

TITLE: The Relationship Between Leadership Behavior of Academic Deans in Public Universities and Job Satisfaction of Department Chairpersons

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OBJECTIVE: Investigate the relationship between perceptions of academic deans and department chairpersons regarding the leadership behavior of deans, and how this was related to the job satisfaction of department chairs.

METHODOLOGY: The study involved a random sample of 50 academic deans and 285 department chairpersons at public universities in Tennessee, with 42 deans (84%) and 173 (60%) chairpersons responding. In addition to the LPI, respondents completed the Index of Job Satisfaction (Brayfield & Rothe, 1951). Most chairpersons were between the ages of 46-60 years of age, males (80%), married (84%), professors (76%), and holding a doctorate (95%). Nearly 25% had been in their positions 4-6 years, another 27% had been 1-3 years, nearly 13% had 7-9 years of experience, and about 31% had over nine years in their current role. Nearly one-third of the deans were between the ages of 46-50, 24 percent between the ages of 56-60, 19 percent over 60 years, and 14% between 51 and 55 years old. Deans were predominantly married (88%), male (88%) professors (98%) with doctorates (100%). Nearly half had been in their positions three or less years; with 17% having 4-6 years experience, 12% with 7-9 years, and almost 24% with 9+ years.

KEY FINDINGS: LPI-Self (deans) scores were significantly higher than those from the LPI-Observer (chairpersons) on all five leadership practices. The more effective the chairpersons perceived the deans' leadership behavior to be, the more they were satisfied with their jobs. The latter relationship was moderated by the number of years chairpersons had been in their position, with those relatively new perceiving deans' leader behaviors as more effective than those who had been in the position for 7-9 years. Demographic variables such as respondent age, gender, marital status, level of education, academic rank, and number of years in position were not related to LPI-Observer scores nor generally related to LPI-Self scores. None of the demographic variables affected job satisfaction scores.