

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 357 936

RC 019 197

AUTHOR Bartley, Natalie L.
 TITLE Outward Bound Leadership Model: An Exploratory Study of Leadership Variables.
 PUB DATE 89
 NOTE 15p.; In: Life Beyond Walls: Proceedings of the 1988 National Conference on Outdoor Recreation (Ft. Collins, CO, November 10-13, 1988); see RC 019 196.
 PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (i43)
 EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS *Interpersonal Competence; *Leadership Styles; Leadership Training; *Outdoor Education; *Personality Traits; *Sex Differences; Sex Role; Teacher Student Relationship
 IDENTIFIERS *Gender Schema Theory; *Outdoor Leadership; Outward Bound

ABSTRACT

A field study of 29 mountain-course instructors at the Colorado Outward Bound School (COBS) explored the relationships of gender-related personality traits and soft skills to outdoor leadership styles and course outcomes. Soft skills are competencies necessary for effective interpersonal helping skills, as opposed to hard skills, which are technical competencies. The instructors were pretested on the Outward Bound Impact Study Inventory, the Bem Personality Inventory, the Leadership Behavior Questionnaire (Form XXII), and the Soft Skills Background Questionnaire. Students attending the COBS 23-day mountain courses rated instructor leadership style and their own course experiences and outcomes. Five supervisors also rated the instructors' leadership styles and course outcomes. Results indicate that gender schema personality traits and previous soft-skills training of instructors were positively associated with students' course outcomes. However, instructor leadership style was not significantly associated with course outcomes. Gender had some effect on leadership style. Outward Bound schools and experiential education programs should actively pursue the development of a soft-skills training curriculum for instructors. (KS)

 * Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
 * from the original document. *

Eric Bruner

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

OUTWARD BOUND LEADERSHIP MODEL:
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF LEADERSHIP VARIABLES

by

Natalie L. Bartley, Ed.D.
Management Training Center Coordinator
Model Outdoor Recreation Program USAF
Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho 83648

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
 Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 357 936

ABSTRACT:

This article provides the theory behind a conceptual model of leadership variables which relate to student course outcomes. The results of the leadership styles, personality, gender, and previous soft skills training, experience and education of Colorado Outward Bound School instructors, and their students course outcomes are presented.

*Previously published in the Bradford Papers Annual Vol. III (1988) under the title "Gender Issues in Outdoor Adventure Programming: An Outdoor Leadership Model Exploring Gender Personality, Soft Skills Training and Leadership Style of Outdoor Leaders."

Introduction

In the Experiential Education field, there is a twofold debate emerging concerning leadership. One aspect addresses the issue of gender awareness and the development of male and female characteristics in leaders. The other aspect concerns the possible imbalance of hard skills and soft skills of leaders. Both aspects are current issues for Outward Bound schools as well.

Masculinity and Femininity

Though the outdoors have traditionally been depicted as a male domain, there is an increasing number of women students and women leaders. Gender issues are starting to come to the forefront. These issues

RC 019197

include: the establishment of expected group and individual behavior, sex-role modeling, the combining of feminine and masculine values, "gender issues" awareness training for staff, participants' impression of leaders' soft skills and hard skills, and the role of gender related personality traits in program philosophy and leaders' behavior. Knapp (1985) felt that the Experiential Education profession should explore whether gender related personality characteristics should be developed in the leaders and the participants and how these characteristics could be developed.

The concept of psychological androgyny dates back to the Orient and the Occident (Marecek, 1979). Androgyny, the combination of the best of stereotypically male and female traits for maximum adaptability, has only recently been suggested as healthy. It is suggested "that traditional ideas of gender-appropriateness constrain men and women from developing broad flexible behavior repertoires and thereby limit human adaptability" (Marecek, 1979, p. 241). An androgynous leader would be able to respond to participants in ways that are not rigidly assigned to either sex. The ideal outdoor leader would attempt to encourage student growth in personality domains of both masculine and feminine traits.

