MSL

Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership

2015

School Report

Executive Summary

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STUDY OVERVIEW

Background & Rationale

The purpose of the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) is to examine influences of higher education on college student leadership development. The study also directs significant attention to the examination of experiences during college and their influences on leadership-related outcomes (e.g., complex cognitive skills, social perspective-taking, leadership efficacy).

The first iteration of the MSL study was administered in the spring of 2006. Subsequent data collections have been conducted in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2015. Over 300 institutions and 350,000 students have been part of the study to date. The study was initially created and led by Co-Principal Investigators, Dr. John P. Dugan of Loyola University Chicago and Dr. Susan R. Komives of University of Maryland. The project is currently run full time by Dr. Dugan. The National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs (NCLP - www.nclp.umd.edu) plays a central role as a sponsor of the MSL. The Survey Sciences Group, LLC, serves as the primary coordinators of the research. Over the years, the MSL has received funding from a variety of organizations; however, the most important source of funding for this research continues to be each of the partner schools that participate in the research.

The education and development of students as leaders has long served as a central purpose for institutions of higher education as evidenced in mission statements and the increased presence of both curricular and co-curricular leadership development programs on college and university campuses (Komives, 2011). Astin and Astin (2000) go as far as to suggest that "higher education plays a major part in shaping the quality of leadership in modern society" (p. 1) and a growing number of scholars and professional associations have identified socially responsible leadership as a core college outcome (Association of American Colleges & Universities, 2007; Astin & Astin, 2000; Hoy & Meisel, 2008; National Association of Student Personnel Administrators & American College Personnel Association, 2004). Yet, research on the topic continues to reflect an incomplete picture suffering from a lack of theoretical grounding consistent with contemporary conceptualizations (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Dugan, 2011) as well as a lack of clarity regarding individual and institutional factors influencing leadership development (Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006). If higher education institutions could begin to address these issues, the ability to enhance leadership development and the preparation of civically engaged citizens would increase dramatically.

Study Framework

The social change model of leadership development (Higher Education Research Institute [HERI], 1996) provides the theoretical frame for this study. The central principles associated with the social change model involve social responsibility and change for the common good. These are achieved through the development of eight core values. These values function at the individual, group, and societal levels. For more information on the social change model consult: *A Social Change Model of Leadership Development: Guidebook Version III* (HERI, 1996) or *Leadership for a Better World: Understanding the Social Change Model of Leadership Development* (Komives, Wagner, & Associates, 2009).

The conceptual framework for the MSL is an adapted version of Astin's (1993) inputs-environments-outcomes (I-E-O) college impact model. This model permits the researcher to "assess the impact of various environmental experiences by determining whether students grow or change differently under varying environmental conditions" (p. 7). The model was adapted in two ways. First, a cross-sectional design with retrospective questions was employed instead of the traditional time-elapsed pretest and posttest to address issues of response shift bias. Second, the influences of non-college reference groups posited in Weidman's (1989) model of student socialization were integrated, which extended variable measurement beyond just elements of the collegiate environment to the external environment as well.

Sample & Instrument

A total of 97 colleges and universities participated in the MSL in 2015; 88 of these schools are included in the national benchmark. The data from community colleges; institutions from Canada, Mexico, and Australia; and schools that did not provide random samples are not included in the national benchmark. The total sample size for the national dataset was 311,678 students. Schools were also invited to submit comparison samples to examine relationships between this group and the school's random sample results. Data collected as part of comparison samples are not included in the national benchmarks.

The questionnaire was developed with a core set of measures adapted from the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS; Tyree, 1998), which measures the core values of the social change model (HERI, 1996). The MSL is comprised of over 400 variables, scales, and composite measures representing students' demographics and pre-college experiences, experiences during college, and key outcome measures. Other leadership-related outcomes studied in the MSL include complex cognitive skills, leadership efficacy, social change behaviors, seeing alternative social perspectives, spiritual development, racial identity, resiliency, and agency. Please see Report Module 1 (Study Design and Methodology) for a list of the changes made to the 2015 instrument. The MSL Codebook provides information on scaling and value labels for all variables in the study. Report Module 1 (Study Design and Methodology) provides an overview of the reliability and validity of key outcome variables.

Data Collection

The MSL was administered between January and April 2015. Data collection was conducted entirely online. Students selected to participate were invited to the survey through a series of email invitations and reminders. Each student received a pre-notification email designed to inform students that a survey was coming, an invitation email, and then a series of up to three reminder emails. Reminder emails were only sent to students who had not completed the survey. Overall, the response rate for all schools in the national benchmark was 31.0% and the total number of completed cases was 77,489. Any requests not to participate were noted and further contacts with the refusing respondent were cancelled.

