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Beliefs and Perceptions of Michigan Superintendents Toward Females Advancing in the Ranks: Perspectives to Increase the Minority Pool

Dennis J. Stanek
Western Michigan University

BELIEFS AND PERCEPTIONS OF MICHIGAN SUPERINTENDENTS
TOWARD FEMALES ADVANCING IN THE RANKS:
PERSPECTIVES TO INCREASE
THE MINORITY POOL

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by

Dennis J. Stanek

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BELIEFS AND PERCEPTIONS OF MICHIGAN SUPERINTENDENTS TOWARD FEMALES ADVANCING IN THE RANKS: PERSPECTIVES TO INCREASE THE MINORITY POOL

· Dennis J. Stanek, Ed.D.

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The purpose of this study was to determine potential factors which affect the advancement of females in the role of superintendent. With the research pointing to a variety of causes for the low percentage of female superintendents, the reason for this study was to make various groups in leadership positions aware of such factors.

Three research questions were studied:

1. Do practicing K-12 male superintendents in Michigan possess significantly different beliefs and perceptions toward female superintendents than do practicing female superintendents?

2. What experiences did the respondent have in working with a female superintendent?

3. What perceptions do K-12 superintendents have as to the barriers which interfere with females aspiring to become superintendents?

This study is a replication of a nationwide study conducted by Zumsteg (1991/1992) utilizing a population consisting of 40 female and 538 male superintendents from the state of Michigan.

The majority of superintendents represented rural districts with school enrollments between 1,001 and 2,000 students. A majority of

the superintendents fell between the ages of 45 and 54 and were married, although a greater number of females were divorced than males. The highest degree held was a Ph.D./Ed.D. acquired mostly by female superintendents. Most males held their first superintendency between the ages of 36 and 45, while females' first appointments occurred between the ages of 46 and 55.

Differences were found to exist between males and females relative to various abilities, aspirations, and qualifications. The majority of both males and females believed male administrators are more likely to relocate for career advancement, females are emotionally capable, assertive, and sufficiently competitive to be a superintendent.

In addition, while the majority of male superintendents believed female administrators lack the experience necessary to be a superintendent, school board members are not reluctant to hire females, and sex discrimination does not exist, female superintendents believed the contrary.

Similarities were constant when the respondents were asked about barriers which may exist resulting in a low percentage of female superintendents. These included gender bias, unwillingness of boards to hire females, and the public perception that females are not capable.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The number of females in comparison to the number of males in the role of K-12 superintendent has shown minimal improvement in spite of the increased efforts of affirmative action (Montenegro, 1993). This is especially disheartening since half the students completing their studies in educational administration have been women (Ortiz & Marshall, 1988).

The document, A Nation at Risk (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), blamed the so-called lack of educational excellence on schools and the ineffective efforts toward the pursuit of gender equity. President Reagan, in contrast, focused attention upon school failure as partially being the result of too much time expended on the research relative to the employment of females, minorities, and the education of the handicapped (Shakeshaft, 1986). The reality is that excellence cannot be achieved without gender equity.

Various perceptions temper the culture of K-12 schools, initiating debate as to the serious possibility of female equity in the role of superintendent. In certain socioeconomic circles, females were considered to be perpetuators of the human race, that is, remaining at home and rearing children (Estler, 1975; Loomis & Wild, 1978; Paul, 1989; K. S. Whitaker & Lane, 1990). Women were perceived as lacking the desire to succeed, unable to endure stress, unwilling to work full time, and

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possessing more interest in their families than in a career (Paul, 1989; Shakeshaft, 1987).

The broad research question is: Do certain beliefs or perceptions toward women in administrative positions exist, causing fewer women to enter administrative careers than males? This study examined the prevalent factors which affect the success of women aspiring to the position of K-12 superintendent and is a replication of the research conducted in 1991 by Zumsteg (1992), entitled Superintendents' Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding the Leadership Pool.

A study conducted in 1928 indicated that 85% of all elementary teachers were females (C. Whitaker & Hales, 1984). Between 1910 and 1930 only eight women served as superintendents in the United States (Gotwalt & Towns, 1986). In 1975, the New York Times ("Women in the Classroom," 1975) reported that women comprised 66% of all public school teachers, 80% of them in elementary positions; yet men held 80% of the elementary principalships. Montenegro's (1993) re-search cited that in 1975 only 0.5% of the total number of superintend-ents were women. In 1985, women continued to hold 66% of all teach-ing positions, while employed only 23% of the time as elementary prin-cipals, 10% as secondary school principals (Office for Multi-Cultural and Equity Education, 1985), and 2.7% as superintendents (Montenegro, 1993). By 1993, the percentage of superintendencies held by women grew to 7.1% (Montenegro, 1993).

Images of females projected in our textbooks and materials avail-able in school libraries, coupled with the lack of counseling for girls to

enter nontraditional roles, have contributed to the perceived lack of equity (Eccles & Hoffman, cited in Shakeshaft, 1986; Gilligan, 1990). In their defense, school personnel responded that due to K-12 budget restrictions, new materials were not readily available which depict women today as the heroine in a police crackdown, the winning attorney in a murder case, or even the principal of the high school (Eccles & Hoffman, cited in Shakeshaft, 1986). The reality is that schools not only educate by what is taught in the classroom, but by the school's reflection of the society in total (Coursen, 1975; Eccles, 1984; Eccles and Hoffman, cited in Shakeshaft, 1986; Sutherland & Veroff, 1985).

Co-ed extracurricular activities have contributed to improving coequality, that is, equal numbers of opportunities for boys and girls, but still lack true equity when compared to coaches' salaries, practice times, and so forth. With limited knowledge of females in nontraditional roles, young people will believe that what they read is fair and equitable (California Interscholastic Federation, 1992; Coursen, 1975; Macoby, 1990).

Despite the existence of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Legislation, research has continued to demonstrate that males and females are represented disproportionately in K-12 school administration (Gotwalt & Towns, 1986; R. W. Heller, Woodsworth, Jacobson, & Conway, 1991). During the last 40 years the number of females entering the work force has risen dramatically. Fifty-five percent of the labor field consisted of women in 1986 as opposed to 33% in 1950. By 1995, the U.S. Census Bureau has predicted that 60% of all adult workers will be women (U.S. Department of Labor, 1990). Concern over the disproportionate ratio of females in K-12 administration will only

escalate as the careers of females in the work force rises, since little progress toward reducing the female to male ratio disparity will be observed.

Statement of the Problem

Although teaching has been considered a feminine career or profession, females have been restricted to entry level administrative positions such as assistant principal or principal. Even though they possess equal or higher levels of formal preparation, few are able to advance to upper level administrative positions, that is, assistant superintendent and superintendent (Dopp, 1985/1986).

Research generally has supported the perception that women see the role of superintendent as institutional leader and that they are willing and able to perform that role or are prepared equally or better than their male counterparts (Biklen & Brannigan, 1980; Lovelady-Dawson, 1980; Shakeshaft, 1987; S. Smith & Piele, 1989; Wiley, 1987; Zumsteg, 1991/1992). Why, then, aren't there more female superintendents when women comprise well over half of the teaching population in K-12 education in the U.S.?

During this examination of beliefs and perceptions of male and female superintendents, three broad research questions were investigated?

1. Do practicing K-12 male superintendents in Michigan have significantly different beliefs and perceptions toward female superintendents than do female superintendents have of female superintendents? Respondents were requested to answer questions related to female

aspirations, relocation, compatibility of being a mother and a career person, experience, actuality of gender discrimination, competitive spirit, and emotional stability.

2. What experiences did the respondent have in working with a female superintendent? Stockard, Schmuck, Williams, and Kemporer (1980) contended that lack of contact with professional administrators of various sorts perpetuates ignorance and creates and perpetuates stereotypes toward females in administrative roles. The reader may hypothesize from the research that superintendents who work with female superintendents will view women in the role of superintendent more positively than those who have not worked with a high percentage of women. What a person does not know, he or she does not understand.

3. What perceptions do Michigan K-12 superintendents have as to the barriers which interfere with females aspiring to become superintendents? Zumsteg (1991/1992) found in her study that female superintendents believed the greatest barriers to aspiring female superintendents were (a) school boards were unwilling to hire a female superintendent, (b) women were perceived by the public to be incapable, and (c) women had family obligations which interfered with their job. Of the male superintendents surveyed by Zumsteg nationwide, the greatest perceived barriers of females entering the superintendency career were (a) lack of aspiration, (b) lack of experience, and (c) the public perception that women are incapable.

