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ABSTRACT

A study of appointments of academic administrators in higher education is discussed. Its goals were: to identify the success rate of women relative to the proportion of their representation in higher education; to identify and characterize any emerging alternative career pathways in colleges and universities; to compare the success rate for position types of internal candidates with external candidates; and to determine if the hiring procedures reflect changing policies. In this study, 1,610 administrative positions were categorized according to type of position, type of institution, and sources of appointee. Results indicate that hiring committees review candidates' papers in search of credential rather than competence, and this is a disadvantage for anyone who has not had the accumulated time-in-line experience. Data indicate there has been no significant change in the percent of successful female candidates for employment in mainline administration over the past decade, though there is evidence that females are increasingly successful in entering higher education administration via alternative routes. Administrative mobility through accrued responsibility is an emerging phenomenon within higher education. Females are particularly successful with the process among private institutions of higher education. The implications of this practice for professionals attempting to enter higher education administration through alternative routes is less than positive. Tables are included. Contains 23 references. (Author/SM)

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AN ANALYSIS OF APPOINTMENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS

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AN ANALYSIS OF APPOINTMENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS:

Reflections of Administrative and Organizational Structures

Abstract

University and college administration has been a target area for affirmative action efforts for fifteen years. Although increased female employment in mainline administration has been a goal, the data indicate that there has been no significant change in the percent of successful female candidates for such positions over the past decade. There is, however, evidence that females are increasingly successful in entering higher education administration through alternative routes. Administrative mobility through accrued responsibility is an emerging phenomenon within higher education. Females are particularly successful with the process among private institutions of higher education.

AN ANALYSIS OF APPOINTMENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS

Introduction

While it seems clear that major administrative appointments are made as a result of true national searches, many announcements of position vacancies may be mechanisms to fulfill the requirements of affirmative action policies. The possibility that the qualifications stated in job advertisements are framed to suit the individual whom the university has identified for the position, cannot be ignored (Findley and Crosson, 1981). Furthermore, there is evidence that members of screening committees tend to search for candidates who are similar to themselves (Williams and Piper, 1988). Although, searches can be more a problem of attitude than of process, it must be recognized that attitudes reflect the institutional culture and the inherent loyalties and goals (Epstein, 1970). No longer is the task simply to increase access to leadership roles by minorities and women. It is becoming apparent that institutions must address the need to establish and maintain a pool of qualified candidates from these populations.

The purposes of this study of appointments of academic administrators in higher education are to: 1) identify the success rate of women relative to the proportion of their representation in higher education; 2) identify and characterize any emerging alternative career pathways in colleges and universities; 3) compare the success rate for position types of internal candidates with external candidates, specifically women in higher education administration in both private and public institutions; and 4) determine if the hiring procedures reflect changing policies.

Background to the Study

The 1972 Higher Education Guidelines required colleges and universities to insure that recruitment and hiring activities reflected affirmative action. The initial evidence indicated that higher education was responding to the 1972 guidelines through both policy and procedure. In the early 70's, a number of studies were conducted to determine if, indeed, the affirmative policy was being implemented. Shoemaker and McKeen (1975) suggest that employment practices in higher education changed and that colleges and universities established and implemented affirmative action policies. According to Marcus (1977), 60 percent of the institutions had developed search procedures consistent with affirmative action policies by 1975. During this period universities demonstrated progress in the hiring of women for administrative positions (Leob, et al, 1978). But, more recent studies suggest that there has been no substantial increase in the rate candidates from under represented populations for administrative positions in higher education are hired (Chronicle of Higher Education, 1982; Etaugh, 1985; Robbins & Kahn, 1985).

The formal structures of universities and colleges permit little career mobility through the hierarchical ladders of administration without traditional time-in-line experience. Traditional career mobility in higher education occurs via movement of persons through fixed positions, where each is expected to have held appointments with "increasing levels of responsibility." If institutions are to increase the hiring rate of candidates from the under represented populations under such conditions, it must be assumed that the available pool of candidates includes appropriately qualified women and minorities. However, a substantial pool of female candidates with the expected time-in-line experience does not

currently exist or it is so small that it is undetected in the analysis of fixed position in traditional administrative hierarchies (Dingerson et. al., 1985).