Bem's (1974a, 1974b, 1981) work on the Androgyny theory and Gender Schema theory suggests that males and females acquire a cognitive structure (schema) of a network of associations that are connected to concepts of masculinity and femininity. Gender schema are standards by which people evaluate their own sex. There are differences between individuals in the strength of their gender schema and in the extent to which masculinity or femininity is reflected in their attitudes, attributes, behavior and evaluation of gender related events in their lives. Thus, an outdoor leader's gender schema might influence his or her leadership style and the experience that participants have on a course. The Androgyny theory and Gender Schema theory may have implications for counseling skills, training for outdoor leaders and instructors, and for program design and implementation.

Soft Skills and Hard Skills

Knapp (1985) suggested that "one goal must be to develop well-balanced leaders who can demonstrate both hard and soft skills with equal competence" (p. 17). Soft skills can be thought of as the competencies necessary for effective interpersonal helping skills, as opposed to hard skills which are technical competencies

in mountaineering, first aid, logistics, and others. Soft skills presumedly are used by the outdoor leaders to teach or help the participant to develop psychosocial coping skills and are sometimes perceived as being gender related.

Larson (1984) referred to the importance of soft skills, stating that psychological skills training is a reflection of a fundamental shift occurring between human services and the larger society. The public is increasing its interest and desire for psychological and other personal growth services. Thus in the context of experiential education, students may come to an outdoor adventure program with a desire to learn skills to enhance the quality of their own and others' lives and solve problems, not just to acquire technical outdoor skills.

Psychosocial coping skills help students to adapt and perform in a variety of situations (Larson, 1984). Specific psychosocial coping skills that are appropriate to teach in outdoor leadership situations include relaxation, active listening, planning, and assertiveness. Many of these skills involve problem-solving skills. In experiential education programs, students might look to male instructors for some skills and to female instructors for other skills.

Outward Bound is one well-known program that addresses personal growth and self-awareness issues. The Outward Bound School's major goal is to create an environment (physically, socially, and psychologically) conducive to enabling students to learn more about themselves and their potential, and to develop self-confidence and compassion through experiences in group communication and decision making, and through coping with fear, uncertainty, and stress. Many other outdoor programs have been developed around the Outward Bound philosophy.

An attempt to identify the soft skills for outdoor leaders was made by Buell (1983) and include counseling, human service, and human development competencies. Buell described these competencies as the ability of leaders to work with other human beings. A supportive and helping relationship is developed through the use of specific helping and counseling skills and principles. The outdoor leader has the ability to assist during psychological crisis. Buell warned that leaders need to know the difference between counseling and therapy and to stay within their level of training and experience. Outdoor leaders and instructors, through the intensive contact with the participants and the relationships developed during an outdoor adventure program, have a great potential for using their soft skills to teach their participants psychosocial coping skills.

Swiderski (1987) proposed that hard skills, soft skills, and conceptual skills are aspects of competent outdoor leaders. He suggested that soft skills and conceptual skills are neglected components of Outdoor Leadership. Outdoor leaders can have an impact upon their participants' potential for personal growth. This may be done unknowingly through the leaders' personalities and gender, or through the conscious application of their soft skills. The importance of soft skills can be understood in reference to Rogers' theory of the role of a counselor or helper. Carl Rogers, the well-known counseling theorist, outlined the facilitative conditions that help to create a nonthreatening atmosphere which allows for self-exploration and the increased likelihood of change in self-concept (Long, 1978). These conditions can be created on an outdoor course and include emphatic understanding, respect, and genuineness.

Walsh and Golins (1976) summarized the diverse skills that outdoor leaders are required to use:

By necessity of running operations in a special environment, such as the outdoors, the instructor is a trainer. . . . He must be able to transmit the skills necessary for functioning in the environment. Not only must he be technically proficient at the skills encountered in negotiating the physical environment, he must be able to facilitate the affective growth of the individuals through their mastery of skills. This requires the ability to be emphatic, genuine, concrete, and confrontive when necessary. (p. 11)

Outdoor Leadership

Buell (1983) reflects the thoughts of many writers in the Leisure Service profession concerning the importance of leadership when he stated: "Leadership is the single most critical aspect of conducting outdoor programs" (p. 1). Currently there seems to be an increasing interest in evaluating outdoor programs and leadership in order to provide qualitative/quantitative documentation (Hendy, 1976; Easely, 1986; Phipps, 1988; and Tisdell, 1986). The study of leadership theories is potentially valuable in the evaluation of outdoor leadership and the understanding of the interrelatedness of gender and soft skills and leadership.

