, we should perhaps see ethnic diversity as a soup—all of the ingredients contribute to the overall "flavor" of the community, without each any losing its own distinction. In order for each culture to maintain its own distinction, multiethnic congregations must seek a greater sense of inclusivity that includes—but is not limited to—the promotion of ethnically representative leaders.

**The need for representative leadership.** The above examples of cultural suppression highlight the need for having ethnically representative leadership in our congregations; namely, we are often blind to how our current models benefit and promote our cultural values while suppressing others. This tendency can be particularly true of us among the majority ethnicity. Chavez and Guido-Dibrito note, "For [white Americans], ethnicity is usually invisible and unconscious because societal norms have been constructed around their racial, ethnic, and cultural frameworks, values, and priorities and then referred to as 'standard American culture' rather than as 'ethnic identity'."[69] In addition, Kristín Loftsdóttir claims that along these same lines, there is a glaring absence of research on whiteness because it is typically seen as "static, normative, and ahistorical."[70] The problem with this "blind spot," according to Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald, is that "once lodged in our minds, hidden biases can influence our behavior . . . , but we remain oblivious to their influence."[71]

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[69] Chavez and Guido-DiBrito, "Racial and Ethnic Identity and Development," 39.

[70] Kristín Loftsdóttir, "Invisible Colour: Landscapes of Whiteness and Racial Identity in International Development," *Anthropology Today* 25, no. 5 (October 2009): 5.

[71] Mahzarin R. Banaji and Anthony Greenwald, *Blindspot: The Hidden Biases of Good People* (New York: Random House, 2013), Preface, para. 6. Kindle.

*A modern example*. An example of how our church models promote our own culture while overshadowing others can be seen in the recent debate about removing European models of Jesus from our congregations. Some Christians might argue that it does not matter what color Jesus is portrayed. However, Edward Blum and Paul Harvey have written extensively regarding how as a means to express dominance over black and Native Americans, Jesus began to be portrayed as a white man: "It was in these years of defining who was (and was not) a citizen, of expanding the market economy, of growing the southern cotton kingdom, and of pushing Native Americans to the west, that Jesus was first fashioned into a white sacred symbol within the United States."[72] As demonstrated in in the first chapter, this imagery was so powerful and so prevalent that even Martin Luther King Jr. affirmed that Jesus was, in fact, a white man.[73]

Churches with such images could respond in a number of ways: they could remove any and all portrayals of Christ from church property; they could replace all such images with more historically accurate pictures of Jesus that portray Jesus as a brown skinned, dark-eyed, Middle Eastern Jewish man; they could incorporate images of Jesus portrayed as a variety of other ethnic groups (e.g., Asian, Hispanic, Indian, African). For White Americans who might feel uncomfortable with the thought of any of these suggestions—that is our White culture speaking. I imagine that foreigners who have only been exposed to images of Christ that are ethnically similar to their own culture are equally troubled when they walk into our churches and see that all of the images of Jesus are white portrayals. Having a diverse leadership body helps us notice such issues to which we ourselves may be blind.

*A variety of viewpoints*. Having leaders from a variety of backgrounds also gives us a deeper understanding of the various perspectives and needs of the cultures we

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[72] Edward J. Blum and Paul Harvey, *The Color of Christ: The Son of God and the Saga of Race in America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 78.

[73] Blum and Harvey, *The Color of Christ*, 205.

are trying to reach. Such insight is necessary to adequately minister to such groups. James Estep, Roger White, and Karen Estep explain that even if we are all using the same Bible, "both the application of meaning and the focus of needs will all vary as a direct result of the societal and cultural factors."[74] In other words, while the message of the Scriptures does not change, how Christian leaders apply the Scriptures depends greatly on the cultural needs and values of our audience. Having culturally representative leadership bodies will create a greater impact in ministering to our congregations and communities.

*A "person of peace."* The importance of diverse leadership bodies, however, goes far beyond just informing our models of church life. In fact, the significance for minority populations in seeing their own culture represented in the church leadership cannot be overstated. Having representative leadership gives them not only a "safe" person with whom to connect and share their concerns but also a sense that their culture is a welcome part of the congregation.[75] Being a part of a church that values their cultural distinction is important for people of various ethnicities because the church represents "the freedom to be autonomous and different, to live within the context of one's own culture, and to worship and serve Christ in one's own cultural context."[76] Additionally, seeing an ethnic representative in the church's leadership helps free them from the fear that their culture will be lost in the fellowship with other believers.[77]

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[74] James Estep, Roger White, and Karen Estep, *Mapping Out Curriculum in Your Church: Cartography for Christian Pilgrims* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2012), chap. 9, "Context and Curriculum," sec. 2, para. 1, Kindle.

[75] See Marie, "Racial Identity Development" 65, 76; Trebesh, *Made to Flourish*, 58.

[76] DeYoung et al., *United by Faith*, 117.

[77] Notably, in a 2015 issue of *9Marks Journal* titled "Multi-Ethnic Churches," both a Black author and an Asian American author mentioned their discomfort in predominantly white churches with not having representative leadership. Isaac Adams stated, "Sometimes blacks feel like projects instead of peers." Isaac Adams, "Why White Churches are Hard for Black People," *9Marks Journal* (Summer 2015): 72. Tim Chiang posed the problem well: "If our churches are healthy, faithfully feeding and discipling all its members, wouldn't we expect to eventually see elders raised up that closely reflect the demographics of our church?" Tim Chiang, "Being Asian American in a White Church" *9Marks Journal* (Summer 2015): 78.

It should be noted that such leadership must go beyond merely having a title to having a real voice and a seat at the table. This is a further application of "bestowing greater honor" (1 Cor 12:13); we should recognize that those voices who have been marginalized by our society should be given greater weight in our congregations. Chelsea Yarborough declares that "leaders must ask critical questions: "Who is missing [in decision making spaces]? Who are the ones whose voice is not heard?" Whose theology has not been engaged? Why? How do we glean information about different cultures?" She further avers that this must go beyond "tokenism" to include the practice of deep listening that results in deep engagement.[78]

*Some disclaimers*. All of this is not to say that having an ethnically diverse leadership body will be easy; multiethnic leadership comes with its own set of challenges. For example, Edgar Schein claims that people who come from cultures where honor and "face" are more highly valued than productivity may be unwilling to contradict another person even when they know the person to be wrong.[79] In addition, John Francis Burke, in working with a multiethnic committee for several years, has noted that the committee often sets its own agenda (rather than following the scheduled one) and typically takes a long time to make any concrete decisions.[80] Beyond this, there has been criticism from some who ascribe to "an expertise model of leadership" that some in the committee have not jumped through the necessary hoops to be considered decision makers. Nevertheless, Francis maintains that our vision of success must move beyond receiving the approval of others or completing tasks to consist of people from different ethnicities working

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[78] Chelsea Yarborough, "Prophetic or Problematic: Exploring the Potential of Just Multicultural Worship," *Proceedings of the North American Academy of Liturgy* (January 2017): 170.

[79] Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 5th ed. (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2017), 23.

[80] John Francis Burke, "Fostering 'Unity in Diversity': A Case-Study of a Church Multicultural Relations Committee," *Journal of Pastoral Theology* 6 (1996): 84.

together, being taught to value one another, and engaging those in the congregation to do the same.[81]

### The Need for Ethnically Representative Leadership in Missionary Work

If there is such a deeply felt need for diverse, ethnically representative leadership in churches in the United States, then how much more does such a need exist when U.S. Christians leave their home culture and enter a culture not their own. It has been claimed that Christian missionary work has been the great destroyer of cultures. Bridgett Kahl states that the "overall threat to human culture comes from a 'Christian' culture, the highly advanced civilization of Europe and North America which has had many centuries of gospel-preaching and teaching."[82] Brian Stanley has remarked that during the nineteenth century, missions had more of what he called "a 'soft' racism" that did not necessarily see people groups as inferior by nature but by environment. Where there was a sense that people were "uncivilized," inserting Christianity could remedy the "problem." Stanley cites family life as an example: "Through the irrigation of the Gospel, Indian or African family life could and would become no less loving and divinely ordered than middle-class Christian family life in Britain was alleged to be."[83] At its very worst, missionary work has contributed to legal systems of racial segregation and apartheid governments.[84]

Nevertheless, I believe that the central goal of most missionaries is not to tear down cultures but to build up the kingdom of God—though admittedly there are

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[81] Burke, "Unity in Diversity," 84-87.

[82] Bridgett Kahl, "Human Culture and the Integrity of Creation: Biblical Reflections on Genesis 1-11," *Ecumenical Review* 39 (1987): 129.

[83] Bryan Stanley, "From 'the Poor Heathen' to 'the Glory and Honour of All Nations': Vocabularies of Race and Custom in Protestant Missions, 1844-1928," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 34, no. 1 (January 2010): 4.

[84] William McCoy, "Comments on 'Mission and Race in Africa'," *Fides et Historia* 50, no. 2 (Summer/Fall 2018): 111.

circumstances where cultural values or practices must be abolished if Christ is to be followed as Lord. Ada Lum defines a missionary as "a prepared disciple whom God sends into the world with his resources to make disciples for the kingdom."[85] This fact notwithstanding, one cannot ignore that every missionary has cultural biases and blind spots that they bring with them into the mission field. We, by nature, transmit this "hidden curriculum" of our cultural values and biases through our ministry and teaching structures.[86] A question our churches must ask is whether our missionaries are—even unintentionally—portraying an attitude of cultural superiority to other cultures. One way this attitude may be communicated is by our lack of ethnically representative leadership—particularly in international churches, as these by their very nature represent an ethnically heterogenous group of believers.

### Existing Literature on International Congregations

International churches were relatively unheard of one hundred years ago. In fact, the first—and, to my knowledge, only—major writing about such churches, David Pederson's *Expatriate Ministry: Inside the Church of Outsiders*, was self-published just over twenty years ago in 1999.[87] In his book, Pederson defines international churches as "a multi-cultured, multi-denominational, local fellowship of expatriate people who are united in Christian belief and who share an identity as foreigners with English as a common language." Pederson cites the earliest known international congregation as being the Union Church of Manila that was established in 1899 after an influx of missionaries

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[85] Ada Lum, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to Missions* (Grand Rapids: InterVarsity Press, 1984), 21, quoted in A. Scott Moreau, Gary R. Corwin, and Gary B. McGee, *Introducing World Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), chap. 1, "Missionary," para. 2, Kindle.

[86] Judith E. Lingenfelter and Sherwood G. Lingenfelter, *Teaching Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Learning and Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 28.

[87] David Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry: Inside the Church of Outsiders* (Seoul: David Pederson, 1999).

and businessmen came to the area following the Spanish-American War.[88] Pederson has shown that since World War II, international congregations have changed dramatically from being primarily composed of missionaries from mainline denominations to having greater numbers of business expatriates and people from majority world countries.[89]

Pederson notes that these changes in groups have produced a number of tensions in international churches, including whether the church is to be a unity or diversity, to be a launching pad or oasis, to focus on truth or relationships, to be attached to a denomination or independent.[90] The author also devotes a chapter to whether international churches should be integrationists, in welcoming indigenous people into their congregations and leadership, or isolationists, in keeping indigenous involvement to a minimum and thereby encouraging them to be more involved in the indigenous churches of the host country.[91] Following this, Pederson offers suggestions for caring for the congregation, growing the congregation, and selecting a pastor.

In the same year that Pederson's book was released, Kenneth MacHarg and Grace Pundyk published articles in *Christianity Today*. MacHarg's article discussed how despite the small amount of attention that international churches receive from mission-sending bodies, they provide a valuable service to expatriates who are looking for a home away from home. He explains that international churches typically accommodate transient members from a variety of denominational and cultural backgrounds. Although many international congregations began as a ministry to U.S. expatriates, this trend is changing such that international churches are no targeting internationals who may have

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[88] Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry*, 33.

[89] Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry*, 50-51.

[90] Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry*, 43-56.

[91] Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry*, 57-67.

little or no church experience.[92] Pundyk's article focused on one international

congregation in particular, the Evangelical Church of Kuwait. Pundyk noticed that "only

about 40 of the 15,000 attenders are actually from the host country." The rest represent

more than forty nationalities, many of whom have come from poorer countries in hopes

of sending money back to their home country. Pundyk demonstrates that the church in

Kuwait is a testament to unity and commitment, noting that its counsel consists of twenty

members from ten different countries.[93]

In addition to these writings, I have been able to find little more in existence

than a couple of dissertations and a few online articles.[94] In 2006, Ernest Klassen wrote a

dissertation in which he argued that international churches should cultivate a missional

identity that is more focused on engaging English-speaking indigenous people of their

host cultures, particularly among the professional and aristocratic classes.[95] Likewise, in

2017, David Young wrote a dissertation echoing this thought, urging international

congregations to—borrowing from Pederson's language—move from an "oasis

paradigm" to a missional mindset that engages its diverse membership in disciple making

with a view toward gospel expansion.[96] Additionally, Thorsten Prill wrote a short

synopsis of the pros and cons of international churches, noting that there was no

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[92] Kenneth MacHarg, "Expatriates Find Oversees Congregations Thriving," *Christianity Today*, May 24, 1999, 22-24.

[93] Grace Pundyk, "Kuwait's Desert Oasis: A Church with 42 Nationalities," *Christianity Today*, May 24, 1999, 22.

[94] One of the difficulties that exists is that many churches refer to themselves as "International" but do not actually meet the criteria of this study. For example, Churches of Christ International does not mean that the individual congregations are English-speaking churches for expatriates but rather that the denomination "Churches of Christ" has an international presence because it has congregations in countries all over the world. An additional example of this is seen in Joel A. Carpenter, "World Christianity and the Ministry of Expatriate Churches," *Presentation to the Strategic Planning Meeting of the American & Foreign Christian Union* (Calvin College, August 26, 2005), where Carpenter is addressing—not true international congregations but—church plants in the West by non-natives directed toward their specific cultural group.

[95] Ernest Klassen, "Exploring the Missional Potential of International Churches: A Case Study of Capital City Baptist Church, Mexico City" (DMin thesis, Asbury Theological Seminary, 2006).

[96] David W. Young, "Redirecting the International Church from an Oasis Paradigm to Missional Thought, Community and Practice" (DMin thesis, George Fox University, 2017).

definitive answer as to whether an expatriate church was a valid church model.[97] Also, Michael Crane and Scott Carter have published an article online that discusses the missional potential for international churches as they are often in major cities and reach a wide cultural demographic. They state, "As these expatriates move back to their home churches [from their IC experience], they are now more equipped to be advocates for international missions as well as becoming leaders in reaching out to the unreached peoples who now live in their home towns."[98] Dan Bowers wrote a similar article expressing the missional potential to both expatriates and the host country by using English as a common language and helping to plant national churches.[99]

In 2015, John Folmar, pastor of United Christian Church in Dubai (which meets the criteria of an international congregation), wrote an article for *9Marks Journal* on multiethnic congregations. In it, he urges churches not to abandon theology for the sake of sociology. Folmar claims that the gospel is a foreign language to all cultures but that "lowest common denominator promotes strife and feebleness, not unity and strength."[100] Folmar claims that the various cultures of international congregations can only be united by the gospel.

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[97] Although, Prill does not define what makes something a "valid church model" in his article, nor does he cite evidence for the accusations he makes, such as the following: "By their nature, most expatriate churches limit their mission to people who belong to the same ethno-cultural group." Thorsten Prill, "Expatriate Churches: Mission and Challenges," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 45, no. 4 (2009): 450-54.

[98] Michael Crane and Scott Carter, "Gateway to the Nations: The Strategic Value of International Churches in a Globalized Urban World," Missional International Church Network, accessed September 17, 2020, https://micn.org/gateway-nations-strategic-value-international-churches-globalized-urban-world/.

[99] Dan Bowers, "Globalization and the Missionary Potential of International Churches," Missio Nexus, July 1, 2005, https://missionexus.org/globalization-and-the-missionary-potential-of-international-churches/. Bowers additionally wrote his dissertation on international churches. Dan P. Bowers, "International Churches as Launching Pads for Mission to Indigenous Peoples" (DMin thesis, Denver Seminary, 2003).

[100] John Folmar, "Building a Multi-Cultural Ministry on Gospel Doctrine," *9Marks Journal* (Summer 2015): 45.

It is not entirely surprising that so little has been written in the world of

Christian scholarship on international churches. If Prill's article is any indication, then

authors may consider international congregations as niche ministries rather than as

legitimate churches.[101] It is equally unsurprising that considering the small amount of

research that exists on these congregations, ethnically representative leadership structures

are unaddressed beyond Pundyk's statement that the church in Kuwait has an ethnically

diverse leadership body.[102] Furthermore, Pederson is the only author who addresses

church leadership, noting that international churches tend to hire pastors who are already

known, immediately available, and affordable. He also mentions that the congregation

and church council should weigh in on the "specific skills" required for a new pastor.[103]

While Pederson discusses the process of hiring, training, and helping the new pastor

transition to the church, the issue of ethnic representation is never addressed.

## Addressing the Void in the Literature

While the absence of a discussion on ethnically representative leadership in

these writings is not unexpected (given the small amount of literature that exists on

international churches), what is somewhat more surprising is that this omission tends to

exist in the bulk of literature regarding Christian leadership. Andy Stanley, for example,

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[101] It is notable, however, that in the world of missions, there has been an increased interest in displaced people groups around the world. Missiologists tend to refer to these as "diaspora" people and this study of missions as "diaspora missiology." Sam George notes that "diaspora is one of the key ways (even if unrecognized as such) that the worldwide church of Jesus Christ is involved in mission globally. The scattered people become conduits through which missionary passion and influence flow between new and old heartlands of Christianity and create new frontiers for cross-cultural diffusion of the faith." Sam George "Diaspora: A Hidden Link from 'Everywhere to Everywhere' Missiology," *Missiology: An International Review* 39, no. 1 (January 2011): 52-53. International congregations may soon find themselves falling under this umbrella of study. For example, in the book *Scattered and Gathered*, a chapter is devoted to international congregations. While the chapter is a general overview of the characteristics of international churches, it provides a hopeful vision that more research may develop in coming years regarding this growing church model. Warren Reeve, "Unleashing Great Commission Potential through International Churches," in *Scattered and Gathered: A Global Compendium of Diaspora Missiology*, ed. Sadiri Joy Tira and Tetsunao Yamamori (Carlisle, UK: Langham, 2020), chap. 11, Kindle.

[102] Pundyk, "Kuwait's Desert Oasis," 22.

[103] Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry*, 109-13.

is the pastor of North Point Community Church, a mega-church in Alpharetta, Georgia, that has grown to seven campuses that collectively have roughly thirty thousand in attendance on a given week.[104] The church even has a page dedicated to racial reconciliation.[105] Yet in spite of this, Stanley's book on leadership, *Next Generation Leader*, makes no mention of culture, race, or ethnicity in relation to leadership.[106]

In my hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, Sojourn Church is well known for its commitment to the Scriptures as well as the ethnic diversity of its membership and even its leadership body.[107] One of the former pastors, Daniel Montgomery, and the current pastor of families at the Midtown campus, Jared Kennedy, wrote the book *Leadership Mosaic*.[108] Much like Stanley's book, *Leadership Mosaic*, despite the title, does not address the topic of ethnicity. The authors do mention that they are a church of many cultures: "We were all over the map theologically, culturally, and practically. We even had competing visions of what Sojourn should be. We were a motley crew to say the least. But in our diversity, God brought unity and eventually maturity."[109] Yet, in spite of this statement, there is no mention of how this cultural diversity plays a role in their leadership or selection of leaders.

