

**TITLE:** The Relationship Between Health Care Managers' Perceived Workplace Empowerment and Their Perceptions of their Leadership Behaviors

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**OBJECTIVE:** To examine the relationship between health care managers' work place empowerment and their perceptions of leadership characteristics.

**METHODOLOGY:** All health care managers and coordinators from one acute care community hospital were invited to participate. Twenty-three accepted (82% response rate). Participants completed the Conditions for Work Effectiveness Questionnaire (Chandler, 1986), the Job Activities Scale (Laschinger, Kutzcher & Sabiston, 1993), the Organizational Relationship Scale (Laschinger, Kutzcher & Sabiston, 1993), the Organizational Description Opinionnaire (Laschinger, 1991), the Leadership Practices Inventory, and provided demographic information. The typical respondent was female (77%), a program coordinator (54%), with an average age of 40.5 years and 17.7 years of work experience, and college-educated (46%). The alpha reliability coefficients for the LPI ranged from .46 to .84 (and may be affected by the small sample size).

**KEY FINDINGS:** Managers' perceived access to empowerment was significantly correlated with leadership practices, especially for Encouraging and Challenging. Seven other relationships between the CWEQ subscales and the leadership practices were statistically significant: Support with Encouraging, Enabling and Overall; Resources with Encouraging, Inspiring and Overall; and Information with Challenging. No relationship was found between informal and formal power and the five leadership practices.

"The results suggest that if health care managers perceive themselves to be in empowered workplace environments, they will utilize leadership behaviors that empower others" (47).

Health care managers' leadership skills were also significantly correlated with their perceived ability to get things done (as assessed by the ODO measure). Challenging, Inspiring, and Overall were each significantly correlated with the ODO instrument.

No significant relationships were found between gender and education level and LPI scores. The only leadership practice significantly correlated with age and years in health care was Inspiring, with a weak correlation with Modeling, and between age and Challenging and Encouraging. The author suggests that this finding implies that leadership skills and knowledge about the health care business are acquired over time.