Rationale for Study

Concerns over the lack of females in administrative positions were of such high priority that in 1987 the Michigan Model project, funded by the Women's Educational Equity Act (WEEA) and the Department of Education, was developed to enhance the number of females in such positions. Of most concern was the need to change perceptions and attitudes of those presently in positions of authority who employ candidates for potential leadership roles.

In the research by Zumsteg (1991/1992), 41.4% of the female superintendents and 35.6% of the male superintendents surveyed responded to the question, "Why did you become a superintendent?" with a similar answer, that is, "to make an impact" or "to make a difference." This answer was the number one choice of both sexes; but ironically, only 7.1% of the superintendents nationwide are female (Montenegro, 1993), while in Michigan, 7% are female K-12 superintendents (Michigan Education Directory, 1994). With so few females in the role of superintendent, a valuable resource in the leadership of schools is possibly being suppressed.

Funk (1986) cited several interesting but disconcerting factors in her research:

1. The typical female is in her 40s, has held an administrative position for less than 10 years, and does not aspire to become a superintendent.

2. The most common problems for female executives are the difficulties encountered in gaining male respect, employment

discrimination, and the perception they are a threat to men in high level positions.

Is a valuable resource toward enhancing the K-12 leadership pool--the female superintendent--being overlooked? Are there a number of biases which attribute to the low number of female superintendents in the state of Michigan? If so, are these biases shared by males and females?

Conditions

This study was based upon the following conditions:

1. Since it was a replication of a study of that by Zumsteg (1991/1992), the author utilized the instrument and chi-square data analysis procedure to determine comparison of results.

2. Subjects to be surveyed were presently employed as superintendents of schools and a majority were male.

3. The study was representative of K-12 schools in the state of Michigan.

4. Sex has been defined as the biological differences that distinguish male from female, while gender is relative to the classification one demonstrates in his or her role or position. Because various authors have used these terms interchangeably, all references to sex and gender in this paper will reference classification.

Summary

With the number of female teachers employed throughout the nation, the concern of why there are so few female administrators needs

to be addressed. This study examined the factors which affect the small percentage of women who become superintendents. Chapter I contained the introduction, statement of the problem, purpose, rationale for the study, conditions, and summary.

In Chapter II, a review of the literature is provided in five sections relevant to the study of females seeking the position of superintendent. These include: (1) historical perspective of women, (2) barriers that confront women, (3) legal perspectives affecting the advancement of women, (4) leadership and its relationship to the superintendency, and (5) summary. The methodology, including instrument design, is presented with three broad research questions in Chapter III. Chapter IV contains an analysis with conclusions and recommendations provided in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to determine the potential factors which affect the advancement of females to the role of superintendent. The review of the literature in Chapter II is divided into five sections: (1) historical perspectives of women, (2) barriers that confront women, (3) legal perspectives affecting the advancement of women, (4) leadership and its relationship to the superintendency, and (5) summary.

Historical Perspective of Women

Historically, women have served in a variety of capacities few of which, prior to the 20th century, were positions of direct authority or responsibility (K. S. Whitaker & Lane, 1990). Throughout history, a customary belief held by most Americans portrayed white, middle-class women as discovering happiness through fulfilling their "biological destiny," that is, becoming good wives and mothers (K. S. Whitaker & Lane, 1990). Puritan New Englanders believed that the hierarchy reflected a divine pattern, that man's role over mankind was similar to God's role over the universe. Cultural historians have shown that the doctrine of domesticity developed boundaries which limited female participation in public work (Chafe, 1991; Funk, 1986).

During the 17th century, in a period known as the agricultural society, women were confined to planting, nurturing, and the harvesting

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of crops. With the availability of servants, women were responsible for arranging daily schedules, finances, and maintaining and coordinating seasonal food production, all related to the procreation of family life (Chafe, 1991). Research has substantiated that those who were predominantly the first born were involved with their father's masculine activities, namely, farming. Thus, if a female was the first child, her destiny was to become her father's hand or a farmer's wife (Henning & Jardin, 1977; K. S. Whitaker & Lane, 1990).

During the middle of the 18th century, women who worked in the mills of New England were separated from their male counterparts and paid less than men (Paul, 1989), thus perpetuating differences between the sexes. This differentiation spread throughout education as men continued to hold the majority of teaching positions (C. Whitaker & Hales, 1984).

Military commitments strongly influenced the rise and fall of female representation in the educational sector. During the colonial era, men held most teaching positions but the number of female teachers began to increase with male involvement in the American Revolution and the Civil War. This scenario repeated itself as women became more involved with education while men were engaged again in battle during World War I and World War II (Neidig, 1980).

Throughout most of America's history, a need for teachers has existed. Until the 20th century, standards were not strict, although teachers were expected to be literate, well versed in the three Rs, of native birth, and willing to accept low wages. Teaching was considered an occupation of respectability and allowed for geographic mobility, thus

early respondents to teaching needs were young men, looking at teaching as a stepping stone, or young, female students, working their way through college (Schmuck, Charters, & Carlson, 1981).

Feminization of teaching was facilitated due to an increase in demand for teachers. Aside from the nation's involvement in national defense, this demand was due to increased population, a greater commitment to education and a higher turn over of teachers (Strober & Tyack, 1980). The preconceived goal of women, that of marriage and child rearing, could be attained through a career in education since women were available, qualified, and employable. With various public and private schools opening their doors to female students, concurrent changes in the family economy arose allowing young women to enter the work force in the public sector (Dublin, 1979).

Advocates such as Horace Mann, Henry Barnard, and Catherine Beecker were instrumental in creating normal schools to train women to become teachers. Women were expected to promulgate their divine virtues, that is, patience, domestic fortitude, and nurturers of life, thus placing them in the primary grade levels. Men, meanwhile, were responsible for later elementary and secondary positions because of a need for direction, athletics, and discipline, integral traits perceived as a road to success for the role as principal (Strober & Tyack, 1980). Male dominance was embedded within institutionalized thinking. The promulgation of segregation and the devaluation of women became prevalent throughout history (Paul, 1989).

By 1929, distinct levels of administration became pronounced in the hierarchy of schools. Examples of such positions included principals,

assistant principals, and specialists (Shakeshaft, 1987). The years between 1900 and 1930 have been referred to as the "golden age" of women administrators since they held 55% (in 1928) of the elementary principal positions (Ortiz & Marshall, 1988; Shakeshaft, 1987).

From the late 1930s until the 1960s, except for the World War II era, the female career was again perceived to be a secondary role, assumed only when it became necessary or convenient. Males had been the traditional providers, decision makers, and organizational players (C. Whitaker & Hales, 1984). Societal orientation of women toward children and home continued to provide the mental prowess that they make the best school teachers, nurses, and librarians (McCarthy & Webb, 1977).

The American Association of School Administrators Office of Minority Affairs ("Results From 1985 Survey", 1985) reported that the representation of women nationwide in the school superintendency was 2.7%, while 15% held positions of assistant superintendents. In 1993, 7.1% of the superintendencies were held by females and 24.3% of assistant superintendents were female (Montenegro, 1993). These statistics tend to reflect the traditional perceptions of the female's role in society. The inequity of the lack of females in school administration purveys the historical concept of man versus woman. When it was convenient, women were promoted to the administrative role.

Barriers That Confront Women

Ella Flagg Young (cited in N. T. Mertz & McNeely, 1988), the first female superintendent in the city of Chicago, predicted in the early

1900s that more women than men would be in charge of the vast educational system. Needless to say, this prediction has yet to become reality. Many studies have shown that a variety of barriers are in existence which make the rise to the top very difficult. The most predominant included: (a) gender bias, (b) public perception, (c) internal barriers, and (d) personnel selection (Adkison, 1981; Edson, 1988; Jones & Montenegro, 1983; Shakeshaft, 1987; Valverde & Ortiz, 1980; Zumsteg, 1991/1992).

Gender Bias

Differentiation by gender has been demonstrated to be deeply embedded in the American culture, economy, family development, and in the evolution of social organization. Historians have shown and promoted the doctrine of domesticity, designing boundaries around a "woman's place" limiting female participation in public work, and so forth (Schmuck et al., 1981).

