



TITLE Contribution of Professional School Counselors' Values and Leadership Practices to Their Programmatic Service Delivery

RESEARCHER M. Ann Shillingford and Glenn W. Lambie
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OBJECTIVE The purpose of this research was to examine how school counselors' values and leadership practices contributed to their programmatic service delivery.

METHODOLOGY

The population for this study was composed of practicing school counselors within the state of Florida. Participants were randomly selected from the database of certified and practicing school counselors provided by the Florida Department of Education. A targeted sample of 718 school counselors received an invitational e-mail to participate in this study and 163 completed all three survey instruments: Leadership Practices Inventory, Schwartz Value Survey (Schwartz, 1992), and the School Counselor Activity Rating Scale (Scarborough, 2005). The typical respondent was female (84%), Caucasian (72%), 46 years old, holding a master's degree (84%), and with 11.3 years of school counseling experience; and 33 percent were in elementary school, 31 percent at the middle school level, 30 percent at the high school level and the remainder as multiple level school counselors. Overall internal reliability for the LPI in this study was .927.

KEY FINDINGS

The most frequently engaged in leadership practice was Enable, followed by Model and Encourage, and then Challenge, and Inspire. Regression analysis revealed that the five leadership practices accounted for 40 percent of the variance in programmatic service delivery. Values made a small, non-statistically significant contribution (less than 1 percent).

The authors suggest that "based on the findings from this study, counselor education programs have a duty to prepare their students to be leaders in the schools by integrating leaders leadership practices into their curriculum" (p. 214). They conclude by noting that:

The findings of this study suggest that long term sustainability of the profession may requires that school counselors advance leadership practices to deliver effective programmatic services to their students. However, many school counselors appear to not possess the strong leadership skills necessary for promoting systematic change. Ultimately, counselor educators and school counseling professionals need to develop and implement specific interventions to promote school counselors' leadership skills in order to transform programmatic service delivery to all stakeholders (p. 216).