

Leadership in Various Shapes

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### Introduction

Teachers as leaders are an incredibly important part of the future of the United States as well as the world. Oliver Osborne's (2009) article, *What are Secondary Students' Expectations for Teachers in Virtual School Environment*, discusses teaching as leadership in the virtual environment. The purpose of this study was to evaluate expectations of virtual schools in North Carolina (NCVPS). It was done in order to show teachers the expectations of their students and to measure the success of the virtual program in place.

### Methodology

Osborne's (2009) study is "based on an embedded mixed methods design with a small selection of quantitative results embedded in a primarily qualitative case study" (Osborne, 2009). The quantitative survey results for this study serve as a way to shed light on student satisfaction with their educators in NCVPS classes. Qualitative data is more specific for this particular research because it provides concrete expectations that students have for their educators in NCVPS classes. The way this research was conducted was through inviting all NCVPS students to participate in a survey at the end of 2007-2008 academic year (Osborne, 2009). The number of students interviewed was 5, 226 out of which 32% chose to respond (1, 648 participants). The responses were volunteer based and anonymous disabling the researchers to determine whether the responses represented the population of the student body. The survey goals were used to evaluate NCVPS's goals "enrollment and assessment targets, twenty first century professionals,

twenty first century partnerships, twenty first century systems, and stakeholder satisfaction” (Osborne, 2009).

### Results

The results of this study showed that students expected their educators to teach and not simply moderate the course. They expected instructors to provide additional context to the shell of the class, show how the course is relevant to students’ lives, as well as to provide opportunity for peer interaction in addition to being available to give feedback and answer students’ questions in a timely manner. The data gathered showed that in order to teach virtual classes, teachers need to be able provide adequate support and additional materials that interest their students. If the discussions are fruitful, the survey showed that students need less one on one attention which is easier for the instructor.

The expectations shown through the surveys can be used for future training and in order to “establish instructor expectations and design professional development experiences that prepare educators to undertake divergent roles unique to online instruction” (Osborne, 2009). Overall, students were at 75% satisfaction with how online courses were being taught through NCVPS. The lowest rating was given to the use of twenty first century tools (under 70%). Open ended questions gave the most guidance in relation to student expectations. Most students looked for timely feedback, appropriate training of the teacher, instructor knowledge of content, etc. The most agreed upon expectation was for teachers to teach rather than simply moderate the classroom (Osborne, 2009).

### Conclusion

I found Osborne's (2009) study to be very interesting because it allowed me to see student views on instructors which I identified as leaders for the purposes of my paper. This study showed that students expect educators to take charge and specifically teach. Some suggestions for future research by Osborne (2009) were to identify preferred online teaching methods for the students, what course additions would add on to the course even though all teachers are given the same shell, continue probing student expectations. Kevin Oliver is a professor of instructional technology at the State University of North Carolina and has published numerous studies on the education system. His position as a professor and previous publishing experience make him a credible source (North Carolina State University, 2011).

### Introduction

Murphy's (2010) work, *Analyzing Generational Values Among Managers and Non-Managers for Sustainable Organizational Effectiveness*, focuses on leadership and working with various generation of leaders and followers (Murphy, 2010). Murphy (2010) puts forward the idea that in order to succeed managers needs to know how to work in our diverse environment. Such environment brings various attitudes and morals of followers as well as leaders. The work force currently is composed of "generation X, Generation Y, and baby boomers who are starting to retire" (Murphy, 2010). The purpose of Murphy's (2010) research is to identify differences in managing these generations. Murphy (2010) chose to study the values and non values of leaders as well as followers for the purposes of her study.

## Methodology

Murphy (2010) conducted a survey using sample of 4, 446 participants. The surveyed participants “ were adults working in medium and large public-sector companies in California, Texas, Florida, Nevada, Louisiana, Washington, D.C., and Michigan” (Murphy, 2010). The data from this study is ordinal because the participants ranked values in order of their importance to themselves. Statistical significance of the research was analyzed by using “nonparametric techniques such as the Kruskal-Wallis one way ANOVA median Test” (Murphy, 2010). Values were determines to be the dependent variable while the generation was the independent variable. Murphy (2010) found statistical significance in the differences of values between generations of both leaders and non leaders (Murphy, 2010).

## Results

From 18 values defined, there was found a difference in 7 in relation to the generations of leaders as well as followers. Managers “ranked freedom, mature love, national security, and salvation more highly than did non-managers, whereas non-managers ranked world at peace, pleasure, and wisdom as relatively more important” (Murphy, 2010). Although there were significant differences in generational believes, some of the similarities included the desire for family security, importance of health, and desire for a comfortable life. Managers from generation Y and non managers from the same generation had the most in common. Boomers and non managers had less in common, while generation x managers and non managers had the least similarities (Murphy, 2010).

## Conclusion

There are major differences in managers and non managers from different generations not only in their work styles, but also values. Therefore, the needs of each generation differ as well as what would motivate each to become better workers/leaders. Murphy's (2010) study suggests the importance of learning to work with managers and non managers of different generations. She suggests the importance of using diversity as a tool rather than a commodity. Murphy's (2010) work is a credible source because of the numerous articles she published in the Journal of Advanced Management. Her study also can parallel to the field of education which I am interested in for the purposes of my work because of generational differences between professors and students as well as administrators.

References

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