

Emotional Intelligence Among Leaders and Non-Leaders in Campus Organizations

by

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Thesis submitted to the faculty of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATION

in

Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

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May 2, 2002

Blacksburg, VA

Keywords: higher education; student affairs; student activities; emotional intelligence;
student organizations; organization leaders; organization members

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Abstract

The present study examined emotional intelligence (EQ) levels among student leaders and members of three types of student organizations: governing, service, and special interest. Emotional intelligence refers to one's ability to recognize emotions in oneself and others and the ability to exhibit appropriate responses to environmental stimuli. Participants included 79 students (half of those were organization leaders and the other half were organization members). An equal number of leaders and members from the three types of organizations were selected. The EQ-i or BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory (Bar-On, 1997) was administered to measure participants' levels of EQ. In general, this study compared EQ scores within and between groups of participants. In addition, the interaction between leadership status and type of organization was studied.

Analysis of these data revealed that college student leaders demonstrate a higher level of EQ than student members in campus organizations. There were also significant differences between types of organizations on EQ scores. No significance was found on EQ between leadership status and type of organization, however.

This research had implications for several groups. First, student activities staff may use the results of this study to design training activities to enhance particular components of EQ. The data might be used to identify skills where training might enhance leader competency within campus organizations. Results of this study may also be used by student activities staff to market extracurricular and leadership opportunities. The study provided them with data about differences in scores by type of position and type of organization. Furthermore, the results of this study might be used by students in determining what types of organizations to join and what types of roles to assume. Future employers might also be interested in the results of this study. Differing levels of involvement may make a difference in potential employees' abilities as defined by the EQ-i scales. Such information may help future employers better assess EQ associated with certain positions or organizations.

Dedication

Dedicated to my parents, Ron and Marsha Scheusner, for their continued support and encouragement of my educational and personal pursuits.

“Optimism is essential to achievement and it is also the foundation
of courage and true progress.”

–Nicholas Murray Butler

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