# Leadership Style in Social Work Educational Administration

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## Abstract

*The leadership styles of social work educational administrators have been understudied. Very few articles have utilized the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire 5x-short (Avolio & Bass, 2004) to explore social work leadership (Gellis, 2001; Mary, 2005; Mizrahi & Berger, 2001), and none of this research explored social work educational administrators practicing in colleges and universities. The hypotheses that social work educational administrators would utilize transformational leadership practices more often than other types and that these practices would be more effective than the other types were supported by this exploratory study. Implications for social work educational leadership are discussed.*

**Keywords:** Transformational Leadership, MLQ, Leader Effectiveness, and Educational Administration

## *1.0 Literature Review*

### 1.1 Full Range of Leadership Model

The full range of leadership model is one method of understanding leadership style. The full range model includes the components of transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors, and this model is also indicative of leader effectiveness because a person demonstrating predominantly laissezfaire leadership is generally rated as less effective (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The full range of leadership model represents nine factors: five transformational, two transactional, and two laissez faire leadership factors, and these factors are clearly delineated as subscales of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire or MLQ (Antonakis, Avolio, & Sivasubranamiam, 2003). In the full range of leadership model, every leader is assumed to display each leadership style to some degree (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The MLQ measures leadership behaviors, and then identifies the most often used style for the leader in question (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

#### 1.1.1 Laissez Faire or Passive Avoidant

Bass and Riggio (2006) define lassiez faire or passive avoidant leadership as "the avoidance or absence of leadership…Necessary decision are not made. Actions are delayed…Authority remains unused." (p.8-9). Antonakis et al. (2003) define the lassiez faire leadership style as the absence of a transaction. The leader "avoids making decisions, abdicates responsibility, and does not use their authority" (p. 265). This leadership style is considered the least effective and most passive leadership style in the full range leadership model (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In the academic world, this type of leadership behavior might be present when a dean refuses to get involved in faculty disagreements in any way despite a negative effect on the entire department due to that inaction.

#### 1.1.2 Transactional

Bass (1990) defines transactional leadership behavior as "the transactional exchange between the leader and the led. The leader clarified what needed to be done and the benefits to the self-interests of the followers for compliance." (p. 902). Bass and Riggio (2006) define transactional leadership as occurring when the leader rewards or disciplines the follower, depending on the adequacy of the follower's performance.

According to Bass and Riggio (2006) transactional leadership when placed in the full range of leadership model can be effective or ineffective and active or passive depending on the context, but in general lie in the mid-range of leader effectiveness. There are three types (or factors) of transactional leadership: (1) contingent reward, (2) management-by-exception active, and (3) management-by-exception passive.

Contingent reward leadership behaviors where leaders reward followers for satisfactorily completing a task is the most effective of the three transactional styles. Management-by-exception active (the leader actively monitors followers' actions and encourages corrective actions if necessary) is effective dependent upon the context, while Management-by-exception passive is least effective of all the transactional styles. Management-by-exception passive behaviors occur when the leader takes action only when follower performance is noticed to be unsatisfactory. (Bass & Riggio, 2006)

A transactional leadership style is often appropriate, empowering, and effective (Bass & Riggio, 2006). For example, in the academic world knowing the expectations for tenure and being guided there by a transactional style mentor would be a great help in achieving that particular career goal, and both parties would likely get recognition from the other for their efforts.

The transactional style of leadership is most effective when liberally augmented by the transformational leadership behaviors described in the next section (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Demonstrations of the augmentation effect have been reported in several leadership studies since the 1980s (Bass, 1997; Gellis, 2001). An example given by faculty raters in this study is that personal faculty and departmental goals were set simultaneously, and when they were met rewards were given in the form of extra faculty development funding or other discretionary rewards.

Problems arise when the leader achieves team goals through intimidation using rewards to maintain the status quo.Faculty raters in this study report leaders who reward negative behavior of faculty which can lead to poor performance of other faculty. An example given is that if a faculty member states disagreement with the leader's direction for the team, that faculty member is given more difficult and time consuming courses and committee assignments. Faculty that remained quiet or supported the leader's direction were given easier and less time consuming workloads.

