

## The Effectiveness of Academic Library Deans and Directors

### A Literature Review

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#### Abstract

As with other organizations in higher education, academic libraries face increasing pressure to assess their work and be more accountable for returns on investment. Although most academic library deans are subject to some type of internal performance review, a broader examination of what makes library deans and directors effective could provide valuable guidance for current and future library leaders. This article reviews some of the core theories of leadership effectiveness in the mainstream management literature and examines recent publications related to effective library leadership. Because few such studies have been conducted, the review was expanded to include studies of academic deans outside of the library as well as studies suggesting additional new directions for research into academic library leader effectiveness. Although the literature in the area of dean effectiveness is somewhat scattered, the findings of individual works are intriguing and suggest several topics for further research. This review also produced suggestions related to methodology. Future researchers should ground investigations of library leadership effectiveness within existing leadership theories. For empirical works, researchers should consider using previously developed, validated instruments in order to be able to compare results with the larger body of leadership effectiveness research.

#### Introduction

There are numerous leadership theories that attempt to capture the nebulous concept of leadership effectiveness. S. A. Kirkpatrick and E. A. Locke summarized research studies within trait-based leadership theory and concluded that leaders “do need to have the ‘right stuff’ to be effective.”<sup>1</sup> Several studies have focused instead on how leader *behaviors* influence effectiveness, such as initiating structure and consideration,<sup>2</sup> self-sacrifice,<sup>3</sup> and more complex combinations such as the four-factor theory of leadership.<sup>4</sup> Charismatic and transformational behaviors have also been linked to effectiveness in leaders.<sup>5</sup>

Other scholars have looked more closely at how *situational* differences contribute to leadership effectiveness. The path-goal theory suggests that effective leaders increase the opportunities for followers to attain work goals and personal satisfaction and clarify the path toward those goals.<sup>6</sup> Fred E. Fiedler and Paul Hersey explored two different models which suggested leaders

need to understand situational details and moderate their behavior accordingly in order to be effective.<sup>7</sup>

Most of the above studies assume that leadership is causally related in some way to the performance of organizations, but other scholars have suggested that effectiveness may be due more to the characteristics or behaviors of followers<sup>8</sup> or to “substitutes for leadership” such as a professional orientation of employees or from work that provides its own performance feedback.<sup>9</sup> For some, the idea of leaders playing a major role in effectiveness is a false assumption.<sup>10</sup> All of the studies acknowledge, however, that effectiveness is a complex construct that can attempt to be measured with very different approaches and methods.

How can this rich network of leadership effectiveness theories be applied to the role of academic library dean? What research has been done in this area so far, and what remains to be explored? While there have been a few recent studies on library deans’ effectiveness, this paper will also draw from empirical studies of leadership effectiveness of academic deans in general. It will also attempt to connect these studies with larger theories of leadership effectiveness. The emphasis will be on research from 2005 to the present. Before turning to the research, however, a few remarks are needed about the place of the academic library within the university.

Today’s academic library is usually positioned within either a student support unit (in which case its leader is usually termed “director”) or within academic affairs (in which case its leader is most often termed “dean”). This article will use “dean” to refer to both library deans and directors. The mission of the library is, perhaps, more similar to other units in academic affairs, being directly tied to teaching, research, and academic life. Yet, the staffing model in an academic library may be more similar to student administration, with large numbers of administrative / professional staff and student workers. Professional librarians frequently have faculty status, which may or may not be tenure-track. These contextual factors have a great deal of impact on the leadership qualities necessary to be effective, but the distinctions have been relatively unexplored in the literature.

