

THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE **research**

THE MOST TRUSTED SOURCE ON BECOMING A BETTER LEADER

TITLE Leadership Practices of Women Superintendents: A Qualitative Study

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OBJECTIVE The purpose of the study was to describe the leadership practices of women superintendents of public school divisions.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher interviewed eight women superintendents in the Commonwealth of Virginia examining the participants' self-perceived leadership practices and their reflections of these practices. Data collection occurred through use of interviews, member checks, field notes, a reflexive journal and completion of the Leadership Practices Inventory-SELF.

KEY FINDINGS

The findings produced eight leadership practices: (1) use consistent and accurate communication with all stakeholders, (2) be visible, (3) use limited delegation, (4) be collaborative, (5) remain poised, (6) accept personal sacrifice of time and family, (7) exhibit confident, and (8) self-educate, be a quick learner. The findings concluded that women described their leadership practices as relationship building practices and practices incorporating issues of gender and silencing.

“Results of the LPI-SELF determined that participants perceived themselves to be highly collaborative, accepting of risk, going beyond status quo thinking, good communicators and listeners. The majority of the participants set clear visions of their goals, but had difficulty with patience in the implementation process. Participants also recognized their difficulties in being able to delegate tasks. Most participants were appreciative of their followers' successes and recognized them in various formal and informal ways” (p. 73).