Gender and Leadership Behavior Among Senior Partners

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GENDER AND LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR AMONG SENIOR PASTORS

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Abstract

Research findings have been equivocal as to the existence of gender difference in leadership across settings. However, some studies based on transformational leadership theory and employing the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire to measure leadership behaviors have indicated a difference in the leadership styles of female and male leaders. This study sought to test whether there were gender differences in the use of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors by Senior Pastors in an Australian Christian Church. The study did not detect any significant gender differences in leadership behaviors.

Gender and Leadership Behavior among Senior Pastors

Gender and Leadership

Leadership has been typically a male prerogative in most sectors of society, including the corporate, political, military, and church sectors (Eagly & Karau, 2002). However, over the last 30 years women have made steady progress in moving into leadership roles. In 1972, women held 17% of all management and professional positions in Fortune 500 Companies. By 2006, this number had grown to 50.3% (Hoyt, Simon, and Reid, 2009). Women typically tend to occupy lower and middle management ranks while men cluster around the most powerful positions at the top. Women managers still receive significantly less remuneration for their work, with female managers receiving 24 percent less pay than men performing the equivalent function (Haslam and Ryan, 2008). Nonetheless, despite continuing

inequity, it is clear that women are gradually occupying an increasing number of management and leadership positions.

Although women have increasingly gained access to supervisory and middle management positions, they remain quite rare as elite leaders. For example, in 2006 women represented 5.2% of top earners, 14.7% of board members, 7.9% of the highest earners, and less than 2% of CEOs in Fortune 500 Companies (Hoyt, Simon, and Reid, 2009). This phenomenon has been explained by use of the idea of a "glass ceiling" – an invisible barrier preventing the rise of women within leadership ranks (Haslam & Ryan, 2008). Eagly and Karau (2002) describe it as "a barrier of prejudice and discrimination that excludes women from higher leadership positions" (p. 573). It is evident in the lower number of women in leadership positions, and particularly in high-level leadership positions. Yukl (2006) observes that "In the complete absence of sex-based discrimination, the number of women in chief executive positions in business and government should be close to 50 percent" (p. 427).

A variety of explanations have been offered for the existence of gender-based discrimination in the appointment of organizational leaders. These include: (1) gender stereotypes suggesting that men are more suited to leadership positions and that women are more suited to support roles (Yukl, 2006); (2) overt sexism in the workplace (Schwartz, 1971); (3) perceived incompatibilities between women's abilities and the requirements of leadership (Arvey, 1979); (4) women's competing responsibilities in the home (Schwartz, 1994); and (5) women's fear of success (Horner, 1972). The explanations are not mutually exclusive and they may combine to create significant barriers to the advancement of women.

Martell and DeSmet (2001) found that a contributing reason for the glass ceiling and the continued absence of women in the upper ranks of management is "the existence of gender-based stereotypes in the leadership domain" (p. 1227). Gender stereotypes are "categorical beliefs composed of the traits and behavioral characteristics assigned to women and men only on the basis of the group label" (Martell & DeSmet, 2001, p. 1223). Such stereotypes serve as a type of expectation regarding the likely abilities of group members and, if left unchallenged, can translate into discriminatory behavior. Eagly and Karau (2002) point out that a "potential for prejudice exists when social perceivers hold a stereotype about a social group that is incongruent with the attributes that are thought to be required for success in certain classes of social roles" (p. 574). Prejudice against women as leaders

"follows from the incongruity that many people perceive between the characteristics of women and the requirements of leader roles" (Eagly & Karau, 2002, p. 574).

Gender and Leadership within Christian Churches

Within Christian churches gender based discrimination has been reinforced by theological perspectives (Barron, 1990; Bridges, 1998; Franklin, 2008; Scholz, 2005). The case that women are forbidden by scripture and church tradition to assume leadership within the church has been made frequently (Barron, 1990). This exclusion has been predominantly based on two Pauline texts (1 Timothy 2:11-15 and 1 Corinthians 14:33-34) and a broader theological position which sees men and women as being ontologically equal but functionally different. Its basic logic is that "God designed women to be subordinate to men in role and function" and therefore "women should not operate in positions of authority over men" (Franklin, 2008, 14). For example, Piper and Grudem (1991) state that "we are persuaded that the Bible teaches that only men should be pastors and elders. That is, men should bear *primary* responsibility for Christlike leadership and teaching in the church. So it is unbiblical, we believe, and therefore detrimental, for women to assume this role" (p. 60-61).

Complementary to this theological position is the suggestion that women do not have the capacity for effective church leadership (Bridges, 1998). Piper (1991) exemplifies this position when he writes: "At the heart of mature masculinity is a sense of benevolent responsibility to lead, provide for and protect women in ways appropriate to a man's differing relationships" and "At the heart of mature femininity is a freeing disposition to affirm, receive, and nurture strength and leadership from worthy men in ways appropriate to a woman's differing relationships' (p. 35-36). The understanding portrayed is that men have the capacity to lead and that women do not. The assumption implicit within this understanding is that leadership does not involve affirming and nurturing behaviors.

