THE LEADERSHIP STYLES OF FUTURE LEADERS

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ABSTRACT

Leadership is continually in short supply and businesses are concerned about where the next generation of leaders will come from. The coursework and activities in higher education help prepare students for the world of work. This study explores the leadership style of future leaders. The majority of respondents did not use any predominant leadership style. Those who did use a predominant style used a single style followed by a paired style. The human resources frame was the most used, followed by the structural frame. Conversely, the political frame was by far the weakest frame used. Slight statistically significant relations were found. The authors address implications and recommendations to enhance the skills of future leaders.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a vital component for any organization. To adapt, evolve, and successfully compete, the leader of an organization casts the vision, plots the course, and navigates the often-turbulent waters of change. Leadership is continually in short supply and businesses are concerned about where the next generation of leaders will come from. For example, in a national study of healthcare executives, it was found that hospitals have not done enough to prepare for top-level vacancies, train, and track future leaders (Evans, 2008). Similarly, many feel that it is incumbent on businesses to develop future leaders so that the enterprise can continue to operate. For example, Albaum and Peterson (2007) contend that future leaders are one of the businesses stakeholders and their development is of paramount performance. In fact, by identifying leaders early, firms are strategically selecting assignments that can augment their job experience and performance (Colvin, 2007).

Vogal (2007) contends there is a leadership void in corporate America and questions whether leaders either contemplate or comprehend their leadership style. This opinion is exasperated by a study (of over 5,000 hiring managers) that found that 46% of new hires failed, predominantly in interpersonal and leadership skills, within 18 months (Murphy, 2006).

Others feel that the preparation of future leaders is a primary responsibility of post secondary institutions. The future leaders in attendance, while lacking in education and experience, display

some nascent abilities that can be honed. Thus, universities are providing leadership experiences in the curriculum to meet the leadership vacuum.

In addition, there is no shortage of books on the topic of leadership. In fact, a recent search revealed over a quarter of one million books, 254,713 to be exact, just in Amazon.com's holdings (www.amazon.com).

But what factors determine leadership? Does age, gender, race, grade point average, work status, type of work, and level in the organization have an impact on leadership style? The purpose of this study is to determine whether the demographic factors such as age, gender race, grade point average, work status, type of work, and level in the organization have an impact on the leadership style of future leaders.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

H_0 There are no relationships between demographic variables and leadership style.
H_1 There is a relationship between age and leadership style.
H_2 There is a relationship between gender and leadership style.
H_3 There is a relationship between race and leadership style.
H_4 There is a relationship between grade point average and leadership style.
H_5 There is a relationship between work status and leadership style.
H_6 There is a relationship between the type of work performed and leadership style.
H_7 There is a relationship between the level in the organization and leadership style.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Dr. Lee Bolman granted the researchers permission to use the copyrighted Bolman and Deal (1990) *Leadership Orientation Instrument (Self)* questionnaire, which consists of 32 questions that seek responses on a Likert-like scale (Bolman & Deal, 1990). This instrument was tested on 1309 managers in business and education and has both validity and reliability as evidenced by a Spearman Brown Coefficient of .933 and a Guttman (Rulon) Coefficient of .933 (Bolman, 2008).

The Bolman and Deal (1990) model consists of four leadership styles: the no-style, single, paired, and multistyled. Leaders using a single style predominantly use one style. Similarly, leaders using a paired style predominately used two leadership styles and those using the multistyle use three or more leadership styles. Those leaders categorized as no style do not exhibit a preference for any of the four rated leadership styles (Bolman & Deal, 1994). Embedded within the style are the four leadership frames.

Frames open different windows of organizational reality and give leaders multiple strategies for addressing challenges. These four dimensions are (a) the structural frame, (b) the human resource frame, (c) the political frame, and (d) the symbolic frame. Bolman and Deal (1994) devised these frames as an extension of previous theories and research. The structural frame focuses on formal rules, hierarchy, and the goals of the organization. The human resource frame focuses on the needs of the people within the organization. The political frame views organizations as arenas where participants compete over resources, power, influence, and

interests. Finally, the symbolic frame focuses on the intangible aspects of the organization such as culture, myths, ceremony, and rituals. Leaders tend to favor certain frameworks over others, but a single framework style might limit their ability to address situations successfully.

