

TITLE: The Relationship Between Teacher Leadership Behaviors and Experiences and the Leadership Development Taught in High School Agriculture Education

RESEARCHER: Jefferson S. McCutcheon
College of Agriculture and Forestry
West Virginia University
Master of Science: June 1995

OBJECTIVE: To determine the extent to which secondary agricultural education teachers provide leadership development for their students beyond what was received through participation in the Future Farmers of America.

METHODOLOGY: Randomized sampling (stratified by state) of secondary agricultural education teachers in single teacher departments listed in the *Agricultural Educators Directory 1994*. Respondents completed the LPI-Self and questionnaire developed by researcher to assess the leadership topics taught by the instructor, the teacher's leadership experiences and demographic data. Usable responses were received from 174 instructors (45.3%); no significant differences were found between early and late respondents. Ninety percent of the respondents were men; the mean respondent age was 39.6 years.

KEY FINDINGS: Most instructors taught leadership style (75%) and 48.6% reported teaching leadership theory; followed by expectations (62%), feedback (53%), followership (43%), and empowerment (34%). All group topics showed more respondents teaching them than not teaching them; the pattern was similar for communication skills. Leadership topics under the heading of vision all had high responses as being taught (73% or greater); topics under the heading of learning were reported as being taught by at least 68% of the respondents; and personal trait topics by more than 70 percent.

On the LPI, the rank order of leadership practices (from most to least frequent) was Enabling, Encouraging, Modeling, Challenging, and Inspiring. All of the groups of respondents reporting that they taught a leadership topic had generally higher mean LPI scores than those who did not teach the topic; significantly more so for all five leadership practices and the teaching of leadership styles, empowerment, problem solving skills, risk taking, evaluation, non-verbal communication, written communication, motivation/persuasion, group dynamics, and team building and work. Most of the respondent groups reporting that they had a selected leadership experience had higher mean LPI scores than those that did not have a leadership experience.