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THE FEW WHO SUCCEEDED:

WOMEN ADMINISTRATORS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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By

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THE FEW WHO SUCCEED:
WOMEN ADMINISTRATORS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES

BY

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Abstract

Women in senior administrative positions in colleges and universities are essential to women's development, an important goal in higher education institutions, because they provide role models to female students, faculty, and staff. The current percentage of women serving in presidential positions (21 percent nationally and 6 percent in Oklahoma) is low; studying the successful women will help open the doors for other women who are willing to accept the challenge of higher education leadership. This study explores women's development theory, leadership theories, and self-determination theory to explain successful female leadership. Current literature concerning female leadership indicates that the factors leading to women attaining senior administrative positions in colleges and universities are issues such as willingness to accept challenges, career opportunities, self-determination, recognition of leadership abilities by peers and self, and the internal motivation to have a positive impact on society.

This phenomenological study uses in-depth interviews with six women serving as senior administrators at higher education institutions to capture the essence of successful female leadership. A survey of the entire population of 39 presidents, provosts, and vice presidents of Oklahoma public institutions resulted in an 85 percent return rate, and gathered information concerning demographics, career tracks, career development, perspectives, leadership styles, and motivations.

Vignettes of the interview participants provide detailed description of each individual participant; survey data provide generalized descriptions. The various themes that emerged from the interviews and survey data were leadership perspective, leadership performance, motivation factors, and barriers. The process of women's development and

revelations of the data indicate that women excel as higher education administrators based on their internal motivation factors and dedication to their institution. The survey participants and interview participants provided valuable insight concerning female leadership, but women must pursue opportunities presented and find their own personal balance between family and career in order to enjoy career advancement.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction of the problem

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.

--Eleanor Roosevelt

Introduction

Role modeling is a form of education that is available to all people in all walks of life. The influence of role models is described by Bucher (1997) as “one of the most important pedagogical agents in the history of education” (p. 620). Leadership role models provide visionary lessons of success, lessons not taught in textbooks or lectures. When asked about leadership development, Jack Welch, who served as General Electric’s chief executive officer for 21 years, stated:

I am often asked if leaders are born or made. The answer, of course, is both. Some characteristics, like I.Q. and energy, seems to come with the package. On the other hand, you learn some leadership skills, like self-confidence, at your mother’s knee, and at school, in academics and sports. And you learn others at work—trying something, getting it wrong and learning from it, or getting it right and gaining the self-confidence to do it again, only better. (as cited in McGinn, 2005, p. 48)

Welch’s description suggests that leadership is both inherent and gained from life’s experiences. Leadership develops from innate ability mixed with absorption of a person’s environment from childhood through adulthood. The more varied a person’s environment, the more experiences they have from which to learn; therefore, a diversified

group of role models with representatives from both genders and from various cultures provide optimal learning opportunities.

Young children observe parents and siblings, their first role models, to help them develop behaviors such as speech and walking. As they mature, their world expands to include other role models from whom they can learn. By the time children enter grade school, middle school, and high school, they have a variety of male and female role models such as teachers, coaches, and administrators. The college environment provides a young person with their first taste of independence and the freedom to begin exploring career opportunities. Students spend a substantial amount of time with educators, making teachers and administrators some of the most influential mentors on college campuses. Upon entering college, however, the number of female role models drops because the majority of professors at colleges and universities are male. Even more alarming, the representation of women grows weaker in higher education leadership with only one out of every five university presidents being female (American Council on Education, 2002b). At a critical time in a young woman's life, she has few examples of successful female leadership. Increasing the number of women professors and administrators at colleges and universities will provide encouragement and mentoring opportunities for young women while improving higher education institutions through greater gender equity and diversified leadership styles.

Women administrators at higher education institutions are a minority. In 2001, the American Council on Education (ACE) gathered data on 2,594 public and private college presidents in the United States. The results of the survey, the most recent and comprehensive source of demographic data on college presidents in all sectors of higher

education, was released in *The American College President: 2002 Edition* (American Council on Education, 2002a). This extensive survey indicated that women hold 21 percent of university presidency posts in the United States. At two-year colleges, women represent 27 percent of the presidential seats, while at doctorate-granting institutions, only 13 percent. In Oklahoma, the state where this study is conducted, only 6 percent of the presidents are women (Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, 2005). Appendix F provides a list of institutions and the number of senior administrators at each institution. The following statistics provide a summary of the low representation of women in senior administration in Oklahoma's public institutions:

- There are 35 presidents at the 25 public institutions (many branch campuses have presidents) and 6% (2 of the 35) are female.
- There are 18 provosts and 44% (8 of the 18) are female.
- There are 116 vice presidents and 25% (29 of the 116) are female.
- Oklahoma has an overall female representation of 23 percent in the top three administrative positions of president, vice president, and provost.
- Five of Oklahoma's 25 (20%) public institutions have no females in the top three administrative positions.

Although the statistics above indicate low representation of females in Oklahoma and across the United States, a brief look at the past two decades indicate how much the percentages have increased and provide encouragement that gender equity in education has improved. Since 1986, when females represented only 9.5 percent of this elite group in United States colleges, the percentage has more than doubled to the current level of 21 percent. While this is an encouraging increase, the rate of growth has slowed in recent

years. ACE President David Ward states, “The good news in this new report on college presidents is that women and minorities hold more college and university presidencies today than ever before, but the bad news is a leveling off of this increased diversity” (American Council on Education, 2002b).

Education is not alone in the problem of small representation of women. The low percentage of female educational administrators is comparable with the low percentage of women leaders in other professions. *Business Week* (Thornton, 2004) reports 14 percent of managing directors are women in the corporate world’s large firms. In the medical field, women make up 20 percent of all doctors (Brand, 2005). In the current political arena, women hold 12 percent of the seats in the House of Representatives and Congress and 9 percent in the Senate (Center for the American Woman and Politics, 2005). Since career training begins on college campuses, more women serving as role models in higher education leadership will provide encouragement for female college students to seek leadership positions in the medical, legal, political, and corporate fields.

Diversification in the workplace has distinct advantages. For this reason, the United States’ legal system provides laws that encourage equal opportunity and representation of genders, races, and cultures at all levels of employment. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in employment situations based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Aimed more specifically at education, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination in all educational programs receiving federal financial assistance. Title IX includes discrimination against students as well as employment discrimination (Chamberlain, 1988). Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1991 created a 21-member panel called the Federal Glass Ceiling

Commission. The commission studied barriers to the advancement of minorities and women in corporations (U.S. Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995) and recommended ways to eliminate the glass ceiling. Despite legal support to promote gender equity, the number of women continues to lag behind the number of men holding leadership positions.

In a three-year average ending in 2001, women accounted for 68 percent of the student population on United States' college campuses (United State Census Bureau n.d.b). Female college students have a 66 percent graduation rate, compared to a 59 percent graduation rate for males (United States Department of Education, 2002). Three decades ago, women earned only 16 percent of all Ph.D.s in the United States. Today, U.S. women are earning more Ph.D.s than men. The National Science Foundation (cited in Wilson, 2004) reports 51 percent of doctoral degrees conferred at United States institutions were awarded to women in 2002. These figures prove that females pursue and obtain college degrees at a higher rate than men, yet they do not have the same positions and tenure as their male counterparts on college campuses (Wilson, 2004).

In addition to women filling few chief administrator posts at educational institutions, mid-level administrative positions and tenured faculty also have a low female population representation. Since a typical career path in higher education consists of advancing from professor to chair to dean to senior administrator (American Council on Education, 2002a; Glazer-Raymo, 1999; Walton & McDade, 2001) the lack of women in these positions impacts the topic of this study, women administrators in higher education. The women currently in positions such as professors and department chairs are the next prospects for senior administrative positions and stand to benefit from the data provided

in this study. A 2001 United States Department of Education report states that in 1992, females represented 39 percent of full-time instructional faculty members and only 14 percent of full professors (as cited by Christman, 2003). *The American College President: 2002 Edition* (American Council on Education, 2002a) states that women comprise 40 percent of all faculty and senior staff in colleges and universities, but prestigious institutions have fewer women. Women make up 48 percent of the professoriate at two-year colleges, 38 percent at baccalaureate-granting colleges, and only 28 percent at research institutions (Wilson, 2004). A 2003 survey released by the American Association of University Professors cites 22 percent of full professors are women (Fogg, 2003). Bain and Cummings (2000, p. 509) state, “Professors are the kings of academe, not the queens” and qualify the statement by pointing out that less than one in ten professors worldwide are female. Ann Springer, associate counsel for American Association of University Professors, states specific reasons why a faculty that is diverse in both gender and race is vital to today’s college students:

Having a diverse faculty is increasingly important today. We are in a global economy, an ever-shrinking world. It’s more important now to have faculty with a variety of experiences to engage students. A diverse faculty brings diverse points of view to the institution. A faculty that is diverse across gender and race benefits institutions because they relate to students differently, have different ways of research, and can be role models for students. Unless colleges and universities have faculty with a variety of skills, experiences and pedagogical approaches, they are going to find it harder and harder to maintain the American

educational system's reputation as one of the best, if not the best, in the world (as cited in Gater, 2005, p. 22-23).

Informal networking is a valuable tool for leaders in all fields, including educational administration. It gives leaders the opportunity to exchange information in a relaxed setting. An informal meeting over dinner between five provosts from elite research universities provides a good atmosphere for exchanging ideas and when all five of the provosts are women, the exchange of female leadership issues was rich enough to be reported by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (Lively, 2000). During the meeting, Judith McLaughlin, chair of the Harvard Seminar for New Presidents at Harvard University, made an important point about the growth of women leadership. Much of McLaughlin's research involves search committee formation and decision-making. In 20 years of research, she has seen advancement of women applicants and appointments due to "more women in the pipeline who have distinguished themselves, and also because more institutions have taken on women as presidents" (Lively, 2000, p. 33).

Role modeling is clearly an important factor in advancing female leadership. Madeline Albright, former secretary of state and U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, serves as a professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Policy. She states, "I was hired to be a role model because the school had been single-sex and then it went coed and they needed women professors" (Lipson, 2005). Albright is a strong advocate of female leadership and maintains that one of the most important factors is encouraging many, many women to get into the pipeline for leadership positions.

The rationale for studying the problem of few women administrators in higher education institutions has historical social, economic, and global components. A

resolution to the problem, low representation of females in higher education administration, offers tremendous benefit in the areas of diversification, leadership development, economics, teaching, and learning. The women currently serving as presidents, provosts, or vice presidents can help resolve the problem by passing on their expertise to other women who have ambition to attain a leadership position. Seeing more female role models in senior administrative positions will encourage a greater population of women to excel in higher education and all other disciplines.

The influence of women to the background of higher education has been quiet but phenomenal. Women have made important contributions to the United States' higher education system throughout history as the percentage of females in the system fluctuated. Low representation of women administrators in higher education has existed since the first generation of female college students was educated between 1860 and 1890. Although few in number, some of these alumnae demonstrated dedication to academics by serving at women's colleges as professors, deans, administrators and as professors at coed institutions (Gordon, 1997). During World War II, the number of male students and faculty members declined in higher education institutions. This provided an opportunity for women to take positions in the professoriate and administration in higher education (Harwarth, Maline, & DeBra, n.d.). With a large portion of the male population at war, women filled the roles and positions left vacated by the men. Becoming a college leader enabled them to prove personal capabilities as well as provide a valuable contribution to society. Following the end of World War II, men regained their positions that had been filled by women in their absence. Due to the birth of the baby boom generation and other economic and social reasons, women tended to have low

representation in the work force, including higher education positions, for many years. During the last several decades, the percentage of female college administrators has slowly increased, yet still lags far behind the 79 percent of male presidents, provosts, and chancellors reported by *The American Council on Education* (2002b). Chapter 2 of this document provides a complete look at the history of women in higher education institutions.

There are both teaching and learning implications for the pursuit of higher female representation in colleges and universities. Gender equity in higher education administration provides an array of effective leadership styles in colleges and gives students, faculty, and staff a variety of role models to follow. Researchers (Perrone, Zanardelli, Worthington, & Chartrand, 2002; Rose, 2004) have found that the majority of people select same-gender role models because they bridge the gap between the ideal and reality better than opposite sex role models. If an aspiring female leader never has the chance to see a woman in a leadership position, she may never develop the confidence and drive to reach her full potential. A young female college student seeing other females in leadership roles helps her form a positive mindset that she too can become successful in her own career. Providing hope that top leadership positions are equally attainable by both genders is an important vision for female college students because they are at a critical time in their life for setting goals and making decisions about their careers. Accomplished women serving as role models for others to follow can open the floodgates for more women to pursue leadership positions, helping them to see the position as something attainable rather than an obscure possibility. Learning from role

models such as a highly visible university president is the unique experience of a lesson learned outside the college classroom.

Gathering data for this study from the current population of women presidents, provosts, and vice presidents gave the administrators an opportunity to relay their wisdom to the next generation of female leaders. The administrators are now teaching to a small number of women at their institutions by role modeling, and this research study gave them an exceptional chance to teach to a larger population. Potential female leaders can integrate the experiences of the current leaders into their own career to help them achieve their goals. The current population of women administrators gained from their predecessor's experiences and welcomed the opportunity to return the favor to the women who will replace them. Stephen Covey (1989) described leadership as a process developing from dependence to independence to interdependence. The final paradigm, interdependence, fully develops when a person "combines their own efforts with the efforts of others to achieve their greatest success" (p. 49). This research study, in which current female administrators indirectly advised future female administrators, facilitates interdependence for both groups of women. The female senior administrators combine their experiences with the ambitions of other women to facilitate an expanding population of diverse, capable leaders for colleges and universities.

Although this study focuses on women administrators and does not present data on male administrators, a social view of the problem must take into account the differences in male and female leadership. The demographic profile of male and female high education administrators differs in several ways. A 2001 survey performed by the American Council on Education (2002a) reports that women presidents had spent an

average of 5.5 years in their current positions while their male counterparts had averaged 6.9 years. Women presidents averaged 58 years of age, while men averaged 57 years of age. Only 58.9 percent of female presidents were married, compared to 89.6 percent of male presidents. In addition to demographic variations, the male perspective is typically different from the female perspective due to the simple fact that men's and women's personalities and leadership styles differ. In the *Harvard Business Review*, Ludeman and Erlandson (2004) discussed male and female leadership styles and provided some valuable insight into the phenomenon they term "the alpha female." In describing female senior executives, they noted that, when compared to men, women:

- place more value on interpersonal relationships
- do not seek to dominate people and situations
- seek collaboration
- use positive motivation and avoid criticizing others
- avoid fear-driven cultures

Ludeman and Erlandson pointed out that society is less tolerant of anger or defensiveness in women than in men. Men leaders thrive on conflict, while females are typically much less comfortable with it. These differences in characteristics can portray women as weak leaders and the authors stated "a woman leader should be aware that her indirect style can engender distrust among certain kinds of men. What she calls diplomacy, he calls politics" (Ludeman & Erlandson, 2004, p. 61).

Media's portrayal of women leaders tends to emphasize the feminine aspects of the female subject rather than her accomplishments. The Home Section of the New York Times featured Judith Rodin, the first woman president of the University of

Pennsylvania, in a front-page story with her scholarly accomplishments listed at the end of the story. The article described her as having “a pert manner, bouncy determination, cover-girl smile, and designer clothes” (O’Neill, 1994, p. C1). Almost as an afterthought, the story ended with the mention of the funding of twenty grants and authoring of 203 academic articles and various books. Ruth Simmons, an African-American woman who became president of Smith College in 1995, was described by the news media as “elegantly dressed in a long, dark-green pleated skirt and matching jacket, with a double strand of pearls and small gold hoop earrings” (Rimer, 1995, p. B8). The *New York Times* article makes little reference to her accomplishments. Rather than describing the women by their outstanding accomplishments and administrative abilities, their gender, stylishness, and race seemed to be the media’s main concern.

Search committees, responsible for seeking suitable candidates to fill vacancies for university positions, have a tendency to view men and women candidates in a different light. An article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* quoted Elizabeth Lunbeck of Princeton University as saying, “women are sometimes seen as more careful and less willing to make big claims.” In other words, women are less likely than men to describe their accomplishments as original and exciting. Lunbeck relates that letters of recommendation written for women use descriptions such as “reliable, responsible, and meticulous,” while those written for men use stronger descriptions such as “brilliant and original.” Lending further support to the notion that search committees evaluate women applicants differently from men, Joan Williams, law professor and director of American University’s Program on WorkLife Law, says, “Search committees throw the book at

women and apply the rules rigidly for them, looking strictly at their accomplishments. For a male candidate, they look at his promise” (Wilson, 2004).

Serving five years as the only female academic dean at a large research university gave one woman first hand experience, which she described in a *NWSA Journal* article. She states some of items on her agenda, such as budget problems and recruiting more full-time faculty members, had common ground with her male counterparts. However, other agenda items differed. Goals she viewed as obvious and reasonable, the male deans considered unorthodox (Kolodny, 2000). She recalled an evening devoted to meeting with other academic deans at the university where she was the only female administrator among twelve men:

I stated that I wanted more family-friendly policies on campus, including childcare facilities and paid family-responsibility leaves. I explained my desire to develop innovative recruitment strategies in order to diversify the faculty and increase our percentages of women and minority faculty members across the departments and across the ranks. I wanted steps taken to see that incoming male and female faculty received substantially equivalent start-up packages of equipment and research funding. I talked about the need to review promotion and tenure procedures to ensure that they did not contain hidden obstacles to the advancement and success of women and minority faculty. When I finished, the dean seated next to me put down his wine glass, turned to me with a shocked expression. “You don’t really believe all that, do you?” he demanded (Kolodny, 2000, p. 139).

Kolodny's recollection of how her goals differed from the male deans makes an excellent point of how increased diversity brings a much broader view to leadership teams.

Gathering a large array of ideas and then eliminating those that are not feasible has advantages over a non-diverse leadership team suffering from tunnel vision and limiting their view to few options. Leadership teams diverse in gender and culture bring many perspectives to discussion tables and offer an array of options for important decisions.

Another reason college campuses need more female leaders is that the traditional role of motherhood has changed as more women pursue college degrees and careers. Today, 50 percent of all marriages end in divorce. In 1970, only 33 percent of marriages failed (United States Census Bureau, n.d.a). Whether it is due to divorce or a single woman choosing to become a mother, many more single-parent homes now exist. This change has brought about the need for women to join the ranks of executives and strive to climb the career ladder to leadership positions once occupied primarily by white males. Gender equity in leadership positions is dependent on women, many of whom are single mothers, having the confidence to seek and attain a leadership position if she so desires. A higher percentage of women in leadership roles on college campuses will help to stimulate that confidence by providing role models and mentors for all females. A domino effect occurs in the case of the single mother. The daughters and sons in single-parent homes will benefit by their mother's pursuit and attainment of a rewarding career and prompt them to set high standards for advancement in their own careers. This common scenario demonstrates the importance of young children having strong successful female role models pursuing and achieving leadership roles in all areas, including higher education. Educational institutions have a special responsibility,

however, because of their exposure to all disciplines in the initial stages of young professionals' education. For example, regardless of what career the single mother chooses to pursue, she will more than likely receive training on a college campus, building confidence and gathering ambition from female role models on that campus. Thus, women leaders in higher education institutions represent an important component for women's success.

Economic Aspect of the Problem

Gender bias in salaries exists in both the faculty level and administration. Because the common path to senior administrative positions tends to begin with a faculty position (American Council on Education, 2002a; Glazer-Raymo, 1999; Walton & McDade, 2001), faculty salaries, as well as administrative salaries, are an important point of discussion when viewing the economic aspect of gender inequity.

A 2003 survey performed by the American Association of University Professors and cited by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (Fogg, 2003; Wilson, 2004) found that male professors at doctoral institutions average \$5,687 more in annual salary than female professors at doctoral institutions average. Comparing the average salaries of male and female full professors at all comprehensive, doctoral, baccalaureate, and two-year colleges revealed that men earn \$9,913 more than their female peers do. This substantial difference in pay clearly indicates "gender bias is alive and well in academe" (Fogg, 2003). Women's choice of disciplines is partially at fault for some of the salary gap. Nursing and education, which are low-paying fields, have a larger percentage of women representatives than the higher-paying fields that men tend to choose such as science and engineering. Another reason that women's aggregate salaries are lower is women

professors in higher education institutions tend to focus on teaching rather than research, and research offers higher salaries (Wilson, 2004). However, the question remains whether teaching, rather than researching, is the women's choice or the institution's assignment. A 2001 gender-equity study at the University of Maine found that 199 of its 451 women professors were underpaid when compared with male counterparts. The institution could not explain the difference, but rectified the problem by giving women faculty raises that averaged \$2,000 per year until they achieved pay equity (Fogg, 2003). Although the University of Maine corrected the salary inequity, this situation documents a very recent incident of gender bias in salaries.

A comprehensive survey, conducted in 2003 by the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources and charted in *Women in Higher Education* (Administrative salaries, 2004), gives the hard facts of pay inequality in top administrative positions. The survey gathered data on 1,379 doctoral, comprehensive, baccalaureate, and two-year schools. In the 205 categories that listed jobs for both sexes, men earned more than women in 80 percent of the categories. The follow table lists the average salaries and pay gap for the top four positions:

Position	Male average salary	Female average salary	Difference	Gender earning highest salary
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	\$190,448	\$182,991	\$7,457	Male
Asst to CEO	\$91,322	\$73,059	\$18,263	Male
Exec VP	\$143,978	\$147,297	\$3,319	Female
Chief Academic Officer	\$135,924	\$133,088	\$2,936	Male

Only one category, executive vice president, had a higher average salary for females and it was only 2.2 percent higher than the male average salary for the position. The largest pay gap was in the category of assistant to the chief executive officer with males earning 25 percent more than females. Male chief executive officers earn 4.1 percent more than

female CEOs and male chief academic officers earn 2.1 percent more than their female counterparts earn.

Global View of the Problem

Low representation of female leaders is not limited to the United States. It is a global issue. A 1999 women's conference in Norway brought together 1600 participants for a meeting entitled "Women's Worlds 99: the Seventh International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women" (Bjorhovde, 1999). The objective of the conference was to share research on women and gender studies and explore the global state of female employees and female students. The result was a worldwide commitment to activism that included promoting women's roles in higher education. Another conference in Italy involving 29 European countries concluded with a commitment to create a more integrated system of post-secondary education, including women faculty and administrators enjoying a bigger role in higher education (Bollag, 1998). In a plea for gender equity in higher education and its impact on our global economy, Kolodny (2000) states

Unless women's access to higher education is discussed amid a larger conversation about hunger, literacy, land rights, the right to seek employment outside the home, child marriage, child labor, domestic violence, sexual harassment, and the reform of rape laws, that discussion will be of only limited utility to the vast majority of the world's women. (p. 134)

Placing gender equity in higher education in the same category as these other world concerns indicates the importance and degree of impact a solution could have on our world.

The United States sets a prestigious example as the most powerful higher education system in the world. A widely used global ranking by Shanghai Jiao Tong University (“The brains business,” 2005) indicates that 17 of the world’s top 20 universities are located in the United States. The ranking is based on indicators of academic and research performance. The indicators show that United States institutions “employ 70 percent of the world’s Nobel prize-winners, produce 30 percent of the world’s output of articles on science and engineering, and generate 44 percent of the most frequently cited articles” (p. 14). Colleges and universities in the United States have great influence throughout the world as exemplary institutions.

As citizens of one of the world’s most powerful countries, we sometimes forget the impact our role models have on citizens in other countries. If more women gain access to leadership positions around the globe, it can only help to discourage the barbaric treatment some women must endure as part of their culture’s traditions. In a world where information flows freely and rapidly, the women in countries where females are viewed as property are likely to observe the accomplishments of other women in the world. Subsequently, those women hindered by their country’s culture will feel compelled to seek a better life for themselves and their children. With United States being at the forefront of higher education institutions, a larger percentage of female collegiate leadership will encourage equal opportunity and diversity around the world.

Problem Statement

A diversified group of administrators and faculty is valuable to higher education institutions because it provides a wide variety of viewpoints, role models, and leadership styles. The low percentage of women in senior administrative positions in higher

education institutions accompanies a low percentage of women in the professoriate and indicates a need for more women to pursue both faculty and administrative positions to close the gender gap. Qualified women should be encouraged to seek leadership positions both for their own career and to benefit educational institutions. The women currently serving as senior administrators provided information, encouragement, and mentorship to other women through this study. Their experiences and perspectives explained their success. Their disclosure of motivations and the barriers that commonly prevent women from gaining access to leadership provide a rare glimpse of hindsight from a leader's point of view. Although not all women possess leadership qualities or ambitions, it is likely there is untapped female talent not currently utilized for higher education institutions' leadership roles. Utilizing this untapped talent is a vital step in higher education institutions reaching optimal performance. A balance of male and female leaders in higher education administration promises a greater variety of desirable leadership traits, a well-rounded leadership team, and exemplary role models for students, faculty, and staff.

Viewing the various aspects of the problem of few women higher education administrators does not yield a clear solution to the problem. However, studying the women who have attained a senior administrative position explains successful female leadership. Using the female presidents, vice presidents, and provosts who currently serve in our institutions for this study brought these successful women together as an informal organization to help other women. By sharing their experiences and perspectives, they provided an insight that is not available from any other source.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explain successful female leadership in higher education. The differences between male and female leadership styles discussed in Chapter Two, the literature review, are numerous and varied. The purpose of this study is not to define female leadership styles, but to study the essence of successful females who are leading Oklahoma colleges and universities. Investigating leadership styles are certainly a part of the essence, but gathering information concerning their tangible methods of conducting leadership, demographic data, educational backgrounds, career tracks, motivations, barriers, and their perspectives of leadership are also vital pieces of data for a study concerning successful leadership. Women who have leadership abilities and aspirations can use the information gained in this study to understand the role of female leadership and be better prepared to pursue leadership positions. Promoting a more diversified group of leaders and role models will benefit women, higher education institutions, students, and society.

Research Questions

Interviewing and surveying women who currently hold senior administrative positions of presidents, provosts, and vice presidents in Oklahoma's colleges and universities provided the data for this research study. The research questions in this study strive to examine the essence of women successfully filling leadership positions. Seeking answers to the following questions explained the qualities of the current female leadership in higher education institutions and the phenomenon of successful female leadership in colleges and universities.

1. What traits, backgrounds, and leadership styles are held and practiced by the women currently serving as senior administrators at colleges and universities?
2. What are women administrators' perspectives on successfully filling leadership roles at higher education institutions?
3. What factors motivate the women currently leading higher education institutions?
4. What barriers have female senior administrators at colleges and universities encountered and how have they overcome them?

Significance and Implications

The contribution of this study is an understanding of a female's success as a senior administrator in a college or university. Finding the answer to the research questions and exploring the data provided by the women who are currently serving as Oklahoma's higher education presidents, provosts, and vice presidents provide encouragement to other women who wish to pursue a senior administrative position. The women of past generations served as role models and gave advice to the women currently filling the top administrative posts (Bolton, 2000; Chamberlain, 1988; Lipson, 2005; Wootton, 2004). This study gave the current administrators a chance to provide the same support to the future generation of women who wish to follow in their career path. The contribution benefits current female administrators, aspiring administrators, and college students. If more leadership becomes available, colleges and universities will flourish and improve, creating a positive economic benefit. Men and women from all disciplines benefit from the study because findings concerning successful leadership transfer to other fields of study. Encouraging and promoting more women to pursue top administrative positions helps resolve the problem of low representation of women administrators in

higher education. Increasing gender equity and representation of women leaders improves higher education institutions and, therefore, makes them better equipped to meet the needs of society.