This reframing will enable the leader to view, analyze, and develop solutions from one or more different perspectives. Bolman and Deal (1997) contend that effective leaders are multiframed, that is they use at least three of the four frames. This multiframe leadership provides the leader with more potential opportunities and solutions. The four-frame model developed by Bolman and Deal was used to identify which frames the participants of this study use.

Bolman and Deal's (1990) model has been successfully used with both high reliability and validity in a variety of areas including College Presidents to Auburn University doctoral leadership program (Bentley, 2004). Especially in the area of education, Bolman and Deal (1994) contend that teachers who are able to reframe situations become more confident, feel less anxious and become more efficient and effective.

TABLE 1. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BOLMAN AND DEAL FOUR-FRAME MODEL

Characteristics	Structural	Human Resource	Political	Symbolic
Metaphor	Machine	Family	Jungle	Carnival
Central concepts	Rules, roles, policies	Relationships, needs, skills	Power, conflict, competition	Culture, rituals
Decision making	Rational	Open-produce commitment	Gain or exercise power	Confirm values
Leader	Analyst, architect	Catalyst, servant	Advocate, negotiator	Prophet/poet
Process	Analysis, design	Support, empowerment	Advocacy, builds coalitions	Inspiration
Communication	Transmit facts	Exchange needs and feelings	Influence others	Tell stories
Motivation	Economic	Growth	Coercion	Symbols
Challenge	Attune structure to task	Align needs	Develop agenda/power base	Create meaning

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kolb (1984) asserts that leadership can be gained from experiential learning experiences, and contends that service learning, social welfare activities, learning communities, volunteering, internships, and other activities develop social consciousness and life-long learning. In addition, Connaughton, Lawrence, and Ruben (2003) contend leadership development is a fundamental responsibility of colleges and universities. By emphasizing students' leadership competencies and experiences through theoretical and applied course work, internships, and interaction with leaders from business, education, health care, and government can both initiate and nurture leadership ability. Similarly, Grande and Srinivas (2001) assert that experiential learning is an essential component for the development of leadership skills. In addition, different frames for adult programs and services are needed to align with the frames of potential participants (Yopp, 1996). Furthermore, Thompson (2000) argues there are significant contributing college resource categories of internships/field experiences/off-campus study and athletics that represent programs that emulate leadership positions, provide opportunities to students, and translate into societal equivalencies.

Slater (1994) argues that leadership has a cultural context and, therefore, recommends that leaders identify cultural themes and values the followers can rally around. White (2004), while studying ministry students, found that they needed to engage their peers at the relational level. In addition, Arendt and Gregoire (1998) found that students identified the relationship between leadership and group projects. However, many barriers limited or prevented learning about leadership, and students realized the need to transfer this learned leadership to the workplace.

With the pressing need for leadership, it appears that future leaders are beginning their training earlier. Griffen-Bonnaire (2003) contends that high school students should be engaged in their education and should play an active role in becoming responsible citizens. In the same manner, the Native American tribal colleges also realize the necessity to train leaders for the future and are actively encouraging leadership training in their curriculum (Cherokee, 2002). However, LaFontaine (2002) found the average male involvement in secondary school student leadership opportunities was approximately 25% and dropping.

Guido-DiBrito, Noteboom, Nathan, and Fentry (1996) studied gender and leadership among midlevel student affairs professionals and found issues of gender and leadership intertwining and changing according to different situations, contexts, and personalities. Women predominantly use a cooperative leadership style, while men lead autocratically. Therefore, it is hoped that student affairs leaders recognize how cultural prescriptions, in addition to their own personal experiences, promote and hinder leadership.

In a study of 60 suburban high school students, Dobosz and Beaty (1999) found that athletes demonstrated significantly greater leadership ability than did nonathletes. Thus, this finding lead suggests that high schools must now play an integral part in the character development of their students, and that they must reinforce the values and morals instilled by the family. By implementing programs that identify and develop character traits crucial for effective student leaders, school personnel at Warren Central High School are providing the necessary anchors to survive tumultuous times and build a firm foundation for the leaders of the future.

Similarly, Posner (2004) contends that leadership development is now an integral part of the educational program of college students, with courses and activities scattered throughout the cocurricular experience, and postulates that leadership educators and other student affairs professionals can take comfort and even pride in knowing that leadership education programs and leadership classes are apparently influencing the leadership behaviors of students. In addition, Berson, Dan, and Yammarino (2006) found management students more readily recognized leadership ability in working in teams as opposed to individual work.