Gender stereotyping through curriculum materials, teaching assignments, textbooks, audio visuals, and so forth, continues to deter full gender equity. Gotwalt and Towns (1986) noted in their study of role biases that 25% of the respondents indicated textbooks were biased. Ironically, only 11% of their respondents reported that they monitor textbook selections, while no federal law prohibits their use. Women have served predominantly as elementary teachers, librarians, and curriculum directors (McCarthy & Zent, 1981; Venditti & McNeely, 1988).

According to a labor force analysis by Stansbury, Thomas, and Wiggins (1984), women have been highly underrepresented in key

administrative roles such as the superintendency relative to the number of females in the classroom. One can observe the·structuring of men's jobs as they have advanced along the career ladder. Although the role of elementary school teachers is similar whether one is a man or woman, there are obvious differences in the advancement of their careers toward educational administration. For men, careers have tended to advance into the hierarchial structure while teaching has often been the terminal point for many women caused by demands of work and family (Edson, 1987).

Shakeshaft (1979/1980), in her examination of dissertations between 1973 and 1979, discovered documents to support unfavorable attitudes toward women in administration. Relevant data on equality of opportunity in educational administration revealed that gender, more than age, experience, or competence determines the role an individual will hold in education (Shakeshaft, Gilligan, & Pierce, 1984; Sholomskas & Axelrod, 1986). Additional research explained that, as a result of gender role stereotyping, women are absent from the leadership hierarchy (Metzger, 1985; Pounder, 1987). Acceptance of gender role stereotypes contributed to role overload for females who attempted to be homemakers and career women (Chase & Bell, 1994).

The Oregon study, Sex Equity in Educational Leadership (SEEL) conducted in 1978, pointed out several interesting observations in relation to the success of female administrators (cited in Schmuck, 1986). These observations indicated that (a) women are underrepresented as leaders in an area in which the majority of professionals are women, (b) women apply for and are hired for subordinate positions, and (c) they

must work their way to positions of higher authority by the process of appointment. The SEEL project also revealed that positions in public education were segregated and considered to be men's work. High school principal and superintendent positions were held by men; vice-principals in charge of discipline were men. Females, on the other hand, were represented in the subordinate roles such as curriculum directors and librarians (Schmuck, 1986; Schmuck & Wyant, 1981).

Public Perception

Females interested in pursuing a professional career find it to be a difficult task. Within these careers are placed conflicting roles such as mother, wife, and career person (Zumsteg, 1991/1992). Tradition has set the role of females as family oriented, thus a woman seeking a career must fight the stigma of someone who is stepping beyond her boundaries. As C. Whitaker and Hales (1984) noted, in the early 1980s various stereotypes have existed which gave credence to this gender bias. Such stereotypes included: (a) a male is firm, a female is inflexible; (b) a man loses his temper, a female is bitchy; (c) a man is aggressive, a female is pushy; (d) he is confident, she is stuck-up; (e) he can make decisions quickly, she is impulsive; and (f) he exercises authority diligently, she is power mad. These stereotypes were also noted in studies by Fansher and Buxton (1984) and Wiley (1987).

Studies of female administrators confirmed that the public perceives women exist in a different world than men (Loomis & Wild, 1978; Shakeshaft, 1989). Women are perceived to care, discern, and alleviate the real and recognizable troubles of the world, while men work toward

respect of others, protecting mankind from interference of the right to life and self-fulfillment (Gilligan, 1982). Adkison (1981) purported that the perception of gender role stereotypes does not suggest a correspondence between stereotypes held generally in society. Certain women exhibit behavior consistent with gender-role stereotypes, for example, waiting for doors to be held open while allowing males to be the driver and the female is the passenger.

Perceptionally, administration was stereotyped as a masculine career (Adkison, 1981). In the late 1800s the masculine "ethic" of administration supported the rise of a new profession of individuals. Top management was comprised of white, protestant men from elite schools. During the 19th century, school masters in the United States believed women would make better school teachers because they were purer, mild mannered, and would set a better example for children (Woody, 1974).

Society's attitude toward appropriate male and female roles has limited the number of females in administrative roles. Although the perception may be that schools are not good for boys or girls, the evidence has shown that they are certainly not a nurturing environment for females (Sizer, 1984). Because there are so few women as superintendents in a male oriented career, their work has been constantly scrutinized. The pressure of constantly being measured has helped reveal rather than conceal barriers when they seek leadership positions (Chase & Bell, 1994).

Various myths have centered around concerns regarding the abuse of sick leave, instability due to spouse transfer, and inability to take

additional coursework or training. S. Mertz, Grossnickle, and Tutcher (1980), in an attempt to override such perceptions, have shown empirical data even though such untruths continue. Although perceptions exist that women are more interested in fulfilling their gender roles as mothers and housewives as opposed to following a career, Holstrom's (1970) study of career patterns of husbands and wives indicated that men and women interrupt careers equally, but each for different reasons.

With respect to abilities, it is sometimes argued that women do not have the required skills to be an effective leader such as aggressiveness, vision or goal setting, willingness to take risks, and demonstration of self-confidence (Adkison, 1981; Dopp, 1985/1986). Lack of ability to handle management positions, an over-emotional reaction to stressful situations, the inability to handle situations rationally, and so forth, have been associated with females in leadership positions even though research studies have indicated that women behave the same as men in similar circumstances (Gupta, 1983).

One theory as to why women are poorly represented in administrative ranks is that they are minimally prepared or lack aspiration (Adkison, 1981). The majority of the research reviewed (Dopp & Sloan, 1986; Schneider, 1988; Shakeshaft, 1989) indicates lowered aspirational levels of women as at least partly responsible for the underrepresentation of females in the field of administration. In contrast, Pavan (1987) determined that women are increasingly well prepared and have obtained the necessary certification and are applying for available administrative positions.

Internal Barriers

Working for a female supervisor has been negatively construed by both males and females with the lack of effectiveness being cited as the key reason. Nieva and Gutek (1981) have shown in their studies that both genders hold the same types of attitudes.

Females do not have the support or mentoring networks that males do. Literature reviews conducted by Adkison (1981) and surveys of women by Edson (1980), Rometo (1983), and Jones and Montenegro (1983), in trying to determine why more women are not school administrators indicated the lack of mentors or role models to be a possible factor. Marshall (1985) demonstrated in his research that few women are in positions to act as mentors. Although, G. L. Shapiro (1985) reported in his study that mentoring support to women appears to be adequate but additional support could result in more women entering the administrative field.

For women, teaching has been a first choice, while men have their goals set higher wanting to reach the ultimate position (superintendency) earlier in their career (Edson, 1986; Ortiz, 1982; Pavan, 1987; K. S. Whitaker & Lane, 1990). Unless attitudinal changes occur, many women will continue to remain in traditional "female occupations" (K. S. Whitaker & Lane, 1990). Yeakey, Johnston, and Adkison (1986) supported the position which downplays the notion that women will actively seek managerial or administrative positions.

In contrast, an extensive study by Ortiz and Covel (1987) determined women have the same career aspirations as men. N. T. Mertz

and McNeely (1990) discovered those female aspirants that worked hard achieved success. Pavan's (1987) findings suggested that gender differences disappeared for all levels of certificate holders except the superintendent. Edson (1986) surveyed women who stated that they were aspiring to be administrators and found that 27% aspired to be a superintendent and 13% an assistant superintendent. These differences in how females view the career ladder to the superintendency leads one to believe that other barriers may exist rather than a self-imposed internal barrier.

Personnel Selection

Despite an increase in the realization of the need for administrative techniques and capabilities to meet the requirements of Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), Title IX, and so forth, local schools have continued to retain considerable discretion in hiring. One might argue that personnel decisions are the most important decisions made by superintendents and principals.

Formerly, employment decisions were based upon a person's "realizing the calling" or an applicant's charisma (Yukl, 1989), nature or personality, ability to manage or represent the district (Reeder, 1954). The superintendent of the 1990s is expected to look for challenges and possess a real sense of accomplishment as well as the possibility of failure (Hanson, 1991/1992). Decisions regarding employment of teachers and administrators have a long-term effect on the educational welfare of students and must be made based on an applicant's abilities, with gender having little or no bearing on the final selection.

