PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO FEMALE ADVANCEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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The University of Southern Mississippi

PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO FEMALE ADVANCEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

by

Wanda Kay Naylor

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Studies Office
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Approved:

August 2007
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by

Wanda Kay Naylor

Abstract of a Dissertation
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ABSTRACT
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by Wanda Kay Naylor
August 2007

This study examined the experiences of male and female administrators in four comprehensive universities in Mississippi. Specifically, this study researched the perceptions of male and female administrators about barriers that impact the career advancement of females into high level administrative positions.

Three broad conclusions were reached in this study. First, findings revealed significant differences between genders in their perceptions of barriers to female mobility in the hierarchy of higher education institutions. Second, it revealed that despite the existence of national studies and legal efforts to combat gender inequity, females still are treated differently and advance less than their male counterparts. Third, this study confirmed that organizational structure and environment have the capacity to influence the behavior and experience of women. Therefore, organizational leaders can positively impact female numbers, position, and power in higher education by hiring based on qualifications and not gender.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My sincere appreciation goes to the many people who made valuable contributions to the success of this study. Special appreciation goes to the committee members, Dr. Willie Pierce, Dr. Wanda Maulding, Dr. J. T. Johnson, Dr. Debra Gentry, and Dr. Terrell Tisdale. Each deserves the highest compliments for giving of their time and expertise to this study.

Special appreciation is extended to the committee chair, Dr. Willie Pierce, for stepping in, unselfishly, to keep me on schedule for the completion of this study. Thanks are extended to Dr. Wanda Maulding for her leadership and guidance, not only for this project but throughout my doctoral studies. A special debt of thanks is given to a highly talented statistician, Dr. J. T. Johnson, for his patience, wisdom, expertise, and sense of humor. Gratitude is also due Dr. Debra Gentry for her constant encouragement and advice on this study. Thanks are also extended to Dr. Terrell Tisdale. This writer has been fortunate to have someone of his distinguished caliber to serve on her committee.

A special tribute is due Dr. Billie J. Herrin for use of her instrument and to the administrators who participated in this project, for without them this study would not have been possible.

My heartfelt thanks are given to my family: husband, Henry Naylor; children, Earl and Kelly; and sister, Sandra Faye Hodges, for their constant flow of love, encouragement, and support. The most sincere thanks to Henry for always being there, knowing the right thing to say at the right time.
Last, though first, I thank God for His unconditional love, for giving me hope and for placing special people in my life to guide me to this new beginning.
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Despite the abundance of literature and efforts made by universities to address
gender inequality, women are still faced with career advancement disparities (Fogg, 2003;
Inglehart, Norris, & Welzel, 2002; Kanter, 2006). Bailyn (2003) said that most of the
literature is put on the shelf with no real solutions and that the apparent focus on “gender-
neutral” treatment of males and females—a concept that ignores the life experiences and
diversity of women—only perpetuates the hiring of males in upper-echelon positions.

Literature reveals that women are less likely than men to hold high level
administrative positions (Bowker, Hinkle, & Worner, 1983; Herrin, 1992; Levin, 1995).
Herrin (1992) added that this course did not change until the 1960s. Because of the effort
of the women’s movement, females were again on an upward trend. According to Perez
(1990), it is difficult for females to move into high-level positions such as deans or
department chairs when they start out working in fields such as nursing and student
personnel services or when they accept positions as “assistants to.” Of even greater
concern is the literature suggesting that the lack of female career advancement in the
workplace has to do with gender and not qualifications (Brooks, 1997; Ezrati, 1983).

When businesses or organizations deny women advancement opportunities
because of gender, they are losing the valuable resources that women bring to an
organization. The diversity of gender and race not only benefits the institution but serves
as role models for students (Bogart, 1989; Grover, 1992).

Two prestigious reports noted by Kaplan and Tinsley (1989), (a) the National
Commission on the Role and Future of State Colleges and Universities, and (b) the
American Council on Education’s Commission on National Challenges in Higher
Education, acknowledged that there are barriers that impede women administrators’ career advancement. Also, the federal government of the United States of America is among the influential voices that embrace the need to improve the mobility of women in high level positions. A recommendation from the 1995 Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, a government initiative to study barriers to the advancement of women, emphasized that progress has been made over the past 30 years to make the American Dream of opportunity fair and equitable for all. However, there is still work to be done to adequately address gender inequities (Gaskell & Willinsky, 1995). This “glass ceiling” refers to barriers that are oftentimes invisible, yet its impact hinders minorities and women from advancing to top level positions and reaching their full potential despite their qualifications or achievements. According to Gaskell and Willinsky, the glass ceiling initiative further acknowledges the injustice of the glass ceiling concept by saying that

The Glass Ceiling is a concept that betrays America’s most cherished principles. It is the unforeseen, yet unbreachable barrier that keeps minorities and females from rising to the upper rungs of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements. (p. 5)

The sexism associated with women only being able to progress to a defined place up the career ladder has a large impact on positions achievement by females; however, women remain in lower level positions, despite the circumstances, because of their love for their profession (Silverman, 2007). While some professions welcome diversity, said Silverman, others are less receptive.

Other researchers acknowledging the struggles of women in the workplace include King (1992) who reported that “many females are outstanding in their achievements and
are willing and able to take on the top jobs, but the number who are given such an opportunity is small” (p. 91). Grover (1992) added that “females seeking positions in institutions of higher education often meet undue prejudice because of their gender; yet there is a need in these educational institutions for strong, ethical female leaders” (p. 330).

Literature points to several factors that contribute to the absence of opportunity for female career advancement. These factors include recruitment and hiring practices, stereotyping, the degree of compatibility between career orientation and the demands of the position, structural barriers, organizational fit, and salary inequity (Kuyper, 1987; Sederbert & Mueller, 1992).

Salary inequity transcends and impacts all of the other barriers. It is many times the end result of the many forces that hinder the upward career movement of females (Amey & Twombly, 1992). Also, salary differences are easily measured. Amey and Twombly added that while women have made significant progress in obtaining high level positions, their salary continues to lag significantly behind their male counterparts.

A comparison of average faculty salary in Mississippi and the Southern Regional Education Institutions indicates disparity among educational institutions (SREB, 2006). This disparity has widened considerably since fiscal year 2000. In FY 2000, faculty members in the southern region made an average of $3,800 more than Mississippi faculty members. By FY 2006, the SREB estimated that they would make an average of $9,927. Likewise, many studies point to the growing concern, both internally and externally, about gaps in the salary of males and females (Blau & Ferber, 1991; Jarrell & Stanley, 2004).
The National Center for Education Statistics (1995) disclosed that women are paid on average less than men. The reason cited for this discrepancy is women’s acceptance of lower positions with lower pay in the same academic rank. The College and University Personnel Association (2006) reported national salary comparisons for 211 administrative positions at 1,345 colleges and universities. The findings indicated that females generally are paid less than their male counterparts. For example, deans of education experience a 7.5% difference in media income. An employee’s salary, said Kanter (1997), is based on the person’s status and not what he or she contributes to the organization. A person’s ranking in the corporate hierarchy decides how much he or she is compensated.

According to Hearn (1999), it is difficult to identify the exact cause for the discrepancy in salaries of males and females. Hearn did indicate that there is a salary difference among faculty; however, these differences may be attributed to a variety of factors, including:

1. Institutional control - where salaries are higher at private institutions

2. Field differences - a growing concern of inequality in salaries based on an individual’s field of study

3. Gender - where it is apparent that women earn less than men regardless of age or hours of work

4. Racial/ethnic - minority faculty members’ salaries remain low and they continue to be at a salary disadvantage

Research indicates that while the attitude of society and even the attitude of women themselves contributes to disparity in salary and treatment, the majority of the inequity between males and females is due to organizational structure (Kanter, 1977). Kanter added that numerous surveys in large corporations show that only a marginal
number of employees believe that traditional pay practices are fair. These private organizations continue to experience controversy regarding the large bonuses received by executives, especially when their companies are suffering financial losses. Additionally, Kanter noted the importance of understanding the difficulties associated with linking pay to a person’s contribution to an organization.

The most common approach to compensating employees has traditionally been associated with the “worth” of the position. The Society for Human Resource Management (2006) noted that job worth has to do with position and not gender. Equal pay for the same work is a fair and justifiable approach to employee compensation. Recognizing that employees are not compensated equally, Kanter (1997) acknowledged that positions that appear to be equal may have unequal power; therefore, numbers alone do not necessarily indicate gender biases.

In addition to salary, a large volume of literature suggests that the low representation of women in high level administrative positions is deeply rooted in attitudes of society regarding women’s roles and in the organizational structure of the workplace (Acker, 1984; Kanter, 1977; Millman & Kanter, 1992; Tannen, 1988). These and other barriers will be discussed in the review of literature.

**Historical Perspective**

*I*F* THERES NOTHIN*G* more powerful than an idea whose time has come, there is nothing more ubiquitously pervasive than an idea whose time won’t go. (*Janeway, 1971, p. 7*)

Solomon (1985) reminded that in the 1600s Colonial America dismissed the idea of women attaining, or even wanting, a college education. Women acquired specific knowledge only as it related to their particular duties. With the onset of the 17*th* century,
women began to think more about advanced education, but formal college class learning was still out of their reach (Blandin, 1909; Solomon, 1985). Limitations on their education reflected the traditional view of women’s place and ability; it was assumed that women had smaller brains and weaker minds than men. For many women, there seemed no reason for them to acquire a formal education (Blandin, 1909). It was not until the 1790s and the 1850s that a few females began to acquire advanced education in seminaries and colleges. These women quickly became known as the new American woman (Herrin, 1992).

Bold claims were made in 1791, for educational aspirations arose at that time out of vital developments in the transition from colonial to republic America. Social, economic, and intellectual changes between the 17th and 18th centuries not only fanned the political revolution but also introduced new questions about the position of women and their education (Blandin, 1909). One forward-thinking woman, Abigail Adams, not only suggested that the new code of laws make provisions for women to have some portion of the liberal education, but she declared that the new society should make a place for learned women (Solomon, 1985).