### 1.1.3 Transformational

Antonakis et al. (2003) states "Transformational leaders are proactive, raise follower awareness for transcendent collective interests, and help followers achieve extraordinary goals" (p.264). Bass and Riggio (2006) describe the transformational leader as one who "stimulates and inspires followers to both achieve extraordinary outcomes and, in the process, develop their own leadership capacity" (p.3). These leaders "empower" their followers and "align" individual, group, leader, and organizational goals. Transformational leadership behaviors have been correlated with "high levels of follower satisfaction and commitment to the group and organization" (Bass & Riggio, 2006, p.3).

In this study, faculty raters indicate that high moral character, fostering a sense of community, and achieving unit goals that are strategically and cooperatively developed are hallmarks of high ratings in transformational leadership. One rater disclosed that their dean had a "unique capacity to inspire others to work at their absolute maximum potential, without putting pressure on them to do so!"

## 1.2 Social Work Leadership and Transformational Leadership Style

In the full range of leadership model, transformational leadership style is comprised of five separate factors or "I"s including (1) idealized influence-attributed, (2) idealized influence-behavior, (3) inspirational motivation, (4) intellectual stimulation, and (5) individualized consideration (Antonakis et al., 2003). These five factors correspond nicely to the five common elements of leadership in the social work profession developed by Rank and Hutchinson (2000).

Rank and Hutchinson (2000) examined views of presidents and executive director members of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and dean members of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) providing an inclusive idea of perceptions of leadership in the social work profession by surveying both practice (NASW) and educationally-focused (CSWE) social workers. This survey identified five common elements defining the concept of leadership: (1) proaction, (2) values and ethics, (3) empowerment, (4) vision, and (5) communication (Rank & Hutchinson, 2000).

Table 1 shows connections between the construct of transformational leadership and the definition of social work leadership developed by Rank and Hutchinson (2000). This definition follows:

Social work leadership is the communication of vision, guided by the NASW Code of Ethics, to create proactive processes that empower individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. (Rank & Hutchison, 2000, p.499)

**Table 1: Comparison of Social Work Elements of Leadership and Transformational Leadership Factors**

| Elements of Leadership as Defined by Rank & Hutchinson (2000) | Five Factors of Transformational Leadership (Antonokis et al., 2003) |
|---|---|
| Proaction: acting in anticipation of future problems | Idealized influence (behavior): "charismatic actions of the leader centered on values, beliefs, and a sense of mission" |
| Values and Ethics: acting in accordance with the NASW Code of Ethics | Idealized influence (attributed): socialized charisma of the leader, whether the leader is perceived as confident, powerful, focused on higher-order ideals and ethics |
| Empowerment: "the process of helping individuals, families, groups, and communities to increase their personal, interpersonal, socioeconomic, and political strength and to develop influence toward improving their circumstances" (Barker, 1994) | Individualized consideration: ways that a leader contributes to follower satisfaction with advising, supporting, and paying attention to individual needs of followers and facilitating their self-actualization |
| Vision: "the act or power of anticipating that which will or may come to be" (Merriam-Webster, 1999) | Inspirational motivation: ways that a leader energizes followers by focusing on an optimistic future, stressing ambitious goals, projecting an idealized vision, and communicating the achievable nature of the vision |
| Communication: the verbal and nonverbal exchange of information including all the ways in which knowledge is transmitted and received." (Barker, 1994) | Intellectual stimulation: leader actions that appeal to follower logic and analysis by encouraging creative thinking and problem solving |

This definition embraces the transformational leadership style. Mary (2005) calls it "congruent with the transformational leadership style". It remains to be seen whether or not the social work educational administrators are actually using this definition and the corresponding transformational leadership style in actual practice.
Only three studies examining leadership style with the MLQ were found in social work literature (Gellis, 2001; Mary, 2005; Mizrahi & Berger, 2001). None discussed leadership style in the context of social work educational settings.No other studies were found exploring the full range of leadership model in social work, and this gap in the literature is an important area to explore. This study begins to fill that gap by exploring social work educational leadership styles as a way of determining how often transformational leadership practices are utilized and how effective they are in American university settings.

