The Leading Edge: Outcomes Achieved by

Residence Hall Association Leaders

by

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(ABSTRACT)

Researchers suggest that there are many outcomes associated with involvement in student clubs and organizations. Research also indicates that positive outcomes are associated with serving in leadership positions. Residence Hall Association (RHA) leaders are college students who are involved in a specific type of organization, based in the residence halls with specific aims to improve the quality of life and enhance leadership skill development. Studies to assess the outcomes associated with the RHA leadership experience, however, are limited. The purpose of this study was to examine the skills achieved by RHA leaders.

Data were gathered by administering the Student Leadership Outcomes Inventory (SLOI) to all RHA Presidents and National Communications Coordinators (NCCs) of NACURH, Inc. during the spring of 2001. The SLOI is a 60-item instrument designed to measure the outcomes of leadership experiences on seven scales. Respondents rate items on a Likert-type scale with responses ranging from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree.”

Data were analyzed to determine if outcomes associated with RHA leadership differed by: type of position (President versus NCC), age, sex, race (minority v. majority), status of advisor (professional versus graduate student), and size of on-campus population (< 900 v. 1000+). Additionally data were analyzed to determine if there were any interaction effects between the status of advisor and size of on-campus population.

Results revealed significant differences by sex on six of the seven scales, status of advisor on the technology scale, and type of position on the self-confidence scale. The data provide information for Residence Education administrators, RHA leaders, and the national board of NACURH, Inc. regarding outcomes achieved by RHA leaders. Using the results of this study, these parties can work to further promote leadership development among RHA officers and members.

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According to African Proverbs, it takes a village to raise a child. This study is the incarnation of these words. Indeed, it has taken a great deal of work from a great many people to become a reality. For this commitment I am forever grateful.

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