

TITLE: Empowering Leadership and Achieving Style: A Study of Gender Differences Between Fraternity and Sorority Presidents

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Masters' Thesis: June 1992

OBJECTIVE: To explore how achieving styles impact leader's behaviors and whether gender moderates any of these relationships.

METHODOLOGY: Nine fraternity and 13 sorority presidents at the University of Maryland at College Park participated (representing about half of the available population) along with 41 fraternity and 110 female executive council members. Presidents completed the LPI-Self (Student Version) and the L-BL Achieving Styles Inventory (Lipman-Blumen, 1985). Internal reliabilities for the LPI were good: Challenging and Enabling = .63, Modeling = .70, Encouraging = .78, and Inspiring = .83. Executive council members completed the LPI-Constituent.

All of the students were in the traditional age range of 18-24 years old (mean = 21.2), with an average GPA of 3.03, and most had achieved traditional junior-level (or beginning senior-level) standing. Most (86%) of the presidents were Caucasian.

KEY FINDINGS: The rank order of the leadership practices was the same across genders: Enabling (most frequent), Encouraging, Inspiring, Modeling, and Challenging. Enabling and Encouraging were also the leadership behaviors most frequently perceived by executive council members of their presidents; Modeling was perceived as used least frequently. Except for Encouraging (males only), significant correlations were not found between LPI-Self and LPI-Constituent scores.

"Within the group as a whole, few relationships of significance between the LPI and ASI occurred" (71). Both Challenging and Inspiring were positively correlated with the Contributory Relational Achieving Style and the Relational Domain overall. The patterns of men and women separately were very different--all leadership practices, except for Enabling, were significantly correlated with at least one Achieving style for women; men's scores showed fewer significant relationships between LPI and ASI scores.

"The Leadership Practices Inventory - Student Version is a new instrument...[but] proving to be reliable" (85). "Interventions that emphasize the importance and usefulness of feedback, evaluation and assessment may improve the presidents' use of these tools and therefore improve both the functioning of their organizations and the feelings and perceptions of their leadership by their officers" (87).