Several non-empirical works provide a context for the library-oriented research to be discussed. Although it predates the focus of this study, Sharon Gray Weiner’s 2003 literature review, “Leadership in Academic Libraries,” has been referred to by most library leadership literature since its publication. While her review covered many other topics, Weiner did highlight some findings from studies on library leader effectiveness, including:

- The perceived effectiveness of the library director and of the library are closely connected;<sup>11</sup>
- The degree to which a university president commits adequate resources to the library is determined by his/her confidence in library leadership;<sup>12</sup> and
- Autonomy at work was shown to affect librarians’ job satisfaction more than leadership practices.<sup>13</sup>

Weiner concluded that despite some research being done, “a comprehensive body of cohesive, evidence-based research is needed.”<sup>14</sup> Specifically, she noted “a dearth of published studies or dissertations that relate leadership to effectiveness of library directors, their organizations, or outcomes.”<sup>15</sup>

Peter Hernon and Nancy Rossiter’s *Making a Difference: Leadership and Academic Libraries* could serve as a textbook for library graduate school students or aspiring library leaders, bringing together a wide variety of topics, some supported by research evidence and others by the authors’ knowledge and experience.<sup>16</sup> However, the book’s eleven-page chapter on leadership effectiveness, which presents a thorough list of leadership effectiveness models such as the ones mentioned in the beginning of this paper, fails to connect its content specifically to libraries.<sup>17</sup> While much leadership research is generally applicable to the library setting, library deans do face specific leadership challenges because of the environment and issues peculiar to libraries. A book connecting leadership theory to library-specific challenges would be a welcome addition to the literature.

Finally, in 2009, a special issue of *Journal of Library Administration* presented descriptions of current and emerging library leadership programs.<sup>18</sup> The issue shows increased attention being paid to leadership in the library profession; however, the articles focused on whether the goals of the programs were met (such as having a certain number of students complete the program), rather than on the effectiveness of the resulting leaders.

## Review of Studies Related to Academic Dean Effectiveness

Although it predates this paper’s intended period, V. J. Rosser et al.’s 2003 study, “Academic Deans and Directors: Assessing Their Effectiveness from Individual and Institutional Perspectives,” is so directly related to the topic that it is worth mentioning. Rosser et al. noted most previous research on deans was descriptive in nature and referred to “specific tasks and challenges.”<sup>19</sup> They discussed “the lack of a commonly accepted definition of what leadership effectiveness in higher education is” and the complexity of developing an evaluation model.<sup>20</sup> The model they developed considered the relevant dimensions of leadership and the multilevel nature of higher education institutions.<sup>21</sup> They defined deans’ leadership as “a construct composed of seven domains that represented central evaluation criteria about the responsibilities and skills of the dean’s role” and found these to be promising.<sup>22</sup> They surveyed 865 of 1,950 faculty and administrative staff at a Carnegie Doctoral / Research-Extensive university (a 54% response rate) concerning 22 deans.<sup>23</sup> Most of the variations were found to be “related to the individuals’ somewhat unique views of and experiences with their dean,” and Rosser et al. were satisfied that their approach allowed them to discriminate between individuals’ perceptions from the more collective view. They found support for the idea that “perceptions of leadership effectiveness are related to the attainment of valued outcomes such as resources”<sup>24</sup> but that deans also need to be sensitive to the complexities of social exchange within the academic setting.<sup>25</sup> These findings suggest that both the path-goal theory<sup>26</sup> and

leader-member exchange theories<sup>27</sup> could be interesting to explore in combination with library dean effectiveness. Intriguingly, they also found female deans in their study were rated more highly in terms of effectiveness.<sup>28</sup> They suggested data drawn from faculty/staff rather than senior administrators was more credible but that sizeable numbers of individual faculty within units need to be included to ensure generalizability.<sup>29</sup> In further examinations of follower perceptions of leader effectiveness, it would be important to review studies about the role of such attributions, as discussed by Hollander.<sup>30</sup>