Women are more likely to obtain their first administrative position by internal recruitment (G. T. Schneider, 1988). The posting of administrative positions has very often been an operation of formality. In numerous situations the jobs have either already been secured by someone from within or recruitment is dispersed via the "good ole boys network" (Pavan & Rometo, 1982). One research study suggested that most people discover employment opportunities via word of mouth (Farley, 1979) as opposed to advertisements in placement bulletins (Pavan & Rometo, 1982). Today, local school boards have usually delegated the screening of applicants to predominantly male oriented professionals (Chase & Bell, 1994).

The manner in which a local school uses its resources to educate young people is dependent upon the manner in which those in charge are selected (Schmuck & Wyant, 1981). Previously employed methods of minimizing the use of outside resources, conducting formal interviews, and so forth, have resulted in the exclusion of women from many administrative positions thus eliminating different but equally important modes of thought (Harragan, 1977).

By practice, a variety of "selection or elimination" criteria in selecting school administrators can be identified. Such requirements as B.A., B.S., or M.A. degrees, and so forth, appear contiguously in the placement bulletins or posting notices (Baltzell & Dentler, 1983). The primary criterion by districts was that of "fit." This concept was not articulated or defined but was perceived to represent the candidates physical appearance, projection of self, and match with community values (Baltzell & Dentler, 1983).

Research has shown that emphasis on the importance of the interview and personal characteristics were considered primary criteria in the final selection of candidates (W. Williams, 1978). Previous administrative experience, personal experience, and the ability to control students were other factors considered important to superintendents in their selection of finalists for principal positions (Bryant, Lawlis, Nicholson, & Maher, 1978).

No single explanation can account for discriminatory practices but the general acceptance of stereotypes about working women in general is prevalent. At the heart of all stereotypes is the notion that the woman's place is in the home (Paul, 1989). This attitude has persisted despite the fact that in the late 1980s women constituted 44% of the labor force compared to 29% in 1929 (S. Smith & Piele, 1989).

Underrepresentation of females in administrative positions appears to be gender biased. Niederemayer and Kramer (1974) cited possible reasons for female underrepresentation. They included: (a) recruitment techniques are not totally representative; (b) the language of the job description eliminates females, for example, minimum experience, "strong" disciplinary philosophy, and so forth; and (c) the makeup of the selection body, that is, normally male dominated boards of education or administrative groups. Several researchers reported that if discrimination occurs it is subtle. Bonuso and Shakeshaft (1982) ironically found no difference in the selection process based upon gender in superintendent's ratings of hypothetical applicants.

Although not perfect, the process of hiring administrators has changed since the early 1960s. Since equity of hiring practices is of

grave concern today, staff members and others involved in the recruit-
ment and selection of new employees are being held accountable for
their efforts and contributions (Boyce, 1989). The public expects that
searches for top candidates be widened geographically, educationally,
and with increased consideration of females (Cunningham & Hentges,
1982; Stapley, 1957).

Selecting new administrators has become increasingly important,
while the role has become increasingly complex, creating additional diffi-
culty in the hiring process (Gips, 1988). The recruitment and selection
of new administrators is in conflict over procedures, criteria, and values.
K-12 institutions have demonstrated their leeriness of hiring women as
evidenced by the minimal number represented in upper level administra-
tive positions (Montenegro, 1993). A concern is whether this practice
will be allowed to continue. The price of retaining good leadership is
less costly than replacement (Boyce, 1989).

Legal Perspectives Affecting the Advancement of Women

Between 1840 and the middle 1970s, several court cases related
to sex inequity were embodied in American law. Bradwell v. the State
of Illinois of 1872 (J. S. Williams, 1970) prohibited women from practic-
ing law; Minor v. Happersett of 1875 (J. M. Smith & Murphy, 1965-
1968) stated women had no right to vote; Muller v. Oregon of 1908
(Cominager, 1968) demanded special legislation to regulate work condi-
tions for women because of the differences between men and women
(procreative act); Hoyt v. the State of Florida of 1961 (Levy, 1992)
limited jury service for women because of the special responsibilities of

women, that is, the fulcrum of the household activities; Frontiero v. Richardson of 1973 (Levy, 1992) argued legal classifications based upon sex were suspect but permissible in rare cases.

As a consequence of paternalistic protection, judges rejected activists requests for equality of civil rights. During the 19th and first half of the 20th century, judicial premise suggested that women were discrete and separate legal classes. Judges assumed that females demanded different treatment because of psychological, sociological, and cultural differences permitting sex as a basis for legal classification (Pole, 1978).

In the late 1960s, the status of American women came under closer scrutiny. Whether by judicial pronouncement or by legislative means, women still constituted a special category of citizen, deserving protection rather than equality. Kanter (1977), in her investigation of the impact of sex in organizational hierarchy, found that position was a powerful determinant of behavior and segregation placed women in fewer opportunities.

The 1970s have witnessed the emergence of public policy of sex equity that limits the use of gender as justification for differing legal rights. However, the idea that sexual equality also means the equal sharing of legal rights and responsibilities is not kept firmly embodied in American law. Court decisions following Frontiero v. Richardson (1973) have been unclear, ambivalent, and inconsistent. In Craig v. Boren of 1976 (U.S. Reports, 1976), for example, the decision in which Justice Stevens denoted that habit rather than analysis makes it seem accept-able and natural to distinguish between male and female did little to

clarify the issue of equal rights.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX (U.S. Department of Education, 1988) of the Education Amendments of 1972 have been most influential in expanding the rights of female employees. Title VII prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, and sex. With the cornerstone of equal rights being laid, Executive Order 11246 was amended in 1967 to prohibit government contractors from discriminating on the basis of sex. The 1970s witnessed the emergence of public policy to prohibit sexual discrimination. Title IX prohibits employment discrimination, in that "no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance" (U.S. Department of Education, 1988, p. 1). Ambiguity in the language creates concern as to whether Title IX has affected employment of women (Cambron-McCabe, 1983).

The employment policies of school systems have been unchallenged and untested under civil rights law. Enforcement of Title IX (all inclusive legislation) has focused on programs and students, not discrimination in employment. Women's lack of participation as school administrators continues despite Affirmative Action, legislation, and the courts (LaPointe, 1994; Montenegro, 1993; Shakeshaft, 1989; Zumsteg, 1991/1992).

The Equal Pay Act (EPA) of 1963 (Fogel, 1984) prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex in the payment of wages for equal work. Unlike Title VII, the EPA is limited to discrimination in wages and does

not apply to hiring and firing.

Women's Educational Equivalent Act (Maurer, 1979) provided funds for curriculum, textbook materials, training, research, and so forth, for the sole purpose of accelerating Affirmative Action and increasing the number of females into high level administrative jobs.

The Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act (1985) outlaws sex discrimination in many forms. Most notable are the references made to compensation, pregnancy, medical conditions, and restriction of wages allocated according to sex.

While Affirmative Action legislation is effective in eliminating some vestiges of sex discrimination in employment, it lacks power to totally eliminate discriminatory practices. Despite the existence of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity legislation, research demonstrates that men and women are not being proportionately represented in education. Evidence exists to support that equally capable women have not been employed in male dominated positions (Shakeshaft, 1989). Although women fill two thirds of the classroom positions in this country, they hold one fifth of all elementary principalships and less than one tenth of all high school principal positions (Gips, 1988).

Local and state governments have responded with varying degrees of Affirmative Action to promote women and minorities in school administration. The National Advisory Council on Women's Educational Programs (1981) reported that the influence of Title IX has led many states to make special efforts to increase the number of women hired for administrative jobs. For example, Illinois and New York have instituted programs to develop a network of women interested in positions in

educational administration. Michigan, on the other hand, has developed the Multi-Phased Model for Compliance and Sex Equity in order to assist local education agencies. Their On-Site Planning model provides consulting services upon request to school districts that are committed to increasing the number of women educational administrators and effecting systematic changes at the district level (Bailey & Smith, 1982).

The guidelines of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (cited in Sandler, 1982) regarding the adoption of voluntary Affirmative Action programs were issued to assure that school districts are in compliance with the law. However, there is little information available to gauge whether school districts do, in fact, follow EEOC standards. Sandler (1982) explored the extent of EEOC compliance in one aspect of the hiring process, the employment application form, in 71% of the school districts throughout one state. Upon review of the EEOC forms, it was ascertained that two thirds of the school districts used application forms which reflected little or no awareness of federal equal employment opportunity guidelines.