As women began to place pressure on the system to open up opportunities in the early 19th century, the beginning of the Common School coupled with the expansion of industry opened vast opportunities for men and a new profession for women (Herrin, 1992). As the need to train common culture through schooling increased, more and more women were recruited to fill new positions. The expansion of higher education for all people in the decades after the Civil War provided opportunity again for women to pressure the system to open opportunities to achieve parity with men in higher education. Because of the campaigns and lobbying on the part of women’s rights advocates, many
college presidents began opening their doors to women in the 1870s (Herrin, 1992). Colleges and universities began admitting women despite their strong belief that education was for men (Estes, 1989). Estes added that "Since the time of the American Revolution, women have been lobbying for equal opportunity in higher education and over time have managed to claim a place for themselves in the ivory tower" (p. 33).

With the onset of World War I, there continued to be a need for college-educated women to fill professional positions. With men going off to war, professional educated women were in great need. A milestone of women achieving faculty and administrative positions was realized. It was not long after these milestones were made in the 1920s that the women educators and administrators began to decline. The return of soldiers from World War II created little need for women in higher education. This trend did not change until the 1960s (Herrin, 1992). Estes (1989) added that by the 1960s there was another change which was caused by the women's movement; and the number of women was again on an upward trend. In 1963, 11% of all doctorates were women and by the mid-1980s, 32% of all doctorates were earned by women and more women entered the academic and administrative profession (Taylor, 1989).

Taylor (1989) stated that the number of college and university women faculty members was at an all-time high of the 20th century, reaching 28% in 1985-1986, but it still lagged behind the significant number of 36.4% in 1979-1980. Taylor said, too, that the number of women entering into the ranks of academic administration has been somewhat recent, and the numbers were still relatively insignificant.

In a 1989 study done to determine if there were any changes in filling academic administrative vacancies in higher education with external candidates, Johnson and Hutchinson (1990) found that the percentage of women who occupy administrative posts
had increased very little from the first study done in 1979. Even though women occupied just under 30% of all faculty positions in higher education in the United States, they still filled very few administrative posts. Johnson and Hutchinson said that although many academic institutions are following the national Executive Order 11246 established under President Lyndon Johnson's administration over 25 years ago (which forbade any agency contracting under the federal government to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin and ensuring all applicants' consideration for positions applied for based solely upon the applicant's qualifications), most institutions have made little apparent progress in increasing the number of women who hold positions in academic management.

Findings reported by Herrin (1992) indicated that if women administrators remain on the rise as they have in the past decade, by 2056 at least half of the chief executive officers will be women. In contrast, Herrin reported that pessimists predicted if female rates decline as they did between 1984 and 1987, it will take until the year 2100 to reach gender equality.

Theoretical Framework

Several theories have been used to explain the slow progression of females into high level administrative positions. While there are disagreements between theorists, they overwhelmingly agree that gender inequity in higher education is real and continues to exist. Evans (1995) revealed that "theory only has meaning provided it has a mutually informing relationship with practice" (p. 48). According to Rouse (1999), socialization, leadership, and organizational structure have a significant impact on the career advancement on females in higher education. Therefore, this study focused on three broad
theoretical frameworks: social, leadership, and structural/organizational, as they relate to
the administrative advancement of females in higher education.

*Socialization Theory*

What a culture accepts as either feminine or masculine is largely transmitted
through family, educational institutions, and society. Lindsay (1997) described
socialization as a lifelong process involving many agents through whom an individual
learns, develops potential, and becomes a functioning member of the society. A child’s
primary socialization occurs in the family where the necessary skills for social interaction,
such as language, are typically established. Continuing socialization in other institutions
determines the specific roles an individual will take on over the course of his or her life
(Lindsay, 1977). Sociologists have used the phrase "the social construction of gender" to
refer to the process by which gender norms are learned and a gendered identity
developed.

McManus (2001) stated that the socialization process is biological and that
genetics and hormones highly impact the cognitive and mental development of males and
females. These factors, according to McManus, can be grouped into three types: social
learning, cognitive-development, and social constraints. The transmission of the lessons
learned is implicit. Bem (1981) referred to this socialization process as "gender schema"
which states that once a child learns what is acceptable or not acceptable, a culture is
created which processes all information received (Bem, 1981). The cognitive concepts
developed and perceptions engulfed shape a person’s world (Lindsay, 1997). Roles are
defined based on social learning. In turn, expectations of others are based on how
individuals have been socialized.
Socialization by gender is significant in any study of gender equity. As far back as psychoanalyst Erik Erikson, the idea of gender specific role separation still echoes (Lindsay, 1997). The theory of gender socialization is related to interpersonal power. Lindsey added that the way power is perceived is influenced by how one was socialized.

Gender socialization plays an important role in many studies of women in positions of power.

Leadership Theory

There have been many different studies of leadership, and theorists agree generally on the qualities needed to be a leader. These qualities include empowering others, encouraging independent thinking, valuing the differences in leadership styles, and modeling the way for others (Bolman & Deal, 2003; Covey, 1990).

Traditional leadership theories were based on the assumption that women must emulate men’s administrative practices to be effective. Shakeshaft (1989) noted that male oriented models are developed and executed by males. Acker (1989) added that females often feel that they must adopt male standards in order to be successful. Traditional career development theory was based almost exclusively on studies of male subjects. Little attention was given to the complex development of females in terms of frequent shifts between home and work and the effects of their socialization on their attitudes, role expectations, and behaviors (Diamond, 1987). Literature further suggests that traditional theorists usually studied people who were already leaders. This exclusion of the lower class and females gave rise to the Great Man theory which suggests that leaders are born (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Other researchers on leadership focused on inherited characteristics or traits (McCall & Lombardo, 1983; Stogdill, 1974). Stogdill (1974)
focused on identifying the traits of a successful leader with the assumption that anyone who had these traits could be a successful leader.

In contrast, Bolman and Deal (2003) reported that other leadership theorists espoused that leaders can be made. These behavioral theorists, reported Bolman and Deal, believe that if leadership can be defined, it can be learned. It is the learned behavior, not inborn traits, that determines a successful leader.

*Structural/Organizational Theory*

Despite legislation and affirmative action, females still remain in low level administrative positions in junior and community colleges (Rouse, 1999). Rouse added that because of this continued disparity, further exploration of the impact of political and organizational impact on female administrators is needed. "The organizational structure and environment have the capacity to influence the behaviors and experiences of women within organizations, affecting female numbers, positions, and power" (p. 2).

Other theorists argued that the political structure of institutions hinders female advancement in higher education (Eisenberg, 2006; Kanter, 1977; Ross-Smith & Kornberger, 2004). The organization and its hierarchical structure, said Kanter (1977), shape and define careers and behaviors—based on gender. The workplace stereotypes differ among women and men in terms of motivation, power, and opportunity. Simply stated, men dominate the higher levels and women the lower, which aid in the perception that discrimination explains all other gender differences that exist (Leonard, 2002). Much of the literature on workplace barriers is centered on human behavior. Studies that have examined industries and occupations conclude that gender disparities occur in all societies and that differential treatment is based on sex-based employee positions. The organizational structure and environment have a direct impact on gender inequities in the
workplace (Kanter, 1977; Shakeshaft, 1989). This division of gender roles suggests that male tasks are more valued than female responsibilities. Repeated inequities discourage females from pursuing high level administrative positions and have a direct effect on their representation, position, and power in the job market (Kanter, 1977; Keller, 1992).

Eisenberg (2006) suggested that to bridge the gap between gender inequality, educational institutions must value the diversity by welcoming the differences that women bring to the table. To accomplish this end result, institutions must be willing to evaluate and reform processes, policies, and organizational politics. In contrast, Shmidtlein (1999) suggested that in order to improve their success up the career ladder, females must embrace the politics of human relations and begin to set up mentoring relationships. Also, women administrators must be willing to play the "power" games in order to make significant career advancements, taking proactive measures to become a part of the establishment, recognizing that rightly or wrongly, career mobility is grounded in the political processes of organizations.

Bowker, Hinkle, and Worner (1983) encouraged further research to identify why females continue to occupy the majority of the lower level administrative positions. The continued study of experiences and situations faced by women in higher education is needed to validate past literature and provide new and current data on the advancement of women in higher education. Also, according to Rosser (2005), reproducing studies allows for benchmarking and monitoring issues over time. This study builds upon the literature regarding the perceptions of men and women about the advancement of females in high level positions in institutions of higher learning.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to:
1. Identify contributors to the career progression of women administrators in colleges and universities.

2. Determine whether barriers experienced by women impede their career development.

3. Identify the differences in perception of men and women about career development progression of women in higher education.

Research Questions

1. What are the barriers to women achieving top level administrative positions in higher education institutions as perceived by female administrators at four Mississippi comprehensive universities?

2. What are the barriers to women in achieving top level administrative positions in higher education institutions as perceived by male administrators at four Mississippi comprehensive universities?

3. Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of females and males regarding barriers that impact female career development at four Mississippi comprehensive universities?

Delimitations

This study was limited by the following conditions:

1. This study was limited to the four comprehensive universities in the state of Mississippi.

2. Only 4-year public universities were included in this study.

3. This study did not survey attitudes and perceptions of administrators toward themselves.
4. This study was limited to the findings from the administrators responding to this questionnaire only.

Assumptions

Two assumptions underlie this study:

1. The respondents gave truthful responses.

2. Administrators at the four comprehensive universities surveyed had similar job responsibilities.

Definition of Major Terms

_Academic administrators_ - positions that hold the rank of president, provost, vice-president, associate vice-president, assistant vice-president, dean, associate dean, assistant dean, or department chair.

_Non-academic administrators_ - positions that hold the rank of president, provost, vice-president, associate vice-president, assistant vice-president, dean, associate dean, assistant dean, or department head.

_Barriers_ - factors that keep women from advancing to high level positions.

_Perceptions_ - intuition with no validity.

_Equity_ - treating males and females equally based on qualification.

_Higher education_ - colleges and universities that provide post-secondary education.

