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Comparison of Leadership Development Priorities in Business, Marketing,
and Finance Education in Public Secondary School Systems and Actual
Classroom Instruction

By James L. Morrison, Ed.D and Titi Oladunjoye, Ph.D

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Adding value to products and services is a constant concern for companies as they compete for customer attention. The result is a transformation of the relationship between customers and companies as the movement towards instantaneous marketing and data mining become more commonplace. In this rapidly changing marketplace, the survivors are those who sell, market, and serve customers effectively. It is the acceleration of the velocity of change in company products and services among competitors that has resulted in the need to hire workers with different kinds of leadership capabilities. Transforming customer relationships, an organization's culture, and other aspects of business (such as inventory management and customer payment systems) requires an alert work force who can keep one step ahead of the competition. Having a new cadre of leaders positioned throughout an organization who can mobilize others into an effective, focused workforce is now a priority (Business Week, 2000).

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Correspondingly, educational institutions who prepare the future workforce must deliver a new breed of employees who are capable of assuming a variety of leadership roles as they arise. Building bridges between what is being taught about leadership development in our teacher preparatory programs in universities across the country and what is actually being implemented in the secondary school classroom is critical to preparing future workers to assume roles of leadership in both profit and non-profit organizations. However, if there is very little interest or emphasis at the collegiate level for 'exposing' future teachers to the need to develop leadership skills in their students at the secondary level, then such knowledge would be helpful in generating a discussion of whether this is appropriate or not. On the other hand, if what future teachers are being taught in teacher preparatory programs is not being carried out when actually in the secondary school classroom, an analysis may be necessary as to why such a discrepancy is occurring-and is this significant? In retrospect, while leadership training has traditionally been aligned with collegiate programs in business, political science, and education, among some others, this research takes this practice one step further by focusing upon the effects of teacher education upon what may be occurring at the secondary level, primarily in our public schools throughout the country.

Leadership Development

Public (and private) education across the country is currently being perceived as possibly playing a greater role in teaching leadership skills as noted by several researchers. For example, Richardson and Feldhusen (1986) indicate that both secondary schools and four-year colleges have similar roles in preparing future workers with leadership skills. Factors identified as important to both levels of education are (1) getting and giving information, (2) understanding group needs, (3) creating common goals, (4) involving everyone, (5) evaluating resources available, (6) counseling subordinates, (7) leading by example, and (8) decision-making. Similarly, Karanese and Meriweather (1989) suggest that information sharing, problem-solving, problem analysis, and mentoring are critical areas for leaders to develop. House (1980) also states that learning the processes of directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating are critical to becoming an effective leader. Finally, Plowman (1981) concludes that faculty in both secondary and colleges have a role to play in preparing workers to fulfill new opportunities for exhibiting leadership in expanding 'flat organizational structures' being adopted in what is now referred to as 'adaptive organizations' where change is constant and rapid.

Over the recent decade, our public schools have been targeted by political leaders, community activists, business leaders, and others to revise and update current educational programs to better prepare students for entry into the workplace and/or entrance into college. In this regard, the Education Trust, a non-partisan organization in Washington, DC, suggests that educators must engage students in more challenging ways for developing 'cognitive maturity' by making certain that teaching practices and efforts are aligned within and across grade levels and by having businesses and community agencies more active in upgrading existing programs (Pika, 2002.) Suzanne Moore (2002), president of the Delaware Chamber of Commerce, states that 'world-class education is everybody's business.'

Business, Marketing, and Finance Education

Educators in business, marketing and finance education at the secondary level have been very active in transforming curricula and instruction over the past several years. Historically, these programs have had a strong emphasis on developing workplace competencies related to

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making decisions, speaking and writing, managing, and problem-solving. In addition, business ethics, team building, and conflict management have been components of many existing programs. Therefore, leadership training at the secondary level in these programs has been designated as a significant component to current business curriculum-and this is a primary reason why this occupational preparatory program at the secondary level of education was targeted for this study.