In 2005, Marietta del Favero concurred with Rosser et al. that there was “little agreement on what constitutes good leadership in higher education.”<sup>31</sup> She sent a 128-item questionnaire to 421 academic deans at doctoral and research universities in order to measure their perceptions of their engagement in specified leadership activities, and netted a response rate of 50 percent.<sup>32</sup> She used discriminant analysis to seek out significant disciplinary differences in academic deans’ administrative behavior. Based on her list of academic areas, library deans were not included in the study. She found that academic deans from disciplines “characterized by less-developed paradigms” and applied fields, as well as those heading smaller units, had a greater tendency toward social behavior, while those from pure fields and disciplines with highly-developed paradigms demonstrated less tendency toward social behavior.<sup>33</sup> This finding suggests academic library deans would also trend toward social behavior, as their domains have less-developed paradigms. Unit size was only a slight moderator for respondents in soft/applied fields.<sup>34</sup> Del Favero suggested that when scholars from these fields become deans, “they are more likely to already become accustomed to engaging socially with their colleagues to make sense of data and come to a common understanding of problem-solving cues in the environment,” She went on to note “where garnering support for academic programs is a critical issue, the social aspect of fit may be crucially important in building relationships with policymakers, donors, and executive-level administrators who oversee institutional resources.”<sup>35</sup> Effectiveness, therefore, would seem to be linked to relationship-building behaviors. Furthermore, del Favero suggested the potential for differentiating between social and cognitive styles when assessing administrative performance.

Shelley Wepner (2008) studied the leadership dimensions of decision-making among deans of colleges of education through a series of interviews and developed a “24-themed, four dimensional model” which employed vignettes.<sup>36</sup> Beginning in 1997, she interviewed fourteen deans from a variety of university settings. She found “an initial tendency to frame problems in intellectual terms”<sup>37</sup> and to use this domain as a basis for integrating the other three dimensions (emotional, social, and moral).<sup>38</sup> She concluded that “an education dean’s success depends on his or her ability to read one’s context and create solutions that are mutually supportive of colleagues and the institutional culture.”<sup>39</sup> Like some of the other studies, this study suggests a supportive leadership style could be important for academic library deans. Wepner also concluded that deans need to understand how their “four dimensions of leadership interact with their environments to influence their decision-making.”<sup>40</sup> Although he did not refer to Wepner’s article, John C. Smart has also suggested a strong correlation between the complexity of campus cultures and the complexity of leader behaviors, in his case involving six core competencies associated with four leadership roles.<sup>41</sup> For academic libraries with complex

cultures, such as those involving such disparate functions as archives, educational technologies, and digitization, the ability to navigate among leadership roles could be key for deans.

## Review of Empirical Studies Related to Library Leader Effectiveness

Since 2005, empirical studies in the library literature have focused on only five research areas within the topic of leadership effectiveness:

- the role of emotional intelligence,
- the attitudes of presidents and provosts toward the university library,
- the perceptions of Generation X librarians,
- evidence-based library management, and
- deans' use and awareness of the ACRL Standards for Libraries in Higher Education.

Since these topics are relatively isolated, they will be discussed in roughly chronological order.

Hernon and Rossiter analyzed four years of job advertisements for library directors, surveyed 70 library directors, and conducted follow-up interviews with eight directors in an effort to determine which emotional intelligence (EI) traits were most prized by library directors and which traits apply to transformational and transactional leadership styles.<sup>42</sup> They based their EI categorizations on Daniel Goleman's popular work.<sup>43</sup> The traits valued most consistently by library directors were "visionary – able to build a shared vision and rally others around it" and "ability to function in a political environment."<sup>44</sup> Hernon and Rossiter stated the consensus among the eight directors they interviewed was that "the university community is often unaware of what directors actually do and how complex the position is."<sup>45</sup> They suggested future research could focus on how the traits they identified apply to different situations or across variables such as gender. They also suggested conducting case study research to examine how leaders use EI traits effectively.<sup>46</sup>