Leadership Context

Yukl (2006) points out that research indicates that effective leaders have strong interpersonal skills as well as decision making and competitive skills. Among these necessary interpersonal skills are "concern for building cooperative, trusting relationships, and use of

behaviors traditionally viewed as feminine (e.g., supporting, developing, empowering)" (p. 427). While such values, skills, and behaviors were always relevant for effective leadership, Yukl suggests that they are now even more important because of changing conditions in organizations. In particular, the increasing cultural diversity of the workplace creates the need to build cooperative relationships based on "empathy, respect for diversity, and understanding of the values, beliefs, and attitudes of people from different cultures" (Yukl, 2006, 39).

Changes in organizational structure toward team based and shared leadership models and the trend towards increased reliance by organizations on outside suppliers, consultants, and contractors also contribute towards the need for leaders to have strong interpersonal skills. Eagly and Carli (2003a) characterize this changed organizational leadership environment according to how power is obtained and maintained. They suggest that "whereas in the past leaders based their authority mainly on their access to political, economic, or military power, in postindustrial societies leaders share power far more and establish many collaborative relationships" (p. 809). Therefore, contemporary views of leadership encourage teamwork and collaboration and emphasize the ability to empower, support, and engage workers. Eagly and Carli suggest that these modern characterizations of effective leadership have become more consonant with the female gender role and thus provide an environment conducive to female leadership.

Transformational, Transactional and Laissez-faire Leadership

The theory of transformational leadership (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999; Bass, 1985, 1998; Bass & Avolio, 1995; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996) has been a significant focus of leadership literature since it was first proposed by Burns (1978). Transformational leadership can be defined as "inspirational leadership aimed at motivating followers to achieve organizational goals whilst emphasizing the importance of follower well-being and need fulfillment" (Panopoulos, 1999, 2). Transformational leadership encompasses behaviors that previously might have been characterized as being either masculine or feminine. These behaviors include idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Yammarino & Bass, 1990).

Transformational leadership is contrasted with transactional leadership and laissez-faire leadership (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999; Bass, 1985, 1998; Bass & Avolio, 1995). Transactional leadership is based upon establishing an exchange contract between the leader and followers. It incorporates the behaviors of contingent reward, active management by exception, and passive management by exception. Laissez-faire leadership is viewed as the failure to exercise leadership appropriately.

Transformational, Transactional and Laissez-faire Leadership within Christian Churches

Rowold (2008) in two related studies explored the effects of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors exercised by German Protestant pastors. The first study with a sample of 247 followers of pastors from 74 different congregations used the MLQ-5X to assess the transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors of pastors. The second study with a sample of 120 followers of pastors and also using the MLQ-5X sought to investigate any correlations between the leadership behaviors of pastors and congregational satisfaction. Rowold found that the use of transformational leadership behaviors helped pastors to motivate followers to perform well and to be satisfied with their work. Transformational leadership was positively associated with followers' satisfaction with their pastor, their extra effort, their effectiveness, and their job satisfaction. Transformational leadership also showed positive effects on worshippers' satisfaction with the worship service.

Rowold's findings were compatible with those of Larsson and Ronnmark (1996) who conducted a qualitative analysis into the effects of the exercise of transformational leadership by the head of a volunteer Christian welfare organization in Sweden. The study involved observation of and interviews with the members and volunteer workers of the organization. They found that transformational leadership is particularly appropriate to voluntary and faith based organizations including churches. In contrast to business and government organizations, such organizations rely heavily upon voluntary workers to achieve their desired outcomes. Transformational leadership is effective in such organizational settings because voluntary workers require inspiration and affirmation from their leaders. Larsson and Ronnmark observed that "Since the material organizational resources are small and participation is on a voluntary basis, the leader has to a

greater extent to build up strength by cultivating mutual trust, ideas, and shared goals" (p. 37).

Butler and Herman (1999) conducted a study of effective ministerial leadership with a sample of 49 effective and 27 comparison group pastors in an evangelical church in the United States. They employed three instruments (Management Practices Survey, Leader Behavior Questionnaire, and Ministerial Effectiveness Inventory) to obtain self and other ratings of the effectiveness of the participating pastors. They found that effective pastors were more likely to engage in transformational leadership behaviors and in particular in inspirational motivation behaviors, than their less effective colleagues. Effective pastors were "more skillful managers, problem solvers, planners, delegators, change agents, shepherds, inspirers, multi-taskers, students, and servants and demonstrate themselves to be persons of integrity" (Butler & Herman, 1999, p. 229).

Druskat (1994) conducted a study involving 6,359 subordinates of leaders in all-female and all-male religious orders in the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. She employed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire to measure the frequency of transformational and transactional leadership behaviors. Subordinate ratings revealed that both female and male leaders exhibited more transformational than transactional leadership behaviors. However, she found that female leaders were rated to exhibit significantly more transformational leadership behaviors than male leaders.

Together, these studies indicate that transformational leadership behaviors are appropriate to and effective for church leaders. In addition, Druskat's study suggested that female church leaders were likely to engage more frequently in transformational leadership behaviors than did male church leaders. This study sought to add to these findings by investigating whether there might be gender differences in the implementation of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors by church leaders.