The implications of this study are the possible changes that can occur for women attempting to move up the career ladder in higher education institutions. By gaining an understanding of the traits and leadership qualities needed to attain desired career goals and enjoy success, women seeking administrative positions will be motivated to assess their own weaknesses and seek continuing professional education to improve them. Since the professorship and chief academic officer are common paths to senior administrative positions (American Council on Education, 2002a; Glazer-Raymo, 1999; Walton & McDade, 2001) and those positions require leadership qualities, this study can also bring about changes in women faculty and mid-level administrative positions. The implications from this study encourages a higher percentage of tenured female professors at colleges and universities since strong leadership qualities are important components of gaining tenure.

Assumptions

The following assumptions apply to this study:

- The participants were truthful as they revealed their traits, motivations, backgrounds, and perspectives of higher education leadership and the path they followed to their current position.
- The experiences and perspectives of the women administrators from Oklahoma institutions are similar to women at other institutions in the United States;

therefore, the results of this study are useful to aspiring women leaders throughout the United States by providing insight to successful female leadership.

Limitations

This study observed the phenomenon of successful women; the qualities and traits of failure were not observed. There was no attempt to measure or ascertain the information on the women who have attempted to gain positions of upper level administration and failed. It is possible these women have the same attributes as the ones in this study. In that case, the information provided by this study affirms their developing voice, a term coined by a group of researchers that means gaining confidence with emerging autonomy (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule 1986), and encourages them to persevere toward their goals. A second limitation was the difficulty of measuring luck or political influence, both of which are possible factors in advancement in higher education institutions. The interview questions attempted to gather the participants' perspective on the role luck played in their advancement because other studies (Helgesen, 1990; Kennedy, 2001) have indicated luck as a factor in leadership advancement. A third limitation was that the data was gathered in only one state. All types of public institutions in Oklahoma including comprehensive research, four-year, and two-year community colleges were studied. This limitation can be overcome by combining the results of this study with similar studies from other states, or comparing the types of institutions across states to see if similarities allow the findings and conclusions to transfer to institutions in other states.

Summary

Although the percentage of female presidents has doubled in the last two decades, a small representation of women in leadership positions still exists in United States' higher education institutions. The gender gap is slowly closing but statistics indicate the influx of women administrators is decreasing in the last several years (American Council on Education, 2002b). In order for gender equity to occur, the current population of female students, professors, and mid-level administrators need to prepare to pursue and accept leadership positions as they become vacant. Women who are qualified, willing to accept the challenge, and willing to walk through doors of opportunity that are opened to them should pursue and gain access to leadership positions. Providing more female role models in leadership roles at college campuses encourages female students in all disciplines to strive for high achievement in their own careers. This study of the experiences and perspectives of women in senior administrative positions benefits women pursuing leadership positions by providing information that enables and encourages them to achieve their goals. By paving the way for more women administrators, higher education institutions benefit by having a larger pool of prospects for administrative positions. The larger the pool of applicants, the more likely a suitable person will be chosen to fill a position. Improving colleges and universities provides economic benefits for the entire population of the United States. International benefits include providing a larger population of successful women as role models for women in lesser developed countries and providing encouragement for them to pursue a better lifestyle.

In 1965, *Harvard Business Review* polled its readers concerning attitudes about women leadership. The results indicated dismal expectations for female leaders. Twenty years later, *Harvard Business Review* polled readers again to compare the differences. Attitudes changed immensely in those two decades with both men's and women's attitudes becoming much more positive. One female respondent to the survey stated, "Women must keep knocking on the door. The women who are there now must keep the faith for those who will follow. It will be easier in the future" (Sutton & Moore, 1985, p. 63). This 1985 quote gives credit to the women leaders of 1965 who helped pave the way for aspiring female leaders. Role modeling and leadership development is an ongoing process that must replicate itself for future generations. Today, women leaders are more plentiful than in 1985 and have the potential to encourage other women. Communicating experiences through studies such as this one gives successful women the opportunity to mentor and role model a large population of women, continuing the evolution and positive trend of female leaders in higher education institutions.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Related Literature

Courage allows the successful woman to fail and learn powerful lessons from the failure so that in the end, she didn't fail at all.

--Maya Angelou, American poet

Introduction

In 1911, the small town of Shady Bend, Kansas, was host to a brutal attack on a young schoolteacher. The young woman attended college for two years and returned to her hometown to teach in a one-room school. The men in the town felt threatened by her strong, independent attitude and thought it their duty to put her in her place. They tarred and feathered her. The state legal system filed charges against the men directly involved in the attack, resulting in the court case *The State of Kansas vs. Jay Fitzwater, et al.* The ensuing trial found seven men guilty of assault for which they received various sentences. However, nothing can erase the horror and degradation felt by the young woman who was the victim of the attack. The fact that she was an educated woman is the prime reason the men of the small town felt threatened enough to attack her. One of the most surprising aspects of the story is that even the women in the town thought the attack was justified (Fitzwater, 2001).

Society has progressed immensely since this incident of tarring and feathering a college-educated woman. Women are now free to pursue education and careers. However, pursuit and attainment are two different things. Even today, almost a century after the tarring and feathering of the young schoolteacher, women leaders are still not as accepted as male leaders. Chapter One discussed the various aspects of the problem of

small representation of women administrators in colleges and universities. This chapter will discuss the history of the problem, associated explanations, and related literature. The history discussion discloses the longevity of the problem and the fluctuations of female leadership in United States' history. Leadership theories explain traits and behaviors conducive to success. Self-determination theory provides explanation of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors and the influence those factors have on leaders. Literature on women's development explains how cultural influence erects its own barriers to women taking on leadership roles. Finally, a discussion of the current literature and research pertaining to female leadership provides a view of what other researchers have pursued and how this study can help resolve the problem of few female leaders in higher education institutions.

History of the Problem

The role of women professors and administrators in higher education has evolved with some interesting twists and turns since it began in the early 1800s. An examination of the history of women in the work force and women in higher education confirms how women's roles have changed and yet how influential the roles from the past are today.

The Revolutionary War was one of the first occurrences of changing roles for women in the United States, particularly in the field of education. During the Revolutionary War, men went to war and left the women behind. In the men's absence, the women accepted the responsibility of managing schools and businesses in addition to tending to their traditional roles of homemakers and mothers. This experience during the mid 1700s helped develop women's confidence as they took pride in their

accomplishments. Exercising their newly-created voice, women began lobbying for legal and political rights (Clinton, 1984).

Women's roles through the 1800s and early 1900s remained firmly seated as traditionally domestic. The women of the 1800s saw the development of a commercial market and the beginning of an industrial economy in the United States. Despite new developments, females maintained their domestic status by concentrating on child rearing. Teaching was the only respectable occupation for an unmarried woman during the mid-1800s according to Ryan (as cited in Vaughn-Roberson, 1992). By the late 1800s, 63 percent of the nation's teachers were female. Only single women were allowed to teach during this era and 28 percent of the women teachers researched in Vaughn-Roberson's (1992) study remained single throughout their lives. This particular study included data from 547 women who were teachers during the early 1900s in Oklahoma, Texas, and Colorado. The following statements clearly depict the strong domestic inclinations of the women from a century ago and their view of today's women:

Accepting the core assumption of domesticity, that women are responsible for the maintenance of familial and social morality, [the women of the early 1900s] identify today's feminism with narcissism and loss of values rather than self-respect and a demand for equality. Although younger feminists may view the educators in this study only as symbols of the past, these women, in their retirement, view what they perceive as the tragedies of contemporary society with a renewed belief that their own lives, securely nestled within the ideology of domesticity, have been full of purpose (Vaughn-Roberson, 1992, p. 25).

An explanation of the history of women in college professoriate and administration must include the role of women in the work force and observe the historically fluctuating percentages of females in various occupations in the United States. In a book called *Black Women and White Women in the Professions*, Sokoloff defines “the professions” as the elite occupations such as law, medicine, architecture, ministry, dentistry, judicial positions, science, and university teaching. He states that these areas qualify as being distinct because the professions receive a high degree of honor and status in our society and the employees in these areas, plausibly called the professionals, can expect great rewards, both internal and monetary, for the services they provide. The high level of education required for these positions promotes autonomy and esteem of the professionals. The specialized training professionals pursue allocates to them a large body of knowledge and society classifies them as experts in their chosen fields.

The “semiprofessions”, a term used by Sokoloff in her book *Black Women and White Women in the Professions*, were occupations that were not as elite as the professions, but did require some level of education. These included occupations such as elementary teaching, nursing, librarianship, and social work, a list that reflects a female-saturated group of positions. White males were predominant in the world of professions; white females were predominant in the world of semiprofessions (Sokoloff, 1992). The distinction of the occupational groups called the professions is important to remember in the following discussion of the United States’ chronological development of the workforce.

Between 1870 and 1930, the percentage of women represented in the occupational groups called the professions increased from 5 percent of all employed women in 1870 to 14 percent in 1930. The next 20 years saw a decline in the percentage of women in the professions due to the Great Depression. In 1950, only 10.8 percent of professionals were female. Until 1960, professionals were white males; women and minority men were only a small percentage of the elite group of occupations. For example, in 1960, women represented one-third of the labor force, but made up only 3.5 percent of all lawyers, 5.8 percent of clergy, 6.8 percent of doctors, and 4.2 percent of physicists (Oppenheimer, 1970). At universities, women taught in the “soft” areas of curriculum such as foreign languages, literature, and home economics (Kaufman, 1984). During the 1960s, the percentage of professional women increased slowly, but it was not until 1970 that women would reclaim 14 percent of the positions in the professions, which they had claimed in 1930 (Bernard, 1971).

Sokoloff (1992) reports that tremendous changes occurred for women in the work force between 1960 and 1980. During the two decades from 1960 to 1980, the professions constituted the highest-paid occupations and provided the greatest amount of autonomy and control to the white males, who were the majority of the employees of these professions (Sokoloff, 1992). Men were free to train for and practice the professions in a way that was restricted from women. The barriers that existed for women included legal restrictions, quotas, administrative regulations, and anti-nepotism rules (Cott, 1987). Universities limited the number of women admitted to higher education institutions with quotas. For example, Stanford’s quota system allowed the acceptance of three males for each female. In 1969, Yale also set quotas for the

admittance of women into its institution (Minnich, n.d.). Legislation in the 1960s and 1970s, which demanded equal treatment of men and women, helped eliminate some of these barriers.

Aside from barriers, there are other reasons for women having such low representation in some of the top professions. Many are self-imposed by women themselves. One of the reasons is that many women simply prefer the female-dominated semiprofessions to the male-dominated professions. The American Association of University Women reports that national census data indicates that women's colleges award the highest proportions of degrees in the traditionally female careers of teaching and nursing (American Association of University Women, 2003). Many women prefer to work as nurses, elementary school teachers, and social workers. The traditional American dream is for all individuals to find the occupation that suits them best. Whether career choice includes a high-paying job requiring several years of postgraduate education or only a six-week training period, it is the individual's right to choose their own path.

Other reasons contribute to the low percentages of women in the professions. Although the percentages of women in male-dominated fields are increasing today, the aggregate male population is more career-oriented than the female population. For many women, other duties and tasks take precedence over a career. Many women spend time raising children or supporting a husband who is pursuing an education or climbing a career ladder. Women's responsibility in childbearing and domestic duties commonly infringes upon or delays the pursuit of a career. Many women, because of personal preference or responsibilities of motherhood, will choose a lower-paying job that requires

less education. However, many stories exist of women, whose mothers and grandmothers were domestic homemakers, choosing to shun examples set by previous generations and pursue the joy and fulfillment of a successful career. Each person and each generation chooses their own path and creates their own definition of success (Belenky et al., 1986; Gilligan, 1982; Thornton, 2004).

When faced with the decision of choosing a career, women have many choices. They can choose a low-paying job with few benefits or invest in a college education and enjoy a higher-paying job with good benefits that also brings them a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. As evidenced by the increasing number of female college graduates (United States Department of Education, 2002), today's women choose a college education that offers increased self-esteem and earning power.

The typical American family has changed substantially during the past three decades with significant increase in the number of single parent homes. The current divorce rate of 50 percent of all marriages compared to a 33 percent divorce rate three decades ago (United States Census Bureau, n.d.a) is clear indication of the increased need for women to pursue fulfilling, successful careers. In previous generations, men have typically been the breadwinners in the family, but it is now up to women to join the workforce to maintain or improve the American family's standard of living. There is considerable motivation for women to join the ranks of executives and strive to climb the ladder in the corporate world once occupied primarily by white males.

The first generation of female college students was educated between 1860 and 1890. These alumnae demonstrated dedication to academics by serving at women's colleges as professors, deans, administrators, and as professors at coed institutions.

Women students at the early colleges founded in the East were the first to reap the benefits of having women faculty and administrators who went to great efforts to improve curriculum and extracurricular activities for female students (Gordon, 1997).

The dean of women administrative position was the first administrative position offered to females in coeducational institutions. Women served as deans of women as early as the 1890s (Schwartz, 1997). These positions became necessary because of the sharp increase in the female population on college campuses. In 1870, women accounted for only 21 percent of the undergraduate population. By 1890, the percentage had climbed to 47 percent. Because of this large increase in the number of women on college campuses, college presidents began to hire females to serve as faculty, advisors, and counselors for the female students. “Dean of Women” was the new title assigned to these women leaders. The responsibilities of these deans were multifaceted and included overseeing the relatively new minority population of women. The job included insulating the men from the women and, at the same time, protecting and guiding the women. Most of the deans were faculty so their first responsibility was to teach. These deans had the scholarly development of women at the forefront of their concern (Schwartz, 1997). Many presidents and college leaders continued to be uncomfortable with women on campuses so the dean of women role was the solution to providing segregation and assurance that the women would remain separate and apart from the males.

The first dean of women was Alice Palmer at the University of Chicago in 1892. Along with the dean’s job, she also accepted the responsibility of professor of history. Palmer’s former position was president of Wellesley College, which she resigned after becoming married. At the time of her appointment to the University of Chicago, she and

her husband resided in Boston. Her husband declined an offer for a position at the University of Chicago, thus beginning a long commute for Alice Palmer each school term between Chicago and Boston. Palmer served in the position for three years and resigned. Her good friend Marion Talbot succeeded her (Schwartz, 1997). This anecdote from history reveals an example of the professional opportunities women of this time period were provided while being tightly bound to a traditional women's role by "the behavioral restrictions that domestic ideology provided to women" (Vaughn-Roberson, 1992, p. 13). The story also hints of mentorship benefits. Palmer's friendship with Talbot likely included valuable advice in her new position as University of Chicago's Dean of Women.

Very early, the deans began forming professional organizations. One such organization was the National Association of Deans of Women (NADW). In 1903, Talbot organized the first meeting of the deans of women, bringing together seventeen deans of women who discussed an agenda that included women's housing, etiquette training, women's self-government, leadership opportunities for women, and women's intercollegiate athletics. At this meeting, the deans passed a resolution condemning "gender segregation in higher education" (NADW, 1927).

Many of the deans of women at that time were enthusiastic about pursuing graduate degrees. In response to this demand, in 1916, Teacher's College of Columbia University established a graduate program to train deans of women. Teacher's College produced some very accomplished researchers and skilled administrators.

During World War II, higher education institutions in the United States had declining numbers of male enrollment and male faculty. This provided an opportunity for women as students and professors in higher education (Harwarth, Maline, & DeBra,

n.d.). With a large portion of the male population at war, women filled the roles and positions left vacated by the men. Many women took advantage of these opportunities to become a college leader and prove personal capabilities.

In the years from the late 1800s through 1945, the deans of women established foundations of practice for students and administration, developed professional associations, conducted research, improved college environments, and developed a body of literature in journals, reports, and books. The early female deans had many duties in addition to providing students with guidance and counseling. In the book *The Dean of Women*, Lois Mathews (1915) provided an appropriate metaphor for describing the responsibilities the deans of women of this time period faced. She stated that a dean must “win her spurs in the classroom.”

In 1928, a study was conducted by Jane Jones (as cited by Schwartz, 1997), a graduate student at the Teacher’s College. The study included 263 deans of women and provided the following statistics: 91 percent held bachelor’s degrees, 57 percent held master’s degrees, and 15 percent had earned doctorate degrees. Of the 263 deans, 75 percent also held academic rank. The breakdown of their rankings was as follows: 9 percent were instructors, 13 percent were assistant professors, 13 percent were associate professors, and 40 percent were professors. This group of females reported teaching in 36 academic areas. It is clear that these women definitely earned their paychecks, dedicating time and tremendous effort to the profession and to female students.

In the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, psychology and vocational education became a popular demand on college campuses. In response to the need, the deans of women took steps to develop these curriculums across the country. They developed programs and

changed curriculum as needed to meet the demands of a changing economy. By the 1940s, the deans of women had firmly established themselves in higher education administration and provided a path for other women to follow (Gordon, 1997).

After World War II, the declining female population on college campuses threatened the position of dean of women and other women's higher educational roles. Although never fully accepted on college campuses, women's numbers had climbed consistently through 1920s. The combination of the Great Depression in the 1930s and World War II beginning in 1939 caused attention to sway away from education. After World War II ended in 1945, United States' attention was still not on education, but focused instead on the prominent role males had played defending the country during the war. Men made admirable efforts and sacrifices and the United States population extended its gratitude. The women who had taken leadership roles in businesses when men went to war found themselves displaced when the men returned to their prewar positions. Likewise, women who had filled the roles as professors and deans on college campuses in the absence of men lost those positions when the male war heroes came home.

In the late 1940s, the title of the position of "Dean of Women" frequently changed to the "Dean of Students" with the office filled by a male assisted by a female who served as a liaison for women students. The threat to the role of dean of women came not only in the elimination of the position in some cases, but also in the loss of authority. Prior to this transition, the position was most often a woman who reported directly to the president of the university. This provided an opportunity for the dean to be on policy-making committees and to be a strong voice for female students and faculty. By losing

the direct line to the president, the position became much less influential. A 2004 National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) symposium report indicates the loss of power caused by the decreasing number of deans of women. The report stated that in 1940, 86 percent of the deans reported to the president. In 1962, the percentage had fallen to 30 percent. In 1971, only 10 percent reported to the president. In 1976, a mere 4 percent reported to the president (Tuttle, 2004).

Women's population on college campuses decreased to a mere 21 percent by the mid 1950s, causing a general erosion of the influence and prominence of women on college campuses. The attitude on campuses became apathetic, even hostile in some cases, toward women. Although women had no problem gaining access to colleges as students, this attitude caused numbers of women on campuses and in the work force to decrease steadily. Records indicate that women terminated from their jobs comprised 60 percent of all workers released in the months immediately following World War II. Women were terminated at a rate 75 percent higher than men (Schwartz, 1997). Lack of available employment to women and the birth of the baby boom generation that was born during the 1940s and 1950s forced women into domestic roles at home.

The move in the 1960s and 1970s toward equality in the work place and in education encouraged the changing of the roles of women in higher education administration and faculty. The 1964 Civil Rights Act called for equal treatment of minority groups and the elimination of gender discrimination. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 provided protection against discrimination for employees and students in educational institutions. The governmental legislation and the strong movement to gain equality led higher education institutions to become organizations

based on function and not gender (Tuttle, 2004). If colleges followed the legislation, they had no choice but to decrease the attention previously given to women's needs on campus and to attempt to treat men and women as equals.

From 1950 to the present, males have assumed the roles of the majority of presidents, vice presidents, deans, and other top administrative positions. There are substantial numbers of women in education and administration graduate programs, but a predominantly male population fills the offices that manage higher education (Schwartz, 1997).

Current statistics presented in Chapter One tell the present state of higher education administration. The problem of low representation of women administrators in colleges and universities is a persistent problem with a prominent historical aspect. While history gives concrete evidence of the problem, other factors also warrant consideration about female leadership. Theories concerning leadership, motivation, and women's development help explain female leadership and how it differs from traditional male leadership.

Leadership Theories

Current literature defines leadership as a mixture of traits, behaviors, influence, power, politics, authority, change, goal achievement, management, and transformation (Bass & Avolio, 1990; Bryman, 1992; Conger, 1992; Dubin, 1986; Fiedler, 1967; Fiedler & Chemers, 1974; House, 1971; House & Baetz, 1990; Jago & Vroom, 1982; Klenke, 1996; Kotter, 1987; Likert, 1967; Rost, 1991; Sashkin & Rosenback, 1993; White & Lippitt, 1960). Leadership is any combination of these. One of the earliest definitions of leadership found in educational literature is from 1934:

Leadership is both a personality phenomenon and a group phenomenon; it is a social process involving a number of persons in mental contact in which one person assumes dominance over the others. It is the process in which the activities of the many are organized to move in a specific direction by the one. It is the process in which the attitudes and values of the many may be changed by the one. (Bogardus, 1934, p. 5).

Bogardus' early definition of leadership lends itself to mind control and has an element that hints of Hitler-like dominance. A 1991 definition includes the role of followers and describes leadership as "an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes" (Rost, 1991, p. 102). Still another definition by former U. S. Senator Barbara Mikulski (as cited in Cantor & Bearnay, 1992) defines leadership in terms of respected political leaders:

Leadership is creating a state of mind in others. President Kennedy's legislative accomplishments were skimpy but he created a state of mind in this country that endures long after his death. Churchill created a state of mind that enabled Great Britain to endure the blitz and marshal resources to help turn the tide of World War II. Martin Luther King, Jr. created a state of mind. Florence Nightingale created a state of mind about what nursing should be (p. 59).

These citations give a brief glimpse of how varied the definition of leadership can be and its evolution spanning several decades. Not only is a simple definition of leadership varied and complicated, defining leadership through theories becomes even more complex and confusing.

Leadership theories typically fall into three broad categories: the trait approach, the behavioral approach, and the contingency approach (Klenke, 1996). A summary of research conducted on each of the approaches explains strengths and weaknesses.

The trait approach, also known as the “great man/great woman” or “great leaders are born” theory of leadership, assumes that inborn qualities determine good leadership. According to trait theorists, physical, intellectual, and personality traits determine whether a person can become a leader (Conger, 1992; Dubin, 1986; House & Baetz, 1990). For example, according to early trait theorists, tall people are more adept leaders than their shorter peers. As early as 1915, researchers observed that religious leaders were taller than religious followers. Another trait studied for leadership ability is energy level. Dubin (1986) found that, although not all high-energy people were leaders, leaders tended to be high-energy people. Of course, some traits such as intelligence, self-confidence, and adaptability have obvious advantages in leadership development. Other aspects of the trait approach such as physical attributes have a smaller impact. After almost 70 years of research, the “leaders are born” theories still have not been substantiated, but personality characteristics still warrant respect in leadership studies. House and Betz (1990) conclude that because leadership requires a great deal of interaction with people, traits such as integrity, cooperation, and sociability are essential elements of leadership. Because of the importance of some traits such as personality, trait theory continues to resurface and play an important role in leadership constructs (Klenke, 1996).

The behavioral approach was the main dynamic in the leadership theories tested in the 1950s. The behavioral approach assumes that leadership is a learned process

during which the individual adopts a leadership style. Some of the behaviors observed when researching this approach include the leader's ability to organize group objectives and the ability to develop mutual trust with subordinates. Some of the most influential studies conducted to test the behavioral approach attempt to explain leadership styles. Likert (1967) tested job-centered leadership style, which focuses on a leader's close supervision and reward to followers for improved performance, versus employee-centered leadership style, which focused on creating a supportive work environment for followers. The findings indicated that the employee-centered leadership style was the most effective and lead to optimal group performance. Other researchers have studied authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles (Jago & Vroom, 1982; White & Lippitt, 1960) and found that different work environments require different leadership styles for optimal performance. The reliability of the behavioral approach is similar to the trait approach; numerous weaknesses make it unreliable as a consistent theory to use, but many of the behavioral approach aspects have great merit. For example, Conger (1992) found that teaching elements of leadership and training to maintain leadership abilities play a vital role in leadership development. The concept that men and women can learn leadership behaviors or leadership styles through training or observing leaders in action is one of the main components of the behavioral approach.

The late 1960s introduced another leadership approach. The situational, or contingency, approach emphasizes that different behavior patterns and leadership styles are effective under different circumstances. Two theories, Fiedler's contingency theory (1967) and House's path-goal theory (1971), are the most widely known in this category. Fiedler's theory, tested for over 25 years, involved comparing group performance with a

task-oriented leader versus a relationship-oriented leader. Although one type of leader proved advantageous in certain situations, no definite conclusions emerged. By his own admission, Fiedler said “by and large these analyses have been fruitless” (Fiedler & Chemers, 1974, p. 64). House’s path-goal theory (1971) involved four types of leaders: (1) the directive leader who lets followers know exactly what is expected of them, (2) the supportive leader who considers the welfare and needs of followers, (3) the participative leader who uses followers’ suggestions and opinions for decision-making, and (4) the achievement-oriented leader who uses goal-setting as motivation for followers. Empirical studies using House’s model was limited to testing only parts of the theory. The conclusions of the path-goal theory are similar to the other theories. Supportive findings exist for part of the components, but overall inconsistent findings cause the path-goal theory to fail as a successful leadership theory (Klenke, 1996).

Leadership theories of the past two decades have a variety of labels such as charismatic (Bryman, 1992), transformational (Bass & Avolio, 1990), visionary (Kotter, 1987), and post-heroic (Sashkin & Rosenback, 1993). The early theories of trait, behavior, and contingency approaches were scientific approaches that depended upon positivistic experimentation. The recent theories depend on descriptive data and are more phenomenological in nature than the theories prior to the 1980s. Charismatic and transformational leadership are underlying themes that have surfaced repeatedly in recent theories (Klenke, 1996). The concept of charisma or transformation is not new, but the identification of the role these types of leaders play in leadership development is new. The discussion of these types of leaders lends a new dimension to the historical theories that have existed since the 1930s. For example, from the contingency point of view,

natural catastrophes or revolutions create an environment that causes charismatic leaders to surface. Both charismatic and transformational leadership theories predict and couch traits possessed by historical charismatic leaders such as Hitler.

Many empirical studies involving charismatic and transformational leadership theories have developed using qualitative research or questionnaire data. In one such study, researchers Tichy and Devanna (as cited in Klenke, 1996) targeted transformational leadership and conducted in-depth interviews with Lee Iacocca of Chrysler, Jack Welch of General Electric, Jerry Campbell of Burger King, and one woman, Mary Lawlor, of Drake Business School. The study proposed a theory of transformational leadership that produced three themes. The study found transformational leaders: (1) realize the need for revitalization, (2) create a vision for their organization, and (3) take action to create the proposed change.

In a book entitled *Visionary Leadership*, Nanus (1992) gathered data from leaders of corporations, universities, and government. Nanus' study revealed six themes concerning transformational leaders, finding the leaders' visions (1) were appropriate for the organization and time, (2) reflected standards of excellence, (3) were clear concerning purpose and direction, (4) inspired enthusiasm and commitment, (5) articulated the vision, and (6) were ambitious.

Surveys provide support to qualitative data. Providing breadth and depth to recent leadership theories, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) identifies transformational, charismatic, and visionary leadership styles (Klenke, 1996). Various aspects of the three styles sometimes integrate with the behavioral approach to help explain the situations that lead to the development of various leadership styles.

A study by Stanford-Blair and Dickmann (2005) did not attempt to classify leaders by their leadership styles, but instead gathered qualitative data on the formation, performance, and sustainability of success from 36 accomplished leaders from around the world. The four emerging themes indicated that effective leadership involves (1) knowing and nurturing core values, (2) leading congruently, (3) compounding capacity, and (4) expanding consequence. These four aspects of leadership are sequential. Core values provide the foundation for solid energized leadership. Consequently, the core values align with social and emotional elements that encourage human growth and achievement, allowing for congruent leadership. Next, leaders adopt strategies that compound capacity and prove their leadership capabilities over a period of time. Finally, expanding consequence refers to the “ripple effect” of coherent leadership. Effective leaders influence many more people than their immediate contacts. Their influence expands to people and places outside their organization. In their book *Leading Coherently*, the researchers state that a good leader’s influence “continues to ripple through leadership performance and sustainability with the ultimate effect of ever-expanding leadership consequence” (p. 179).

