

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS AND LEADERSHIP STYLES: THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO WOMEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTS

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Abstract

In 2005, according to the American Association of Community College (AACC) and the National Institute of Leadership Development, women signify 259 community college presidents nationally. Hockaday and Puyear (2000), Weisman and Vaughan (2002) reported in 2002 that more women held presidencies at community colleges when compared to other types of higher education institutions. The purpose of this study was to identify the leadership styles and significant events identified by the female community college presidents. The research questions driving this study are, What are the significant events that led to women becoming community college presidents? What are the preferred leadership styles demonstrated by women community college presidents? The Gregorc Style Delineator™ (Gregorc, 1982) was used to determine the styles of women community college presidents relating to leadership. The participant information sheet was used to obtain demographic information (race, public/private institution, rural/urban, union/non-union, size of student population) and the significant events that influenced the participant to become a community college president. Descriptive statistics were used to address the preferred leadership styles. Contingency tables described the value obtained from the Gregorc Style Delineator™ (Gregorc, 1982). Two research questions guided this study and were interpreted using various research methods. Results from this study reflect that Concrete Random is the preferred leadership style of the participants. Furthermore, this research suggests that women community college presidents are multitaskers, visionaries, and motivators who inspire those working with them to achieve all goals set for the institution. These attributes and skills are displayed in Concrete Random and Concrete Sequential styles. Moreover, it was identified that significant events positively impacted the female president's pursuit of a presidency. The results of the study may serve as a guide to a community college engaged in a search for a president and provide direction for future leadership development opportunities.

Keywords: *community college, women, president, leadership styles, significant events*