

THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE **research**

THE MOST TRUSTED SOURCE ON BECOMING A BETTER LEADER

TITLE A Change for the Future: Presidents and Deans Real And Ideal Leadership Practices at Community and Junior Colleges in Mississippi

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Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation: December 2008

OBJECTIVE The purpose of this study was to examine real versus ideal leadership practices of administrators according to race, gender, age, experience, education level, current years in position, and years at community and junior colleges in Mississippi.

METHODOLOGY

The population consisted of the presidents and deans from the Mississippi Association of Community and Junior Colleges. Five individuals were subsequently identified from each campus website and asked to complete the LPI-Observer, with 166 responding (43% response rate). The sample was reduced to 37 leaders who had both completed the LPI-Self and had at least two constituents respond to the survey (N=98). The typical leader was male (71%), Caucasian (87%), holding a doctorate (66%), with an average of 2.4 years in their current position and 4.5 years at a community/junior college. The typical constituent was Caucasian (83%), with a master's degree (42%), who had been in their position for 1.9 years on average and at with a community/junior college for 2.7 years. The LPI was modified to reflect an administration of how the leader "actually" and "ideally" engaged in each behavior, and only 20 statements (rather than the full 30) were used. For this version of the LPI, internal reliability of the scales for leaders ranged between .50 and .82 for Actual and between .92 and .97 for Ideal and for constituents on Actual the range was between .85 to .92 and between .91 to .95 for Ideal.

KEY FINDINGS

The rank order from most to least frequent ACTUAL leadership practice for leaders was Modeling, Enabling, Encouraging, Inspiring and Challenging and from the perspective of constituents it was generally the same: Enabling, Modeling, Encouraging, Inspiring and Challenging. The rank order from most to least frequent IDEAL leadership practice for leaders as well as constituents was

Encouraging, Modeling, Enabling, Challenging and Inspiring. Generally the means from the Ideal leadership practices were significantly higher than the Actual leadership practices.

No differences were found on the basis of gender for any of the five leadership practices (ideal and actual) nor were differences found on the basis of years at a community/junior college. African-American leaders did not vary from Caucasian leaders on Modeling, Challenging, Enabling and Encouraging but did report engaging in Inspiring significantly less so. No differences by ethnicity were found from the perspective of constituents. Inspiring was the only leadership practice that was significantly higher by years of education (degree) for leaders and for constituents.