The most extensive treatment of cultural diversity from a Christian leadership perspective comes from Timothy Paul Jones, another pastor of Sojourn, who wrote *The*

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[104] North Point Community Church, "Welcome," accessed July 10, 2020, http://northpointministries.org.

[105] North Point Community Church, "Racial Reconciliation: Resources and Support," accessed July 10, 2020, https://northpoint.org/race.

[106] Andy Stanley, *Next Generation Leader: Five Essentials for Those Who Will Shape the Future* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2003).

[107] Sojourn Collective, "Collective Vision Team," accessed July 10, 2020, https://sojournchurch.com/leaders.

[108] The Gospel Coalition, "Author: Jared Kennedy," accessed July 10, 2020, https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/profile/jared-kennedy/.

[109] Daniel Montgomery and Jared Kennedy, *Leadership Mosaic: Five Leadership Principles for Ministry and Everyday Life* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), chap. 4, "The Message of Collaboration," para. 5, Kindle.

*God Who Goes before You* with fellow colleague Michael Wilder. Their definition of leadership states that a Christian leader "develops a diverse community of fellow laborers."[110] Jones and Wilder understand diversity to include "not only racial and ethnic diversity but also socioeconomic and generational diversity."[111] While the term "fellow laborers" hints at the idea of diverse, ethnically representative leadership, this is not explicitly stated in the book.

There is perhaps a reason that we find this absence in many Christian leadership books. The reality is that most leadership books, including all of the above-listed works, are written about the "how" of leadership, not the "who." In most cases, it seems that the authors are writing to current or future leaders and trying to create a framework for what leadership should look like rather than writing to congregations and suggesting which individuals they should be looking at for leadership positions. I do not believe this omission is *necessarily* done from a place of ethnic superiority; instead, I believe ethnicity is seen as a separate issue from the goal of these books.

What is somewhat disappointing, however, is that this absence exists even in Christian literature regarding "multicultural Christian leadership." Much that is written about this topic is less concerned with developing leaders from various cultures and more concerning with leading ethnically diverse groups of people. In his book *Leading Cross-Culturally*, for example, Sherwood Lingenfelter defines cross-cultural leadership as "inspiring people who come from two or more cultural traditions to participate *with you* (the leader or leadership team) in building a community of trust and then to *follow you* and be empowered *by you* to achieve a compelling vision of faith."[112] Likewise, the book

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[110] Timothy Paul Jones and Michael S. Wilder, *The God Who Goes before You: Pastoral Leadership as Christ-Centered Followership* (Nashville: B&H, 2018), "Followership, Delegated Power, and the Necessity of Community," sec. 2, para. 3, Kindle.

[111] Jones and Wilder, *The God Who Goes before You*, Endnotes, chap. 1, n. 48.

[112] Sherwood G. Lingenfelter, *Leading Cross-Culturally: Covenant Relationships for Effective Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 21 (emphasis added).

*Churches, Cultures and Leadership*—despite the title—is merely a guide on how church leaders can communicate well interculturally, but it does not address actually elevating people from various cultures into leadership positions. The authors, Mark Branson and Juan Martinez, state that the practices a leader needs to have are to learn the language of the other culture (in their example, Korean) and to learn to read cultural patterns by giving attention to worldview, relational approaches, and specific attributes of life and culture. Yet, the thought of actually promoting or hiring a Korean individual to a leadership position in their congregation is never entertained.[113]

Though little exists in terms of leadership writings regarding missiology, James Keith McKinley has written a noteworthy dissertation regarding the application of transformational leadership theory to the field of missions. He himself stated, "I found no typology for leadership in missions and very little systematic study of leadership theory in missions."[114] For this reason, McKinley created a matrix to examine Bernard M. Bass's Full Range of Leadership theory using both theological and cultural-anthropological assessments. McKinley found that transformational theory succeeded theoretically but fell short theologically. Significant for this thesis, McKinley argues that "Scholars and practitioners of leadership in Christian missions need to think and, subsequently, lead with greater attention to the philosophical, theological and cultural anthropological assumptions that stand behind their leadership theories and practices."[115] My research seeks to address this cultural anthropological component of missionary leadership practice.

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[113] Mark Branson and Juan Martinez, *Churches, Cultures and Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), chap. 11, para. 3-4, Kindle.

[114] James Keith McKinley, "A Missiological Analysis of Transformational Leadership Theory" (PhD Diss, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015), 179.

[115] McKinley, "Missiological Analysis," 186-87.

## Conclusion

This research seeks to help address some of the issues left by the void that exists in current scholarly literature by investigating the factors that aid and hinder the promotion of ethnically representative leaders in international congregations. My hope is that this research will not only make international church leaders more self-conscious of their own cultural biases but also help equip all Christian leaders to fulfill the Great Commission in their culture of ministry work. Beyond this, my hope is that evangelical churches everywhere would be more self-aware of the need for ethnically representative leadership in their congregations so that we would truly be churches where people from our communities feel welcome to attend and where there are no glass ceilings due to ethnicity. When this happens, congregations will more fully reflect the heavenly society where there will be people from "every nation and tribe and people and tongue, standing before the throne," declaring God's salvation, and worshipping him (Rev 7:9-10).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter 1 of this research demonstrated that although the early church had a rich cultural, economic, and generational diversity, many churches in the United States today are ethnically divided.[1] Such division in the churches has its roots in attitudes of white supremacy and the cultural superiority of the U.S. The research concern for this thesis relates directly to the field of missions and whether missionaries are—perhaps even inadvertently—bringing such attitudes of cultural superiority with them. Ecuadorian international congregations were chosen as a case study for this research because of the rich ethnic diversity of the country as well as the significant U.S. populations within their churches.

Chapter 2 examined the current literature and argued for the need for ethnically representative leadership in congregations from both a theoretical and theological standpoint. It further demonstrated the void in Christian leadership material regarding ethnic diversity in leadership as well as the overall lack of literature regarding international congregations. This chapter proposes a methodology by which the issue of ethnically representative leadership in international congregations can be examined more fully. In doing so, the chapter outlines the overarching research design, procedures, limitations, and means of validation of the research findings so that other researchers may be able to replicate this research in their particular contexts.

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[1] Jacqueline Lewis, "On Earth as It Is in Heaven: Rehearsing the Reign of God," *Theology Today* 65 (2008): 3.

**Research Purpose**

The purpose of this project was to gain a deeper understanding of the perspectives of international pastors on the obstacles and factors that aid the development of diverse, ethnically representative leadership in their congregations. In part, this research hopes to aid in future examination of whether U.S. missionaries are—even unintentionally—bringing attitudes and structures of cultural superiority to the mission field. Additionally, it is my hope that the findings of this research may aid in creating greater cultural equality in multiethnic congregations both in Ecuador and around the world.

**Research Questions Synopsis**

In order to accomplish the aims of this study, the three following research questions were addressed:

1. According to pastors in the cases studied, what is the current status of ethnic diversity among Ecuadorian international congregations and their pastoral/elder bodies?

2. According to pastors in the cases studied, what factors relate to the hindrance of a diverse, ethnically representative leadership body in Ecuadorian international churches, and how might they be overcome?

3. According to pastors in the cases studied, what factors relate to the increased development of a diverse, ethnically representative leadership body in Ecuadorian international churches, and how might they be promoted?

**Design Overview**

Because this research seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the perceptions of research participants and because there is little research on the topic being covered, a qualitative study is the appropriate study for the research purpose. John Creswell and Cheryl Poth note that a qualitative study is most useful where there is a "need to study a group or population, identify variables that cannot be easily measured, or hear silenced voices." The authors also state that qualitative research is needed "when we need a

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complex, detailed understanding of the issue."[2] In the case of this research, all of these factors apply to this study.

In their book *Research Design*, John Creswell and J. David Creswell explain that a qualitative study should purposefully select its participants, discuss the strategies of recruitment, comment on the number of participants included, and discuss the types of data collected, such as qualitative observations, interviews, documents, and/or additional materials.[3] Each of these aspects of the research are addressed below. Additionally, this methodology was approved by The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Ethics Committee prior to research collection.

The research design was primarily conducted through interviews using a purposive sampling of pastors of every known international congregation in Ecuador. Every pastor/elder who was willing to participate was included in this study and was assured anonymity through a privately conducted interview and the absence of names in the written research findings. Participants were additionally offered the opportunity to receive a copy of the findings of this research project upon its completion.

Because of the distance between the Ecuadorian international congregations and out of respect for the participants' time, research interviews were conducted as audio interviews. Emily Block and Laura Erskine have shown that audio interviews are efficient both in cost and time yet tend to yield the same quality of data as face-to-face interviews.[4] I recorded the interviews and kept a journal of my own observations. Prior to

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[2] John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oak, CA: Sage, 2018), 104, Kindle.

[3] John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 5th ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2018), chap. 9, "Data Collection Procedures," Kindle.

[4] Block and Erskine utilize telephone interviews in their research, whereas I used both telephone interviews and Zoom audio interviews (i.e., without video). Block and Erskine note that in some cases, particularly those that discuss deviant behavior, participants were actually more forthcoming in phone interviews than in in-person interviews. The researchers explain that F. J. Fowler's study (*Survey Research Methods* [Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 2001]) has shown a lower response rate for phone interviews but that this study includes cold calling as a type of interview, which does not apply to this research. Emily

recording, I asked for the participants' permission to be recorded and assured them of their anonymity in the final research. Additionally, I recorded them giving their consent to the audio recording and once again reaffirmed that they would have anonymity and the opportunity to examine the final transcript to make clarification.

Following the recorded interview, the audio recordings were transcribed through Temi, an online transcription service.[5] After I received the manuscripts from Temi, I reviewed them while listening to the audio files and made revisions as needed. I additionally sent the edited manuscripts to the participants and allowed them three days to review it and let me know if they felt that there were any inaccuracies. At this time, I also allowed them to submit any further thoughts or documentation that they felt might aid in this research.

### Clarifying Researcher Bias

Paul Leedy and Jeanne Ormrod have noted that for qualitative research to produce reliable data, the researcher should identify "any assumptions, beliefs, values, and biases that may influence data collection and interpretation."[6] For this reason, I am including a short history of my background in this subject matter.

I am entering my twentieth year of vocational ministry, and every church that I have worked in has had an all-white staff. I can recall that the pastor of one church where I served as a youth minister secretly confided in me that he hoped the church would hire a black music minister, but—to my knowledge—he never stated this publicly, and the church eventually hired a white music minister. This same church, for a brief period, had joint services once a quarter with other churches, and one of these was a black church.

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S. Block and Laura Erskine, "Interviewing by Telephone: Specific Considerations, Opportunities, and Challenges," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 11, no. 4 (2012): 430-32.

[5] Temi, https://www.temi.com.

[6] Paul D. Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, *Practical Research: Planning and Design*, 12th ed. (New York: Pearson Education, 2019), 251, Kindle.

Yet our congregation decided to withdraw from the community services because they got tired of the black pastor's bringing up the issue of race in his sermons. That is, they did not want to be confronted with the idea that they might be racists.

Later, when I was a senior pastor, our church was given the opportunity to be the host sight for a black pastor who was seeking to plant a church. I was excited about the opportunity to benefit another congregation, but other members in my congregation expressed that they hoped that allowing the church the space might instead grow our own congregation. In addition, when an Indian pastor came to speak at our church annually and take a love offering, some members of the church complained that he was receiving money that could go to our church. Later, when I announced that I was going to be a missionary to India (though several people from the church became support partners), one member expressed outrage that I would go to another country, stating, "What about us? What about the people right here in this community?" This was in spite of the fact that the man had never once come to a Sunday night outreach to go into our community. I had a pretty good idea which people he was talking about.

When our family became missionaries, the door closed to India, and we landed in Ecuador, South America. Through a series of events, we started attending an English-speaking international congregation, only to discover a familiar phenomenon. In spite of the fact that our congregation had as many as thirty nationalities represented on a given Sunday, the elder body of the church was composed of six men: one Ecuadorian and five white men of North American descent.[7] The question as to why there was not a greater population of other ethnicities among the elder body continued to plague me and ultimately gave birth to this project.

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[7] To be fair, one of the white men is a child of a U.S. missionary who grew up in an Ecuadorian tribe and does have some identification with that culture. However, it is also notable that the elder body was 80 percent white until about nine months ago, when a new pastor—also a white American—was brought in.

In my mind, international congregations have a tremendous potential to reach people in places that some missionaries may never be able to go, but the question as to whether white North American missionaries are bringing attitudes of cultural superiority into the mission field is deeply personal for me. I cannot shake the question "Is this happening everywhere?" This concern was further highlighted when I was discussing the issue with an Ecuadorian member of the church who expressed, in so many words, that she thought that white pastors were just better. My hope is that this will not be a view shared by those who are church leaders and that this research can be a wake-up call to all pastors about the need for ethnically diverse leadership in our congregations. I do not pretend to be unbiased in this regard.

## Population Sample

Creswell and Poth note that qualitative studies will consist of a purposeful sampling that must take into consideration "whom to select as participants (or sites) for the study, the specific type of sampling strategy, and the size of the sample to be studied."[8] For the purposes of this study, I have isolated the research population to the pastors/elders of English-speaking international congregations because they most likely have the greatest understanding of church politics and because their opinions typically have greatest weight in church decision making.

Ecuadorian churches do not have the same online presence that is common among churches in the United States. For this reason, I relied on references from fellow missionaries and expatriate Facebook groups for references to the respective churches. I was made aware of four such churches in Ecuador: Trinity Vineyard in Cuenca, Church on the Beach in Salinas, English Fellowship Church in Quito, and International Community Church in Cuenca. From these leads, I was able to contact the pastors of

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[8] Creswell and Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 296.

these churches and glean information about their leadership structure (i.e., whether they had an elder body). I contacted each lead pastor individually and asked them to participate in the study. I relied on the lead pastors to connect me with the other pastors of their church. This study is composed of all of the pastors who agreed to participate in an interview.

## Delimitations

This study was intended to understand the perspectives of pastors/elders of international congregations regarding the factors that influence and hinder culturally representative leadership. Because of this purposive sampling, the following delimitations were employed:

1. Research was delimited to Protestant self-governing congregations.[9]

2. Research was delimited to international congregations where English was the primary language.[10]

3. Research was delimited to churches in Ecuador, South America.

4. Research was delimited to the pastors/elders of these respective congregations.

5. Research was delimited to the participating sample.

## Limitations of Generalization

Because this research was delimited to international congregations in Ecuador, South America, its findings can only be generalized to these specific congregations. The goal of this research was transferability rather than generalization. Creswell and Creswell note that "the value of qualitative research lies in the particular description and themes

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[9] While there are a few Mormon and Jehovah's Witnesses congregations that would otherwise fit the criteria of this research, I considered them outside the scope of the study for theological reasons.

[10] While there are some churches that host English services, these do not meet the criteria of international congregations per David Pederson's definition that "the English-speaking International Congregation is a multi-cultured, multi-denominational, local fellowship of expatriate people who are united in Christian belief and who share an identity as foreigners with English as a common language." David Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry: Inside the Church of Outsiders* (Seoul: David Pederson, 1999), 33.

developed in the context of a specific site."[11] Nevertheless, the findings of this research may be transferable to other multiethnic ministry contexts, particularly to international congregations outside this study.

### Research Methods and Instrumentation

Leedy and Ormrod explain that an effective interviewer should (1) identify general questions and subquestions in advance, (2) consider how participants cultural backgrounds might influence their answers, (3) chose an appropriate sample, (4) find a suitable location, (5) obtain written permission, (6) establish and maintain rapport, (7) focus on concrete—rather than abstract—answers, (8) not put words in people's mouths, (9) record responses verbatim, (10) suspend reactions, and (11) remember that he or she is not necessarily getting all the facts.[12] While I have already addressed participant selection above, I address many of the remaining criteria below by detailing the three-stage process by which I collected and organized the data into meaningful findings."

### Stage 1: Preliminary Procedures

**Participant information form.** Irving Seidman states that a participant information form can serve the purposes of facilitating communication between the researcher and participant as well as gleaning information for participant selection and data collection. Seidman notes that the form should allow the participant to suggest good days and times for conducting the interview(s).[13] In addition to these, the participation

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[11] Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, chap. 9, "Validity and Reliability," central bullet point 4.

[12] Leedy and Ormrod, *Practical Research*, 245-49. Leedy and Ormrod also add a twelfth criterion regarding group interviews, but it does not apply to this study since I conducted all interviews one on one. Further, concerning criterion (5), I obtained consent via audio recording and the participation form.

[13] Irving Seidman, *Interviewing for Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences*, 5th ed. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2019), 54.

form included a statement of consent for participants to affirm and questions intended to aid in answering the first research question of this study.[14]

**Creation of questions.** In order to ascertain the perceptions of the pastors interviewed, the interview questions were open-ended to provide as much data as possible for the research purposes. The interview questions were intended to aid in answering the second and third research questions of this study. In alignment with Leedy and Ormond's criteria outlined above, additional prompts were created to glean as much information as possible.

**Research panel.** Following the formulation of the questions, an expert panel was created to evaluate the clarity, sensitivity, and appropriateness of the interview questions. This panel consisted of three individuals: (1) a seminary professor and research advisor, (2) a recent Doctor of Education graduate and adjunct professor, and (3) a pastor of a multiethnic congregation. Interview questions were readjusted based on the suggestions of this panel and resubmitted to the panel for final unanimous approval.

**Pilot interview.** Finally, to ensure a smooth interview process, clarity of questions, and transition between questions, a pilot interview was conducted with a pastor of a multiethnic congregation who was not part of this research study. The interview was conducted as normal, but the results were discarded. Following the interview, I allowed the pastor to give me feedback on the interview, and I recorded my own observations as well. My observations and those of the pastor were recorded and resubmitted to the research panel for any further recommendations.

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[14] The participant information form is found in appendix 1; I adapted a participation form from John David Trentham "Epistemological Developments in Pre-Ministry Undergraduates: A Cross Institutional Application of the Perry Scheme" (PhD Diss, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012), Appendix 2.

**Stage 2: Interview Methodology**

Seidman suggests three separate interviews for qualitative study: the first should establish the context of the participant's experience, the second should reconstruct the details of that context, and the third should reflect on the meaning the experience holds for them.[15] For example, if a researcher was seeking a greater understanding of the experience of pilots, then they would focus the first interview on what led to the participant's becoming a pilot, the second on what their day-to-day life is like now, and the third on what piloting means to them.[16] It is clear that in cases where researchers are seeking to glean a holistic understanding of someone's experience in a particular field, the three-interview model could be especially useful.

However, since this research seeks only to understand a particular aspect of international church ministry, the three-interview approach did not seem most appropriate to this study. That is, though I asked the church pastors/elders interviewed to draw upon their experience as pastors, I was more interested in understanding their informed opinions on the subject matter. For this reason, these three aspects of the pastor's experience—establishing context, gleaning details, and searching for meaning—were established through the participation survey, the audio interview, and the opportunity for participants to add additional thoughts to the data, respectively.

Prior to conducting the interview, I informed the participants that they were being recorded and that their identity would be kept anonymous in the final document.[17] Seidman notes that "researchers must take steps to code the identity of their participants from the beginning of the process, so that, for instance, a casual observer happening to

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[15] Seidman, *Interviewing for Qualitative Research*, 21.

[16] Seidman, *Interviewing for Qualitative Research*, 21-23.

[17] I initially opted to use a pseudonym for each participant but did not find doing so helpful in reporting the findings, so I abandoned this and simply referred to each participant as a pastor.

see a transcript on a desk could not identify the participant."[18] Once it was clear that the church pastors/elders understood these terms, I recorded them acknowledging this understanding. In addition, I made it clear that for their participation, they would receive a final copy of the research findings and recommendations in digital format. I also informed them that I would be writing notes in a journal during the interview, so there may be brief pauses after they answer, but this should not be perceived as indicating that I was not listening or that I was evaluating their answers.