Raines (2003) contends the good higher education administrator is one who masters the knowledge and skills to perform necessary tasks with efficiency and effectiveness; the outstanding leader engages in reflective practice and continuous growth. Marques (2007) found that learning and leadership are positively related and provide a mutual benefit both learning and leadership. In addition, their progress increases the probability of future job success. In the process of their maturity, leadership identity was connected to the students changing view of themselves (Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Maintella, & Osteen, 2005).

Komives, Lucas, and McMahon (1998) posited that leadership, like any other skill, needs to be practiced. Reese (2008) asserted that career and technical student organizations are places to learn leadership skills. In fact, participation in extracurricular activities can increase communication and leadership skills (Cuyjet, 2006). While many believe that reputable student organizations such as Student Government and the Society for the Advancement of Management are avenues for the development of leadership skills, others feel that Greek fraternities and sororities are nothing more than organized drinking clubs. However, Plucker (2004) found that there was not a significant relationship between binge drinking and Greek leadership positions

The issues of race and gender have been contentious in relation to leadership style. In a study of American and European business executives, Frauenheim (2007) contends that people automatically assume that leaders should be male. In fact, Tully (2007) asserts that women must become adept at both assertiveness and sociability to reach leadership positions. Further, in a study of nearly 3,000 undergraduate business students from universities across the country, Albaum and Peterson (2007) found that female survey participants were slightly but significantly more ethically inclined than male survey participants, and that survey participants who reported being very religious were slightly but significantly more ethically inclined than survey participants who were less religious. In addition, Lips (2001) found that women were more likely than men to anticipate relationship problems with powerful roles. Furthermore, young women do envision ambitious leadership possibilities for themselves; however, they struggle with how to make these visions a reality. Likewise, the college student's vision of power was moderated by gender, as women were significantly more likely than men to anticipate relationship problems associated with the political leader role. In addition, women did not see themselves becoming a person of power (Lips, 2000). However, Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster, and Burkhardt (2001) did not find gender or race to be factors in leadership ability.

Leadership Styles

There have been many studies using the Bolman and Deal (1990) *Leadership Orientations* instrument. Monahan and Shah (2006) found that Master I presidents practice a multiframe leadership style. Russell (2000) observed that academic deans at community colleges predominantly used the multiple frame leadership style, and Turley (2002), who studied radiation therapy program directors, found that 44% of respondents espoused multiframe leadership.

On the other hand, Thompson (2000), in a study of 472 lower-management, middle management, and upper-management personnel in secondary and postsecondary leadership positions, found that the majority (51.1%) used either single or paired frames, 13.3% used three frames, and 35.6% employed all four frames.

In a study of campus safety directors at public 4-year institutions two-thirds used multiple-frame leadership (Wolf, 1998). Further, two-thirds of chief information officers used multiframe leadership (Becker, 1999).

Small (2002) examined the relationship between the perceived leadership style of nursing chairpersons and the organizational effectiveness of baccalaureate nursing programs. It was interesting to note that faculty members perceived chairs as using no frames the most, followed

by all four frames, single frame, multiframe, and paired frame. Rivers (1996) studied principal leadership in Florida and found more than one-half of the elementary principals used multiple frames and three-quarters of the high school principals used multiple frames

Messer (2002) also studied elementary principal leadership orientations in Florida public schools and found that 60% of the principals employed multiple frame leadership. Harlow (1994) studied 20 Washington State public school superintendents and found these superintendents rarely used more than two frames, but Flak (1998) examined female superintendents and found that multiframe leadership orientation was used.

Leadership Frames

In a study of directors of occupational therapy programs, Miller (1998) found that 40% used the four frames. The human resources frame was the most used, while the structural frame was the least used. Males were four-frame leaders significantly more than females, and years of experience were significantly correlated with use of the political and symbolic frames. Scott (1999) studied the 20 top college athletic departments and found that the political frame the least used, but there were no statistical differences due to gender. Bird (2004) surveyed student leaders from 12 protestant colleges and found that the human resource frame was the predominant frame used, followed by the structural, political, and symbolic frames.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The survey was administered to 655 undergraduates and graduate students at a Masters I university located in Appalachia. The demographics of the respondents are displayed in Table 2. The respondents by gender were nearly evenly distributed 48% (female) to 52% (male). The vast majority (67%) was between 20–22 years of age, and nearly all 96% were single. Caucasians accounted for 79% of the respondents, followed by African Americans 14%. Business majors (54%) were the dominant area of study. The majority (56%) had a GPA of less than 3.0. Most (57%) were full-time undergraduates taking between 3–5 classes. Nearly half (45%) did not work at all and, of those who did work, only 9% held full-time jobs. Of those working, 30% were operatives.