Research Problem

This study sought to investigate whether female and male Senior Pastors in an Australian church differed in their use of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors. While these behaviors have been explored in many organizational and cultural settings (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Yammarino & Bass, 1990; Yammarino, Spangler, & Bass, 1993), there have been few studies of

their implementation by church leaders (Rowold, 2008). Meta-analyses of studies on transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership undertaken by Eagly, Darau, and Makhijani (1995), Lowe, Kroeck, and Sivasubramaniam (1996), and Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) identified only three studies relating to church settings. The study by Druskat (1994) is the only identified investigation into gender differences in transformational and transactional leadership style in a church setting.

The research problem in this study was to identify whether female or male church leaders were more likely to engage in transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors. Using a quantitative methodology that incorporated survey research, the study compared the leadership styles of female and male church leaders across an Australian church denomination.

Literature Review

Transformational Leadership

The term "transformational leadership" was first coined by Burns (1978) who made the distinction between transformational and transactional leadership. Transformational leaders inspire followers to exceed expected levels of commitment and contribution by emphasizing task related values and commitment to a mission. By mentoring and empowering their followers, "transformational leaders encourage them to develop their full potential and thereby to contribute more capably to their organization" (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003, 569). Transformational leadership is defined in terms of four inter-related sub-types or factors: (1) idealized influence; (2) inspirational motivation; (3) intellectual stimulation; and (4) individual consideration (Yammarino & Bass, 1990).

Idealized influence involves the leader's role in demonstrating by personal example how to work toward the vision of the organization. It refers to the leader's capacity to inspire respect and higher motivation in followers and is based on the transformational leader's idealized qualities with which followers identify. Judge and Bono (2000) suggest that "This dimension, often simply referred to as "charisma," is the most prototypic and often the single most important dimension" of transformational leadership (p. 751).

Inspirational motivation is the leader's ability to provide followers with a clear and compelling vision, high standards of

operation, and a sense of meaningfulness in their work. It is achieved by articulating a compelling vision of what can be accomplished and by speaking optimistically about the vision. The inspirational leader motivates followers with his or her enthusiasm and confidence that the compelling vision is within the realm of achievable possibility.

Intellectual stimulation refers to the leader's interaction with followers so as to challenge their thinking and methodologies and to encourage within them creativity and innovation. In providing intellectual stimulation, the leader orients followers to an "awareness of problems, to their own thoughts and imagination, and to the recognition of their beliefs and values" (Yammarino & Bass, 1990, p. 153). Transformational leaders provide an intellectually stimulating environment that fosters in followers the capacity to develop creative solutions to problems which stand in the way of achieving organizational goals.

Individualized consideration involves the leader's attention to the unique gifts and talents of each follower and the leader's ability to mentor followers with challenges and opportunities that suit each individual (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999; Bass, 1985; Yammarino & Bass, 1990; Yammarino, Spangler, & Bass, 1993). The leader's use of individual consideration is a crucial element in enabling followers to achieve their full potential. Individual consideration is achieved by coaching and mentoring as well as by setting examples. In providing individual consideration the leader is sensitive to the current needs of followers, but is also aiming to elevate those needs to a higher level (Yammarino, Spangler, & Bass, 1993).

Transactional Leadership

Transformational leadership is contrasted with transactional leadership. Transactional leaders obtain cooperation by establishing exchanges with followers and then monitoring the exchange relationship. Bass (1985) posited three dimensions underlying transactional leadership: (1) contingent reward; (2) active management by exception; and (3) passive management by exception.

Contingent reward is providing an adequate exchange of valued resources for follower support. The leader appeals to followers' self-interest by establishing exchange relationships with them. He or she outlines tasks and performance standards and followers agree to complete assignments in exchange for commensurate compensation. Judge and Bono (2000) note that contingent reward "is the most active

form of transactional leadership but is less active than transformational leadership, because one can engage in contingent reward without being closely engaged with followers (e.g., implementing a pay for performance plan)" (p. 752).

Active management by exception involves monitoring performance and taking corrective action. Passive management by exception means intervening only when problems become serious. Both active and passive management by exception involve enforcing rules to avoid mistakes. There is evidence to suggest that contingent reward is displayed by effective leaders, but that the two other transactional leadership dimensions are negatively related to effective leadership (Judge & Bono, 2000).

Laissez-faire Leadership

Laissez-faire leadership is non-leadership (Panopoulos, 1999). It "is marked by a general failure to take responsibility for managing" (Eagly et al., 2003, 571).

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) is an instrument developed by Bass to measure transformational and transactional leadership behaviors (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The MLQ can be used to measure leader characteristics by the rating of followers, of the leader's peers and superiors, and as a self-rating instrument (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999). The ratings by others (peers, superiors, and followers) are considered to be a more valid means of assessment than self ratings (Panopoulos, 1999). The current version of the instrument is the MLQ-5X, which consists of 36 items measuring transformational leadership by five subscales, transactional leadership by three subscales, and laissez-faire leadership by one scale. The 9 transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership measures of the MLQ-5X are shown in Table 1.

Several studies have used factor analysis to assess the construct validity of the MLQ. Construct validity is "the extent to which a set of measured items actually reflects the theoretical latent construct those items are designed to measure" (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010, 686). It deals with the accuracy of measurement of the theoretical constructs by the measuring tool. These studies have consistently found support for the distinction between transformational

and transactional leadership as broad metacategories (Avolio & Bass, 2004; Den Hartog, Van Muijen, & Koopman, 1997).