Visitors included any students who logged in to the survey, but did not complete the consent form. Partials are students who logged in, completed the consent form, but did not click on the submit button at the end of the survey.

Response & Completion Rates	Visitors	Partials	Completes	Response Rate %	Completion Rate %
National Benchmark	9,750	19,099	77,489	31.0%	80.2%
Your Institution	145	229	1152	34.5%	83.4%

Summary of Survey Participation

Each participating school was given several options to customize the MSL to their own needs. The following table is a summary of your institution's participation in the MSL2015. For additional details about these options, please refer to page 1-20 of Report Module 1 (Study Design and Methodology).

Participation Summary	Details
Protocol	Standard Data
Coalition Participation	No Coalition
Total Sample Provided	4000
Total Random Sample Provided	4000
Total Comparison Sample Provided	0
Local Incentive Included	No
Custom Questions Included	2015 Questions
Custom Logo Included	Custom

Benchmarking

Within the report each school is benchmarked against the National Sample which includes 88 collegiate campuses throughout the United States. Schools were classified into the following categories as gathered from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS): Carnegie Classification, Institutional Size, Control, Setting, and Affiliation. Schools were also classified into a Selectivity category gathered from Barron's *Profiles of American Colleges 2015*. Along with the National Sample statistics, each institution was able to select four other benchmark groups for their reports. They could choose from any of the subgroups of the above categories, their MSL 2012 data (if applicable), coalition data (if applicable), comparative sample(s), and custom peer groups composed of at least three participating schools of their choice. If selected, the custom peer group is described on page 1-25 of Report Module 1 (Study Design and Methodology).

KEY FINDINGS

Executive Summary Key Findings

While the full MSL 2015 reports provide a wealth of usable statistics and findings for your school, we have summarized some key findings for your institution here that we think may be of interest to you. These are key measures that the research team has selected as important for a great majority of MSL schools.

The primary measures for the study, the SRLS, as described in Report Module 1 (Study Design and Methodology), are reported as mean composite scores that range from 1 to 5. Your school's SRLS measures, side by side with the national benchmark measures, are reported below (along with resiliency). For significance and effect size results, please see page 3-5 in Report Module 3 (General and Sub-Study Outcomes).

Overall Scores	Consciousness of Self	Congruence	Commitment	Collaboration	Controversy with Civility	Citizenship	Omnibus SRLS	Resiliency
Your Institution's Scores	3.98	4.19	4.38	4.13	4.18	3.81	4.11	3.86
National Benchmark	4.05	4.24	4.40	4.18	4.23	3.94	4.17	3.88

The conceptual design of the MSL, using the I-E-O model, provides you with valuable information on how your students' characteristics and the environmental experiences with which they engage have an impact on the SRLS outcome measures. The following table shows how several input measures may be related to the SRLS outcome measures. If there is a relationship, then you will see an "X" in the cell for each measure. If you do not see an "X" then there were no significant differences. For more about these findings, you may find the detailed results in the table "Inputs by Outcome Measures", which starts on page 4-5 of Report Module 4 (Campus: Inputs and Environments by Outcomes).

Key Input Measures	Consciousness of Self	Congruence	Commitment	Collaboration	Controversy with Civility	Citizenship	Omnibus SRLS	Resiliency
Gender			X		X	X	X	X
Race		X	X		X		X	
Class Standing	X	X		X	X		X	X

Environmental experiences can influence these outcomes as well. In the following table, you can find where several key environmental variables influence the SRLS outcome measures. You may find the detailed results in the table "Environments by Outcome Measures" which starts on page 4-10 of Report Module 4 (Campus: Inputs and Environments by Outcomes).

Environmental Measures	Consciousness of Self	Congruence	Commitment	Collaboration	Controversy with Civility	Citizenship	Omnibus SRLS	Resiliency
Community Service	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Residential Setting								
Involvement in College Organizations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Leadership Positions in College Organizations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Socio-Cultural Conversations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Because of the I-E-O quasi-experimental design, your MSL results are able to give you a picture of students' change over time across the outcome measures. Looking at seniors at your school (or all students at community colleges), we have developed the MSL Delta Measure---a quasi-experimental analysis that gives you a look at change over time. The following table identifies the outcomes in which students report a significant difference between pre-college and senior year (or current year for community colleges). Significant changes are identified by an "X". To view the direction, scale, and effect size for these measures, please see the "MSL2015 Delta Measure: Change Over Time" table on page 3-8 in Report Module 3 (General and Sub-Study Outcomes).

Delta Measure Overall Scores	Consciousness of Self	Congruence	Commitment	Collaboration	Controversy with Civility	Citizenship	Omnibus SRLS	Resiliency
MSL Delta Measure-Change Over Time	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

RELEVANT REFERENCES

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