## *2.0 Method*

The exploratory study employed a cross-sectional online survey design (Singleton & Straits, 1999), and data were collected from social work deans and directors and their faculty ratersacross the United States including Puerto Rico.

The researcher obtained human subjects protection approval from the university's institutional review board as well as a letter of support from the NADD President, Alberto Godenzi. This documentation was provided with the request for survey completion.

The researcher deidentified data prior to analysis by assigning numbers to each leader that corresponded to their faculty rater numbers. In order to further protect confidentiality, faculty raters were not asked for their names, and all data was returned directly to the researcher. All faculty ratings arereported only in the aggregate.

### 2.1 Sampling Design

Purposive sampling was used to obtain knowledge about the leadership practices of social work educational leaders. Following a pilot test of the instrumentation and web survey software, each dean, department head, and director listed in the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) National Association of Deans and Directors (NADD) online directory for Fall 2008 was solicited via email communication regarding the purposes of the research and how to access the survey.

A complete population of all deans, directors, and chairs listed in the CSWE NADD list from the United States was utilized. All received the study materials. This is a complete population because leaders at all levels of social work education – bachelors, masters, and doctoral – in all CSWE accredited schools participating in NADDwere offered the survey.

For the purposes of this study a leader is defined as: a person in social work higher education holding the position of dean, director, or chair in an accredited university level social work department. All social work educators associated with leaders who have returned surveys were invited to participate by anonymously rating their leaders. Faculty raters are defined as direct reports of the leader and include instructors, lecturers, part-time faculty, and full-time faculty who have worked with the leader for at least 6 months.

### 2.2 Tailored Design Method

This study used the Tailored Design Method (Dillman, 2007) to explore the leadership styles of social work educational administrators in the United States through a web-based survey. The Tailored Design Method (Dillman, 2007) emphasizes the use of six contacts for maximum response rate, however, in this study a suggested modification resulted in the utilization of only four contacts.

Two different questionnaires (one for leaders and one for faculty raters) including demographic data and the MLQ-5x Short Scale (both leader and faculty rater forms) were utilized in this study to gather information on leadership style and demographics. These instruments were accessible online with a pass code only and in a Microsoft Word document format through mail or email. The instrument in Word document format could be returned via regular mail or email.

The total population included the entire National Association of Deans and Directors (NADD) listserv with a total of one hundred ninety five member leaders. A total of thirty three (33) leader surveys were returned from deans, directors, and chairs of social work departments in CSWE accredited schools in the United States and Puerto Rico. Returned leader surveys included almost seventeen percent (16.9%) of the total NADD list. Of those 33 leaders, 15 had at least two faculty raters return surveys. If at least two matched employee surveys were received, then those matched sets were used in the analyses. A total of 65 faculty raters returned surveys on those 15 leaders.

A total of seventy four surveys were returned from the faculty raters of deans, directors, and chairs of social work departments in CSWE accredited schools in the United States and Puerto Rico. Those leaders were specifically targeted with an individual follow up email and phone call requesting participation, however, none responded. The additional nine surveys, while not corresponding to a specific leader, were utilized for some analyses in this study.

The leaders reported five hundred sixty nine (569) faculty raters. A return rate of twelve percent (12.3%) of faculty raters was established for this study.

### 2.3 Participants

#### 2.3.1 Leader Demographics

The total number of deans, directors, and chairs responding to this survey was thirty three. There was no incentive for them to participate other than to assist with increasing the knowledge base of the social work profession. All respondents were volunteers.

The mean years of experience at any college is 22.67 years with 25 years being the mode. Mean years at their current college is 12.16 years with the mean for years at their current position being 3.89 years. See Table 2 for further demographic information on degree, title, gender, and age.