All of the leadership approaches have strengths and weaknesses. One recurring theme that continues through the most recent literature is that leaders need experience. Main (1987) estimated that leaders gain 80 percent of their growth from experience and the other 20 percent from formal training. More recently, Stanford-Blair and Dickmann (2005) concluded that leadership develops through experiences. This conclusion emerged from interviews with prominent leaders from five different continents. Stanford-Blair and Dickmann stated:

That leaders are strongly formed by life experience is further accented by the revelation that leadership was never a primary goal for any of the 36 interviewed leaders. Rather, they were nurtured by early life experiences toward the formation of core values that anticipated vocational callings and, ultimately, a commitment to lead. In this fashion, the formation of a coherent leadership model begins to emerge. It is a model that is founded on values initially shaped by family and community, cultural context, and mentor influence (p. 14).

Experience helps men and women achieve a leadership position and experience will help them sustain and succeed as leaders. Leadership education and training can only deliver a portion of what a leader needs to survive. The daily experience of an administrator or executive delivers the majority of the leader's training and allows them to hone and refine their skills as they practice their profession. Research studies such as this one allow other people to tap into a leader's experience and gain insight into a leader's world. The leader's honesty and rich detail will be valuable to others wishing to pursue positions of leadership.

Self-Determination Theory

Motivation is caused by a person's need for change due to fear, discomfort, or discontent. It originates from an internal stimulus, external stimulus, or a combination of both. Motivation for personal growth drives people to learn new skills, inspires task-achievement, and generally causes people to set goals and to be persistent in reaching them. Lack of motivation for personal achievement exhibits itself in an apathetic, irresponsible adult. Children and adult students who suffer from lack of motivation sit in classrooms showing little or no interest in the material studied. They go through every

day adding little value to their lives or other people's lives. Adult employees who suffer from lack of motivation are unproductive. Occasionally, they will respond to a motivation such as fear of losing their job and temporarily increase productivity, but return to their apathetic state quickly.

Leaders of higher education institutions are motivated people. They accept responsibilities, fulfill obligations, and accomplish objectives. Theorists (Conger, 1992; Dubin, 1986; Fiedler, 1967; House, 1971; House & Baetz, 1990) argue whether motivation is an innate trait or if it is developed throughout life. Regardless of its origin, it is an essential resource for an effective leader. Successful leaders do not suffer from lack of motivation. Therefore, explaining leaders' internal or external motivation is a valid point in explaining effective leadership. Internal motivation comes from a person's drive to seek inherent satisfaction from the changes they are making. External motivation derives from a person seeking to satisfy an external need. For example, do college presidents seek to implement changes in an institution because they feel satisfaction in knowing they have improved education, or because of the prestige accompanying the leadership position? Internal motivation feeds a person from within by delivering a sense of satisfaction and peace without any recognition from an outside source. External motivation requires outside sources, or social values, to deliver the feeling of satisfaction. There is power, prestige, money, or another reward involved in the delivery of satisfaction. While both internal and external motivation can be powerful forces, it is helpful to know which one people are responding to when explaining successful leadership.

Self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) seeks to explain personal growth as a process of satisfying three basic psychological needs: competence, relatedness, and autonomy. Ryan and Deci theorized that a person's motivation, social functioning, and well-being influences these three needs and, therefore, either helps or hinders a person's ability to function at their optimal level.

Competence determines the ability of a person to perform an activity or task. An interested, capable person is able to adapt to new challenges, but true competence is deeper than mere capability. The competent person possesses a defining inquisitive, adaptive, incorporating nature.

Relatedness refers to the support and connectivity the person has with family, co-workers, boss, and others. The benefits of relatedness are a network of people from which to draw information and strong emotional support that facilitates personal growth.

Autonomy, as it relates to self-determination theory, is a person having the freedom of choice to pursue tasks as an individualist or collectivist. Autonomous people realize they have options and are free to explore all options while remaining an accepted individual in a group. Autonomy, often equated with independence, has a slightly varied meaning when couched in self-determination theory. Self-determination theory views autonomy as the freedom to act or pursue choices either in an individual situation or within a group. When autonomous people act in a collectivist situation, they feel free to make decisions that may or may not reflect the groups' shared vision. Autonomy, as defined by self-determination theory, involves more than independence or individualism. It involves having the self-assurance to make decisions within a group or for a group and be ready to defend the decision (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Ryan and Deci describe internal motivation as the most influential “single phenomenon reflecting the positive potential of human nature” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 70). Present at birth, there is no drive more powerful than internal drive. Cognitive evaluation theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), derived from self-motivation theory, targeted social and environmental factors that explained variations of intrinsic motivation. An earlier study by Ryan (1982) observed how feelings of competence enhanced intrinsic motivation. The study found that a sense of autonomy was required before feelings of competence increased. Because of the importance of autonomy, much of the later research on intrinsic motivation focuses on autonomy rather than competence. A longitudinal study by Deci, Koestner, & Ryan (1999) indicated that rewards given for performance actually undermine intrinsic motivation. In this 30-year study, 128 people exhibited decreased internal motivation when they earned monetary and tangible rewards. Extrinsic rewards cause people to feel controlled by the reward and shift the origination of the behavior from internal to external. The study performed by Deci, Koestner, & Ryan supported previous research (Deci & Ryan, 1985) that found a controlling environment, such as directive orders and pressured evaluations, also diminished intrinsic motivation. An environment that allows for self-directed opportunities enhances intrinsic motivation. Research by Deci and Ryan clearly indicates strong relationships exist between internal motivation and the satisfaction of the needs for autonomy and competence.

The research on internal motivation indicates that people are internally motivated to perform tasks that hold internal interest for them. However, many people also perform very well at tasks that hold no internal interest for them. The tasks for which people are

not interested require extrinsic motivation, which is also an important component in successful leadership. Society and job requirements put continual pressure on individuals to perform activities that are uninteresting, unpleasant, even distasteful. In order to perform these activities effectively, individuals implement extrinsic motivation. According to Deci and Ryan, when a person in authority, whether it is a parent, teacher, or boss, requires a person to perform tasks or exhibit behaviors, several results are possible. The person can respond with a range from complete lack of motivation to an active commitment (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Self-determination theory suggests the varying range depends on the degree to which the person internalizes the value of the requested behavior. In other words, for the person to perform an uninteresting task well and with enthusiasm, the person being required to perform the uninteresting task must “take in” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 72) the value the task has to the person in authority. Doing so causes the person to adopt a personal commitment that will motivate him or her and result in the success of the activity. Organismic integration theory is a subtheory of self-determination theory and suggests the varying degrees to which external motivation is self-determined (Deci & Ryan, 1985). A complete lack of motivation is one extreme and integrated regulation is the other extreme, representing the most autonomous degree of external motivation. Other researchers including Connell & Wellborn (cited in Deci & Ryan, 2000) and Hayamizu (1997) studied external motivation and found that the more autonomous motivation promotes positive outcomes such as better performance and more engagement.

Since many tasks require external motivation to produce positive outcomes, methods for developing autonomous motivation become an important aspect for

explaining success. By the time a man or woman attains a college president's seat, he or she has probably managed to establish self-directed autonomous motivation. Deci and Ryan (2000) recognize the importance of all three components of self-determination theory (competence, relatedness, and autonomy) in the development of autonomous external motivation.

Intrinsic motivation is authentic and originates from self-determined beliefs and actions. Extrinsic motivation originates from outside influences, but can be as powerful as intrinsic motivation if the person integrates and internalizes the value of the task. Competence, relatedness, and autonomy foster internalization and commitment of performance. They all play an important role in helping people strongly integrate tasks. Strong integration promotes well-performed tasks. If externally motivated tasks are highly internalized, people perform better than they would if the externally motivated tasks lacked internalization. Successful leadership requires high performance of many externally motivated tasks. Strong internalization of these tasks enables the leader to approach the tasks with enthusiasm. Deci and Ryan (2000) conclude that strong internalization is of great significance for leaders who are required to motivate other people into commitment and high-quality performance.

Motivation was also a focus in a study conducted by Drew and Halstead (2003) in which findings revealed several items of interest pertaining to women faculty and administrators. A strong 40 percent response rate indicated a high interest from the 366 female faculty members who responded to the survey. The study provided demographic data and motivation factors of faculty members from ten colleges and universities. The themes that emerged from the inquiries about motivation factors were (1) the importance

of relationships, (2) intrinsic motivation factors with personal accomplishments being the one mentioned most often, (3) extrinsic motivation factors with financial reasons cited by a large percentage of participants, (4) the need for personal control and academic freedom, and (5) workload/performance issues. Questions posed to the participants concerning gender issues revealed a lack of respect and poor advancement due to small numbers of females as reasons for barriers to women faculty. The results indicated a need for more women faculty and administrators so students will have role models of both sexes readily available. Participants also stated increased interaction between female students and faculty is desirable for mentoring reasons.

Female college administrators are willing and able to self-disclose their leadership styles, strengths, and weaknesses. However, internal or external motivation in their leadership roles is more difficult to self-analyze. The research on self-determination theory applies to a research study on higher education administrators because the theory provides ways to identify internal and external motivation. Evaluating whether an administrator is attempting to satisfy internal or external needs aids in identifying the force behind their success. Survey instruments for determining motivation (Vallerand, Pelleties, Blais, Briere, Senecal, & Valalieres, 1993) were adapted for use with college administrators in this study.

Both self-determination theory and leadership theories deserve consideration in this study. However, the leadership style a college president possesses or the motivation that drives her does not fully explain her success. The literature on leadership theories indicates a variety of effective leadership styles. One leadership style does not necessarily have advantage over another. Each person must let their own personality and

motivations drive the style they adopt. Personal and career experiences are a major part of a leader's developing success and exploring their experiences will help explain successful female leadership.

Women's Development

Postsecondary education is possibly the most valuable investment a woman can make in her own future. In an attempt to describe women and their plight for self-value, Martin (2000) eloquently states, "Education turns each and every one of us from a creature of nature, so to speak, into a creature of culture: it supplies the attitudes, values, and ideologies we carry with us into each and every encounter with the world" (Martin, 2000, p. 48). This quote describes the non-material assets women seek during their lifetime. Education is the resource that enables women to develop the valuable assets of attitudes, values, and ideologies. Many researchers (Belenky et al., 1986 ; Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan,1982; Hancock,1989) have studied and attempted to explain women's development. Literature concerning women's development began to emerge in the late 1970s and became abundant in the 1980s. One of the common themes from the literature is that women tend to feel more comfortable in their own skin as they grow older. Another common theme is the communication and relatedness women tend to develop and rely on throughout their lives. A discussion of the researchers and their findings concerning women's development will help explain female leadership and its strengths and weaknesses.

Girls learn at a very young age that teachers treat boys and girls differently. In elementary school, boys get a larger share of teachers' time, energy, and attention (Good & Brophy, 1994; Sadker, 1994). A report by the American Association of University

Women (1992) reinforces the gender bias issue by stating, “a large body of research indicates that teachers give more classroom attention and more esteem-building encouragement to boys” (AAUW, 1992, p. 2). This difference begins in elementary school and continues through college. In her book *Coming of Age in the Academe*, Martin (2000) describes the chilly college classroom climate women must tolerate from teachers. Both male and female teachers call on males more than females, ask males more difficult questions than they ask females, and wait longer for males to answer. While those components may seem as if teachers are more demanding of males, teachers also show more support for males since they urge them to try harder, make eye contact more often with male students, and urge them to elaborate on their answers to questions more than they urge females. Teachers of both sexes interrupt women students more than men students and use examples that reinforce negative stereotypes of women, implying that women are not as competent as males.

Hancock (1989) suggests that both boys and girls begin to feel independence around age eight or ten. Along with this new independence, they also realize they have mental and physical capabilities. According to Hancock, parents, teachers, and society foster the mental and physical abilities of boys but do not encourage the development of the same abilities in girls. Hancock gathered data from twenty 40- and 50-year-old women. In-depth interviews revealed that adolescence girls come to realize that males enjoy more accomplishments in the fields of science, business, math, and medicine. During adolescence, girls also realize they are physically weaker and smaller than boys. Consequently, boys become competitive and girls become nurturing. Boys lead and girls

follow. The women in Hancock's study reported that in their 30s and 40s, they managed to regain the self-confidence and power they felt as a pre-adolescent girl.

The young girl of age eight or ten speaks freely and openly about anger and other emotions, showing strength and stamina, traits that are often absent in the adolescent girl and adult woman. Research teams such as Brown and Gilligan (1992) and Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) all found that adult women "silence themselves" (Brown & Gilligan, 1992, p. 3) rather than risk conflict because they fear isolation and rejection. Brown and Gilligan interviewed almost one hundred girls between the ages of seven and eighteen during 1986-1990 and concluded that adolescence is a time of crisis for girls and a time when the majority of young females lose their ability to form authentic, genuine relationships. The basis for this failure seems to be girls' lack of courage and inability to stand up for herself as an individual. A very interesting finding in the study that has implications for education is that the girls in Brown and Gilligan's study expressed a desire for women teachers to "bring themselves into their teaching" and treat the girls "like people." When the female teachers at the school where the study was performed were made aware of the girls' statements, they too expressed a desire to form more authentic relationships with the girls. Brown and Gilligan claim their work has implications for preventing psychological suffering in women while encouraging political, societal, and cultural changes.

Hancock (1989) describes her study in a book called *The Girl Within*. She agrees with Brown and Gilligan in her conclusions concerning women's development from childhood to adulthood. She points out that, in a culture shaped by men, exploring the development of women is vital in order to understand women's potential role in today's

society and our future society. Erik Erickson's work in the 1950s adds depth to the study of women's development. Erickson proposed that developing a firm sense of self was crucial in adolescence. This essential sense of self develops when the adolescent remains assertive, takes an independent stand, and makes commitments to unique principles in both public and private relationships. This description fits few female adolescents. Instead of developing and crystallizing their sense of self, women tend to reach back into their childhood to recover the sense of self that became hazy during their teenage years. Hancock's goal was to study women who had reached psychological maturity and had the ability to shed light on the phenomena of successful women's development into adulthood. In order to locate the participants for her study, she used an instrument called Loevinger Sentence Completion Test. The Leovinger instrument identified women who had reached a high level of psychological development. Fifty women scored sufficiently high enough, and she chose twenty of those fifty women for the phenomenological study. Hancock's conclusions agreed with Brown and Gilligan. She found that the women in her study developed an obscure sense of themselves during adolescence and typically found their strength and their own voice again in their 40s, 50s, and sometimes even later in life. Conflicts and stressful times in a woman's life seemed to aid in the development of a sense of self.

Bolton (2000) studied a sample of 117 women between 1993 and 1996, gathering interview data pertaining to their life development. Bolton describes a woman's development as a series of four rings that encircle the woman throughout her life. The outer ring is the woman's external appearance, the second is her behavior and professional style, the third is her attitudes and beliefs, and the inner circle is her true

inner spirit. The rings accompany the woman constantly, but only the outer ring is visible to everyone she meets. The outside world initially judges her by the outer ring, but her abilities and accomplishments depend on the inner circles. Each circle gets progressively intimate. The inner circle, the true inner spirit, is often not even visible to the woman herself. Disconnects in the circles occur when one circle is in disharmony with an adjacent circle. For example, if a woman's behavior does not accurately portray her attitudes and beliefs, she is obviously not reacting to her true feelings. Any disconnect between the circles cause women confusion, self-doubt and even self-loathing (p. 65).

The body of research on women's development applies not only to women administrators in higher education, but to women in all occupations: professionals and non-professionals, employed and unemployed. The emerging data from the various studies clarifies and validates the role women have commonly played in our culture. Women have fulfilled the supporting career roles such as teachers, nurses, secretaries, and homemakers. They have blended themselves into their husband's and children's lives, molding their own identity with that of their family's. The process of making women listen to their own voice of reason can be a long road. Family, friends, teachers, and mentors can all assist females in this process, but it is ultimately the woman's choice to move forward on her own. As history so clearly points out, women have not filled leadership roles. The findings of the women's development studies help explain one of the possible causes of the low number of female administrators in United States' colleges and universities. Many of the women who have succeeded in achieving a senior administrative position in higher education have experienced the obscurity of adolescence

and the re-emergence of her voice later in life. Gathering qualitative data explored this possibility and gave the female administrators the opportunity to tell their stories.

Women as Leaders

Though the percentage of female leadership is low, there are many examples of effective, successful women leaders today and in history. Studies such as this one can use those examples from our present and past to observe the traits of the successful women. Today's aspiring female leaders can use these women as role models, learning from their experiences and expertise. One of the goals of this study is to define successful female leadership and help other women gain entry into leadership positions. A discussion of the literature and studies of women leadership will reveal the research findings of past studies and perhaps clarify problems that need further explanation.

Although most of this section reports on studies concerning higher education administration, strong female leaders in business and politics merit some discussion. Dan Perlman, former president of Suffolk University in Massachusetts and Webster University in Missouri, states "the position of today's university president requires the skills of a political leader, corporate executive and evangelist" (Farrington, 2005). University leadership has become much more political in the past decade and the value of a college president possessing a sharp business mind and political wit is evident.

One famous example of a woman who became one of the greatest political leaders in history is the former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, elected to her post in England in 1979. Thatcher's personality traits included aggressiveness, self-confidence, dominance, pragmatism, and a driving ambition that caused offensiveness when she faced an opponent. Thatcher became a female leader in a man's world and wanted no

concessions for being a woman. As her leadership developed, so did her powerful sense of self. She started out as a strong woman and became even stronger, more confident, and powerful as her political career progressed (Klenke, 1996).

Women's colleges offer an educational environment that is conducive to the success of young women. Lacking male competition in leadership roles, the female students at women's colleges are permitted to run student governments, serve on committees with faculty and administration, be the leaders of extracurricular organizations, publish student newspapers, and lead class discussions (Hollins University, 2004). The all-female institutions encourage women to develop leadership abilities in an environment that is almost void of male competition. After four years of building self-confidence, graduates of women's colleges are well prepared to face the highly competitive "real" world which includes both sexes. The following list of graduates from women's colleges, give tangible evidence that successful women have emerged and left their mark on the world (Famous firsts from women's colleges, n.d.).

- Hilary Rodham Clinton, first former First-Lady to be elected to the Senate or to Congress
- Catherine Brewer Benson, first woman to receive a college bachelor's degree
- Sarah Hoehmler, first woman to be executive vice president of American Stock Exchange
- Grances K. Conley, first woman to become a tenured full professor of neurosurgery in the United States
- Marian Wright Edelman, first African American woman to pass the bar in the state of Mississippi

- Gail Gamble, first woman elected President of Physicians at Mayo Clinic and of Minnesota Medical Society in 1994
- Elsa Gomez, first Hispanic woman named president of a comprehensive state college
- Hanna Holborn Gray, first woman president of a major university, The University of Chicago
- Geraldine Ferraro, first woman Vice Presidential candidate
- Dr. Millie Hughes-Fulford, first civilian woman scientist on a space shuttle mission (SpaceLabLife Sciences I)
- Katherine Hepburn, first and only person to have won four Academy Awards for acting and voted the nation's leading screen legend of the 20th century
- Antoinette Jennings, first woman president of the Florida senate
- Jeane Kirkpatrick, first woman to serve as United States Ambassador to the United Nations
- Aulana Pharis Peters, first African American woman appointed Commissioner of Securities and Exchange Commission
- Shirley Daniel Peterson, first woman commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service
- Rear Admiral Louise Wilmot, first woman to command naval base and highest ranking woman in United States Navy
- Madeleine Albright, first woman to be named Secretary of State in the U.S., appointed in 1997

As chief executive officer of Corporate Coaching International, Dr. Lois Frankel is a frequent presenter at leadership conferences. At a recent conference of the American Association for Women in Community Colleges, Frankel presented data concerning female leadership. When asked to specify the positive leadership traits of female leaders, participants stated that women leaders influenced, took risks, communicated effectively, listened well, demonstrated resilience, demonstrated commitment to a common vision, and had high credibility (Frankel, 2004). Other traits of female leadership (Dubrin, 2001) are as follows:

- tendency to collaborate rather than using command and control
- understanding the need to individualize
- tendency to network rather than using a top down hierarchy
- leading using teaching techniques rather than military techniques
- tendency to be more flexible than men

Similar findings by Gardner (1990) indicate that some of the most important skills needed in the workplace are more conducive to women's leadership styles than to men's. Gardner contends that critical skills include networking with other people and encouraging collaboration among groups. Men's leadership styles tend to be traditional, where women's tend to be non-traditional. However, in the past decade, there has been a blending of the traditional and non-traditional with men adopting some of the non-traditional methods (Frankel, 2004).

A 1987 study by Durnovo (1990) gathered quantitative and qualitative data from 294 community and junior college women administrators. The qualitative data consisted of phone interviews obtaining information on factors leading to success. Since 57

percent of the female participants reported having a mentor in their career in higher education administration, Durnovo stated that having a mentor was significantly important in advancement in higher education administration. Of the women mentored, 62.9 percent had male mentors. The lack of female administrators at the time of the study made finding female mentors difficult. Some of the help provided by mentors included sharing information, encouragement, guidance on political issues, and role modeling. Even the participants in the study who did not have a mentor reported a mentor relationship as an important ingredient for success. Seeking a mentor was one of the recommendations of the study. Obtaining a doctorate degree, building a network of contacts, and developing a strong personal commitment were the other recommendations that would help women succeed in college administration. Grady (1989) also cited lack of mentors for females as a barrier to women in education administration. Grady surveyed 250 females from central United States who held certifications in elementary and secondary administration but were not currently holding administrative positions. The data indicated the most important factor listed as a reason the women did not hold administrative positions was lack of encouragement to apply.

Even though research has indicated the need for female role models and mentors for aspiring female leaders, a study by Robinson-Hornbuckle (1991) found that female administrators resist affiliating themselves with organizations for women for fear of alienating themselves from their male counterparts. A more recent study (Kennedy, 2001) used data from a committee of five women whose mission was to advance women in higher education leadership. The findings in Kennedy's study indicated that women's advancement in higher education is due to lack of equality for women in academics and

also because women's advancement was and continues to be interrupted by the male model of leadership. Kennedy's case study of the five females concluded that a need for organizational change existed in the current education culture. More female leadership is one of the main components of the desired organizational change. Other components of change are training for women, consciousness raising, and mentoring. The committee that served as Kennedy's participants pointed out that legislation for equal opportunity did not guarantee that equity would exist, it "merely opened avenues for action which did not exist previously" (Kennedy, 2001, p. 99).

Motivation to succeed originating from family and cultural background was the core of a study performed by Vaughn and Everett (1992). Life-history interviews with 18 African American and white female high school administrators revealed that childhood and young adulthood experiences shaped their ambition to become a leader in education. These findings support Main's (1987) conclusions that 80 percent of leadership growth comes from experience and only 20 percent from formal training.

Using narrative research data provided by twelve African American female participants, Jean-Marie (2002) studied top administrators at historically black colleges and universities in one southeastern state in the United States. Jean Marie's study found the female leaders to be transformative intellectuals. The mission of the female administrators in this study was to change the educational conditions of African American students. These women seemed to draw strength from knowing they were part of a collective effort with other women administrators.

In a female leadership study, Bagihole (1992) interviewed 43 women from one university. At this particular university, women comprised 11 percent of the full-time

faculty and academic administrative staff. The findings of this study indicated that more than half of the women had neutral relationships with their male peers. Only one woman reported having a positive relationship with a male colleague and over one-third reported that they felt that their male peers had negative views of them because they were women. Fewer than 25 percent of the women in this study had access to a female role model but the vast majority felt they needed one and would benefit from having a mentor. Over 75 percent of these women admitted they felt they had to be better than their male counterparts to succeed in academics, which placed an incredible amount of pressure on them. Desiring success on the basis of their own accomplishments and abilities, the women wanted others to view them as equals with men in their respective disciplines and had a strong commitment to the traditional male model of leadership. In the 1970s, many researchers (Bardwick, 1977; Kanter, 1977; Staines, Travis, & Jatrente, 1974) found that women were hesitant to mentor other women. Like women of past generations, the women in these studies believed the best path to successful leadership was following the male criterion that had been in place for decades.

Bensimon and Neumann (1993) studied fifteen academic presidential teams to find that leaders tend to appoint people like themselves to senior management teams. Thus, they were reluctant to appoint women to academic or financial vice presidencies. Their findings also indicated that women are subject to different expectations than men. A vice president, who was the only female in their study, reported that she frequently felt silenced and was encouraged to act and think more like a male than to act on her own thoughts. Their findings support the typical barriers encountered by women seeking leadership positions.

Application of Literature to Current Study

Martin (2000) compared the attempt to raise the representation of women in higher education to immigration, stating “it is natural for immigrant groups to assume that if they just try harder to acquire the natives’ cultural patterns, the assimilation process can be expedited” (Martin, 2000, p. 152). However, women cannot just simply try to adopt men’s ways of leading since leadership styles are as inherent as personality traits. Women’s ways of leadership and development have been studied and reported by many researchers (Bagihole, 1992; Belenky, et al., 1986; Frankel, 2004; Grady, 1989; Helgesen, 1990; Jean-Marie, 2002; Kennedy, 2001; Klenke, 1996; Robinson-Hornbuckle, 1991; Vaughn & Everett, 1992) and the differences between male and female leadership typically differ. The leadership style and person must fit the position and institution.

Martin (2000) and Kennedy (2001), contend that organizational transformation rather than assimilation is the best way for women to raise their numbers in higher education. As our world and cultures blend, women will likely gain more and more access to leadership positions. Ideally, organizations and educational institutions will be able to accept female leadership. As this process happens, females must be professionally, mentally, and academically ready to pursue the roles as they become available. Thus, one of the purposes of this study is to enable women to identify successful leadership and be ready for the challenge of being a college leader. After serving five years as an academic dean at a large research university, Kolodny (2000) offered constructive criticism and advice to higher education institutions concerning women administrators. Kolodny stated that in order for the influx of female

administrators to occur, it is essential that a “critical mass” of women undergo the necessary education to be ready to take leadership positions. The women currently serving as senior administrators can help create and educate Kolodny’s critical mass by offering their voice of experience through research studies such as this one.

Leadership theories provide lists of traits and behaviors typical to various leadership styles, yet there is not one style that is preferred over another. Self-determination theory provides explanation for motivations that drive people to become successful leaders, yet many highly motivated people will never attain a leadership position. Women’s development theory provides clarification on how cultural and familial pressures affect women’s personal and career choices, yet when middle-aged women “find their voice” (Belenky et al., 1982; Gilligan, 1982), many of them continue to struggle to break the glass ceiling. The literature presented in this chapter offers the framework for a study on female college administrators. The theories and literature presented thus far do not provide a solution to the problem of low representation of females in collegiate administrative positions. For a thorough explanation of successful female leadership in higher education, the women currently serving at the institutions shared their experiences in this study, thus mentoring other women. Their voice of experience provides leadership wisdom that is not available from any other source. Encouraging them to share their life stories brings to light what has propelled them to become a part of the elite group of women holding senior administrative positions in today’s colleges and universities.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

I will never know the experience of others, but I can know my own, and I can approximate theirs by entering their world.

--Shulamit Reinharz, social scientist

Introduction

Learning from others who have gone before us is a traditional method of knowledge transfer. In all occupations, we use techniques handed down from generation to generation until technology or research presents us with improved methods. Advances in technology and discoveries in research sometimes leap ahead with amazing speed and sometimes seem to remain idle for long periods of time. Regardless of technology or research, pioneers pave the way at a constant pace for future generations, providing stability to those who follow and fill their vacated positions. This process is apparent in leadership development. The experiences of today's leaders pave the way for the leaders of tomorrow.

Women leaders are a minority, but the percentage of female leaders has increased in recent history. Legal policies that encourage diversity are responsible for some of the influx, but a changing culture has also encouraged women to increase their leadership capabilities and take advantage of leadership opportunities. Colleges and universities provide an important environment for young female students to begin developing leadership abilities. Female leadership on college campuses provides role models for both female faculty and students and encourages tomorrow's female leaders. Role models are educators without the formal setting of a classroom. They teach by example,

and by passing their wisdom on to other people who have aspirations to follow in the same path. By listening to the experiences of women who have become leaders in higher education, others can gain insight and entry into leadership positions.