In addition, with the urging of the National Business Education Association and the support of state departments of education throughout the nation, business educators at the secondary level are in the process of adopting recently developed national standards, indicating what k-14 students should know and be able to do upon graduation. These national standards contain guidelines for quality education in 11 areas of business, marketing and finance education, of which leadership development is integrated into three: entrepreneurship, management, and international business (NBEA, 2001) Similarly, at the collegiate level where secondary school business educators receive their teacher preparation, business teacher education program standards have also been adopted for the profession (NBEA, 2001).

With these national standards becoming benchmarks for success in business, marketing, and finance education at the secondary level, program priorities are now firmly established for setting direction for better preparing students to enter employment directly upon their graduation. These programs generally attract a large number of students whose goal is to begin their careers at age 18, rather than going to college for advanced learning. They become part of a large work pool of candidates each year-one that business has generally relied upon for meeting their company's job entry needs. Many of these business programs have aligned themselves with the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) whose mission is to help students develop leadership skills.

The question of interest here is that if these secondary school business programs are geared to enable students to connect to the workforce upon graduation, to what degree is leadership development currently a program priority at this level? Are classroom business educators who typically have close ties to the business community taking the lead themselves by integrating leadership training into classroom instruction as proposed by standards adopted by the National Business Education Association? Therefore, this research is an attempt to determine to what degree is business faculty at the secondary level following through and actually establishing program priorities and correspondingly implementing leadership training into their classrooms as suggested by their national professional association. In addition, are there bridges being built between collegiate teacher preparatory programs and leadership training at the secondary level?

Statement of the Problem

Leadership is about learning how 'to make things happen.' Organizations have been examining the merits of a 'flatter structure' whereby leadership responsibilities are spread throughout rather than assigned to particular individuals at different levels of a hierarchy (Conger, 1992). Leadership is now everybody's business and responsibility (Kouzes, 1995). Workers at all positions (whether job entry or advanced) are required to know how to mobilize resources (land, labor, and capital) for the purpose of transforming an organization into a quick moving, fast reacting 'machine' (Business Week, 2002). Therefore, the primary research question to be addressed here is - *Do faculty in business programs in secondary schools perceive leadership development as a priority? If they do, is leadership training actually being implemented to a*

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similar degree of intensity in their teaching strategies in the classroom? The premise here is that while some leaders may receive advanced training by completing undergraduate and graduate work at a university, some degree of leadership is also expected of others with less academic training/preparation.

Moreover, programs in business, marketing, and finance education at the secondary level are closely aligned to business teacher preparatory programs at the college level. Therefore, a secondary research interest is whether these collegiate teacher preparatory programs have leadership development as a priority in their departments and to what degree are faculty integrating such experiences in existing curricula, if any? In other words, are future teachers being exposed to teaching methodology to enhance the integration of leadership training at the secondary level? Furthermore, is there a similar relationship between program priorities and the actual teaching about leadership in the classroom at the collegiate level and those at the secondary-school level? Since college faculty may be considered role models for future teachers, the reality of what occurs at this time in their training may have significant impact upon what occurs in the classroom. Therefore, are there 'stringent borders' between these two levels of education that are hindering the development of leadership building in our youth in public schools across the nation, or has a bridge been created that has advanced leadership education at the secondary level?

Research Methodology

During January 2002, a survey was disseminated to 250 secondary teachers in business, marketing, and finance programs throughout the United States. In addition, an identical survey instrument was sent to 250 college business teacher educators who train future teachers for entry into secondary school programs. The survey instrument consisted of a two-dimensional design. The respondents were requested to use a 5-point Likert-type rating scale where 1 indicated a low program priority and 5, a high priority for secondary school respondents. Similarly for the second dimension to the study, a 1 indicated low instructional emphasis (intensity) and 5 high instructional emphasis (intensity) in the classroom.