Table 1

Definitions of Transformational, Transactional, and Laissez-Faire Leadership Styles in the MLQ-5X

MLQ-5X scales with subscales	Description of Leadership style
Transformational	
Idealized Influence (attribute)	Demonstrates qualities that motivate respect and pride from association with him or her
Idealized Influence (behavior)	Communicates values, purpose, and importance of organization's mission
Inspirational Motivation	Exhibits optimism and excitement about goals and future states
Intellectual Stimulation	Examines new perspectives for solving problems and completing tasks
Individualized Consideration	Focuses on development and mentoring of followers and attends to their individual needs
Transactional	
Contingent Reward	Provides rewards for satisfactory performance by followers
Active Management by Exception	Attends to followers' mistakes and failures to meet standards
Passive Management by Exception	Waits until problems become severe before attending to them and intervening
Laissez-Faire	Exhibits frequent absence and lack of involvement during critical junctures

Gender Differences in Leadership

Lowe, Kroeck, and Sivasubramaniam (1996), in a meta-analysis of 39 studies, showed positive correlations between leaders' effectiveness and all components of transformational leadership as well as the contingent reward component of transactional leadership. They found that transformational leadership produces greater follower satisfaction and enhanced organizational performance than transactional leadership across a range of organizational settings.

DeGroot, Kiker, and Cross (2000) demonstrated positive relations between charismatic, transformational leadership and outcomes that include leader effectiveness, follower effectiveness, follower effort, and follower job satisfaction. Judge and Piccolo (2004) found that the positive impact of transformational leadership on follower performance and satisfaction enhances the impact of transactional leadership on these criteria. A study of the MLQ measure (Center for Leadership Studies, 2000) showed negative relations between leaders' effectiveness and passive management by exception and laissez-faire leadership. On the basis of this evidence Eagly and Carli (2003b) conclude that "transformational leadership is generally effective" (p. 853).

Many studies have been conducted comparing women and men as leaders (Eagly, Darau, & Makhijani, 1995; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Panopoulos, 1999). This research is inconclusive as to whether there is evidence for important differences between men and women in regard to leadership behaviors. Eagly and Carli (2003a; 2003b) and Vecchio (2002; 2003) while analyzing the same research studies on gender differences in leadership behaviors could not reach agreement. Vecchio saw little evidence of gender difference in leadership behaviors, concluding that "the search for gender differences in the behavior of leaders has yielded results that are highly equivocal (2002, 651). Eagly and Carli identify some evidence of female advantage in leadership behaviors in some circumstances. They conclude that "research on transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles does suggest female advantage, albeit a slight advantage" (2003a, 818).

Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen (2003) in a meta-analysis of 45 studies of transformational and transactional leadership styles found that women used slightly more transformational leadership behaviors than men. The primary difference was for individualized consideration, which includes focusing on development and mentoring

of followers and attending to their individual needs. They also found that women used slightly more contingent reward behavior of transactional leadership, which involves providing rewards for satisfactory performance by followers. By contrast, men used slightly more active and passive management by exception and laissez-faire leadership. These gender differences were small but consistent across the meta-analysis as a whole.

Limitations in much of the research on gender differences complicate the interpretation of the results (Yukl, 2006). It is difficult to isolate gender from other variables such as position type and level, time in position, and type of organization. Unless these and other variables are measured and controlled it is possible that variations in leadership behavior will be erroneously attributed to gender differences.

Schneider (1983, 1987) suggested that job incumbents have a high degree of homogeneity which is likely to contribute to the difficulty of identifying gender differences in leadership behavior. He stated that certain types of people are drawn to specific positions and selected by the employing organization. Once employed, they are then socialized into the position and role expectations so as to be effective. These dynamics are likely to over-ride any gender differences among incumbents. Carless (1998) in a study of gender differences in transformational leadership in an Australian bank found that both incumbents and subordinates thought that "female and male managers who perform the same organizational duties and occupy equivalent positions within the organizational hierarchy do not differ in their leadership style" (p. 898). The role socialization process is likely to moderate or eliminate any gender based differences in leadership style.

Women as Transformational Leaders

Eagly and Carli (2003a) indicated that transformational leadership theory describes some behaviors that are consistent with traditionally female gender supportive, considerate behaviors. Eagly and Karau (2002) described gender roles as socially shared beliefs and expectations about the attributes of women and men. Gender roles are "consensual beliefs about the attributes of women and men" (p. 574). These beliefs and expectations are normative in that they describe qualities and behavioral tendencies that are viewed as desirable for each gender. Eagly and Karau (2002) suggested that the majority of

stereotypical beliefs about women and men pertain to *communal* and *agentic* attributes:

> Communal characteristics, which are ascribed more strongly to women, describe primarily a concern for the welfare of other people – for example, affectionate, helpful, kind, sympathetic, interpersonally sensitive, and gentle. In contrast, agentic characteristics which are ascribed more strongly to men, describe primarily an assertive, controlling, and confident tendency – for example, aggressive, ambitious, dominant, forceful, independent, self-sufficient, self-confident, and prone to act as a leader (p. 574).

