

TITLE: College Women's Leadership and Self-Esteem: Perceptions of "Middler" Students at a Five-Year Cooperative Education Institution of Higher Education

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OBJECTIVE: To explore the perceptions of leadership and self-esteem that women students in their "middler" (third year of five) years as part of a cooperative educational institution have of themselves.

METHODOLOGY: The sample consisted of 12 women who were all presently involved in student organizations but did not hold formal positions of leadership at Northeastern University (Boston). Detailed descriptions and in-depth inquiry of the women's personal perspectives of their personal leadership and self-esteem experiences were gathered via structured and open-ended interviews. All of the students were in their middler year and 20 years of age. Each completed the LPI-Self between the two rounds of interviews.

KEY FINDINGS: All findings from this research with women middler students at Northeastern University illustrate the five practices of Kouzes and Posner present in (their) model. Therefore, this model is one that women college students in this study identified with" (p. 165).

All participants provided positive feedback with regard to this inventory. One woman said, "it was one of the most helpful tests she had ever taken," and another said, "the LPI confirmed for her what she had known about herself and her leadership behaviors and tendencies." "This helps me be more aware of my leadership and how I may successfully or unsuccessfully interact with people." Another woman said, "I think I learned about myself more than anything else"(p. 91).