This study employed transcendental phenomenology as the research method to study successful female leadership in higher education. Because the phenomenon of female leadership in top administrative levels occurs in only 21 percent of collegiate leadership positions, studying the women who hold those positions on today's campuses provided answers to the research questions proposed in this study. Interviews were the primary method for gathering data, and a survey instrument was the secondary method in this mixed methods study. The survey provided additional data by gathering demographic and descriptive information from the entire population of women presidents, vice presidents, and provosts in Oklahoma's public higher education institutions.

Rationale for methods

Entering another person's world and living their experiences through their spoken words is a unique opportunity to learn. Social scientist Shulamit Reinharz admitted that while qualitative research had inadequacies, it also provided a unique opportunity to learn through other people's experiences. She stated, "I will never know the experience of others, but I can know my own, and I can approximate theirs by entering their world. This approximation marks the tragic, perpetually inadequate aspect of social research" (1984, p. 365).

This phenomenological leadership study seeks to explain the composition of successful female leadership in colleges and universities by reporting the traits,

motivations, views, and experiences of today's women leaders. Moustakas (1994) clarified transcendental phenomenology, describing it as "the appearance of things, of phenomena just as we see them and as they appear to us in consciousness" (p. 49). The transcendental aspect of this method demands that a research study include complete descriptions of perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and any other data that could possibly explain the phenomena. Therefore, a mixed methods study such as this one, using interviews and a survey instrument, is an appropriate technique to study women presidents, vice presidents, and provosts. Creswell refers to this type of validation procedure when discussing mixed methods, saying "data analysis in mixed methods research occurs both within and between the quantitative and the qualitative approaches" (Creswell, 2003, p. 220). In keeping with the phenomenology intent of the study, mixed methods will broaden the content of the qualitative data.

This study seeks an explanation of how female higher education administrators' leadership evolved and how they sustain success. The first-hand accounts from successful women provide professional mentorship through rich descriptions that cannot be captured by mere numbers in quantitative research. The survey instrument added depth and breadth to the study by observing the past and current experiences that allowed the participants to progress to their current administrative position and also reporting the female administrator's demographic data, motivations, and personal views of barriers to female leadership.

Since the 1980s, phenomenology has become a highly respected and effective approach to studying human experiences for social science research (Wimpenny & Gass, 2000). Phenomenology research is defined by Schwandt as a "careful description of

ordinary conscious experience of everyday life” (2001, p. 191) in which the researcher attempts to describe the essence of a phenomenon. Hoshmand (1989) stated that qualitative research, which includes phenomenology research, is appropriate in addressing meanings and perspectives of participants. Still another definition by Patton defines phenomenology simply as finding out “what people experience and how they interpret the world” (2002, p. 106). These definitions of phenomenology imply that if researchers have not experienced the phenomenon themselves, the best way to learn about it is to talk to people who have experienced it firsthand and draw from their knowledge.

Phenomenological research attempts to reveal the core meanings of experiences and how the common experiences caused a phenomenon to occur. Capturing the essence through studying people who belong to a designated group can lead to understanding the phenomenon and provide important information to others outside the group. Women who serve as senior administrators in colleges and universities share the common bond of being an elite group that comprises only 21 percent of all college presidents in the United States (American Council on Education, 2002b). In Oklahoma, the state where this study occurred, females constitute only 6 percent of the college president positions and 23 percent of all president, vice president, and provost positions in the public universities. Studying the members of this elite group captures their essence, explains their success, and provides guidance to other women seeking administrative positions.

A phenomenology study scrutinizes everyday experiences from the point of view of the participants. The term commonly used in phenomenology research that refers to everyday experiences and its effect on social or professional development is *life-world*

(Schwandt, 2001). This study focused on describing the life-world of a female president, vice president, or provost. Studying the women who are leaders of our higher educational institutions by probing their past and present experiences while seeking to understand the root of their determination and the development of their leadership skills identifies the qualities that made these women successful.

The common themes that emerged from the administrators' stories portrays the qualities and the background that lead them to university administration. The essence of their success emerged from the interviews to identify for others, and in some cases to the women themselves, how they came to their current administrative position. As is the case in many qualitative research studies, allowing the participants to share their experiences benefited the participants as well as other people. Other studies (Belenky et al., 1986; Helgesen, 1990; Stanford-Blair & Dickmann, 2005) involving interviews concluded that women feel a sense of refinement upon sharing their knowledge. In a study involving 135 participants, the conclusions included the following:

Women typically approach adulthood with the understanding that the care and empowerment of others is central to their life's work. Through listening and responding, they draw out the voices and minds of those they help to raise up. In the process, they often come to hear, value, and strengthen their own voices and minds as well. (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 48)

Standford-Blair and Dickman (2005) interviewed 36 prominent people from various professions concerning leadership issues. In this study involving both male and female leaders, one theme pertaining to females in particular indicates the power that mentoring exudes:

Many of the women interviewed expressed the power of other women as role models, supporters, and indispensable mentors in their formation. These women learned from other women that they could be strong, smart, and effective in whatever they endeavored. Learning these lessons early in their lives instilled a keen affinity for such attributes as well as a sense that they could be strong, smart, and effective. (p. 24)

Both the mentor and the learner in a mentoring relationship stand to gain. The study on women administrators presented in the following two chapters provides insight into the leadership qualities and the methods by which women administrators have managed to climb to the top rungs of the ladder in higher education administration, thus benefiting others interested in seeking administrative positions. The study also provides mentoring opportunities to women who serve as senior administrators in colleges. By verbalizing their rise to the top, the administrators affirmed their own success while empowering others to achieve high goals.

Procedures employed in phenomenology

Moustakas (1994) and Creswell (1998; 2000) outlined three steps to be taken in phenomenological research. The first step is called bracketing. Since the researcher is looking for an understanding of how a phenomenon has evolved in a group of people, removing all preconceived notions and prejudices is essential. The researcher must have an open mind to the information he or she gathers from the participants in the study. The researcher's own interpretations must be suspended so the participant's world will be studied without imposing preconceptions on the study. In a sense, the researcher enters the participant's world (Tesch, 1990). Although it is a difficult task for humans to refrain

from bringing their own views into a study, both trustworthiness and reliability of any qualitative research method depends a great deal on the ability of the researcher to remain impartial and refrain from imposing bias on the findings (Moustakas, 1994). Bracketing is also stressed by Creswell (1998; 2000) as an important step, one that must be taken early in the study to prevent the researcher from putting a false slant on the findings and reducing trustworthiness and reliability. Creswell suggests that qualitative researchers discuss the beliefs and biases they bring to a study in an “open and honest narrative that will resonate well with readers” (1998, p. 196).

The second step in phenomenological research is horizontalization. During this phase, the researcher lists every statement that is relevant to the study and gives them equal value. Although to the researcher, it may seem that some statements made by the participants are not relevant, they should be listed regardless of the researcher’s initial impression (Moustakas, 1994). Themes may possibly develop from some seemingly insignificant statements. The researcher should become immersed in the data until a feeling of true understanding develops and “a sense of the whole” is accomplished (Tesch, 1990, p. 93).

The third step is to cluster the statements into themes. Once all data is gathered and clustered, the statements that are common to many of the participants will become themes (Moustakas, 1994). For example, suppose data is gathered and six college presidents state that they had five to ten years experience in a financial management position prior to their presidency. As the data is analyzed, experience and training in finance emerges as a significant theme for serving as a senior administrative position in a college. The researcher consistently goes back and forth from the data to the text to the

themes. This procedure, known as the constant comparative method, ensures the completeness and authenticity of the data being reported and merged into themes (Tesch, 1990).

During this process, the essence of the phenomenon becomes apparent. Having “essence” is a characteristic that is identified with phenomenology. The essence is the core meanings that are understood by the people experiencing the phenomenon (Patton, 2002). For example, the essence of sadness experienced by giving birth to a stillborn baby is something that could be described only by women having gone through that experience. In-depth interviews with a number of women who have shared this experience would capture the true essence of the phenomenon. In this women’s leadership study, the essence of success can be described by the women who have achieved it.

Following bracketing, horizationalization, and clustering, the researcher is then ready to write the data analysis using structural and textural descriptions. Structural descriptions explain how the phenomenon transpired and textural descriptions tell what the participants experienced. During data analysis, researchers commonly bring personal experience into the study. The structural description explores the phenomenon from the participant’s various frames of reference. The researchers provide an objective perspective since they have researched the background of the study topic and heard all of the participants’ stories.

Since the researcher gathers phenomenological data from the participants, good communication skills are essential for the researcher. Empathizing with participants, asking good questions, and listening intently are skills Merriam (1998) lists as necessary

for efficient data collecting. Claiming that empathy is the foundation of rapport, Merriam explains that an interview is productive when there is an atmosphere of trust. Since the qualitative researcher attempts to find out what is in and on someone else's mind, asking good interview questions in a setting of trust allows information to flow freely. A good interview is a conversation with a purpose. The researcher allows the participant to talk freely, listening carefully for any leads to important information that might be probed or explored further. The interview guide, or list of questions, is a general guideline, but the interviewer should be flexible and allow the participant to set the direction of information flow.

Procedures such as member checking, triangulation, thick description, peer reviews, and external audits establish validity in qualitative research. Creswell (2003) compares validity in qualitative research to viewing the same data through various lenses. The lens of the researcher is the first observation in the research study. The researcher gathers and interprets the data. The second lens is the participants of the study. Member checking is a common way to employ the second lens. During member checking, the researcher seeks the participant's view of the interpreted data to assure accuracy. For example, in phenomenology, the researcher asks the participants to verify the accuracy of interviews and provide any clarification or correction prior to the report of findings. The third lens is an external audit. In this phase, an external researcher examines the documentation of the study's process, data, and findings. The external researcher "provides support, plays devil's advocate, and pushes the researcher to the next step methodologically" (Creswell, 2003, p. 129). Viewing the interpretation of qualitative data through these three lenses assures credibility of the findings.

Triangulation is another way to guard against threats to trustworthiness.

Triangulation involves using multiple methods of gathering data, such as interview transcripts, field notes, and observation. Another type of triangulation is methods triangulation, which means employing more than one research method (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 2002; Creswell, 2003). For example, using both qualitative and quantitative methods to gather data is methods triangulation. Analyzing the convergence of information from all sources provides assurance that the findings are valid. In this study, field notes taken during interviews, tape recording of interviews, and transcription of interviews provided triangulation. Using both interviews and a survey instrument is also triangulation.

One of the threats to trustworthiness in a qualitative research study is the subjectivity that is involved in the researcher playing such an instrumental part in the study. In phenomenology, the researcher plays the role of the data collection instrument. As discussed previously, bracketing is an essential step to eliminate the researcher's own biases and preferences influencing the findings of the study. To guard against this threat, thorough field notes taken by the researcher ensure that all observable data is recorded. In this study, the researcher wrote during and immediately after the interviews to include a complete account of the interview experience. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The verbatim transcriptions are necessary for member checking and for the co-researcher to have adequate access to the data. Multiple researchers analyzing the data will lessen the threat of researcher bias.

Sample

A common characteristic of qualitative research is the small number of human participants used in the studies. Purposeful sampling is a common type used for a phenomenological study because it allows the researcher to select a small group of information-rich cases for study. A simple definition of purposeful sampling is selecting participants that can give the best information about the research questions because they have in-depth knowledge about the study topic. Homogeneous purposeful sampling is a group of similar participants that become the focus of data collection. These homogeneous cases assure the researcher that the data collected is truthful and in-depth. The participants need to have experienced the phenomenon first hand and be willing and able to verbalize the full mental and physical experience to the researcher (Creswell, 1998; Patton, 2002; Tesch, 1988). Purposeful sampling, used for the survey instrument, targeted the entire population of 39 female presidents, vice presidents, and provosts in Oklahoma. Homogeneous purposeful sampling was used for the interviews; the research questions probed six of the presidents, vice presidents, and provosts for in-depth information about their success.

The interview participants in this study were a group of six women, all senior administrators, serving at comprehensive research, four-year, and two-year public institutions with all three types of institutions represented in the sample population. The purpose of the interviews was to gain thick, rich descriptions of successful female leadership and provide themes related to female leadership. Six of the 39 senior administrators were invited, and subsequently accepted, to serve as interview participants in the study. The interview participants included:

- 2 senior vice presidents/provosts from two research institutions
- 1 vice provost for academic affairs from a research institution
- 1 associate provost from a four-year institution
- 1 president from a four-year institution
- 1 provost/vice president for academic affairs from a two-year community college

Six is an acceptable sample size to interview for a phenomenological study according to experts on qualitative research. Creswell has suggested a sample size of “up to ten people” (1998, p. 113) and reports observing sample sizes of 1 to 325 participants for phenomenological studies (p. 122). Tesch states “phenomenological researchers have traditionally worked with at least five to ten people. The limits on the number of participants are imposed by the researcher’s available resources in conducting intensive, multiple, in-depth explorations with each of the study participants” (1988, p. 3). Therefore, the researcher conducted interviews with six administrators.

The survey portion of this study polled the entire population of 39 female presidents, provosts, and vice presidents in Oklahoma’s public colleges and universities. For the purpose of this study, senior administrator is defined as president, vice president, or provost. Among Oklahoma’s 25 public higher education institutions, 76 percent of the institutions have at least one female serving in a senior administrative position of president, provost, or vice president (Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, 2005). The group of 39 participants for this study surfaced from the institutions that employed a female in one of those senior administrative positions. This group of 19 institutions included 2 comprehensive research institutions, 8 four-year institutions, and 9

two-year community colleges. A high response rate, 85 percent, resulted from 33 of the 39 administrators completing and returning the survey. The survey gathered demographic data, educational background and career track information, and self-assessed motivation factors and barriers. A table of Oklahoma institutions and the number of female senior administrators serving at each institution appears in Appendix F.

Procedures

This transcendental phenomenological leadership study involved both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The primary method for gathering data was interviews. The interview guide (see Appendix A) developed from questions used in two previous studies. The previous researchers found these questions very effective in gathering information concerning leadership. Stanford-Blair and Dickman (2005) reported the results of their qualitative study in the book *Leading Coherently*. Their interview guide consisted of three broad questions with several prompts related to each of the questions to assure thorough revelation of the topic. Stanford-Blair and Dickman interviewed 36 leaders from government, law, business, education, health, and other fields, revealing an understanding of the meaning the leaders made of their experiences and the essence of their success. The interview questions used by Hancock (1989) in her study of 20 women targeted women's perception of themselves and how their sense of self developed during adulthood. Hancock added a question to her last interviews that she felt was one of the most important questions because it directly tapped the core material. The question pertained to the women's description of their adult life and "when in their lives they most felt themselves" (p. 239). Since Hancock identified this question as being so valuable, the researcher felt it would be valuable in this study also. Although

there were only four main questions, several prompts were also provided on the interview guide. Using a small number of probing, self-reflecting questions allowed the interview to flow like a conversation and prevented the researcher from being tied to the list of questions. The researcher expanded upon cues from the participants' answers to gain the thick, rich descriptions that are so important in qualitative research.

The secondary method of gathering data was a survey instrument administered to the entire population of female senior administrators in Oklahoma. The purpose of the surveys was to gather descriptive data that will provide depth and breadth to the interview data. A survey was chosen for the secondary method because it provided a way to gather information from the entire population and provided rapid turnaround. The surveys supported and added to the findings of the interviews.

One section of the survey instruments (see Appendix B) gathered demographic data concerning the participants' personal life, background, and education. In addition to demographic data of the population, the survey also gathered qualitative data pertaining to the research questions.

Another section of the survey instrument gathered participants' views on barriers to women seeking leadership positions (see Page 2 of Appendix B). The researcher devised the list of barriers from the extensive literature review in Chapter 2. Leadership theories, motivation theories, and women's development theories relate to barriers for women leaders. Review of the literature revealed barriers pertaining to career participation and career advancement. The survey instrument encouraged additional qualitative data concerning barriers from the survey participants.

A third section of the survey instrument measured internal and external motivation (see Page 3 of Appendix B). The motivation statement section is a modification of an instrument used by previous researchers (Vallerand & Bissonnette, 1992; Vallerand, Pelletier, Vlais, Briere, Senecal, & Vallieres, 1993). The original instrument used Deci's and Ryan's (1985; 2000) self-determination theory as the theoretical base in devising their survey.

The survey was anonymous. To assure privacy, the researcher assigned pseudonyms to the participants, or referred to them simply as "an administrator" rather than their current title. One of the assumptions of this study was that the participants would be truthful in their responses to questions. Providing anonymity to the participants facilitates this assumption by encouraging honesty and full disclosure.

Approval of the University of Oklahoma Institutional Review Board (IRB) was necessary prior to collection of the data. While awaiting the approval, the researcher used a directory provided by the state's department of higher education to locate the female administrators that constituted the study's population. The directory provided the administrators' names, phone numbers, postal addresses, and e-mail addresses. The researcher created a database that provided a quick, simple, reference for contacting the administrators. By phone, the researcher invited the women administrators to participate in a survey to gather demographic and descriptive information concerning the current population of women leaders. Because names are often genderless, the phone calls clarified questions concerning the gender of higher educational institutions' presidents, vice presidents, or provosts. During the phone call, a brief, simple explanation of the study was given and an inquiry made as to whether the institution's president or provost

was a potential participant. The final sample population count for the study was 39 female administrators.

Following approval by the IRB, the researcher contacted by phone and invited six female administrators to be an interview participant in the study. At least one participant from each of the three types of institutions was included in this study. The three types of institutions are comprehensive research universities, four-year universities, and two-year community colleges. The interviews lasted from 45 minutes to 90 minutes. Five of the interviews were conducted by face-to-face meetings at the administrators' institutions. Due to scheduling conflicts and weather conditions, one interview was held via interactive video. The interview guide in Appendix A was used to gather the interview data.

The six participants read and signed informed consent forms. Upon permission granted by the each participant, the interviews were tape-recorded. The researcher observed and recorded field notes during the interviews. Member checking occurred as each participant received full interview transcriptions and submitted minor corrections. According to Tesch (1988), the participants should be asked to confirm and, when appropriate, correct the data. Member checking provides triangulation for the study and assures an accurate capture of the essence of each woman's perspective and views.

The researcher employed bracketing during the interviews, observations, and feedback from the participants. The extensive literature review on leadership and women's development aided the researcher in developing a broad scope of leadership. The role the researcher has played as a mentor and role model to students was bracketed in order to gather the data with as little bias as possible. Twenty years of teaching

experience in the field of education aids the researcher in bracketing since both experience and age enable open mindedness and allows prejudices and preconceived notions to be put aside. An experienced researcher, serving as a co-researcher and peer reviewer, also read the interviews. The peer reviewer provided consultation to lessen the threat of biases and aid with data analysis.

To analyze the interviews, the researcher created a chart that listed the major ideas from each participant. Listing all main ideas is essential since some seemingly insignificant statements might possibly form themes during data analysis. After listing the major ideas of each participant, careful examination revealed commonalities among the participant's statements. These commonalities become themes. As themes emerge, the major ideas were moved around in the chart as they combined with other ideas of the same theme. Using the constant comparative method, there was continuous evaluation between the data, major ideas, and themes to ensure complete accurate reporting of the data.

After clustering the data into themes, the researcher wrote the data analysis using structural and textural descriptions. The textural descriptions provided first-hand accounts of the participant's experiences. The structural descriptions provided the researcher's objective view using the researcher's knowledge of the subject and the advantage of having heard all of the participant's stories. Using thick, rich descriptions that are characteristic of phenomenology was an important aspect of this phase.

Following the interviews, the researcher mailed the survey instrument following Creswell's (2003, p. 158) suggested timeline for mailed surveys. The first step in the survey procedure was a phone call to each of the 39 women presidents, vice presidents,

or provosts in Oklahoma's public higher education institutions. After a brief description of the study and an explanation of the benefits provided to the participants and other people, the senior administrator was asked if she was willing to be a participant in the study. If she agreed to participate, further explanation stated that she would be receiving the survey via regular mail in approximately one week. Next, the anonymous survey was sent by first class mail along with a cover letter (see Appendix D) and self-addressed, stamped envelope, which provided the administrator with a quick, convenient way to return the survey. Ten days after the survey was mailed, a follow-up e-mail message (see Appendix E) was sent to each administrator, prompting her to respond to the survey if she had not already done so and asking her to respond to the e-mail message if she needed another survey mailed to her. Following this final e-mail message, three weeks were allowed for the return of the surveys.

Utilizing the data from the returned surveys involved summarizing the demographic and qualitative data provided by the participants. The demographic data summary gave descriptive statistics of the age, personal information, and backgrounds of women administrators. The data concerning barriers for women entering higher education administration provided a list of barriers and the magnitude of each barrier as seen by the women administrators. The motivation instrument determined if the administrators respond to intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. Appendix C provides a chart of the motivations and factors measured by the survey instrument.

One of the limitations regarding the methodology of this study was the small sample size. However, six is an acceptable sample size according to Creswell (1998) and the survey offered to the entire population of female administrators also gathered

qualitative data. A second limitation is that the study was confined to one state for convenience. However, since higher education institutions share similar missions across the United States and the percentage of women administrators in the senior positions is low across the entire United States, the findings of this study apply to people interested in collegiate leadership.

This study required approximately six months to complete. Following IRB approval, which required two weeks, the researcher made appointments for the interviews, which began within a few days. Following the transcription and member checking of the interviews, initial data analysis began simultaneously with the mailing of the survey instrument. The survey required approximately six weeks. Peer review by the co-researcher was performed prior to the writing of the findings and conclusions.

Understanding successful female leadership is an important step in promoting a greater population of women leaders in colleges and universities. This study seeks to capture the essence of female leadership through phenomenology. In-depth interviews provided a thorough look at the core of six female college presidents, provosts, and vice presidents. They were asked to divulge the origin of their success and the methods by which they sustained their success. Surveying the entire population of female senior administrators gathered demographic data and additional qualitative data concerning the leaders' perspectives of barriers and motivations. Making the essence of successful female leadership available through studies such as this one gives other women concrete information and encouragement to pursue their own leadership goals. Women administrators on college campuses are significant role models and encourage women

leadership in all vocations. Due to this radiating influence, increasing the female leaders on college campuses stands to benefit all of society.

CHAPTER FOUR

Findings

The day I was appointed President, I was much smarter than I was the day I retired.

--Joe Anna Hibler, university president emeritus

Introduction

The goal of this phenomenological study was to understand the composition of successful female leadership in higher education institutions. Gathering and analyzing data from women who currently hold positions of president, provost, or vice president, the researcher searched for emerging themes and other valid data that could explain the phenomenon.

Demographic Profile of Administrators

Thirty-three administrators, representing 85 percent of the population surveyed, provided the data for profiling Oklahoma's higher education senior administrators. The administrators' ages ranged from 35 to 62. The average age of the participants was 52; 58 percent of the participants were 55 years old or older. Table 1 summarizes the personal demographic data of the participants.

Table 1 Personal Data of Female Presidents, Provosts, and Vice Presidents of Oklahoma Colleges and Universities	
Marital status	80% married 9% divorced, not married 6% single, never married 5% divorced and remarried
Number of children	64% have 1-2 children, ranging from 3 to 35 years of age 24% have 3 or more children, ranging from 14 to 43 years of age 12% have no children
Race	91% Caucasian 6% African American 3% American Indian

Family background concerning birth order revealed that 31 percent of the administrators were first-born children, 21 percent were only children, 21 percent were the youngest children, and 27 percent were middle children. Table 2 presents other information on the administrators' family backgrounds.

<p>Table 2 Family Background Data of Female Presidents, Provosts, and Vice Presidents of Oklahoma Colleges and Universities</p>		
	Father	Mother
Percent of administrators/parents' highest level of education	3% elementary school 6% eighth-ninth grade 40% high school diploma 21% some college 15% bachelor's degree 3% master's degree 12% Ph.D., Ed.D., or J.D.	9% eighth-ninth grade 36% high school diploma 28% some college 18% bachelor's degree 9% master's degree
Percent of administrators/parents' occupation	28% farmer 21% engineer 18% executive/white collar 15% factory worker/blue collar 9% self-employed business owner 9% military	49% homemaker 15% high school teacher/counselor 12% secretary 9% social worker 9% restaurant/hotel employee 6% nurse

The participants held varying degrees and levels of education. The highest level of education for the participants was:

- 39 percent, or 13 of the 33 administrators, held Doctor of Education degrees in administration and adult education.
- 30 percent, or 10 of the 33 administrators, held Doctor of Philosophy degrees in areas such as adult education, higher education administration, research, theory, and evaluation.
- 18 percent, or 6 of the 33 administrators, held master's degrees in various fields.
- 9 percent, or 3 of the 33 administrators, held bachelor's degree in various fields.

- 3 percent, or 1 administrator, reported “some college,” and stated that she filled her position based on her past experience related to fiscal services.

The participants have held their current positions an average of 6 years, ranging from 5 months to 28 years. The results of the survey instrument indicated varying career tracks for the participants. Seventeen of the 33 administrators, or 52 percent, advanced to senior administration through faculty ranks. Within this group of 17 administrators, 5 began a career in higher education following elementary and secondary teaching experience. Ten of the 33 administrators, or 30 percent, advanced to their current position through entry-level administrative positions, such as director or assistant director. Six of the 33 participants, or 18 percent, began their careers in clerical positions, and advanced to administration as opportunities presented themselves.

The survey instrument also gathered data concerning barriers, internal motivation, and external motivation. Survey information and interview findings concerning these and other emerging themes are reported thematically later in this chapter.

Interview Findings

The researcher’s field notes consistently addressed the candidness of each participant. The interview participants disclosed humble, honest anecdotes in their responses. For example, one of the participants in this study, an experienced administrator in her eleventh year of senior administration, exhibited humility as she stated, “It’s funny for me to think about being in a leadership position because I still have to condition myself to think that I have any place at the table.” The quote from a retired university president that introduces this chapter is another example of the sincere humility displayed by administrators (Wootton, 2004). The president emeritus stated,

“The day I was appointed President, I was much smarter than I was the day I retired.”

Similar to this past president, the participants in this study are willing to let their everyday life as administrators guide them to better leadership methods, continuously changing and learning as they fulfill their senior administrative responsibilities. The data clearly implies that each administrator’s dedication to her institution takes precedence over personal agendas.

All of the administrators were willing to share their stories and spoke with clarity, emotion, and deep thought. With few exceptions, the administrators seemed to put their innermost thoughts on the interview table. One administrator expressed concern that, because of her position, she felt a need to “be careful” with the information she disclosed. However, after the interview began, she seemed to relax and enjoy the exchange of questions and answers. Two of the administrators did not speak as freely as the others about their background and did not disclose much of their life story, but gave good concrete evidence of their leadership and shared their perspective of leadership without restraint. The other four administrators spoke at length about their life stories and backgrounds. All of the administrators openly conducted a self-assessment of their traits and leadership styles and freely shared their perspectives and tangible leadership methods. Following the interviews, several of the administrators commented that they enjoyed the interview and expressed genuine interest in reading the findings. The body language and facial expressions of the group of six women indicated honesty and relaxation. The self-disclosing, sometimes humorous, accounts of their pasts were admirable and bold. Their responses indicated trust and a belief that their stories needed to be told. Upon initial contact with the participants, many demonstrated surprise when

they were invited to be an interview participant. One administrator, combining humility and humor, stated “I can not imagine what I could have to offer to the study.”

