

TITLE How Do Police and Firefighters' Perceived Leadership Practices Relate to Organizational Commitment?

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OBJECTIVE The purpose of this study was to explore how leadership practices impact the organizational commitment of police and firefighters.

METHODOLOGY

Police and firefighters in four cities in the southeastern region of the United States were surveyed (N = 104; 51% response rate). They completed the LPI-Observer, Organizational Commitment Scale (Meyer and Allen, 1991), and provided demographic information. The typical respondent was male (78%), with over 15 years of service (68%), between 35-54 years of age (82%), with a college degree (79%).

KEY FINDINGS

Enable Others to Act was reported as the most frequently used leadership practice of their supervisors, followed by Model, and then Encourage, Challenge, and Inspire. All five leadership practices were significantly correlated with affective and normative organizational commitment. No significant correlations were found between continuance commitment and any of the leadership practices.

Regression analysis found the five leadership practices accounting for 38.3% of the explained variance in affective organizational commitment, and 25% of the explained variance in normative organizational commitment.

The author concludes: "Leadership matters, if success is the goal of the organization. Strong leadership equals a healthy organization (p. 72)... The most consistent results of this research indicate that employees want the tools to perform their duties and responsibilities, and the power to coordinate and collaborate with others in order to produce a strong work product, and above all they desire the power to act" (p. 73).