The 15 items included in the survey instrument were developed using leadership skills identified as important by Hackman and Johnson (2000), Gary Yukl (2002), Afsaneh Nahavandi (2000), Kouzes and Posner (1995), and Conger (1992). A linear regression statistical analysis was performed to determine what factors were significant between respondent department priority ratings and teaching emphasis in the actual classroom at both the secondary and collegiate program levels.

Findings

Of the survey forms sent to 250 classroom business teachers in secondary schools, 89 were returned by January 31, 2002. Of these, 6 were eliminated due to illegible responses or desire of respondent not to record answers on the survey forms. Therefore, 83 survey forms were included in this study, representing 33.2 percent rate of return. Of the 250 survey forms sent to college business teacher educators, 93 were returned. Of these, 5 were discarded due to illegible responses. Therefore, 88 survey forms were analyzed, representing 35.2 percent rate of return.

Perceptions of Secondary School Business Educators. The data collected from the 83 classroom business educators in business, marketing, and finance programs indicated that there were significant differences among leadership factors between department priorities and

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corresponding emphasis within the classroom. Without exception, classroom business teachers indicated a lesser degree of emphasis in the classroom than that established by their departments for each leadership building factor but two (Table 1). The two exceptions were related to teaching about *the use of power and taking risks* in which degrees of department priority and teaching emphasis *were matched similarly*. However, the leadership factors related to problem-solving (m=4.28), interpersonal relations (m=4.24), work/time management (m=4.23), business ethics (m=4.19), and decision-making (m=4.13), were perceived as being a high program priority (with a mean score of 4.0 or higher on a 5-point rating scale) with corresponding teaching emphasis in the classroom being significantly less with mean scores below 4.0. (Table 1) Ironically, learning how to take risks (m=2.82) and how to conduct meetings (m=2.92) were perceived to a similar degree in terms of not being a department priority or being emphasized in the classroom.

Table 1
Significance of Discrepancies in Perceptions of Secondary School Educators As to Department Priorities and Corresponding Emphasis on Leadership Development Conducted In the Classroom

Leadership Factor	(Mean Scores)		Diff.	T Value	Prob.
	Dept. Priority	Personal Emphasis			
Conflict Management	3.26	2.83	-.43	-3.26	.0016*
Business Ethics	4.19	3.86	-.33	-2.86	.0053*
Use of Power	3.11	3.01	-.10	-1.29	.2004
Taking Risks	2.82	2.61	-.21	-1.95	.0545
Consensus Building	3.17	2.91	-.26	-2.16	.0340*
Stress Management	3.22	2.72	-.50	-3.98	.0001*
Interpersonal Relations	4.24	3.73	-.51	-4.38	.0001*
Decision-Making	4.13	3.59	-.54	-4.75	.0001*
Problem-Solving	4.28	3.75	-.53	-4.81	.0001*
Synergy Building	3.35	2.98	-.37	-3.87	.0002*
Networking	2.97	2.55	-.42	-3.55	.0006*
Data Mining	2.58	2.35	-.23	-2.65	.0096*
Diversity Sensitivity	3.69	3.21	-.48	-3.98	.0001*
Work/Time Mgmt.	4.23	3.78	-.45	-3.74	.0003*
Conduct Meetings	2.92	2.62	-.30	-2.24	.0276*

Note: N = 83

*Significant at the .05 level of confidence

Rating Scale: - 1 - low priority; 5 - high priority (Department Priority)

1 - low emphasis; 5 - high emphasis

The greatest discrepancies between department priorities and classroom instructional intensity were in the leadership building areas of decision making (-.54), interpersonal relations building (-.51) problem-solving (-.54) and stress management (-.50) (Table 1).

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Perceptions of College Business Teacher Educators. With a few exceptions, college business teacher educators indicated that their departments place a higher priority on teaching leadership than that emphasized by these business educators in the classroom. (Table 2). For the leadership building areas of taking risks (m=2.95) and data mining (m=2.83), the business teacher educators indicated a higher emphasis in the classroom than that by the department (mean ratings of 2.85 and 2.66 respectively). With three exceptions, there were significant discrepancies for each leadership factor between department priorities and teaching emphasis in the classroom by these college faculty. The three leadership factors which matched department priority and instructional emphasis were *taking risks, use of power, and networking* (Table 2).