School districts vary in their formal and informal policies to provide equal opportunity for employment. In one study an attempt was made to evaluate the implementation of Title IX. The school districts studied varied in their written policies regarding affirmative action: 71% had written policy, 41% had a plan of action, and 25% had no specific timetable to implement action plans, goals, or policies regarding hiring practices (Miller & Associates, 1978).

But progress has been demonstrated through legislative actions such as Title VII (U.S. Equal Opportunities Commission, 1981), Title IX

(U.S. Department of Education, 1988), and the Women's Educational Equity Act Program of 1977. For example, significant changes in the workplace for women have been initiated. The hiring of administrators has become a more formal practice. Advancement to administrative positions was formerly a matter of reward for good teaching; but since the 1970s, procedures for recruitment and screening have become more objective and competitive. As a result, this has potentially caused an increase in the number of female superintendents (Schmuck & Wyant, 1981).

The EEOC has looked with increasing interest as to how organizations recruit new workers. Basic guidelines have been established to ensure fair recruitment, that is, elimination of procedures that enhance "word of mouth" or "walk-in" selection, use of only objective selection criteria, publication of vacancies in the media, implementation of community resources including employment services, training programs, and so forth (U.S. Equal Opportunities Commission, 1981).

While efforts have been made since the early 1970s to assure fair and equitable hiring procedures, some school districts continue to possess considerable discretionary power. For example, Schmuck and Wyant (1981) concluded that formal policies governing hiring procedures were found to be present and somewhat in force in large metropolitan districts. Smaller schools, however, possessed policies only as a matter of formality. Job descriptions were not precise, thereby making it difficult to monitor or prove discriminatory intent.

Leadership and Its Relationship to the Superintendency

Educational leaders have become managerial and visionary. In contrast to earlier days when leaders were selected based upon their moral character and public charisma, today's administrators are being selected based on training, certification, and skill (Schmuck & Wyant, 1981; Yukl, 1989).

Education has taken lessons from a series of success stories in business and industry. No matter how complex, organizations should devote literally hours of effort detailing plans of what they want to do--often described as Long-Range Strategic Plans, Five-Year Plans, and so forth (Iacocca, 1988). Innovative companies not only produced viable new widgets, they responded to change (Peters & Watterman, 1982). The vision of its purpose is well distributed throughout the work force.

Leadership is the pivotal force behind any successful organization. A leader in any institution is one who establishes a vision creating commitment of his or her followers toward that vision whether it be established in business, industry, or in the role of superintendent (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Burns, 1979). Successful leadership is so essential if one (a superintendent) is to handle the complexities of the world. Simplicity is equally possible in leading people (Harvey, 1990).

The superintendent of the 1990s must not only be competent but also must be a leader. A sound system of education is vital to our future as a democratic nation. Recent research in the superintendency has made one point amply clear--top-down bureaucratic management is

being replaced by bottom-up executive leadership that encourages input from community resources, that is, parents, business, staff, and other shareholders (Hoife, 1993). Leaders experienced personal and professional development from a wide variety of experiences. Lessons have been learned from one's co-workers and from one's involvement in other situations (Hanson, 1991/1992).

An effective leader is one who consciously or unconsciously has a wide variety of skills at his or her disposal. Interpersonal skills allow one to utilize a variety of strategies to interact with persons in a variety of situations (White, Clayton, Myrtle, Siegel, & Rose, 1985). Surveyed board members believed four of the most important skills included (1) motivating others, (2) making objective decisions, (3) involving others in your decision making, and (4) using power appropriately (Hanson, 1991/1992).

Pitner (1981), in a study of both males and females, noticed males use communication skills for "politicking" within the community power echelons while women used their time networking with their peers. Female superintendents appeared to be confident in their positions because of strong interpersonal skills and competencies (Dopp, 1985/1986). Flexibility spawned effective communication and research strongly suggests that female language is more apt to initiate participation, a feeling of belonging, yet women continue to be viewed as non-leaders when situational cues suggest leadership positions for them (Porter, Lindauer-Geis, & Jennings, 1993).

The best bosses are leaders, not managers (Geltner, 1988). Management has tended to bring to a situation sterility and cumbersome

job detail. Leadership gives an organization its vision and through in-fluencing, guiding, and creating, the vision is attained (Bennis & Nanus, 1985). Mitchell's (1987/1988) research concluded that values of males reveal an encouragement of equality, while female administrators showed feelings of caring. Those who tended to mesh the two became more successful administratively.

Tichy and Devanna (1986), in their book entitled The Transforma-tional Leader, depicted today's leader as being able to change things. Shakeshaft (1987), in her research has shown that women's communi-cation and decision making styles stress cooperation and ownership in order to transfer their visions for change. Being visionary is often diffi-cult when looking at the everyday life of a superintendent.

Shakeshaft (1987) argued that one cannot draw conclusions that women are better suited to be school administrators than men. Women have tended to be brighter and more competent than men but that may be due to the large field of males employed (Adams, 1981). Thus, the two populations may not be similar at all with gender being the least important variable for accounting differences (Shakeshaft, 1987).

During the last 20 years, the definition of leadership has gone through a transition of thought. Berne (1963) described the effective leader as one who makes actual decisions, the psychological leader who is responsible for every aspect of an organization. "Effective" leadership influences the work of others (Mitzberg, 1975). Effective schools are operated by effective leaders (Bennis & Nanus, 1985). Blumberg (1985) contended that every superintendent performs two dichotomous jobs, that is, (1) presents appeal to the school board by maintaining an

organized, calm system, and (2) provides leadership through change. Effective school research has clearly established that a clear vision or force must be identified and depicted through board policies.

Administration and teaching are separate professions (Marshall & Ortiz, 1988). The study of school leadership should begin with the assumption that administrators (superintendents) have a unique, specific culture. Their career socialization process requires separation from the rest of the educational institution and a need for special training and development of new knowledge circles (Greenfield, 1985; Marshall, 1985; Mitchell, 1987/1988).

Burns (1979) suggested that successful leaders (transformational leaders) seek to raise the consciousness of their followers by appealing to higher ideals and moral values in terms of Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of needs. Gender stereotypes still influence social judgments. The successful superintendent needs to have the necessary knowledge to be the master of educational leadership, personnel administration, and public issues (Owens, 1981). Neither of the National Education Goals (1993) developed by the National Governor's Association in 1990 nor the document entitled Goals 2000 made any mention of moving the female toward equitable opportunity. Critical in correcting any inequity is to identify the problem, publicly exposing any myths for its existence.

Summary

Throughout history females have been considered the submissive gender, whose contribution to society was measured by raising children, preparing meals for her husband and substituting when men were not

available to perform certain career functions (K. S. Whitaker & Lane, 1990).

This attitude has pervaded into education, more prevalent in upper level administration (Gilligan, 1982). Various barriers, that is, gender bias, public perception, and personnel selection have been identified in this chapter as having the greatest impact as to why there are so few women in administrative roles, especially the superintendency.

Although the amount of research has declined since the early 1980s, the great majority of literature demonstrates women do struggle and need to exercise greater persistence in order to attain their career goals. This undertaking is prevalent even though laws such as Title VI, Title IX, EEOC, and so forth, are in existence to prevent bias with respect to employment of females.

Procedures and decisions which center around personnel selection convey to this researcher that people are employed predicated upon subjective selection. Recruitment of personnel during the last century has been improved through objective notification and personnel selection practices.

With the minimal number of females within the ranks of superintendent, our leadership pool remains stagnant. The era of hiring the football coach or guidance counselor is now moot. Society is now looking for visionary transformational leaders capable of making decisions which direct the organization (school district) into a more competitive world (Shakeshaft, 1987).

After reviewing the literature, three questions have arisen which will be studied in Chapter IV. These include:

1. Why are there so few females serving as superintendents in the state of Michigan? More specifically, what do practicing K-12 superintendents believe are the reasons females have not, or cannot, progress along the same track that male superintendents utilize? Are the reasons synonymous with certain biases, that is, lack of educational preparation, fear of success, bias in hiring practices, or unwillingness to relocate?

2. What experience has the practicing superintendent had in working directly with other female superintendents? Is there a relationship between the attitudes towards female superintendents of those who have worked with a female superintendent versus a superintendent who has not?

3. What barriers, if any, interfere with a female aspiring to become a K-12 superintendent? Do traditional perceptions exist or have they changed, especially since the turnover in numbers of superintendents is rising?

