

TITLE: Leadership Behaviors in Undergraduate Hospitality Management and Dietetics Students.

RESEARCHER: Susan A. Arendt
Hospitality Management
Iowa State University
Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation: June 2004

OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this study was to assess self perceptions of leadership behaviors and practices in hospitality management and dietetics undergraduate students and determine how these might differ based on demographic characteristics.

METHODOLOGY: The population consisted of all students at either the freshman or senior level enrolled in either a hospitality management or dietetics program at one of eight universities with both programs of study. Survey packets were handed out in class by faculty members and sent directly to the researcher. In addition to completing the Student Leadership Practices Inventory (S-LPI), respondents answered questions about themselves as leaders and demographic information. They also indicated the context within which they engaged as leaders (home, class, work, and clubs/groups). A total of 345 surveys were returned from hospitality management students. The majority of these respondents were female (62%), under the age of 25 years (94%), and an upper-classman (70%). They had taken a leadership course or coursework (64%), reported supervisory work experience (74%) and having held a leadership positions in extracurricular activities (55%). A total of 283 dietetics students returned surveys and these respondents were primarily female (89%), under 25 years of age (88%) and upperclassmen (74%). They had completed a leadership course (49%), had supervisory experience (70%), and held leadership positions in extracurricular activities (60%).

KEY FINDINGS: Box's test of covariance matrices revealed that the factor structure of the Student LPI was not consistent between the two populations and hence all analyses were conducted separately for the two groups of students (hospitality management and dietetics). Enabling was the leadership practice engaged in most by students regardless of their course of study. For both groups having taken leadership coursework, lectures or readings and having held leadership positions resulted in higher leadership scores. No differences were found based upon supervisory work experience.