

TITLE: Gender Differences in High School Principals' Leadership Styles

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OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this study was to determine if the leadership behavioral practices of female and male high school principals were similar or different.

METHODOLOGY: The Leadership Practices Inventory - Individual Contributor (LPI-IC) form was sent to a random sample of 300 (100 females and 200 males) of the 898 public high school principals in California. The response rate was 45 percent (N=123; 79 males and 44 females). The typical principal had served six years, with an average of 13 years as a teacher.

KEY FINDINGS: While female principals generally reported higher scores than their male counterparts on the five leadership practices, there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups on Challenging, Enabling, and Encouraging. On both Inspiring and Modeling, the scores of female principals were higher than those of male principals.

Number of years as a principal was not correlated with any of the five leadership practices; and the same was true for number of schools as a high school principal. Challenging and Inspiring were significantly correlated with number of years as a teacher.