It appears that numerous theories exist that attempt to explain either the facts involved in emergence leadership or in the nature of leadership and its

consequences. Many models have been proposed which attempt to reconstruct the dynamics of leadership using selected variable thought to be involved in leadership.

A brief survey of the leadership theories include: great-man theories, trait theories, environmental theories, personal-situational theories, psychoanalytic theories, leader role theory, role attainment theory, reinforced change theory, path-goal theory, contingency theory, humanistic theories, exchange theory, behavioral theories, and attribution theory. Bass (1981) stated that every procedure known to social science in general has been applied to the study of leadership.

The Ohio State Leadership Studies spurred a variety of theories on leadership styles and research investigations to test the theories. The study of leader behaviors became a major focus. Many researchers used various terms to describe a leader with high concern for the group's goal, including task oriented, concerned for production,, goal achieving, work-facilitation and goal emphasizing, production oriented, and production emphasizing. The above terms describe the dimensions of initiation of structure as identified in the Ohio State Leadership Studies. Similarly, many terms have been used to describe a leader with a high concern about the group member including emphasizing employees, relations-oriented, concerned for group maintenance, concerned for people, interaction-oriented, and in need of affiliation. These items describe the dimension of consideration, as identified in the Ohio State Leadership Studies (Bass, 1981). Leaders differ in their concern for group goals and concern about group members, and in the methods they use to pursue group goals and attempt to maintain positive open relations with followers.

The Ohio State Leadership Studies have isolated two dimensions that describe leader behavior: consideration (person) and initiating of structure (task). These terms have become widely used and many studies have been produced. The behavioral dimensions are frequently measured by one or more of the Ohio State Leadership Scales which include the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ), the Leadership Description Questionnaire-Form XII (LBDQ-XII), the Supervisory Behavior Description Questionnaire (SBDQ), and the Leadership Opinion Questionnaire (LOQ). The Leadership Scales could have potential application to the measurement of outdoor leadership styles. The work of Sergiovanni, Metzcus, and Burden (1969), the work of Pfeiffer and Jones (1974), and the work of Phipps (1988) are three examples of adaptations of the Leadership Scales for understanding individuals' leadership styles in the work place.

A theoretical model of outdoor leadership was developed (Bartley, 1987) in order to investigate the potential relationship between gender, schema (personality), previous soft skills training, leadership style and course outcome. The leadership model is presented in Figure 1. There are positive traits from both sexes that are needed in the use of soft skills by an outdoor leader or instructor. Valued masculine traits would include risk taking, initiating, and assertion. Valued feminine traits include caring, expressing feelings, empathizing, and intuition. What role do such traits play in determining soft skills, leadership style and participants' course outcomes?

METHODS

Variables in the Model

The Gender variable reflects the increased interest of practitioners and researchers in how gender interacts with leadership styles and leader effectiveness. Gender is hypothesized to act on course outcome indirectly. Personality and training are thought to act on course outcomes directly and through leadership style.

The Personality variable reflects the traditional use of personality traits in leadership research. The application of the Gender Schema Theory through the use of the Gem Sex Role Inventory, a measurement of sex-typed and androgynous individuals, has not been researched with outdoor leaders but has implications for leadership style, training, and course outcomes.

The Soft Skills Training variable refers to the previous soft skills training, education, and experience of the leader. This was measured using a questionnaire developed especially for this model. The type of training needed for effective leadership and the relationship of training to course outcomes is generating great concern among practitioners and among researchers.

The Leadership Style variable is theorized in this model to be a composite of the above three variables which have been isolated for analysis in this study based on theoretical arguments from researchers and practitioners. Leadership style was represented using the Task and Persons Leadership Style modification of the LBDQ Initiation of Structure and Consideration Model. This conceptualization of leader behavior has a long history in research application, with valid and reliable test instruments based on this theory.

