

TITLE: An Examination of the Perceived Leadership Practices and Organizational Commitment of Active Duty Air Force Personnel and Government Civil Service Employees

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OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the perceived leadership practices and organizational commitment including selected personal characteristics of Air Force employees.

METHODOLOGY: The population (N=430) surveyed included both active duty and civil service Air Force employees who were either faculty members or students attending classes at the Air Force Institute of Technology. Total active duty (military) Air Force respondents were 215 and government civil service (Civilian) Air Force employees were 113 (76% response rate). The majority of the respondents had 21 years and over working for the Air Force. Seventy-five percent were male, and the majority of respondents were between the ages of 35 and 44 years, with a college degree. Respondents completed the Leadership Practices Inventory - Observer, Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Porter et al. 1974), and provided demographic information.

KEY FINDINGS: Enabling was the leadership practice most frequently observed, followed by Modeling, Encouraging, Challenging and Inspiring. A significant correlation was found between all five leadership practices, and a global (sum) leadership score, and the sum of the organizational commitment questionnaire, and this pattern was observed for both military and civilian respondents. The military respondents reported higher levels of leadership on all five leadership practices than their civilian counterparts, although only Modeling reached statistically significant levels. No significant difference was found for employee demographic characteristics (employee position, years of service, gender, age and education) and perceptions of their supervisor's leadership practices.

The author concludes: "Further use of their (Kouzes and Posner) Leadership Practices Inventory model on Air Force employees can help Air Force leaders improve their leadership Practices" (p. 121).