

TITLE: Leadership Practices and Job Satisfaction: An Examination of the Relationship Between Academic Deans and Department Chairpersons

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Doctoral Dissertation: May 1995

OBJECTIVE: To study the impact of academic deans' leadership practices on the job satisfaction of department chairpersons.

METHODOLOGY: The sample involved a random sample of 300 academic deans and 300 department chairpersons from colleges and universities in four upper Midwest states. Response rates were 57% (N=170) for deans and 47% (N=140) for chairpersons. Respondents completed the LPI, the Job Descriptive Index (Smith et al. 1987), and provided demographic information. Academic deans were predominantly male (71%), nearly 89% ranged in age from 46 to 65 years of age, with doctorates (95%). Most were from public institutions (63%) and 74% had been in their current position less than 8 years. Department chairs were also predominantly male (76%), slightly younger than deans and most held doctorates (87%). Just over half were with public institutions and had been in their positions for less than 8 years.

KEY FINDINGS: The leadership practices of deans were significantly higher than those reported by department chairs across all five leadership practices. Deans were more satisfied than chairs on some JDI items (work on present job, pay, and job in general) but not others (promotion, supervision, and coworkers). Correlations were found between various leadership practices and various facets of job satisfaction for both deans and department chairs. However, no correlations were found between the deans' leadership practices and the job satisfaction of department chairs (NOTE: These correlations were not for matched dean-chair sets).

The null hypothesis regarding the relationship between the leadership practices of deans and demographic variables were retained (i.e., gender, age, type or size of, and length of service); similar results were found between these demographic variables and job satisfaction. For department chairs, females reported higher usage of challenging and encouraging than their male counterparts. No significant differences were found for department chairs and age, type and size of institution, or length of service. For department chairs, there were no significant differences between job satisfaction and demographic variables.

Comparisons with a national sample of managers (Posner & Kouzes, 1992), the deans engaged in these leadership practices more frequently while department chairs reported engaging less in challenging and more in encouraging. "Within and throughout the academy, leaders are needed to provide the vision and values that give institutions distinction and encourage members to put forth extra effort beyond what they thought

in any successful institution of higher education, and without effective leadership by those individuals no institution can be continuously successful" (pp. 97-98).