

TITLE: A Comparison of Leadership Styles and Organizational Cultures of Women in Two and Four Year Colleges and Universities

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OBJECTIVE: To examine the relationships between the leadership styles, organizational cultures, and post-graduate leadership development training of women identified as holding leadership positions in two-year and in four-year colleges and universities, and attempt to discover why women in the former have had more success than the latter group in obtaining senior leadership positions.

METHODOLOGY: The sample consisted of 713 women leaders in Florida's higher education system in 1998 (response rate = 97%). Nearly half held doctoral degrees, and most were between 20 and 60 years of age, although the women at two-year colleges were generally younger. In addition to completing the Leadership Practices Inventory, respondents also completed the Leadership Orientations (LO) questionnaire (Bolman & Deal, 1990) as a measure of organizational culture and leadership style, and provided demographic information.

KEY FINDINGS: The results showed that there were no differences between the two groups of women in their leadership practices as measured by their LPI scores. There was one difference in organizational culture, with two-year colleges having a more participative organizational structure. Women at two-year institutions reported having significantly more formal post-graduate leadership training than those at four-year institutions.