Patricia A. Kreitz also studied emotional intelligence, focusing on library directors and members of their senior management team (SMT) at eight ARL libraries in the Western U.S. (interestingly, she had aimed for 19 libraries, but six positions were vacant during the time of the study; an additional 5 declined to participate).<sup>47</sup> She received surveys from six directors and 22 SMT members for a 60 percent response rate. Her first hypothesis was that there would be no statistically significant difference between the traits library directors choose for a director and the traits they choose for an SMT member. Her second hypothesis was that there would be no statistically significant difference between the traits SMT members choose for a director and the traits they choose for an SMT member.<sup>48</sup> Kreitz used Hernon and Rossiter's survey instrument but mapped their original five domains of EI to four: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Library directors found the top five traits for an ideal library director as "knowing where he or she is going/taking the organization, ability to listen and

delegate, realistic self-understanding... self-confidence, and respect for scholarship, teaching, and learning.”<sup>49</sup> The SMTs agreed with three of those traits but substituted cognitive ability and being articulate for self-confidence, and substituted respect for scholarship, learning, and teaching.<sup>50</sup> Kreitz concluded that a library director differs from other SMT members in the need to “create a vision for change, communicate that vision, and then motivate staff to support that change.”<sup>51</sup> Her findings did not support the popular assumption that a library director’s top responsibility is obtaining funding.<sup>52</sup>

These two studies on EI point to one of the major problems with recent library-focused literature on leadership effectiveness: a failure to fully connect one’s study with existing research. Although Kreitz reviewed empirical studies with positive outcomes related to EI and leadership, Herson and Rossiter did not look at research outside librarianship, and neither study addressed the controversy about the placement of EI in the leadership literature.<sup>53</sup> Some scholars do not believe EI meets the definition of intelligence; others think the instruments developed to measure EI are lacking. Furthermore, Kreitz and Herson and Rossiter’s findings seemed to have very little to do with the construct of emotional intelligence itself and instead provided support to pieces of EI that could fit in any number of other theoretical models. Thus, using emotional intelligence as an initial framework seems almost moot.

Arthur Young, Peter Herson, and Ronald Powell conducted a Delphi study with six participants from Generation X in order to explore their perceptions of attributes essential for academic library leaders.<sup>54</sup> They used an initial list of traits based on qualities derived from the literature but allowed participants to add new ones. They identified “top ten” attributes and noticed most of these related to communications and interpersonal skills.<sup>55</sup> The Gen-X participants also identified twenty-eight new (or differently worded) attributes. Young et al. concluded that the leadership attributes most important to Gen-X non-directors were different from those rated by library directors. Gen-X librarians in this study placed greater value on balancing work and personal life and stressed the importance of an “employee-oriented workplace that values teamwork, fairness, and loyalty.”<sup>56</sup> These findings suggest Gen-X librarians might value participative and/or supportive leadership behaviors.

In 2007, Lynch et al. replicated a 1992-1993 study by Deborah Grimes and studied the attitudes of presidents and provosts toward the university library through interviews.<sup>57</sup> Four key questions were asked of leaders at six universities in one-hour interview session; unfortunately, the number of interviewees was not noted. One of the overall goals was determining indicators of how central the library was to the university; presidents agreed on three: “the library’s ability to acquire outside funding, visibility and leadership on campus, and circulation and interlibrary loan statistics.”<sup>58</sup> Lynch et al. noted that the ability to acquire outside funding had not arisen in Grimes’s earlier study. Also important were the quality of staff and collections, innovative use of technology, services to other campus units, and participation of library leaders in high-level university decision-making.

Two specific questions most relevant to this review were “Briefly, how is the university librarian or library director involved in university decision-making?” (asked as part of a series of



questions related to standards and technology) and “How has the library or library director helped you in your own work recently?” (which was asked as a follow-up at the end of the interview).<sup>59</sup> Although the word “effectiveness” was not used, these questions were the closest any of the library studies came to a president’s view of library director effectiveness. Only one of the interviewees was not able to provide an example where the library or library director “participated proactively in university affairs, helped forward the university’s agenda, or provided important information for governance and planning.”<sup>60</sup> Lynch et al. stated this was a “marked change” from Grimes’s earlier study, in which only two respondents had called on services from their librarians. Additionally, they found library deans and directors to have increasing influence since 2004, perhaps because they have done a more effective job educating administrators about library issues.<sup>61</sup> This finding differs from Herson and Rossiter’s conclusion that more education of university administrators was needed. It would be interesting to know whether the difference lay simply with the individuals or whether there is a perceptual difference between directors looking up the university hierarchy and provosts and presidents looking down it.

