

TITLE: Relationships Between Sex Role Orientation, Interpersonal Relations Orientation, Leadership Style Practices, and Fear of Success in University Faculty

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OBJECTIVE: To examine the possibility of a relationship between gender, sex role orientation, interpersonal needs orientation, fear of success, and leadership style practice which might account for the underrepresentation of women administrators in higher education.

METHODOLOGY: Sample involved 233 faculty members (47% response rate) at four midwestern doctorate granting universities, of which 67% were female, 66% were married, 92% were Caucasian, 86% had doctorates, 32% were assistant professors, 36% associate and 24% professors, with 12 years of teaching experience at the median, and 62% were tenured. Respondents completed Cohen's Fear of Success questionnaire, Bem's Sex Role Inventory, the FIRO-B (Fundamental Interpersonal Relationship Orientation-Behavior), and the LPI-Self. In addition to providing demographic information, respondents completed two open-ended questions regarding their aspirations to seek an administrative position, and perceived barriers or constraints expected when seeking an administrative position in higher education.

KEY FINDINGS: There were no significant differences by gender on the LPI for Challenging, Inspiring, Enabling, Modeling: Female faculty reported greater frequency on Encouraging than their male counterparts. "These data patterns generally support the conclusion that female faculty and male faculty are more alike in behavior than different. Female faculty, however, differed significantly on career aspirations despite real or perceived barriers" (p. 74).