The criterion variable Course Outcome represents the interactive effects of the four above predictor

variables. Course outcome, as perceived and measured by the course participants, is the most critical consideration of the effect of leadership and the relationship of leadership in the achievement of a programs' goals. If the participants gain in the targeted areas, then the programs' goals have been met. The leadership provided by the program may strongly influence the realization of program goals. Course Outcome was measured with the Outward Bound Impact Study Inventories, resulting in six summated subscales.

This study was an exploratory attempt to understand the role of gender-related personality traits and soft skills on outdoor leadership styles and course outcomes. The model was an oversimplification of leadership; however, it is not intended to serve as a model of the complex and dynamic leadership situation or process. Instead, it was designed to examine major variables that have been previously ignored in outdoor leadership efforts, and are variables of practitioners' current concerns.

To investigate the relationship of the variables in the model shown in Figure 1, an exploratory field study was conducted on twenty-nine mountain course instructors at the Colorado Outward Bound School (COBS) during the 1986 season. The instructors were precourse tested on the Outdoor Bound Impact Study (OBIS) Inventory, the Bem Personality Inventory, the Leadership Behavior Questionnaire, Form XII (LBDQ-XII), and Soft Skills Background Questionnaire. Seventy-nine students attending the COBS 23-day mountain courses served as the raters of the instructor leadership style and as raters of their own individual perception of their course experiences. The students completed the precourse OBIS Inventory to assess course outcomes, coupled with the LBDQ-XII on their instructors. The five supervisors of the instructors also completed postcourse OBIS and LBDQ on the instructors.¹

¹The study was part of a multiyear project known as the Outward Bound Impact Study (OBIS). The goal of the OBIS project was to determine the impact of the standard Outward Bound Course. The project director was Dr. G. Christian Jernstedt, Department of Psychology, Dartmouth College. Dr. Stephan C. Bacon, Program Research and Development Director at the Outward Bound (USA) national office, Dr. Jernstedt, and the Colorado Outward Bound School made it possible for the study to contribute to the ongoing Outward Bound Impact Study.

Results

As general profile, instructors in the study had a relatively high level of education, were in their late 20's, had previous experience as an Outward Bound instructor or assistant and were somewhat similar to the instructors who participated in an earlier OBIS study at the Hurricane Island Outward Bound School (HIOBS) in 1984 through 1985. The student evaluators who participated in the COBS study appeared to be similar to the students who participated in a similar study at HIOBS in 1984 through 1985. Specifically, similarities were observed on 12 of the 14 personality variables measured by OBIS, and in the age of the students.

The primary hypothesis was that leadership style, as a composite of gender, personality, and soft skills, affects student course outcomes. Multiple regression analysis, t-tests, chi-square, and Pearson correlation coefficients were used to analyze statistical relationships among the variables.

Six different course outcome subscales were used to evaluate the effect of leadership style, gender, personality, and soft skills training on students' course outcomes. Three of the subscales were found to be impacted by leader variables other than leadership style. The impacted subscales were self-deprecation, sociability, and hopelessness.

The direct effect of leadership style on the six course outcome subscales were not supported by the results of the exploratory field study. Variables other than leadership style had some effect on students' course outcomes. When controlling for the students' precourse subscale scores which accounted for most of the variance, instructor personality and soft skills training had small but significant direct effects on course outcomes. The instructor's gender was found to have some effect on leadership style.

Within the limitations of this study, the following findings were indicated. The gender schema personality traits and previous soft skills training of the instructors were associated with the students' course outcomes. Leadership style was not significantly associated with the students' course outcomes. The gender schema personality traits of the instructors were associated with soft skills training. A trend emerged that gender did in fact have some effect on leadership style. A summary of the results are provided in Figure 2, where a solid line indicates the potential direct influence of one variable on another. A broken line indicates the potential indirect effect, where a variable has an effect on a variable by influencing another variable, which in turn affects leadership or course outcome.