The interview followed research questions 2 and 3, except where there was a need for clarification, more information, or examples. In alignment with Seidman's design, I chose prompts specific to the participant's answers in order to aid in the recommendations section of this project. Seidman states that researchers need to be good listeners (rather than having prepared prompts), must follow with questions based on what the participant is saying and the "inner voice" of the participant, and must be aware of the process as well as the substance of the interview. He explains that researchers should listen for cue words, such as "adventure" or "fascinate," that should indicate to researchers the need for more information, clarity, or stories.[19] Seidman encourages researchers to ask open-ended questions, avoid leading the participant, and write down thoughts to follow up on (as opposing to interrupting the participant's response).[20]

The interviews were recorded in a digital audio format. During the interviews, I also recorded any personal observations in a research journal. Upon the conclusion of the interview, I thanked the participant for their contribution and asked them if they had any other thoughts or comments that they wished to add. I informed them that I would

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[18] Seidman, *Interviewing for Qualitative Research*, 74.

[19] Seidman, *Interviewing for Qualitative Research*, 85-90.

[20] Seidman, *Interviewing for Qualitative Research*, 90-93. Although, according to Leedy and Ormond (*Practical Research*, 245), potential prompts are advised. In an effort to balance this tension, I have written a few potential prompts in my interview questions (see appendix 2) but have allowed myself freedom to go beyond these.

transcribe the interview, they would have the chance to review the transcription, and they could add any further thoughts or data at that time.[21]

**Stage 3: Data Organization**

All of the data, including my own journal observations, was collected and coded into similar themes. Creswell and Poth explain that "coding involves aggregating the text or visual data into small categories of information, seeking evidence for the code from different databases being used in a study, and then assigning a label to the code."[22] As such, I have identified significant words, quotes, and themes as well as observations regarding participants' significant pauses and tone. I analyzed my coding using NVivo, a coding software program for researchers.[23] In accordance with Seidman's recommendation, no data was coded until all interviews were conducted and transcribed.[24]

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**Validation Strategies**

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Creswell and Poth offer nine potential forms of validation for qualitative research. While all of these validation tools are not possible with this study, I have sought to employ five aspects of research validation.[25] The first two, "clarifying researcher bias" and "collaborating with participants," have been demonstrated above. I have detailed my own history with the subject matter and have allowed interviewees to contribute additional feedback and data after the interview process. The remaining strategies of

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[21] While none of the participants made alterations to the data gleaned from interviews, two provided additional documentation from their church documents. These are included in

[22] Creswell and Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 347.

[23] NVivo, https://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo-qualitative-data-analysis-software/home/.

[24] Seidman, *Interviewing for Qualitative Research*, 122.

[25] Creswell and Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 449-54.

member checking, giving "rich, thick descriptions," and conducting a peer review are detailed below.

**Member Checking**

Following the completion of data coding, reported findings, and recommendations, this information was sent to the research participants for their feedback. In cases where there was significant pushback on a particular finding or interpretation of data, members of the expert panel were consulted for final evaluation.

**Rich, Thick Descriptions**

I sought to record any significant use of emphasis, words, or ideas in my research journal and to note these as well as significant quotations in my research findings. However, space limits the ability to include every such instance in my findings. As such, I am willing to share completed manuscripts in their redacted form upon request.[26] Future researchers are free to examine these for further consideration of transferability to their own research.

**Peer Review**

Prior to the publication of this research, it was separately reviewed by the interview participants, the expert panel, and my defense readers at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary—the Doctor of Education department head, the Vice President for Doctoral Studies, and the Dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism, and Ministry. Any recommendations for changes by one party were made before the research was presented to the next group. The final copy of this research has received approval from all three parties.

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[26] Researchers may contact me at michaelandsarah@rtim.org.

## Research Assumptions

Based on my own experience as a minister of the gospel and as a member of an international congregation and based on knowledge gleaned from the precedent literature, I have conducted this research study with the following assumptions.

First, cultural hierarchies do not necessarily need to arise from *intentional* attitudes of superiority but can arise from biases that those in power hold—biases of which they may not even be aware. Michael Emerson and Christian Smith have noted that "racial practices that produce racial division . . . (1) are increasingly covert, (2) are embedded in normal operations of institutions, (3) avoid direct racial terminology, and (4) are invisible to most Whites."[27] In addition, Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald state that "hidden biases are capable of guiding our behavior without our being aware of their role."[28] Second, it is assumed that cultural inequalities are by their nature detrimental to ethnic minorities or those who hold less power in a particular context.[29]

Third, the pastors of a given church can best speak to the factors that aid or hinder cultural representation in their leadership bodies. As a former pastor, I am well aware of the dynamics in the church—both political and personal—that must be factored in before significant changes can be made. Fourth, it is assumed that the majority of pastors interviewed were honest in their assessment of their congregations and had a greater desire to please God rather than to present themselves or their congregation in the best light.

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[27] Michael O. Emerson and Christian Smith, *Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 9.

[28] Mahzarin R. Banaji and Anthony Greenwald, *Blindspot: The Hidden Biases of Good People* (New York: Random House, 2013), Preface, para. 6, Kindle.

[29] For example, though a congregation may be primarily indigenous this does not mean that they are the most powerful party in the congregation.

## Rationale and Significance

The rationale for this study is born from a desire to understand the factors that will aid and hinder the increased ethnic representation among church leaders in international congregations. My hope is that the findings and recommendations of this research will serve to aid and encourage these congregations in their ministry to the various cultural groups they serve. My hope is that in doing so, these congregations will be better equipped to fulfill the Great Commission in making disciples of all nations.

Further, from a researcher perspective, my hope is that this research would be a springboard for future research of the same kind to be replicated in multiethnic churches around the world. My hope is that in doing so, churches in every place would have a greater awareness of the cultural inequalities that surround them and be given tools to name and combat such inequalities, even in their own congregations.

## Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided a detailed description of the research methodology that I used in this project. I have tried to honestly present my own biases and assumptions going into the project while seeking to balance these with several forms of research validation. For this qualitative study, I have sought an exhaustive purposeful sampling of pastors/elders from Ecuadorian international congregations. My research— including the interview methodology, data collection, coding, and interpretation—was informed by the precedent literature and strictly adhered to the guidelines outlined above. I have conducted all research under the oversight and counsel of my research advisor and other qualified individuals.

Chapter 4 outlines my research findings by means of weighted values. The final chapter of this study interprets the research findings, offers recommendations based on these findings, and offers suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

The previous chapters of this project have outlined the need for ethnically representative leadership, particularly in areas and congregations with broad ethnic diversity. Yet overwhelmingly in international congregations, the highest levels of leadership seem to be held by Caucasian North Americans. This research was able to identify four congregations in Ecuador that met the criteria of being international congregations. There are approximately twenty pastors who lead these four churches: one of the churches is led by a single pastor; one has a "board"; one is led by a husband-wife team with a few "associates" who lead the Spanish service; and one has a lead pastor and a body of elders.[1] Of these twenty pastors, eleven are Caucasian Americans, and two are from the United Kingdom. Each church has one pastor who is considered the "lead pastor," and in each case, this position is occupied by a Caucasian American male. Despite this, many of the participants recognized the need to be culturally informed regarding their congregations and able to minister to them in culturally relevant ways. One participant noted, "[W]e believe that God doesn't have a particular culture that is that he highlights over the other, what do we use . . . what do we protest and what do we embrace from every culture? And what can we learn and then create really a hybrid of all these different expressions?"

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[1] Although, some of these elders are also considered "pastors" if they provide teaching or preaching services in the church. For the purposes of this research, each of these individuals was counted as a pastor, though this title had different meanings for different congregations. Additionally, it is unclear whether the governing board of one of the churches actually consists of "pastors," but since the lead pastor included them in his participation form, they are included with this data.

The aim of this qualitative study was to understand the perception of the current pastors and elders of these four congregations regarding how their congregations might move toward more ethnically representative leadership models. This chapter outlines the compilation methodology of the data, details the participant information, summarizes the research findings, and evaluates the research methodology.

## Compilation Methodology

The data for this qualitative study was obtained by interviews of the population sample conducted via telephone or Zoom audio.[2] For this study, I employed a purposive sampling of participants and sought to interview every pastor and elder of every international congregation in Ecuador. To find qualifying congregations for this study, I searched online databases,[3] contacted several missionaries in Ecuador, and contacted several expatriate groups on Facebook[4] for information about English-speaking congregations and their pastors. After gathering the names of several potential churches, I was able to exclude those churches that were no longer in existence or did not meet the criteria of international congregations as outlined by David Peterson.[5] Four congregations were identified as meeting the criteria of international congregations for this study. After these congregations were identified, the lead pastors were contacted via the email gleaned from their website or through personal reference. In most cases, these pastors were willing to refer me to the other pastors in their church. In total, eleven subjects agreed to

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[2] For the sake of consistency, I muted my camera and participants were asked to mute their cameras during the interview portion of the zoom calls. There were ten total interviews, nine of which consisted of a single pastor, and one interview was of a husband / wife team.

[3] International Congregations, "Directory: South America," accessed August 16, 2021, https://www.internationalcongregations.com/2015/01/16/south-america/; International Churches Network, "Directory of International Churches," accessed August 16, 2021, https://www.internationalchurches.net/directory-of-intl-churches.html (downloadable Excel file of churches).

[4] Facebook groups included "Expats in Ecuador," "Expats in Quito, Ecuador," "Expats and Amigos in Manta and Manabi," and "Cuenca Expats."

[5] David Peterson, *Expatriate Ministry: Inside the Church of Outsiders* (Seoul, Korea: David Peterson, 1999), 33. For example, Spanish churches that had an English service or congregations that had a denominational affiliation (e.g., Anglican, Baptist) were excluded from this study.

participate in the study. Participants were guaranteed anonymity and a final copy of the research findings prior to publication.

The audio interviews were recorded and transcribed through Temi transcription services then manually reviewed and edited.[6] I also took notes during the interview to refer back to participant statements and provide backup data in the event that the audio recording failed. Ten interviews (one of which included two participants) ranged from fifteen minutes to one hour and six minutes. Participants were asked to complete a participation form that obtained demographic information about themselves as well as the congregations that they represented (see appendix 1); ten of the eleven participants completed and returned this form.

After participant interviews were transcribed, participants received a copy of the interview (see appendix 2) and were given seven days to make any suggestions for change or additions to the manuscript. Participants were also allowed to submit any other information that might be considered relevant to this study (see appendices 3 and 4). The data was manually coded and organized using NVivo qualitative data collection software for Mac.[7] The research findings of this coding are outlined below.

## Participant Demographics

Eleven pastors participated in the study whose ages ranged from 36 to 83 years old. The sample included nine Caucasian American men, one Caucasian American woman, and one Latino Ecuadorian man.[8] Notably, at least two of the Caucasian participants in the study grew up in missionary homes outside the U.S. and would

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[6] Temi, https://www.temi.com/.

[7] NVivo, https://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo-qualitative-data-analysis-software/home/.

[8] In Ecuadorian culture, this man would be identified as Mestizo (i.e., being of Hispanic and indigenous descent).

typically be identified as a "third culture" individuals.[9] However, neither individual

identified themself with the culture of their upbringing but used the terms "white" and

"European American," respectively, on the participation from to identify their ethnicity.[10]

## Research Question Synopsis

The data for this project was compiled and analyzed according to the study's

three research questions:

1. According to pastors in the cases studied, what is the current status of ethnic diversity among Ecuadorian international congregations and their pastoral/elder bodies?

2. According to pastors in the cases studied, what factors relate to the hindrance of a diverse, ethnically representative leadership body in Ecuadorian international churches, and how might they be overcome?

3. According to pastors in the cases studied, what factors relate to the increased development of a diverse, ethnically representative leadership body in Ecuadorian international churches, and how might they be promoted?

## Findings

This project sought to discover (1) the current state of ethnic diversity and

representation in Ecuadorian international congregations; (2) pastors' perspectives on

(2a) the factors that hinder the increase of ethnic representation in Ecuadorian

international congregations and (2b) suggestions how those factors could be overcome in

their congregation; and (3) pastors' perspectives on (3a) what could aid with increasing

ethnic representation in their congregation and (3b) how those strategies could be

promoted or implemented. The main research questions of the study (2a, 3a) were kept

very broad, while the questions of implementation (2b, 3b) were specific to the

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[9] Third Culture Kids (TCKs) and Adult Third Culture Kids (ATCKs) refer to individuals who grow up in a culture other than their home/passport culture. "Children are TCKs for many reasons. Some have parents with careers in international business, the diplomatic corps, the military, or religious missions." David C. Pollock, Ruth E. Van Reken, and Michael V. Pollock, *Third Culture Kids: Growing Up among Worlds*, 3rd ed. (New York: Nicholas Brealey, 2017), 4, Kindle.

[10] However, other participants from the same congregation did identify one of them with the culture of their upbringing.

participants' answers to the research questions.[11] For this reason, the findings below are presented in a manner that fits the interview process.

**Research Question 1**

Based on the participation forms completed by participating pastors, the four international congregations of Ecuador ranged in size of having 50-240 congregants prior to the coronavirus outbreak.[12] The pastors reported having 2-26 nationalities represented in their congregation and their pastor bodies as consisting of 1-7 individuals with 1-3 nationalities represented among them. In terms of calculating averages, the average church had 114 people representing 12 nationalities, and the average pastor body consisted of 5 people representing 2 nationalities. Table 1 lists the demographic information of the participating congregations.

Table 1. Demographic information from participating congregations[13]

|  | Church A | Church B | Church C | Church D |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Congregation Size Prior to COVID-19 | 100 | 50 | 65 | 240 |
| Number of Pastors/Elders | 5 | 7 | 1 | 7 |
| Nationalities in the Congregation | 4 | 14 | 2 | 26 |
| Pastor/Body Nationalities | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 |

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[11] For example, if in response to question 1a a participant stated that racial discrimination was a hindrance to increasing ethnic representation among their church leadership, then for question 1b, I would ask how this racial discrimination could be overcome.

[12] At the time this study began, many congregations were still not meeting in person. As such, I decided to focus on the demographics prior to the outbreak as being more representative of the church.

[13] The numbers in this table represent an average (rounded to the nearest whole number) of the estimations given by the participants from each respective congregation.

**Research Question 2**

        The second research question sought to discover the pastor perspectives on hindrances to increasing ethnic representation in pastor bodies and how these hindrances might be overcome. Participants were first asked what the hindrance were, then asked to identify strategies for overcoming the particular hindrances they mentioned. The most common answers to the question of the factors that hindered increased ethnic representation were language and communication, finding the right leaders, and establishing trust cross culturally. Other answers that were given by more than one participant were the transient nature of the congregation, having distinct cultural values, the dominance of North American culture, and issues of discrimination. Finally, answers that came from just one participant or interview were different cultural perceptions and having a single pastor/single vision model of ministry. (See Figure 1 below) Participant answers to how these obstacles might be overcome are treated respectively below.
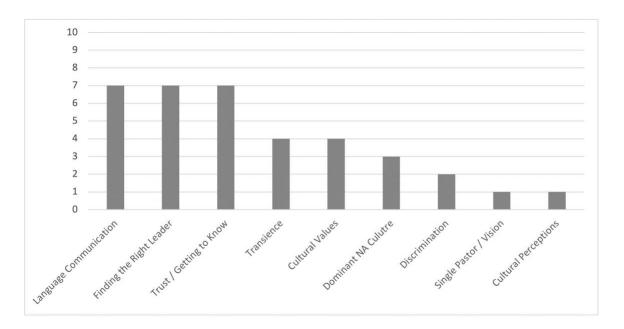


Figure 1. Factors that hinder increased ethnic representation in leadership[14]

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[14] The number 10 represents the number of interviews rather than number of the participants in the study. This is the case because in one interview, a husband-wife team opted to be interviewed together.

**Language and communication.** Most of the participants in the study felt that communication was a significant barrier toward increasing the ethnic representation of their leadership body. (A summary of participant responses is outlined in Figure 2 below) One of the pastors[15] noted that this can often hinder people from even participating in the church:

> So one of the factors that keeps us from being able to bring in other ethnic groups and especially the Spanish speaking ethnic groups, is the fact that we—very few of us—are bilingual. We don't speak Spanish very well. We studied it, we can understand it some, but to speak it's another matter. And so, you know, these people who would come that might be Spanish-speaking they really have not a lot to be able to participate in and to be able to understand because of the language barrier.

Others felt that proficiency in English was a necessary component of leadership in their church. In the words on one pastor, "Since our church uses English for the foundation of most of our ministry, we sometimes have felt like we needed to choose elders that could handle English well. And not everybody that attends the church can speak English well. And so that limits us."

As a result of these criteria, North Americans often are considered for leadership more readily than others who do not have English as their first language. One pastor stated, "So the tendency is to have been English speakers who are well apt in English speaking, which normally come from North America and training that people have gotten up there." Conversely, one of the participants argued that members of other ethnicities who may otherwise be quality candidates for church leadership are often not considered if they cannot speak English well:

> I've got one guy in mind right now, Chinese guy, the more I get to know him, the more, I think he's a solid, solid follower of Christ and living on mission for Jesus faithfully, well-versed in the Bible, someone that I would love to see on our elder team, but he speaks almost no English and no one else on our elder team speaks Chinese Mandarin. And so that would be a significant barrier sometimes depending on the person.

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[15] For the purposes of reporting, all participants are referred to as "pastors" whether their role is that of "elder" or "pastor" in their local church, for some congregations understand these terms as distinct and others use them synonymously.

In terms of how the language barrier might be overcome, most felt that there was no practical way to move past this obstacle, at least on the church's end.[16] One pastor said,

> I'm hesitant to think something like a live translation service would be able to help overcome a language barrier for somebody who doesn't speak English to the point where we could really serve on an elder team, given the weight and the expectations and types of things that we, that we work with and work on as elders. I don't really think something like that would work though.

Part of the rationale for this viewpoint was that many pastors felt that English was an essential part of their identity as an international church and was the reason that many people from various cultures desired to attend there. One pastor stated, "English remains primary and I think should remain primary given that our calling as an international church is to people who are not from here . . . , so I think English will remain in here." Another pastor stated that many congregants attended because they were looking for an English-speaking church: "Even though we've talked about going more to Spanish, it seems like a lot of people just want, they're looking for a place in English and that's our niche. That's what we can offer."

Several pastors suggested that instead of the church moving to being more bilingual, individuals who desire to move toward more meaningful engagement in the church should seek to learn English, and some felt that perhaps the church could help in this matter. According to one pastor, "And but one thing they [people from other cultures] do know [is] that if they can learn English their life will be better. And so I think if we could put together a program in which we would engage in that that would be helpful." One pastor noted that a lot depended on the desire of the congregant to learn English:

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[16] However, at least three out of the four churches I spoke to had made some accommodation for the national language of Spanish, including a translated manuscript of the sermon, a separate service that has the same sermon in Spanish, and live translation services through a listening device.

The understanding at least where I'm coming from myself then how do we help people overcome that language piece of it would have to do with how do we help them learn English and, or, you know, are they seeking to learn for themselves? You know I think that some of that would have to do on the desire of the person to learn English. I think also we have historically wanted to, and had many English classes where we're trying to help people learn English.

