Being or Doing: An Axiometric Evaluation of Servant Leadership Values and the Informing-Rendering Agency of Competence [Dissertation Notice]

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Through a qualitative study utilizing in-depth interviews, practitioner opinion was gathered regarding how Christian institutions of higher education, primarily Baptist seminaries, may better utilize formal and continuing education to prepare clergy for pastoral leadership. The intention was to provide a better understanding of the leadership skills required by senior pastors, to help develop pastoral ministries curriculum, and to assess the potential effectiveness of continuing education for pastoral leadership. The subjects indicated that the degree program of their seminary did equip them with the basic knowledge needed for pastoral leadership but it did not provide them in sufficiency with the necessary practical skills for pastoral leadership. The pattern that emerged from the data indicates that, overall, seminaries are providing a quality education in preparing pastors for the ministry in their formal degree plans. However, seminaries may have opportunities to be of further service and to gain a competitive advantage vis-à-vis other seminaries by enhancing and expanding their continuing education programs.


Over the next five years, independent schools will be expected to replace more than 60% of key leadership. This is just one example of the growing evidence of shortages of persons filling key leadership positions. Based on this increasing concern, there is a need to develop a strategy to ensure the efficacy of prospective heads and their educational enterprises but also to ensure that the leaders of independent schools have the specific training, better understanding of issues critical to independent school leadership and opportunities to advance their careers. The intent of this study is to present a framework for designing leadership development programs for independent schools and to address the needs of the leaders within those schools.


This study attempted to inform the literature on the nature of competence as a leadership value, and establish an early axiometric scale of values and attributes associated with the theory of servant leadership. The research sought to answer three fundamental questions: What is good leadership? Does being a good person contribute toward being a good leader? What is truly more valued by organizational constituents; doing or being? Given the predominant emphasis of servant leadership upon the individual, the study sought to determine whether or not servant leadership’s strongly virtue based approach to leadership was a more effective theory than competing leadership theories which had a stronger focus on organizational advancement.