The interview and survey data indicate that the road to higher education leadership for women is extremely varied. Although themes emerged, there were also distinct differences in the women’s backgrounds and perspectives that are an important part of the findings. The various backgrounds and areas of expertise held by the interview participants caused the women to approach many of the interview questions from different angles. The inquiry “tell me your life story” triggered the most varied responses from the women. Some were willing to share their life in detail while others limited their responses to their professional life. The responses to that inquiry, presented in the following vignettes, provide a profile of the group that forms today’s higher education female administrators. In order to provide a thorough description of the data, the findings report both the differences and similarities. Combining the participants’ data into one finding would blur the distinctiveness of their stories. The following vignettes reveal the varied backgrounds and interests of the women who all arrived at a senior administrative post in their career. Some are motivated by internal factors while others are obviously moved by certain outside influences. The vignettes give a voice to each administrator’s story and allow their individualities to surface. Each woman’s unique qualities surfaced, permitting a rare glimpse into higher education leadership personnel. The data revealed emerging themes discussed later in this chapter and specify the commonalities shared among the participants’ backgrounds and leadership careers. Since the backgrounds of the six women were very different, permitting each woman’s story to

stand alone demonstrates how each woman paved her own path to a leadership position in higher education.

The population of both the interview participants and the survey participants was limited to presidents, provosts, and vice presidents. The researcher assigned each woman a pseudonym to aid in storytelling and refers to the participants simply as “administrators” in the findings to maintain confidentiality of the participants. The small population size could make identity of the women possible in some instances; therefore, referring to the women as “administrator” creates a global reference and respects their privacy.

Interview Participants

Francine

Francine’s current position as a university administrator follows a career that combined nursing and nursing education. She received a Bachelor of Science in nursing, a Master of Science in psychiatric mental health nursing, and a Doctor of Philosophy in research and theory. Her career prior to administration involved three years as a nurse and 25 years as a nursing professor at a four-year university. She has served in her current administrative role for two years. Throughout the 25 years spent in the classroom, she continued to work part time in clinical nursing. Her lifelong dedication to the nursing profession was apparent as she stated,

Continuing a clinical practice kept me fresh in the classroom with new stories to tell about application and how we, as nurses, apply our practice. Nursing practice is as much an art as it is a science, and it takes practice to be an excellent nurse. I considered it part of my job. I was, and still am, a good nurse. When I began

teaching, I had been practicing long enough to be aware that there were others in my field whose caliber of work I didn't appreciate. It was nice to be able to teach students that, while there were different ways to do many things, there were also definitely some ways not to do things. I needed to teach students how to practice safely and competently and grow their skills.

Today, Francine demonstrates continuing loyalty to her first career choice by serving on the Oklahoma Board of Nursing, a governor-appointed position that keeps her politically connected. She is honored to serve the nursing profession from a decision-making leadership role at the state level. Devotion to the nursing profession and the honor of serving on the state board was so important to her that it weighed heavily in the decision to accept her current administrative position. She stated,

My position on the Oklahoma Board of Nursing played a role in whether I would accept this position. I knew how busy I had been as a member of the board, but I was going to be even busier as [an officer]. If I was going to have to give up my position on the state board, then I wasn't going to accept this administrative position.

Francine is the youngest of eight children, all born within two years of each other. Her father was a farmer with a high school education and her mother was a homemaker with two years of college. When asked to tell about her life, she described her childhood as "wonderful" and recalls "an excellent first-year experience in school" as "one of the best years of her life." She continued a relationship with her first grade teacher through her adulthood and credits the teacher for "getting her off to a good start." Francine grew up in a small community among a close-knit family. From her position as the youngest

of eight children, she took advantage of learning from older brothers and sisters.

Capitalizing on this learning opportunity shaped her ability to deal with other people, and influenced her choice of a nursing career:

As the youngest, I was able to take advantage of the life experiences that my older brothers and sisters had. I watched them make mistakes and tried not to repeat the mistakes they made. I certainly made enough of my own, but I think I was in a good position. I learned very early to ask for what I wanted and to be persistent. As a child, my take was that women could be a missionary, teacher, mother, or a nurse. Those were the socially approved career choices for women. My oldest sister was a nurse. She shaped my values and goals at a very young age. She graduated from nursing school when I was six, and I remember thinking that I also wanted to be a nurse. I never wavered from that.

Francine is married and has two grown children. She and her husband still live in the same small community she grew up in as a child. Residing in their small community near her family aided with childcare when their children were small. Francine stated, “My parents encouraged me to do what I wanted to do, and my mother helped me out any way she could. If I needed childcare at the last minute, she made herself available.”

Education was important to her parents and she credits them for her sense of purpose and strong work ethic. She communicates frequently with her six living siblings and maintains a close relationship with her aging mother, who still lives independently at age 87. Francine expressed gratitude that her nursing skills give her the opportunity to serve as her mother’s primary health provider. Her father and one sibling died some years ago.

She spoke of her father with deep affection and emotion as she described her relationship with him:

My father and I were very good friends. My dad always told me that he wanted me to have a career so I could support myself. As an adult, I found out that he was not happy with his career choice of farming. He had been unhappy most of his adult life with this decision, but I never knew that until I was an adult. That says a lot about the kind of man he was. He never complained. He was a very positive person.

Francine's positive attitude reflected her father's optimism as she described her own life and career. She spoke frequently of happiness in her personal life with a husband who has been supportive of her career and satisfaction in her combined career of nursing and teaching. In her role as a faculty member, she frequently "stepped up to the plate" when no one else would volunteer for unpleasant tasks. If she could "learn something or develop as a person or have a positive outcome for the institution by serving on a committee that no one else would volunteer for, then it was worth it." In reflecting on her career and promotions, she is adamant that her continual willingness to serve on committees and her dedication to the growth of the university was a substantial contribution to the achievement of her current administrative role.

I served on the [faculty governance] committee and other leadership committees often because other people didn't want to. I was on the [faculty governance] committee when the President formed the North Central Steering Committee. When the call for volunteers was announced, you could hear groans around the room. When they asked who would serve, no one volunteered, so I said I would

do it. At the time, I was pushing to finish my dissertation and I remember wondering what else I could possibly do to myself. I really think the decision to serve on that committee was the catalyst that set everything else in motion for what changed in my career over the next few years.

Francine's choice of a nursing career enabled her to pursue her interests and fulfilled her desire to be a health care provider as she pursued a master's degree and career in psychiatric nursing. Although she faced criticism concerning her choice of psychiatric nursing, she felt her interest in people would enable her to serve the population very well. She stated,

I have always been interested in human relationships. What I have found in my practice is that people are looking for answers to their own life's problems and they choose a specialty area to help them in that way. We all have issues and the choices we make allow us to travel down a certain path.

Francine spoke of ignoring voices of authority and pursuing her own beliefs several times during her life story. When she chose to practice nursing in a small rural hospital, her teachers at the institution where she received her baccalaureate degree warned her of the high burnout rate that typically occurred for nurses at small hospitals. She met the well-meant warning with conviction, stating, "I still wanted to practice nursing here, so I came back to [my small community]." On another occasion, a physician discouraged her from pursuing a career in psychiatric nursing. Again, she assessed her own talents and pursued the path in which she felt she could be the best service to her chosen field. As the primary income provider for her growing family, a

field that related to both the clinical setting and nursing education had the added attraction of job security for her.

Francine's life story demonstrates her abilities to nurture and persevere. Her background and dedication to a nursing career pegs her as a caregiver, and she brings some unique leadership qualities to an administrative office. The discussion of emerging themes later in this chapter addresses other aspects of Francine's leadership performance and perspective.

Brenda

Brenda has served in her current administrative position for sixteen years. Unlike many college administrators, she did not come to senior administration through faculty ranks. Her background includes various experiences as an administrative assistant before acquiring administrative positions at her current institution and promoting to the top-ranking position she now fills. She has no children, and is divorced and remarried. Her educational background includes a Bachelor of Science in sociology, a Master of Business Administration in management, and a recently acquired Doctor of Philosophy in higher education administration.

Brenda's response to the question about her life story was that her life was a "mixture of complete joy and tragedy." She was the only daughter and second born of three children. Her father was a college-educated petroleum engineer who provided a lucrative income for his family and was pursuing a promising career in the oil industry. Her mother had a high school education. Further details revealed that she had a "wonderful life with normal parents" but that ideal life had been shattered when her father died when she was a young child. Upon the death of her father, Brenda's family

understandably suffered great emotional and financial losses. Brenda's own words eloquently describe her family's heartbreaking downfall:

We were a wonderful Walton-like family. I was nine when my father died. It threw my family into a tizzy. My poor mother was left with three children between the ages of 6 and 14. Our Walton-like family became even less Walton-like when my mother married a fellow who ended up taking all our money. We ended up moving to [the small town] where my mother was from. We lived in a rental house that was just crummy and my mother found [minimum-wage] jobs here and there. My brothers and I made good grades in school and were very active in school activities. We were fine, but it was kind of nutty. My mother began to drink too much and became an alcoholic. We hardly had any money and usually ran out of money at the end of the month. My older brother was a national merit scholar and a very nice, smart young man. When he was 17 years old, a train hit his car and killed him. That sent my mother into a worse situation. I continued to make good grades, be on the tennis team, be a cheerleader, and do all those things. It was a roller coaster kind of existence. Nothing happened to me personally, but I was affected by these things because it affected my family and that affected my home life. I fit the standard 'child of an alcoholic' syndrome. I could separate out any bad thing that was happening at my house with what went on in my outside world. When I opened the door of my house to leave, I was happy and probably overcompensated looking happy. I made good grades and did what I consider to be normal things, but [at the end of each day], I would have home to deal with. I got very good at compartmentalizing things.

Because of her rather chaotic home life, Brenda was eager to go off to college upon graduation from high school. Since she made good grades in high school, she was awarded some scholarships, although not near enough to fully fund her college expenses. She chose a college that was far enough away from her childhood home so she, by her own admission, “legitimately could not go home very often.”

A lifeline of stability existed for Brenda in a Texas cotton farm owned and operated by her paternal grandparents. As a child and teenager, she spent summers on the cotton farm and acknowledges the security it offered to her and credits her stamina and work ethic to working on the farm. The security and refuge offered by her grandparents surfaced several times during the interview.

I didn’t have much money at college, but I had negotiated with my grandfather, who was a cotton farmer, to pay for my college. The reason he was willing to do that is because every summer from the time I was about two until I was nineteen, I spent my entire summer on his farm driving a tractor, pulling cotton, hoeing cotton, or whatever. I loved being out there; it was perfect. I know now why he paid us so poorly for driving a tractor. He saved his money to pay for our college. You can’t fault that. I didn’t think much about it at the time. He used to pay us a dollar an hour. When I was nineteen, I was still making a dollar an hour, and I never gave it a thought. Then when I was thirty years old and reminiscing about how much I enjoyed being on that cotton farm, I thought “minimum wage was higher than that, and he employed migrant workers, and I know he paid them minimum wage.” I appreciate the fact that he paid for my college, but I think I actually paid for my college by having him save it for me.

College was an enjoyable place for Brenda, and she felt compelled to join a sorority in order to have a small group of people with whom to associate. One of the obvious advantages of fraternal organizations is that they provide a surrogate family for college students. Brenda, given her background, could understandably benefit from a supportive atmosphere. Again, she turned to her grandfather and negotiated the funds for the sorority expenses. She stated, "I talked my grandfather into paying for me joining and becoming a member of [a sorority]." She chose a particular sorority because "those girls appealed to me. . .they were regular people." She made a four point grade point average her first semester, moved into the sorority house her sophomore year, and was subsequently elected president of the sorority. She described her reign of power pleasantly:

The president is usually a junior, but I got elected as a sophomore. I had a great time with it. It was a perfect place to practice leadership skills even though I didn't realize what I was practicing. I learned a lot about people because, as president, I was trying to get a large number of people going in the same direction. I didn't have any real authority over them. It was only a perceived authority because they elected me. I learned how to persuade and cajole. It was very good training ground for work.

When Brenda graduated from college, she and a friend moved to Lake Tahoe and worked in casinos. She stated, "I didn't know what I wanted to do next and so I just avoided adulthood." She eventually moved back to Oklahoma and landed a job as the communication consultant for a major company. She was, in fact, the first female in the state hired for the position. Although the position paid well, it became apparent to

Brenda that the sales position was something at which she would never excel. The time of drifting about after college and working in sales proved valuable to Brenda by teaching her what she was not good at. She explained,

The reason I mentioned this story is that it caused me to get a feel for the things that I'm more suited to do. I had sold things my entire life—spirit ribbons, things in college—I would sell more than anyone, but I couldn't do this job and be successful.

During this time, she married a man who was working on a Ph.D. and, in the course of events, she became interested in pursuing a graduate degree in business at the university he was attending.

After turning in my application, an associate dean called me over the next day to visit with him. He introduced me to a gentleman who turned out to be one of the deans of the college. He explained that he was looking for a graduate assistant to work for him and wanted to offer me the job. I accepted without thinking of the magnitude of what just happened. It was the luck of the draw, being in the right place at the right time. My tuition was free, as well as my spouse's. During the course of my position with him, he latched on to me and became the prized mentor that everyone would like to have. He took me everywhere, and I got to see how universities worked.

This opportunity and position seemed to be a turning point for Brenda as she described the next few years as a graduate assistant and, after completing a Master of Business Administration degree, she became the full time assistant to the dean. The position was another good training ground for future positions as she moved around and

landed various positions at other higher education institutions during the next ten years. When describing the various administrative assistant positions during the course of her early career, she described them as jobs where “she got to do a lot of fun things, met a lot of new people, and got to see new developments.” She typically stayed at each position for a period of three to five years. At one point, she worked for her husband part time in his psychology business and traveled around the country, pursuing her love of tennis competitions. However, the relaxed lifestyle did not fit well with her. She described her dissatisfaction as, “I just felt guilty. I felt like I had become a housewife, which is a bad thing to say.” In pursuing another job opportunity, she accepted an invitation to work for a university interim president. She resisted the offer initially, but the interim president eventually persuaded her to accept the job. Brenda found the position fascinating. She reflected, “I had this idea of how the president’s office is well-organized and runs perfectly, but it isn’t. Everything is chaotic, and chaos is right down my alley. I love things that are in a mess.” The position as assistant to the interim president evolved to her current position, and she has been in her current administrative position for sixteen years.

In reviewing Brenda’s early career, one gets a sense of constant upheaval, a struggle to succeed, or a search for the next available place of temporary comfort. Her childhood helped form her into a resilient person. She also seemed more driven by external motivation than the other interview participants. She frequently mentioned the pursuit of a higher salary or promotion during the recount of her life. Not surprisingly, she cited the “Walton family years” prior to her father’s death as one of her most comfortable times. After a few seconds’ pause, she also added that her college years

were a comfortable, pleasant time in her life. At this point in her career, she seems very content, confident, and satisfied in her current administrative position. However, she left the door open for change when she said, “I don’t think I’m egotistical, but I think I still make a difference in making this place work well. There may come a day when I don’t, and that is when I need to hit the road.” She uses humor and blatant honesty in dealing with her responsibilities, and one gets a sense that she has used the same leadership techniques since her days as a sorority president. Brenda’s coping skills developed at an early age out of necessity, and her adult experience refined them. She is a very determined administrator who shared her perspectives and leadership techniques openly. Additional data from Brenda’s interview is included in the thematic findings.

Ruby

Ruby’s three-year tenure as an administrator of a higher education institution follows former administrative positions at other institutions. She served as a university director of academic affairs and chief academic officer of a state regent’s office before coming to her current position. Her educational background consists of a Bachelor of Science in university studies, and both Master of Science and Doctor of Education degrees in higher education administration.

The inquiry concerning her life story yielded that she is the second born of three children, was raised in a rural community, and graduated from a small Oklahoma high school. Her family resided in Oklahoma before statehood, making her a fifth generation Oklahoman. Her parents’ highest level of education was high school. Her father worked in the oilfield industry; her mother was a homemaker. She is married, the mother of two grown children, and acknowledges that she has been very fortunate throughout her life.

She recalls the happiest, most comfortable time of her life was when she was “working at [a research institution] and having babies.” She summarized her life story by stating,

My rural roots are very important to me, and I try to remember that. I consider myself a small town girl. I was raised in a very traditional household and went to college immediately out of high school because that was where my boyfriend was. I had no aspirations for a career or a life separate from just getting married. I married at 19 and dropped out of school for seven years. When I returned to college, I finished my bachelor’s, master’s, and doctorate degrees while working full time. I never had a burning passion to go to college or to be a [university administrator]. When I entered the world of work, it became apparent to me that I was bright and capable and that I didn’t want to do routine, mundane things for the rest of my life. Education was the way to advance. As I received each succeeding advanced degree and had professional opportunities, I realized that I loved the challenge, growth, development, and greater responsibilities each new position brought.

Ruby has been in higher education administration for over two decades and reports that she has received many opportunities to perform duties beyond what some of her positions dictated. She credits those opportunities for giving her valuable learning experiences. Ruby seizes projects that involve unfamiliar territory as a way to embark on a learning opportunity. She acknowledges a job she had in high school and during the first year of her marriage as valuable contribution to her personal development. She says, “Working as a nurses’ aid taught me a lot about life. It taught me the value of hard work,

a lot of humility, and the importance of providing a small measure of comfort to people who need it so desperately.”

Ruby is a good example of a person who responds to internal motivation and permits it to lead her education and career path. As she matured in early adulthood, she realized her own potential and pursued an education and career path that provided the challenges she desired. In a very soft-spoken manner, she chose her words carefully when presented with a question, addressing each issue at hand with quiet reserve. When the inquiry, “Tell me your life story” was put before the participants, the researcher let the participants volunteer as much or as little as they wanted, acknowledging that a person’s life story is a personal matter. Ruby was very reserved and did not reveal personal anecdotes as freely as some participants. However, Ruby contributed a great deal to the information concerning leadership perspective and methods of leadership performance discussed later with the other emerging themes.

Martha

Martha’s career path transpired through seventeen years as a faculty member prior to her first administrative position. After being in administration for almost twenty years, eleven years in her current position, she still teaches an honors class because she feels it is important to “keep in touch with the students.” During her educational background, she earned three college degrees, including a Doctor of Philosophy, in psychology. Early in her career, she served as a professor at a liberal arts college prior to teaching at her current institution. She has served at her current institution for 33 years as both a faculty member and an administrator.

Martha was born and raised in a small town in upstate New York, the second born of three daughters in her family. She enjoyed a “wonderful childhood and a supportive family.” Her father had a high school education and was the manager of a manufacturing plant. Her mother had a master’s degree in English and taught high school at the small school where Martha attended. She quipped, “I had my mother as my home room teacher so I didn’t get to cut class.” She is married, the mother of two grown sons, and her husband is a faculty member at the institution where she works.

Since Martha graduated from high school in the late 1960s and attended college in the early 1970s, the tumultuous times of that era were issues she reflected upon and discussed briefly during the interview. She recalled specific differences during the era, citing that certain social aspects evolved from one end of the spectrum to the opposite end within a matter of a few years. Martha cited examples that ranged from conservative, such as observing the formal rules of signing in and out of the dormitories and dressing for dinner, to liberal, such as no curfews at all and dressing in army and navy clothing.

After receiving a bachelor’s degree, she attended graduate school. She revealed that she “had good grades, scored well on standardized tests, and decided to attend graduate school, not knowing what else to do.” Martha stated that she was “like most young adults during that time, terrified of the world of work.” She entered graduate school with a cohort group of eight students, all of whom were under the same federal fellowship grant. She went through graduate school in four years and landed her first teaching job prior to defending her dissertation. After teaching three years in New York, she received an offer to come to an Oklahoma institution. She stated,

I was single and didn't know anybody. I thought it very adventuresome, that Oklahoma was very exotic. I came here in 1979 and sought tenure in 1984. By then I had a husband and two children. I had a personal life and a professional life. Oklahoma has always been kind to me. I worked hard, and in Oklahoma, if you work hard with a passion, they help you. They don't feel threatened by you.

Martha described higher education as "life transformational." She reflected that her belief in higher education could be related to her late father's similar view. She stated, "My dad didn't have a college degree, and he was a bright, hard-working person—even he sensed that education transforms an individual."

Martha consistently mentioned how fortunate she has been throughout her personal and professional life. In fact, a close examination of the interview transcript revealed that she mentioned good luck and good fortune a total of ten times during the conversation. Interestingly, she sees the "good fortune" aspect as the reason that she is not a good role model for other women. She stated,

I think in some way, I might be a bad role model because people look at me and say, "she's never struggled, she never had any crisis." I have had small things in my life, but I've never had the kind of life-changing crisis that many people have. I've been lucky, and I reminded myself of that recently. For those reasons, I think that I might not be a good role model.

Martha is a soft-spoken woman who carefully formed her answers and frequently revisited a question asked earlier in the interview when another thought occurred to her. Early in the interview, when asked when she felt the most comfortable in her life, she stated, "My childhood was wonderful. I think as a child, you feel as comfortable as

you'll ever feel." At the end of the interview, she said, "I keep thinking about that question about comfort—it's an odd question in our time." The ensuing discussion between Martha and the researcher reflected on today's precarious world and the vulnerability our nation feels following the terrorists' attack on September 11, 2001. That particular question would likely be taken differently prior to that time.

Martha spoke extensively concerning professional relationships among senior administrators and the methods used at her institution to enhance its operation. She mentioned many current situations that affect higher education institutions nationwide. Her impressive worldview of the state and institution she serves keeps her position and institution in a global perspective. The interview with Martha revealed many interesting perceptions and tangible methods of how she conducts her leadership. The eleven years of senior administrator experience she brings to the table provided some of the most valuable data in the thematic findings discussion.

Sue

Sue's first offer for a higher education administrative position occurred at the same institution where she earned three graduate degrees. She earned a Bachelor of Science in bacteriology and government, a Master of Science in counseling psychology, and a Doctor of Philosophy in educational research and evaluation. Prior to earning a doctorate, she also earned an additional graduate degree in educational psychology at another institution. Her career track includes serving as a faculty member, director of a research center at a higher education institution, associate dean, and ten years as provost at two other institutions prior to coming to her current administrative position three years ago.

Sue was born and raised in rural Iowa and attended a small school, graduating from a class of eleven. The highest level of education for both of her parents was high school. Her father was a factory worker and her mother, a full time homemaker. Sue is the second born of two children. College education for their children was a high priority for her parents; therefore, both she and her brother, who is now deceased, earned doctorate degrees. Sue describes her life as “an incredible ride, one in which I have had lots of wonderful experiences that I never would have imagined in my wildest dreams.” She declared that “higher education literally changed [her] life.” She is currently divorced with one grown child, and she describes the last ten years of her life as being the most comfortable during which time she was serving as a senior administrator of various universities.

Sue’s experience in higher education administration spans several decades. Her early experience reflects her work ethic and teamwork abilities:

When I started as a faculty member, my area was research methods and evaluation. I began working with other faculty members in research design, writing articles together. I would also do data analysis for them. I subsequently had an opportunity to direct a research and development center. That was my first leadership position in higher education as an administrator. I had several opportunities in that same institution to go to the different levels of the institution and do different kinds of leadership activities.

Due to time constraints and traveling distance, this was the only interview in this research study that was not conducted as a face-to-face interview. At Sue’s suggestion, the interview was conducted by interactive video. Both Sue and the researcher were

familiar with interactive video as an alternative method for meetings, and they both felt comfortable with the decision. Although interactive video allows both parties to see each other, there is still a certain sacrifice of communication when meeting virtually instead of face-to-face. Sue's brief, precise, thoughtful answers allowed rapport to develop and encouraged a very productive meeting between her and the researcher. At the conclusion of the meeting, Sue offered encouragement and, if needed, more information via phone or another meeting.

Sue's summary of her life has a ring of determination and strong will. Her mannerisms are very precise and straightforward, and she answers questions in a similar manner. She brings thirteen years of experience as a senior administrator and contributes valuable data to the thematic findings of this study.

Amanda

Amanda has been serving in her current position for four years. She advanced in higher education administration through the faculty ranks, then became a department chair, dean, and associate vice president prior to her current position. She grew up in one of the largest cities in Oklahoma, the first born of two children. Her father, a lawyer, and mother, a homemaker, were both college graduates. Her educational background included all three degrees, including a Doctor of Philosophy in math education. From the standpoint of a divorced woman with no children, she offered some interesting insight concerning decisions women face about careers and motherhood. Her views, presented thematically with the other information concerning barriers, offer a deep understanding of time challenges and career-changing decisions faced by women.

Amanda's high energy level and positive attitude creates an atmosphere of power. During the interview, she frequently shared many anecdotes about mentoring aspiring leaders and people who inspired her. She credits her parents for her work ethic and strong determination. She stated, "I have a tremendous work ethic—it's ingrained in me. Other people probably see me as a workaholic." She praised a high school teacher for influencing the math aspect of her career. When speaking of other people who have influenced her, she mentioned a person she had been observing for several years:

There is a woman [in this city] who is not in higher ed—she is a civic leader—whom I have always found fascinating. She's very feminine, but she's also a very strong leader. She does it in her own style versus trying to copy someone else's style. She is one who has influenced me. The more you learn how you function best, the better you will be. Not everybody functions the same way.

Amanda spoke frequently of working hard and taking advantage of opportunities as they presented themselves. She stated,

You've got to prove that you are willing to work. It takes years of hard work and trying to anticipate the next step. You can't just react, you must anticipate what is going to happen, which involves developing your instincts. Everyone has instincts, but you have to follow the good ones. Over the years, I've had great opportunities for development. It just kind of progresses—you do one thing and it opens doors to something else.

Amanda is a very work-driven, career-oriented woman. She is enthusiastically involved in community and civic work and spoke of many contacts outside her institution that had helped or influenced her in some way. Although the position she fills at her

institution includes community and economic development, the information she revealed in the interview indicated that she is motivated to involve herself in the community and has done so for many years. It seems probable that she came to her current position naturally because of her interest in community development rather than becoming involved in community development out of the position's responsibilities. In fact, at the time of the interview, she was leaving her position within a few days to become chief executive officer of a private organization that promotes leadership training, a position that will allow her an even greater involvement in economic, business, and community outreach.

Amanda is a good example of a natural teacher. She identified the years in a college classroom as the time in her life that she was the most comfortable, and her warm, vivacious nature creates an atmosphere conducive to learning. When she spoke of her teaching experience in the math classroom, she said "Every day in class, I would see a light bulb come on for somebody, and it was an instant reward." She continues to teach even as an administrator and thrives on helping others succeed. By her own admission, she has "a sunny disposition" and labels herself "approachable." Those traits, combined with her network of contacts in the business world, make her impending move to the private sector an expected one. Higher education is losing a dynamic leader, one who served in higher education institutions for three decades, but her influence will continue to be felt by aspiring leaders in her new role.

Emerging Themes for Female Leadership

Theme: Leadership Perspective

The participants reflected and shared their view of leadership throughout the interviews. Each administrator's overall perspective is defined by her personal view of leadership, her career development, and her belief of what constitutes a successful leader. The leadership perspective theme emerged from the conglomeration of all of the participants' views and statements concerning successful leadership as witnessed by the participants during their careers. The view of successful leadership as seen from a leader's eyes includes techniques, traits, beliefs, and other issues pertaining to the general perception of leadership. The leadership perspective data is based on the participants' own leadership in addition to other successful people whom the participants view as being effective leaders. The participants described themselves and other successful leaders with such adjectives as decisive, visionary, tough, aggressive, hard working, tenacious, focused, professional, inclusive, collaborative, fair, and knowledgeable. Sub-themes pertaining to leadership perspective are leadership development, frustrations and self-doubt, female leadership, and the role luck plays in a higher education leader's career. The use of pseudonyms, introduced in the previous section, continues in this section.

The participants' view and definition of leadership came in varied forms. Brenda compared the view from a leader's eyes to "watching a movie and seeing all the things happen" and compared the ability to create change to "planting a seed and watching it grow." Keeping a global perspective of their institution's mission and the absence of a personal agenda were some of the most important issues the participants identified for

effective leadership. Colleges and universities must sustain the diversity of higher education and offer an atmosphere of trust in order to create the most productive education to students. Martha verbalized this need very well in the following quote:

Higher education leaders must be inclusive because there is so much diversity of all kinds: diversity of disciplines, diversity of students, students from so many kinds of backgrounds and so many kinds of culture, so many different life experiences. I think leaders must seek to be a good steward over all that precious diversity and try to build a community of trust that embraces the diversity.