Lynch et al. also recommended library directors learn to operate as a team member of the provost’s council and develop the necessary skills, knowledge, and competencies to do so.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, they said directors need to educate librarians and staff about their role in upper administration and delegate more authority to library associate deans. Finally, Lynch et al. recommended that library directors make explicit connections between library and university missions and the creation of knowledge. “This message must be tailored to decision makers who sit on the provost’s council as well as to the library’s various patrons,” they wrote.<sup>63</sup> To discover how to do this, directors should pay attention when presidents and provosts communicate about “indicators of centrality” and link the library’s strategic issues and actions with them, using both administrative relationships and written strategic plans to communicate.<sup>64</sup>

Amos Lakos conducted an exploratory study on the role of leadership in evidence-based library management, informed in part by interviews with 21 library directors, whom he noted were a “non-random sample.”<sup>65</sup> Of particular interest to this study was Lakos’s third research question, “Do [university] administrators expect data-driven decisions / recommendations / requests from the libraries?”<sup>66</sup> Lakos noted university administrators were described by directors as being interested in benchmarks and rankings, such as the Association of Research Libraries rankings, but did not expect detailed data.<sup>67</sup> Directors also reported administrators were increasingly interested in outcomes data but that libraries were not yet seen as part of these outcomes. Despite these expectations from administrators, directors were growing increasingly aware of the need to use data, their own limitations in using it, and resistance of staff toward gathering it. Furthermore, directors all agreed the quality of decisions would be “better, more reliable, and more effective if based on actual data and trend analysis.”<sup>68</sup> About half of those interviewed were in the process of creating assessment-related positions. Lakos concluded that “effective implementation of data-driven and evidence-based decision-making requires vision, leadership, and risk-taking,” which would be needed to “move from a culture of intuition-based decision-making to a decision-making framework based more on evidence, analytics, and results.”<sup>69</sup>

Lakos's study points out the potential for library deans to consider a cognitive model of participative leadership, as described by K.I. Miller and P.R. Monge.<sup>70</sup> By using participative decision-making to enhance information flow in the library, deans might improve staff participation in data gathering and reporting while concurrently realizing the benefits of participative leadership.

The recent increase of libraries' attention on assessment data is accompanied by a growing interest in standards. In 2010, the Association for College and Research Libraries surveyed 1,260 library directors about their use and awareness of the ACRL Standards for Libraries in Higher Education, with a 66.11 percent response rate. Directors who had used these standards "found them most useful for preparing accreditation reports and engaging in library self-studies," pointing to the importance of such standards in illustrations of library effectiveness.<sup>71</sup> Directors who did not use the standards reported two top reasons: "no campus support for use of library standards" and "use regional accreditation standards instead."<sup>72</sup> Other data sources and standards used by library directors included peer comparisons (28%), National Center for Education Statistics data (23%), and accreditation standards (22%). Seventy-eight percent of respondents indicated an interest in training on using ACRL standards in outcome assessment.<sup>73</sup> These results suggest "industry knowledge" of other libraries is an important trait for library deans, which is supported by Kirkpatrick and Locke's review of leadership traits.

The next part of this article will explore research studies in library literature tangentially related to leadership effectiveness; the remainder of items found in recent library literature were practical pieces such as advice and lists of tips, rather than empirical works.<sup>74</sup>

### **Additional directions for studying academic library leaders**

Several studies have explored topics related to the effectiveness of academic library leaders, albeit not directly addressing the topic. Paula Kaufman, dean of libraries at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, reported on one of the first return-on-investment (ROI) studies at an academic library.<sup>75</sup> The study focused on the number of faculty with grants which used citations, the grant award success rate of those grants, and the dollar amount of grant income for each dollar invested in the library. She noted that next steps could include ROI analyses based on a library's contributions to effective teaching and learning. Although an ROI is not an evaluation of a leader's contribution, the measured variables would hopefully be important to upper administration when evaluating the effectiveness of a library and its dean.

