THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE
research

THE MOST TRUSTED SOURCE ON BECOMING A BETTER LEADER

TITLE   Evaluation of Student Leadership in the University of Louisiana System of Higher Education

RESEARCHER   Calvin Bailey
School of Education
University of Phoenix
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OBJECTIVE   The purpose of this study was to discover if the leadership behaviors exhibited by students affect the level of their self-identified satisfaction with leadership development programs that are offered to students who have participated in registered student organizations.

METHODOLOGY

The population studied consisted of over 80,000 students, located in the seven institutions within in the University of Louisiana system. From a random sample of 538 students, a total of 304 with complete and usable data were included (57% response rate). The participants were all members of registered student organizations, and 35 percent were officers. The majority of the participants were female (74%) and non-Hispanic White (77%). The majority (68%) did not dedicate 48 hours or more to their organizations. The average age of the participants was over 20.1 years. Students completed the Student Leadership Practices Inventory; a ten-item Student Leadership Satisfaction Survey (SLSS) developed by the researcher, and provided demographic information. Internal reliability in this study was .75 for Model, .82 for Inspire, .81 for Challenge, .69 for Enable, and .80 for Encourage.

KEY FINDINGS

Each of the five leadership practices were significant predictors of Student Leadership Satisfaction. Linear regression analyses showed that Model accounted for 26.7 percent of the variance in satisfaction with leadership development, Inspire accounted for 29.9 percent, Challenge accounted for 25.3 percent, Enable accounted for 24.2 percent, and Encourage accounted for 24.5 percent. Respondents who were officers were significantly more satisfied with leadership development than non-officers; and those who spent more time with their organizations were also more satisfied than those who spent less time.

The researcher indicates: "The study showed that, as the level of leadership practices increases for a student, so does his or her level of satisfaction with his or her leadership development. The analysis also supported the belief that, if students exhibit the five leadership practices measured by the SLPI, they will demonstrate a high level of satisfaction with personal leadership development as a result of actively engaging in those practices. Another result of the data analysis showed that the level of satisfaction students have with their leadership development is heavily impacted by their own behavior" (p. 103-104).