

THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE **research**

THE MOST TRUSTED SOURCE ON BECOMING A BETTER LEADER

TITLE Women's Leadership Practices in Student Government

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OBJECTIVE The purpose of this study was to explore the leadership practices of student government members.

METHODOLOGY

Research participants were student government members from eight colleges across the Midwestern United States (N = 533) in either elected or appointed positions. The usable sample (response rate = 58%; N = 308) included 173 men (56%) of which 22 percent (N = 67) held leadership positions, and 135 females, of which 16 percent (N = 48) held leadership positions. Respondents completed the Student Leadership Practices Inventory and a brief demographic survey. Internal reliability in this study ranged from .63 (Enabling), .75 (Challenging), .77 (Encouraging and Inspiring), to .78 (Modeling).

KEY FINDINGS

No significant differences were found on the five leadership practices between male and female respondents, or between elected and appointed leaders. Similarly no differences were found according to gender and election versus appointment. No significant differences were found between men and women and whether the student held a leadership position within the student government

However, MANOVA revealed statistically significant differences on leadership practices between leaders and non-leaders. Student holding leadership positions versus those not holding positions (members of student government) engaged significantly more frequently than non-leaders in the practices of Challenging, Inspiring, Modeling, and Encouraging.

High correlations between the five practices raised some doubts on the author's part of whether the S-LPI measured different aspects of leadership; meaning that there may be some redundancy between the scores.