The research demonstrates that, historically, females have been treated differently in their endeavors to reach top level administrative positions. Attitudes and perceptions toward females are different than the attitudes and perceptions toward males whether one discusses barriers, qualifications or personnel selection (Shakeshaft, 1989).

Chapter II has presented a review of the literature related to (a) historical perspectives of women, (b) barriers that confront women, (c) legal perspectives affecting the advancement of women, and (d) leadership and its relationship to the superintendency. The study design is discussed in Chapter III, and the findings are reported in Chapter IV. Conclusions and recommendations are contained in Chapter V.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND INSTRUMENTATION

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine prevalent factors which affect the advancement of females in the role of superintendent. There are seven sections in this chapter: (1) introduction, (2) research design, (3) hypotheses, (4) sample population, (5) data collection, (6) data analysis, and (7) summary.

This study replicated a nationwide study entitled <u>Superintendents'</u> <u>Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for</u> <u>Expanding the Leadership Pool</u> conducted in 1991 by Zumsteg (1991/1992). Zumsteg, when conducting her study, discovered that over 90% of all superintendents nationwide were white and male. As a result, she conducted her study for the purpose of exploring factors affecting the advancement of women to the superintendency. The reason for Zumsteg's study was to increase the pool of potential educational leaders since (a) a large percentage of administrators would be eligible for retirement (1992), (b) a national call for reform, (c) the superintendency is a critical leadership position, and (d) at the time of her study only 2% of the superintendents nationwide were female.

Zumsteg (1991/1992) used a four-part Likert-type survey with a nationwide population representation of 400 male superintendents and 200 female superintendents. Prior to the distribution of the survey, a

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pilot survey was conducted utilizing 13 Oakland County (Michigan) superintendents, one assistant superintendent, and a consultant for research and testing in Oakland (Michigan) schools. Various comments and suggestions were made initiating several refinements where appropriate or possible. After two mailings the sample size for the study included a return rate of 357 males (89%) and 124 females (62%).

Research Design

This research study, a causal comparative study (ex post facto) was designed to look at whether responses to survey questions which determine perception and beliefs toward females aspiring to superintendent roles are relative to gender. The causal comparative research study was selected since a true experimental method was not feasible. Attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs resulted in responses one presently possessed. An attempt was made in Section III of the survey to look at differences predicated upon whether a superintendent had the experience of working with a female administrator.

The instrument, like Zumsteg's (1991/1992), was a four-part, cross-sectional Likert-type survey which consisted of: (1) demographic information, (2) attitudes and beliefs of female and male superintendents relative to females aspiring toward the superintendency, (3) a comparison of those attitudes and beliefs when one has worked with female superintendents versus those who have not, and (4) responses which reflect perceptions as to the barriers females face when aspiring to the superintendency.

The Likert-type scale included divisions of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SD). Also included were open-ended questions which allowed for additional comments whenever the respondent thought further clarification was necessary.

Because the survey was appropriate and validated for a similar study which this researcher planned on conducting, permission was secured from Zumsteg (1991/1992) to utilize her instrument with appropriate adjustments (Appendix A). The return rate for Zumsteg's study was 89% male and 62% female, while this study demonstrated a return rate of 70% and 68%, respectively.

Hypotheses

This study was predicated upon three questions:

1. Why is there such a minimum number of females serving in the role of superintendent in the state of Michigan?

2. What experience has the practicing superintendent (male or female) had in working directly with other female superintendents?

3. What barriers, if any, interfere with females aspiring to become a K-12 superintendent?

The conceptual hypothesis of this study was that there is a difference between the beliefs and perceptions conveyed by females as to why there are so few female superintendents as compared to the responses of male superintendents. The operational hypothesis was that gender will influence the explanations given by superintendents as to why there are so few female superintendents. The independent variable

was gender, while the dependent variable was the perception of respondents as to why there are so few female superintendents.

Sample Population

The 1994 <u>Michigan Education Directory</u> (Michigan Education Directory, Inc., 1994), which contained a list of 578 public K-12 school districts with their respective superintendent was utilized as a data base for sample population. According to the author of the directory, this list accurately represented all public K-12 schools within the state of Michigan. The accuracy was further substantiated through Dr. Gerald Keidel, executive director of the Michigan Association of School Administrators (MASA), who indicated 560 K-12 superintendents belonged to MASA, a number which represents 97% of all K-12 superintendents within the state of Michigan.

The participants were divided into two lists, one for male and one for female. From the list of 578 K-12 superintendents, all 40 females were selected and 241 male superintendents were randomly selected. This number of superintendents to be surveyed reflected an accurate sample necessary to achieve a 95% confidence level from a finite population (Krejcie & Morgan, cited in Isaac & Michael, 1990). In order to determine a survey's reliability, for a population of 40 females, 36 samples should be used. In this study all 40 female superintendents were selected. For a population of 538 males, the sample size should include 221 surveys. This study accessed 241 potential respondents.

Data Collection

For this study, 281 surveys with cover letter and return envelopes were mailed on June 10, 1994, after permission was received from the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (Appendix B). Respondents were requested to return the surveys within 2 weeks. The cover letter (Appendix C) described the need for research in this area, an explanation of its purpose, and a guarantee of confidentiality.

Should the respondent be interested in the results, a separate information sheet was included to be returned with the survey or separately, if desired (Appendix D). After 3 weeks, 62% of the surveys were returned. To those original superintendents who did not return their survey, a reminder letter was sent. A return date deadline (July 30, 1994) was established which resulted in a 70% overall completion rate. Of the 281 surveys distributed, the final tabulation showed 196 surveys were completed, 169 by males and 27 by female superintendents.

Data Analysis

The statistical procedure used for analyzing data was chi-square analysis. The purpose of the chi square was to answer questions about observed data as compared to theoretical numbers existing in the form of frequencies in cells. More significantly, the researcher was trying to determine whether deviation between groups is due to sampling error or some correlation among frequencies (Isaac & Michael, 1990).

Variables in this study were discrete, therefore cross tabulation by

gender and chi-square tests of independence were used to assess gender related differences (Zumsteg, 1991/1992).

Summary

The research design and methodology used in this study have been outlined in this chapter. Throughout the state of Michigan, 281 surveys were distributed to K-12 public school superintendents. Forty surveys, which represent all of the female K-12 superintendents, were sent of which 27 were returned eliciting a 68% return rate. Two hundred forty-one surveys were sent to male K-12 superintendents representing 45% of the male superintendents statewide. Of those distributed, 169 were returned for a 70% return rate.

The purpose of this study was to determine the potential factors which affect the advancement of females in the role of superintendent. This researcher's study, although limited to the state of Michigan, compares results to Zumsteg's (1991/1992) study in Chapter IV. Determination is made whether the results were significant and whether a difference exists between Michigan and a nationwide study.

In Chapter IV, data from the respondents appears in tables and graphs depicting raw numbers and percentages of responses received. The summary of this study with recommendations for further study are presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to determine the potential factors which affect the advancement of females to the role of superintendent, replicating a nationwide study entitled <u>Superintendents' Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding the Leadership Pool</u> conducted in 1991 by Zumsteg (1991/1992).

The sample population for this study consisted of 40 female and 241 male superintendents from the state of Michigan. Data received from the Michigan respondents were utilized to make comparisons relative to the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study.

Chapter IV is divided into four components. The first discusses and compares the demographics of the Michigan female and male superintendents who participated in the study. An analysis of male and female perceptions of female superintendents is presented next. The third component describes whether perceptions of male and female respondents about females as superintendents differ based on their experiences of having worked with other female superintendents. Finally, male and female superintendents' responses to open-ended questions are discussed with respect to potential biases that may exist in the selection of females for the role of superintendent.

The instrument was a four-part cross-sectional Likert type survey developed and used by Zumsteg (1991/1992). Since the variables in

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this study were discrete, cross tabulations by gender were performed using the chi-square tests of independence at .05 significance level. The chi square was used to determine whether differences at this level were statistically significant or whether the differences in responses were due to chance. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS-X) was utilized to determine statistical significance (Norusis, 1990).

The study sample consisted of all 40 female superintendents and 241 randomly selected male superintendents from Michigan (June of 1994). Twenty-seven females (68%) and 168 males (70%) responded after two mailings were conducted. The first mailing included an intro-ductory letter and the survey, while the second mailing consisted of a letter indicating their response was not received, with a request to complete the survey. A total return of 68% of the females and 70% of the males was determined to be adequate.