Martha further explained that stewardship is an important leadership issue. Stewardship should expand to higher education and not be confined to a single institution. For example, she pointed out that leaders should reach out to other institutions to offer assistance in situations such as the New Orleans area after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

Being supportive of others and having good decision-making strategies are important qualities for leaders to possess. The participants alluded to these desirable leadership qualities in the interviews. Sue described how she fulfills her responsibilities as an administrator:

People need to see how their goals fit into the institution's mission. This includes their professional goals, the goals of their unit, and their own personal goals. My job is to identify what resources we need to make this happen for them and for their unit. The next step is to garner those resources and then let the people do the job they are prepared to do. I also like to involve cooperative problem solving with people—not only talk about what the problem is, but consider the

alternatives. Sometimes none of them are very good, but we need to make a decision together and move forward. I'll be prepared to support them. In a similar manner, if there are difficult decisions that I have to make, I expect to talk those through, and I expect that when a decision is made, we'll walk out of the room together.

The interview data pointed out that good leadership is versatile. As Brenda stated, "You can take leadership into any milieu and it will work." She acknowledged that one must get familiar with the jargon of the respective system and that good people working for the leader are vital, but a good leader's abilities are adaptable to various environments. Brenda related a time span of about two years when she became director of her institution's technology service department. She admitted she had limited knowledge about technology, but the well-trained people working for her handled the technical issues while she provided leadership until another director was hired.

The participants identified meshing with peers and complementing other senior administrators as other good leadership traits. For example, one participant stated:

A senior vice president and provost has to mesh with the president. With a strong president like we have, we need a collaborative, cooperative leader. There has to be a good mix of the two leadership styles. I'm comfortable with the type of leadership I bring. In another context, it might not be the right one.

The participants' various perspectives and definition of leadership had commonalities. The following quote from Martha is a good representation of the views of the entire group of participants:

You have to have a good understanding of the job. It's a complicated job in such a large organization, and you are always learning new things and being presented with unique problems. That makes it interesting. It is sometimes stressful, sometimes challenging, but a lot of the time rewarding. The goal is to provide extraordinary experiences for our students and to recruit and retain extraordinary faculty that will carry the legacy on for decades. You do your best to learn as much as you can and make the right decisions to help people grow.

Leadership Perspective Sub-theme: Career Development

The development of the administrators' careers had some definite similarities. None of the participants in this survey targeted a goal of higher education administration early in their career. One participant said, "I never aspired to be a university [senior administrator] even when I had been in higher education 24 years before I took this job." Another stated, "I didn't set this goal for myself, but after I started working with people who were in this position, I thought I could do it." All six of the participants identified readiness and willingness to seize opportunities as essential elements of career advancement. The administrators described taking advantage of opportunities to propel their careers in comments such as "every so often, I'll get additional tasks that are great for career development" or "advancing to leadership is a series of opportunity gifts." Some of the opportunities came disguised as very menial, unpleasant tasks. Francine's appointment to a strategic planning committee came at a busy time in her career when she was writing her dissertation. She said, "They asked who wanted to do it and nobody was stepping up to the plate, so I said I would do it." The appointment turned out to be a pivotal point in her administrative career.

All of the participants described support from family, friends, and mentors as an important motivator for career advancement. Francine and Martha cited cohort groups also as a significant influence. Martha's support originated from a group of eight graduate students who, as she described, "provided an immediate cohort of support", when they all entered graduate school together under federal funding. Francine described the women in the school of nursing where she began teaching 28 years ago as her support group:

They were eight very strong women and I was the youngest. There was at least 10 to 15 years difference in the next youngest woman and me. This group of women took me under their wing, protected me, and challenged me. They encouraged me to get my doctorate and become involved in faculty government and other university committees.

All six participants stated they had a strong work ethic and viewed the trait as necessary for leaders. A strong work ethic enforces many other aspects of leadership such as determination and confidence. In the individual vignettes, each woman's story identified where her work ethic originated. They gave credit to their parents or, in Brenda's case, to grandparents.

Several of the administrators cited accepting distasteful committee appointments, taking risks, and following instincts as ways to encouragement career advancement. Francine stated, "Some people are afraid to take risks. I had doors opened to me because I was willing to take risks." Martha was another administrator who cited risk-taking as a pathway to success when she reflected on being invited by the current president to step into a senior administrative position from being director of the institution's honors

program. Describing it as a “giant step,” Martha explained that “the traditional trajectory for a [senior administrator] is to have been dean of a college.” An important complement to risk-taking is instinct development. Amanda pointed out, “You must develop your instincts and follow the good ones.” Francine stated, “I looked for opportunities to do things, which sometimes meant volunteering for committees when no one else wanted to do it. Because of that, I have met with success. I didn’t get where I am by slouching around.”

Obtaining proper credentials was a vital career-propelling move. Amanda stated, “If you don’t have the credentials, you don’t get the opportunities. Getting a doctorate, while it may not literally be a requirement, is an unwritten requirement.” Francine added to this point, “Once you finish a Ph.D., it’s just different. People look at you differently, and you are treated differently in higher education.” Ruby, who obtained all three of her degrees while working full time, acknowledged that obtaining credentials provided both personal challenges and career advancement.

The participants reported that both informal and formal education contributed to the development of the participants’ careers. All six of the women hold doctorate degrees; therefore, formal education has obviously been a part of their career advancement. They cited national and state conferences and leadership institutes as other methods of ongoing formal education. Amanda, who has been a part of several leadership-training programs, described the advantage of participating in such programs: “They give you exposure to statewide or citywide issues. They make you a better educator, and the network you develop is remarkable. Not only did I learn a lot professionally, but I learned a lot about myself.”

Informal methods of leadership development included on-the-job training like observation and the learning opportunities presented by new experiences. Martha stated that “watching very interesting leadership traits in people and learning what doesn’t work” helped her develop her own leadership methods over her 20-year administrative career. The other administrators made statements throughout the interviews that attested to benefits of on-the-job training. Statements such as “I constantly learn and take on challenges” and “I had the chance to learn a lot of new things” indicate these women are dedicated, life-long learners. The enthusiasm for learning and accepting challenges was apparent during the interviews when they spoke of the ever-changing daily responsibilities and the need to meet new objectives. Brenda gives an example of the wide variety of tasks that prompts her informal on-the-job training, “One day I’m working on the cancer center, the next day on fund raising; another day, it might be a faculty member who is suing us. It is something different every day, and it is a wide range of things in senior administration.”

Relieving stress is an important aspect of leadership development. There was no interview question pertaining to stress relief, but two of the participants mentioned the issue. One participant said she uses gardening and traveling as a way of relieving stress. Amanda, who uses civic group involvement and exercise as stress relief, also encourages others to relieve stress:

I try to encourage everyone to take a break and relieve stress. Everyone needs to relieve stress. Whether they exercise, garden, or if they have to develop an interest, it makes them a well-rounded person and therefore a better leader and

supervisor. In leadership, if you don't take some kind of mental break, eventually you will break.

Leadership Perspective Sub-theme: Frustrations and Self-doubt

The interview questions did not specifically address frustrations and self-doubt, yet they surfaced in the participants' verbal data. The administrators cited instances where frustrating circumstances can sometimes become overwhelming and detrimental. The participants all agreed there were many difficult decisions and frustrating days in senior administration. Amanda viewed her past position as a dean as the toughest job of all, stating, "It's emotionally hard to deal with the faculty and students because they only come to talk to you when it is negative." To Francine, lack of progress and people choosing to hold back vital information causes frustration. She described the annoyance in the following quote:

Good decisions are based on having all the vital information. I depend on people to give me information and when they make the choice to hold back necessary information, it frustrates me. I don't like to play games. I've been in this world long enough to know that it happens, but it doesn't mean I get any less frustrated when it does happen.

Self-doubt can infiltrate many areas of leadership. When taking on new positions, Martha pointed out that administrators must allow themselves some time to grow into the new role and call upon support from people above and below them. She further stated that there are days when every leader wonders "What am I doing here?" Persistence is a vital ingredient that can negate self-doubt and frustration. Martha stated,

You have to believe in yourself enough that if you've had one bad day or made some bad mistakes or said some things you regret, you come back in, and you do it better the next day. For women, it is very critical to know that you're less than perfect and persist. You should say to yourself, "I have not done such damage that I should not keep going." You could articulate that as a fundamental belief in self or competency. I call it staying on the horse.

A careful self-analysis as described by Martha in the former quote and conscious effort to "know yourself" was a point made by several of the participants when speaking of leadership. Francine stated, "I told my nursing students they had to know themselves. As a mental health nurse, I felt it was extremely important to examine what made me tick, what my buttons were that would cause me to respond in a certain way." Being aware of your own talents and abilities allows you to choose the best career path, as Brenda pointed out when sharing anecdotes about her early career:

The good thing about doing such a variety of things when I was young is that it caused me to get a feel for my talents. It doesn't make any difference how smart you are. If you aren't suited for something, you aren't going to be successful at it. I learned what I would not be good at.

Leadership Perspective Sub-theme: Female Leadership

The interview questions for this study applied to leadership; the intent was not to target female versus male leadership but rather to study female leaders. However, the issue of female versus male behavior surfaced in many interviews. Therefore, a sub-theme of female leadership emerged within the perspective theme. Martha noted the differences in male and female leadership styles in the statement: "I don't think most

people would articulate me as a strong, traditional, masculine leader. In higher education, that type of leader isn't needed because there's a shared governance tradition among faculty and students." Brenda noted the following concerns of the female leadership perspective:

We always get back to that old scenario of how women look at things versus how men look at things. It would be nice if women would deal with situations more globally rather than one-on-one. I think some women are naïve, and they approach a situation from the point of "can't we just all hold hands and make this work." I think young women need to toughen up a little bit.

Some participants chose to minimize gender in their leadership role. They reported seeing themselves as simply a president, provost, or vice president rather than a woman administrator. Amanda concentrates on quality of leadership, not gender:

What has worked for me is not thinking about being female, but I concentrate on being the best professional, the best qualified, just the best. I don't think about if it's male or female. I don't try to be a guy; I just try to be me. When people try to fit a mold, it backfires.

Along the same line of thought, Ruby stated:

I don't reflect that I'm, quote, a leader, and I don't see myself as a woman [administrator]. I see myself as the [senior administrator] of a university who is responsible for all aspects of the university, certainly first and foremost, quality of the education our students receive.

Martha acknowledges female issues in leadership in the following statement:

I see myself as one kind of a leader, and I sense that there are some common issues for women in a hierarchal institution or in a university setting. In the way women are socialized, this creates a sense of discomfort.

Many of the administrators mentioned negative personality traits commonly associated with women. Open displays of emotion and not being supportive of other women were cited as problematic. However, participants also stated that they have observed some improvement during the last two decades. Ruby made the following statement concerning lack of support among women:

Early in my career when I started getting promotions and moving through various positions, it was obvious from my perspective that women were their own worst enemy because, at that time, there was so much backbiting between women. If a woman received a well-deserved promotion, one of the primary problems was that women would object to her promotion. You don't see that nearly as much now, but it was a big issue twenty years ago. We've come a long way.

Other participants echoed Ruby's sentiment about women's lack of support for each other. Sue said, "Women can be their own worst enemy to each other. They are not always as willing to mentor and not always as supportive to other women as they ought to be." Amanda used the same terminology as Sue when she stated, "Women can sometimes be their own worst enemy. When I was going up through the ranks, there weren't many other women and so there wasn't that "petty women" thing like there is now." Unlike the other administrators, Amanda obviously viewed the present situation among women as worse instead of better. She blamed the progressively worse situation on today's young women being more impatient and their drive to succeed quickly.

Brenda cites emotional outbursts as problematic for some female leaders, evidenced in the following scenario:

In a meeting several years ago, things didn't go the way one of our new female deans wanted, and she basically threw a fit. Later, I told her "You acted like a girl in there. That won't cut it. Just because you don't get your way, you can't just throw a fit. You are really smart, and the things you can do for this college are unlimited, but if you act like that, it's all going to be negated." Somewhere along the line, women need to learn how to manage their behavior. If I could do away with one little gene in people, both male and female, I would nix that hysteria gene.

The barrier theme discussion also includes similar aspects of female leadership. However, since the interview data discussed above pertained specifically to leadership, female leadership emerged as a sub-theme within the leadership perspective.

Leadership Perspective Sub-theme: Luck

Other leadership studies (Helgesen, 1990; Kennedy, 2001) indicate luck as an aspect of leadership advancement. One of the interview questions included a prompt concerning luck's role in their careers. All of the participants agreed that, to some extent luck had helped with their advancement in administration. In fact, one participant used the phrase "I was lucky" ten times during the interview when referencing good fortune in both her personal life and professional life. All six administrators in this study acknowledged varying degrees of luck ranging from "I attribute much of the success I've had to luck" to only a small degree of luck, such as the following statement:

My brother and I have had this discussion. He will say, “You have been so lucky.” Actually, I have worked hard to get where I am now. I don’t call having two jobs for twenty years really special. When I was working those 12-hour shifts on weekends to pay bills, I wasn’t caught up on how lucky I am. I admit I was blessed with many talents and many skills for which I am eternally grateful. Certainly, luck has some small way of presenting itself, but I wonder if it was luck or my ability to be in the right place at the right time and my willingness to take some risks.

Theme: Leadership Performance

The leadership performance theme emerged from tangible examples of how the participants conducted their leadership and the factors that formed them into the leaders they are today. There is a fine line between the issues in the leadership performance theme and the preceding leadership perspective theme. Creswell (1998) and Moustakas (1994) both refer to the necessity of devising a “list of nonrepetitive, nonoverlapping statements” (Creswell, 1998, p. 147) when analyzing phenomenological data. The distinction formulated between the two related themes for this study is that the leadership performance theme involves the specific examples the participants cited of how they carried out their leadership. The leadership perspective theme involves less tangible data such as beliefs and traits possessed by effective leaders, including the participants themselves and anyone they may have observed in a leadership position. The sub-themes that developed within the leadership performance theme are early leadership tendencies, career satisfaction, tangible leadership methods, and role modeling and mentorship.

Leadership Performance Sub-theme: Early Leadership Tendencies

The interview transcripts indicated that the participants' leadership qualities were obvious to other people, sometimes before the participant themselves understood they had leadership qualities. While recalling their early career history, the administrators cited several instances when senior administrators invited them to pursue upper level administrative positions. These invitations indicate that other leaders recognized and valued their leadership talents.

Brenda's first leadership role came with her winning the election of president of her sorority as a sophomore in college. She proclaimed the experience as an excellent training ground in the following statement:

In high school, I was always the one who would organize all my buddies together for something, whether it was skipping school or raising money for tennis trips, but I didn't think about it being leadership. The sorority was the first place that I could actually see myself as a leader and I had a great time with it. It was a perfect place to practice leadership skills even if I didn't realize I was practicing.

Brenda's experience as a graduate student represents another example of the recognition of her leadership abilities at an early age. As discussed in the leadership development theme, while she worked as a dean's administrative assistant, he became "the prized mentor that everyone would like to have." Obviously, the experienced administrator saw something in Brenda that he could help cultivate and grow through his mentorship.

The participants showed leadership tendencies early in their careers by unique qualifications and ambitions. Francine was only one of five registered nurses in Oklahoma who had a baccalaureate degree. Brenda was the first female communication

consultant in Oklahoma for a major company and obtained a Master's Degree in Business Administration (MBA) in the mid 1970s when a female holding an MBA was a rarity. Sue obtained all three of her degrees in a discipline and university among a male-dominated student, faculty, and administration population. Amanda showed early interest in administrative positions and pursued community leadership activities. Ruby realized her capability upon reentering higher education as a student following a seven-year hiatus. She made a personal decision to pursue the challenges and growth that comes with leadership positions rather than settling for a mundane career. Martha ventured from New York to accept a faculty position with the thought that "it was adventuresome and Oklahoma was exotic." Each woman's individual story carries its own testimony of early leadership development.

The administrators in this study were clearly not the typical secretaries, nurses, and teachers of the 1970s, although most of them did fill those roles for years. They wanted more. They wanted challenges. They wanted to experience growth in themselves and to be able to facilitate growth in others. The participants demonstrated leadership tendencies as teenagers and young adults; soon after that, they began pursuing opportunities. Although this study did not attempt to analyze whether leaders are born or formed, the qualitative data from the leaders and from previous research (Conger, 1992; Dubin, 1986; House & Baetz, 1990) indicates the possibility of innate ability. As one participant said when describing leadership tendencies, "I think you have to have a knack for it. You have it when you pop out of the womb."

Leadership Performance Sub-theme: Career Satisfaction

All of the participants indicated career satisfaction in their current positions but also disclosed periods of dissatisfaction in their past. Although each administrator did not specifically verbalize career satisfaction, their body language, enthusiasm, and candid responses throughout the interviews indicated happiness and fulfillment. Positive comments about administrative positions in general, whether they were referring to their own position or one filled by someone else, demonstrated contentment.

Amanda, who was exiting her administrative position within a few days after the interview to accept a position as chief executive officer of a private organization, exhibited high satisfaction in her career. She admitted she suffered burnout when she served as a college dean because of negative feedback from students and faculty, but her current position provided her with an enjoyable network in which she was able to see growth and advancement for higher education. Francine, who remains dedicated to nursing even while filling her role as a senior administrator, admitted that she experienced dissatisfaction prior to her current position:

There was a time I went looking for something else because of changes in the program and the leadership changes, but I didn't find anything I wanted to do. I was looking for clinical management and was going to get out of education. I am glad now that I didn't.

Leadership Performance Sub-theme: Tangible Leadership Methods

The sub-theme of tangible leadership methods emerged from the effective management strategies use by the participants in their administrative positions. Specific leadership duties cited by the women included budgeting, strategic, and political

planning. Methods for conquering these duties varied from participant to participant and required good communication and networking.

In analyzing the interview data for tangible methods of effective leadership, several citations emerged documenting support for faculty, staff, and students. The broad area ranged from assisting with the formulation of goals to recognition. Sue stated that she consistently supported the goals of committees, faculty members, staff personnel, and students. She “identified what resources people needed to make a goal happen, garnered the resources, and then got out of the way for them to do their job.” The other participants echoed similar actions. Amanda pointed out that she sometimes helps people establish goals because “if they don’t have goals, they won’t realize what they achieve.” She added, “If someone is not realizing their goals, I’ll say ‘look what you just accomplished.’ I help people celebrate, and the celebration can be just a pat on the back, not anything big.”

Other methods the administrators listed for showing support were being prepared for meetings, being accessible, and simply demonstrating appreciation. The participants reported both verbal and written support for faculty, staff, and students. They cited recognition for a job well done as well as support for people going through difficult times. The administrators recognized these as important occasions to show support. Ruby stated:

I sustain others in word and deed. I write a lot of notes. If a faculty member or student is recognized for something such as publishing a paper, I try to write a personal, hand-written note. I pat people on the back, both publicly and privately, with my remarks. If someone, whether it is a student or faculty member or staff

member, is having a difficult time such as losing a loved one or having medical problems, I try to make a phone call or send a note. We lost a student a year ago this spring to cancer. My husband and I donated a tree in her honor, and we had her family here to dedicate the tree. I try to do personal things, be encouraging and recognize people's contributions.

Sue also used personal interaction with people at her institution:

I give a lot of personal and professional support. Daily interaction with them is necessary. I write lots and lots of notes. If people are struggling with something, I'll get on the phone to them or I'll walk over to their office just to keep a sense of how things are going. I try to be sensitive to the areas of their life where they are struggling.

Martha also explained her method of providing support and her way of paying particular attention to women in leadership positions:

I believe in a lot of verbal support for folks and telling them when they are doing a difficult job well. When something wonderful is happening on their watch or in their domain, I tell them about it. When they are having a bad day, I tell them to look at all the things they have accomplished and to see how they have made a difference. I try to be particularly sensitive to women in leadership positions. When they come in with a problem, I remind them to look at everything they are doing that is going well. We sit down and try to solve the problem too, but I don't want them to go away thinking they've only created a problem. I want them to be reminded that I celebrate everything they do well.

The administrators' enthusiasm for supporting people in their institution comes about naturally, as demonstrated in this quote from Brenda:

I like to get down in the trenches. I like management by walking around. I like to be out and about because I like people. I'm not going to learn these people's names just so I can mark it down in my book that I learned their names. I like to know people. I like to talk to the landscape guys. I know all the telephone guys. Sometimes you can help folks—something that may seem insurmountable to some people, I can just do in a phone call. I like to facilitate things, and I like people to enjoy their work.

Another issue the participants cited as an important contributor to their effective leadership was consistent, accurate communication. Both giving and receiving accurate communication is important, as Amanda pointed out when she stated, "I try to get all the data, and I try to give the people who work for me access to all the data. I share what I know. I'm not someone who hides information or makes information a secret." The communication methods employed by the participants are similar, but each administrator has her own scheme. Martha's methods are outlined in the following statement:

I have lots of regularly scheduled meetings with the folks that report up through me. I believe that incessant communication is critical because it keeps me connected and listening. It helps me understand even if someone isn't bringing a specific issue to the table, I can sense or hear that they are having a difficult time. I also believe in several layers of communication. I meet regularly with the deans and directors. All of the departments are incredibly varied, nothing in common across the units, except they all report to me and can be isolated and want to come

to the table and talk to each other, not just talk to me. At some point, I leave the room because I'm scheduled for another meeting. They'll be in the room for another hour over cookies, talking to each other. I also have provost advisory groups that I meet with regularly. Although they don't report directly to me, I pull them together and have them meet amongst themselves at least once a year. I retreat with them, and they know they have my ear. I meet regularly with another group of financial administrators and managers. They just had their Christmas lunch a few days ago, and I was there, telling them I appreciated their job—moving a lot of money through this system in the various colleges. By having all these groups meet and me meeting with them means they are empowered to professionalize and work with each other. I try to define and bring together groups, regardless of their hierarchal structure, at a more horizontal level. Through meetings, these groups can solve problems and regulate proceedings across campus. It expedites work. It reduces problems and mistakes. It gives me an opportunity within another group to listen for things that aren't working well. I don't know if that's a female management style or just mine, but I have found that it helps and that people appreciate knowing they have my ear.

Managing an institution during difficult times is particularly challenging and communication becomes especially crucial. Ruby recalled a situation from her first weeks in senior administration:

I am upfront about what is going on across campus. For example, I had only been here six weeks when we had our first budget reduction in 2002. I held a series of meetings, and I laid out the finances of the university. I said “this is how much

money we have, this is where the money is, these are the decisions I've made." I think when people saw that, they were much more likely to accept the decisions I had made.

Ruby continued with clear examples of her leadership methods and free-flowing communication attempts:

I am of the opinion that there is very little that is secret. Of course, there are personnel issues that are obviously confidential, but outside of that, very little is secret. People ought to know how the university is funded, where the money goes, what your priorities are, what our expectations are. No faculty member should ever be surprised if they get a poor evaluation. They ought to have regular feedback on how they are measuring up. I can give you examples of my communication methods. I meet once a week with the vice presidents collectively. Every August, I have a general faculty and staff meeting and I also hold a couple of those throughout the year. I meet with the student government association and the faculty senate. I have departmental breakfasts, and I meet with the faculty members without the administration. There isn't a dean or vice president at those meetings. I have student open-door sessions where students can come see me if they have a problem or something they want to discuss. I have a caveat pertaining to some things I can't intervene on or that need to go through administrative channels. I also go over on a regular basis to the student union and have lunch with students. I walk across campus regularly.

Good communication skills enable confident, consensus-based decisions. Since decision-making is a responsibility of senior administrators, methods employed for such

tasks surfaced throughout the interviews. The participants identified consensus-based decisions by phrases such as “after the meeting, we walk out of the room together” and “we come to the table and discuss.”

Francine felt that having all options on the table aided in good decision-making. She related a leadership method she used in meetings:

There always needs to be someone in the room asking questions and playing the devil’s advocate. We shouldn’t get upset with that person because it is such a valuable role. If we all agree and never disagree on anything, then we are not making the right decision because we haven’t looked at the other side thoroughly. If the people involved in the discussion aren’t willing to play the devil’s advocate, then it is sometimes left up to me to ask more probing questions to fully understand the situation.

Sue stated that hiring good people was among the most crucial decisions she made. She stated,

I am a strong believer in hiring good people and then letting them do their job. My job is to enable them to perform at the highest level they can and contribute as much as they can. I like taking the position that if I could do their job better than they can, then I ought to be doing it, but I hired them because of the expertise that they have.

Three of the participants pointed out that they had high expectations of people. They expect faculty members and staff members to do the job they were hired to do and to carry out initiatives. Martha expects independence and stated, “When folks are to report directly to me, I have to remind them that they are going to have to survive without

a lot of direct attention much of the time, and that reflects the level of trust I put in them.” The participants admitted they are not tolerant of incompetent people and realize this trait is viewed as them being rather demanding. Although she was serious with her thought, Ruby laughed as she said, “I have extremely high standards. Some people think I’m hard to work for. I think I’m good to work for if you are a good, committed employee. If someone is not, I am very bad to work for.” Brenda echoed a similar sentiment when she stated, “I am a pretty hard task master. I expect everybody to work their butts off and I expect them to be completely honest, and if anyone makes a mistake, they just need to say it.” Later in the interview, Brenda restated the same thought when she said, “I am one tough person to deal with. I am as nice as can be, but you can not [deceive] me and get by with it.”

Leadership Performance Sub-theme: Role Modeling and Mentorship

Five of the six participants said they saw themselves as role models to other women, and qualified the answer with comments. The comments included, “I am a role model by virtue of the role,” and “Being a role model is a responsibility that goes along with this position.” One administrator did not see herself as a good role model to other women because she had not met with difficulties like most women do throughout their lives.

Mentoring other people as they were mentored early in their careers is obviously one of the most prominent missions for the participants. All six administrators cited various practices for offering opportunities. The administrators enjoy giving opportunities and encouraging career development for others. Many of the actions

described, such as the following quote by Sue, benefit not only their institution, but have potential to affect higher education in general:

I would much prefer to have someone work for me and have golden opportunities to move to other positions and choose to stay because they like the environment in which they work. There are some people who are afraid to encourage other people to grow and gain more skills because they figure if they grow, they'll leave. I think you have to hope that it will be the kind of work environment that if they do leave, they'll replicate the environment someplace else and watch other people grow or that they'll really want to stay because it's such a great place to work.

The administrators' procedures for providing a learning environment to others were varied, yet also had some common threads. Brenda, who benefited from many mentors as described previously, repays the favor by mentoring people at her institution. Her method is similar to the process used by many of her former mentors and is described in the following quote:

I give people opportunities to do things and try to include them even if it's just taking them around with me so they can see how the whole place works. I tell them about the things that we have going on so they can see the big picture. People learn a lot of things by osmosis and direct mentoring. I like to mentor and include people. Here at our institution, we have a large number of women in leadership position, and I spend a considerable amount of time with these women. I have a lot of interaction with them on a daily and weekly basis. I try to make things fun and impress upon people that this is an environment where they can be

open and feel free to bring any and all issues or questions to the table. I think that is the best way to role model—give people a chance to make their mistakes and learn from them without any dire consequences.

In another example of on-the-job mentoring, Amanda cited a particular situation concerning a director who accepted a difficult position under her administration:

She walked into a mess. The person who had been there before her left it in a mess. I kept telling her “this will take you a little time, and every day, you are going to walk in and figure out something different. Then six months later, you are going to be shocked at the difference. Right now, it’s a mess and you are just going to have to work with it.”

Reflecting and expanding on this example, Amanda said, “I lead by example. I try to empower—I let someone go until they can’t go any further, or I stop them before they make some major mistake. Sometimes they never know I stopped them.”