Justification

Being an effective manager has persistently been associated with being male. This stereotype is a major hurdle to the advancement of women. Schein (2001) said that such a male-oriented viewpoint suggests that, all else being equal, males are more qualified for leadership positions than females.
Despite the literature written and the national focus on gender disparity in career opportunities, women still remain in the lower level positions of the administrative make-up of America's colleges and universities. While all circumstances that hinder females from moving into high level positions are not gender related, Shavlik and Touchton (1988) suggested that the majority of equities is contributed to gender. Other reasons that could contribute to the gender gap encompass choice of discipline and the flexibility of moving into higher positions. While quantity of work is also identified as a hindrance to female advancement, Fogg (2003) suggested that the focus should be on quality, not quantity. Additionally, Fogg reported that women should alert themselves to the many situations that they may be confronted with as they move up the career ladder. Some challenges may be blatant and obviously discriminatory and others are less direct but more readily accepted by society (Springer & Pierson, 1988).

Diamond (1987) emphasized that there are many challenges that restrict females from positions of power and influence. While the number of women students has increased dramatically in colleges and universities since the 1960s, the employment of women has not kept the same pace and lags significantly behind their male counterparts. Marginal gains continue to exist for women. Progress made by women in educational institutions is primarily in mid-level management positions. These lower level potions are dominated by women in what Moses (1989) referred to as the three A's: assistant to, associate to, and acting as.

The increase in leadership roles of women in higher education does not alter research findings that there remains only nominal increase in the number of women filling top positions (Alpert, 1989; Etaugh, 1984; Lomperis, 1990). Therefore, it seems
appropriate and necessary to re-examine the status of women in higher education to
determine how much progress, if any, has been made.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of the literature indicated an overall consensus that barriers do exist for females in the workforce and that these barriers have an adverse impact of females getting progressive administrative positions in higher education.

This chapter focuses on the factors that underpin gender inequity. First, it will focus on the socialization of women and its impact on the status of women in higher education. Second, the leadership styles of men and women will be explored; and third, the career path of women in higher education will be examined. The fourth area will examine specific barriers and conflicts that hinder female career development, and the fifth focus will be on the impact that educational institutions can have on gender equity.

Gender Socialization and Stereotypical Perceptions of Women

*Any area of sociology, when dominated by men, will be defined in masculine ways and thus limited in scope and understanding. Feminism provides a perspective from which certain serious flaws in the sociological view of reality are evident or certainly justified.* (Ferree, 1977, p. 256)

While it is clear that there are biological differences between males and females, literature suggests that personality and behavioral differences are socialized early in life. Nature takes care of the biological differences, said Millman and Kanter (1992), whereas nurturing from significant others impacts one’s personality and behavior.

Parents and society are the primary influences of what children perceive as feminine or masculine. Girls learn their roles and values through dialogue and observed behaviors of their mothers and boys imitate the actions of their fathers. In the absence of parents, children learn appropriate gender roles by imitating same-sex significant others.
in the family unit. These roles are internalized by children and used in dealing with
individuals of the same or opposite sex (Acker, 1984; Duberman, 1975).

Literature suggested that much of learned behavior occurs from infancy through
adolescence. During play time, the caregiver expects males to play aggressively, talk
loudly, be an independent thinker, and be competitive. Females are rewarded for being
soft spoken and quiet, being patient, and waiting for help. Also, females are encouraged
to not compete with boys (Duberman, 1975; Gilligan, 1982; Jones, 1986; Porat, 1985).
The overprotection of girls from competition and being submissive is behavior that
lingers into adulthood.

The values that parents instill in their children usually stem from the perceptions
of society. It is a cycle of learned behavior that trickles down from generation to
geneneration. Most cultures expect men to be more aggressive and females more nurturing.
To act differently than socially expected is looked upon negatively by society (Lakoff,
1975; Tannen, 1998; William & Best, 1990). Families, therefore, act upon what they hear
and see in their communities. The media also have a significant impact on the perceptions
of families regarding gender roles (Duberman, 1975). Literature raises concern about the
role school plays in socialization of students. It was reported by Biklin and Brannigan
(1980) that when administrators create boundaries of what is appropriate feminine and
masculine behaviors, they are in essence contributing to discrimination against girls,
whether overtly or covertly. For example, when males are encouraged to lead group
discussions and females are reprimanded for calling out answers, a sociocultural impact is
being made (Sadker & Sadker, 1988).

The impact of stereotypical behavior continues into adulthood, and the negative
social-culture conditions are reflected in the workplace. When females are placed in less
visible and "occupationally segregated" positions, their chance for career advancement is limited (Gutteridge & Otte, 1983).

Most educated people believe in equal opportunity and rewards based on performance, said Powell and Butterfield (1977); however, learned attitudes and perceptions influence their treatment of men and women. Males receive advancement based on perceived attributes such as effective leadership, intelligence, dominance, rationality and objectivity, implied competence, status, and authority whereas a female lack of advancement is hinged on stereotypes such as emotionality, nurturance, accommodation, conformity, and deference that implies less competence, lower status, and no authority (Powell, 1993; Powell & Butterfield, 1977; Schein, 1975). Gilligan (1982) supported literature that suggests that the inept personality and behavior of males should not be a deterrent to their career mobility. The way women view and experience the world is unique and beneficial to the effectiveness of an organization (Pounds, 1987).

Characteristics of Good Leadership—Men and Women

*For successful change, leaders must make "bold strokes." To help promote and sustain organization success, leaders must be bold in their actions.* (Kanter, Stein, & Jick, 1992, p. 492)

Getting things done through people is a key characteristics of a good leader. Effective leaders have the ability to bring people together to accomplish goals, empowering them to make independent decisions. Covey (1990) talked about independent and interdependent leaders. He reported that independent leaders make decisions for others whereas interdependent leaders choose to involve others in making decisions. It is this later type of empowerment that Covey also reported that good leaders
should champion with their employees. Collins (2001) added that it is in difficult and challenging times that effective leaders step up and show their capabilities.

As long as leaders exhibit the leadership qualities necessary to address the goals and objectives of the institutions, gender should not be a determining factor. Also, there should not be a preconceived expectation of how women or men should act. However, before an individual or organization’s management team can move toward understanding others, they must first understand their own leadership style and philosophy.

Bolman and Deal (2003) reported that Kurt Lewin, known for his description of leadership styles as either autocratic, democratic, or laissez-faire, advocated that leadership takes on different characteristics. Autocratic leaders seldom ask for input, they are very direct and telling. The democratic leader seeks input from everyone and seeks to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to provide input. Laissez-faire leaders look to the group to provide direction. This does not mean that they are not in charge; they allow the decisions to be shaped by the group. Bolman and Deal suggested a broader scope of leadership by looking at other management frameworks. In Bolman and Deal’s book *Reframing Organizations*, four frameworks of leadership are discussed: structural, human resources, political, and symbolic. In a structural framework, managers and leaders are placed into roles to get things done. They are clear and direct on what they want so that there is little room for confusion. People are the center of focus in a human resources framework. Taking care of the employees and their needs is the primary focus of this leader. Political leaders must deal with their power base, referred to as stakeholders, very carefully. They must always keep their focus on the goal and at all times treat the stakeholder with respect.
There is no right or wrong way to lead. Leaders must assess the situation and determine the most effective approach to a positive outcome of the goals and objectives or mission. Bolman and Deal (2003) reported that Hersey and Blanchard referred to this type of leadership style as a situational leadership model. They added that leaders have dominant traits that may indicate a particular style; however, they recognize that a given approach may not be effective in a given situation (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

Females aspiring to top level administrative positions in educational institutions have traditionally followed the advice of studies suggesting that they adopt the leadership style of men. However, they are still acquiring few administrative positions (Gill, 1997). Socialization of women and societal stereotypes make it difficult for women to advance to leadership positions (Amey & Twombly, 1992). Therefore, until females are placed into positions of leadership, recognized for their abilities, become role models, and move forward, their status will remain the same.

In the past, effective leadership was judged from a male perspective. Women had to exhibit male leadership styles and approaches to problem solving. It was not until recently, reported Curry (2000), that literature began to focus and compare men and women leadership styles. This change in focus is attributed to the increases in women leaders, added Curry. Research challenges the notion that females must possess masculine qualities in order to lead. Weedon (1987) agreed and stated that "the essential biological nature of women guarantees the inevitability that we should fulfill particular economic and social functions which may not be in our own interest" (p. 130).

Gender equity is even more complicated when leadership is associated with gender (Banks, 1995; Bass, 1990; Shakeshaft, 1987; Tannen, 1990). Some researchers indicated that leadership styles are similar in males and females, with few exceptions.
(Powell, 1990; Shimanoff & Jenkins, 1991; Bass, 1990; Nieva & Gutek, 1980) and others concluded that women and men have unique traits which cause them to lead differently (Gilligan, 1982; Rosener, 1990). Reports identified numerous differences between the leadership styles of males and females.

When asked to describe their own (gender) leadership styles, Rosener (1990) reported that men view their relationship with others as a stepping stone. In comparison, women described their leadership styles one of influencing others to reach a common goal. In a study on transformation leadership, Gillett-Karan (1999) found that both men and women community college presidents were effective leaders; however, they exhibited specific behavior differences. Findings indicated that women are more risk takers and genuinely care for the well being of others than their male counterparts. Additionally, the desire of women to include others in the decision-making processes—sharing power and open and honest communication—is reported (Gross & Task, 1976; Pearson, 1981; Rosener, 1990). The results of a study conducted by Jones (1987) indicated that male and female community college administrators display differences in behavior but not in overall leadership style.

Studies show that women are more effective as leaders. This advantage is due to early socialized behaviors that are more suited to the workplace. As reported by Edwards (2002), in 1990 Helegesen argued that women have an advantage in the role of leader. They are especially up to the responsibly because of their socialization. Women regularly engage in ways of being related to tasks and transactions that are more suited to the new corporate culture. Edwards reported findings from a 1989 study by Mintzberg relative to women:
1. They work at an unrelenting pace with no breaks in activities during the day.