Some of the participants did see some problems with the expectation that congregants learn English. One pastor expressed doubt as to whether the church offering English classes would resolve the language barrier in a meaningful way:

You know, there's a lot of Latin [sic] and other nationalities that are in the [congregation] that definitely have a good grasp on English and, you know, throughout the time we have had different people who are from different nationalities, and it worked, you know, fine. So I don't know if there is anything that you can really do about that, you know, you [can] have more training in English, but I don't think that . . . that will necessarily fix the problem.

Another pastor expressed concern that we may unintentionally conflate linguistic ability with spiritual maturity: "If English becomes considered [supreme] well, okay . . . we can inadvertently send a message that a mature follower has, has a certain level of English ability. Nobody wants to do that, but that can end up being what's communicated inadvertently if we don't create the spaces for these other languages."

Other suggestions, each made by just one pastor, included having a separate Spanish service, having translators in the service, and trying to speak to people in their own language. As an example of the third suggestion, one pastor discussed a conversation with a Farsi speaker:

So when we're with, let's say with the Farsi speaking people, and with English, we'll take time with a Google translator or with a translator, and we'll go back and forth and it takes a little bit of time, but it just shows you that you value them as people. And so the more that you include them in your lives and with their language . . . , [that is] just a little practical ways of, of breaking down those barriers so that the different ethnicity feels like that you value them and that they are part of your life. So that's just one little example.

Another pastor noted that multilingual communication often works better in a small group setting rather than the gathered service because groups of same language speakers can help one another out:

We had six different languages represented in our group, and those languages would go on pretty consistently. And, you know, I'll be [honest], at times it was frustrating, right? You're teaching in English and . . . [what's being said] is being spread around and people are able to help maybe their husband, or their wife understand it more clearly by doing a translation into the language, as opposed to just having an English, Spanish parallel translation.
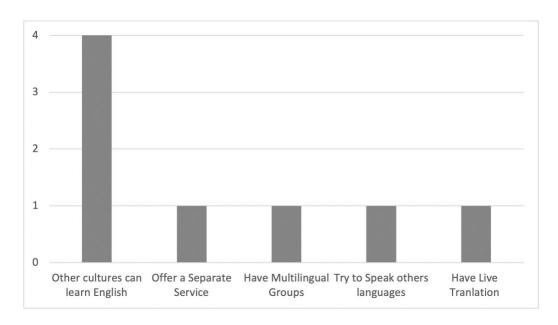


Figure 2. Suggestions for overcoming the language barrier

**Finding the right leaders.** Most of the participants in the study also noted a difficulty in finding qualified church leaders among many cultural backgrounds. One pastor stated that the elder body has "invited [people of other ethnicities] into that group in the past—Hispanic background, you know, have just declined because they're busy and involved in other areas—so it's not that there haven't been attempts. I don't think that's true." However, the pastors have attributed different reasons for the difficulty in finding leaders (see Figure 3 below). At least four pastors claimed that people from non-North American backgrounds seem to be less likely to desire to move into leadership positions in the church. One pastor—who himself is a representative of a non-North American culture—claimed that many people from other cultures are really only interested in improving their English ability:

> We do want to make it more culturally diverse in the leadership of the church, but generally because of our, our nature as an English-speaking church, people who come here even from like Ecuador or so are looking for the North American experience, like a church that speaks English because they want to improve their English . . . . [T]hey think that by learning this type of culture, they are advancing in their knowledge . . . . I think their goal sometimes is just to advance in their English or advance in their contacts or education, because they have a different plan, which is probably move to the States or have a better job and, you know, use that as a tool to get a job or whatever. And so to me, they're not in the leadership because they have a different goal and they probably don't want to be in the leadership.

Others have noted that because of the large Roman Catholic influence in Ecuador, many people—particularly Ecuadorians—are hesitant to move into a place of deep involvement in the congregation. One pastor explained that his city has a large Catholic population with more than fifty Catholic churches in the city. He stated that members of his congregation are "warned to stay away from those 'Christian heathens'." Another pastor stated that "anyone [from this culture] that might be interested in going into ministry or be in ministry goes into the Catholic church and either becomes a priest or a nun or something of that nature. So that the choices we have are very limited for that leadership."

In addition, some of the pastors felt that it was more difficult to find people from other cultural backgrounds who were like-minded and shared the same vision or philosophy of ministry. In one pastor's words,

> We have some in our Spanish speaking congregation who could be mentored to be leaders, but they tend to be loose cannons from time to time. And so we don't use them. We have to have people who understand our philosophy of ministry, no matter what culture they come from, no matter what step that is, they have to be willing or able to hook in with the vision that we have here.

One of the pastors who understands his church to be a missional church claimed that the idea of self-sacrifice does not seem to be shared by the Christians of his host culture: "But the problem that we discover here in this part of the world is that Christianity is not really defined that way. And people that even are interested in going to a church are not really that interested in the self-sacrificing cross life."

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A final reason given for the difficulty in finding qualified leaders among diverse ethnic groups is that many of the groups represented do not seem to come to their churches with the same kind of background and training that is often found among the church's North American population. According to one pastor,

> [I]t just seemed like a higher percentage of the spiritually mature people with leadership characteristics, you know, "leadership qualities" tend to be North American . . . . [I]t's not that every North American meets those qualities, and it's not that people from other backgrounds always don't . . . . [I]t probably relates to the fact that we have so many missionaries in our church that are North Americans. And so they're, they are people who have more Bible knowledge there . . . . And sometimes people from other ethnic backgrounds might be coming to the church just haven't been Christians as long. And just aren't as developed in their faith in that way . . . . And so, it makes it a challenge.



Figure 3. Difficulties finding leaders[17]

In terms of how these obstacles might be overcome, those who noted that many individuals from non-North American backgrounds are often unwilling to lead claimed that factor could be overcome if it is addressed at leadership levels. One

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[17] This figure terminates at 7 to signify the total number of interviews that mentioned a difficulty in finding leaders.

participant stated, "[I]t needs to start with leadership, I think." Another shared his

personal dream that a theological seminary could be established to help train those who

did not have the same opportunities for training:

> So I guess I would say that if we could create a more deeper and completer, more complete understanding type seminary that would take any of these young people that wanted to learn about this and get them a more in depth understanding of the Scriptures and the kind of the general understanding of Christianity behind it. And especially from our standpoint and emphasis at all on the self-sacrificing self-giving nature of the Christian life.

However, one participant, himself from a non-white background, felt that the

church, rather than trying to bring such individuals into leadership, should see the

missional potential of sending them into other places:

> [As a result of pastoral care . . . ] they have changed their perspective probably, or goals in life sometimes to follow what Christ has for them. And so it's hard to say, do we want to change that? . . . They do have some of the North American perspective being [here], but their culture, native culture that could be Colombian, Ecuadorian, Venezuela. And I don't know, but that culture gives them a different entry to other places. And so I don't know if we want to change that but we want to encourage people to follow what God has called them or revealed them to do with their life.

For those pastors who felt that like-mindedness was a hindrance to finding

ethnically representative leaders, two suggestions were offered for how this hindrance

might be overcome. Two pastors noted that individuals ought to be given opportunities to

serve as a test of their character. One pastor explained that he attempts to get people

involved in their "love ministries" (i.e., benevolence ministries) in order to examine

them. Another explained, "They have to prove that they are a servant. We choose people

to lead who've shown us that they are servants. First of all, they get in and do what needs

to be done." One of the pastors also felt that it was important to educate people about

who the church was rather than just invite them to come.

Finally, the individual who stated that many people from non-North American

backgrounds do not often have the same level of training or spiritual maturity felt that

this obstacle could be overcome by seeking out and discipling such individuals for leadership positions:

> Choose people who are potential leadership material, walk alongside them and complete what they need in order to be in positions of leadership. And so that includes things like just Bible and theology education, as well as you know, just intimate discipleship and giving them experience in and other ways of service before, before moving that meant to a bigger role such as an elder or something. So, so that that's the way to overcome that.

**Getting to know people/establishing trust.** Another major factor that appeared in 70 percent of the interviews was getting to know people and establishing trust interculturally. For many of the pastors, the "trust factor" has to do with our tendency to gravitate toward people of our own culture. One pastor said, "It has to deal with . . . being more comfortable around your own people groups. And you actually have to be purposed and purposeful to include other peoples in your, in your circle of your inner social circle, your inner ministry circle." Another stated, "[I]t's less natural for current leadership to develop close relationships with people from other ethnic backgrounds. That's just that's just a reality of the way it works." One pastor also felt that the need to grow in intercultural trust is a problem not just for the leadership but also for the congregation, who may need to overcome biases before they will follow certain leaders:

> Not knowing what the other cultures are like or using a predetermined idea of different cultures. Like if there was, for example, a middle East culture coming to the church, people really don't know how they act or interact with other people because they have an idea given by media or so this is what they do. And so there might be some fear for that in this community.

Because of this tendency to build homogenous relationships, the pastors believe we more readily trust people of our own cultures. One pastor noted, "I think that our natural bent is to be able to trust somebody from a culture we are more familiar with more readily than from a cultural. And I think that that is something that if we're not purposeful about, we will not ever really overcome." Conversely, another expressed,

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"[W]hen you come from a fairly limited cultural background, it's harder to think about others in leadership if you don't know them well." One pastor summarized this phenomenon concisely by stating that "the challenge is that our default tends to be . . . to more readily trust people from our own culture, just because we understand them better."

One pastor additionally explained that our criteria for establishing trust are often culturally based:

> And so if you, if you use the traditional metric, maybe you would say for trying to understand can I trust this person? Often times we, we look through a cultural lens to test whether or not this person is trustworthy. An example may be "Okay. What mission is sending you?" Well they may not have a mission that's sending them. "What's your home church?" Well, maybe they came from a house church in a country that has been persecuting Christians. "Okay. Well, we can't really use that one. What's your seminary degree?" "I didn't do seminary. I learned in in a house church framework." And you know, the questions can go on and on. And at some point we look at that and we say, oh, my normal framework for testing and, trusting this person kind of has to go out the window at an international church.

When asked how the obstacle of trust could be overcome, the most common answer given by the pastors was that the church should create opportunities to serve where church leaders can observe the growth of individuals from various ethnic backgrounds. In the words of one pastor,

> If you have a church full of different ethnicities . . . , you take time with them and learn about them and include them in activities, whether they're social activities or ministry activities, and as the more involvement in their lives, you have more inclusion and, and you see that these people are gifted and maybe even theologically trained or theologically sound in the, in their lives and you have more inclusion.

The pastors described this process as letting people from different backgrounds "be challenged by [new] experiences and . . . take on new responsibilities." One pastor stated that "it's usually through those type of settings whether they've gotten involved in kitchen, kids, or a small group, or maybe even just being in a small group and then getting into the position where they're teaching more." However, that same pastor also noted that, again, there must be a willingness from the individual, "but all that is based on whether the person is out there doing it; willing or interested in that, you know?" Another

pastor claimed that service opportunities—particularly missional opportunities—were able to give leaders a clear assessment of an individual's spiritual maturity:

> We are reaching out to these refugees and immigrants, and I'm walking alongside this brother. And pretty soon you start to see who the active work of the Holy Spirit, which brother and sister, is really like moving in. And at least that's been our experience within our group where you all of a sudden say, Hey, you know what? These people are needing more milk. This guy over here, he's on meat and he's ready to go.

The second most common answer was that the church leadership must participate in cross cultural engagement and relationship building. According to one pastor,

> I think it's, it's just by doing life together because that's when you get to know people, that's when you get to see, Oh, you, you do believe in this, Oh, this is interesting. What, why would you do this? . . . And then, you know, my stereotypes go down when I get to experience their culture. And when I get to know the people for who they are, and not just my preconception of what I thought it was.

This engagement can be as simple as "making friends with people from other cultural backgrounds, even when it's not natural" or traveling to other areas for the purpose of cultural engagement. "[A question I might ask is], 'can I take the elder team on a trip . . . into the jungle to spend three days with [an indigenous group]?' You know, I think that kind of pushes our cultural boundaries in appropriate ways for us to kind of learn." However, it was argued that such engagement must begin with intentionality by those who are already in leadership positions:

> Well, it all starts with the leadership, everything rises and falls on leadership. And so if the leadership is self-absorbed in his own person in his own, his own ethnicity, then he will not look out at the richness there in his community or, or this congregation there. So it all starts with the attitude of the leadership . . . . So, what we do is try to include [people of other cultures] in a conversation instead of little cliques around with just all Americans or all one ethnicity . . . to include other people and value them.

A couple of the participants noted the value of small groups in helping to establish trust. One pastor stated that "small groups are great with doing that." Another pastor explained that whereas Sunday services allow for minimal involvement, in small

missional community groups, "if you're not pulling your weight, and you're just there to kind of get something out of the family, it becomes obvious really quickly." The same pastor also stated, "I think [the ability to evaluate people] speeds up in this smaller setting, your ability to be able to walk with someone and say, 'hey, this person is trustworthy.'"

Finally, one pastor felt that the issue of establishing trust could be overcome by leaders' growing in their understanding of other cultures through reading books, and he cited David Livermore's *Cultural Intelligence* as an example.[18] He felt that educating himself in this way enabled him to "grow in awareness of my own cultural lenses and the grow in awareness of how other people see the world." Additionally, he felt that such education enabled him to train the church in cultural differences and be more "a-cultural" in his interpretation of Scripture. (A summary of participant responses is outlined in Figure 4 below)
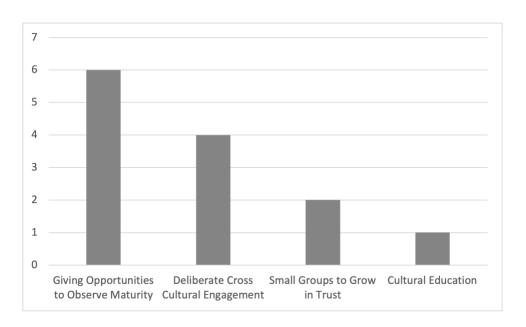


Figure 4. Overcoming the obstacle of building cross-cultural trust

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[18] David Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009).

**Transience.** According to several of the pastors interviewed (40 percent), an issue that further complicates building intimacy in international congregations is the short period of time that many people stay in their church. One pastor stated, "Our body stay, actually turns over about every two years. The people we had two years ago are not the people we've got now. So that's a big problem for us in all areas." Another pastor explained, "[There have] been times when there was a potential leader that we wanted to get plugged in and, and then before you knew it, he was gone and . . . there wasn't an opportunity to do so." One of the pastors compared his position to "being the pastor of a cruise ship." Another shared an illustration he had heard from another pastor:

> There's a guy named David King who runs an international church who had been a pastor for 10 years in Bangkok. And the image that he gave was . . . it's like a walk-alator in an airport where all these people are coming on and they're kind of going through quickly. How do we take those people and how do we pick them out for leadership and to be greater influence in our church, if they're kind of moving along and we don't know where they came from?

One of the reasons the transient nature of church membership complicates the leadership selection process is that many of the pastors are hesitant to promote someone to leadership that they do not know well. One pastor explained, "[T]ransience makes it a bit of a challenge to get to know someone to the point where you can trust them as a, as an elder in the church . . . . I don't think that putting somebody into an elder position or a pastoral position in a rushed manner is wise ever."

In terms of how this obstacle could be overcome, a couple of the pastors felt that the relational process could be expedited through small group ministry. One of these stated, "If we have solid, godly facilitators of our groups and we can plug people into those groups quickly when they become part of our church . . . , what that does is allows us to get to know people and get to know them on a more personal level outside of the Sunday morning, larger gathering." Another stated that these "smaller missional settings" were similar to "build[ing] a greenhouse" where growth could happen very quickly.

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Additionally, two of the participants felt that the transient nature of church involvement should be embraced and seen through a kingdom-building lens:

> And so the reality, our reality, is people are going and traveling all over the world, going different places. And so that's just a given. And what we need to do is make disciples of people as much as they're with us, and then send them off as they leave to go make disciples somewhere else. And and have a small part of fulfilling the great commission by doing that . . . . So in a way, it's, in a way the answer is no, we don't we don't overcome the turnover rate, but in a way, the answer is we make the best of it and use it for the sake of the kingdom.

Finally, one participant said the "need to develop a fuller theology and theological understanding" for church, but particularly for those potentially moving into a pastoral position in the church. (A summary of participant responses is outlined in Figure 5 below)



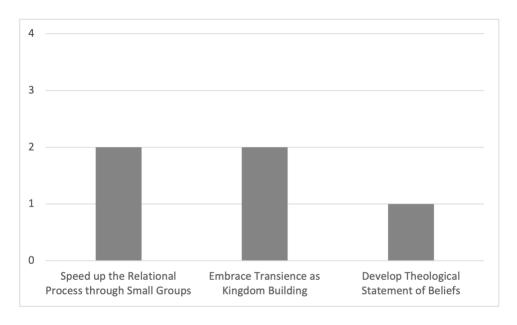Figure 5. Overcoming the transient nature of the congregation

**Differing cultural values.** Another hindrance to growing ethic representation in church leadership that several of the participants (40 percent) mentioned was the different cultural values that people held. One pastor claimed that Ecuador had a "very strong caste system" that made social status "very important." Another pastor explained

that these different cultural values create "differences of how things are handled and how things are explained and you'd have a little bit different directions that people would want to go." One pastor gave an example of this phenomenon: "Many people tell me they are warned to stay away from those 'Christian heathens' [laughs]. . . . [W]e have 52 Catholic churches here in our town." Another pastor explained the difficulty that pastors of international churches constantly face:

> When you're in a multicultural [setting], then you have to look at different cultures, different sayings in these cultures, and you know, spend time with each other and maybe explain in greater detail because maybe the other, the foreign ethnic person wouldn't understand the saying or a part of the cultural aspects to a meeting or a vision meeting or something like that. And so those would be some challenges to it. It's not impossible, but there would be some challenges to it.

To overcome this obstacle, a couple of the pastors suggested that churches need to grow in their cultural understanding. One pastor explained the need for this growth for those who come from a North American background: "Everybody's different already . . . So letting people know a little bit of cultural backgrounds and training in that area would probably help." Another pastor, however, stated that those from minority cultures should seek to grow in their understanding as well: "It's been both ways. We have had to assimilate into some of the Latin [sic] ways and—because we are the leaders—they've had to assimilate into ours and they just know how we offer it now."

Another solution that a couple of pastors gave was modeling servant leadership for other cultures. In one of the interviews, the following statement was made: "[W]e are toilet cleaning pastors . . . ; we really are. We're servers; we're leader-servers, and lovers. We just think really that people are drawn to the gospel through his love, not through the glitzy [means]." Another pastor felt that their benevolence ministries served as a testimony to the culture around them: "I mean, we have a school for refugees. We have a school for orphans that are deformed. We have a battered woman's place that we help with. They're, you know, abandoned by their husbands and their children. We have all of

these places where they see us presenting a different view of what Christianity might be about."

One pastor felt that the way to overcome the hindrance of differing cultural values was to show acceptance. He explained that a large percentage of his church comes from a Roman Catholic background, so he tries to be sensitive to that: "I am careful not to speak out against the Roman Catholic church. You have to be careful because if you begin speaking out against the church you are going to close off those people because it is part of their culture." (A summary of participant responses is outlined in Figure 6 below)



Figure 6. Overcoming differing cultural values

**Dominant North American culture.** Four of the pastors interviewed stated that the prevailing U.S. culture in their congregation was a hindrance to increasing the ethnic representation in their leadership. One pastor stated, "[T]here is some lack of diversity of ethnicities on our elder team, because our church is made up of quite a few North Americans." Another pastor said that the North American culture "dominates the church, not on purpose, but it's just because our church is made of, you know, more

people from North America." Yet another pastor felt that this phenomenon naturally results from more members coming from that background: "[S]ince there's fewer people to pull from or quality potential leaders from other ethnic groups, it tends to happen more with whites or North Americans. We just have a bigger pool there." However, one pastor warned of the danger of having such a dominant culture in the congregation:

> I believe that the most significant hindrance to ethnic representation in elder and pastoral [positions] . . . , the highest part of the leadership in a church like an international church, is traditional [North American] understandings of church. It is everything from a very academically expressed teaching have 45 minutes on Sunday . . . . [I]t certainly places a barrier between most leaders who English may not be their first language . . . And again, culturally, we tend to still think of things on that Sunday morning slot as a very time-oriented and planned out structured thing. And that can feel almost you know, it can, it can feel rude or insensitive to cultures that value interpersonal and more conversational.