Eagly and Carli (2003a) suggested that transformational leadership encompasses communal as well as agentic behaviors. This suggestion accords with the findings of Druskat (1994) and Daughtry and Finch (1997). Druskat found that women in Roman Catholic orders displayed significantly more transformational leadership than did men. Daughtry and Finch, in a study of leadership effectiveness of 144 vocational administrators as a function of leadership style, found that females rated higher as transformational leaders than their male counterparts. Females rated higher on four of the five factors of the transformational leadership construct both on self – and other – ratings with a significant difference noted for intellectual stimulation in self ratings. The findings of both of these studies agree with the results of Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen's (2003) meta-analysis which found that women used slightly more transformational leadership behavior than did men.

Eagly and Carli (2003a) observed that there is a contemporary change in the advocated practice of leadership consisting of a reduction in hierarchy and increased collaboration between leader and follower. Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) concluded that "it appears female leaders are somewhat more likely than their male counterparts to have a repertoire of the leadership behaviors that are particularly effective under contemporary conditions" (p. 587). These proponents of a female advantage theory contend that women are more concerned with consensus building, inclusiveness, and interpersonal relations, and that they are more willing to develop and nurture followers and to share power with them. Lowe, Kroeck, and Sivasubramaniam (1996) connected women's progress as leaders to such transformational leadership behaviors.

Yukl (2006), on the other hand, has advised caution in any assessment of gender advantage, whether male or female. He suggested that "claims about a gender advantage appear to be based on weak assumptions and exaggerated gender stereotypes" (p. 428). Vecchio (2003) warned of the danger of gender stereotypes which "ignore the overlap of the sexes in terms of their behavioral repertoire and individual adaptability" (p. 836). Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) pointed out that "knowing that a particular individual is female or male would not be a reliable indicator of that person's leadership style" (p. 586). Rather than women or men being better transformational leaders, it is more likely that there are excellent, average, and poor leaders within each sex.

Conclusion

This literature review indicates that women leaders are likely to engage in transformational leadership behaviors. Some studies suggest that women are slightly more likely than men to engage in transformational leadership behaviors and slightly less likely to engage in transactional and laissez-faire leadership behaviors. These findings are not unequivocal and must be balanced against the noted difficulties associated with clearly assigning leadership behaviors to either sex.

Research Hypotheses

This study sought to investigate whether female and male Senior Pastors in an Australian church differed in their use of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors. It was designed to test the finding of Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003), referred to above, that women were more likely to engage in transformational leadership and contingent reward behaviors and that men were more likely to engage in active and passive management by exception and laissez-faire leadership behaviors. The research proposal is set out in the following research hypotheses which are based on the identified behaviors associated with transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership.

Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) found that "female leaders were more transformational than male leaders in their leadership style" (p. 578). They found that women scored higher than men on: (1) idealized influence, which encompasses the leader behaviors of vision communication, motivational language use, and

serving as an example of what it means to carry out the proposed vision (Bass, 1998); (2) inspirational motivation, which includes leadership behaviors that articulate expectations and reveal the leader's commitment to organizational goals, and which enhance the meaningfulness of followers' work experiences and offer to them challenging goals and opportunities (Bass, 1998); (3) intellectual stimulation, which encapsulates the transformational leader's desire to challenge the thinking of followers about problem-solving strategies and to stimulate followers to creativity and innovation (Bass, 1998); and (4) individualized consideration, which includes leader actions that guide followers toward reaching their respective levels of potential. The leader acts as a mentor and coach and demonstrates concern for each follower (Bass, 1998).

> H1: Female Senior Pastors are more likely than their male counterparts to demonstrate the transformational leadership behaviors of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

Eagly, et al. (2003) found that women scored higher than men on contingent reward behavior. This is a transactional leadership behavior and includes the implementation of an incentives system to provide positive reinforcement of desired follower behaviors. The leader creates a transactional exchange that sees followers rewarded or punished on performance outcomes (Bass, 1985).

> H2: Female Senior Pastors are more likely than their male counterparts to demonstrate contingent reward behaviors.

Eagly, et al. (2003) found that men scored higher than women on active and passive management by exception and laissez-faire leadership behaviors. Management by exception behavior involves taking action only when problems or failures have occurred. Bass (1985) suggests that a leader who employs active management by exception desires to "preserve the status quo and does not consider trying to make improvements as long as things are going all right or according to earlier plans" (p. 697). Negative feedback and punishment are characteristic outcomes of active management by exception (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Passive management by exception occurs when a leader only gets involved when absolutely necessary (Bass, 1985). Antonakis, Avolio, and Sivasubramaniam (2003) state that "laissez-

faire leadership represents the absence of a transaction of sorts with respect to leadership in which the leader avoids making decisions, abdicating responsibility and does not use their authority" (p. 265). Laissez-faire leadership is practically the absence of leadership.

> H3: Male Senior Pastors are more likely than their female counterparts to demonstrate the transactional leadership behaviors of active management by exception and passive management by exception.
>
> H4: Male Senior Pastors are more likely than their female counterparts to demonstrate laissez-faire leadership behaviors.