**Table 2: Participant Demographics**

| Variable | Leaders (n=33) | | Employee (n=74) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % |
| Gender | | | | |
| Female | 19 | 57.6 | 54 | 73 |
| Male | 14 | 42.4 | 20 | 17 |
| Age | | | | |
| 30-40 years | 1 | 3.0 | 15 | 20.3 |
| 40-50 years | 4 | 12.1 | 18 | 24.3 |
| 50-60 years | 12 | 36.4 | 27 | 36.5 |
| 61 + | 16 | 48.5 | 13 | 17.6 |
| Degree | | | | |
| Ph. D. or DSW | 32 | 97.0 | 49 | 66.2 |
| Master's | 1 | 3.0 | 25 | 25.7 |
| Discipline | | | | |
| Social Work | 22 | 66.7 | 68.9 | 68.9 |
| Psychology | 4 | 12.1 | 6.8 | 6.8 |
| Education | 1 | 3.0 | 2.7 | 2.7 |
| Other | 5 | 15.1 | 21.6 | 21.6 |
| Title | | | | |
| Dean | 14 | 42.4 | n/a | n/a |
| Director | 14 | 42.4 | n/a | n/a |
| Chair | 4 | 12.1 | n/a | n/a |
| Interim Director | 1 | 3.0 | n/a | n/a |

These leaders indirectly influence 12,732 social work students yearly or 18.5% of the 68,837 social work degree seeking students in CSWE accredited programs (Lennon, 2002). This study offers an important exploration of leadership in social work education but will not be generalizable to all deans, directors, and chairs in CSWE accredited schools due to the low response rate. It is possible to replicate this study in the future in order to meet the required number for generalizability to all social work leaders.

### 2.3.2 Faculty Rater Demographics

Table 2 displays age, gender and degree variables. The faculty respondents have an average of 7.5 years at their current position with one year given as the most commonly given response. Their experience, however, is much higher with a mean of 14.5 years' experience at any school with a mode of ten years. This falls far short of the leader's average years of experience at any college of 22.7 years with 25 years being the most commonly given answer.

## *3.0 Results*

### 3.1 MLQ 5x-Short Findings

The findings were divided into two sections: comparison with national norms and exploration of this particular sample. T-tests were used in most cases. Three possible analyses were completed: one with leader self-ratings only, a second comparing leader and matched faculty rater ratings, and a third with a combined leader/faculty rater average rating to national norms for the MLQ 5x-Short form. Tables 3 and 4 depict the means of these various groups for the scales.

**Table 3: MLQ 5x-Short form Scale Scores: Leader self-Rating (n=33) and Employee Ratings (n=74) Compared to Norm Means**

| Leadership Style | Component | Leader Mean n=33 | Norm Mean n=3,375 | Rater Mean n=74 | Norm Mean n=5,185 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Transformational | Idealized influence (attributed)* | 3.77 | 2.95 | 3.84 | 2.93 |
| | Idealized influence (behavior)^* | 4.11 | 2.99 | 3.33 | 2.77 |
| | Inspirational motivation* | 4.27 | 3.04 | 4.06 | 2.84 |
| | Intellectual stimulation^* | 4.13 | 2.96 | 3.38 | 2.77 |
| | Individualized consideration* | 4.27 | 3.16 | 3.54 | 2.83 |
| | *Total Transformational** | *4.11* | *3.02* | *3.64* | *2.83* |
| Transactional | Contingent Rewards* | 3.91 | 2.99 | 3.77 | 2.88 |
| | Mgt. by exception- active* | 2.36 | 1.58 | 2.19 | 1.72 |
| | *Total Transactional** | *3.13* | *2.29* | *2.98* | *2.30* |
| Passive Avoidant | Mgt. by exception-passive^* | 1.83 | 1.07 | 2.33 | 1.04 |
| | Laissez-faire* | 1.55 | .61 | 1.81 | .65 |
| | *Total Passive Avoidant** | *1.69* | *.84* | *2.07* | *.85* |
| Outcomes of leadership | Extra Effort* | 3.90 | 2.79 | 3.57 | 2.68 |
| | Effectiveness* | 4.34 | 3.14 | 3.78 | 3.02 |
| | Satisfaction* | 4.17 | 3.09 | 3.76 | 3.08 |

*p< .001 difference with national norm
^p< .001 difference between employee and leader ratings