TABLE 2. DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Demographic Factors	Percent
Gender	
Females	0.48
Males	0.52
Marital status	
Married respondents	0.04
Single respondents	0.96
Age in years	
Under 20 years	0.19

Demographic Factors	Percent
20–22 years	0.67
23–29 years	0.11
30–39 years	0.02
40–49 years	0.01
50–59 years	0.01
Over 60 years	—
Ethnicity	
African Americans	0.14
American Indians	0.01
Asians	0.02
Caucasians	0.79
Hispanics	0.02
Others	0.02
Work status	
Not working	0.45
Working < 10 hours per week	0.15
Working 11– 15 hours per week	0.11
Working 16–25 hours per week	0.13
Working 26–35 hours per week	0.07
Working > 35 hours per week	0.09
Industry where working	
Education	0.06
Finance	0.01
Healthcare	0.02
Hospitality	0.10
Manufacturing	0.01
Sales	0.09
Service	0.09
Other	0.19
Not applicable	0.42
Work level	
Upper management	0.03
Middle management	0.06
Supervisor	0.07
Operative	0.30
Not applicable	0.53

Demographic Factors	Percent
GPA	
2.00 – 2.49	0.16
2.50 – 2.99	0.28
3.00 – 3.25	0.18
3.26 – 3.49	0.15
3.50 – 3.75	0.10
3.76 – 4.00	0.10
Educational major	
Business	0.54
Education	0.13
Fine Arts	0.02
Liberal Arts	0.06
Physical Science	0.03
Social Science	0.04
Other	0.18
Level of courses taken	
Undergrad 1–2	0.20
Undergrad 3–5	0.57
Undergrad >5	0.14
Graduate 1–2	0.03
Graduate 3–4	0.03
Graduate >4	0.01

The majority of respondents did not use any predominant leadership style. Those who did use a predominant leadership style used a single style (24%) followed by a paired style (15%; see Table 3). As anticipated, the human resources frame was the most used (47%), followed by the structural frame (33%). Conversely, the political frame was by far the weakest frame used (40%) (see Table 4).

TABLE 3. LEADERSHIP STYLE USAGE

Style	Percent of use
No style	41
Single style	24
Paired style	15
Three style	9
Four style	11

TABLE 4. STRONGEST AND WEAKEST FRAMES USED

Frame	Strongest		Weakest	
Structural	33	(2)	29	(2)
Human resources	47	(4)	12	(4)
Political	8	(3)	40	(1)
Symbolic	12		19	(3)

With regard to gender, nearly half (48%) of males did not use any frame as compared to one-third (33%) of females. With the exception of the full four frames, females used each style more than males. In fact, a weak but statistically significant negative relationship existed (see Table 4). Concerning race, non-Caucasians (17%) used the full four-frame leadership style at twice the level of Caucasians (9%; see Table 4).

A slight statistically significant relationship, $r = .198$ at the .01 level, was found with respondents with GPA's greater than 3.0. These students generally exhibited more leadership styles than students with lower grades (see Table 7).

Respondents who worked used many more frames of leadership than respondents who did not work (see Table 7). Ironically, those who worked part-time generally used more leadership styles than those who worked full-time (see Table 8).

TABLE 5. LEADERSHIP STYLE AND GENDER

Style	Female	Male
No Frame	0.33	0.48
Single	0.27	0.21
Paired	0.16	0.14
Three Frame	0.13	0.06
Four Frame	0.11	0.11

Note. Pearson's r = −.100, p <.01; χ^2 = 21.86, df 4, p < .01

TABLE 6. LEADERSHIP STYLE AND RACE

Style	Caucasian	Non-Caucasian
No frame	0.42	0.38
Single	0.26	0.19
Paired	0.15	0.16
Three frame	0.09	0.10
Four frame	0.09	0.17

Note. Pearson's r = .092; p <.05 χ^2 = 9.41, df 4; p < .05.

