

ABSTRACT

POLITICAL LEADER ACTIONS, WORDS, AND BEHAVIOR: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE COMMON CORE DEBATE

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This study presents a model for understanding political leadership based upon the processes that influence and thereby shape political leaders' types, as captured in their own words and behaviors on digital recordings, official documents, press releases, the media, and twitter on the public record. Using the disciplines of public policy, political science, and leadership science this transformative case study takes a front row seat in the public policy debate on the Common Core Standards. Political legislators represent the study population with as many as 567 data points per variable analyzed with presence-absence coding. Computer assisted advanced Meta analysis was employed to conduct content analysis across twenty thousand tweets, over twenty-six hours of digital committee hearing recordings, official legislative documents, and press releases.

Two constructs are created for this study by the author they are: the *integrity index* constructed to measure a political leader's orientation toward the policy they purport to support; and the *political leadership typology* to examine leader attributes for classification. Both of these newly devised constructs are proven highly reliable at over .90, Cronbach's alpha (Nunnally, 1970). Findings show five dominant influencers of political leader behavior and policy communication. The most significant in order of importance are money, political motive, peer/political pressure, the media, and the citizen. *The Political Leader Typology* reveals a continuum of leadership behavior from light to shadow within transforming, transformational, laissez-faire, transactional, and

Machiavellian leadership. (For permission to cite this study please contact the author at terri@mccormickdawson.com).

Keywords: Political leadership, leader behavior, public policy communication, Common Core Standards, ethics in government, ethics education, civic engagement

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