Reports that institutions of higher education are implementing affirmative action for administrative positions, despite a lack of experienced candidates, suggest that alternative mechanisms are being used. The loosely coupled organizational structure and unique culture of higher education (particularly private colleges and universities) allows considerable flexibility to change or implement innovative administrative structures (Weick, 1976). And, there is some evidence that new administrative positions are being established, outside normal or classical administrative structures. These alternative career routes, which bypass traditional time-in-line requirements, appear to take two basic forms.

The first approach is what Miner and Estler (1985) describe as the accrual mobility model. In this process the institution identifies an individual, assigns him/her a title (usually external to the classical hierarchy) and develops a position description such that new responsibilities can be assigned as his/her expertise grows. The position evolves over a period of time without being redefined or given a different title; hence the individual who holds the position accrues experience and expertise via a mechanism external to the classical administrative structure in higher education and the traditional search procedures. In this sense, the institution is fostering the development of qualified personnel using a mechanism that is not part of the hierarchical ladder of administration and which is external to the usual scrutiny of the faculty.

The second approach is more dependent on resources and internal flexibility to change administrative lines. In this case a new staff

position (assistant dean, assistant to the vice president, associate director, etc.) within the office of a classical hierarchical position is established. As the individual holding the position gains in experience, the position may be redefined, perhaps by the individual him/her self. In essence the position moves as it is changed, such as from an assistant vice president to an associate vice president. This may require a search but the internal candidate would be expected to have an advantage. Thus, the incumbent of the staff position has increased career mobility as the position is upgraded within the fixed hierarchy.

If higher education is using alternative career mobility pathways there should be an increase in the numbers of nontraditional administrative positions. Although the barriers to career mobility of women and minorities may be common to both private and public institutions, the flexibility to deal with the barriers and respond to needs are different (Menges & Exum, 1983). A difference found in the number of positions and the proportion of successful females between the two types institutions should serve as evidence of alternative career pathways.

Methodology

The Chronicle of Higher Education was used as the source of data for analyses. Both the "Bulletin Board" and the "Gazette" sections were used as indicators of hiring trends, position description changes, and processes by which colleges and universities fill upper level administrative positions. For the purposes of this study it was determined that reported appointments -- as provided in the Gazette section -- would be an indicator of the success rate of women in attaining administrative positions in higher education from a Directorship level through the college presidency.

The Gazette section of every other issue of the Chronicle for the year 1986 was used as the representative data sample. A data sheet was developed for coding all information in the announcement and for content analysis. Gender of the successful candidate was based on the name. To insure that the study did not over-emphasize the success rate of females, unisex names were classified as male. Sources of appointees were categorized three ways: 1) from a different college or university; 2) from within the college or university; or 3) from some other agency, such as a professional organization or a state department of education. Institutions listed in the announcement were classified as private or public.

Analyses included the determination of frequencies and cross-tabulation of positions to identify patterns. Chi square statistics were used to test the goodness-of-fit of the distribution for each of the different positions ($p < 0.01$). Frequency distribution for each position type was compared with the distribution of the total populations. Each position type was treated as a subpopulation drawn from the total population. Since the frequencies for all position announcements were known, this frequency was used to calculate expected frequencies for each category of each position type in each data set.

Results

A total of 1610 administrative positions were categorized according to type of position, type of institution, and sources of appointee (Table 1). The most frequently announced appointment was for directorships (28.1%), a position not traditionally included in studies of higher education administration. The position of dean ranked second in total number of announced appointments (20.4%). Sixty-four percent of these 328 positions were

filled by candidates external of the hiring institution. Of the positions filled from within, men were identified as the successful candidate nearly 72% of the time.

Table 1 - about here

The data indicated that the hiring of administrators as directors, deans, presidents, vice-presidents, and department chairpersons were more likely to be individuals recruited from outside the institution. Assistant and associate directors, deans, and vice-presidents were more likely to be promoted from within the organizational hierarchy.

It must be noted that the employment pattern of chairpersons, as reflected in announcements is significantly different from the overall population. A small percentage of all position changes of chairpersons in higher education were announced (97% from outside the institution) reflecting just the key appointments of leadership within a particular discipline. More specifically, of the 58 notices in the Gazette section, 82% of the announcements were made by institutions which, according to the Carnegie classification system, are either Research I or II Institutions. In the sample, there was but one female candidate promoted to a chair position from within an institution.