2. Their days are characterized by interruptions, discontinuity, and fragmentation.

3. They spare little time for activities not directly related to their work.

4. They exhibit a preference for live action encounters.

5. They maintain a complex network of relationships with people outside their organizations.

6. They are immersed in the day-to-day need to keep the company going, and they lack time for reflection.

7. They have difficulty sharing information.

8. They identify themselves with their jobs.

By comparison, women are characterized by the following traits:

1. They work at a steady pace, but with small breaks scheduled throughout the day.

2. They do not view unscheduled tasks and encounters as interruptions.

3. They make time for activities not directly related to work.

4. They prefer live action encounters but schedule time to attend to the mail.

5. They maintain a complex network of relationships with people outside their organization.

6. They focus on the ecology of relationships.

7. They see their own identities as complex and multifaceted.

8. They schedule time for sharing information. (pp. 15-16)
Although they may exhibit the same behavior as leaders, research shows that males and females are treated differently. The outcome of the same behavioral responses is rated more positively for males than females (Butler & Geis, 1990; Nieva & Gutek, 1980; Seifert & Miller, 1988). Also, males are not judged as harshly as females when they fail to respond to the needs of others (Helgesen, 1991).

The fascination and perplexity associated with whether or not leadership is impacted by gender continues to be of interest to scholars. Because there are more women in leadership positions today than ever before, future researchers should be able to conduct a more indepth study of gender leadership styles.

Struggles Facing Women in Higher Education

When women are admitted into higher education, but advance only minimally, then institutions are not taking full advantage of the workforce they employ.

(Business and Professional Women, 1992, p. 55)

History shows that advancement of women in higher education has always been minimal and limited in scope. Grover (1992) claimed that when women seek positions in higher education institutions, they are often met with undue prejudices based on their gender. Many women administrators believe that the hurdles they face will not be overcome until a detailed examination of education's "glass ceiling" is studied.

In his article "For Women, Glass Ceiling Still an Issue," Trumbull (2007) concluded that gender discrimination in the workplace still exists despite decades of equal rights legislation. His study on the lawsuit against Wal-Mart revealed that 1.5 million women feel that they were treated differently than men on job promotions. While the case is currently under appeal, the attention it has generated adds to the interest in gender disparity in the workplace. Trumbull summed up the effect of discrimination by saying:
The issue (Discrimination) matters not just for women but the whole economy, because the underlying question is whether businesses are making the most productive use of the talents available. Gender discrimination represents a failure involving nearly half the workforce. (Trumbull, 2007, p. 1)

Women are aware of this disparity and use it to support their claim that females are placed in lower level positions than males and that the impact is fewer and lower level positions (Alpert, 1989; Lomperis, 1990; Menges & Exum, 1983). Literature provides numerous studies that support the assessment that accepting lower positions has a negative impact on the career advancement of women (Dryer, 1994; Ferber & Green, 1982). There does not appear to be a difference in gender of the choice of institutions attended by males and females. Also, Ferber and Green (1982) concluded that lower rank positions equate to lower salaries and fewer promotional opportunities. Ferber and Green also referred to a report by Sandler in 1984 which concluded that most studies on women report these findings:

1. Most women in higher education occupy middle and low level posts, which rarely lead to top academic positions;
2. When women are found in postsecondary institutions, they tend to be concentrated in those fields traditionally occupied by women (i.e., social work, nursing, support services);
3. The more prestigious the institution, the fewer women are present;
4. The highest percentage of women in top level positions are found at private women's colleges;
5. Women in higher education earn less than men despite comparable levels of training and education. (p. 72)
When the majority of women in the workplace are concentrated in lower ranked positions, the implications suggest that women do not have equal access to promotional opportunities in higher education (Cole, 1979; Lomperis, 1990; Menges & Exum, 1983).

Other reports regarding gender inequities suggested that the type college, private or public, also has a negative impact on the advancement of females to high level positions. According to Faulwell and Gordon (1985), the results of a 183 survey of members of the American Conference of Academic Deans indicated that there are more female administrators at small private educational institutions than males and that males dominate administrative jobs at public institutions. Their findings also indicated that there were no female administrators at institutions in excess of 15,000 students. Additionally, an analysis of the College and University Personnel Association’s data from 1978 to 1983 by Konrad and Pfeffer (1991) indicated that women and minorities are more likely to be hired as administrators in public rather than private institutions. These findings were reinforced with a study by Twale (1992) that found that because of the flexibility and organizational structure, private colleges and universities are more receptive and open to hiring female candidates. Conclusions from these studies strengthen literature which suggests that gender has an impact on the career advancement of women into upper level positions (Etaugh, 1984; Faulwell & Gordon, 1985; Ost & Twale, 1989). In contrast, findings from a study of administrators at predominately comprehensive institutions found that the type of institution did not have an adverse impact on the number of women hired. However, higher level positions were more often awarded to men.

There is little disagreement that most of the mid-level positions are held by women and that the higher administrative positions are held by men (Bogart, 1989). The area that creates dialogue is the type of positions held by women. Females tend to hold
positions that deal with women or minority issues. For example, Kaplan and Tinsley (1989) found that women tend to hold positions in areas such as human resources, affirmative action, and continuing education; whereas men hold positions as directors, chairs, and deans. Bogart (1989) added that the clustering of females in these type positions does not allow students the opportunity to interact with females at all levels. Also, institutions are not taking advantage of the resources that women bring to the workforce when restrictions are laced on their ability to enter executive positions just because of their gender. Reasons such as insufficient training and lack of education, for denial of female to upper level management, is no longer valid (Chamberlain, 1988; Tack & Patiu, 1992). One must look beyond the traditionally stated reasons such as insufficient training, lack of appropriate education level (a doctorate), and degree of competence, for all lack validity today (Chamberlain, 1988; Tack & Patiu, 1992).

Kanter (1977) suggested that the reason that institutions continue to hinder women in acquiring top level administrative positions has to do with power. Clearly, power is a vast and complex subject, especially as it relates to the roles of males and females in educational institutions (Kanter, 1977). It is important that institutions be able to discern between the power struggle of its male and female employees, added Kanter (1977). Also, said Kanter, institutions should be cognizant that gender discrimination can result from power imbalance. Schein (1980) addressed the power struggle by saying that "any attempt at organization change threatens the power structure. As such, change will be overtly and covertly resisted by those who perceive an erosion of their power base" (p. 428). Therefore, it is the responsibility of the institution to ensure fair and equitable placement of males and females to executive positions (Kanter, 1977).
Barriers to Female Career Advancement

In literature and writings reviewed for this study, there was consensus that barriers exist which impede female advancement in high level administrative positions in higher education institutions. Women must overcome barriers, collectively referred to as "the glass ceiling," if they are to move into senior level positions (Winship & Amey, 1992; Morrison et al., 1987). Barriers can be both personal and organizational, said Kanter (1997); however, a good support system can help with stress associated with workplace inequities. Curry (2000) pointed out, however, that the glass ceiling can represent more than one stumbling block to the career advancement of women. Research indicated that common barriers to female advancement are gender perception, workplace biases and perceptions, organizational policies and procedures, hiring practices, lack of informal networks, and same-sex biases (Edwards, 2002; Herrin, 1992; Rouse, 1999).

*Workplace Biases and Perceptions*

It is not the intention of faculty and administrators to treat their colleagues differently based on race. Most times, said Sandler (1993), they inadvertently treat women differently than men. Nevertheless, this sends a message to women that they are valued less by their male peers. What may be considered small or insignificant by males could be taken quite seriously by females. These seemingly trivial responses convey the powerful messages to women that their male peers are not serious about the professional development of females. Other behaviors that undermine females are perceptions that women have low self-esteem, poor leadership skills, must be pampered, and are not willing to work long hours. These perceived inequities undermine the resources of women and damage their professional development. This behavior may also damage their contribution to institutions as a faculty member and role model for students. Sandler
added that women already stand out among their male peers because there are few females in administrative positions. This, in itself, causes females to receive greater scrutiny.

Research shows that there are behavior differences in male and female managers. Jones (1987) conducted a study on college administrators based on the theory of situational leadership. He sought to determine if his study would add to the widely held belief that the leadership styles of women make them inferior managers. The results of this study indicated that:

Although there may be differences in leaders behavior between individual male and female administrators, there are no statistically significant differences in their overall administrative effectiveness or their overall leadership. It was equally evident that female administrators did not have a significantly higher need for fostering interpersonal relationships than their male colleagues. Male administrators were not noted to be more task oriented or authoritative, in general, than their female counterparts. (p. 2)

Jones’s (1987) findings also noted that sex-role stereotyping still exists when assigning job responsibilities. Women continue to hold more positions in "people oriented" roles such as academic support and student services, while men continue to dominate "task oriented" positions such as deans, directors, and chairs. Jones’s study provided evidence to support traditional findings that men dominate administrative positions.
Organizational Policies and Practices

Gender inequality typically occurs in the workplace. When examining employer practices, literature suggests that organizational practices and employee actions affect the career advancement of males and females differently (Oppenheimer, 1970; Perrucci & Perrucci, 1970; Williams, 1979; Wolf & Fligstein, 1979). Recognizing that sex-based division of employees occurs in all societies, Shakeshaft (1989) stated that while task may change based on gender, history shows little change in women's movement into high administrative positions. This male dominance ideology, according to Shakeshaft, remains deeply rooted in societal values and workplace practices. The physical segregation of gender in the workplace, compounded with the cluster of females in lower "women's work" level positions, perpetuates the perception of discrimination (Baron & Bielby, 1984).

Research suggests that women many times find themselves in a win-lose situation. When females exhibit similar workplace behaviors as men, they are perceived as being overbearing (Shepard, 1997).

These perception differences between men and women are used by employers in making promotion decisions (Shepard, 1997). According to Shepard, when looking at employment characteristics, employers should look at: (a) work attitudes and habits, (b) interest and motivation, (c) temperament, and (d) aptitudes and knowledge-skills. Perception, especially those with discriminatory effects, does not belong in the workplace, said Shepard. Sex discrimination, pay equity, and undesirable and low status jobs are all noted as affecting the career advancement of women (Lorena, 1996). Minority women experience an even greater challenge with gender inequities. The racism-sexism experienced by this group is often referred to in terms of "multiple jeopardy" or "triple
jeopardy" (Benjamin, 1997; Chliwniak, 1997; Daniel, 1997; King, 1988; Lindsay, 1980).
This additional discriminatory burden makes the "glass ceiling" even more invisible and
fragile for women of color.