**Table 4: MLQ 5x-Short form Scale Scores with Means Combined Leader (n=15) and Employee (n=65) mean Ratings (total n=80)**

| Leadership Style | Component | Mean n=80 | Norm Mean n=27,285 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Transformational | Idealized influence (attributed)* | 3.94 | 2.94 |
| | Idealized influence (behavior)* | 3.96 | 2.88 |
| | Inspirational motivation* | 4.15 | 2.94 |
| | Intellectual stimulation* | 3.60 | 2.87 |
| | Individualized consideration* | 3.84 | 3.00 |
| | *Total Transformational** | *3.89* | *2.93* |
| Transactional | Contingent Rewards* | 3.95 | 2.94 |
| | Mgt. by exception- active* | 2.21 | 1.65 |
| | *Total Transactional** | *3.07* | *2.30* |
| Passive Avoidant | Mgt. by exception-passive* | 2.12 | 1.06 |
| | Laissez-faire* | 1.62 | .63 |
| | *Total Passive Avoidant** | *2.27* | *.85* |
| Outcomes of leadership | Extra Effort* | 3.74 | 2.74 |
| | Effectiveness* | 4.07 | 3.08 |
| | Satisfaction* | 3.97 | 3.09 |

*p< .001 difference with national norm

Compared to the national norms for the MLQ 5x-Short scales, social work leaders rate higher on all three types of leadership as well as effectiveness with *t*(13-33) scores ranging from 4.402 to 31.414.Figure 1 depicts the comparison of three group views of leadership styles. There are differences among the three groups, but all groups agree that transformational leadership practices are used most frequently by social work educators with transactional leadership practices used next frequently and passive avoidant practices used the least.

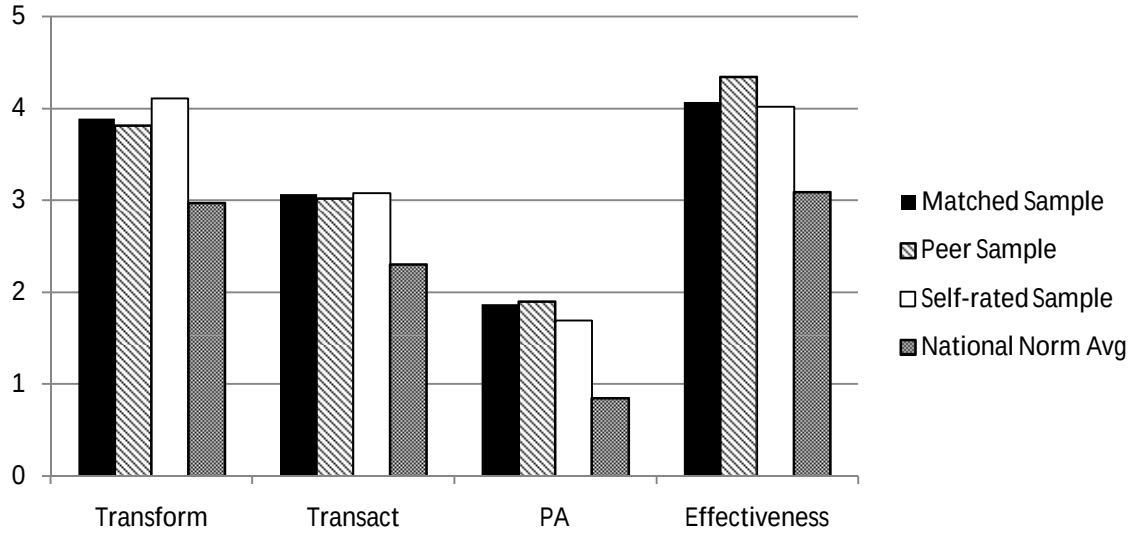


**Figure 1: Comparison of Sample Ratings with National Norm Averages on the MLQ 5x Short form**

Interestingly, some MLQ-5x Short form scales were significantly different between leader and employee ratings. These three scales were idealized influence – behavior, intellectual stimulation, and passive-avoidant leadership scales (see Table 3). Apart from those three scales, no significant differences between leader and employee ratings were found.