In order to test the hypotheses data were obtained to measure the transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors of female and male Senior Pastors. Participants were selected from Senior Pastors in the Australian Christian Churches (ACC) because it ordains both men and women and allows ordained ministers of either gender to hold the position of Senior Pastor. A Senior Pastor is the leader of an individual congregation. Each participating Senior Pastor was asked to nominate the three most senior church workers who reported to them. The Senior Pastors were instructed to identify these workers on the basis that they worked most closely with the Senior Pastor and therefore had the greatest number of opportunities to observe performance and leadership behaviors. The church workers nominated by Senior Pastors were directly approached and invited to participate in the survey.

Method

Sample

The sample consisted of 47 Senior Pastors. The participants represented 4.7% of an approximate population of 1,000 ACC Senior Pastors, and consisted of 24 (51%) female and 23 (49%) male participants. The participants were rated on their transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors. Each Senior Pastor: (1) provided a self-rating; and (2) was rated by the nominated church workers. A total of 71 church workers provided ratings on the 47 participating Senior Pastors. Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010) have stated that in order to achieve a power level of 80% (the

probability that statistical significance will be indicated if it is present) with the one independent variable of gender it is desirable that there are 15 to 20 participants in the sample. According to this criterion, the sample of 47 was large enough for statistical significance to be achieved. Table 2 provides demographic information for participating Senior Pastors and church workers.

Table 2

Demographic Information of Participants

	Senior Pastors	Church Workers
Percentage of Females	51%	45%
Percentage of Males	49%	55%
Mean Age	49.7	45
Mean Congregation Size	235	-
Mean Years in Position	7.5	-
Mean Years working with Senior Pastor	-	7.6

Data Collection

An initial recruitment email was sent to potential participants. As affirmative responses were received to the participant recruitment emails a Leader Response Pack was mailed to each participating Senior Pastor. This pack contained: (1) a Covering Letter; (2) an Informed Consent Form; (3) a Personal Demographic Form; and (4) the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Leader Form. It also included a pre-addressed, stamped return envelope for the questionnaire. Participating Senior Pastors were asked to indicate their gender, age, congregation size, and the number of years that they had been a Senior Pastor.

Church workers who were nominated by participating Senior Pastors were contacted by email and phone to enlist their participation. As affirmative responses were received to the participant recruitment emails and phone calls a Rater Response Pack was mailed to each participating church worker. This pack contained: (1) a Covering Letter; (2) an Informed Consent Form; (3) a Personal Demographic Form; and (4) the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Rater Form. It

also included a pre-addressed, stamped return envelope for the questionnaire. Church workers were asked to nominate their gender, age, and the number of years they had worked with the Senior Pastor.

Measure

Transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors were measured using the MLQ-5X (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The MLQ-5X consists of 36 items that are loaded onto 3 leadership scales (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership). The transformational leadership scale has 4 sub-scales (idealized influence; inspirational motivation; intellectual stimulation; and individualized consideration). The transactional leadership scale has 3 sub-scales (contingent reward; active management by exception; and passive management by exception). Sample items are included in Table 3. The MLQ-5X utilizes a 5 point Likert scale: 0 (not at all); 1 (once in a while); 2 (sometimes); 3 (fairly often); 4 (frequently, if not always).

Table 3

Sample Items from the MLQ-5X Leader Form

"I talk about my most important values and beliefs"	Idealized Influence
"I talk optimistically about the future"	Inspirational Motivation
"I seek differing perspectives when solving problems"	Intellectual Stimulation
"I spend time teaching and coaching"	Individualized Consideration
"I provide others with assistance in exchange for their efforts"	Contingent Reward
"I focus on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from standards"	Active Management by Exception
"I fail to interfere until problems become serious"	Passive Management by Exception
"I avoid getting involved when important issues arise"	Laissez-faire leadership

Cronbach's alpha measures the reliability of an instrument or a scale. Reliability can be defined as "the relative absence of errors or measurement in a measuring instrument" (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000, p.

643). Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010) state that Cronbach's alpha "ranges from 0 to 1, with values of .60 to .70 deemed the lower limit of acceptability" (p. 92). Kerlinger and Lee (2000) suggest that "in some cases a reliability value of .5 or .6 is acceptable" (p. 663). According to Avolio and Bass (2004), the following reliability ratings apply to the MLQ-5X: Cronbach's alpha for the transformational subscales ranges from .70 to .83; Cronbach's alpha for the transactional subscales ranges from .69 to .75; and Cronbach's alpha for laissez-faire leadership is .71. Cronbach's alpha for the scales in the study sample are listed in Table 4. All scales were included in the analysis on the basis of the advice of Kerlinger and Lee (2000) and Hair, et al. (2010).

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The means and standard deviations for the scales are shown in Table 4. They show that the participants were rated as practicing more frequently the behaviors of idealized influence (M = 3.41; SD = .40), inspirational motivation (M = 3.48; SD = .50), intellectual stimulation (M = 2.93; SD = .57), individualized consideration (M = 3.37; SD = .51), and contingent reward (M = 2.83; SD = .67). The participants were rated as practicing less frequently the behaviors of active management by exception (M = 1.55; SD = .76), passive management by exception (M=1.07; SD = .69), and laissez-faire leadership (M = 0.66; SD = .59). These findings indicate that transformational leadership behaviors were more frequently observed than transactional or laissez-faire behaviors.