Interestingly, the four pastors who cited this hindrance gave four different solutions for how it might be overcome. One pastor suggested that "people from different cultures getting involved deeply in the ministries will open the opportunity for them to be a part of the leadership," but he also noted that "so far it hasn't happened." Another pastor felt that the solution involved meaningful listening to other cultures by saying things like "tell me about your experience of following Jesus, and centering around scripture in your [sic] country." He also felt the church should have a greater number of smaller "family style gatherings" that "do life on life in a very regular way." His final suggestion was that churches should have more culturally inclusive worship:

> So an example of that is repeated lyrics and music . . . . [M]any [other] countries [have a] very oral based way of learning and repetition is an important part of that . . . . [Y]ou will repeat the same two or three lines again and again, and again. It's a great space to learn from each other, but if I'm not used to that, it could sound to me as though there's, there's just not any substance . . . . If I'm from, you know, Iran or the Philippines or wherever, and I come in and I'm hearing on a Sunday morning . . . some [North American established] mission that our church is celebrating. My thought is, oh, those Westerners are the ones who do mission . . . , [so] what can we do to create as many spaces as possible for other languages to be welcomed and encouraged our worship when we're singing? . . . Because when you have been out of your home country and you come back into it and you hear your language again, there's something just really wonderful and special about that.

**Other hindrances.** Other hindrances that were mentioned by just one or two pastors include discrimination, cultural perceptions, and having a single pastor/single vision of ministry. Two pastors mentioned that discrimination created a barrier to more ethnic representation in their church's leadership. One pastor stated, "[O]ne of the things that is most prevalent is the discrimination of the leadership, how they were raised, what culture they're from, and how they accept the culture that God has placed them in." Another explained, "[I]n an international church setting you have a tendency and sometimes a danger of forming groups and cliques . . . , and not including everybody else. So those are some of the dangers of that . . . It communicates that another maybe race is not welcome; maybe a second-class citizen." One felt that this obstacle could be overcome by demonstrating love and acceptance to people who are looked down upon by the culture:

> We have to demonstrate. We have to accept . . . [that it] doesn't matter what class you're from. It doesn't matter what "pais," country you're from. That isn't what's important. What is important is that this [Venezuelan refugee] is another human being from the Lord, Jesus Christ, for whom the Lord Jesus Christ died. God created, loves, and values [them]. And so we value, we tried very hard to teach, "love the Lord, your God, with all your heart and soul and mind but *love your neighbor as yourself*."[19]

One pastor couple noted that a potential hindrance was differing cultural perceptions. They offered the following example: They had a covered dish meal at their church, and many of the Ecuadorians invited friends and family to come, but there was not enough food feed everyone. An Ecuadorian woman finally asked the purpose of the meal. One of the spouses from the pastor couple answered, "And I said, well, it's for fellowship. So we can all get together as a church body and enjoy a meal together." Then the Ecuadorian woman responded, "Oh, she said, it isn't to bring, new people [to the church]?" The pastor couple felt that this obstacle could be overcome by putting systems in place, keeping explanations very simple (particularly when it comes to spiritual

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[19] Italics in quotations represent words that were emphasized in the interview.

matters), and listening carefully to make sure we understand what people from other cultures are trying to communicate:

> I think it's, you know, clarify, verify, and then just keep asking questions until you really discern what they're really asking and what their real bias may be. Many times we jump at what we think they're asking, or [what] we think the answer is that they want to hear and we really don't understand what it is that they're trying to get to. And that that's a cultural thing, many times.

Finally, one pastor felt that having a single lead pastor with a firm vision or model of ministry could be a deterrent to growing ethnic representation in the leadership. This pastor felt that those in such positions could overcome this obstacle by being open to outside viewpoints and voices:

> I think Scripture speaks to the fact that there's wisdom obviously in hearing from God, but also in the wisdom of many counselors . . . , and with that comes, comes issues of greater knowledge, understanding familiarity and comfort, maybe with diversity and being able to deal with the ups and downs of people, dealing with situations differently than what I might want to do myself going forward.

**Research Question 3**

The second half of the research interviews focused on pastor perspectives for how ethnic representation could be increased in the participants' congregations and how these ideas could be implemented. There is notably an overlap between this section and the implementation aspect of the first section of the interview (i.e., how the hindrances to increased ethnic representation in leadership might be overcome). It is likely for this reason that the interview participants had less to say than when they were addressing hindrances. A few began their answer saying things like "I think related to some of the things I just said" and "[I]t was kind of similar to the other question already asked." A few others referred to answers they had previously given.[20]

The participants in this study were asked what could help increase the ethnic representation of their pastor bodies then asked how their particular suggestions could be

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[20] However, future researchers are encouraged to keep this aspect of the interview as it did generate additional data.

promoted in their congregation. The most common suggestion to increasing ethnic representation was that church leaders should practice deliberate inclusion of individuals from other ethnic groups. A few pastors also suggested that current leaders work to develop cross-cultural relationships, have a clear path of discipleship, and grow in their cultural understanding. Additional answers included pastor mentorships through missional community groups, finding teachable people, and focusing on outreach to Ecuadorians (see Figure 7 below). Each of these answers are explored in detail below.



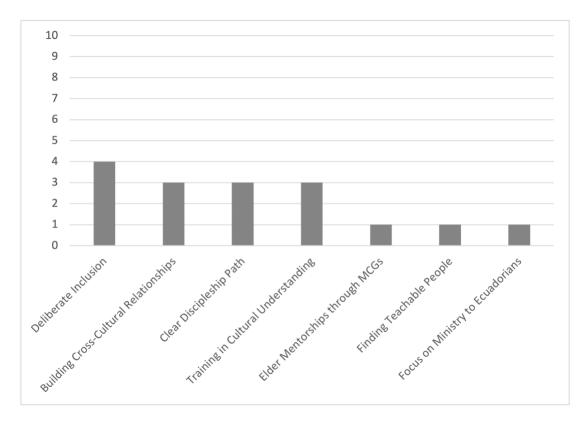Figure 7. Suggestions for increasing ethnic representation in leadership

**Deliberate inclusion.** Forty percent of the pastors interviewed identified the need for church leaders to identify areas where people from various ethnic backgrounds can get more involved in church life. One pastor noted the value of "giving [people from other cultural groups] some responsibility and giving them some visibility." Another

pastor stated that "if you're purposeful in thinking about those, those individuals that show promise and are giving them appropriate areas of responsibility, it's beneficial to the church all along." Deliberate inclusion extends to the highest levels of church service; as one pastor explained, "When we're at that moment [when we are looking for new elders] we need to ask ourselves too, have we considered people from all ethnic groups? Is there another ethnic group that we're overlooking?" One pastor added that the process of inclusion is a continual one through stages of commitment:

> If I want people to be in the worship team, then I will probably ask them to join the Bible studies and see their abilities, their musical abilities . . . , but I will not put them [in] right away. I generally say, "Hey, you need to join another ministry for three months and I'll be in contact with the leader of the ministry, making sure that you are participating, that you are committed to the ministry." . . . It's part of our call, I think. And so giving opportunities in different ministries that can probably prove that they will be fit for a higher position.

In terms of how this suggestion could be promoted in their churches, two of the pastors suggested that the leadership look for specific areas where individuals could get involved and encourage them toward that position. One pastor stated that from a leadership perspective, "[w]e've asked [about including people from outside ethnicities in the elder body] verbally aloud as a group and we've made lists—brainstormed and we've made lists—we've walked through anybody we could think of." Another pastor stated, "[S]ome people need to be coaxed and yeah, others are ready for the challenge even before they [think they] might be ready."

Two other pastors, however, believed that the best process was to start with the individual and help them find the place they felt most comfortable serving. One pastor stated, "I'm teaching the ministry of helps, you know, and getting people to tell us what they would like to do, where they would like to serve." His wife added that they also

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conduct seminars and spiritual gifts assessments.[21] Another pastor suggested simply

talking to individuals to find the places of ministry that they are passionate about:

> Have a conversation with people and say, what are you passionate about? Because sometimes in leadership, we have noticed that we are trying to create programs and trying to put who we think is a leader for that. And generally it works 40% of the time . . . . And so I think by letting the people describe what their passions are and just seeing where they fit in the church, I think it's a great way to improve the chance of giving them opportunities because . . . they might just haven't found a right place. You know, we have just certain ministries available, but they could create something else. And so by having conversations that door can be opened.

One pastor claimed that promoting deliberate inclusion in the church might

mean the current leadership re-examining what they consider to be "leadership material."

In speaking of one leader who grew up in an indigenous culture, this pastor noted, "I

think he's a great elder for that reason, because he fits the needs that we have as a church

that are not necessarily approached from a North American style . . . . I think that we

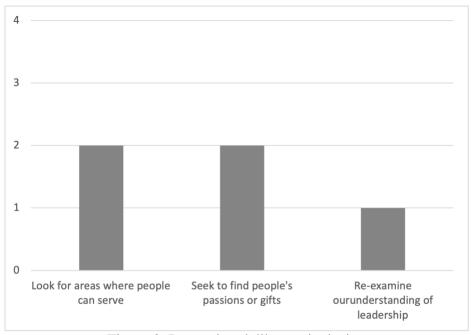need to think [that way] even more." (Responses are summarized in Figure 8 below)



Figure 8. Promoting deliberate inclusion

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**Cross-cultural relationships.** Three of the interviewees mentioned the need for those in leadership to build what one of the participants called "purposeful relationships" with congregants from different ethnic backgrounds. One pastor stated, "In terms of leadership, they have to be on the same page as us. So I guess a lot of it would be for me, it's building relationships enough with that person that I can train them to do what we want them to do." Another said, "I think it's back to relational. You know, [if] the elders aren't spending time getting to know people, different cultures, then they're probably never going to come to the place where they can discern [who might be a good leader]."

In terms of how building cross-cultural relationships could be promoted in the church, two of the participants felt that putting people together who may not normally associate with each other could force them into fellowship. One pastor stated, "One of the things that I have done from time to time is put two people together that really didn't like each other . . . opposites working together and eventually finding out, you know, the other person is not so bad after all, a lot of it has to do with knowing who they are in Christ." Another pastor saw cross-cultural small groups as a means of creating this fellowship:

> If we can plug different ethnicities into one small group and have all of our groups . . . have some ethnic diversity in them—though obviously not the only factor or the only consideration as we form groups and things like that. But where we can do that, I think that can really help people grow to see and understand [one another] more appropriately. One of the groups that we just wrapped up that we've been doing for the last almost year [and] we had, I don't know, five or six different ethnicities in there, and it was pretty cool. And you do start to get to know people because you're spending time together.

One pastor also saw the value of small groups in building cross-cultural relationships. He stated, "[T]he benefits of doing life together and getting to know one another on a deeper level . . . . I think is where is where that familiarity and the understanding of other individuals, the giftedness that God gives to them really comes out." The pastor went on to add, "I do think body life and we call them 'missional

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communities' at [our church]. I think that is the breeding ground for more leadership

representation across different ethnic groups."

One pastor additionally noted that growing in cultural understandings is

necessary in order to have good cross-cultural relationships. This pastor shared two

stories of difficulties in cross-cultural communication:

> We had a Bible study probably four years ago and I was leading the Spanish Bible study and we had to women in that group who were really being contentious that night . . . . I made the mistake of putting my hand up, like a policeman would put their hand up, [to say] stop that's enough. And that woman burst into tears and ran out of the room. And I was just left speechless. And later I found out that you don't do that in this culture, but that's, that's very offensive to them . . . . So in building relationship, learning these, tweaking these little things . . . , we have a [man from India in our church] he's bossy and he comes out of a culture in India where he was in a class system where he was running the roost . . . he almost got kicked out of the building where he's renting, because he told the landlord that the hot water wasn't working in the shower and he needed to fix it.

(A summary of participant responses is outlined in Figure 9 below)
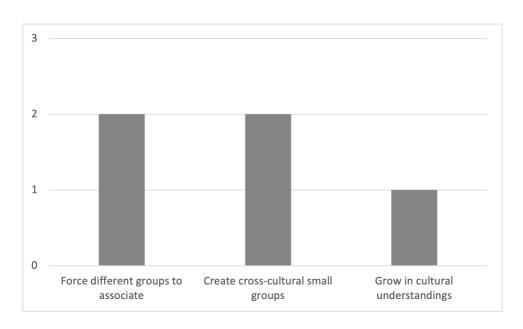


Figure 9. Promoting cross-cultural relationships

**Training in cultural understanding.** Three of the pastors claimed that

training the congregation in understanding other cultures could be an important part of

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having a more ethnically representative leadership. One pastor stated, "We could seek to increase education and understanding of the ethnic diversity of churches. It's like in the book of Acts when people came from all over. So help give people that understanding." Another said, "I just want to make sure that there's an intentionality coming from the elders to say, what cultural things, what worldview things do we need to work on equipping our people for. And then that trickles into these groups." One pastor explained that such a step might be necessary for people of other ethnicities to be accepted as leaders by their congregation:

> If the congregation as a whole does not come to be more sensitive—more ethnically sensitive—they will not easily or well follow somebody from a culture they don't know or trust . . . . [I]f, you know if the church body really only trusts—and historically, I think there's actually a problem here amongst some—that really only trust white missionaries. Well, okay. Let's, let's help you kind of filter through that. Why is that . . . and where do you need to grow in your understanding of culture and ethnicities? So that way you can learn to follow somebody who is not a white missionary.

In terms of promoting such a training in their congregation, each of the pastors offered a different means of how this might be accomplished. One pastor felt that congregants could grow best in their cultural understandings in a small group setting: "[Y]ou're equipping, but it's equipping in a relational setting . . . through a shepherded family type type setting . . . . [I]t's also [preparing people for] what are some of the major worldview realities that I need to be prepared for?" Another pastor felt that allowing people to share "testimonies of God's work in their lives… helps too, because you're [sic] giving some exposure . . . and you're starting to hear how people see the world." A final means of promoting this solution was educational:

> I think that education is helpful because maybe, you know, you spend six months getting to know somebody and going out to coffee every week and whatever, and they're from a different culture. So you're still scratching your head saying why do they do it that way until somebody comes along and points it out? I think that can be helpful or things you didn't even know to ask.

**A path of discipleship.** Three of the pastors cited the need for a discipleship process. One pastor noted that their church had implemented courses that were "a means of helping people become leaders in the church and invite their friends. We teach celebrating together in corporate worship and the outcome will be more pastors, leaders, and shepherds." Another pastor described his church's path as being a process through stages of maturity rather than a curriculum:[22]

> We start from day one and give a clear path, a sequential path of, of how a person can reach the leadership . . . . So I think it has to be intentional from day one, that beginning process of discipleship that one day your disciples will actually be your mentor . . . . [S]o this past year the leadership team at [our] church, we actually sat down and mapped out a route that helped people—the new believers in the different ethnicities, coming into our church—to map out a route for their growth.

One of the pastors felt that such a process not only aids people of different ethnicities in moving into leadership positions but also serves as a protection for the church: "I think just giving the opportunities in a church is a responsibility for the leadership. The leadership has to make sure that the people who could be given an opportunity will not hurt the body by having a leadership role."

One pastor argued that to foster a discipleship path, this solution could not be promoted without a vision from the leadership: "It has to be a part of the vision from the pastor and the eldership, because if the leadership doesn't have that passion and vision, then it's not going to happen."

**Other suggestions.** The three remaining suggestions for helping to increase ethnic representation in church leadership were each given in only one interview. The first of these suggestions was establishing relationships with teachable people. The pastor felt that this suggestion could be promoted in people's demonstration of humility by admitting when they are wrong: "I think that's a real quality of leadership and demonstration to the people that, uh, you know, I can serve with this person because

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[22] See appendix 3 for a copy of this outline in redacted form.

they're not a dictator." The husband-wife team stated that the best means of promoting diverse, ethnic representation in their pastoral body was "probably by teaching character, very good principles of character preaching . . . . I think a lot of it is done in the seminar environment where people can ask questions."

The second suggestion was that the church take more seriously its ministry to its host culture. The pastor stated, "[W]e need to take much more seriously our need to be in ministry to the Ecuadorians. We all know we should . . . ; why are we trying to get what few English speaking people there are engaged in Christianity? Why are we focusing upon them?" He felt that this solution could be promoted by focusing on holidays and cultural events, using the internet as a means of communication, and creating informative church materials in Spanish.

The final suggestion was that pastors could use small missional groups to mentor people and recommend them for ministry positions. However, this pastor felt that for such mentorships to work, there has to be full "buy-in" from those who serve in the highest positions of church leadership:

> It's gotta be a commitment from the elders to say these things that seem small, like a little group of people that are meeting in a house . . . [but] the transformational kingdom reality of what this will do in the long run, in a church that's international, like this is fully worth it. And I'm going to give my space, my house, my time, my whatever for the kingdom in that sense . . . because if you have just one or two people doing it, the cost is too high . . . , the cost feels often too high to step into these types of groups and say welcome people in my house, and, and try to learn other cultures and all these things . . . it's the modeling part with a clear vision that says, this is who we are.

### An Additional Remark on the Findings

One note of significance regarding the interviews was that many of the pastors saw the value of growing the ethnic representation of their leadership body. One stated, "[A] couple of people that are moving closer to becoming elders . . . are from other backgrounds. And so that's good to, that's good to see." Another pastor stated, "[B]ecause I realize it's an area that I still need to grow in. But I want to grow well, if

that makes sense, I want to grow up faithfully." One pastor explained that having

increased ethnically representative leadership could open the door to growing ethnic

diversity among the pastors:

> [People from different backgrounds can say] "Hey, my people are also elders. I can
> do that as well. Jesus came and gave me that opportunity as well" . . . This is just
> going to multiply the ethnic reality in your church. It's rather than it keep it a small
> segment . . . , it's going to end up multiplying and kind of be like a snowball effect
> in that sense.

However, many of the pastors interviewed wanted to clarify that someone

should not be put into a leadership position simply because of their ethnicity but that

meeting the qualifications of Scripture is the primary concern when examining who is

qualified to lead. One pastor stated, "[I]t is a tricky situation because we want to expand,

but not just for the sake of expanding or having a bigger team, we want to have the right

people in the right places . . . . [W]e want to pay attention to what God is saying."

Another stated, "[W]ho's a good leader should be based more on biblical guidelines

looking at [the Bible]. First Timothy . . . gives guidelines for who that would be, what

kind of person that would be. And that has very little to do with . . . another kind of I

guess 'artificial characteristic' that's based on culture." One pastor noted that while

pastors should practice cultural sensitivity and inclusion, Scripture stands over culture:[23]

> And that I think is something we should be purposeful about, obviously with an
> appropriate balance [with] biblical guidelines on spiritual maturity, on character, on
> calling. Things like that can't ever be overruled by cultural considerations or the
> desire for diversity, anything like that. But we should be careful that we are seeing
> those things appropriately, even across cultural lines, if that makes sense . . . . I'll be
> the first to say that I need to and want to be more culturally sensitive to the people
> that I'm interacting with whatever ethnicities or cultures that are coming. However,
> no culture trumps Scripture as God's revelation or stands above the gospel.

