

TITLE: Administrator Behavior Leadership Practices: A Comparative Assessment of Administrators and Observers at Selected Community Colleges in Texas

RESEARCHER: Daniel J. Holt
Educational Administration
Texas A&M University
Doctoral Dissertation: May 2003

OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this study was to examine the leadership practices of administrators in community colleges in order to establish an understanding of current leadership practices and to provide constituents an improvement model.

METHODOLOGY: The study population was estimated at about 228 administrators from two public community college districts in Texas and their 600 direct reports, with responses received from 102 administrators and 218 constituents. Respondents completed either the self or observer version of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI).

KEY FINDINGS: College administrators viewed themselves as engaging in the leadership practice of Enabling most frequently, followed by Modeling, Encouraging, Challenging and Inspiring. This same pattern was repeated from constituents' perspective; although the typical scores were significantly ($p < .0001$) lower than those of their leaders.

“The inference from this investigation is that knowledgeable observers perceive administrator’s leadership practices a sin need of improvement, whereas, administrators perceive their self-assessment of leadership skills as adequate and fulfilling for subordinates and the organization” (pp. 151-2). “The identification of the strengths and weaknesses of all 30 behavioral characteristics, as related to the five leadership Practices for exemplary leaders, will allow persons charged with leadership responsibilities at the selected community colleges to focus on those elements that are integral to systemic change and ultimately to an improved campus climate” (p. 155).