

TITLE: A Study of Leadership Program Models and Audiences and Their Relationship to Perceived Leadership Practices

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OBJECTIVE: To determine if variations of community leadership programs differentially enhance leadership skills of participants who successfully completed one of two community leadership models found in Missouri.

METHODOLOGY: The population was made up of adults in Missouri who participated in one of two community leadership development program models. One complete cohort was sampled to represent graduates of the enhanced and the chamber models. The response rate of 71.3 percent yielded a sample of 238 respondents. Pre- and post-program measurements were taken with the Leadership Practices Inventory.

KEY FINDINGS: Internal reliability coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha) for this sample were as follows: Challenging (.83), Inspiring (.82), Enabling (.83), Modeling (.82), and Encouraging (.84). Two-way ANOVA with time of measurement and model as independent variables for each of the five LPI scales revealed significant relationships for Challenging, Inspiring and Enabling on the models dimension, but not for Modeling and Encouraging. Time of measurement did not significantly affect any of the leadership practices nor was there any interaction effect with the models.

However, the author concludes: "The outcomes of this investigation indicates that individuals who take part in enhanced community leadership programs that include group evolution and team building do not view themselves as having leadership skills any stronger than those individuals participating in chamber based programs. Perhaps a plausible reason for this outcome was the instrument used in this study was based on the subjective self-perceptions of participants and their use of leadership practices: (p. 166).

The author wondered why the quantitative LPI instrument "did not adequately reflect what the qualitative research observed. Perhaps the research design was flawed in this respect" (p. 166).