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[23] For a fuller discussion of the relationship between Scripture and culture, see Don A. Carson,
*Christ and Culture Revisited* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008).

**Summary of Findings**

The findings of this research demonstrate that although the average Ecuadorian international congregation has twelve nationalities represented in their church, the highest positions of leadership on average represent only two of those nationalities. Additionally, the lead/senior pastor positions in each of the congregations represented in this study are occupied by a Caucasian North American.

In terms of hindrances to increasing the ethnic representation in their pastoral bodies, the pastors identified nine obstacles, six of which were mentioned in more than one or two interviews. Language and communication barriers, establishing trust and getting to know people, and difficulty finding qualified leaders were each mentioned in seven of the interviews. The transient nature of church membership, differing cultural values, and the dominance of the North American culture were each mentioned in four of the interviews.

For the most common answers to research question 2, most of pastors felt that the language barrier could not be overcome by the leadership but that congregants should try to improve their language skills and perhaps the church could help in this matter. Other suggestions included having a separate language service, having small multilingual home groups, and offering translation services. Notably, at least three of the four churches represented in this study do provide some accommodation for their Spanish speakers, as this is their host culture language.

To overcome the obstacle of establishing trust and getting to know people of different ethnicities, six of the seven participants who identified this hindrance felt that a promising solution was providing opportunities for people to serve in areas where their character and spiritual maturity could be observed. Other pastors who mentioned this obstacle stated that church leaders should be deliberate about building cross-cultural relationships. A couple of pastors noted the benefit of small groups in establishing trust, and one suggested that leaders should seek to educate themselves on other cultures.

The final obstacle that was mentioned in seven of the interviews was finding quality leaders among different ethnicities. However, the participants of this study expressed three different reasons for this phenomenon. Four pastors suggested that many people who come to the church are not interested in pursuing leadership positions; these pastors suggested that this obstacle could be overcome by encouragement from the leadership, by churches' establishing seminary-type theological training, or by churches' simply seeing the missional potential of people serving elsewhere. Some of the pastors identified a difference in like-mindedness and vision from people of different cultures and suggested that their church could offer information about their missional identity and look for people who are servant-hearted. One pastor felt that the difficulty in finding leaders was due to a lack of training or maturity in those who came from other cultures; this pastor suggested that this obstacle could be overcome through deliberate discipleship.

In terms of the second tier of answers to research question 2, those who felt that differing cultural values create a hindrance to increased ethnic representation in leadership suggested that this obstacle could overcome by church leaders' helping the congregation grow in cultural understanding, modeling servant leadership, and showing acceptance and cultural sensitivity toward other cultures. Those who saw the dominance of North American culture as an obstacle suggested having culturally inclusive worship, giving leadership opportunities, having small family-style groups, and employing meaningful cultural listening as ideas for how this hindrance might be overcome. Those who mentioned the transient nature of the church community as an obstacle suggested that it might be overcome by speeding up the relational process through small groups, embracing the transience as kingdom building, and developing theological standards for leadership.

When asked what could help increase the ethnic representation in their leadership bodies and how these things could be promoted, the pastors offered seven suggestions. Four of these suggestions were offered by more than one person. The most

common answer—given by four pastors—was that church leaders should be deliberate to include people of other ethnicities in areas of service where they can be evaluated as well as into leadership positions. To promote deliberate inclusion, the pastors suggested that leaders look for areas to place people in the church, evaluate members for their gifts and passions, brainstorm ideas for ethic representatives for pastoral positions, and reassess their leadership assumptions.

The remaining suggestions—that leaders should be intentional about building cross-cultural relationships, that the congregation grow in its understanding of various cultures, and that there be a clear path of discipleship to leadership—were each mentioned in three interviews. Those who suggested intentional relationship building recommended that this idea could be promoted by putting people from various cultures together, utilizing small groups, and helping the congregation and leaders grow in their understanding of cultural differences. Those who suggested that the congregation grow in its cultural understanding offered building relationships, maintaining home groups, and having people share their stories as means of promoting this idea. In terms of promoting a clear discipleship path to leadership, it was noted that if this was not part of the passion and vision of the leadership, then it would not happen.

### Evaluation of the Research Design

John Creswell and J. David Creswell explain that the purpose of qualitative research is to understand "the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem."[24] This section evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of this study's research design in accomplishing this purpose. This study was conducted through participation forms and live online audio interviews and phone interviews of pastors of international congregations in Ecuador. The goal of this research was to ascertain the current state of

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[24] John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 5th ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2018), 25, Kindle.

ethnic representation in those congregations as well as the pastors' perspectives on the factors that could potentially hinder or aid the increase of ethnic representation in their pastoral bodies. Additionally, the study sought the pastors' perspectives on how these hindrances could be overcome and how the aids to increased ethnic representation could be promoted.

Because of the lack of research that currently exists on leadership in international congregations, a qualitative study was the best method for creating a starting point for future research in this field. My living in Ecuador, serving in an international congregation, and knowing many of the participants personally gave me special insight into the research. However, the careful collection and analysis of data helped reduce the personal bias that I might have inadvertently brought to the study.

The strengths of this study was its comprehensive scope and open-ended interview format. The study was comprehensive in its scope in that—to the best of my knowledge—every international congregation in Ecuador and every lead pastor of those congregations is represented in this thesis. Additionally, several other pastors, co-pastors, and elders were interviewed. Beyond this, every pastor of every international church in Ecuador was given the opportunity to participate in the research interviews. The research questions were asked in a broad, open-ended format to allow for "rich, thick descriptions" from the participants, who were encouraged to respond as openly as possible.[25]

Finally, the findings of this research were verified by member checking, an expert panel, and the guarantee of anonymity. A pilot interview and its findings were examined by an expert panel who gave feedback on questions and the style of the interview process. Following the interviews, participants were allowed to review the

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[25] On "rich, thick descriptions," see John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oak, CA: Sage, 2018), 453-54, Kindle.

transcripts and suggest changes or make additions. They, as well as the expert panel, were given the final findings to evaluate and provide additional feedback. Each interview participant was guaranteed anonymity regarding their answers, which provided an additional layer of assurance that they could speak freely.

The weaknesses of this research were threefold. First, nine of the eleven participants in this study were Caucasian males from a North American background. Because of this lack of ethnic diversity, there is little "outsider" perspective in this thesis. Additionally, because the interviews were conducted as nine individual interviews and one joint interview, I decided to quantify the findings in terms of interviews rather than individual speakers, which may create confusion for some readers.[26] Finally, because of the qualitative nature of this study, the findings are limited in their generalizations. While I do not feel that these weaknesses lessen the value of the findings, they will nevertheless influence the suggestions for further research offered in the next chapter.

## Conclusion

This research has been successful in acquiring the perspectives of Ecuadorian international church pastors on the current state of ethnic representation in their pastoral bodies, potential hindrances to and aids for increasing this representation, and suggestions on how their recommended changes might best be implemented in the respective congregations. The next chapter interprets the findings by identifying notable themes in the participant responses, making recommendations for international church pastors, and identifying potential areas of research for future study.

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[26] The figures, for example, are scaled in reference to ten interviews rather than eleven pastors.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Recent research in the field of international churches has noted the missional

potential for these congregations. David Young has argued that international

congregations must abandon an "oasis" paradigm and move toward alignment with their

Great Commission calling. He states, "The problem addressed by this research occurs

when the church prioritizes consumerism over God's glory and mission, specifically in

the context of the IC [international congregation]."[1] In addition, Ernest Klassen argues

that international congregations are poised to have great influence over the English-

speaking aristocracy in their host cities:

> If the international churches of the world can adjust their missional focus so as to
> embrace the English-speaking nationals without compromising their unique and
> legitimate ministry to the expatriate community, then the international church can be
> instrumental in reaching significant portions of unreached sectors of world-class
> urban centers.[2]

Moreover, several of the participants of this study have expressed the kingdom-building

potential of equipping and sending people of the many ethnicities that make the

international church their congregational home before returning to their home cultures.

Scholarship, however, has also demonstrated the need for ethnically

representative leadership. Chapter 2 of this thesis outlined how having diverse ethnic

representation in our leadership bodies sends a message to members of minority

ethnicities that we seek to celebrate their cultural distinctions rather than to assimilate

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[1] David W. Young, "Redirecting the International Church from an Oasis Paradigm to Missional Thought, Community and Practice" (DMin thesis, George Fox University, 2017), 9.

[2] Ernest Klassen, "Exploring the Missional Potential of International Churches: A Case Study of Capital City Baptist Church, Mexico City" (DMin thesis, Asbury Theological Seminary, 2006), 1-2.

them into a majority culture. Additionally, this thesis has demonstrated how ethnic representation aids greatly in informing our models of ministry, provides individuals from other cultures with a "person of peace," and allows them to see the potential of stepping into leadership themselves. In other words, the more international churches grow in ethnic representation in the highest levels of their leadership, the more they will be poised to capitalize on their missional potential for the kingdom of God.

## Interpretation of Findings

Of the pastors interviewed, many affirmed the need to grow in the ethnic representation of their church leadership. Although there was some variety in how to best accomplish this growth, four interconnected themes emerged that permeated the pastors' recommendations. The first of these themes was *the need for growth in cross-cultural understandings and relationships*. Participants seen the need for this move both in the church leaders who will be identifying and training future leaders as well as in the congregation who will be asked to follow their leadership. Growing in cross-cultural understanding and relationships was identified as factor in overcoming issues in communication, worship, the dominant North American influence, the transient nature of the congregation, and having differing values. Growing in cross-cultural understanding and relationships was also seen as a means of promoting deliberate inclusion and building relationships.

Participants noted that while a number of books existed on understanding various cultures and values, it was equally important to get to know people through intimate engagement and life-on-life ministry. This theme is consistent with Klassen's statement that "leadership experienced in cross-cultural life and ministry enhances the development of missional characteristics in the international church. Missiological basics

speak of the importance of contextualization, language acquisition, and cultural accommodation in order to connect with the people."[3]

While stated in various ways, a second theme that emerged in the pastors' answers was *the need for a disciple-making path to church leadership*. Based on the content of the interviews, this path would include getting to know people intimately and identifying potential leaders, placing people in service positions that they are passionate about and can be evaluated in, having an established theology for leaders, and making deliberate attempts to move people from various backgrounds into leadership positions. Creating a discipleship path to leadership was identified as a solution to how the issues of transience, the lack of training, the dominant North American culture, differing cultural perceptions, and finding leaders can be overcome. Creating a discipleship path to leadership was also suggested as a way to promote deliberate inclusion, elder mentoring, and outreach efforts.

The need for deliberate discipleship corresponds to Young's findings on international churches. He suggests that international congregations adopt a model that starts people in short-term "starting points" that help people beginning in their walk with Jesus, then moves them to "intermediate groups" that help develop their theology, and finally places them in "missional community groups" that encourage them to use their gifts for the Great Commission.[4] Young states, "The IC [international church] that focuses on disciple-making, and continuously identifies and engages leaders throughout the organization, will reproduce disciples and leaders as well as develop new ministries, services, and churches."[5] John Folmar, pastor of an international congregation in Dubai, affirms the need for multiethnic churches to be united around a common theology:

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[3] Klassen, "Missional Potential of International Churches," 133.

[4] Young, "Redirecting the International Church," 111-33.

[5] Young, "Redirecting the International Church," 122.

> The worst thing you can do in a multi-cultural environment is to dumb-down the doctrine, or avoid the hard-edges of theological truth, in order to try and keep diverse people on the same page. Maybe you think: they are from all over the world and I must lighten up the teaching to keep them unified. In actual fact, robust truth is what will keep churches and friendships together amid their diversity. *Lowest-common-denominator theology promotes strife and feebleness, not unity and strength*.[6]

In the book *Scattered and Gathered*, Warren Reeve notes that even when discipleship does not produce leaders in the local congregation, it "can produce well-rounded, holistic, multicultural disciples who reproduce themselves when they move on to their next country or back to their country of origin."[7]

A third theme that emerged was *the need to utilize small groups to speed up establishing trust and raising up leaders.* The participants typically described small groups as "family style" and "life-on-life" discipleship. A few participants described "missional communities" (or MCGs) where participants served together, were mentored, and had the opportunity to be observed for higher levels of church leadership. Small groups were stated to be beneficial in overcoming the language barrier, the dominant North American influence, and the transient nature of the congregation. They were also identified as an aid in building relationships, establishing trust, growing in cultural understanding, and creating elder mentorships.

Researchers have discussed the benefit of small groups in international congregations. David Pederson, in his foundational work on international congregations, *Expatriate Ministry*, states, "I see small groups as an indicator of the health of an international congregation."[8] He recommends that leaders should emphasize small group ministry through each level of church ministry. He also suggests that congregations have

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[6] John Folmar, "Building a Multi-Cultural Ministry on Gospel Doctrine," *9Marks Journal* (Summer 2015): 45 (emphasis original).

[7] Warren Reeve, "Unleashing Great Commission Potential through International Churches," in *Scattered and Gathered: A Global Compendium of Diaspora Missiology*, ed. Sadiri Joy Tira and Tetsunao Yamamori (Carlisle, UK: Langham, 2020), chap. 11, "Discipleship Training," para. 1. Kindle.

[8] David Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry: Inside the Church of Outsiders* (Seoul: David Pederson, 1999), 79.

three types of small groups: those that *task* (i.e., oversee ministries), *teach* (i.e., give a theological foundation), and *touch* (i.e., minister to high-need situations). Finally, he suggests that a variety of means are employed to develop a small group network.[9] Klassen's research found small groups—in particular contexts—to be the most effective means of reaching nationals and assimilating people into the church.[10] As noted above, Young likewise outlined a path of discipleship utilizing "starting," "intermediate," and "missional community" groups. He states that missional community groups "are committed to holistic discipleship" in that they "integrate discipleship, evangelism, and community."[11]

A fourth and final theme that was repeatedly identified in the interviews was *the need for intentionality by the pastor(s)*. Overwhelmingly, the participants in the study felt that for any effective change to happen in the church, it must be promoted and participated in by those in authority. Participants felt that pastors must not only be deliberate not only in modeling behaviors like love, humility, and servant leadership but also actively in supporting needed changes in the church. In other words, a move toward greater ethnic representation in their pastoral bodies *will not happen without intentionality*. The interviewees claimed that pastors must be deliberate about cultural sensitivity, including cross-cultural relationship building, creating culturally inclusive worship, employing meaningful listening, and seeking input from outside voices. They also held that pastors must be meaningfully involved in every aspect of moving people toward leadership, including participating in small groups to get to know people,

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[9] Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry*, 79.

[10] Klassen, "Missional Potential of International Churches," 87. Klassen relates, "According to the pastor of the English service, assimilation in an international missional church is facilitated by the small group and by taking a place of responsibility" (102).

[11] Young, "Redirecting the International Church," 109. Young extensively details the characteristics, disciplines, and practices of missional communities (133-46), drawing from Todd Randall Engstrom, "Missional Community as a Model for Integrated Discipleship in an American Context" (DEdMin thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014).

identifying leaders, discipling potential leaders, brainstorming for candidates, pushing people toward leadership, and including them as equal voices once they are in leadership positions. One pastor stated that we should even begin with a vision in which the people we are developing will one day be mentoring us:

> So I think it has to be intentional from day one, that beginning process of discipleship that one day your disciples will actually be your mentor. And so, if it takes a lot of humility for that and prayer and recognition that you know, one day that you may be exhorted by a brother from a different nationality, but that's a good thing because that was part of that discipleship process.

Young suggests that pastors should "intentionally invest about 20 percent of their time in developing leaders" through looking broadly, creating an expectation of leader reproduction, leading "leadership cohorts," and developing personal mentorships.[12]

Multiple authors on the subject of international churches have noted the significant power the pastor(s) has toward transformation in his church. Klassen states, "Once the intention is in place, the rest follows naturally, provided the right kind of person or team gives the appropriate leadership."[13] He further explains that "the most significant and determining factor affecting the degree and pace of missionality in the international church is the pastor."[14] It is perhaps for this reason that Pederson asserts that "the choice of a pastor is the most significant decision that the international congregation (IC) makes."[15] Joel Carpenter suggests that given their trickle-down influence, pastors of international churches may have far more influence than they realize: "The sojourners who worship in your congregations will be eager to apply the lessons they learn there and replicate the blessings they receive from you when they return home. So the strategic

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[12] Young, "Redirecting the International Church," 158.

[13] Klassen, "Missional Potential of International Churches," 132.

[14] Klassen, "Missional Potential of International Churches," 136.

[15] Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry*, 108.

planning you pursue this week may be more strategic than you imagined. God is full of surprises."[16]

## Pastor Recommendations

Based on the four pervasive themes discovered in the participant answers, the following recommendations can be made to international church pastors so that they can move their churches toward increased ethnic representation in their pastoral bodies. The first recommendation is that *pastors must be intentional to grow both themselves and their congregations in their understanding of other cultures and in intercultural relationships*. Growing in this way will, at very a basic level, mean that leaders will need to educate both themselves and their congregations about other cultures and cross-cultural communication.[17] Education about other cultures could include small group book studies, mission trips to other cultural groups, training through conferences (perhaps using guest speakers), but also education about other cultures should be established as part of "welcome" and new member classes—since this should be a core value of the church. People who attend the church should have an understanding that the leadership values their culture and that they are expected to value one another's cultures as well.

Additionally, elders and congregations should utilize a number of means toward cross-cultural relationship building. At a minimum, there should be a space for everyone's culture and language to be represented and welcomed. While it is not reasonable to expect that leaders can learn everyone's language or that the church change

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[16] Joel A. Carpenter, "World Christianity and the Ministry of Expatriate Churches," *Presentation to the Strategic Planning Meeting of the American & Foreign Christian Union* (Calvin College, August 26, 2005), 5.

[17] Participants referenced David Livermore, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009); Jayson Georges, *The 3D Gospel: Ministry in Guilt, Shame, and Fear Cultures* (n.p.: Timē Press, 2017). Other notable books in this field are Sarah Lanier, *Foreign to Familiar: A Guide to Understanding Hot- and Cold-Climate Cultures* (Hagerstown, MD: McDougal, 2010); A. Scott Moreau, Evvy Hay Campbell, and Susan Greener, *Effective Intercultural Communication: A Christian Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014); Harry W. Gardiner, *Lives across Cultures: Cross-Cultural Human Development*, 6th ed. (New York: Pearson Education, 2018).

its central language from English, it is reasonable to expect that leaders can seek to bring people of same language groups together to help one another. Leaders can also try to communicate interpersonally in other languages even if it means using services like Google translate or even use a personal translator. Furthermore, because many pastors noted the need for potential leaders to learn English, as well as the desire of many congregants to do so, English classes should be a regular ministry of the church.

Many pastors felt that the greatest means of growing in cultural understanding is interpersonal relationships. For this reason, leaders should be intentional to place people (and themselves) in situations and groups where they will be forced to associate with people outside their own culture. This step should take place *after* both groups have received training on cross-cultural communication and thereby know best how to communicate with one another—and to do so without causing offense. Creating these relationship opportunities can be as simple as having people serve together in a particular ministry or be a part of a multicultural/multilingual small group. The more interaction between different groups occurs, the more people will see one another as individuals instead of as stereotypes.