Although mentoring often occurs in an informal setting such as the cases previously described, formal mentoring also exists. Sue stated that she has developed a fellowship program on three different campuses to help people who are considering the pursuit of leadership positions. She further explains:

In the fellowship program, one of the things I stress is by the end of the year, I want the participants to know what they would be willing to lose their job for. It is important to identify some things of value that mark your leadership, no matter what that might be. I think the participants in the fellowship program need to define what those three or four values are that would permeate every decision and every action they take.

Amanda uses both formal and informal training, depending on the need. She explained, “If I’ve employed someone and they are lacking something that I know they can overcome, I get them some kind of formal training or pair them up with somebody who has the expertise they lack. I do something so they can start with all the tools they need.”

The energy the administrators spend mentoring other people is not mere obligation. The varied methods of mentoring indicate strong personal preference and interest from each participant as she developed her own teaching methods. Sue, armed with thirteen years of senior administrative experience, formulated mentoring into a formal program to aid aspiring leaders. The other participants cited many examples of offering mentoring opportunities to people at their respective institutions. By their own admission and by serving as a senior administrator, all of the participants are a role model to other women. Role modeling alone is a form of mentoring (Bucher, 1997). The interview data indicates the participants willingly lead a visible, public role on colleges and universities. Therefore, female presidents, provosts, and vice presidents mentor a large population of women without having direct personal contact with them.

Theme: Motivation

This study analyzed internal and external motivation factors from both interview data and survey data. Internal motivation originated from a person’s drive to seek satisfaction and peace without compensation from an outside source. Internal motivators listed on the survey instrument were job satisfaction, feeling of personal and professional accomplishment, and enjoyment of broadening knowledge. External motivation requires outside sources or social values to deliver satisfaction. Examples of external motivation

factors were money, career advancement, prestige, affluent lifestyle, and proof of success to self and others. Research by Deci and Ryan (2000) provided the theoretical base for a survey instrument devised by other researchers (Vallerand & Bissonnette, 1992; Vallerand, Pelletier, Vlais, Briere, Senecal, & Vallieres, 1993). Modifications to the original survey instrument made it applicable to higher education administrators for this study. The survey instrument is available on Page 3 of Appendix B.

Motivation Sub-theme: Internal Motivation

The survey instrument gathered data concerning internal motivation. Thirty-three administrators responded based on a six-level scale that ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Table 3 on the following page summarizes the data and indicates the frequency of responses at each of the six levels.

One of Francine's statements is an astute summation of the findings of the motivation survey instrument. She said, "The benefits are not always money or recognition. Many times, the benefits are internal." The frequencies reported in Table 3 and the following discussion of the survey and interview findings indicate the strength of internal motivation for women administrators.

Table 3 Internal Motivation Factors for Women Administrators							
Item number on survey instrument	Internal Motivation Factors	Number of administrators responding at this level N=33					
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
2.	Because I experience enjoyment and satisfaction while performing my job.	0	0	0	0	14	19
4.	Because of the intense feeling I experience when I am able to accomplish something for my institution.	0	0	0	5	11	17
5.	For the enjoyment I experience in the achievements of my position.	0	0	0	4	15	14
8.	For the gratification I experience when I accomplish new things.	0	0	0	4	17	12
10.	For the satisfaction that I experience when I create new programs that will help students.	1	0	1	4	13	14
11.	For the feeling of personal accomplishment that comes with the duties of this job.	0	0	0	5	13	15
14.	For the pleasure of broadening my knowledge base that this job requires.	0	0	1	13	12	7
16.	For the enjoyment that I feel when I feel completely absorbed by my job.	0	3	4	9	12	5
17.	For the satisfaction that I feel when I am in the process of accomplishing difficult duties.	0	0	3	5	19	6
20.	Because this job allows me to do things I am interested in.	0	0	0	4	16	13
22.	For the great feeling that I experience while tending to the various aspects of my job.	0	0	1	7	17	8
23.	Because this position allows me to experience a personal satisfaction in my quest for excellence.	0	0	2	7	14	10

As evidenced by the high frequencies in the three “agree” categories, participants agreed that they responded to internal motivation. All 33 of the administrators agreed, to some extent, with the following six statements:

- because I experience enjoyment and satisfaction while performing my job
- because of the intense feeling I experience when I am able to accomplish something for my institution
- for the enjoyment I experience in the achievements of my position
- for the gratification I experience when I accomplish new things
- for the feeling of personal accomplishment that comes with the duties of this job
- because this job allows me to do things I am interested in

The strongest agreement occurred with the statement “because I experience enjoyment and satisfaction while performing my job,” with all 33 administrators marking the statement with either “agree” or “strongly agree,” the two extreme levels of the scale. The other five statements on the above bulleted list were also agreed upon by all 33 administrators, although some responses were at the “mildly agree” level. The majority of the participants also agreed on the remaining six statements on the survey instrument, with only one to four participants disagreeing at any level.

All six of the interview participants indicated they responded to internal motivation factors. Sue stated that the mission of her institution and the passion she feels for her institution motivated her. She explained more of her motivation, stating,

I enjoy seeing what my people are able to accomplish. It’s the same thing that sustained me when I was a faculty member teaching on a regular basis. I always

wanted my students to come out of the class doing better or having written a better paper than they ever believed they were capable of doing. That's what I want for my administrators. I want them to achieve more than they ever thought they could. That gives me great pleasure.

Martha stated that she enjoys administration because she sees that she can make a difference. She said

I care about this institution because I feel it has a unique history in the state of Oklahoma and a unique role to play in the leadership. I care passionately about higher education. That is a motivation—when you have a high level of investment of the enterprise and in the institution. Not everybody has that in their world of work. It's important to me that I'm not just building my own resume, but I'm part of an enterprise I care deeply for.

Martha's commitment to higher education and the future of the institution she serves was apparent as she continued, "I am also sustained when I see the institution is building and gathering resources that will continue to influence students for decades. We have the kind of research going on here that has the potential to be transformational for the world."

Amanda, another internally driven administrator, cited the enjoyment of challenges as a motivator. She also enjoyed getting involved outside the academic world in economics and community development. Since she served a community-driven institution, those motivations also served her institution as well as her own fulfillment. Amanda described the change in motivation upon the transition from faculty member to administrator:

When I first moved into administration, I redeveloped and broadened my focus.

It isn't about what you perceive; it is the bigger picture. What you get a grant, it isn't about you; it's about the institution, but it's also these neat things that you get to do.

Ruby identified her university's success as her motivation. She stated, "I am absolutely passionate about this university and moving it forward. I am driven by that, and I think I have had the same kind of ambition and ownership of whatever position I've been in." Everyday occurrences also sustain her. Ruby stated that she derives great enjoyment from "little things such as seeing individual students excel, observing or hearing a story about a faculty member doing something extraordinary. It is the little things that I find so energizing."

Francine began a career in higher education administration following nursing and nursing education careers. During her nursing career, she responded to internal motivation in her drive to provide the highest standard in nursing care. The motivation factor "this position allows me to experience a personal satisfaction in my quest for excellence" applies to her drive. That same drive fed her mission to teach students to do the same. Francine carried the same dedication into her administration career. She said,

My current position is not much different than what I did as a nurse or what I did every day teaching; it's just a different data set. The process for decision-making isn't any different, but I'm still learning what the variables are in this new data set.

Brenda, the only participant who responded strongly to external motivation, also alluded to internal motivation. Her internal motivation, similar to the other

administrators, was contributing to her institution and higher education. She reflected on her current role as senior administrator:

The position I have allows me to see the whole place. There are a lot of opportunities to get involved in a wide variety of things and work behind the scenes. I like to put some idea out there and then one day—there it is! There is a period of time when you can see this little thread that keeps developing until your idea is full blown. When I was in the president's office, I wrote policies, and we still use them today. That's not anything I would run around and tell everyone, but I pick up the regent's handbook and my [writing] is still in there. No one is every really going to know it, but I do. We recently received an \$11 million grant by writing all the clinical projections and other requirements. Things like that sustain me. I love making this place work well.

The survey instrument indicates administrators respond strongly to internal motivation. The textual citations of the interview participants support this finding. However, external motivation factors also contribute to these senior administrators' drive.

Motivation Sub-theme: External Motivation

The survey instrument gathered data concerning external motivation. Thirty-three administrators responded based on a six-level scale that ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Table 4 on the following page summarizes the data and indicates the frequency of responses at each of the six levels.

<p style="text-align: center;">Table 4 External Motivation Factors for Women Administrators</p>							
Item number on survey instrument	External Motivation Factors	Number of administrators responding at this level N=33					
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	I wanted a position that paid well.	4	3	5	8	7	6
3.	Because this position fulfills my career goals.	0	1	2	4	16	10
6.	To prove to myself that I am capable of serving successfully in this position.	4	2	2	7	13	5
7.	Serving in this position will help me attain a more prestigious position later on.	6	5	10	4	7	1
9.	Because it will enable me to enter another career in which I am interested.	7	11	7	2	4	2
12.	Because this job makes me feel important.	6	4	4	11	5	3
13.	Because I enjoy the “good life.”	5	5	6	8	7	2
15.	Because this position allows me to make important decisions.	1	2	1	10	13	6
18.	To show myself that I am a successful person.	6	3	5	8	9	2
19.	To earn a better salary than my previous jobs.	5	1	4	8	12	3
21.	Because I believe that time in this position will improve my competence.	2	1	2	12	12	4
24.	Because I want to show myself that I can succeed.	5	4	3	9	10	2

Although the survey participants did not agree with the external motivation factors as strongly as they agreed with internal motivation factors, there were external factors that motivated the administrators. The external motivation factor identified as the most prominent was “this position fulfills my career goals,” with 26 of the 33 participants either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement. Two other motivation factors,

“this position allows me to make important decisions,” and “time in this position will improve my competence,” were also heavily favored as motivation factors. Two statements pertained to money as an external motivation factor. These statements were identified by the participants with 21 to 23 of the 33 participants agreeing, at some level, that they were motivated by money.

The two survey items the participants identified as the least motivating of the external factors were “serving in this position will help me attain a more prestigious position later on” and “because this position will enable me to enter another career in which I am interested.” One of the survey participants provided a valid point concerning those two items that may have contributed to their rating as the least motivating. The participant stated, “I am planning to retire rather than seek a presidency in the future.” Since the average age of the participants was 52, and 58 percent were 55 years old or older, many of the administrators are close to retirement and not planning to seek another position. The two statements could possibly be identified as more motivating factors within a different age group.

The interview participants referred to external motivation factors also, although qualitative data supporting internal motivation was more prevalent. Brenda mentions external motivation most often, perhaps because of her family’s financial difficulties when she was a child. She mentioned phrases such as “I could earn more” or “they paid me well” often throughout the interview. In fact, she mentioned the word “money” 16 times during the interview, compared to an average of 1.6 times for the other interview participants. Brenda was also willing to do a menial job because of the high probability that it would evolve into a better position. Item 7 on the survey instrument (see Page 3 of

Appendix B), “serving in this position will help me attain a more prestigious position later on,” is the targeted item in this instance. The following textual citation supports this finding:

When I interviewed for the position, I realized it would mean going back to being a secretary, but I felt it would pay off in the long run. I was willing to do it. I had met the fellow who was director of finances for the college, and he told me he was going to be starting his own business and leaving the college. If I were here on board, he could leave and turn his job over to me.

Brenda accepted the secretarial position, performed some “menial tasks daily,” and was subsequently hired for the director position. She stated, “After [the director] left to manage his own agency, I was in a job that I was enthused about, it paid a nice salary, and I got to do cool things for the college.”

Francine also alluded to external motivation. Two items on the survey instrument, “because this position fulfills my career goals” and “to show myself that I am a successful person,” seem to fit some of Francine’s comments. She stated, “My leadership is driven by the goals I set for myself. I set goals and objectives and formulate a plan. Just give me an idea, get out of the way, let me work, and I’ll get it done.” She seems driven by personal goals, although many of her personal goals and her institution’s goals coincide. Francine’s background as a nurse and the dedication she still feels to the nursing profession also fit with the two external motivation factors above.

The textual citations from the interview participants that refer to their willingness to perform unpleasant duties coincide with self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Deci & Ryan, 1999; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Tasks for which

people have little interest require external motivation; therefore, the unpleasant tasks performed by the administrators for career advancement required external motivation. In order for the administrators to perform the tasks well, they recognized the value of their performance based on the value to their institution. Since the administrators are highly motivated by the success of their institutions, their personal commitment caused them to perform the unpleasant tasks based on its value to higher education. Although the unpleasant tasks required external motivation, their internal motivation was the driving force that caused them to internalize the motivation and perform the tasks well.

Theme: Barriers

The survey instrument gathered data concerning barriers to women entering higher education administration (see Page 2 of Appendix B). Thirty-three administrators read statements and were asked to think about the women they knew who had the potential to enter higher education administration. Then, using a six-level scale, they indicated how much they agreed or disagreed that the items were barriers to women entering administration. Table 5 on the following page summarizes the data and gives the frequency of responses at each level.

Table 5 Barriers Perceived for Women Entering Higher Education Administration						
Barrier	Number of administrators responding at this level N=33					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Limited time/support	1	6	10	7	7	2
Lack of appropriate credentials	3	6	6	10	8	0
Gender	3	7	6	6	7	4
Lack of opportunity	1	5	6	10	9	2
Age/late start	0	9	10	3	11	0
Family or child responsibility	1	6	2	5	11	8
Race/ethnicity	5	7	10	5	4	2
Dislikes administration as a career	4	6	9	6	3	5
Lack of experience	3	0	8	10	11	1
Personal characteristics	2	4	6	12	5	4
Lack of informal networking	1	5	3	11	9	4

The frequencies in Table 5 indicate that the participants viewed many items as definite barriers to women entering higher education administration. The strongest barriers, identified by 24 of the 33 participants, were “family or child responsibility” and “lack of informal networking.” “Family or child responsibility” was the strongest barrier with 19 of the 33 participants responding with either “agree” or “strongly agree,” two extreme levels of the scale. “Lack of experience,” “lack of opportunity,” and “personal characteristics” were also identified as barriers when 21 to 22 of the 33 participants

agreed, to some extent, that the issues were obstacles for women wishing to pursue leadership positions.

The following are barriers listed by the survey participants in the space available on the survey instrument for additional qualitative data. The participants voluntarily added these items. One or two of the 33 participants agreed, to some extent, that each of the items below represented a barrier for women entering higher education administration. These items have been categorized, but left in the participants' own words.

Education/training/exposure factors:

- lack of exposure to administrative activities
- inferior skill set/knowledge
- institution's emphasis on formal credentials (doctorate degrees) versus professional or administrative experience/productivity/capability
- lack of understanding/unwilling to engage in personal politics

Personal factors:

- lack of motivation
- lack of drive/unwillingness to make sacrifice
- lack of support from spouse with family responsibilities
- isolation and lack of support system
- inability to relocate
- negative self-image

Institutional/environmental factors:

- Oklahoma's historical lack of female executives at highest administrative levels

- lack of support from other leaders in work environment
- attitude of president toward female role in administration
- in technical education, it is still a male-dominated system
- some areas/types of institutions/states offer fewer opportunities for women
- governing boards for colleges and universities comprised of traditional/male members
- existence of the “good ol’ boy” network

More than half of the participants disagreed with three of the barriers listed on the survey instrument. “Age/late start” and “dislikes administration as a career” were both rejected by 19 of the 33 participants. The strongest item disagreed upon by the administrators was “race/ethnicity,” which was rejected by 22 of the 33 participants.

The survey data supported the interview data concerning administrators’ perception of barriers for women entering administrative careers. Many of the interview participants cited barriers that agreed with the larger population of administrators.

All six of the interview participants recognized “family or child responsibility” as a major barrier. Francine and Martha both acknowledged that they had outstanding assistance with their child responsibilities that eased the blending of family and work during their early careers. Francine stated that her mother lived nearby when her children were young and if she “needed childcare at the last minute, [her mother] would help out.” Martha’s husband was a faculty member. She acknowledged the convenience of having a fellow academic as a companion while children were young when she stated, “with both of us in the academy, when they were in school and had to be taken all over the place, we

were able to manage.” Martha further recognized that healthy children, along with both parents having academic careers offers a certain amount of freedom:

Co-parenting with someone who has an academic career allows the latitude for child rearing in way that a job in the private sector might not. My husband and I were lucky enough to have raised two independent, healthy, chipper boys who didn’t create problems. You never know when a child can have either emotional issues or physical health issues, which means that you are deflected from your career.

Although Amanda did not have children, she recognized that family issues can be a struggle for women. The decision to have children weighs heavily on women’s shoulders. A woman must make the decision to have children within the timeframe of the childbearing years. If the woman does have children, then she must be willing to sacrifice time and energy that could be spent on her career. Amanda’s statement is said with the conviction of a woman who struggled with the decision:

I don’t have children. Part of the reason I don’t is because I could never fit it all in. I think when you look at that piece of the pie, a woman has to figure that out for herself and figure out the balance. If you are in turmoil about it, you won’t be successful at anything. What does it take for you—do you have children or do you not have children? If you do, how will the support work? If you don’t feel comfortable with your decision, it will be a constant struggle and you won’t be good at either one. That’s probably the one big thing for women.

Sue took a large-scale look at the family and child responsibility issue in her statement that referred to support from the workplace:

Historically, there hasn't been much flexibility in the workplace in the sense of childcare or career stages for women. The fact is that since women, despite a tremendous amount of progress, still carry the bulk of the responsibility for child rearing and taking care of the home. It is more difficult for them to move through some of the hurdles that happen in higher education.

Other family responsibilities such as spouse's careers and aging parents also present barriers to women. Although Brenda did not verbally target her spouse's career as a barrier, she mentioned several times during the interview that she followed her husband to various locations because of his choice of graduate schools or a change in work location. Moving with a spouse can be detrimental if there are opportunities on the horizon that could lead to advancement for the woman's career. Amanda pointed out that caring for aging parents also takes time and energy away from women's careers:

Something I'm seeing now is that the care of elderly parents now falls mainly on the woman. Women have their own children early in their career and the elderly parents later in their career. Both tend to fall on the woman.

Francine is a specific example of this particular scenario. She has six living siblings, yet she is serving as her aging mother's primary health provider.

Three of the perceived barriers concerned lack of essential components for leaders: informal networking, experience, and opportunities. The leadership perspective theme and the leadership performed theme include discussions of all three of these components. The interview participants spoke extensively about how they took advantage of opportunities when they presented themselves and gave credit to opportunities and on-the-job experience for their career advancement. Examples of how

the interview participants capitalized on informal networking were also apparent throughout the interviews. Amanda's networking skills drew her into the community environment because of her institution's mission and her own motivations. Although the women did not specifically state a lack of the three essential components, the emphasis they placed on them makes their importance apparent. Ruby sees increasing opportunities for women. She stated,

The barriers are not the same now as they were when I started in higher education.

There are more opportunities now for women. I think women are taken much more seriously now than they have been in the past.

The following statement from Sue pertains to the lack of access to mentors that women face:

Women do not have, in my judgment, as many opportunities to identify good mentors as men have. There haven't been as many women in administrative positions or highly visible administrative positions. Men became department heads because the department head before them was a man. Men have more opportunities for significant mentoring. Those opportunities are less common for women.

Women's personal characteristics were viewed as a barrier by 21 of the 33 participants. The female leadership sub-theme within the leadership perspective theme also discussed the negative personality traits of women. A common phrase used by the participants was "women can be their own worst enemy" because of their lack of support for other women. Although the participants see women's negative personality characteristics as a barrier, successful women commonly do not demonstrate the negative

characteristics. They honestly admit they see the negative traits in other women but point out that women who exhibit negative behaviors will not likely enjoy career advancement.

Another barrier was lack of credentials. All of the interview participants held doctorate degrees and many of them cited obtaining the proper credentials as a significant component in career advancement. Sue contributed other interview data that pertains to lack of credentials:

I see barriers for people who do not have a background in the sciences. In higher education, there is a tendency that the higher people move in administration, the more likely they are to come from the sciences—from what people would consider being disciplines that are more rigorous. We know nationally, to some degree, that women have been disadvantaged by the fields in which they are dominant such as family and consumer sciences, education, library science, nursing, etc. I suspect from hearing search committees' discussions that there is a tendency to see some of those disciplines as soft disciplines—not as rigorous and therefore, not as likely to understand research and scholarly activities.

Many of the interview participants discussed gender, viewed as a barrier by 17 of the 33 survey participants. Martha's global view includes shades of the negative aspects of women's personalities. She stated,

Any woman raised in American culture has a profound barrier that has to do with their belief in their own roles—that it is all right for them to be at the table, to be there, to be a voice. Women seem to have an oversensitivity to even a passing comment that may be misperceived or even perceived rightly as dismissive or sexist or racist or whatever. Women need to understand that they don't

necessarily need to get shrill in the way they are stating their opinion. Sometimes, women are so worried about the flaws that they aren't taking enough pride and pleasure in what is going right.

Martha continued with her view of women's method of measuring their self-worth with that of other people's opinions:

I think women spend their whole adulthood convincing themselves of their capability. Women are convinced of their capability in what is reflected back to them from their family or from their colleagues. We see in our families and colleagues some levels of confidence or belief that we can help them, aid them, support them, and understand what they are about. That helps a woman convince herself that she has a right to the title that she holds.

Martha's global statement above included the entire American culture. Some areas of our country are outdated and erect their own territorial standards. In many rural communities, an archaic disrespect for women exists in the notion that women are to remain uneducated and be dependent on their husbands. A brief excerpt from the interview with Francine reveals a perfect example of such mentality. Francine recalled an incident that occurred after she completed a Ph.D. She stated, "My husband was approached by a person from our small community and asked why he allowed me to go back to school. To this day, he still won't tell me who it was."

The interview participants also mentioned workplace gender barriers. Ruby recalled an incident from her early career:

In the 1970s, I was working for parks and recreation. I worked hard and got a couple of promotions, was named Employee of the Year, and became a

supervisor. There were other supervisors who were parallel on the organizational chart and I was the only female. I realized that I was making a fraction of the salary as that of the males. I pointed out to my boss that all of the males on the organizational chart at my level were making much more than I was. What did they do? They demoted me. I maintained all the same responsibilities, but they demoted me in title so I had my own special place on the organizational chart. They didn't take any salary away from me, but I was already making less than the others on the chart. I have experienced real, tangible barriers that are overt. I have also experienced some that are more indirect that limit opportunities.

Sue, a single woman, recognizes that today's colleges and universities can be a difficult arena for single women. She stated, "I happen to be divorced, and I think it's more difficult for single women to advance than it is for people that are married. I'm not sure that is as true for men as it is for women."

Brenda praised the colleges and universities she served in the past, saying, "I never had a single barrier from an immediate boss." She recalls a boss telling her that he did not think of her as female, he thought of her as "neutral." She viewed the comment as an accurate summation of her workplace relationships. She stated, "I thought that was great because most of the people I deal with are men, and they don't think about me being female." Despite her praise of higher education institutions, she had some qualifying statements:

I have run into the basic Oklahoman who just can't stand it that I have a position that might be higher than theirs. I've learned that, although I don't think about the fact that I have power, they think about power all the time. There are five or

six people along the way who have done everything they can to “get me.” It has never worked. There’s been a temporary bump, but in the long run, I’ve always come out on top. Part of it is, you have to outlast them.

Brenda sees social barriers for other women, but no workplace barriers and cites a specific case as an example:

We have some very smart women in associate dean positions. My best young protégé is over in medicine in the dean’s office. She is so damn smart, it is amazing, and she knows the clinical world like the back of her hand. She can hold her own, and she is highly regarded. However, there is a point when those boys don’t want her to be there, and she’s fine with it because she doesn’t want to be there either. When they say, “let’s all go have a drink,” they aren’t going to take her to have a drink. She doesn’t care. She wouldn’t want to go have a drink with them if they paid her. When I think of the young ladies that I’ve been working with over the years, they all have good, strong working relationships with their male colleagues and bosses. There are probably fifteen of their immediate supervisors who are men, and I just don’t see the men erecting barriers.

Francine was proud of the fact that she did not see any gender barriers at her institution. She also could not recall any prominent barriers to females in nursing, but also recognized that nursing was a predominantly female field. Francine continued with an astute statement:

We [women] probably don't give ourselves enough credit for the progress that we have made. I think in some sense, women have to do it bigger and better and work twice as hard to get the same recognition as men.

This thought is repeated in much of the literature concerning leadership and women's development. Although female leaders have the same responsibilities as male leaders, they are perceived and evaluated differently much of the time.

Summary

The findings of this study portray women administrators in colleges and universities. The demographic data concerning women administrators provide generalized information; the vignettes of the six women administrators provide individualized information. The interview and survey data produced emerging themes. The leadership perspective theme examined the development and strategies of a successful higher education administrator. The sub-themes that emerged within the leadership perspective theme were career development, frustrations and self-doubt, female leadership, and luck. The leadership performance theme provided the actual management techniques employed by the women administrators. Sub-themes that developed included early leadership tendencies, career satisfaction, tangible leadership methods, and role modeling and mentorship. The motivation theme involved internal and external motivation information provided by both interview and survey participants. The final theme, barriers, was a discussion of the impasses that females face when attempting to advance to higher education administration. The interview and survey data combined to create the findings and lead to the conclusions discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions

We've got to get women into the pipeline and then women have to help each other.

My real motto is: There's a special place in hell for women who don't help each other.

--Madeleine Albright, former Secretary of State

Introduction

Women administrators in colleges and universities are a minority. Nationally, women fill 21 percent of higher education's presidential positions. Women fill only 6 percent of the presidential positions in Oklahoma. Because senior administrators serve as influential role models to the entire population of college students, increasing female leadership on college campuses encourages more females to seek leadership positions in all occupations. This study gathered data from successful women administrators, and investigated the composition of their success. The data provides information on successful female leadership, while offering mentoring opportunities to the participants. McLaughlin (Lively, 2000) concluded after a longitudinal 20-year research study that more women taking on presidential titles contributed to the growth of women leadership. Although Stanford-Blair and Dickman (2005) were not referring to women in leadership positions with their term "ripple. . . of ever-expanding leadership consequence," (p. 179), the phrase accurately describes the influence of increasing gender diversity. Promoting a diversified group of leaders and role models will benefit women, higher education institutions, students, and society.

Findings Applied to Research Questions and Literature

The procedure for this study involved surveying the entire population of presidents, provosts, and vice presidents, and interviewing six of the senior administrators. Themes emerging from the interview and survey data include leadership perspective, leadership performance, motivation, and barriers. The four research questions proposed in Chapter One serve as the basis for discussing the conclusions of this study.

Research Question One: What traits, backgrounds, and leadership styles are held and practiced by the women currently serving as senior administrators at colleges and universities?

The women administrators in this study held varied backgrounds. The educational credentials and career tracks of the participants included 69 percent holding doctorate degrees and 52 percent coming to their current administrative position from faculty ranks. The tables and demographic data presented in Chapter 4 portray the personal, familial, educational, and career backgrounds of the administrators.

In addition to intelligence and integrity, other leadership traits that contribute to the participants' success are strong work ethic, high degree of career satisfaction, good communication skills, and well-developed networking skills. Consistent, accurate communication is vital, especially during difficult situations. Strong communication contributes to consensus-based decisions, which are an important goal in leadership. Many tangible demonstrations of support to faculty, staff, and students confirmed the administrators' communication skills. Stanford-Blair and Dickman (2005) also found that effective leaders encouraged human growth and achievement. Other researchers

have indicated luck as an issue in career advancement (Helgesen, 1990; Kennedy, 2001) and these administrators also credited their success to varying degrees of luck.

The collaborative leadership style practiced and the traits exhibited by the women in this study were also found in research by Dubrin (2001) and Frankel (2004).