Discussion

The following recommendations are made based on the field observations of this author/instructor, the theoretical body of literature, and the analysis of the data from the present study.

While the evidence is limited, it appears that Outward Bound schools and Experiential Education programs should consider actively pursuing the development of a soft skills training curriculum for instructors. The recent work of Swiderski (1987) has identified components of soft skills and conceptual skills that could be focused on during leadership training sessions. Bacon (1983) has initiated efforts in soft training skills through nationally available workshops and the publication of the book, The Conscious Use of Metaphor in Outward Bound. Bacon's book provides insight into the soft skills an instructor can develop in order to enhance the potential for the students to experience personal growth. While personality and gender play a role in course outcomes, the outdoor leader's soft skills abilities may have a greater influence on course outcomes. Soft skills, as an ability, has the potential to be learned, more so than personality and gender, or leadership style, and is more modifiable than personality and gender.

Additional soft skills assessment methods need to be developed and validated. The method could take a number of different forms. The Soft Skills background Questionnaire could be further developed for accuracy, consistency, and predictive ability. A subjective, qualitative approach, such as the use of participant observers in the field documenting the skills the instructors display, could be used. Content analysis of instructor and/or student journals, with a focus on human relationship interactions or the use of situational role-playing, with an observer rating the skills of the instructor displayed are other possibilities.

The interaction of outdoor leadership style and course outcomes is still in an early stage of exploration. Further research in this direction is still needed. The task/person adaptation of the LBDQ-XII (Sergiovanni, et al, 1969) should be considered for use in future studies. Modification and revalidation of the instrument may be needed to improve the readability and appropriateness of the inventory to outdoor program settings. In addition, consideration should be given to the use of other leadership models and inventories, such as the models identified by Phipps (1988).

The assignment of instructor pairs to course should be carefully considered by the supervisor. Striving for a potential balance of instructor gender, personality

schema, leadership styles, and soft skills ability may have a greater impact on students' course outcomes than having a balance of a male instructor and a female instructor. Assignment of instructor pairs and training can, perhaps, enhance the instructors' influence on students' course outcomes. A unique approach to the assignment of instructors to students might be to first test the students on personality traits and personal needs, then on the basis of the results, match the students with the instructors whose personality traits, soft skills abilities, and leadership styles might best serve a particular group of students.

In summary, leadership is the critical component of all outdoor programs. There is currently some lack of certainty as to (a) what competencies are needed, (b) what leader styles are effective, (c) what proportion of hard skills and soft skills cause desired course outcomes, (d) what role androgyny/gender schema should play in program philosophy and leaders' behavior,, and (e) what impact gender has on leaders' styles and course outcomes. Hopefully the information and insight gained can be used to further the understanding of outdoor leadership variables.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Gender Topics

- Butterfield, D.A., & Powell, G. N. (1981). Effect of group performance, leader sex, and rater sex on ratings of leader behavior. Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 28, 129-141.
- Deaux, K. (1985). Sex and gender. Annual Review of Psychology, 36, 49-81.
- Galpin, T. (1987). Is it really a man's world? Male and female outdoor adventure leaders rate their competency. (ED 286-690). Arlington, VA: Computer Microfilm International Corporation.
- Knapp, C. E. (1985). Escaping the gender trap: The ultimate challenge for experiential educators. The Journal of Experiential Education, 8, (2), 16-19.
- Powell, G. N., & Butterfield, D. A. (1984). The female leader and the high-high effective leader stereotype. The Journal of Psychology, 117, 71-76.
- Vokey, D. (1988). Gender issues: A question of balance. The Journal of COBWS Education, 4(1), 26-30.

Leadership in General

- Bass, B.M. (1981). Stogdill's handbook of leadership: A survey of theory and research (Rev. ed.). New York: The Free Press.
- Burke, W.W. (1980). Leadership: Is there one best approach? Management Review, 69(1), 54-56.
- [The] Ohio State Leadership Studies. (1962). Leadership behavior description - form XII. Columbus, OH: College of Administrative Science, The Ohio State University.
- Pfeiffer, J. W., & Jones, J. R. (Eds.) (1974). A handbook of structured experiences for human relations training (Vol. 1). San Diego: University Associates Inc.
- Sergiovanni, T. J., Metzcus, R., & Burden, L. (1969). Toward a particularistic approach to leadership style: Some findings. American Educational Research Journal, 6, 62-79.