TABLE 7. SUMMARY OF STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIPS

Statistically significant demographic factors	r	p	$\chi2$	df	p
Gender	–0.100	p < .01	21.86	4	p < .01
GPA > 3.0	0.198	p < .01	12.14	4	p < .05
Race	0.092	p < .05	9.41	4	p < .05
Level in workforce	0.095	p < .05			
Work status: not working or working	0.142	p < .01	18.42	4	p < .01
Working part-time or full-time	0.115	p < .01			
Working in services	0.155	p < .01			
Working in sales	0.148	p < .01			
Working in education	0.120	p < .01			

The strong use of the human resources and structural frames correspond to the student's basic understanding of the dichotomy between the leader focusing on relationship and tasks. The very limited use of the political and symbolic frames might be due to the time and experience it takes to develop or the reluctance to stray from a style that appears to be working. Even when using a frame, the largest number of respondents used only one, the human resources frame.

Concerning gender, a slight statistical relationship occurred because the females used one, two, and three frames more than males. Similarly, regarding race, non-Caucasians used the four frames more than Caucasians.

Similarly, respondents with higher GPAs and those who worked tended to be more versatile in their use of leadership styles; however, those who worked part-time showed more leadership styles than those who worked full-time. Perhaps, intelligence is a factor in leadership. Another explanation might be that the students who were of a traditional age worked part-time and adults who had or did not have college degrees worked full-time. In addition, a statistical correlation existed with those respondents who worked in the services, sales, and education fields. This might be because the respondents needed to adapt to various types of customers and constituencies.

Because the majority of respondents did not have a particular style, the researchers posited that the uses of styles were the result of experience. Because so many college students did not work or worked only part-time, they might not have had opportunities to develop leadership styles. Their supervision of others might be rudimentary at best, and they probably had had limited situations in which to resolve conflict, work autonomously, and set goals. Monahan and Shah (2006) found that university presidents use the multiframe style. This might be due to their training, years of experience, and boundless opportunities to address conflict.

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Employing a higher GPA and working at a higher level all had weak but statistically significant relationships on leadership style. Surprisingly, business majors did not possess more leadership ability than their counterparts. This might be due to the respondents' level of studies in their

major or the apparent conclusion that a major is not an indicator of leadership ability.

Additional research could focus on the leadership styles of freshman and seniors. In addition, longitudinal studies could assess whether leadership skills are gained during the college years and could compare the results to students who have been in the workforce for at least 5 years. The student findings could be compared with college presidents, deans, student affairs officers, faculty, medical, and legal practitioners.

However, the issue remains: What can universities do to improve the leadership skills of future leaders? Because multiframe leadership is the most effective, what measures can be taken to train and guide students into this pattern of leadership? First, a paradigm shift is needed. Students must be educated on the value of becoming involved; then they will be able to see situations from multiple perspectives. Perhaps, through encouraging and mentoring, students could be drawn into clubs such as the Society for the Advancement of Management (SAM); the Society for Human Resources (SHRM); other clubs in field such as marketing, economics, finance, accounting and entrepreneurship; or Delta Sigma Pi, the preeminent business fraternity. Furthermore, students could be inducted into honorary organizations such as Beta Gamma Sigma or such organizations could serve as springboards for leadership activities. Secondly, students should be steered toward classes that offer experiential learning activities. Third, classroom activities that promote group work, critical thinking, and discussion should be encouraged.

Additional activities have also been cited in the literature. For example, Thompson (2002) encouraged internships, field experiences, and off-campus study programs. Slater (1994) asserts that an understanding of culture and values might be of benefit to leaders. Even the much-maligned Greek organizations provide extracurricular leadership opportunities (Plucker, 2004).

Finally, research could also be extended to high school students. Although still younger, these students experience profound physiological and psychological changes. A plethora of activities and experiences such as drama clubs, mock trials, science competitions, athletics, student government, scouting, and cheerleading to name of few could help them break out of their shells and contribute to their communities. Perhaps, if these students could exert leadership in the company of the companions with whom they grew up, they might be more comfortable in continuing in leadership positions when they later attend college or enter the workforce. At the very least, a solid stage can be set by which their college development could continue.

In conclusion, leadership development is a major task and opportunity for institutions of higher education. Their efforts could help future leaders prepare for the challenges of tomorrow.

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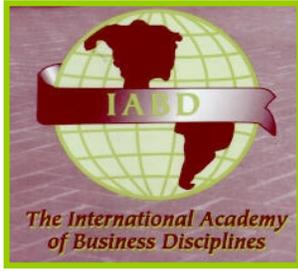
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