

TITLE: Leadership Styles of Executive Female Administrators in Tennessee Community Colleges

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OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this study was to determine if unique differences exist between the leadership styles of female executive administrators in student affairs, and female executive administrators in academic affairs at Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) community colleges.

METHODOLOGY: Female participants were selected to from the 13 two-year community colleges in Tennessee in either positions of executive administrators in student affairs or academic affairs and 204 completed the Leadership Practices Inventory and provided demographic data (76% response rate). The typical respondent was Caucasian (87%), 50-59 years old (44%), married (70%), with a master's degree (56%), and had been employed at their current institution between 11 and 20 years. Seventy-three percent indicated they had participated in formal leadership training.

KEY FINDINGS: The most frequently engaged in leadership practice was Enabling, followed by Modeling, Encouraging, Challenging and Inspiring, and this order was the same for both groups. Indeed, there were no significant differences on any of the five leadership practices between female administrators in student affairs compared with female administrators in academic affairs.

The five leadership practices scores did not vary by respondent age, level of education (degree received), marital status, years at the institution, academic department affiliation, having received mentoring (yes/no), and mentoring by gender. African-American respondents scored higher in Encouraging than did their Caucasian counterparts but the two groups did not vary on the other four leadership practices. Those who had received formal leadership training reported (yes vs. no) reported engaging more frequently in Modeling and Encouraging.