Literature indicates that work-place policies and procedures have an added
inequity impact on married women. A study by Ezrati (1983) revealed that married
academicians tend to be adversely impacted by policies related to nepotism, inbreeding,
leaves of absence, part-time employment, and child care provisions.

The hiring process itself presents challenges to women as they pursue high level
administrative positions. Obstacles such as non-job-related requirements and all-male
search committees are also cited as deterrents to women applying for positions. Warner
and DeFleur (1993) reported that the criteria for faculty and administrator selection are
based more on social activities and expectation than duties and responsibilities. All-male
search committees were also cited by Warner and DeFleur as influencing the outcome of
new hires and the advancement of seasoned females to positions of power. Male hiring
decisions are based on hiring candidates who are a "right fit" for the institution. The
outcome of these decisions is usually White males (Amey & Twombly, 1992).

Minorities and women of color face "double discrimination." Challenges facing
this racial and ethnic group make it even more difficult to determine the cause of
inequities that these women face. Therefore, institutions need to be twice as committed to
identifying, recruiting, and nurturing females (Caldwell-Colbert & Colbert, 1989; Sanders

Lack of Informal Networks

Lack of access to the "informal networks" has been noted as a barrier to the career
advancement of women in higher education. Relationships are very important to moving
up in an organization (Henning & Jardin, 1977). Females realize the importance of socializing with peers, such as eating lunch together and participating in activities at and outside of work. It is the access to peer groups that poses a challenge (Gupton & Slick, 1996). Socialization adds to the understanding of attitudes, customs, and habits of others. Although networks often consist of White males, it is this value system of the “majority” that gets the promotion opportunities (Simeone, 1987). Gupton and Slick (1996) added that when women are not included in networking, they have no voice in the informal discussions and decision making. Lack of networking, therefore, impacts performance and job advancement.

In a study conducted by Hubbard and Robinson (1994), over half the women administrators surveyed stated that mentoring was important to new professionals. They also stated that networking helped them get their current job. Women continue to be underrepresented in the highest level administrative positions. This shortage is not due to availability of females but to role and access dictated by top executives (Shakeshaft, 1989; Yewchuk, 1992). Literature suggests that women advance to mid-level positions, but the “glass ceiling” prevents them from advancing in large numbers to top level executive roles (Gutner, 2002).

Women are clearly at a disadvantage in the promotion process (Fogarty, Allen, & Walters, 1981; Johnsrud, 1991; Stage, 1990). Kanter (1977) suggested that this disadvantage could be based on an organization’s perception that women are not trustworthy. Also, Kanter noted that decision makers often hire people more like themselves and that males are more often hired than females when this approach is used.

Classifying and making decisions on gender is not new and the respect for gender difference rather than a quest to understand sexism should be the approach of the future.
(Gagnier, 1990; Keller, 1992). However, findings by Rusch and Marshall (1995) indicated that educational institutions are confronting the complexities of gender issues.

Educational Institutions as Change Agents

America’s educational system has, during the last two decades, provided unequaled opportunities for the career preparation of women. It is now that system’s obligation to widen its doors farther and welcome more women into its highest levels of Administration. The importance and visibility of educational institutions in their communities provide them an excellent opportunity to set an example for other organizations to follow. (Jones, 1987, p. 3)

State, local, and federal policies are a start, but they are not adequate or sufficient in addressing the inequities between men and women. In addition, despite the commitment of organizations like the Ford Foundation toward women’s advancement, literature still exists that suggests that male careers are valued over those of women (Haas, Hwang, & Russell, 2000).

In an effort to affect a difference in the mindset of hiring managers, organizations must first acknowledge that they help perpetuate workplace inequalities. The environment and structural characteristics of an organization impact how it deals with workplace issues such as gender and race (Kanter, 1977).

Literature suggests that providing sensitivity training sends a positive message to employees that the organization values and is committed to workplace equality. Employees oftentimes are not aware that their actions are considered discriminatory. Providing training to employees is a positive step toward helping them adjust to the stress associated with personal and organizational challenges (Bolman & Deal, 2003).
Change has always been a part of life; however, the forces of change appear to be more prevalent today—especially in the world of work. All companies must be prepared for on-going transformation in the workplace (Mason, 2006). If not, they run the risk of employee turnover and losing their competitive advantage in the business market and the value that women bring to the workplace. Because change will not stop, individuals must seek to control their reactions by learning to respond appropriately.

One effective way of aiding this process is to provide training to employees to help them understand and effectively deal with personal and workplace challenges (EAP, 2006). The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) (2006) supported this writer’s opinion that human resource leaders are uniquely positioned to champion change in their organization. Human resource professionals understand the business enough to be both proactive and reactive when necessary while enabling others in understanding the change process. SHRM acknowledged that human resource professionals provide support to all facets of the workplace which is an advantage in promoting shared decision making throughout the various departments. Before providing training or learning sessions, human resource leaders must make sure that they first understand the context of change within the organization, be aware of the management style of the company’s leadership team, and refresh their understanding of the change process (Bissell & Shirah, 2002).

Change is inevitable and occurs frequently, quickly, and sometimes unexpectedly. It can make people feel insecure, causing an unsettling feeling about what will happen or what is expected (EAP, 2006). This is a universal reaction; however, with support, change eventually becomes easier to accept (Bissell & Shirah, 2002). People vary widely in their openness and enthusiasm to a new approach. Beginning a new way of doing things is one of the most difficult tasks a person can undertake. Whether change is small
or large, it modifies an individual’s life. The degree of its impact is greatly influenced by how a person responds to situations and circumstances.

Many organizations do not enjoy a high success rate at adapting to change in their organizations. Collerette et al. (2003) attributed this low success in change to the organizational structure. Collerett et al. stated:

Our approach can be summed up in the following statement which, although simple, has many implications: it is up to the organization’s management to provide the necessary means for both line and supervisory staff to adapt to the change it is seeking to introduce. (p. 59)

Collerett et al. also provided an example of a study conducted in 2001 by Mourier and Smith that revealed that 75% of managers interviewed viewed their experiences with organizational change as less than successful. When faced with disappointing results, managers and supervisors must examine how employees view the change process in their organization (Kanter et al., 1992).

Oftentimes, when dealing with opposition to change, managers say that employees are resistant to change. Although this common explanation is generally accepted, not addressing the factors that impact employees adjusting to change could lead to a passive workforce (SHRM, 2006). A proactive approach is to help employees adapt to change. Instead of fighting resistance to the acceptance of policies and procedures, employers should set a program, including training seminars, to help their employees adapt to change (Bissell & Shirah, 2002). An employee’s understanding of his or her organization’s goals and strategic efforts builds support for impending change. Industry leaders must also educate employees on where they fit into the organization (Mason,
This is difficult for many companies because they have a controlling, noninclusive management.

When addressing change, leaders should not forget to keep into account that habits were acquired gradually and changing habits is bound to create stress. Whether the consequences are negative or positive, change lends itself to a stressful situation. Be patient and remember that small strides are good (EAP, 2006). Johnson (2002), in *Who Moved My Cheese*, used four mice to analyze how difficult it is for people to accept change. Through this short parable, a powerful message on how differently individuals deal with change was shared. Change is inevitable and will happen or, as Johnson puts it, "they keep moving the cheese." This book provides a simplistic but effective understanding of how employees react to change. It is the responsibility of the leadership in organizations to help their employees adapt to change in the workplace. As Johnson wrote, "An organization can only change when enough people in it change. Providing employees with detailed information is important when making structural changes in an organization" (Kanter, 1977, p. 233).

Another way to affect change in educational institutions is for women to get more involved in their own futures. Kaplan and Tinsley (1989) suggested the following ways that women can become more involved in higher education institutions: (a) strive to reach the top level of administrative positions; (b) become involved in gender equality concerns; (c) be a risk taker; and (d) respect the authority of the leadership in colleges and universities. It is also important that educational systems be responsive to gender inequities. According to Shavlik and Touchton (1988), reasons that support institutional involvement are because: (a) women have bright minds and talent needed in educational institutions; (b) leading the charge on gender equality is a positive measure for society to
emulate; and (c) educational institutions have the knowledge, intellect, and mindset to institute change processes. While there are no magic formulas and guarantees that change will occur, colleges and universities should step up to meet the challenges of gender disparity (Taylor, 1989). Kaplan and Tinsley (1989) added that to meet these challenges, institutions must value diversity and draw from both genders and all ethnic groups. Taylor (1989) added that a genuine commitment to increasing the number of females in high level positions will help with the career advancement of women.

Change is not easily accepted, and it does not occur without opposition. However, change requires more than a discussion. It requires new and alternative ideas and the encouragement of open and honest input from those affected and those with the authority to challenge the status quo (Levy & Merry, 1986).

It is important that if conditions that limit women’s advancement are to be overcome, the barriers which impede their advancement in higher education be specifically identified and examined and a specific action plan be put in place to affect a difference. With the professional skill set and minds of universities, who better to lead the efforts of gender equality than educational institutions?
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine barriers to women’s advancement in higher education as perceived by administrators at four universities in Mississippi. This chapter is organized in the following manner: (a) selection of respondents, (b) instrumentation, (c) data collection procedures, and (d) data analysis procedures.

Selection of Respondents

A questionnaire was mailed to all academic and nonacademic administrators (approximately 125) at the four comprehensive universities in Mississippi (Appendix A). Names of administrators were then selected based on the positions held: president, provost, associate provosts, vice president, deans, associate deans, division and department heads, and directors. All participants who held the selected positions were eligible to participate in this study.

Instrument

Herrin (1992) constructed the instrument that was used for this study. From a randomly selected population of 75 administrators, Herrin piloted the instrument to 50 administrators from six 4-year private and community colleges in Montana. Because of a disproportionate number of male and female administrators, 8 females and 42 males, a stratified sampling was used. Of the minor clarity suggestions made by the responding administrators, 28 (56%) were implemented.