Table 2
Significance of Discrepancies in Perceptions of Post-Secondary Business Teacher Educators As to Department Priorities and Corresponding Emphasis on Leadership Development Conducted In the Classroom

Leadership Factor	(Mean Scores)		Diff.	T Value	Prob.
	Dept. Priority	Personal Emphasis			
Conflict Management	3.28	3.01	-.27	-2.32	.0225*
Business Ethics	4.33	4.08	-.25	-2.72	.0078*
Use of Power	3.11	3.06	-.05	-0.66	.5109
Taking Risks	2.85	2.95	+.10	+1.00	.3201
Consensus Building	3.49	3.31	-.18	-1.67	.0991*
Stress Management	3.36	3.09	-.27	-2.47	.0155*
Interpersonal Relations	4.51	4.08	-.43	-4.55	.0001*
Decision-Making	4.23	4.03	-.20	-2.69	.0086*
Problem-Solving	4.39	4.21	-.18	-2.14	.0349*
Synergy Building	3.89	3.59	-.30	-3.15	.0023*
Networking	3.48	3.38	-.10	-.09	.3638
Data Mining	2.66	2.83	+.17	+2.14	.0349*
Diversity Sensitivity	4.01	3.76	-.25	-2.46	.0158*
Work/Time Mgmt.	4.07	3.73	-.34	-3.47	.0008*
Conduct Meetings	3.43	3.05	-.38	-2.29	.0046*

N = 88

*Significant at the .05 level of confidence

Rating Scale: - 1 - low priority; 5 - high priority (Department Priority)

1 - low emphasis; 5 - high emphasis

There were significant discrepancies between the degree of classroom emphasis for each of 12 leadership factors and adherence to departmental priorities. This is consistent to what occurred with the classroom business educators. The greatest discrepancies were related to interpersonal relations building (-.43), synergy building (-.30), work/time management (-.34) and conducting meeting (-.38) (Table 2).

Degree of Differences Between Discrepancies of Perceptions of Secondary and College Business Faculty. There were significant differences among perceptions of

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secondary business teachers and college faculty as to the degrees of discrepancy between department priorities and emphasis in teaching about the leadership areas of taking risks, decision-making, problem-solving, networking, and data mining (Table 3).

Table 3
Significance of Differences Between Discrepancies of Perceptions of Secondary School Business Education Classroom Teachers and College Business Educators Related to Department Priorities and Degree of Instructional Emphasis on Leadership Development in the Classroom

Leadership Factor	<i>(Mean Scores)</i>						T Value	Prob.
	Sec. Bus. Ed. N = 83			College Fac. N = 88				
	DP	PE	Diff	DP	PE	Diff		
Conflict Management	3.26	2.83	-.43	3.28	3.01	-.27	0.91	.3640
Business Ethics	4.19	3.86	-.33	4.33	4.08	-.25	0.59	.5570
Use of Power	3.11	3.01	-.10	3.11	3.06	-.05	0.43	.6688
Taking Risks	2.82	2.61	-.21	2.85	2.95	.10	2.12	.0358*
Consensus Building	3.17	2.91	-.26	3.49	3.31	-.18	0.44	.6569
Stress Management	3.22	2.72	-.52	3.36	3.09	-.27	1.34	.1836
Interpersonal Relations	4.24	3.73	-.51	4.51	4.08	-.43	0.58	.5615
Decision-Making	4.13	3.59	-.54	4.23	4.03	-.20	2.54	.0120*
Problem-Solving	4.28	3.75	-.53	4.39	4.21	-.18	2.52	.0126*
Synergy Building	3.35	2.98	-.37	3.89	3.59	-.30	0.49	.6279
Networking	2.97	2.55	-.42	3.48	3.38	-.10	1.96	.0520*
Data Mining	2.58	2.35	-.23	2.66	2.83	.17	3.41	.0008*
Diversity Sensitivity	3.69	3.21	-.48	4.11	3.76	-.25	1.52	.1299
Work/Time Mgmt.	4.23	3.78	-.45	4.07	3.73	-.34	0.68	.4956
Conduct Meetings	2.92	2.62	-.30	3.43	3.05	-.38	-0.52	.6006