It is important to note that self-rating percentiles reported by Avolio and Bass (2004) less than 60 percent of leaders in the normed sample had transformational leadership scores over 3.25 (the low transformational leadership category) and less than 5 percent had scores over 4.00 (the high transformational leadership category). Laissez faire leadership scores actually ranged from 1.00 to 1.79. Low category scores were between 1.00 and 1.25; less than 20% or the national self-ratings were at that level. The high laissez faire category scales were between 1.26 and 2.25; less than 10% of leaders in the national survey scored that high (Avolio & Bass, 2004).This means the lowest scores in this group of leaders were high within national percentiles.

### 3.2 Research Question 1: Styles of Social Work Leadership

The predominant style of leadership practiced by leaders in social work education was found to be transformational leadership style. When compared to national norms, this group of social work administrators was found to utilize significantly higher levels of transformational leadership. This finding was expected. What was not expected was the finding that they also utilize higher levels of transactional and passive/avoidant leadership than leaders in the national norm group.

There are many ways to interpret these unexpected findings. One possible explanation is that social work administrators are very good at leading in certain situations (such as meeting organizational goals) but are substandard leaders or simply not instrumental in others (such as reducing employee conflict). Alternatively, these findings may suggest that as a group, social work leaders are excellent at transforming their faculty raters into the highest form of themselves but are sometimes not doing enough leadership tending instead to avoid responsibility through lack of timely response to conflict or important items. Items such as "I avoid getting involved when important issues arise" and "I show that I am a firm believer in 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it.'" are examples of passive avoidant leadership style items (Avolio & Bass, 2004) given high ratings by leaders and faculty raters in this study.

It could be that faculty raters at this level are seeking their own fulfillment through their work and are self-motivated for personal transformation. One faculty rater comment sums up this type of situation: "I am an exceptionally motivated person so the dean's input in motivating me is not necessary. This is not a reflection on [their] ability to motivate others since [this person] does an excellent job of motivating some people in the organization. It is just an explanation of why I have not given [my leader] the highest ratings for [their] ability to motivate me." Individual views such as this may make rating these particular leaders difficult.

It is possible that there are inconsistencies with leader behaviors, making it difficult to give consistent ratings. One employee addressed leader inconsistencies in an open-ended comment. This employee stated "[The leader] isn't consistent-I never know when [they] will make a thoughtful decision or a reactive decision. [This leader] has poor self-awareness. [This leader] can be very generous at times (with giving assistance to faculty, etc.) but other times [this leader] is vindictive and manipulative." This statement highlights difficulties that can occur for faculty when leaders are inconsistent with behavior. Problems such as lack of respect for the leader, a perception of lack of fairness to faculty raters, and the perception of ineffective decision making processes will impact faculty to a large degree. Without knowing what to expect next faculty may experience negative symptoms such as increased anxiety and stress that will ultimately make them less effective in their jobs.

An additional unexpected finding was that leader and faculty raters have statistically significant differences of opinion on three of the fifteen subscales. These three subscales were idealized influence (behavior), intellectual stimulation, and passive-avoidant leadership scales. Differences between leader self-ratings and employee ratings of leaders are typical; hence this particular instrument has different norms for each group. The typical differences are not statistically significant whereas they were statistically significant with this group.

### 3.3 Research Question 2: Effectiveness of Social Work Educational Leadership

Research Question 2 asked "Is the predominant type of leadership practiced by social workers in educational administration effective?" Lowe, Kroeck, and Sivasubramaniam (1996) found that effectiveness and transformational leadership style were correlated in their meta-analysis. In accordance with research question 2, it is important to note that the predominant type of leadership style practiced by social work educators is effective, satisfying to faculty raters, and encourages faculty raters to provide extra effort (see Table 2). The findings on the MLQ-5x short outcomes of leadership subscales demonstrate this to be the case. As hypothesized, in this study a positive relationship between use of a transformational leadership style and effectiveness was found. The leaders in this study were rated as effective by both themselves and their faculty raters.

## *4.0 Discussion*

One limitation of this study is a participant pool limited to social work educators who volunteered for the study. It is possible that only leaders confident in their skills responded to the survey. Also, the number of leader participants did not meet the level needed for generalizability. The sample is not totally representative of the various types of social work programs since 80% of the respondents were from a social work program including more than one level of social work education, a third limitation consistent with the NADD population.