Upon Herrin’s (1992) permission to use the survey (Appendix B), a questionnaire was mailed to selected participants. The survey consisted of four sections for a total of 52 questions:

Section one - demographic variables
Section two - how participants achieved their administrative position

Section three - identification of barriers encountered in reaching administrative goals

Section four - participants’ perception of barriers that impact females’ achievement of administrative goals.

Data Collection and Procedures

Herrin (1992) designed the survey instrument to be used for this study. Data were obtained through a self-administered questionnaire that was distributed to male and female administrators. A cover letter was included in the packet to explain the purpose of the study, how the instrument was to be used, and instructions for proper completion of the form (Appendix C).

Respondents were instructed to return both the questionnaire and the data form in a self-addressed, stamped envelope by May 13, 2007. The following weeks, e-mails and telephone calls were made thanking respondents for their participation and serving as a reminder for nonrespondents (Appendix D). Another packet was mailed to three respondents whose original instrument was misplaced. The final closing date for data collection was May 13, 2007.

To maintain accountability and privacy, each packet was assigned a code. This number was placed in the upper right corner of each instrument. As each packet was mailed, the code was placed on a list. Upon receipt of the returned instrument, code numbers were dropped from the list so that no respondents could be easily identified. At the end of the data collection period, all codes were destroyed.

Permission to collect data was obtained from the Human Subjects Committee at The University of Southern Mississippi (Appendix E).
Data Analysis

Data were compiled and analyzed using the SPSS version 13.0. The statistical procedure used to address research questions 1 and 2 (reflected by questions 17-32) was descriptive statistics (e.g., frequency and percentages). Research question 3 (reflected by questions 35-52) was analyzed using a two sample $t$ test. The level of significance used for all tests was .05.
CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to: (a) identify contributors to the career progression of women administrators in colleges and universities; (b) determine whether barriers experienced by women impede their career development; and (c) identify the differences in perceptions of men and women about the career development progression of women in higher education. Academic and nonacademic administrators from four comprehensive universities in the state of Mississippi were chosen to be surveyed. This chapter will discuss the findings from this survey. A copy of the instrument in included in Appendix A.

Population Characteristics

The population for this survey was gathered from the Human Resources Departments and the Web site directories of the four comprehensive universities in Mississippi. From a population of 900 administrators, a sample of 402 was randomly selected. Of the 402 instruments mailed, 12 surveys were returned as undeliverable, reducing the population to 390. Due to a mix-up with the postal service, 98 of the 111 surveys mailed to one university were returned. These returned surveys were not reported in this study as undeliverable. An e-mail was forwarded to all surveyed participants at this institution, with an electronic copy of the survey attached, explaining the circumstances and giving them the option of responding electronically. A total of 20 surveys were returned electronically, and 12 others were printed out and returned via mail.
A response rate of at least 41%—160 out of 390—resulted from the return of questionnaires received by the due date of May 13, 2007. Five surveys returned after the due date were not analyzed as part of this study.

Demographics

Of the 160 participants responding to the survey, 97 were male and 63 were female. Males have been in administrative positions for a slightly smaller period of time (mean 13.19), when compared to females (mean 14.30). The average age of male administrators is 53.97 with a low of 36 and a high of 72. The average age of female administrators is 51.94 with a low of 35 and a high of 80 (see Table 1).

The majority of male (59.8%) and female (49.2%) administrators are in the lower administrative level positions of department chair, division chair, director, or department head. In the highest level administrative positions of president, chancellor, provost, or vice president, females occupy 6.3% of these positions and males occupy 7.2%. At the associate or assistant vice president level, there is a 15.9% female to 8.2% male ratio. Deans are representative of 8.2% male and 14.3% females, and associate and assistant deans are 15.5% male and 11.1% female. Table 2 displays the job levels held by the incumbents.

Male administrators (90.7%) are married and held faculty positions (41.2%) immediately prior to their current position. In comparison, 60.3% of female administrators are married and held another administrative position prior to their current one (see Table 2).

Survey findings indicated that when entering an educational institution as an administrator, more males (47.4%) than females (38.1%) get the position. In contrast,
Table 1

*Years in Administration and Age of Participants*

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<td>Years in Administration</td>
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Table 2

*Frequencies and Percentages on Job Level, Marital Status, Prior Position, and Degree Completed*

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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>41.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President, Chancellor, Provost, VP</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assoc. or Asst. VP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assoc./Asst. Dean</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. Chair, Div. Chair, Director, Dept. Head</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>59.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>90.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prior Administrative Position</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>41.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Administrative</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination/Faculty and Admin.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Highest Degree Completed</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
when actively recruited or nominated, females (34.9%) are more apt to obtain the position than males (23.7%). The group most influential in helping administrators achieve their current positions were their administrative peers. Males indicated a 29.9% influence rate compared to a high of 42.9% by females. Both males (43.3%) and females (36.5%) indicated that their role models were male (see Table 3).

Data in Table 3 also indicate that the majority of the supervisors of university administrators are male. Male administrators have male supervisors (71.1%) and female administrators have male supervisors (55.1%).

Table 4 indicates that 29% of males were involved in professional networks or organizations prior to their administrative position in contrast to 44.4% of females. Survey results indicate that the influence of role models on entrance into administrative positions was higher for females (71.4%) than males (46.4%).

Results of Statistical Analysis

The first and second research questions, What are the barriers to women achieving top level administrative positions in higher education as perceived by female administrators at four Mississippi comprehensive universities? and What are the barriers to women in achieving top level administrative positions in higher education as perceived by females at four Mississippi comprehensive universities?, were analyzed using responses to items found in section three of the questionnaire. Results are reported using frequencies and percentages and supported by a chi square analysis.

Two factors, gender and tenure, indicated a significant difference in the perception of males and females about hindrances in achieving administrative goals. Using a Yes, No, and NA responses, women (24.2%), \(\chi^2(15, 2) = 10.55, p = .005\), said that gender
Table 3

**Frequencies and Percentages by Gender on Participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Rate</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current Supervisor</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sole Supvr. - Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>34.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sole Supvr. - Male</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>55.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Supvrs./Mostly Male</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Supvrs./Mostly Female</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Supvrs./Equal Male &amp; Female</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Method of Entry into Administration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied for Position</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointed to Position</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruited or Nominated</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>34.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Most Influential in Achieving Position</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Peers</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Models</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentors/Sponsors</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search Committee</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender of Role Model</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Model - Male</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Model - Female</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4

*Percentage of Participants by Gender on Network Involvement and Role Model Influence*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involved in Professional Network</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Model Influenced Entry into</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>53.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
hinders them from achieving their goals compared to men, who said that gender hindered them from reaching their goals. In contrast, regarding tenure, more men (9.4%), $\chi^2(9, 2) = 6.29, p = .043$, said that tenure hindered their progress in achieving administrative goals compared to women. Also of note, more females (28.6%) than males (14.4%) said that tenure was not applicable (see Table 5).

Although the chi square analysis ($p = .208$) indicates no significant difference, an examination of the data revealed that slightly more females (19.6%) than males (16.5%) feel that "significant others" hinder them in achieving their administrative goals. Other findings reported include: (a) women (15.9%) state that the opposite gender hinders administrative advancement compared to men (5.2%); (b) 9.5% of women reported that same gender supervisors hinder goal attainment compared to 6.2% of men; (c) more women (23.8%) say that lack of mobility hinders achievement of goals compared to males (16.5%); and (d) men (25.8%) reported that noncompetitive salary hinders them from attaining their goal compared to women (25.4%) (see Table 5).

Research question 3 asked, Is there a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of females and males regarding barriers that impact female career development at four Mississippi comprehensive universities? Respondents used a Likert-type scale to select one of the five responses that best described their perceptions toward questions 35-52. The five responses that the respondents could select were: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. An independent sample $t$ test was used to analyze these data. Results of this analysis revealed that many females find barriers inhibiting their progress up the career ladder. Listed below are the findings based on gender perceptions (see Table 6).
Table 5

*Factors that Hinder Progress in Achieving Further Administrative Goals*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. Others</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>67.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>71.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>85.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>71.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Background</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>78.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposite Gender</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>82.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same Gender in Supvr. Role</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>83.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aging Parent</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>80.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Terminal Degree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>74.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>75.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Stability of Department</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>78.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Mobility</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-competitive Salary</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>63.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand of Position</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>68.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Admin. Experience</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>83.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Leadership Training</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>88.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverse Attitudes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>83.5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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### Table 6

**Barriers Perceived by Faculty and Administrators**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>df</td>
<td>sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/as influential/M</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>-4.85</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/as influential/F</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>-3.03</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/training/rapid adv</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>.900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/advance rapidly/M</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>-3.56</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/advance rapidly/F</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biases do not exist</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>-3.82</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/perf as effect/M</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>.313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/perf as effect/F</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>-3.01</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similar position/role expectation</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>-3.10</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/F display gender specific admin style</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F possesses same leader character as M</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-1.93</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>.353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentors equal to rapid/higher position</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>.277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role demand same for m/f/similar jobs</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>-4.47</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adm. perform gender biased duties</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/more qualified/F</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>.684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/more qualified/M</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differ/appoint/gender</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differ/staff selection/gender</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>.233</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1 = SD; 5 = SA*
Gender Perceptions Indicating Significant Differences in Barriers

1. Women (mean 2.60) disagree that the role of females is perceived to be as influential as men (mean 1.75).

2. Women (mean 2.71) disagree that the role of males (mean 1.75) is perceived to be as influential as women.

3. Women (mean 3.87) disagree that females progress to higher levels more rapidly than males (mean 3.33).

4. Women (mean 2.39) agree that males (mean 2.94) progress to higher levels more rapidly than females.

5. Women (mean 3.26) disagree that biases against females do not exist compared to men (mean 2.56).

6. Women (mean 2.10) disagree that males (mean 1.71) perform administrative functions as effectively as females.

7. Women (mean 2.66) disagree that in comparable positions, males and females encounter similar role expectations compared to men (mean 2.11).

8. Women (mean 2.63) agree that female and male administrators are viewed as displaying gender specific characteristics in their leadership styles compared to men (mean 3.09).