*Significant at the .05 level of confidence

Rating Scale: - 1 - low priority; 5 - high priority (Department Priority)

1 - low emphasis; 5 - high emphasis

DP = Department Priority, PE = Personal Emphasis in the Classroom

Secondary business teachers placed less emphasis on teaching students how to take risks (-.21) and how to mind data (-.23) than indicated in their department priorities whereas college business teacher educators place more emphasis on these same leadership building areas taught in the classroom than department priority (risk taking +.10 and data mining +.17). For all the other leadership factors, both the secondary school business educators and college faculty indicated similar degrees of discrepancies between department priorities and teaching emphasis in the classroom. Only for teaching how to conduct meetings did the college educators have a greater discrepancy between department priorities and teaching inclusion (Table 3).

Conclusions

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There are great similarities between what is occurring at the secondary level of business, marketing, and finance education in leadership development and that at the collegiate level with few exceptions. College faculty who prepare future business educators for positions at the secondary school level and those actually teaching at secondary level are generally not following through on priorities set by their departments with similar intensity in the classroom. Ironically, the leadership of chairs and administrators themselves at these two levels of education may not be effective in getting faculty in departments to follow along department priorities. The fall out of such an occurrence is that there is no 'bridge' in regard to leadership training occurring in either level of education with the effect being felt in secondary schools within the business, finance, and marketing education curricula. In fact, there may be a 'boundary' effect in that there is a 'disconnect' not only within the college teacher preparatory programs but between the two levels of education.

In this regard, although collectively faculty agree that having leadership training as part of their program is a significant goal for the department, individually they are not convinced. This failure to follow through may be the result of insufficient preparation of faculty or perhaps not having the time required to integrate leadership training into the classroom. It may also be that traditions associated with business, marketing, and finance educational programs are likely interfering with the classroom educator's ability or willingness to transform traditional instructional style into levels of leadership training. These traditions relate to prior emphasis on teaching computer applications and other forms of information technology to enhance project development work, etc. These 'core values' associated with business, marketing, and finance education are likely impacting upon a classroom teacher's ability to modify teaching style to integrate more leadership training. In terms of guiding classroom teachers and their students into leadership development activities, the framework established through nationally accepted program standards is firmly in place but the 'heart' to commit to those standards through demonstrable teaching practices is not evident with few exceptions.

In view of these findings, there is a need to re-examine relationships among professional educators for the purpose of determining why such a 'disconnect' prevails within these business programs. The disconnect is disturbing due to the fact that there is general agreement as to leadership training being a priority at the department level, but such agreement is not being translated into action at the classroom level at either program level. Therefore, leadership development for both future classroom business educators and their students is being hampered somewhat due to an inability to connect. This reality (disconnect) may be a symptom that needs to be analyzed in greater detail to determine how better to move leadership training into public education more quickly and effectively. At present, the 'bridge' between leadership preparation and implementation has a serious crack in it, separating educators from their own leadership in terms of following through on prior commitments made at both the national and local department level.

On the other hand, there is a great opportunity to strengthen the ties between collegiate teacher preparatory faculty and secondary school classroom educators by initially publicly recognizing a divide exists and then taking the initiative to acknowledge and reduce obstacles that may be impeding cooperation and collaboration. This appears to be an appropriate time to begin 'building a stronger bridge' for connecting collegiate and secondary school faculty to support one another in this endeavor to deliver leadership training in teacher preparation at the collegiate level and in business, marketing, and finance education at the secondary level.

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