

THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE **research**

THE MOST TRUSTED SOURCE ON BECOMING A BETTER LEADER

- TITLE** A Study of the Relationship Between Leadership Practices and Organizational Effectiveness in Student Affairs
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- OBJECTIVE** The purpose of this study was to determine any correlation between transformational leadership practices in Chief Student Affairs Officers (CSAO) at small, non-profit, bachelor's degree granting colleges in Midwestern states and organizational effectiveness in student affairs.
- METHODOLOGY** A total of 339 university presidents and their CSAOs were invited to participate in the study and 130 CSAOs responded (38% response rate) as did 117 presidents (34% response rate) which provided a total of 84 pairings. The CSAOs completed the Leadership Practices Inventory and the university presidents responded to seven statements that placed a value on their perception of student affairs division organizational effectiveness (SAOE). A pilot test found internal reliability for the SAOE at .93. The typical CSAO was male (60%), over the age of 45 (58%), with less than 20 years of work experience (61%), and less than 15 years as CSAO (87%). Cronbach alpha scores in this study for the LPI were all above .70 (Modeling = .80, Inspiring = .85, Challenging = .85, Enabling = .72, and Encouraging = .91).

KEY FINDINGS

Correlation and multiple linear regression analysis were used to compare leadership styles with organizational effectiveness. Results of the analysis revealed that none of the leadership practices scores of CSAOs were statistically significant predictors of student affairs organizational effectiveness. Therefore, suggests the author, “other extraneous variables may have masked the relationship between leadership practices and organizational effectiveness, or results may be different and a relationship between leadership and organizational effectiveness more prevalent in other populations” (p. 101)... “In addition, the opinions of presidents in evaluating organizational effectiveness of the student affairs division may not be a sensitive enough indicator of what determines a successful student affairs operation” (p. 102)... and, “the correlation between effectiveness and leadership practices may have been too weak to be detected by the sample size used in this study “ (p. 105).