The category labeled "All Other" included 51 different titles ranging from coordinator to controller, as well as positions identified as "acting," and special assistants to various administrators. For these positions, successful candidates were as likely to come from within the institution as outside.

Table 2 - about here

The inference that candidates were expected to have time-in-line experience within the institution type was supported by the data in Table 2. Nearly 70% of all hiring was of candidates from similarly affiliated institutions.

Table 3 provided a summary of announced appointments and the origin of successful candidates for positions within public institutions. The Chi square analyses suggests that here, there was no common pattern. For all 849 announcements made by public institutions, males dominated as the preferred candidates. Women have a success rate of 17% and are most successful in attaining directorships (26% success rate). Their success in attaining an assistant or associate vice presidency (22.5%) was highest if they originated outside to the institution -- a situation directly opposite of men candidates. Only 5% of positions for assistant or associate vice presidents were external male candidates, whereas male candidates from within the institution stood a better chance of advancement (70% success rate).

Table 3 - About Here

If public colleges and universities had been using lower level administrative positions as entry points for women within their respective institutions, it would be expected that internal female candidates would have a higher success rate. Internal male candidates, however, had a success rate above the total average for the positions of assistant or

associate director, assistant or associate dean, and assistant or associate vice president.

Illustrated in Table 4, the appointment patterns in private institutions contrasted those of public institutions. The Chi Square calculations revealed that the success rates of women candidates for the positions of director and assistant or associate director were significantly higher than the total success rate for all positions in private institutions. For example, external female candidates for the position of director were the most successful of all categories. For the positions of chief executive officer, chairperson, and the collapsed category of "all other," women candidates were statistically less successful than men candidates.

Table 4 - About Here

Analyses of the overall success rate of women showed that women were relatively successful in securing job appointments among the four most frequently announced positions. Women candidates were more successful when applying for a position in private institutions but from outside the institution. In Table 5, the two categories (assistant/associate vice president and all other) reflected a hiring pattern of women significantly different from the total success rate. In this case public institutions appeared more responsive to female candidates.

Table 5 - About Here

Public institutions of higher education had a tendency to employ candidates with experience in public colleges and universities as shown in Table 6. Similarly, private institutions tended to hire candidates who had

experience in private colleges and universities. The "other" category from which successful candidates originated included business, professional associations, and government agencies.

Table 6 - About Here

Discussion and Conclusions

Positions of director, assistant director and associate director are frequently classified as "academic staff" (Sagaria, 1982). These are considered to be staff positions that are adjunct to primary line administration and generally intended to support the organizational chain of command. Although these positions are frequently included in affirmative action reports, a review of the research concerning management and administration of higher education yields little information concerning these types of positions. Since the kinds of responsibilities associated with "academic staff" positions are generally specific and task oriented, faculty may associate the positions more with specific projects or support staff rather than as academic administrative. It can be inferred that the faculty does not generally look to such positions as part of the traditionally accepted administrative hierarchy.

The research reported here supports the contention of Bartless and Barnes (1978, p. 38) that hiring committees review candidates' papers in search of "credential rather than competence." Position descriptions are frequently written using criteria based on expertise such as, "the successful candidate will have five years experience as dean or higher." Moore (1983) and Sagaria (1988) conclude that before individuals can be hired in a position, such as a dean, the candidate is expected to have held other

academic administrative positions. Similarly, successful candidates for administrative positions in student affairs must have had appropriate positions in student affairs (Dingerson et al 1980).

This is a disadvantage for anyone who has not had the appropriate time-in-line experience. Without time-in-line credentials, only nontraditional administrative positions which are defined in terms of specific competencies and/or responsibilities are reasonable options for women, minorities, and even male candidates with nontraditional administrative experience.