Avolio and Bass (1995, p.15) maintain that an optimal and balanced MLQ profile implies means of 3.0 or higher on the transformational scales, 2.0 or lower on the transactional scales, and 1.0 or lower on laissez-faire leadership. On this basis, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, active and passive management by exception, and laissez-faire leadership were rated as optimal in the study. Intellectual stimulation was near to optimal and contingent reward behavior was perceived to be practiced at higher than the optimal level.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics

Scales and Sub-scales	Cronbach's alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation
Transformational Leadership			
Idealized Influence	.73	3.41	.45
Inspirational Motivation	.70	3.48	.50
Intellectual Stimulation	.64	2.93	.57
Individualized Consideration	.56	3.37	.51
Transactional Leadership			
Contingent Reward	.62	2.83	.67
Active Management by Exception	.64	1.55	.76
Passive Management by Exception	.69	1.07	.69
Laissez-faire Leadership	.62	0.66	.59

Correlations

Table 5 contains a correlation analysis incorporating gender and the transformational, transactional, and laissez faire leadership scales. Senior Pastor (self) ratings are above the diagonal and church worker ratings of Senior Pastors are below the diagonal. The only significant correlation involving gender is with active management by exception in Senior Pastor (self) ratings ($r = .30$; $p < .05$). There are no significant correlations between gender and any of the other scales in self or other rating. This indicates that Senior Pastors and church workers perceived that there was little difference in the leadership behaviors of the female and male Senior Pastors who participated in the study.

Both Senior Pastor (self) ratings and church worker ratings display positive and significant inter-correlations between the transformational leadership behaviors of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, and with the transactional leadership behavior of contingent reward. Passive management by exception and laissez-faire leadership display positive and significant correlations with one another

and negative correlations with transformational leadership behaviors and contingent reward.

Table 5

Correlations of Senior Pastor (Self) and Church Worker Ratings on the MLQ-5X

	SPGen	IdInf	InMot	IntSt	IndCon	ConRe	AME	PME	LFF
SPGen	1.00	.08	.14	.20	-.12	.04	.30*	.03	-.01
IdInf	.11	1.00	.64**	.36*	.21	.46**	.26	.05	-.10
InMot	-.01	.65**	1.00	.39**	.32*	.46**	.05	-.11	-.26
IntSt	.04	.57**	.48**	1.00	.44**	.23	-.01	-.23	-.21
IndCon	.01	.71**	.54**	.59**	1.00	.28	-.04	-.40**	-.32*
ConRe	.12	.66**	.47**	.56**	.66**	1.00	.17	.06	-.23
AME	-.05	.00	-.08	-.07	-.16	.04	1.00	.20	.02
PME	-.00	-.44**	-.31**	-.25*	-.32**	-.37**	-.09	1.00	.66**
LFL	.03	-.62**	-.36**	-.39**	-.52**	-.55**	-.03	.65**	1.00

Correlations above the diagonal are for the Senior Pastor (Self) ratings; correlations below the diagonal are for church worker ratings of the Senior Pastor.
SPGen = Senior Pastor Gender; IdInf = Idealized Influence; InMot = Inspirational Motivation; IntSt = Intellectual Stimulation; IndCon = Individualized Consideration; ConRe = Contingent Reward; AME = Active Management by Exception; PME = Passive Management by Exception; LFL = Laissez-faire Leadership.
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

T-Tests

Independent samples t-tests were carried out to test the four hypotheses. The two independent groups in the study were female and male Senior Pastors. The differences in mean scores, standard deviations, and significances are displayed in Table 6 for Senior Pastor self-rating and in Table 7 for church worker rating of the Senior Pastor.

Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010) state that a t-test is used "to assess the statistical significance of the difference between two sample means," being "a special case of ANOVA for two groups or levels of a treatment variable" (p. 348). Green and Salkind (2008) point out that the independent samples t-test assuming equal variances and the one-way ANOVA using the General Linear Model – Univariate procedure "yield identical results in that the *p* values are the same" (p. 180). Both analyses have been conducted in previous investigations similar to the present study. Daughtry and Finch (1997) and Carless (1998) both used independent samples t-tests in studies investigating gender differences in leadership behavior using the MLQ. Panopoulos (1999) employed one-way ANOVA to investigate gender differences in transformational leadership using the MLQ.

Table 6

Comparison of Female and Male Senior Pastor Self Ratings

Scale	Female (n = 24)		Male (n = 23)		T-value
	M	SD	M	SD	
IdInf	3.27	.41	3.34	.48	.52ns[a]
InMot	3.37	.44	3.51	.51	.98ns
IntSt	2.91	.51	3.11	.48	1.38ns
IndCon	3.56	.35	3.48	.38	-.79ns
ConRe	2.77	.69	2.83	.68	.29ns
AME	1.27	.62	1.63	.57	2.11*
PME	1.02	.63	1.05	.56	.19ns
LFL	.64	.52	.63	.48	-.03ns

IdInf = Idealized Influence; InMot = Inspirational Motivation; IntSt = Intellectual Stimulation; IndCon = Individualized Consideration; ConRe = Contingent Reward; AME = Active Management by Exception; PME = Passive Management by Exception; LFL = Laissez-faire Leadership.