Barbara Moran, Elisabeth Leonard, and Jessica Zellers analyzed the *American Library Directory* from 1972, 1982, 1994, and 2004 in order to examine gender equity among library administrators.<sup>76</sup> They found that while substantial gaps still remain at certain levels for certain institutions, great progress has been made. ARL institutions have made the most progress; while only 2 percent of directors in 1972 were women, there were 61 percent in 2004 (the ARL librarian workforce is 64 percent female). Liberal Arts I college libraries, however, still show a



gap, with only 51 percent of directors being female, compared to a workforce that is 70 percent female. The authors note this improvement is dramatically better in academic libraries than in other departments on campus: females are underrepresented in tenure-track ranks and in senior higher education positions.<sup>77</sup> A potential new direction for research in this area could be an investigation of why women have been able to make such strides in libraries and not in the larger higher education environment. Perhaps it is simply the large pool of women librarians from which to draw, but this pool has always been there; perhaps there are lessons aspiring female educational administrators could learn from the progress of women library administrators. These findings also suggest an opportunity for research into gendered leadership behaviors and leader effectiveness.

Carol A. Isaac et al. collected data about individual background, leadership, and power from ten women deans at both male and female-dominated colleges and performed a rhizoanalysis, which “disrupts unity and linearity and establishes connections between semiotic chains and the organizations of power.”<sup>78</sup> They found the women’s language and the interview data to be filled with “discourses of achievement and hierarchy which indicated that women administrators are shaped or subjectified by the language of current discourses.”<sup>79</sup> This study explicitly avoided a focus on “finding what ‘good’ leadership is, as that is an essentialist framework.”<sup>80</sup> They suggested that uncovering controversies and unfolding women’s identities within the academic context could show “a more complex, discursively constructed and changing vision of women leaders” and those investigations of leadership effectiveness should perhaps not “reside in binaries but in multiplicity.”<sup>81</sup> The deans in their study “described multiple identities as revealed in different contexts,” leading to questions about how effectiveness could be evaluated in those different contexts.

## Discussion and Analysis

Research on leadership effectiveness in the library environment is scattered, with few connections between studies other than those by the same authors. Lynch et al.’s 2007 article on emotional intelligence was based on a 2005 conference presentation by the authors, while Herson and Rossiter interviewed directors about which emotional intelligence traits were most important for library leaders;<sup>82</sup> however, the two studies appear to have happened in isolation, sharing not even one reference. Meanwhile, other papers presented diverse techniques for evaluating the effectiveness of academic libraries, including the importance of standards for libraries,<sup>83</sup> evidence-based library management,<sup>84</sup> and ROI analysis.<sup>85</sup> These touched on important considerations for library leaders, but did not make a direct connection with one another or with leadership studies, either in the library literature or beyond.

Other than Herson and Rossiter’s and Kreitz’s papers on emotional intelligence, the library-focused research has not drawn from the many existing models of leadership effectiveness in the long history of leadership studies. It has also failed to connect with research on academic deans. Future researchers in this area would do well to review leadership effectiveness

literature and ground research questions in the context of existing theories. This may mean exploring business, psychology, and educational administration publications. An important next step is for the library community to develop a research agenda for academic library leadership studies so that future studies can place themselves within the complex web of ways to look at effectiveness. This could make it easier to see both the usefulness and the limitations of individual studies. While some scholars have listed topics of research interest, they have not done so in a way that connects with the existing roadmaps provided by decades of leadership studies research.