Finally, cultural inclusion should extend to the gathered worship service as well. A few of the participants shared the value of hearing the stories of others, so pastors should give space for testimonies that represent different cultural backgrounds. They should let various cultures weigh in on how they worship in their home culture and use this communication to inform how their church could worship as a corporate body. When preparing the sermon message, pastors should allow a diversity of voices to speak to how *they* understand the passage, and then they would apply it in their own culture. Pastors could allow people from various backgrounds to write up a "sample sermon" that they could use to inform their own preaching. When highlighting different ministries or having different people address the congregation (through the welcome, prayer, announcements, etc.), leaders should make sure that the various ethnic groups in the

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congregation are being represented. While this may slow down the service, cause more

work, and be sometimes hard to understand, the rule should be that *no culture* feels

completely comfortable so that every culture can feel a little more comfortable.

The second recommendation is *pastors must be intentional to work with other church leaders—particularly those who are representative of different cultures in their congregation—to develop, implement, and promote a discipleship path toward leadership in their congregation*. The first step of this process must be to clearly establish the

church's identity; each church must be able to answer the questions "What is our

purpose?" "What are our values?" and "What do we believe?"[18] Beyond answering these

questions, leaders should communicate this identity clearly and consistently to members

and outsiders. While it is not recommended that the church post—or worse have people

memorize—some all-inclusive mission/vision/purpose statement, it is recommended that

the congregation, and particularly the leadership, be united in understanding who they are

and what they do.[19]

Following this, current leadership must clearly establish both what is expected

of future leadership and how a person makes it there. This path should include both

theological standards for leadership and a practical plan of discipleship. It has been well

said that if someone does not know where they are going, any path will get them there.

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[18] These questions are loosely based on Patrick Lencioni's six crucial questions of organizational health: (1) Why do we exist? (2) How do we behave? (3) What do we do? (4) How will we succeed? (5) What is most important, right now? (6) Who must do what? Patrick M. Lencioni, *The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business* (San Francisco: Wiley, 2012), 77, Kindle. While not a ministry publication, the book is an excellent resource for understanding leadership in any setting.

[19] Lencioni states,

Though I can't be sure, I suspect that at some point about thirty years ago a cleverly sadistic and antibusiness consultant decided that the best way to really screw up companies was to convince them that what they needed was a convoluted, jargony, and all-encompassing declaration of intent . . . . And if companies would actually print those declarations and hang them in their lobbies and break rooms for public viewing, well, that would be a real coup. Even if my historical suspicions are untrue, it can't be denied that most mission statements have neither inspired people to change the world nor provided them with an accurate description of what an organization actually does for a living. They certainly haven't created alignment and clarity among employees. What they have done is make many leadership teams look foolish. (Lencioni, *The Advantage*, 75-76).

The plan of discipleship should begin with church membership and have measurable steps toward eldership ordination in the congregation for biblically qualified candidates.

Ideally, prospective church members should receive an orientation on the church's identity (as outlined above) and the expectations of membership. At a minimum, all church members should be expected to align with the church's mission and theology (Eph 4:11-16), submit to the church leadership (Heb 13:17), give to support the ministry of church (Heb 13:16), serve in some capacity (Rom 12:4-8), and participate in the church's program of discipleship (Matt 28:19-20). If the church has not had a membership orientation, then it is recommended that current leaders emphasize these expectations with the entire congregation through a sermon series, printed materials, and/or private conversations.

From the initial orientation stage, pastors should begin seeking to move people through intentional stages of discipleship, specifically targeting people of diverse ethnic backgrounds to take on growing levels of leadership. Church leaders must continuously be giving advancing leadership opportunities that might include, but are not limited to, ministering to another person, teaching a class lesson, leading a class, overseeing an area of ministry, serving as a deacon, serving as an elder or pastor, and being sent out as a missionary of the church. An incomplete theology is no excuse for not considering someone to leadership; it only means that the church has more work to do in discipling the person in their faith.

Through each stage in the process, leaders should be identifying specific individuals and specific jobs that might be suitable for them. If an opportunity does not exist for someone, then leaders should seek to create one that aligns with the individual's passions and gifts. During this process, pastors should be observing, correcting, and encouraging the new leader as well as exhorting them to move into a new role once they have shown proficiency in their current role. It is not enough to simply ask for volunteers or to hope that people will just step into roles; leaders should target a potential leader and

say, "I think you would be great for this. Would you be willing to do it? I will be right there if you have any questions or need help."

Beyond this, churches should not have expectations for leaders if they are not willing to provide the means for them to achieve these expectations. If a leader needs to display certain character traits, then the church must teach and model these traits. If a leader needs to be proficient in English, then the church should provide language classes. If leaders are expected to be capable teachers, then churches must provide training in teaching and supply teaching opportunities. If leaders are expected to have a seminary-level education, then the church must provide seminary-level classes to help leaders achieve this goal. If churches are unwilling to make these accommodations, then they are practicing *de facto* discrimination against people from cultures that do not provide such opportunities.

The third and final recommendation is that *pastors must be intentional to utilize and attend smaller family-style community groups in their church to promote cross-cultural relationships, identify leaders, and give leadership opportunities*. It is not just enough to "offer" small groups; if pastors hope to grow in their understanding of cultures and raise up a diversity of leaders, then they must promote and attend small groups, though they do not necessarily need to act as the leader of those groups. Peterson states "The pastor and family should be involved in a small group. The church leadership should see themselves in some way as a small group, giving nurture and development to one another. Small groups are caught, not taught."[20]

Along with the suggestions given by both Peterson and Young, I recommend several small group settings. First, there should be a new member orientation that outlines the church's identity and member expectations. Depending on the church's values and

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[20] Pederson, *Expatriate Ministry*, 79.

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goals for new members, this class can last from a few weeks to a few months. The church building is probably the best place for this group to meet—in contrast to the other groups.

Once students have finished the membership class, they should transition into a discipleship class. Because making disciples is one of the central purposes of the church, *every church member* should be expected to attend a discipleship class. I recommend two types of discipleship groups. The first type of group is a Bible study group that should serve to equip believers in the theological foundations of the faith, familiarize them with the stories and people of the Bible, encourage them in practicing spiritual disciplines, and create a space for cross-cultural relationships. Because of the intimate and growing nature of these groups, open dialogue and conversation should be encouraged. Ideally, this training would not be self-contained in one class but would be a series of classes that ran in cycles according to the discipleship plan established by the leadership.[21] Bible study groups help pastors assess the Bible knowledge of potential leaders, correct poor theology, and allow potential leaders to have teaching opportunities in a contained, mentored setting.

The second type of discipleship group is a family-style missional community group. Todd Engstrom defines a missional community as "a community of Christ followers on mission with God in obedience to the Holy Spirit that demonstrates tangibly and declares creatively the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a specific pocket of people."[22] These groups provide the deepest level of intimacy in church life. They are "communities" in the sense that they typically meet in homes over a meal and provide life-on-life fellowship and accountability. They are "missional" in the sense that they encourage both personal evangelism and strategic ministry to a particular segment of the outside

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[21] Groups could also run concurrently but should be structured in such a way that church members can work through all of them.

[22] Todd Engstrom, "What Is a Missional Community," The Austin Stone, accessed September 13, 2021, http://toddengstrom.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/What-is-a-Missional-Community.pdf.

community. Such ministries can include things like engaging people in the community with the gospel in day-to-day life, serving in a local food outreach as a group, or simply providing snacks at a school soccer match to build relationships. The goal is to create a gateway for gospel conversations and to begin the process of discipleship with someone new.[23] Missional community groups provide an opportunity for pastors to grow in their knowledge of people as individuals, assess the spiritual maturity of potential leaders, and recognize the gifts that different individuals in the church possess.

I would like to note a few caveats regarding these discipleship groups. First, while church members should participate in both types of groups, they do not have to do so progressively. Members in a missional group should be encouraged to participate in a discipleship group once the group ends and vice-versa. Additionally, one group can serve both missional and discipleship functions so long as there is intentionality in the way it is organized. Finally, and somewhat contrary to typical church practices, every group should have a definite lifespan. Having an end date for small groups not only prevents people from getting too comfortable in their "in-group" but also allows leaders a season to rest and new leaders an opportunity to step into teaching/leadership roles.

These recommendations, of course, are not a silver bullet; every pastor will have to adapt them to his particular congregation and contextual setting. Nevertheless, I believe that if pastors are intentional about growing themselves and their congregations in cross-cultural understandings and relationships, creating a culturally informed path of discipleship, and utilizing small groups to build relations and raise up leaders, then international congregations will move closer to having a more diverse, ethnically

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[23] A number of resources exist on missional communities aside from those mentioned in this chapter. A couple of examples are Mike Breen and Alex Absalom, *Launching Missional Communities: A Field Guide* (Pawleys Island, SC: 3DM, 2010); Johnathan K. Dodson and Brad Watson, *Called Together: A Guide to Forming Missional Communities* (Austin: GCD Books, 2014). Additionally, Reggie McNeal has written *Missional Communities: The Rise of the Post Congregational Church* (San Francisco: Wiley, 2011), in which he argues for missional communities as a *replacement* for a local congregation. I do not share McNeal's position, for I find it unbiblical and rather believe that all groups of Christians should operate under the authority of the eldership of a local congregation.

representative leadership body. In doing so, these churches will be more effective in ministering to the different cultures in their congregation, attracting more ethnic groups into their congregation, and reaching the nations for the kingdom of God.

## Contribution of Findings

This study is unique in that it addresses (1) ethnic representation in church leadership and (2) international congregations. As demonstrated in chapter 2, neither of these topics has been treated in great length by academic scholarship. I hope with this research to help address this void in current literature and provide tools and starting points for future researchers in these respective fields.

This study also exists to be a resource for pastors and leaders of multiethnic congregations, particularly international churches. This research has examined various models of multiethnic ministry and has demonstrated that a pluralistic model of church ministry provides the greatest benefit to the various ethnic groups represented in church congregation. This model can only be truly implemented when the ethnic groups of the church are adequately represented in the church's leadership. This research has sought to discover the factors that hinder and those that could potentially aid in increasing the ethnic representation in international congregations in Ecuador.

This study has further sought to discover through pastor interviews how the hindrances might be overcome and how the aids could be implemented. From the information gleaned through these interviews, I was able to identify not only the most recommended solutions to common problems but also suggestions for change and how these changes could be implemented. In addition, I was able to identify four pervasive themes in the interviews from which I was able to create three recommendations for best practices. This chapter has detailed how pastors can employ these recommendations to aid in increasing the ethnic representation in their leadership bodies.

Finally, it is my desire with this research to help identify the biases and blind spots for those of us who might occupy positions of authority and to give a greater voice to those who might be underrepresented in their communities and congregations. The hope behind this study is that it will give birth to more studies like it and raise more awareness of the need for diverse, ethnic representation in church leadership structures. A growing awareness will potentially aid in increased ethnic representation in church leadership around the world. For those of us in power, increasing our awareness means that we never stop looking to elevate others who do not have the benefit of the opportunities that we have enjoyed, and we never stop asking if there are voices that are not being heard—that we who are in Christ would all see ourselves as our brother's keeper.

**Limitations of the Study**

This qualitative research study faces a number of limitations. The sample population for this research consisted of only eleven pastors, and of these, Caucasian North American males were overrepresented, making up nine of the participants. For this reason, the findings of this study are limited in their generalization and may not adequately represent the opinions of individuals from lesser-represented ethnic groups. Two of the assumptions that guided this research were that the pastors were most qualified to speak to the research questions and that they would seek to answer honestly rather than present themselves in the best light. While I still affirm these assumptions, it is possible that others in the church may identify issues of which the pastors are unaware. It is also possible that some participants chose not to include information that would have benefitted this study or simply did not think of it during the interview, as the questions were not provided to the pastors in advance. There may also be problems in my own evaluation and coding of the data that could have impacted the findings.

## Transferability

While the findings of this project can only be generalized to the specific participants of the study and their respective congregations, the goal of this study is not generalization but transferability. John Creswell and Cheryl Poth state that qualitative studies should include "rich, thick descriptions" so that "the researcher enables readers to transfer information to other settings and to determine whether the findings can be transferred because of shared characteristics."[24] Consequently, the findings of this research will likely have the highest degree of transferability with other international congregations, particularly those in a Latin American context. However, church leaders of other multiethnic congregations may also benefit from the research findings. Finally, researchers exploring multiethnic and ethnically representative leadership may find a degree of transferability with their own research.

## Recommendations for Future Researchers

This research lays a groundwork for future research in a number of areas. While the findings of this research do not lend themselves to generalization, future research can test the transferability of the findings by duplicating the study in other contexts. Furthermore, researchers could conduct a qualitative study through the development of Likert scale to test whether the findings of this study can be generalized to international churches on a larger scale.

One limitation of this research previously mentioned is that it only included pastors and elders, which resulted in an overrepresentation of Caucasian North American males in the study. Future research could instead target lesser-represented ethnicities in the congregation's laity to discover the degree to which there is alignment and distinction in answers to the research questions.

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[24] John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oak, CA: Sage, 2018), 453-54, Kindle.

Additionally, researchers could test the recommendations of this study in their own cultural context and evaluate their overall effectiveness. Such a study could be conducted over a series of years in one or several multiethnic (preferably international) churches to evaluate whether their pastoral bodies grew in their ethnic representation as a result of the implementation of these suggestions. If they did not, then the study could examine what hindrances prevented this from happening and how they might be overcome.

Researchers could also test the claims made by the pastors themselves. A sample of potential questions for investigation could include the following:

1. What strategies are effective in overcoming language barriers in linguistically diverse groups?

2. What tools could church leaders employ to gain confidence for ministry qualification among people from culturally diverse backgrounds?

3. How do various cultural backgrounds influence the interpretation of Scripture and the formation of theology?

4. How does the temporary nature of church membership influence the way that a church's ministry is perceived?

5. How do people of other cultural backgrounds perceive the influence of the North American culture in international congregations? How can this influence be offset?

6. Is it true that underrepresented cultures are not as attracted to leadership positions, or do cultural values (or other factors) make them less inclined to pursue them?

Finally, while this research has sought to find the factors that hinder and aid the increased ethnic representation in church leadership, it has not explored how church dynamics are impacted once this happens. Future research would benefit from examining the strengths and weaknesses of multiethnic pastoral bodies. A qualitative study could explore how differing cultural backgrounds among pastors impacts ministry, decision making, and relationships in the leadership body.

**Conclusion**

In his first epistle, the apostle Peter tells the church that whatever gifts anyone has, they should use them to serve one another. Peter says ministry (whether speaking or serving) should be done in such a manner that "that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen" (1 Pet 4:10-11). It is for this reason that I believe that no research should be done for its own sake or worse—to make a name for the researcher. The goal of this research has been to discover practical means by which international pastors can more effectively minister to the underrepresented cultures in their congregations.

Scholarly research has demonstrated that the greatest means of ministering to people groups is to allow their ethnicity to be represented in leadership; any other practice is antithetical to the gospel of Christ who has made us all one in him (Eph 2:13-14). To discover how hindrances to ethnic representation may be overcome and how ideas to aid representation might be employed, pastors of Ecuadorian international churches were interviewed to best speak to these questions.

The pastors of these churches identified six significant hindrances to increasing ethnic representation.[25] These hindrances included (1) language and communication barriers, (2) finding the right leaders, (3) establishing trust and getting to know people cross-culturally, (4) the transient nature of the international community, (5) having differing cultural values, and (6) the dominance of the North American culture. Participants also offered four significant potential aids for increasing this representation. They recommended that leaders (1) practice deliberate inclusion, (2) prioritize building cross-cultural relationships, (3) create a clear path of discipleship, and (4) train both themselves and their congregations in cross-cultural understanding. The pastors offered several practical suggestions for how these hindrances might be overcome and how these

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[25] The term "significant" in this paragraph implies that the answer was given in more than two interviews.

aids could be promoted. From these suggestions, I have identified four pervasive themes: the need for (1) growth in cross-cultural understandings and relationship, (2) the creation and promotion of a disciple-making path to church leadership, (3) the utilization of small groups to speed up establishing trust and raising up leaders, and (4) intentionality by the pastor(s). These pervasive themes enabled the creation of the three recommendations for international church pastors.

It is my hope that this research will serve as a benefit to the international pastors who participated in this study, as a resource for pastors of other multiethnic congregations, and as a foundation for future research in this field. My goal is that our churches would move closer to an inclusiveness that reflects the universal *imago Dei* and is envisioned in John's Revelation when people from every tribe, tongue, people, and language are gathered before the throne, worshipping God and the Lamb (Rev 7:9). Finally, it is my aim that through the Holy Spirit the name of God would be glorified in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

APPENDIX 1

THESIS STUDY PARTICIPATION FORM

Instructions:
• In Section 1, please read the "Agreement to Participate" statement and confirm your willingness to participate in this study by checking the appropriate box and entering the requested information.
• In Section 2, please provide responses to each of the prompts and questions by entering your information in the shaded boxes. Please enter responses for every box, even if "not applicable" is most appropriate.

[Section 1]

**Agreement to Participate**

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to explore factors that aid and hinder increased ethnic representation in the pastoral bodies of international congregations. This research is being conducted by Michael D. Small, Jr. Under the supervision of Timothy Paul Jones, Ph.D. of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for purposes of a thesis research project. In this research you will complete the form below and participate in a personal interview by telephone. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time*. You will have **seven (7) days** to review a transcript of the conversation for accuracy as well as submit any other comments or data to this research. **After the seven (7) day period you agree that the transcript is accurate**. If you so request you can receive a final copy of the research findings.

By your completion of this form and the subsequent personal interview, and by checking the appropriate box below and entering the requested information, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

___ I agree to participate
___ I do not agree to participate

Today's Date:

E-mail:

Phone #:                                         Do you use WhatsApp? Yes   No

Best Days and Times to call:

[Section 2]

Preferred name:

Age:

Your ethnic background:

Church Name:

Church Location:

Approximate number of attendees on a given Sunday morning prior to Covid:

Approximate number of ethnic groups regularly represented in your congregation (prior to Covid):

Number of pastors / elders in your church:

What ethnicities are represented in your pastoral body?


Are you aware of any other English speaking congregations in Ecuador? Please include any information you are aware of regarding theses churches below (and THANK YOU for your willingness to help!).

APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW QUESTIONAIRE

Introduction: Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study, I want to inform you that, although I will record your name, church, and today's date in this interview it will not be included in the research findings and your identity will be kept confidential in relation to this interview. Do I have your permission to start recording?

[Start Recording]

For the record, today's date is _____ and I am speaking to Pastor _____ of _____ Church. Pastor _____do you understand that though this interview is being recorded, you will be kept anonymous with regard to this interview in the final findings of this research project and that you will have the opportunity to review a transcript of this interview as well as the final research findings?

Do you also understand that you have the option to withdraw your participation at any time before the findings of this research are publicized?

Finally, do you consent to have this interview recorded and its findings published?

1. In your opinion, what are the factors that hinder having more ethnic representation in your pastor / elder body?

2. How do you feel that these factors could be overcome in your church?

3. In your opinion, what could help increase the ethnic representation of your pastor / elder body?

4. How do you feel that these solutions could be promoted in your church?

Potential prompts:
- Could you think of any more factors?
- Could you elaborate on what you mean by_____ ?
- Could you provide me with any examples of _____ ?
- Do you have any documentation of _____? Would you mind sending me a copy of that documentation?