Anecdotal comments from CSWE conference attendees suggest that there was not trust that the research process was indeed confidential leading to hesitancy to complete the survey instrument due to fear of repercussions (Anonymous Personal Communications, 2011). This lack of trust was puzzling due to the provided written assurances from the appropriate university Institutional Review Board and a letter from the NADD President, Alberto Godenzi. It would be important in future research to address those concerns through more discussion of safeguards to confidentiality in an effort to increase participation. The MLQ also encourages leader supervisor completion of the instrument, however, in this case that would be Deans of Colleges and Presidents of Colleges/Universities who may have limited contact with the leader. For that reason, this study protocol did not utilize the 360 degree view including supervisors and faculty raters, but only the 180 degree employee view. Perhaps using the supervisor view would be beneficial in future studies garnering a higher return rate and more robust data. Those assumptions and limitations notwithstanding, the pursuant discussion is presented.

## *5.0 Implications for Social Work Practice*

The present study results have many implications for social work educational leadership practice and training. Nesoff (2007) states that the issues of lack of administrative training and increasing the strength of administration components within social work programs are still primary concerns in the social work profession as a whole. In contrast, this study finds that deans, directors, and department heads are effective in their roles albeitunusual when compared to national norms including various professions. This may be a function of the unique setting where they operate. The shared leadership model of most universities prohibits or reduces leadership risks because providing strong leadership can lead to poor faculty leader evaluations and ultimately termination. Perhaps by virtue of their unique position as an educational administrator, these leaders are utilizing a specific subset of leadership competencies.

A higher than usual laissez faire leadership utilization may be a functional strategy allowing intelligent, strong-willed faculty-often leaders in their own right-to solve problems on their own. Whatever the reason, these leaders were found to be effective despite their unique utilization of leadership styles. Further exploration of this finding is warranted.

The Network for Social Work Management (NSWM) has developed a set of management standards for use in academic institution settings including eleven leadership competencies (Hassan, Waldman, & Wimpfheimer, 2012).Competencies and practice behaviors such as these can be used as a basis for best practice guidelines in social work educational leadership. Leadership is one of the NSWM categories of overarching importance because of the requirement for development of balanced organizations. No one leader can meet all of the competencies, so self-awareness is of primary importance for leaders as they must choose others for leadership positions that complement their own strengths and weaknesses (Hassan, Waldman, & Wimpfheimer, 2012).
One specific finding in this study is that social work leaders and their faculty raters have different views of their leadership practices. These particular differences are important to explore because accurate evaluation is important for leaders and faculty raters. One specific way to encourage accurate assessment in training and education is to encourage and assist social work leaders and faculty raters in seeking feedback from others in assessing the utility of their own and others' leadership styles and practices.

There are instruments available that do just that; one example is the MLQ instrument utilized in this study which is capable of taking a 360 degree view of leadership. Regular administration and monitoring of the profession via this tool is one way to determine and address the specialized leadership training needs required for effective social work educational administration.

## 6.0 Conclusion

These particular leaders, due to their placement at large colleges/universities with large social work programs, have a stronger impact than if they chose to lead in smaller colleges/universities. The social work leaders responding to this study report directly influencing 569 social work faculty members and 12,732 social work students yearly which constitute 7% of the faculty and 30% of the students in CSWE accredited social work programs in 2006 (CSWE, 2007). These results have importance based on these numbers despite the lack of generalizability to the entire group of social work educational administration leaders. Further research can be completed to build upon what is discussed here.

While more research, training and support for social work leadership is needed at all levels, social work is well on its way with development of leadership initiatives(Sheafor, 2005) such as the CSWE Leadership Initiative (CSWE, 2013) and the creation of leadership competencies and practice behaviors via the Network on Social Work Management (Hassan, Waldman, & Wimpfheimer, 2012). Increasing the knowledge base of the profession through additional research and encouraging educational leadership through individualized assessment and training is the next step. Utilization of the MLQ for training and monitoring is a way to track the effectiveness of leadership initiatives.

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