Library researchers also need to attend more to methodology. Some library studies have suffered from small sample sizes<sup>86</sup> or non-random samples.<sup>87</sup> Future studies could use previously developed, validated instruments for measuring effective leadership, which would save time and allow comparisons between the special population of library deans and other leadership. In order to maximize funding opportunities and achieve adequate response rates, library researchers should collaborate with one another or with library organizations, as with the ACRL standards study.<sup>88</sup>

Given the discussion above, several topics seem especially intriguing for further research. First, several studies noted the importance of emotional intelligence and social interaction of library deans and deans in general, which suggests a participative and/or supportive leadership style could be a strength for the academic library environment.<sup>89</sup> Researchers could compare directive, supportive, achievement-oriented, and participative leadership styles, perhaps using the path-goal theory as a framework<sup>90</sup> or following the survey methodology of Somech and Wenderow, who compared the effects of participative and directive leadership on elementary teachers' performance.<sup>91</sup> John Smart's competing values framework, as presented in his 2003 study of leadership complexity, also could be tested in the academic library environment. Such investigations could be repeated with both an internal perspective (library faculty and staff) and senior administrators (presidents and provosts), since the dean is accountable to both; both Kreitz and Rosser et al. suggested discriminating between faculty/staff and senior management evaluations.

Rosser et al.'s study also highlighted the importance of social exchange in deans' pursuit of effectiveness. Future studies could explore this topic with a focus on academic library deans. What is it that deans "exchange" with followers in an academic library? At public institutions, financial benefits are tightly regulated, so this question could be increasingly useful in this context. Hui et al. noted that career-enhancing opportunities, access to key personnel or information, and increasing levels of trust in job performance are forms of currency in social exchange.<sup>92</sup> Scandura emphasized the importance of maintaining perceptions of organizational justice during leader-member exchange development. Their research could be used to frame a study of academic library leaders.<sup>93</sup>

Situational differences between libraries are also important to examine in the context of leadership effectiveness. Although the reviewed studies did not seem to touch on the aspect of library size (except Weiner 2003), del Favero found unit size to be a slight moderator due to its

impact on social engagement. Thus, size seems like an important variable to either study directly or to control for in studies on other topics. Some academic libraries have a staff the size of a small academic department; others may have well over 100 employees. In a large environment, the skills of an academic library dean might be quite different than the person in the same title or role for a small academic department. Union versus non-union environments is another situational variable that could affect what skills and behaviors are most effective. Other significant variables could be student-centered versus research-centered academic libraries, or state-funded versus private institutions.

Rosser et al.'s 2003 study of individual and institutional perceptions of effectiveness of deans in general noted a link between the sex of the dean and ratings of dean effectiveness: female deans in their study of one university were rated higher in terms of their leadership effectiveness, even after controlling for the sex of the evaluators.<sup>94</sup> It would be interesting to see if this finding was repeated at other institutions and in other studies. While Moran et al.'s study showed that there are a proportionate number of female ARL library deans, it did not explore sex differences.<sup>95</sup> Are female library deans more successful if they have masculine behaviors? Are male library deans more effective when they use a "feminine" style? Many scholars have laid groundwork in this area, suggesting female leaders are more effective in less masculine roles,<sup>96</sup> that masculine-intelligent individuals are more likely to emerge as leaders in initiating-structure task conditions,<sup>97</sup> and that women's leadership styles emphasize both interpersonal relations and task accomplishment slightly more than men's.<sup>98</sup> It will be important to clearly distinguish between women leaders and "feminine" leadership style in such studies. Isaac noted that the very language of effectiveness favors masculinity, which would need to be considered when examining this question.<sup>99</sup>

## Conclusion

It is an exciting time to be a researcher about academic library dean effectiveness. The Gen-X librarians studied by Young, Herson, and Powell will begin to enter candidate pools for dean. Their expectations for leadership behaviors were shown to be different than those of standing deans. If their practice follows their expectation, libraries may enter an age of increased participation in decision-making between administrators and staff. Leadership effectiveness research is also timely because academic libraries are increasingly interested in assessment and outcomes, and although universities have not yet thought of libraries or library deans in these terms, they are thinking of other parts of the university in these terms. Hopefully libraries will be providing mature assessments at the time when they are most needed by campus administrators. The role of dean within this assessment environment is key, but it is understudied and is not yet part of the increased attention on library assessment. An opportunity exists for a researcher to set a clear agenda for library leadership effectiveness research and provide empirical support for deans, selection committees, and university administrators to learn how a dean can contribute most effectively to library success.

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