

THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE **research**

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TITLE A Study of the Relationship between the Leadership Styles and Emotional Intelligence of Residential Student Leaders

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OBJECTIVE The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership styles when students participate in residential leadership opportunities, and the differences between those who receive more and less training.

METHODOLOGY Two hundred students who held residential leadership positions at California State Polytechnic University (Pomona) were invited to participate and 119 accepted (60% response rate). Of these, 54 (46%) had specific training and experience (Group A) and the rest had not (Group B). Participants completed the Student Leadership Practices Inventory and the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire – Short Form (Petrides, 2001). Internal reliability in this study for the SLPI was 0.93. Two quarters later, Group A went through three weeks of intensive training, followed by an additional 10 weeks of weekly training classes and held his/her leadership position for two academic quarters. Group B also held their positions for two academic quarters and training was focused on areas others than leadership practices and emotional intelligence (i.e., customer service).

KEY FINDINGS

The correlations between the five leadership practices and emotional intelligence (scales of well being, self control, emotionality, and sociability) were all positive and statistically significant. Only three behaviors were significantly different on the Student LPI between trained and untrained leaders. The author concludes that the “findings of this study indicate that all residential student leaders have a level of leadership skills and emotional intelligence, including those who are not intentionally trained by the department in these areas” (p. 70-71). No significant differences were found among any of the demographic variables (i.e., gender, age or academic standing) for either leadership practices or emotional intelligence. The author asks, since there was no difference between those who were trained or not trained, is “what was the program missing?”