Nontraditional academic positions tend to evolve in response to the expertise of the individual holding the position (Miner & Estler, 1985); he/she accrues responsibility, skills, and/or knowledge and exhibits performance which become the qualities expected for the position. The result is that not only has the individual accrued mobility, but if he/she leaves the institution, the resulting vacancy is clearly defined in terms of competencies and characteristics exhibited by the exiting individual. Most academic administrative positions on the other hand, are the result of years of tradition culminating in a highly formalized job definition. These positions do not generally evolve to reflect the qualities of the individual holding the position; expectations for a replacement candidate remain described in terms of "credential rather than competence".

One would predict that positions developed through responsibility accrual would appear more frequently in more flexible organizational structures such as at many private institutions. Thus, it is not surprising that positions of director are most commonly found at private institutions (253), as compared with public institutions (198). The same is true for

the category assistant/associate director despite the fact that there is a larger number of public institutions.

Etaugh (1985) found that the majority of women presidents are in private, 4-year colleges and that the leadership in public institutions is proportionally under representative of females. The results reported here reaffirm the finding that women are considerably less successful in public institutions. Successful candidates for chief executive officer positions in both public and private institutions tend to be males drawn from outside the institution. However, it is important to note that if in public institutions time-in-line experience is valuable to career mobility, then the fact that females are gaining in the rate of promotion to vice-presidencies suggests that the pool for future chief executive officers is increasing. The higher rate of success of women in private institutions may be in large part due to the alternative pathways to administration more common in private institutions.

The search for candidates who reflect the idiosyncratic qualities of committee members could account for the relatively high success rate of internal candidates for assistant/associate directors, assistant/ associate deans and assistant/associate vice presidents. However, it should be noted that many of these positions are less than full-time and therefore the successful candidate must also fit a part-time faculty line. Such a constraint would limit the appeal of the position to many qualified external candidates. The best candidates may indeed be internal; making the positions part-time, however, may ensure that the candidate pool is not large.

It is not surprising that the category of "all other" announced position changes is filled from within the institution nearly half of the

time. Many of the positions are in the "Acting" or short-term category. Leinwand-Jones (1983) suggests that the internal appointments can be legitimate, such as emergency appointments due to a death or a late resignation. Under such conditions it is often necessary to appoint an individual who is already familiar with the nature and scope of the position. However, such appointments provide the individual valuable time-in-line experience. While most appointments go to males, institutions may well be short-sighted in not using these kinds of positions as a training ground for providing females (and minorities) with administrative experience.

Finally, public institutions tend to hire candidates from public institutions and private institutions hire professionals with experience in private institutions. Although there may be a legitimate explanation -- based on uniqueness of experiences -- it appears that the phenomenon is more a function of search and selection based on credentials rather than competence. Apparently a position announcement which includes a statement such as, "the successful candidate will have demonstrated commitment to the goals and objectives of a small liberal arts college" is translated into, "the candidate has an employment history in such institutions." Under such operating assumptions expertise is not a primary criterion in the review of applications (Bartlett & Barnes, 1978).

In the private institutions, females account for 35.7% of the successful applicants. These findings are congruent with reports that women appear to be more successful in becoming administrators at private institutions (Faulwell and Gordon, 1985). The ratio of 64.3 males to 35.7 females entering administrative positions in private institutions is identical to the ratio of 64.6 males to 35.4 females earning their doctorates in 1986 (National Research Council, 1988). However, female

candidates are appointed to 17.4% of the public institution positions, a rate lower than that of private institutions but a percentage which parallels the proportion (16.9%) of tenured, full professor women in public institutions (American Association of University Professors, 1988).

Women are having a higher rate of success in management and administrative positions which are outside the normal administrative hierarchy. The evidence concerning the evolution of new kinds of positions through accrued responsibility of individuals suggests that search and hiring committees have not yet recognized such positions. Although it is clear that such positions are potentially entry level opportunities for females pursuing careers in administration, there is little indication that the routes provide any better access to the policy-making positions in higher education. Sagaria (1988) suggests that the extent to which women are able to move between institutions differs as a function of their specialization.

Furthermore, it should not go unnoted that the average age of women receiving doctorates is estimated to range from 5.6 to 9.1 years older than males. If time-in-line criteria are used in public institutions, then an anticipated delay of up to 10 years can be expected as women gain experience equivalent to men and are competitive for administrative positions in terms of time-in-line requirements. Somehow a connection must be made between expertise gained through accrued responsibility and the traditional academic positions defined in terms of time-in-line. To limit the acceptability of viable candidates to only those with time-in-line experience is to prevent higher education from utilizing the talents and insights of potentially creative and innovative administrators.

