

TITLE: Psychological Sources of Perceived Self-Efficacy as a Change Agent Among Deans of Colleges/Schools of Education

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OBJECTIVE: To gain a comprehensive profile of the self-efficacy, personality traits, and leadership characteristics of deans of colleges/schools of education and identify the degree to which they can serve as change agents.

METHODOLOGY: Data was derived from the Leadership Practices Inventory, the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (Cattell, et al. 1970), and the Self-Efficacy Scale (Sherer et al.1982). The sample consisted of 61 education deans (35% response rate) from Research I and II universities and Doctoral-Granting I and II universities from the Carnegie Classification of Higher Education (1987). Sixty-four percent of the respondents were male, nearly 60% were in their fifties, 84% were full professors, and they had been in their present position 3-5 years (36%), or less than 2 years (32%).

KEY FINDINGS: No significant differences were found among deans of Research and Doctoral-Granting institutions on the LPI; nor were differences found on personality traits or self-efficacy. No differences on LPI scores were found based upon the ages of Deans by institutional affiliation nor on the bases of the number of years the respondent had served in the Dean's position. There were no significant differences between the gender of Deans and their leadership practices except between the nine deans in Doctoral-Granting II institutions, where female deans reported Inspiring and Encouraging more than their male counterparts.

The author concludes: "It can be implied from this study that traditional selection committee membership and preparation are not designed to identify appropriate leaders (p.161)...all of the deans in all categories fall within the average range of the norming population of the 16PF. It is highly unusual to find any group of people who would fall within the average range in each category. Thus, the 16PF indicates that the deans are very average individuals with no particular leadership abilities and deficits no different from the norming sample. In fact, they represent a rather bland profile (p. 162)...individuals who currently occupy deanships should be provided professional growth leadership training by their institutions. Many if not most deans have no formal leadership training.