

Title: The Achieving Styles of Female Presidents of Large State Universities: A Qualitative Cross Case Analysis

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This qualitative study examined the president's role in large state universities. More specifically, it is a cross case analysis of the achieving styles of state university presidents who are female. The study explored the achieving styles female presidents of large state universities use to get things done, the daily leadership experiences of these presidents, how these presidents accomplished various tasks and fulfilled key roles, and how they described their achieving styles. In addition, this study explored how the observed behaviors of these female leaders of large state universities compared with the traits associated with connective leadership in the research literature.

The researcher used interviews, observation, and artifact collection as methods to construct the cases and address the research questions. The study used a semi-structured interview protocol. Observation was used to check data against data collected through other sources—interviews and artifacts. Document and artifact analysis was used for triangulation of data.

Categories relevant to the study were created that focus on answering the research questions. In addition, profiles of the three participating presidents were created and a cross case analysis performed. Eight themes clearly emerged in the cross case analysis: collaboration, decisions, mentors, competition, people, goals, money, and time.

In answering the research questions, the researcher first discovered that collaborative achieving and power achieving were in evidence most often in the profiled presidents. Second, the

daily leadership experiences of female presidents of large state universities are varied and differ from day to day. Third, the presidents in this study accomplished their work because they have energy and commitment and a lot of help from other people. Fourth, the presidents in this study all described their achieving style as collaborative. Fifth, the achieving styles of the participants in the study do not amount to connective leadership according to the research literature.

In relationship to the research literature, the presidents of this study confirmed some of the findings in the literature and disproved others. Future studies on leaders' achieving styles should grow in number of cases as well as diversity of participants and methodologies.