9. Women (mean 2.75) disagree that role demands are the same for both males and females who hold comparable positions compared to men (mean 1.99).

10. Women (mean 3.23) disagree that administrators perform gender biased duties compared to men (mean 3.56).
11. Women (mean 3.85) agree that females are more qualified for administrative positions than males (mean 4.31).

12. Women (mean 2.92) agree that there is a difference in the level of administrative appointment by gender compared to men (3.39).

Six items did not yield statistically significant differences as perceived by male and female participants in this study (see Table 5).

*Gender Perceptions Indicating No Significant Difference in Barriers (Table 6)*

1. Women (mean 2.90) agree that females who attend leadership training progress to higher levels more rapidly than those who do not attend compared to men (mean 2.92).

2. Women (mean 1.51) agree that females perform administrative functions as effectively as men compared to men (1.62).

3. Women (mean 2.32) disagree that females possess the same administrative leadership characteristics as males (mean 2.17).

4. Women (mean 2.56) agree that if administrators had more mentors/sponsors, they would progress to higher administrative positions compared to men (mean 2.74).

5. Women (mean 4.44) disagree that males are more qualified for administrative jobs than females compared to males (mean 4.40).

6. Women (mean 3.15) agree that there is a difference in gender selection of staff or line positions compared to men (mean 3.38).

These findings quite closely follow the national trends discussed in the review of literature which indicated that there are significant barriers that hinder women from
reaching their administrative goals in higher education. The relationship of these findings with the literature will be discussed in Chapter V.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary
The purpose of this study was to determine the factors that influence the career development of females in higher education. This study investigated male and female administrators’ attitudes and perceptions toward the career advancement of female administrators in four comprehensive universities in Mississippi.

The literature overwhelmingly indicated that barriers still exist that impede the advancement of females in top level positions. Gaskell (1995) stated that “It is the unseen, yet unreachable, barrier that keeps minorities and females from rising to the upper rungs of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements” (p. 5). This study’s findings demonstrate that female administrators in higher education still face barriers that impede them from access to executive positions.

Bowker et al. (1983) and Levin (1995) reported that women are less likely than men to hold high level positions. Also, Moses (1989) said that it is difficult for women to move into higher positions when they are clustered in the assistant to, associate of, and acting as positions—referred to as the 3 A’s. This study’s findings also support the existing research which indicates that women are heavily concentrated in assistant to and associate positions.

This study indicates that the barriers most significant to the advancement of women in higher education were gender and tenure. According to Gutteridge and Otte (1983), when women are placed in less visible and "occupational segregated" positions, their chance of career advancement is limited. Women advance to mid-level positions,
but the glass ceiling prevents them from advancing to top level positions. Results of findings support the literature that says gender is a significant factor affecting the career development of women.

Tenure was also indicated as a significant barrier to females moving up in the hierarchy. The results further indicate that females are not in high level positions to take advantage of tenure opportunities. Literature suggests that hiring practices, organizational fit, and acceptance of females has a direct impact on their tenure and upward mobility (Kanter, 1977; Kuyper, 1987; Sederberg & Mueller, 1992). However, females must overcome the struggles of getting into positions before they can see tenure, which enhanced the chances of continued upward mobility (Kanter et al., 1992).

Findings indicate that the role of females is perceived as less influential as males. Literature on education supports this finding. Expectations of others are based on how individuals are socialized, said Lindsay (1997). McManus (2001) suggested that this perception is based on research that indicates that the socialization process is biological and that genetics and hormones impact the cognitive and mental development of females. Blandin (1909) noted that the limitation on education reflected the traditional view of women’s place and ability. It was assumed that women have smaller brains and weaker minds. Most cultures expect men to be more aggressive and females more nurturing. To act differently is looked upon negatively by society (Williams & Best, 1990). Media also have a significant impact on perceptions of roles (Duberman, 1975).

Survey data suggest that women agree that males progress to higher level positions more rapidly than female. Powell (1993) agreed with these findings and suggested that these advancement are based on perceived attitude, such as effective
leadership, intelligence, and men dominance. Gilligan (1982) added that personality and
behaviors should not deter career mobility, and Covey (1990) further added that as long
as leaders exhibit the leadership qualities necessary to address goals and objectives,
gender should not be a determining factor in career progression. It was the conclusion of
Fobbs (1988) that females are promoted more often in smaller steps while men are
promoted less often but make greater leaps. This is important because academic
institutions are characterized by higher positions in the hierarchy.

Findings indicated that there is a perception that administrators are viewed as
displaying gender specific characteristics in their leadership styles. Literature stated that
traditional leadership theories were based on the assumption that women must emulate
men’s administrative practices. According to Acker (1989), females often feel that they
must adopt male standards to be successful. However, Acker noted that it is the learned
behaviors, not inborn traits, that determine successful leaders.

This study’s findings indicated that women believe that the role demands are not
the same for males and females. Literature also indicated that male tasks are more valued
than female tasks. Kanter et al. (1992) and other scholars agreed that female
administrators experience conflict between the traditional roles of women and career
demands. However, they are willing to make adjustment to meet family needs (Touchton,
Shavlik, & Davis, 1993). Repeated inequities discourage females from pursuing high

Literature showed that women are more effective administrative leaders (Edwards,
2002). Edwards added that this advantage is due to early socialized behavior. Women
have an advantage. They work at an unrelenting pace and they immerse in the day-to-day
need to keep the company going (Helgesen, 1991). The findings from this study also indicate that women feel that they are more qualified for administrative positions than their male counterparts.

Participants in this study agreed that there is a difference in the level of administrative appointments by gender. The literature review also indicated that although they may exhibit the same behaviors as leaders, males are treated differently (Butler & Geis, 1990; Nieva & Gutek, 1980; Seifert & Miller, 1988). The outcome of the same behavioral response is rated more positively for males. Also, males are not judged as harshly when they fail to respond to the needs of others (Helgesen, 1991).

The findings that females who attend leadership training progress to higher levels more rapidly were not significant in this study. However, it is interesting to note that the literature agreed that factors such as insufficient training and lack of education for denial of females to upper level management is no longer valid (Chamberlain, 1988; Tack & Pattiu, 1992). The focus needs to be on power imbalance, said Kanter (1977). Kanter added that power is a complex issue, especially as it relates to the role of males and females in educational institutions. Institutions must foster change, said Schein (1980), and any attempt at organizational change threatens the power structure. As such, change will be resisted by those who perceive erosion in power. Therefore, it is the responsibility of institutions to ensure a fair and equitable place for males and females to move into executive positions (Kanter, 1997). Kanter added that this should begin with training. Bowker at al. (1983) further pointed out that women have had limited access to a mentoring relationship, which can have a negative impact on their career development. According to Bowers, this limited access may include the fact that there are limited roles
available for women and many women are opposed to serving as mentors because they are threatened by the notion that another female will ascend to the level they have attained.

Another barrier indicated from the study, although insignificant in this finding, is that informal networks have been noted as having an impact on the career advancement of women. Relationships are very important to moving up in the organization (Henning & Jardin, 1977). Females realized the importance of eating lunch together and participation in activities at and outside of work. It is the access to peer groups that proposed a challenge (Hubbard & Robinson, 1994). In addition, the good old boy system prevents females from knowing the important networks of informal socialization and politics behind the formal system (Kanter et al., 1992).

Conclusions

The objective of this study was to identify the perception of barriers to female advancements in higher education by female and male administrators. The following conclusions were drawn from the findings of this study:

1. Female roles are perceived to be less influential than males.
2. Females do not progress to higher levels as rapidly as males.
3. Biases against females exist.
4. Females perform administrative functions as effectively as males.
5. In comparable positions, males and females encounter different role expectations.
6. Gender specific characteristics are viewed as having an impact on leadership style.
7. The role demands for females are different than for men in comparable positions.

8. Females perform gender bias duties.

9. Females are perceived to be more qualified for administrative positions than males.

10. There is a difference in the level of administrative appointment by gender.

This study on barriers that impact female administrators' career advancement in Mississippi institutions of higher learning has demonstrated that organizational conditions have the potential of affecting the number of women in organizations, their positions, and, therefore, their power. The conclusion of this study supports Kanter's organizational theory based on the response of participants about barrier in their organizations. The experiences and perceptions of current administrators were clear, and the overall results were significant. By learning more about the perceptions of administrators in the colleges and universities, organizational leadership will take proactive efforts to bridge the gap in the under-representation of females.

Recommendations

At the highest level of higher education, females are clearly not representative of the population at large. This is not due to inadequate numbers of females available for the positions, but to variables in their career paths, including barriers and lack of appropriate support. Females get close to the top but few get to the highest level of the educational hierarchy.

The results of this study demonstrate that structural and organizational barriers of the organizations have the capacity to influence the career progression of female
administrators. Kanter’s organizational theory of human behavior was supported in this study, and the recommendations that follow are based upon this conceptual framework:

1. This study focused on comprehensive universities in Mississippi. Analysis comparing this study to other regions and small institutions might prove interesting. Private versus public institutions could also be included in such a study.

2. Race, sexual orientation, and disabilities were not included in this study. A survey to include these factors would be an insightful comparison.

3. A future study should be done on line managers and lay employees at universities to determine their perceptions of gender equity.

4. A qualitative research study should be completed to further examine the relationship of organizational/structural support for employee career advancement based on gender.

5. A study should be done that focuses narrowly and specifically on effective and fair human resource practices and their impact on career advancement.

6. A similar study should be conducted on the barriers and contributors to female administrators’ career progression by each administrative level.

7. Studies to examine minority female administrators in institutions of higher education are recommended.

8. Research that investigate salary differences in higher education based on gender would be useful.

9. Research is needed that explores how women who have achieved senior-level management positions overcome barriers.
10. Replication of this study should be made in 5 years to determine whether conditions have changes for females in Mississippi.
APPENDIX A

ATTITUDINAL SURVEY OF PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD WOMEN IN HIGHER ADMINISTRATION

SECTION 1: Identify your status by completing the following statements

Q-1. Present administrative level. (Circle number of your answer)

1. PRESIDENT, CHANCELLOR, PROVOST, VICE-PRESIDENT
2. ASSOCIATE OR ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT
3. DEAN
4. ASSOCIATE OR ASSISTANT DEAN
5. DEPARTMENT CHAIR, DIVISION CHAIR, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT HEAD

Q-2. Your present age (at last birthday): ________YEARS

Q-3 Your gender. (Circle number)

1. MALE
2. FEMALE

Q-4 Your present marital status. (Circle number)

1. MARRIED
2. SINGLE

Q-5 Position immediately prior to current administrative position. (Circle number—if other state position)

1. FACULTY
2. OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE
3. COMBINATION FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION
4. OTHER

Q-6 Years (counting present year) in administration. 