[a]ns = not significant; * $p < .05$

Table 7

Comparison of Female and Male Senior Pastor Ratings by Church Workers

Scale	Female (n = 24)		Male (n = 23)		T-value
	M	SD	M	SD	
IdInf	3.43	.51	3.53	.38	.94ns[a]
InMot	3.51	.52	3.50	.53	-.06ns
IntSt	2.86	.64	2.91	.60	.32ns
IndCon	3.26	.59	3.27	.55	.04ns
ConRe	2.78	.69	2.93	.66	.96ns
AME	1.66	.86	1.58	.83	-.40ns
PME	1.10	.83	1.10	.67	-.02ns
LFL	.65	.75	.70	.53	-.27ns

IdInf = Idealized Influence; InMot = Inspirational Motivation; IntSt = Intellectual Stimulation; IndCon = Individualized Consideration; ConRe = Contingent Reward; AME = Active Management by Exception; PME = Passive Management by Exception; LFL = Laissez-faire Leadership.
[a]ns = not significant

The only significant difference involving gender is with active management by exception in Senior Pastor (self) ratings (t (45) = 2.11, p = .04), displayed in Table 6. This indicates that participating female Senior Pastors rated themselves as less likely and their male counterparts rated themselves as more likely to engage in active management by exception behaviors. These behaviors include focusing attention on and dealing with irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from standards. This finding is tempered by the observation that in the use of the MLQ other-ratings are considered to be a more valid means of assessment than self-ratings (Panopoulos, 1999). The other findings in Table 6 are not statistically significant. However, they indicate that participating male Senior Pastors rated themselves higher than did their female counterparts in all of the transformational and transactional behaviors.

Table 7 demonstrates that there were no statistically significant findings in the ratings of Senior Pastors by church workers. However, it indicates that participating church workers rated male

Senior Pastors as being slightly more likely to engage in transformational leadership behaviors. The overall portrayal of Tables 6 and 7 is that any difference in the leadership behaviors of participating female and male Senior Pastors is negligible. Both self-rating and other-rating of Senior Pastors provided little evidence of perceived gender differences in the exercise of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors.

Hypothesis Testing Results

This study has not produced evidence to support the findings of Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) that female leaders were more transformational than male leaders in their leadership style. Female Senior Pastors did not score higher on idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, or individualized consideration than their male counterparts. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was not supported.

This study has also not produced evidence to support the findings of Eagly et al. (2003) that female leaders were more likely to engage in contingent reward behaviors and that males were more likely to engage in passive management by exception and laissez-faire leadership behaviors. Female Senior Pastors did not score higher on contingent reward behaviors. Therefore, hypothesis 2 was not supported. Female and male Senior Pastors had very similar scores on passive management by exception and laissez-faire leadership in self and other ratings. However, the results were not significant. Therefore, hypothesis 4 was not supported.

There was some support for Eagly et al.'s (2003) finding that male leaders were more likely to engage in active management by exception behaviors. Male Senior Pastors rated themselves as more likely to engage in active management by exception and the result was significant. This was a self-rating and was not supported by the rating of church workers. However, hypothesis 3 was partially supported.

Discussion

This study set out to investigate whether female or male Senior Pastors differed in their use of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors. The sample of Senior Pastors was from the Australian Christian Churches and contained an almost equal distribution of female (n = 24) and male (n – 23) participants.

The results for both self-ratings and other-ratings did not detect any significant gender differences in leadership behaviors. This finding was not in conformity with the finding of Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, and van Engen (2003) that female and male leaders differ in their implementation of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors.

The data lends support to the finding of Carless (1998) that female and male leaders who perform similar organizational duties and occupy equivalent positions with organizations do not differ significantly in their leadership style. This structural perspective suggests that the organizational role occupied by an individual is more important than the gender of the individual in determining leadership behaviors (Eagly, Karau, & Makhijani. 1995). It is likely that cultural and organizational expectations significantly dictate the leadership style and behaviors of Senior Pastors of both genders.

Limitations and Future Research

This study was limited by a small sample of Senior Pastors (n = 47) and a small number of ratings provided by church workers (n = 118). The small sample size was due to the need to meet a submission deadline for this paper before the majority of responses had been returned. This factor highlights the need for sufficient time to be allowed for data collection and the difficulty of conducting research using mail. It is likely that web-based surveys would be more efficient and effective in providing timely data. The small sample size is likely to have impacted the scale reliabilities, correlations, and the t-test findings. There is, therefore, a need to continue the present study in the same population with a significantly larger sample in order to have statistically significant data to work with.

The data indicate the homogeneity of the population of Senior Pastors and church workers within the Australian Christian Churches. The responses of self and other ratings were very similar and corporately placed a very high value on transformational leadership behaviors. This is to be expected in a church movement where charismatic leadership, the casting of vision, and investing into volunteers are integral and important behaviors. Rowold (2008) points out that church pastors rely on "the representation and articulation of a value-based vision" to provide leadership to their congregation (p. 409). There is a need to conduct further investigation into potential

gender based differences in leadership behaviors in organizations with different cultural characteristics to those of churches.

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