Summary and Conclusions

The data and analyses suggest that despite good intentions little has changed in the hiring trends in higher education since Finlay and Grosson (1981) ~~illustrated the~~ under representation of women in leadership roles of higher education. This can in large part be attributed to the fact that hiring criteria emphasize accumulated time-in-line experience. There is continuing evidence that hiring practices emphasize the accumulation of intuitively defined appropriate experiences - without any evidence that the candidates' experiences were judged good or bad -- to the exclusion of expressed criteria of competence. The implications of this continuing practice for those professionals (women and men) attempting to enter higher education administration, particularly in public institutions, through alternative routes is less than positive.

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TABLE 1

APPOINTMENT AND SOURCES OF APPOINTEE: ALL INSTITUTIONS

Position	From Without		From Within		Total N	Total %	Chi Square
	N	%	N	%			
Director	301	67	150	33	451	28	0.886
Public	158	35	40	9			
Private	143	32	110	24			
Dean	211	64	117	36	328	20	0.978
Public	125	38	41	13			
Private	86	26	76	23			
Vice Pres.	127	64	70	36	197	12	1.934
Public	76	39	36	18			
Private	51	26	34	17			
Asst./Assoc. Directors	27	29	65	71	92	6	25.711*
Public	12	13	33	36			
Private	15	16	32	35			
Asst./Assoc. Deans	29	37	49	63	78	5	22.494*
Public	16	20	28	36			
Private	13	17	21	27			
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	56	80	14	20	70	4	11.513*
Public	35	5	9	13			
Private	21	3	5	7			
Chairperson	56	97	2	3	58	4	30.899*
Public	33	57	1	1.5			
Private	23	40	1	1.5			
Asst./Assoc. Vice President	18	36	31	64	49	3	8.373
Public	9	18	25	51			
Private	9	18	6	13			
All Other	150	52	137	48	287	18	19.534*
Public	96	33	76	26			
Private	54	18	61	21			
Total	975	61	635	39	1610	100	
Public	560	35	289	18			
Private	415	26	346	21			

*Significant at
the 0.01 level

TABLE 2

SUMMARY OF ORIGIN OF SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES BY INSTITUTION

Hiring Institution	Number of Announcements	Previous Affiliation in % Public	Private	Other
Public	849	69.13	14.63	16.24
Private	761	12.30	68.83	18.87

TABLE 3

APPOINTMENT AND SOURCES OF APPOINTEE: PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

Position (Gender)	From Without		From Within		Total N	Total %	Chi Square
	N	%	N	%			
Director	158	80	40	20	198	23	29.629*
(Male)	(118)	(60)	(27)	(14)			
(Female)	(40)	(20)	(13)	(6)			
Dean	125	75	41	25	166	20	18.630*
(Male)	(111)	(61)	(30)	(27)			
(Female)	(14)	(8)	(11)	(7)			
Vice Pres.	76	68	36	32	112	14	6.920
(Male)	(68)	(61)	(35)	(31)			
(Female)	(8)	(7)	(1)	(1)			
Asst./Assoc. Directors	12	27	33	73	45	5	36.208*
(Male)	(6)	(13)	(32)	(71)			
(Female)	(6)	(13)	(1)	(1)			
Asst./Assoc. Deans	16	36	28	64	44	5	17.500*
(Male)	(12)	(27)	(25)	(57)			
(Female)	(4)	(9)	(3)	(7)			
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	35	80	9	20	44	5	3.988
(Male)	(29)	(66)	(8)	(18)			
(Female)	(6)	(14)	(1)	(0.5)			
Chairperson	33	97	1	3	34	4	18.800*
(Male)	(30)	(88)	(0)	(0)			
(Female)	(3)	(9)	(1)	(0.5)			
Asst./Assoc. Vice Pres.	9	26	25	74	34	4	39.250*
(Male)	(1)	(0.5)	(24)	(70)			
(Female)	(8)	(22)	(1)	(0.5)			
All Other	96	56	76	44	172	20	9.232
(Male)	(75)	(44)	(70)	(41)			
(Female)	(21)	(12)	(6)	(3)			
Total	560	66	289	34	849	100	
(Male)	(450)	(53)	(251)	(30)			
(Female)	(110)	(13)	(38)	(4)			