Variations between women's and men's leadership styles often result in one style being preferred over the other under certain circumstances. As some of the participants in this study pointed out, the leadership styles practiced by women are conducive to higher education institutions. Gardner (1990) indicated that many skills needed in the general workplace are readily available in female leadership because women tend to network and encourage collaboration among groups. Frankel (2004) reports a blending of men's and women's styles in recent years as men adopt strategies commonly used by women. For years, women's leadership was interpreted based on the male model of leadership (Kennedy, 2001), but the women in this study proclaim the necessity of each person developing his or her own style, and not merely adopting someone else's strategies. As one participant stated, "I don't try to be a guy; I just try to be me. When people try to fit a mold, it backfires."

The senior administrators in this study had high expectations of people, saw themselves as role models, and provided mentoring to others. Mentoring was delivered through formal and informal channels, and often resembled the mentorship method that the administrator received during her own career advancement. On-the-job training, a mentoring method commonly employed by the administrators, is a component of the behavioral approach to leadership style. The participants stated that observance and direct mentoring are effective tools for leadership training. Conger (1992) found that

teaching leadership abilities to others plays a vital role in a person's own leadership development. The participants in Helgesen's (1990) study reported that they provided learning opportunities to others in their organization. The experiences built confidence in their employees and improved the efficiency of their organization. Other research contributing to the strength of this finding is Main's (1987) estimate that leaders gain 80 percent of their growth from experience and the other 20 percent from formal training. More recently, Stanford-Blair and Dickman's (2005) study with prominent leaders from five different continents concluded that leadership develops through experiences. The senior administrators in the current study gave many tangible examples of taking advantage of learning opportunities and offering learning experiences to potential leaders.

The communication skills and mentoring drives claimed by the administrators in this study are supported by the 85 percent response rate for the survey. In another study involving female administrators, Jean-Marie (2002) noted that the participants seemed to draw strength from knowing they were part of a group effort with other female leaders. The willingness to mentor others is an important aspect for this study's future implications. Studies conducted more than a decade ago (Durnovo, 1990; Grady 1989) indicated that women's lack of female mentors made career advancement difficult. Standford-Blair and Dickman (2005) recently concluded that women mentoring other women provided unique learning opportunities. The female participants in the Standford-Blair and Dickman study expressed the power of female mentoring. The current study involving female administrators gives wide-range mentoring opportunities to the small group of women participants.

The leadership styles practiced by the women in this study were similar to those found in other studies. Robinson-Hornbuckle (1991) found that women were participatory leaders who sought and valued input when making decisions. Frankel (2004) reported that women leaders took risks, communicated effectively, listened well, demonstrated resilience, demonstrated commitment to a common vision, and had high credibility. Dubrin (2001) found additional traits of female leadership such as their tendency to be more flexible than men and their understanding of the need to individualize. All of the traits and leadership styles identified by the past researchers also applied to the current study.

Research Question Two: What are women administrators' perspectives on successfully filling leadership roles at higher education institutions?

The senior administrators in this study felt that higher education administrators should maintain a global view of higher education and an institution-driven agenda. An important aspect of higher education administration is gaining an understanding of how their own institution contributes to the entire network of higher education. The administrators believed that demonstrating support to faculty, staff, and the student body encouraged success of the whole institution. The diversity of higher education must be protected, nurtured, and encouraged through stewardship. As pointed out by the participants, taking advantage of opportunities is one of the most important issues for career advancement, and they felt administration should offer opportunities to faculty and staff to encourage personal and institutional growth. As senior administrators, they saw themselves as role models and accepted role modeling as a responsibility of their administrative position.

Budgeting, strategic planning, and political planning were listed as the main tasks for higher education administrators. The development of networking skills, common to female leadership styles, aids in political planning and facilitates peer and co-administrator relationships.

The participants viewed good leadership as versatile and adaptable to many settings. Since administrators are frequently required to take their leadership into other areas, this is a valuable trait. Several of the administrators pointed out that they had been required to lead another department temporarily at various times during their careers. Their methods and strategies of leadership transferred to other departments and seemed effective. Since the administrators were enthusiastic, life-long learners, these experiences represented a new learning opportunity and quenched their thirst for new knowledge.

Leadership development includes many unpleasant tasks; therefore, support from family, friends, and mentors is helpful. The administrators in this study viewed workplace support as part of the responsibility of their role. They were willing to serve as mentors and supply opportunities conducive to advancing other people's careers. Since the senior administrators reported experiencing frustrations and self-doubt in their own careers, they have a strong understanding of the benefit of support.

The participants attributed successful female leadership to striving to provide quality leadership through their own unique strategies, while minimizing gender in their leadership role. They did not think of themselves as female leaders; they were simply leaders. This thought is similar to Margaret Thatcher's image as reported by Klenke (1996) and other female leaders (Famous firsts from women's colleges, n.d.). The strong

female leaders of the past expected no special concessions because they were female; their main objective was leadership.

Research from the 1970s indicates that women of this decade hesitated to mentor other women because they had such a strong commitment to the male leadership model (Bardwick, 1977; Kanter, 1977; Staines, Travis, & Jatrente, 1974). Recent research indicates that people tend to select same-gender role models (Perrone, Zanardelli, Worthington, & Chartrand, 2002; Rose, 2004). The progress of female leadership since 1970 to the present time is evident when observing the differing views of the women administrators in this study. Several of the administrators in this study mentioned male mentors in their early careers, which would have been during the 1970s and early 1980s. One administrator had female mentors; however, she was in nursing education, which is a female-dominant field. Since the current women administrators experienced career advancement during a time with few female role models, they understand the value of increasing the number of women leaders. The senior administrators accept the role model label willingly and support other female leaders.

Although the women senior administrators downplayed gender as a factor in their leadership role, they acknowledged the socialization of women and its effect on women's advancement. As noted by many of the participants, women often feel inadequate, frustrated, and filled with self-doubt. They have to remind themselves, or be reminded by someone else, of their accomplishments and capabilities. As one administrator stated, "Women spend their whole adulthood convincing themselves of their capability. Women are convinced of their capability in what is reflected back to them from their family or from their colleagues." This concept is parallel to women's development theorists who

claim that women tend to evaluate themselves based on other's opinions (Belenky et al., 1986 ; Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan,1982; Hancock,1989). Men use their success in business to ascertain self-confidence, while women analyze their success based on their families (Dubrin, 2001).

One of the women in this study remarked that women have to “do it bigger and better and work twice as hard to get the same recognition as men.” This thought coincides with Bagihole's (1992) study, which concluded that over 75 percent of the women admitted they felt they had to be better than their male counterparts.

Women's development theories also explain the evolution of a typical woman's life. Women typically develop much like males until early adolescence when they tend to obscure their ability and potential. Many women do not find their own voice again until their 40s or later in life. Conflicts and stress seem to aid in the rediscovery of a woman's sense of self. Although the women in this study did not wait until midlife to regain their voice, they acknowledged it as a common occurrence among women. These women understood that they were fortunate to have very satisfying careers, an asset not afforded to everyone. As one participant said, “Not everybody has that in their world of work. It's important to me that I'm not just building my own resume, but I'm part of an enterprise I care deeply for.” Since approximately half of the participants in this study had mothers who were homemakers, it is likely the participants witnessed, in their immediate family the obscurity that women's development theorists discuss.

Research Question Three: What factors motivate the women currently leading higher education institutions?

The administrators in this study were internally motivated by job satisfaction, feelings of personal and professional accomplishment, and the enjoyment of broadening knowledge. The findings of motivation corroborate with self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Deci & Ryan, 1999; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000), which identifies internal motivation as the most influential “single phenomenon... of human nature” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 70). Deci and Ryan’s research indicates a positive relationship between internal motivation and the satisfaction of the needs for autonomy and competence. Internal motivation for the women administrators in this study was strong; over 90 percent of the participants agreed, to some extent, with 11 of the 12 internal motivation factors listed on the survey. Sokoloff (1992) also supports the motivation findings of this study when he described “the professions” as careers where people can expect both internal and monetary rewards, and a high level of autonomy and esteem.

The participants also responded to external motivation, although not as strongly as they responded to internal motivation. The external motivation factors were career advancement and proof of success to self and others. Again, self-determination theory supports the findings of the study. Deci and Ryan (2000) concluded that leadership requires high performance of externally motivated tasks. Successful leaders such as the administrators in this study, approach such tasks with enthusiasm. Deci and Ryan further concluded that strong internalization is necessary for leaders, such as higher education

administrators, who aspire to motivate other people to high-quality performance. The participants in this study provided tangible evidence that they motivated faculty and staff.

The findings of this study supported a study by Drew and Halstead (2003) that found personal accomplishment as a prominent internal motivation factor for female faculty members. The participants of Drew's and Halstead's study cited financial reasons as external motivation factors. Both of these findings concerning internal and external motivation agreed with the current study. The participants in the current study responded to internal motivation and the external motivation of money was moderately supported.

Research Question Four: What barriers have female senior administrators at colleges and universities encountered and how have they overcome them?

The most prominent barrier perceived by the interview participants was family and child responsibility. This finding from the interview data was supported by 24 of the 33 survey participants agreeing it was a barrier for women. Literature and past research also supports this finding (Bain & Cummings, 2000; Belenky et al., 1986 ; Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, 1982; Hancock, 1989; Helgesen, 1990). One of the participants stated that career advancement is harder for single women than single men, a statement that seems to have merit since 80 percent of the administrators in this study were married. Hence remains the dichotomy of female leadership within higher education: Career advancement is more favorable for married women, yet it is easier for a single woman to accommodate a career without the demands of children and running a household. Single women have the time and energy to devote to a career in higher education, yet higher education institutions do not accept single women leaders as readily as they accept married women.

Approximately half of the participants in this study agreed that gender was a barrier. Barriers for women persist despite legal action formed to promote gender equity. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1991, which created the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission (Chamberlain, 1988; U.S. Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995) give legal support to eliminate discrimination and encourage gender equity. However, as Kennedy (2001) pointed out, the legislation for equal opportunity does not guarantee equity, it only documents guidelines and suggests options for action.

An encompassing look at this study reveals that the success of these women radiates from their mission to serve their institutions and higher education. The magnitude of their dedication becomes apparent when analyzing their perspectives, actions, and motivations, all aimed at promoting higher education. Their mission has nothing to do with successful female leadership and everything to do with successful colleges and universities. They each keep their role as senior administrator in perspective and attempt to provide exemplary leadership as they oversee their institution. Since female leadership styles are conducive to higher education, the question of the low representation of women remains. Gender alone does not explain the small representation of females in leadership positions, but the other role that typically accompanies women helps explain the deficit. Both the interview data and survey data point to family responsibility, which limits the time and energy spent on career advancement. The successful women in this study admitted the conflict in their own lives and recognized it in others. Women struggle with finding a comfortable balance between work and family. Career advancement requires a substantial investment of time

and energy. Blending a commitment to family and career is difficult and represents the most prominent struggle facing career-oriented women. The two issues often conflict dramatically, and seldom co-exist peacefully. Women who enjoy achievement in their careers often have reliable childcare readily available, such as spouse or grandparents. Those who do not have assistance with childcare, sacrifice career advancement, family time, or bypass motherhood completely. As in the case of the women in this study, some chose not to have children, and the ones who had children admitted that they received substantial support from spouses and other family members. The limited resources of time and energy also contribute to the lack of networking and experience. Dividing resources between family responsibilities and careers requires women to sacrifice something in both areas. Enjoying the best of both worlds can be difficult, if not impossible.

Implications and Recommendations

Women's development theory (Belenky et al., 1986 ; Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan,1982; Hancock,1989) reveals that women tend to blend themselves into other people's identities. For example, a young girl looks to her mother as a role model. Typically, her mother's foremost responsibility is to her husband and children so the young girl also accepts that as her adulthood mission. Our culture conditions women to accept the role also. The role of homemaker is a historical, honorable, and important part of all cultures around the world. However, when women attempt to build a career, they simply do not have the resources, in this case time and energy, to do both adequately. As the participants in Helgesen's (1990) qualitative study point out, it often "takes women ten years longer than men to realize how good they are" (p. 163) and it is difficult to

make strong contributions until that confidence is fully developed. Many women focus time and energy on family responsibilities during young adulthood, delaying career development until middle age. Thus, family and child responsibility becomes a barrier for women's career advancement. A woman must sacrifice one for another, or make adjustments for one in favor of the other. The ensuing choices are some of the most excruciating decisions in a woman's life. Although labeled a barrier, family and child responsibilities are self-imposed by the woman herself. The extent of sacrifice she makes to her family or to her career is a personal decision. One of the participants in this study summarized the dilemma in the following statement:

The family issue can be a struggle for women. I think when you look at that piece of the pie, a woman has to figure that out for herself and figure out the balance. If you don't feel comfortable with your decision, it will be a constant struggle and you won't be good at either one. Each woman has to find the right balance and that's a big element.

Mentoring programs, both formal and informal, help address barriers such as lack of networking, experience, and opportunity. The programs can be offered, but it is up to faculty and staff members to take advantage of the opportunities and capitalize on them. As noted by the participants in this study, many chances offered through normal occurrences on college campuses are overlooked or declined consistently. Encouragement from interested faculty members and administration might alert potential leaders who are not realizing the opportunities being presented.

The negative personality characteristics of women discussed in the findings of this study should be kept in perspective. Although the negative personality traits are a

barrier to some women, they do not represent a barrier to the entire population of women. Obviously, females who practice negative behaviors will realize adverse effects. Women who strive to maintain professional attitudes, such as the participants in this study, will succeed and enjoy career advancement. One of the participants said it best when she stated, “Somewhere along the line, women need to learn how to manage their behavior.” Those who do, will succeed; those who do not, will fail.

Since the participants in this study identified taking advantage of the opportunities presented to them as such an important catalyst in career advancement, aspiring leaders should be aware of committee appointments and other tasks they sometimes decline. Service on governance boards and committees provide a good overview of university operations and encourage networking across campuses. Sponsorship of state and national student organizations provide good training in student affairs and increases networking with other campuses. Conferences within discipline areas or work areas expand the network of contacts that is so essential in career advancement. Faculty and staff members may be declining opportunities that could provide valuable training and contacts to them.

Another recommendation is making formal mentorship and leadership training programs available and accessible for faculty and staff members on college campuses. Some leadership programs are already in existence. Strathe and Wilson (2006) conduct the Administrative Fellows program. The program selects eight to ten faculty, staff, or entry-level administrators to meet in monthly seminars and shadow upper level administrators at higher education institutions. Women lead the program and the program serves a population that is 52 percent female. The evaluations of the program

are positive and indicate growth in the participants. Programs such as these increase mentorship and networking.

On a more informal scale, mentorship assignments between experienced faculty/staff members and new hires on college campuses can prove valuable. Many times, a mentorship develops naturally between faculty members when a new faculty member is hired. However, institutions can be assured new faculty members are receiving the necessary information and on-the-job training if an experienced faculty member provides a year of informal supervision. The women in this study described similar mentorship during their early careers, but it does not happen in all cases. Informal training such as this is valuable for both the assigned mentor and the new faculty or staff member. The relationship gives the mentor experience and satisfaction in promoting growth in someone, and it gives the new faculty or staff member a much-needed contact during their first year on the job.

The participants in this study cited good listening skills and the development of good instincts as important traits for career advancement. Those two skills are valuable and transferable to any occupation. Another important point made by the participants is that, in many instances, other people noted their leadership abilities before the participants realized their own potential. An obvious suggestion for aspiring leaders is to listen carefully, seize opportunities, be alert when other people point out positive traits, and use verbal and written feedback to correct negative traits that may have an adverse effect on careers.

Implications for future studies within the realm of female leadership are numerous. Since this study involved a variety of issues and involved all areas of

successful leadership, the implications are wide spread. Below are some additional questions raised by this study:

- Research indicates that male leadership styles and female leadership styles are blending and becoming similar (Frankel, 2004). Is this trend of congruency between male and female leadership styles continuing?
- The women in this study conducted self-assessments and portrayed themselves as global, communicative leaders. Do faculties, staffs, and students see them the same way they see themselves?
- A longitudinal study observing the changes of internal and external motivation factors over a period of several years as people experience career advancement would indicate how motivation factors change. Do people tend to become internally motivated as they grow older? Does career advancement have a changing impact on motivation?
- This study was limited to one state. Although higher education institutions' missions are similar across the nation, the percentage of women leaders fluctuates. A study similar to this one on a national scale would provide valuable information. What are the traits, leadership styles, perceptions, motivations, and barriers of women administrators in higher education institutions across the United States?

Summary

The historical fluctuations in women's roles reviewed in Chapter 2 reveal the struggles women as an aggregate population have faced since the early 1800s. As women leadership develops and more women succeed, society will embrace and value

the contributions they make. As with the women in this study who preferred to be viewed as leaders, not women leaders or female leaders, gender will become less and less a factor as more women accept leadership positions. All professionals receive their education at colleges and universities. The strong women leaders that are presently serving as visible mentors provide role models for today's college students to emulate in their various careers. The current administrators are doing their part in providing examples, it is up to other females to follow and pursue future leadership roles.

Higher education administrators are devoted not only to their institutions, but to higher education. In fact, they are passionate about it. Colleges and universities may feel competition with each other on the sports' playing fields, but these administrators did not compete. Their main objective is improving and contributing to higher education. They understand that if they help their institution perform at the optimal level, higher education benefits. That particular aspect portrays higher education and society as an intricate web. Higher education's strand of influence is woven throughout the web of our society. If higher education improves, all of society benefits because higher education contributes to society as nothing else does. Higher education produces the world's wealth of human capital. All professions are educated through colleges and universities; therefore, the institutions contribute and affect society in an unparalleled manner.

Higher education administrators have a great responsibility in this web. Their responsibility is to facilitate institutions to provide the best education possible. The web of society embraces higher education's students and utilizes their skills. Within this web, society benefits from having the best leaders, both male and female. Female leaders on college campuses provide the necessary catalyst for motivating other women leaders in

all occupations, thus contributing to society and building a strong, resilient web. The image of this web and the contribution each strand makes is summarized in the following quote from Brother Eagle, Sister Sky (Seattle, 1991): “We did not weave the web of life, we are merely a strand in it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.” Higher education plays a vital role in the web of our society. Improving its leadership creates a strong resilient web.

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Appendices

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APPENDIX A

Interview Guide for gathering data from Higher Education Administrators

There are four main questions for the interviews. The items listed below each of the four questions provide additional prompts if needed.

1. Tell me your life story.
 - a. When in your life did you feel most comfortable?
2. How did you come to leadership?
 - a. What relationships, events, and experiences influenced your journey to leadership?
 - b. What preparation (formal or informal) was valuable to your leadership development?
 - c. What barriers did you encounter?
 - d. What barriers do you see other women encountering?
 - e. What role has luck played in the journey to your present position?
3. How do you conduct your leadership?
 - a. What motivate/drives your leadership?
 - b. How do you see yourself as a leader?
 - c. What does your leadership look like to other?
 - d. How do you influence others toward the achievement of goals?
 - e. Do you see yourself as a role model to other women?
4. What sustains you as a leader?
 - a. How do you sustain results?
 - b. How do you sustain others?

APPENDIX B, Page I

Higher Education Administrator Survey

Thank you for participating in this survey. Please respond to the following questions or statements.

Question or Statement	Your Answer
What is your age?	_____
What is your marital status?	<input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed and remarried <input type="checkbox"/> Single, never married <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced and remarried
How many children do you have? Check one, then fill in current age(s) of children.	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/> 1, age _____ <input type="checkbox"/> 2, ages _____ <input type="checkbox"/> 3, ages _____ <input type="checkbox"/> 4, ages _____ <input type="checkbox"/> more than 4, ranging in age from _____ to _____
What is your race? Check one. If your answer is "other", please fill in the blank with your nationality.	<input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Summarize your post secondary education. (degree, institution, and major) <i>Example:</i> 1. <i>B.S., University of Oklahoma, Accounting</i> 2. <i>M.S., University of Oklahoma, Secondary Administration</i> 3. <i>Ph.D., Oklahoma State University, Higher Education Administration</i>	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____
Summarize your career track. <i>Example:</i> 1. <i>Accounting teacher in 4-year university</i> 2. <i>Department Chair</i> 3. <i>Dean of Education</i> 4. <i>Provost</i>	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____
How many years have you been in your current administrative position?	_____
In your family of origin, what is your birth order? <i>Example:</i> <i>1st born child of 4 children, or only child</i>	_____
What is your parents' highest level of education? <i>Example:</i> <i>Father: high school</i> <i>Mother: associate degree in general studies</i>	Father _____ Mother _____
What was/is your parents' primary occupations? <i>Example:</i> <i>Father: banker</i> <i>Mother: nurse</i>	Father _____ Mother _____

APPENDIX B, Page 2

Think about the women you currently know who have the potential to enter higher education administration. Using the scale below, circle the number that indicates how much you agree or disagree that the item listed is an obstacle for women entering higher education administration. Numbers 12 through 14 are blank, allowing you to list and rank any barriers not already listed.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6

How powerful are the following barriers for women entering leadership positions in higher education institutions?

Potential obstacle		Your rating					
1.	Limited time/support for development and research	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Lack of appropriate credentials	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Lack of opportunity	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Age/late start	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.	Family or child responsibility	1	2	3	4	5	6
7.	Race/ethnicity	1	2	3	4	5	6
8.	Dislikes administration as a career	1	2	3	4	5	6
9.	Lack of experience	1	2	3	4	5	6
10.	Personal characteristics	1	2	3	4	5	6
11.	Lack of informal networking	1	2	3	4	5	6
12.	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6
13.	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6
14.	_____	1	2	3	4	5	6

APPENDIX B, Page 3

The following statements represent beliefs administrators may have about their position in higher education administration. Read each statement and circle the number that indicates how much you agree that the statement is true of you in your current position. Please answer as honestly as you can. Use the 6-point scale below to indicate your response.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Mildly Disagree	Mildly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6

Why are you serving in a position of higher education administrator?

1.	I wanted a position that paid well.	1 2 3 4 5 6
2.	Because I experience enjoyment and satisfaction while performing my job.	1 2 3 4 5 6
3.	Because this position fulfills my career goals.	1 2 3 4 5 6
4.	Because of the intense feeling I experience when I am able to accomplish something for my institution.	1 2 3 4 5 6
5.	For the enjoyment I experience in the achievements of my position.	1 2 3 4 5 6
6.	To prove to myself that I am capable of serving successfully in this position.	1 2 3 4 5 6
7.	Serving in this position will help me attain a more prestigious position later on.	1 2 3 4 5 6
8.	For the gratification I experience when I accomplish new things.	1 2 3 4 5 6
9.	Because it will enable me to enter another career in which I am interested.	1 2 3 4 5 6
10.	For the satisfaction that I experience when I create new programs that will help Students.	1 2 3 4 5 6
11.	For the feeling of personal accomplishment that comes with the duties of this job.	1 2 3 4 5 6
12.	Because this job makes me feel important.	1 2 3 4 5 6
13.	Because I enjoy the "good life."	1 2 3 4 5 6
14.	For the pleasure of broadening my knowledge base that this job requires.	1 2 3 4 5 6
15.	Because this position allows me to make important decisions.	1 2 3 4 5 6
16.	For the enjoyment that I feel when I feel completely absorbed by my job.	1 2 3 4 5 6
17.	For the satisfaction that I feel when I am in the process of accomplishing difficult duties.	1 2 3 4 5 6
18.	To show myself that I am a successful person.	1 2 3 4 5 6
19.	To earn a better salary than my previous jobs.	1 2 3 4 5 6
20.	Because this job allows me to do things I am interested in.	1 2 3 4 5 6
21.	Because I believe that time in this position will improve my competence.	1 2 3 4 5 6
22.	For the great feeling that I experience while tending to the various aspects of my job.	1 2 3 4 5 6
23.	Because this position allows me to experience a personal satisfaction in my quest for excellence.	1 2 3 4 5 6
24.	Because I want to show myself that I can succeed.	1 2 3 4 5 6

APPENDIX C

Motivational Factors

Motivational factors measured on Page 3 of Higher Education Administrator survey instrument:

Question Number	Intrinsic/Extrinsic	Specific factor measured
2, 8, 14, 20	Intrinsic	To know
5, 11, 17, 23	Intrinsic	Toward accomplishment
4, 10, 16, 22	Intrinsic	To experience stimulation
3, 9, 15, 21	Extrinsic	Identified
6, 12, 18, 24	Extrinsic	Interjected
1, 7, 13, 19	Extrinsic	External

APPENDIX D

PATSY WOOTTON

2 North Covey

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December 20, 2005

Dear President, Vice President, or Provost:

You are a member of an elite group. Female presidents, provosts, and vice presidents represent only 23 percent of all senior administrators at public higher education institutions in Oklahoma. As a member of this elite group, you can mentor other women by sharing some of your knowledge, expertise, and perspectives. You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted under the auspices of the University of Oklahoma-Norman Campus. Your input is vital to the success of this study. **Please return the enclosed survey by January 31, 2006.**

I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Robert Fox in the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Oklahoma. The purpose of this dissertation study is to understand the characteristics of successful female leaders in colleges and universities in Oklahoma. The enclosed survey will help achieve the objective. Investigating the perspectives, traits, and motivation factors of women like you will capture the essence of women who are currently serving as senior administrators in colleges and universities.

The enclosed survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Your involvement in the study is voluntary. You may stop filling out the survey at any time or choose to not answer specific questions. The survey is anonymous and no comments can be attributed to you by name in any reports on this study.

Thank you for considering this request for your participation in this research study. A self-addressed stamped envelope is enclosed for the return of the survey instrument. By returning this survey in the envelope provided, you will be agreeing to participate in the above described project. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. The information you provide will promote a more diversified group of leaders and role models in our colleges and universities, thus benefiting higher education institutions, students, and society.

Sincerely,

Patsy Wootton, Principal Investigator
Graduate Student

APPENDIX E

E-mail message for follow-up of the survey **(Send approximately ten days after mailing the hard copies of the survey)**

Dear President, Vice President, or Provost:

Approximately one week ago, you should have received a survey designed to gather data about women administrators in higher education institutions. This survey was sent through regular post office mail.

If you have already responded to the survey, please accept my sincere appreciation for your participation in this study concerning women leaders in higher education. If you did not receive the survey or have not yet responded and would like another copy of the survey sent to you, please respond to this e-mail message. I will send another survey and self-addressed, stamped envelope to you immediately.

Thank you for your help in this effort to assist other women gain entry into leadership positions.

Sincerely,

Patsy Wootton, Principal Investigator and Graduate Student
2 North Covey
Sayre, OK 73662

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APPENDIX F

Female Administrators in Oklahoma Higher Education Institutions

Information from *Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education Directory* (2005), updated December 6, 2005

Institution	Number of total administrators*	Number of females* and percent of female representation
COMPREHENSIVE RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES		
Oklahoma State University (Stillwater, Tulsa, Oklahoma City, and Okmulgee campuses)	34	6
University of Oklahoma (Norman, Oklahoma City, and Tulsa campuses)	15	3
Total for comprehensive universities	49	9 (18.4%)
FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITIES		
Cameron University	5	1
East Central University	5	0
Langston University	4	3
Northeastern State University	5	2
Northwestern Oklahoma State University	4	1
Oklahoma Panhandle State University	3	0
Rogers State University	5	1
Southeastern Oklahoma State University	7	1
Southwestern Oklahoma State University	4	1
University of Central Oklahoma	5	1
University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma	3	0
Total for four-year universities	50	11 (22.0%)
TWO-YEAR COMMUNITY COLLEGES		
Carl Albert State College	2	1
Connors State College	4	2
Eastern Oklahoma State College	2	0
Murray State College	5	2
Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College	4	0
Northern Oklahoma College	7	3
Oklahoma City Community College	7	2
Redlands Community College	4	1
Rose State College	5	1
Seminole State College	5	2
Tulsa Community College	8	5
Western Oklahoma State College	5	0
Total for community colleges	58	19 (32.8%)
Total for all three types of institutions	157	39 (24.8%)

*Includes administrative positions of president, provost, and vice president