

TITLE: Leadership Development of Students Engaged in Experiential Learning: Implications for Internship Programs in Textiles and Apparel

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OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this study was to determine if learning preferences are important to the leadership development process and to investigate whether leadership development can occur in a pre-internship course.

METHODOLOGY: Participants were 17 undergraduate textile products design and marketing majors at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro (beginning their junior year) and 31 junior and senior level human environment and family sciences majors at North Carolina A & T State University. In addition to completing the student version of the Leadership Practices Inventory, participants completed the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Index (Crown & Marlowe, 1960) and a modified version of the Student's Orientation Questionnaire (Christian, 1982) to assess the students' andragogical-pedagogical orientation. Students were randomly assigned to a leader (treatment) group, an assistant leader group, or a follower group, and then formed into three-person teams with a member of each of these groups. Each team was assigned a project to complete; the final project of which was reviewed by a panel of expert judges. Pre and post-tests were administered, about 15 weeks apart. Student LPI-Observer scores were computed by ratings made by each subject's team members, faculty rater and peer rater. The final sample consisted of 39 subjects (dropping several who did not complete the course, both tests, and all three males).

KEY FINDINGS: Analysis of Student LPI scores and the Social Desirability Index "confirms previous work by Posner and Kouzes (1993) that social desirability bias tests were not statistically significant"(p. 58). Student preferences for andragogical-pedagogical learning did not generally result in any statistically significant relationships with leadership development scores, although many of the findings were in the predicted (andragogical) direction. Similarly, no significant leadership development (change in Student LPI scores) were observed between the pre and post-test administrations. The researcher, citing conversations with the Center for Creative Leadership (Greensboro), asserts that leadership development is "not linear, rather leadership development will regress and progress. In the process of implementing leadership programs, the researchers at the Center found that the immediate post test often showed negative development as opposed to the pretest. This may be a result of participants

increased awareness of the multiple facets of leadership as they move through leadership training” (p. 110-111). Generally more time (e.g., 18 months) is needed to demonstrate the effects of leadership development programs.