*Significant at
the 0.01 level

TABLE 4

APPOINTMENT AND ORIGINS OF APPOINTEES: PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

Position (Gender)	From Without		From Within		Total N	Total %	Chi Square
	N	%	N	%			
Director (Male)	143 (67)	57 (26)	110 (61)	43 (24)	253	33	20.324*
(Female)	(76)	(30)	(49)	(19)			
Dean (Male)	86 (51)	53 (31)	76 (54)	47 (33)	162	22	0.914
(Female)	(35)	(22)	(22)	(14)			
Vice Pres. (Male)	51 (33)	60 (39)	34 (22)	40 (26)	85	11	1.585
(Female)	(18)	(21)	(12)	(14)			
Asst./Assoc. Directors (Male)	15 (3)	32 (6)	32 (22)	68 (47)	47	7	16.820*
(Female)	(12)	(26)	(10)	(21)			
Asst./Assoc. Deans (Male)	13 (8)	38 (24)	21 (12)	62 (35)	34	4	5.219
(Female)	(5)	(15)	(9)	(26)			
Chief Executive Officer (CEO) (Male)	21 (17)	81 (65)	5 (3)	19 (12)	26	3	11.436*
(Female)	(4)	(15)	(2)	(8)			
Chairperson (Male)	23 (18)	96 (75)	1 (1)	4 (4)	24	3	17.129*
(Female)	(5)	(21)	(0)	(0)			
Asst./Assoc. Vice President (Male)	9 (8)	60 (53)	6 (4)	40 (27)	15	2	3.333
(Female)	(1)	(13)	(2)	(13)			
All Other (Male)	54 (52)	47 (45)	61 (53)	53 (46)	115	15	38.522*
(Female)	(2)	(2)	(8)	(7)			
Total (Male)	415 (257)	55 (34)	346 (232)	45 (30)	761	100	
(Female)	(158)	(21)	(114)	(15)			

*Significant at
the 0.01 level

TABLE 5

SUMMARY OF FEMALE APPOINTMENTS

Position Institution type	From Without		From Within		Total N	Total %	Chi Square
	N	%	N	%			
Director	116	65	62	35	178	42	
Public	(40)	(22)	(13)	(7)			
Private	(76)	(43)	(49)	(28)			2.575
Dean	49	60	33	40	82	20	
Public	(14)	(17)	(11)	(13)			
Private	(35)	(43)	(22)	(27)			5.155
Vice Pres.	26	67	13	33	39	9	
Public	(8)	(21)	(1)	(2)			
Private	(18)	(46)	(12)	(31)			2.333
Asst./Assoc. Directors	18	62	11	38	29	7	
Public	(6)	(21)	(1)	(3)			
Private	(12)	(41)	(10)	(34)			2.428
Asst./Assoc. Deans	9	43	12	57	21	5	
Public	(4)	(19)	(3)	(14)			
Private	(5)	(24)	(9)	(43)			3.325
C.E.O.	10	77	3	23			
Public	(6)	(46)	(1)	(8)	13	3	
Private	(4)	(31)	(2)	(15)			4.200
Chairperson	8	88	1	11	9	2	
Public	(3)	(33)	(1)	(11)			
Private	(5)	(55)	(0)	(0)			3.833
Asst./Assoc. Vice Pres.	9	75	3	25	12	3	
Public	(8)	(67)	(1)	(8)			
Private	(1)	(8)	(2)	(17)			11.867*
All Other	23	62	14	38	37	9	
Public	(21)	(57)	(6)	(16)			
Private	(2)	(5)	(8)	(22)			25.786*
Total	268	64	152	36	420	100	
Public	(110)	(26)	(38)	(9)			
Private	(158)	(38)	(114)	(27)			

*Significant at
the 0.01 level

TABLE 6

SUMMARY OF ORIGIN OF SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES BY GENDER

Type of Institution	Number of Announcements	% Male	% Female
Public	849	82.57	17.43
Private	761	64.26	35.74