For analysis purposes, the data compared responses of male superintendents to those received from female superintendents. When-ever data were available from the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study, those results are presented so the reader can compare those results to the results of this study.

Demographics

Several significant observations of the general overview were discovered.

1. Nearly 60% of both female and male superintendents repre-sented what they perceive to be rural school districts.

2. Female and male superintendents were predominantly between the ages of 45 and 54.

3. A greater majority of male superintendents were married as compared to female superintendents.

4. Female superintendents were generally older than male superintendents when they obtained their first superintendency appointment.

5. Female superintendents generally held higher degrees (Ph.D., Ed.D., and Ed.S.) than male superintendents.

6. Male superintendents earned more money than female superintendents.

7. Most female and male superintendents planned to continue their career as superintendent.

District Type

A majority of the respondents (61.5% female, 58.7% male) described the district they represented as rural with town and suburban type districts as the next most recurring choices (Table 1). While these differences were not statistically significant, results correspond to the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study.

School District Enrollment

The largest percentage of both female and male superintendents represented districts with enrollments between 1,001 and 2,000 students (Table 2). The smallest percentage of superintendents were employed in districts with student enrollments ranging from 3,001 to 4,000. Zumsteg's (1991/1992) study showed similar results relative to

Table 1

Type of District

Group		Rural	Town	Suburban	Large urban center	Other	Total
Male	N	98	31	33	3	2	167
	Row %	58.7	18.6	19.7	1.8	1.2	
	Column %	86.0	84.0	89.0	100.0	100.0	
	% of total respondents	50.8	16.1	17.0	1.6	1.0	86.5
Female	N	16	6	4	0	0	26
	Row %	61.5	23.1	15.4	0.0	0.0	
	Column %	14.0	16.0	11.0	0.0	0.0	
	% of total respondents	8.3	3.1	2.1	0.0	0.0	13.5
	Column	114	37	37	3	2	193
	Total %	59.1	19.2	19.2	1.5	1.0	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(4, N = 193) = 1.27334$, $p = .86588$.

Table 2

School District Enrollment

Group		0-1,000	1,001-2,000	2,001-3,000	3,001-4,000	4,000+	Total
Male	N	44	60	27	6	32	169
	Row %	26.0	35.5	16.0	3.6	18.9	
	Column %	83.0	84.5	90.0	85.7	91.4	
	% of total respondents	22.4	30.6	13.8	3.0	16.4	86.2
Female	N	9	11	3	1	3	27
	Row %	33.3	40.7	11.1	3.6	11.1	
	Column %	17.0	15.5	10.0	14.3	8.6	
	% of total respondents	4.6	5.7	1.5	0.5	1.5	13.8
	Column	53	71	30	7	35	196
	Total %	27.0	36.2	15.3	3.6	17.9	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(4, N = 196) = 1.79443$, $p = .77350$.

the largest population representation but the smallest representation came from school districts within the 20,001 to 25,000 range. No statistically significant differences were found in either study.

Age of Respondent

The predominant age group for both females and male superintendents occurred between 45 and 54 years of age with only 0.6% of the males and none of the females presently employed between the ages of 65 and 74 (Table 3). Again, in comparison to the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study, the age category was similar with no statistically significant differences.

Marital Status

A large majority of female and male superintendents (59.3% and 94.7%, respectively) were married (Table 4). A greater percentage of females (29.6%) were divorced than males (2.9%). These results were similar to the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study whose data is presented in Table 5. The statistical difference was significant in both studies.

First Administrative Job

The greatest percentage of females (48.2%) began their administrative careers in positions other than those listed in Table 6, while male superintendents (37.3%) started out as assistant principals. The second most selected choice was the elementary principal position for both females and males.

Table 3

Age of Respondents

Group		65-74	55-64	45-54	35-44	Total
Male	N	1	31	115	22	169
	Row %	0.6	18.4	68.0	13.0	
	Column %	100.0	96.9	86.5	81.5	
	% of total respondents	0.5	16.1	59.6	11.4	87.6
Female	N	0	1	18	5	24
	Row %	0.0	4.2	75.0	20.8	
	Column %	0.0	3.1	13.5	18.5	
	% of total	0.0	0.5	9.3	2.6	12.4
	Column	1	32	133	27	193
	Total %	0.5	16.6	68.9	14.0	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(3, N = 193) = 3.75438, p = .28924.$

Table 4

Marital Status

Group		Married	Divorced	Separated	Widowed	Never married	Total
Male	N	160	5	1	1	2	169
	Row %	94.7	2.9	0.6	0.6	1.2	
	Column %	90.9	38.5	100.0	50.0	50.0	
	% of total respondents	81.6	2.6	0.5	0.5	1.0	86.2
Female	N	16	8	0	1	2	27
	Row %	59.3	29.6	0.0	3.7	7.4	
	Column %	9.1	61.5	0.0	50.0	50.0	
	% of total respondents	8.2	4.1	0.0	0.5	1.0	13.8
	Column	176	13	1	2	4	196
	Total %	89.8	6.6	0.5	1.0	2.1	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(4, N = 196) = 35.00827, p = .00000$.

Table 5

Cross Tabulation by Gender-Marital Status

Group	Married	Divorced	Separated	Widowed	Never married	Total
Male	343	7	2	1	4	357
	96.1%	2.0%	0.6%	0.3%	1.1%	74.2%
Female	88	19	2	3	12	124
	71.0%	15.3%	1.6%	2.4%	9.7%	25.8%
Column totals	431	26	4	4	16	481
	89.6%	5.4%	0.8%	0.8%	3.3%	100.0%

Note. $\chi^2(4, \underline{N} = 481) = 63.42410, \underline{p} = .00000$.

Note. Table is adapted from "Superintendents' Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding the Leadership Pool" by T. Zumsteg, 1991/1992, Dissertation Abstracts International, 52(10), 3501A.

Table 6

First Administrative Position

Group		Ass't. prin.	Super- visor	Ass't. supt.	Elem. prin.	M.S. prin.	H.S. prin.	Other	Total
Male	N	63	5	4	35	10	21	31	169
	Row %	37.3	3.0	2.4	20.7	5.9	12.4	18.3	
	Column %	98.4	83.3	100.0	76.1	90.9	100.0	70.5	
	% of total respondents	32.1	2.6	2.1	17.9	5.1	10.7	15.7	86.2
Female	N	1	1	0	11	1	0	13	27
	Row %	3.7	3.7	0.0	40.7	3.7	0.0	48.2	
	Column %	1.6	16.7	0.0	23.9	9.1	0.0	29.5	
	% of total	0.5	0.5	0.0	5.6	0.5	0.0	6.7	13.8
	Column	64	6	4	46	11	21	44	196
	Total %	32.6	3.1	2.1	23.5	5.6	10.7	22.4	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(6, N = 196) = 25.46886$, $p = .00028$.

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Zumsteg (1991/1992) found, as noted in Table 7, female superintendents began their career in other areas, while male superintendents began as an assistant principal. Contrarily, Zumsteg (1991/1992) noted a difference in the second largest category where female superintendents began their career as elementary principals and males as high school principals. Both studies found the differences to be statistically significant.

Age of First Superintendent Appointment

First appointments to the superintendency for females occurred between age 46 and 55. The majority of male superintendents in this study were appointed to their first job between age 36 and 45. The age at which the second largest group attained their first superintendency fell in opposite ranges, that is, females in the age range of 36 to 45 and males between the ages of 46 and 55.

One noteworthy observation finds that the percentage of male superintendents who received their first superintendency between the ages of 25 and 35 was twice that of the female, although there is no statistically significant difference as to the age at which males and females are first appointed to the superintendency (Table 8). In contrast, Zumsteg's (1991/1992) study found the differences to be significant (Table 9).

Highest Degree

Thirty-seven percent of the female superintendents held either a Ph.D. or Ed.D., while 33.3% possessed an Ed.S. In contrast, male superintendents held a greater percentage of MA + 30 degrees (31.4%),

Table 7

Cross Tabulation by Gender-Nature of First Administrative Position

Group	Ass't. prin.	Super-visor	Ass't. supt.	Elem. prin.	M.S. prin.	H.S. prin.	Other	Total
Male	112	19	11	61	10	79	65	357
	31.4%	5.3%	3.1%	17.1%	2.8%	22.1%	18.2%	74.2%
Female	26	16	2	28	0	6	46	124
	21.0%	12.9%	1.6%	22.6%	0.0%	4.8%	37.1%	25.8%
Column totals	138	35	13	89	10	85	111	481
	28.7%	7.3%	2.7%	18.5%	2.1%	17.7%	23.1%	100.0%

Note. $\chi^2(6, N = 481) = 46.25011, p = .00000$.