__________YEARS

Q-7 Highest degree completed. (Circle number)

1. DOCTORATE
2. SPECIALIST'S DEGREE
3. MASTER'S DEGREE
4. BACHELOR'S DEGREE

Q-8 Your current supervisor. (Circle number)
1. SOLE SUPERVISOR—FEMALE
2. SOLE SUPERVISOR—MALE
3. BOARD OF SUPERVISORS PREDOMINANTLY MALE
4. BOARD OF SUPERVISORS PREDOMINANTLY FEMALE
5. BOARD OF SUPERVISORS EQUAL MALE/FEMALE
6. OTHER

Q-9. Significant other’s occupation (if applicable) ____________________________

Q-10. The ultimate position to which you aspire ____________________________

Q-11. What is the next position available above your current position? ____________________________

Q-12. Identify your method of entry into administration.
   1. APPLIED FOR THE POSITION
   2. APPOINTED TO THE POSITION
   3. RECRUITED OR NOMINATED FOR THE POSITION
   4. OTHER ____________________________

Q-13 Persons most influential in achieving your administrative position. (Circle only one)
   1. ADMINISTRATIVE PEERS
   2. ROLE MODELS
   3. MENTORS/SPONSORS
   4. SEARCH COMMITTEE
   5. OTHER ____________________________
Q-14. Were you involved in an administration network through professional organizations, leadership training programs, or committees prior to attaining your first administrative position?

1. YES
2. NO

Q-15. Did you have a role model who influenced your entry into administration?

1. YES
2. NO

Q-16. Identify the gender of the role model.

1. MALE
2. FEMALE
3. NOT APPLICABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DETERMINANT</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>NOT APPLICABLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q-17. Significant others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q-18. Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q-19. Gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q-20. Age</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q-21. Ethnic Background</td>
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<td>Q-22. Person of opposite gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q-23. Person of same gender in supervisory/administrative role.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q-24. Aging parents (s)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q-25. Lack of terminal degree  YES  NO  N/A
Q-26. Tenure  YES  NO  N/A
Q-27. Financial stability of unit or department.  YES  NO  N/A
Q-28. Enrollment  YES  NO  N/A
Q-29. Lack of mobility  YES  NO  N/A
Q-30. Non-competitive salary  YES  NO  N/A
Q-31. Demands of position  YES  NO  N/A
Q-32. Lack of administrative experience  YES  NO  N/A
Q-33. Lack of leadership training programs and seminar  YES  NO  N/A
Q-34. Adverse attitudes about my role as an administrator  YES  NO  N/A
Q-35. The role of the female administrator is perceived to be as influential as the role of the male administrator at this institution.

1  2  3  4  5
SA  A  N  D  SD

Q-36. The role of the male administrator is perceived to be as influential as the role of the female at this institution.

SA  A  N  D  SD

Q-37. Female administrators who have attended leadership training programs progress to higher level administrative positions more rapidly than those who have not attended training programs.
Q-38. Female administrators progress to higher administrative levels more rapidly than males at this institution.

Q-39. Male administrators progress to higher administrative levels more rapidly than females at this institution.

Q-40. Biases against women in administration do NOT exist at this institution.

Q-41. Females perform administrative functions as effectively as males at this institution.

Q-42. Males perform administrative functions as effectively as females at this institution.

Q-43. Females and males in comparable administrative positions encounter similar role expectations by their peers.
Q-44. Females and male administrators at this institution are viewed as displaying
gender specific characteristics in their administrative style.

SA A N D SD

Q-45. Females possess the same administrative leadership characteristics as males at this
institution.

SA A N D SD

Q-46. If administrators had more mentors and sponsors, they would progress to higher
administrative positions more rapidly at this institution.

SA A N D SD

Q-47. Role demands are the same for both males and females who hold comparable
administrative positions at this institution.

SA A N D SD

Q-48. Administrators perform gender biased duties at this institution.

SA A N D SD

Q-49. In general, males are more qualified for administrative jobs than females.

SA A N D SD

Q-50. In general, females are more qualified for administrative jobs than males.

SA A N D SD
Q-51. There is a difference in the level of administrative appointment by gender at this institution.

SA A N D SD

Q-52. There is a difference in gender selection to staff or line position at this institution.

SA A N D SD

Thank you for your participation in this study. Your attitudes and perceptions are a valuable contribution to this research.

Please return your questionnaire by May 13, 2007 in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided.

Thank you.

Wanda Naylor
Educational Leadership and Research
The University of Southern Mississippi
Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39406
11553 West King Snake Court
Surprise, AZ 85374
April 5, 2007

Wanda K. Naylor
Doctoral Student
The University of Southern Mississippi
Department of Educational Leadership & Research

Dear Wanda:

After reading your letter and talking with you, Wanda, your request to use the survey instrument from my 1990-1991 doctoral dissertation is approved. As discussed, I would recommend a revision and update of the instrument prior to mailing. I would also suggest a pilot study and a broader sampling of administrators than just those in Mississippi.

I am pleased that you requested the use of the instrument and I would like to receive a copy of your updated and revised survey. Best wishes on the completion of your research and doctoral dissertation.

Sincerely,

Billie J. Herrin, EDD

Dr. Billie J. Herrin
Professor Emeritus, The University of Montana
APPENDIX C

LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

April 24, 2007

Name
Address

Dear :

I am a doctoral candidate at The University of Southern Mississippi, under the advisement of Dr. Willie Pierce, Department of Leadership and Research. For my dissertation topic, I have chosen to study barriers to female advancement in higher education as perceived by academic and non-academic administrators at four-year institutions.

As an administrator at The University of Southern Mississippi, you have been selected to participate in this study. The questionnaire you have received contains items on career patterns and factors influencing career growth. It will take you approximately ten minutes to complete the questionnaire. Please complete and return the enclosed questionnaire by May 13, 2007 in the envelope provided. Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at anytime; however your participation in this study will ensure that recent data on women in higher education is available to the community, practitioners, policy makers, and researchers.

Your preaddressed return envelope has an identification number for mailing purposes only. This will allow me to check your name off the mailing list once your questionnaire is returned. Your response, therefore, are confidential and will only be reported in aggregate form. If you are interested in the results of this study, or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 601-266-4052 or via e-mail at Wanda.Naylor@usm.edu.

This project has been reviewed by the Human Subjects Protection Committee which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject should be directed to the Institutional Review Board Office, Box 5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406, (601) 266-6820. Thank you in advance for your willingness to participate in this study.

Sincerely,

Wanda Naylor
The University of Southern Mississippi
Doctoral Candidate
Enclosures (3)
FOLLOW-UP E-MAILS TO PARTICIPANTS

--- Original Message ---
From: Wanda Naylor
To: Sent: Thursday, May 03, 2007 12:36 PM
Subject: Dissertation/Survey

Good afternoon,

Last week you were mailed a questionnaire seeking information on your perceptions on barriers to female advancement in higher education. As an administrator, your participation in this study is important to guarantee representative results.

If you have not returned your survey, please do so today. If you have already returned your questionnaire, please accept my sincere thanks. Also, if you did not receive the survey or misplaced it, please call 601-266-4052 or email me at wanda.naylor@usm.edu.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Wanda

Wanda Naylor
Department of Human Resources
The University of Southern Mississippi
118 College Drive, Box 5111
Hattiesburg, MS 39406
Phone - (601) 266-4052
Fax - (601) 266-4541
--- Original Message ---

From: Wanda Naylor
To: 
Cc: 
Sent: Thursday, May 03, 2007 6:31 PM
Subject: Copy of Survey Attached

Good evening,

Because the institution that I had not received any returned responses and because so many of you shared with me via email that you had not received my survey, I decided to call the campus postal service. In summary, a mix up in the mailing process was discovered. However, Mr. has so graciously agreed to assist and the surveys should reach you soon.

I have attached an electronic copy of the survey for anyone who would like to complete an online copy. Since the survey was designed as a mail-out, please highlight your responses. Also, please know, as indicated in my mailed cover letter, that your responses will remain confidential and data will only be reported in aggregate form. If you choose to complete the online survey, just discard the mailed copy.

If you are more comfortable waiting on the typeset mailed survey, do not hesitate to do so. Please note that returned surveys are requested by May 13, 2007.

Thank you so much for your understanding, patience and consideration of this request. I know this is a busy time for everyone. The survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete.

Again, thank you.

Wanda

Wanda Naylor
Department of Human Resources
The University of Southern Mississippi
118 College Drive, Box 5111
Hattiesburg, MS 39406
Phone - (601) 266-4052
Fax - (601) 266-4541
The University of Southern Mississippi
Institutional Review Board

HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION REVIEW COMMITTEE
NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Human Subjects Protection Review Committee in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

• The risks to subjects are minimized.
• The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
• The selection of subjects is equitable.
• Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
• Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
• Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
• Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
• Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
• If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months. Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 27040906
PROJECT TITLE: Barriers to Female Advancement in Higher Education
PROPOSED PROJECT DATES: 04/15/07 to 06/15/07
PROJECT TYPE: Dissertation or Thesis
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: Wanda K. Naylor
COLLEGE/DIVISION: College of Education & Psychology
DEPARTMENT: Educational Leadership & Research
FUNDING AGENCY: N/A
HSPRC COMMITTEE ACTION: Expedited Review Approval
PERIOD OF APPROVAL: 04/16/07 to 04/15/08

Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.
HSPRC Chair

4-11-07
Date
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Paper presented at the Learned Societies Conference of the Canadian Association for the Study of Women in Education. St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, June.


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