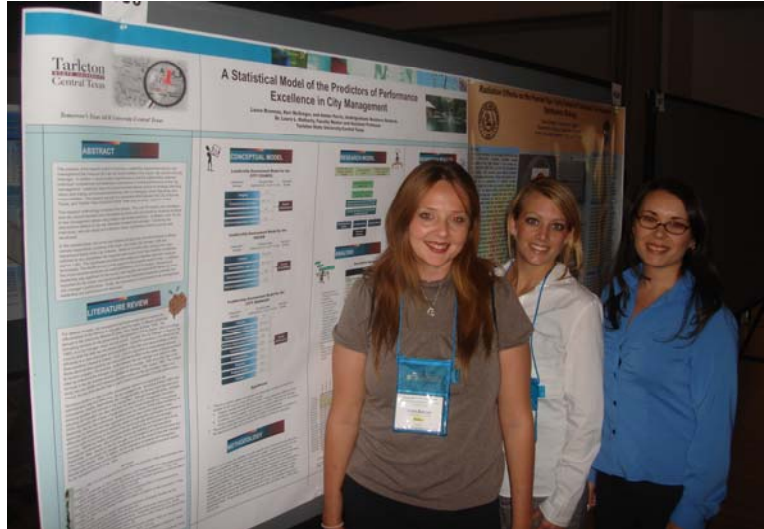


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**A STATISTICAL MODEL OF THE
PREDICTORS OF PERFORMANCE
EXCELLENCE IN CITY
MANAGEMENT**



The purpose of this research project is to develop a leadership assessment tool for city management that measures the roles and responsibilities of the mayor, city council, and city manager. In addition, a causal model is hypothesized to test the relationships between individual competencies and leadership on perceptions of overall performance of the city management. Leadership takes into account transformational actions or strategic planning, vision and change and transactional behaviors refer to managing current objectives and responsibilities. The research was part of a cooperative effort between the City of Burnet, Texas, and Tarleton State University-Central Texas using an action research model.

The research methodology consisted of two phases. First, over 35 mayors, city managers and city council members were interviewed via phone calls and emails by students enrolled in two management classes using multiple, open-ended questions. In addition, over 35 job descriptions defined on city web sites were reviewed and evaluated. Combining the interviews, web site results, and literature review, a preliminary draft of a survey was developed. In the second phase, the survey was finalized and approved, and administered to fifteen sample respondents consisting of the mayor, city council, city manager, staff and department heads of the City of Burnet.

Based on a 5-point scale, ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied, the measures were found to have high reliability (coefficient alphas $>.80$). The hypotheses are tested with multiple and stepwise regression analysis techniques. The results showed partial support for the proposed causal model. In addition, the most important predictors of overall performance varied by position: transactional leadership was significant for the council; both integrity and transactional leadership were important for the mayor; and transformational and transactional leadership predicted the city manager's performance.

Finally, the implications for improvement of city management, leadership and performance are discussed.

Presented at:

6th Annual Texas A&M University System Pathways to the Doctorate Student Research Symposium (2008) – Business & Computer Information Systems undergraduate - Second Place Award