Stogdill, R. M. (1963). Manual for the leadership behavior description - form XII. Columbus, OH: Bureau of Business Research, College of Commerce and Administration, The Ohio State University.

Outdoor Leadership

Bartley, N. L. (1987). Relationship of leadership style, gender, personality, and training of outward bound instructors and their course outcomes. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT, 1987). Dissertation Abstracts International, 48, 2979-A.

Bartley, N.L. (1988). Gender issues in outdoor adventure programming: An outdoor leadership model exploring gender, personality, soft skills training and leadership style of outdoor leaders. Bradford Papers Annual, Vol. III.

Buell, L. (1983). Outdoor leadership competency: A manual for self-assessment and staff-evaluation. Greenfield, MA: Environmental Awareness Publications.

Easley, A. T. (1986). The personality traits of wilderness leadership instructors at NOLS: The relationship to perceived Instructor effectiveness and development of self-concept in students. Dissertation Abstract International, 45, 2151B. (University Microfilms No. 8521310).

Hampton, M., Easley, T., & Feunekes, A. (Nov. 1987). Evaluating outdoor leadership staff: What really counts? Paper presented at the National Conference of the Association for Experiential Education, Port Townsend, WA.

Hendy, C. M. (1976). Outward Bound and personality: 16 PF profile of instructors and IPSATIVE changes in male and female students 16-19 years of age (Doctoral dissertation, University of Oregon, 1975). Dissertation Abstracts International, 36, 4353-A.

Kalisch, K. R. (1979). The role of the instructor in the Outward Bound educational process. Three Lakes, WI: Honey Rock Camp Northwoods Campus, Wheaton College.

Priest, S. (1987). Preparing effective outdoor pursuit leaders. (ED 286-692). Arlington, VA: Computer Microfilm International Corporation.

Tisdell, J. (1986). Effects of instructor personality and teaching styles on student personality in Outward Bound programs. Unpublished paper, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH.

Gender Schema Personality Theory

Bem, S. L. (1974). Bem sex-role inventory. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Bem, S. L. (1981a). Bem sex-role inventory: Professional manual. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologist Press, Inc.

Bem, S. L. (1981b). Gender schema theory: A cognitive account of sex typing. Psychological Review, 88, 354-364.

Bem, S. L. (1981c). The BSRI and gender schema theory: A reply to Spence and Helmreich. Psychological Review, 88, 369-371.

Berzins, J. I., Welling, M. A., & Wetter, R. E. (1987a). A new measure of psychological androgyny based on the Personality Research Form. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 46, 126-138.

Larsen, R. T., & Seidman, E. (1986). Gender schema theory and sex-role inventories: Some conceptual and psychometric considerations. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 50, 205-211.

Soft Skills

Bacon, S. (1983). The conscious use of metaphor in outward bound. Denver: Colorado Outward Bound School.

Buell, L. (1983). Outdoor leadership competency: A manual for self-assessment and staff-evaluation. Greenfield, MA: Environmental Awareness Publications.

Larson, D. (Ed.) (1984). Teaching psychological skills: Models for giving psychology away. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Long, L. (1978). Listening, responding: Human relations training for teachers. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Phipps, M. (1988). Experiential leadership education-Teaching the soft skills of leadership. In J. Cedarquist (Ed.), Proceedings of the 1986 Conference on Outdoor Recreation (pp. 39-47). Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press.

Swiderski, M. (1987). Soft and conceptual skills. The often overlooked components of outdoor leadership. The Bradford Papers Annual, 2, 29-36.

Course Outcome Management

Jernstedt, G. C. (1986). Procedures, materials, notes for the outward bound impact study. Hanover, NH: Department of Psychology, Dartmouth College.

Stevenson, R. (1985). Evaluating experiential education learning programs: The case study approach. The Journal of Experiential Education, 8(3), 42-45.