APPENDIX 3

DISCIPLESHIP PATH CHURCH OUTLINE

<u>██ "Ruta de la Iglesia"</u>

In response to Jesus' standing command to all of His disciples: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age",
and in alignment with ██ stated mission: "As revealed through the Bible, we strive to be people bound to Jesus Christ and one another, in Spirit-filled life on mission in this world, all for the glory of God",
and including our stated missional focuses of reaching out to international refugees as well as to people who are drawn to English:

The below is a proposed approach to purposeful discipleship at ██



<u>Notes and Observations</u>
Completion of "Foundations 101" will be required for Covenant Membership.
Covenant Membership will be required for some parts of "Ongoing Growth" (see below).
"Ongoing Growth" and "Missional Impact" are intertwined, with overlapping aspects.


*New to* ██
- "First Touch" opportunities, such as:
    o Connect Ministry
    o Ushers
    o Church members friendliness and awareness of new people
*Foundations 101*
- Theological foundations course consisting of essential Christian theology; 5 sessions taught by Elders or people who would qualify as Elders even if they are not currently Elders
- This is required for Membership

*Covenant Membership*
- One or two session seminar
- Those accepted into membership will sign the church covenant, be assigned an Elder for care and shepherding
- This is required for certain ministry opportunities in the Church
- All Covenant Members will be invited to quarterly Members Breakfasts for connection, updates, and vision

*Ongoing Growth*
Includes aspects of:
- Theological and Spiritual formation
  - Bible teaching and study
  - Spiritual disciplines
- Discovery of individual gifting and service
  - Spiritual Giftedness discovery
  - Service in body
  - Equipped for Influence
- Missional Equipping
  - Gospel Fluency/Evangelism training
  - Cultural Awareness training
  - Missions exposure
- This phase is carried out through:
  - Preaching and teaching
  - Personal Bible study
  - Group studies
  - Missional community/small group involvement
  - Temporary "focus" small groups (see next point)
  - Bi-yearly all-church focuses to work through essential aspects of Christian and church life
  - One on one discipleship
  - Counseling
  - Etc.
- *Missional Impact*
  - Through individual opportunities of church members
  - Focused on the two areas identified for ██████ focuses:
    - English Drawn people, which could include:
      - English teaching for outreach and discipleship
      - Ecuadorian partners like ████
      - Native English speakers
        - Embassy
        - Retirees
        - Students
        - Educators
    - International people groups
      - Church planting among specific people groups?
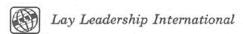      - Refugee work?

# APPENDIX 4

## MOTIVATIONAL GIFTS ASSESSMENT[1]

Name_____

# DISCOVER YOUR MOTIVATIONAL GIFTS

*A Self-Discovery Questionnaire*

Developed by

Rev. Lawrence F. Selig, D.Min.

Lay Leadership International

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[1] This material is for reference purposes only. Copyright belongs to the original publisher.

# Discover Your Motivational Gifts

This questionnaire is based on the premise that the seven spiritual gifts mentioned in Romans 12:6-8 (Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Giving, Administration, Mercy) describe seven different temperament styles. These strongly influence the way we relate to people and how we may find the greatest fulfillment in serving the Lord.

This analysis assumes that God gives to every Christian one of these seven motivational gifts as a major tendency. He may also give one or two other motivational gifts as secondary preferences. As we discover our strongest motivational gifts, we begin to understand more fully our strengths and weaknesses, and sense our need to depend on other Christians to complement our ministry. We will also discover the areas of ministry where we may find our greatest fulfillment working for the Lord.

It is important to realize that no two individuals have an identical style of ministry. This questionnaire is intended only as one means of helping you discover your own gifts. Avoid applying the characteristics too rigidly. This questionnaire should not be used alone, but only in the context of a group dealing with spiritual gifts where there is opportunity for discussion, group interaction, and affirmation.

## Instructions

1. Read through the list of seventy statements and place a check beside the answer which is *most* appropriate for you: "Usually True, Sometimes True, Seldom True, Rarely True." *Do not ponder at length over any one question. Be as realistic as you can, answering not as you would like to be, but as you are at this stage in your life.*
2. After completing the seventy statements, transfer the numerical value of your answers to the Tabulation Chart found on page 5. Then add the scores horizontally in each line and record the total at the right.
3. The total will help reflect your spiritual gift. Your primary motivational gift should be indicated by the largest number of points. One or more other motivational gifts may also rank above the others. These may be considered secondary motivations. Compare these primary and secondary motivations with the definitions on page 6.
4. Once you have completed the test and tallied your score, spend some time answering the questions for personal study or group discussion that follow. These are designed to help you evaluate your present place of ministry in the body of Christ in the light of what you have discovered about your motivational gifts through the test.

Beside each statement check the appropriate box which comes closest to your normal tendency.

| | Usually True (5) | Sometimes True (3) | Seldom True (1) | Rarely True (0) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I like to think of ways to help others who are suffering physically, emotionally, and spiritually. | | | | |
| 2. I enjoy spending time in intense study and research of the Bible. | | | | |
| 3. I feel people should say what they mean, and mean what they say about God's truth even though it may hurt the feelings of the listeners. | | | | |
| 4. I give more than the biblical tithe to the Lord's work. | | | | |
| 5. I enjoy responsibilities which involve helping other Chrisitans grow spiritually. | | | | |
| 6. I enjoy doing small tasks that need to be done, without being asked to do them. | | | | |
| 7. I like to take a project, break it down into various parts, and systematically organize a plan to accomplish the final goal. | | | | |
| 8. I find it very difficult to discipline others unless I am *really* convinced it will help them. | | | | |
| 9. In studying the Bible, I like to study the passage in context and find what it meant to the writer before trying to apply it to myself. | | | | |
| 10. When situations are not right, I feel an urge to speak up about them in order to correct them. | | | | |
| 11. When I hear of someone in need, I think of the amount of money I can give to help them. | | | | |

2

| | Usually True (5) | Sometimes True (3) | Seldom True (1) | Rarely True (0) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12. I am a possibility thinker, believing that all things are possible with God. | | | | |
| 13. I would rather do a task myself than work with a group or committee to get it done. | | | | |
| 14. If a project needs to be done and no one is in charge, I like to volunteer to get it organized. | | | | |
| 15. I can sense immediately whether the person I am talking to is hurting, or is really happy. | | | | |
| 16. I organize my thoughts in a systematic way after careful research and study. | | | | |
| 17. I have the unique ability to discern deception, dishonesty, and compromise in the motives and actions of others. | | | | |
| 18. I prefer to give to the work of the Lord amounts suggested by the Lord rather than have others suggest how much I should give. | | | | |
| 19. I have the ability to help people see how their trials and difficulties can be opportunities for spiritual growth. | | | | |
| 20. I would rather do a number of short-range immediate tasks than do one long-range task taking a year or more. | | | | |
| 21. I have the ability to see over-all goals and the "finished picture" of a project, when others may see only the various pieces. | | | | |
| 22. I will go to almost any length to avoid hurting the feelings of others. | | | | |
| 23. I like to see things prepared and taught in a systematic, factual way rather than having people share just personal experiences. | | | | |
| 24. Injustice, dishonesty, and unrighteousness in the church and community bother me enough that I am willing to speak up even though some may be offended. | | | | |
| 25. When I feel led by the Lord to give, I give generously without thinking of the sacrifice this may involve. | | | | |
| 26. I would rather talk with someone about their personal problems and share with them practical help from the Bible than send them to someone else. | | | | |
| 27. I find it difficult to say no when I see something practical which can be done to help someone in need. | | | | |
| 28. I would rather train others to do various tasks than do everything myself. | | | | |
| 29. I like to speak kind, comforting, reassuring words to others and I am hurt when I hear others speak harshly. | | | | |
| 30. I enjoy communicating biblical truths to others and seeing long-range growth in knowledge of the Christian faith. | | | | |
| 31. I have a desire to share with others messages I believe are from God which can correct, encourage, and comfort them. | | | | |
| 32. I enjoy making my home available for entertaining overnight guests who are involved in God's work. | | | | |
| 33. I enjoy meeting regularly over a period of time with individuals to help them grow spiritually. | | | | |
| 34. I enjoy serving the needs of others in order to free them for more important work for the Lord. | | | | |

3

130

| | Usually True (5) | Sometimes True (3) | Seldom True (1) | Rarely True (0) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 35. I have the ability to organize people, resources, plans and timetables in order to accomplish the Lord's work efficiently. | | | | |
| 36. When others are hurting or in pain, I can *feel* for them, even to the point of becoming emotionally involved. | | | | |
| 37. I have the ability to explain difficult issues, after giving them much thought and study. | | | | |
| 38. I am able to communicate my thoughts directly and frankly to close friends, even though they may disagree with me. | | | | |
| 39. I think it is sinful if a person fails to manage his/her financial assets well. | | | | |
| 40. I enjoy teaching and sharing with others, especially when I can apply the Bible to daily life. | | | | |
| 41. I enjoy doing routine tasks to help others, even though the tasks seem menial. | | | | |
| 42. I feel comfortable delegating responsibilities to others and directing a plan through to completion. | | | | |
| 43. I am primarily attracted to people who express tenderness and kindness. | | | | |
| 44. I enjoy researching answers to difficult questions. | | | | |
| 45. When I fail to live up to the standards of Christian living which I feel are important, I become very discouraged with myself. | | | | |
| 46. I really enjoy giving money and other material resources to Christian causes. | | | | |
| 47. When sharing Christian truth, I enjoy illustrating it with personal examples to make it more practical. | | | | |
| 48. I need reassurance that what I do to help other people is appreciated. | | | | |
| 49. I am able with discipline to work under pressure and accomplish things, as long as I know my goals and objectives. | | | | |
| 50. I feel deep compassion and understanding for those with spiritual and emotional needs. | | | | |
| 51. The meaning of words and how people use them is important to me. | | | | |
| 52. I speak up about what I believe is right and wrong, regardless of whether others agree or not. | | | | |
| 53. I receive special joy in encouraging others to be more generous in their giving. | | | | |
| 54. I enjoy sharing the practical teaching of Scripture as it relates to the personal and emotional problems of people. | | | | |
| 55. When I provide things for others, I would rather give them something I made myself than something I bought. | | | | |
| 56. In a leadership position, I feel more joy than frustration or burden. | | | | |
| 57. I like to be involved in alleviating the sufferings of others. | | | | |

4

| | Usually True (5) | Sometimes True (3) | Seldom True (1) | Rarely True (0) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 58. When I hear a message I like, I check out the facts and details if I am uncertain rather than accept the speaker's word without question. | | | | |
| 59. When I sense the problems and needs of the world, I am burdened to spend long periods of time in intercessory prayer. | | | | |
| 60. When I give money or other tangible help to others, I like to do it anonymously. | | | | |
| 61. I like to simplify complex issues into practical steps to help people grow spiritually. | | | | |
| 62. I am a *now* person, and when I see a need, I want to meet it right away rather than wait for a more convenient time. | | | | |
| 63. I enjoy being responsible for the success of the organization or group of which I am a part. | | | | |
| 64. I avoid leadership positions where I will have to carry out decisions which may hurt the feelings of some people. | | | | |
| 65. I enjoy devoting great amounts of time to studying the Bible to learn new truth. | | | | |
| 66. When I share God's truth with others, I need to see that this brings about the change that God desires in them. | | | | |
| 67. I enjoy living at a lower standard of living than necessary in order to have more to give to the Lord's work. | | | | |
| 68. I like to share with others the confidence that in spite of outward circumstances, trials, and set-backs, God always keeps His promises. | | | | |
| 69. When I hear of some practical need that someone has, I am willing to volunteer to help meet it. | | | | |
| 70. I am willing to endure the misunderstanding and reaction of others when working on a plan, because I know the end results of what I am seeking to accomplish. | | | | |

After completing the final question, check back to make sure all questions are answered and then transfer your scores to the Tabulation Chart below.

## Tabulation Chart

In the boxes below, enter the numerical value of your responses to questions 1-70, (Usually True - 5, Sometimes True - 3, Seldom True - 1, Rarely True - 0). Then, add up the ten numbers horizontally and record the result in the totals column at the right.

| | | | | | | | | | | Totals | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 8 | 15 | 22 | 29 | 36 | 43 | 50 | 57 | 64 | | Mercy |
| 2 | 9 | 16 | 23 | 30 | 37 | 44 | 51 | 58 | 65 | | Teaching |
| 3 | 10 | 17 | 24 | 31 | 38 | 45 | 52 | 59 | 66 | | Prophecy |
| 4 | 11 | 18 | 25 | 32 | 39 | 46 | 53 | 60 | 67 | | Giving |
| 5 | 12 | 19 | 26 | 33 | 40 | 47 | 54 | 61 | 68 | | Exhortation |
| 6 | 13 | 20 | 27 | 34 | 41 | 48 | 55 | 62 | 69 | | Serving |
| 7 | 14 | 21 | 28 | 35 | 42 | 49 | 56 | 63 | 70 | | Administration |

## Motivational Gift Definitions

| Gift | Definition | Strengths | Weaknesses |
|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Mercy | The ability to identify with and comfort those in distress. | • A special sensitivity to emotional needs.<br>• Sensitivity for the feelings of people which expresses tenderness, kindness, and compassion.<br>• Generally likes to avoid actions which will hurt the feelings of others, including discipline and administrative decisions. | • May become too emotionally involved and lose objectivity in helping others.<br>• Can become closed in spirit to those who are not sensitive to others.<br>• Tends to avoid stress-producing situations and firmness, unless absolutely convinced it is necessary.<br>• There is a danger of emotional involvement in helping those of the opposite sex. |
| Teaching | The ability to clarify truth after thorough study and research. | • Likes to present truth in a systematic fashion.<br>• Enjoys the world of books and ideas. | • May become more interested in factual details than the practical application of truth.<br>• May enjoy personal research more than teaching others.<br>• May become proud of their learning and knowledge. |
| Prophecy | The ability to declare God's truth which touches the heart and brings conviction. | • The gift of "sanctified criticism."<br>• Great ability to verbalize truth and to feel what God feels and see things from God's viewpoint.<br>• Quick to discern dishonest character and motives.<br>• Speaks frankly, even to friends, without considering the consequences. | • May have little sensitivity for the feelings of others.<br>• May appear judgmental.<br>• Is more concerned with righteousness than with people. |
| Giving | The ability to contribute generously of financial and material resources for the Lord's work. | • Usually desires to give anonymously and at the Lord's prompting.<br>• Usually thrifty and a good financial manager thus has more to give away than others. | • May become cause-oriented rather than people-oriented.<br>• Tends to judge those who are poor financial managers.<br>• Sometimes forgets to confirm giving with spouse. |
| Exhorting | The ability to encourage others to grow spiritually, even in the face of hardship and suffering. | • Seeks to teach the practical application of Scripture often in a person-to-person setting.<br>• Serves as "God's cheerleader" in the church.<br>• Desires to create harmony in the church. | • May be success-oriented and thus neglect people with deeper, more complex needs.<br>• May tend to oversimplify complex issues. |
| Serving | The ability to show love by meeting the practical needs of others. | • Ability to recall personal likes and dislikes of others.<br>• Likes to give things made with their own hands.<br>• Enjoys short-range "now" projects.<br>• Volunteers readily for even menial tasks. | • May disregard personal needs, stamina, family and personal funds in serving others.<br>• Finds it difficult to say no.<br>• May prefer to work alone rather than with others. |
| Administration | The ability to coordinate people, resources, and schedules to achieve goals. | • Ability to see over-all goals and objectives and the steps needed to reach those goals.<br>• Enjoys seeing all of the parts in the project come together.<br>• Enjoys delegating responsibility and taking leadership when none exists. | • May be task-oriented rather than people-oriented.<br>• Willingness to endure reaction in meeting the goal may appear as insensitivity.<br>• May appear to use people.<br>• May be weak in listening skills. |

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## Study Questions

The following questions are designed to assist you in evaluating your present place of ministry in the body of Christ particularly in the light of what you have learned through taking this test. They can be done for your own personal benefit to assist you in thinking through this issue or can serve as a basis for group discussion and affirmation as you meet with others to share and encourage one another concerning your involvement in the work of Christ in the local church.

1. Having discovered your primary motivational gift, are you presently involved in areas of service for the Lord which enable your strongest motivations to be expressed? Explain your answer.

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Are the characteristic strengths and weaknesses of your motivational gift(s) reflected in your service for the Lord?

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Study the list of weaknesses for your particular motivational gift(s) and suggest some ways you could turn these into personal strengths.

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. What additional training could help balance your areas of weakness and develop further areas of strength with regard to your motivational gift(s)?

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Are you presently allowing others to use their complementary gifts in your area of ministry?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. What other areas of ministry in your local church are you aware of where your primary gift could perhaps be put to better use?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

# What is Lay Leadership International?

Lay Leadership International is a missionary organization dedicated to the training of lay people worldwide. Through LLI, thousands of men and women are being discipled and equipped to reach their communities more effectively with the Word of God.

Our ministry was initiated in 1975 to support local pastors and missionaries anywhere in the world. Employing a strategy of intensive Christian development through literature, the work has spread quickly throughout North America and to numerous other countries.

The Great Commission means two things, evangelism and spiritual growth. This is only made possible as men and women are equipped to live as true Christian disciples in today's world

To date we have distributed hundreds of thousands of courses. These courses represent men and women who are training themselves in the principles of Christian maturity.

## Pathway of Discipleship 103    *by Donald E. Hill*

*Pathway 103* examines in great depth the fifth Beatitude, "Blessed are the merciful." It deals with the Church as the body of Christ on earth becoming the total expression of Christ's love and ministry to a broken world. Included in this course are helpful insights on how the believer can discover, develop, and deploy his spiritual gifts through the body of Christ.

*Pathway 103* is part of an extensive two-year series of courses that make an in-depth examination of the principles of the kingdom of God as set forth by Christ in the Beatitudes. Although part of a larger series, *Pathway 103* is a self-contained unit which is ideally suited to prepare members of the local church to take an active part in the work of the ministry and the building up of the body of Christ.

## Further Studies in Discipleship from LLI

*New Life Studies* is a course in the foundational truths of the Christian life. It deals with such key topics as salvation, assurance, prayer, handling your problems, and sharing your faith. Experience has shown that believers both young and old in the faith profit greatly from this study.

*Pathway of Discipleship 101* is the first in a series of four courses that make an intensive study of the Beatitudes. It examines the importance of the local church as the place where disciples are truly formed. It also deals with learning to depend upon God and the methods God uses to make us like Christ.

*Pathway of Discipleship 102* considers the third Beatitude, "Blessed are the meek" by examining how the Christian relates to divine as well as human authority. It also investigates the key motivation underlying all discipleship, spiritual hunger.

*Pathway of Discipleship 104* examines the essential quality of discipleship, purity. It also covers the theme, "Blessed are the peacemakers" and shows how the unity of the church is essential to her witness. This course concludes the Pathway series with a look at persecution, the inevitable reaction to discipleship and the ways in which every Christian can become the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

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ABSTRACT

ETHNIC REPRESENTATION AMONG PASTORS OF
ECUADORIAN INTERNATIONAL CHURCHES:
A MULTI-CASE STUDY

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2021
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Ethnically representative leadership in the local church is an application of the equality of believers through our shared union in Christ and the fact that we are created in the image of God. Such leadership models have been shown to be deeply meaningful to ethnic minorities and are essential in reaching diverse groups for Christ. In spite of these facts, many U.S. churches still fail to have ethnically diverse leadership structures. This study explores whether U.S. missionaries are carrying models of church leadership that represent attitudes of ethnic superiority into the mission field by seeking to discover the factors that relate to the increased ethnic diversity of international congregations in Ecuador, South America. Ecuador was chosen as a case site because of its large expatriate population from diverse national backgrounds. This qualitative case study was conducted through participation forms and interviews of pastors and elders of international congregations in Ecuador.

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