

TITLE: Leadership Roles and Characteristics of Selected Northeastern Ohio School Business Officials

RESEARCHER: Keith M. Miller
Graduate School of Education
Kent State University
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OBJECTIVE: To provide information about the leadership roles of Northeastern Ohio school business officials and to measure their leadership characteristics.

METHODOLOGY: The target population were school business officials employed in the 40 school districts in Northeastern Ohio. Participants (N=34; 85% response rate) completed the LPI-Self and requested that LPI-Observers be completed by their superintendent, a central office peer, a building principal and a subordinate (N=123; 90% response rate). Eighty-two percent of the participants were between the ages of 41 and 60, with 50% between 51 and 60 years of age; and almost all were men (94%). All respondents were college graduates, with nearly two-thirds holding graduate degrees. Most had been in their current position for 11 or more years (47%), with another 29% having 7-10 years of tenure. Most respondents were former teachers (68%).

KEY FINDINGS: The LPI-Self scores for school business officials were higher on Enabling and Modeling than the Kouzes/Posner normative sample, and not significantly different for Challenging, Inspiring, and Encouraging. Between the perceptions of the school business officials and their constituents (comparing LPI-Self and LPI-Observer scores) there were no significant differences for any of the five leadership practices.

There were a few significant correlations between various leadership practices and demographic characteristics of business school officials (e.g., age, gender, education, years of experience as school business official, years in position, former teacher, number of years taught, former administrator, years as a manager, number of managers supervised, and district enrollment). The only significant correlation for Challenging was age (negative); for Enabling the only significant correlation was for years in position (negative); for Modeling, education (positive) and number of years taught (negative) were the only significant correlations; and for Encouraging, education (negative) and years in position (negative) were significantly correlated. Demographic characteristics were generally not correlated with LPI-Observers' scores. The only exception was years as a manager being negatively correlated with Enabling and Encouraging leadership practices. LPI scores (Self and Observers) were generally not significantly correlated with various responsibilities of school business officials.