Note. Table is adapted from "Superintendents' Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding the Leadership Pool" by T. Zumsteg, 1991/1992, Dissertation Abstracts International, 52(10), 3501A.

Table 8

Age of Respondent's First Superintendency

Group		25-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	Total
Male	N	29	98	40	1	168
	Row %	17.3	58.3	23.8	0.6	
	Column %	93.5	90.7	76.9	100.0	
	% of total respondents	15.1	51.0	20.8	0.6	87.5
Female	N	2	10	12	0	24
	Row %	8.3	41.7	50.0	0.0	
	Column %	6.5	9.3	23.1	0.0	
	% of total respondents	1.0	5.2	6.3	0.0	12.5
	Column	31	108	52	1	192
	Total %	16.1	56.2	27.1	0.6	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(3, N = 192) = 7.53544$, $p = .05665$.

Table 9

Cross Tabulation by Gender-Age of First Superintendency

Group	25-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66-75	Total
Male	100	178	70	3	0	351
	28.5%	50.7%	19.9%	0.9%	0.0%	74.5%
Female	7	74	33	5	1	120
	5.8%	61.7%	27.5%	4.2%	0.8%	25.5%
Column totals	107	252	103	8	1	471
	22.7%	53.5%	21.9%	1.7%	0.2%	100.0%

Note. $\chi^2(4, = 471) = 33.24807$, $\underline{p} = .00000$.

Note. Table is adapted from "Superintendents' Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding the Leadership Pool" by T. Zumsteg, 1991/1992, Dissertation Abstracts International, 52(10), 3501A.

Ed.S. degrees (30.2%), and the third largest percentage (28.3%) holding a Ph.D. or Ed.D. (Table 10). There was no statistical difference in responses between both groups.

The Zumsteg (1991/1992) study reported similar findings in relationship to the female superintendents holding a greater percentage (51.6%) of Ph.D. and Ed.D. degrees than any other group. Contrarily, in Zumsteg's study, male superintendents also held the greater percentage (36.5%) of Ph.D. and Ed.D. degrees. The difference in this group was statistically significant (Table 11).

Present Annual Salary

Although not statistically significant, the largest percentage of both female and male superintendents were discovered to be in the $60,001 to $70,000 salary range. It is important to note, however, that the second largest range of salaries for the female superintendents drops to the $50,001-$60,000 group, while the second largest range for males increases to the $70,001-$80,000 group (Table 12).

In 1991, nationwide, Zumsteg (1991/1992) found the largest salary range held by females to be within the $40,000-$50,000 range and the salaries for male superintendents to be within the $50,000-$60,000 range. The difference in the Zumsteg study was found to be statistically significant as evidenced in Table 13.

Current Career Thinking

Both groups indicated overwhelmingly (76.9% of females and 82% of males) they will continue in the position of superintendent. The

Table 10

Highest Degree Presently Held

Group		MA/MS	MA + 30	Ed.S.	Ph.D./ Ed.D.	Total
Male	N	17	53	51	48	169
	Row %	10.1	31.4	30.2	28.3	
	Column %	89.5	89.8	85.0	82.8	
	% of total respondents	8.7	27.0	26.0	24.5	86.2
Female	N	2	6	9	10	27
	Row %	7.4	22.3	33.3	37.0	
	Column %	10.5	10.2	15.0	17.2	
	% of total respondents	1.0	3.1	4.6	5.1	13.8
	Column	19	59	60	58	196
	Total %	9.7	30.1	30.6	29.6	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(3, N = 196) = 1.47708$, $p = .68757$.

Table 11

Cross Tabulation by Gender-Highest Degree Held

Group	BA/BS	MA/MS	MA+30	Ed.S.	Ph.D./ Ed.D.	Other	Total
Male	4	28	107	78	130	9	356
	1.1%	7.9%	30.1%	21.9%	36.5%	2.5%	74.2%
Female	9	6	33	7	64	5	124
	7.3%	4.8%	26.6%	5.6%	51.6%	4.0%	25.8%
Column totals	13	34	140	85	194	14	480
	2.7%	7.1%	29.2%	17.7%	40.4%	2.9%	100.0%

Note. $\chi^2(5, N = 480) = 33.97972, p = .00000$.

Note. Table is adapted from "Superintendents' Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding the Leadership Pool" by T. Zumsteg, 1991/1992, Dissertation Abstracts International, 52(10), 3501A.

Table 12

Present Annual Salary

Group	$40,001-$50,000	$50,001-$60,000	$60,001-$70,000	$70,001-$80,000	$80,001-$90,000	$90,001-$100,000	$100,000+	Total
Male								
N	4	31	50	33	20	9	17	164
Row %	2.4	18.9	30.5	20.1	12.2	5.5	10.4	
Column %	100.0	81.6	84.7	94.3	80.0	100.0	85.0	
% of total respondents	2.1	16.3	26.3	17.4	10.6	4.7	8.9	86.3
Female								
N	0	7	9	2	5	0	3	26
Row %	0.0	26.9	34.6	7.7	19.2	0.0	11.6	
Column %	0.0	18.4	15.3	5.7	20.0	0.0	15.0	
% of total respondents	0.0	3.7	4.7	1.1	2.6	0.0	1.6	13.7
Column	4	38	59	35	25	9	20	190
Total %	2.1	20.0	31.0	18.5	13.2	4.7	10.5	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(6, N = 190) = 5.66176$, $p = .46213$.

Table 13

Cross Tabulation by Gender-Annual Salary

Group	Under $30K	$30-$40K	$40-$50K	$50-$60K	$60-$70K	$70-$80K	$80-$90K	$90-$100K	Over $100K	Total
Male	3	29	55	95	82	47	23	9	12	355
	0.8%	8.2%	15.5%	26.8%	23.1%	13.2%	6.5%	2.5%	3.4%	74.4%
Female	8	3	28	22	24	19	10	7	1	122
	6.6%	2.5%	23.0%	18.0%	19.7%	15.6%	8.2%	5.7%	0.8%	25.6%
Column total	11	32	83	117	106	66	33	16	13	477
	2.3%	6.7%	17.4%	24.5%	22.2%	13.8%	6.9%	3.4%	2.7%	100.0%

Note. $\chi^2(8, N = 477) = 29.16741, p = .00030$.

Note. Table is adapted from "Superintendents' Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding the Leadership Pool" by T. Zumsteg, 1991/1992, Dissertation Abstracts International, 52(10), 3501A.

second largest group (11.6% of the females and 10.8% of the males) indicated they were looking at other options, which included predominately retirement. The percentage of superintendents who indicated they would seek positions outside of education was 7.7% and 5.4% for females and males, respectively. This analysis was not found to be statistically significant (Table 14). Although the rank order was similar, Zumsteg's (1991/1992) study found the difference to be significant as noted in Table 15.

Reasons for Low Percentage of Female Superintendents

The purpose of Section II in the survey instrument was to determine superintendents' perceptions as to why there is a relatively low percentage of female superintendents in the state of Michigan. Each question is briefly analyzed with tables as reference to the respondent's raw data and corresponding percentages. · Each series of data is analyzed utilizing the chi square with $p < .05$ to determine statistical significance.

Theoretically, no frequency should be less than 5 (Siegel, cited in Isaac & Michael, 1990). For this purpose, all chi-square analyses were performed with data received utilizing a 2 x 4 table. In order to enhance the significance of the study, a 2 x 2 chi-square analysis was performed combining the strongly agree with the agree category and the disagree with strongly disagree category.

Question 1: "Do you believe that female administrators aspire to be superintendents as often as male superintendents?" Female and male

Table 14

Current Career Thinking

Group		Retain supt. as career	Seek higher ed. position	Seek position outside ed.	Other	Total
Male	N	137	3	9	18	167
	Row %	82.0	1.8	5.4	10.8	
	Column %	87.3	75.0	81.8	85.7	
	% of total respondents	71.0	1.6	4.7	9.2	86.5
Female	N	20	1	2	3	26
	Row %	76.9 .	3.8	7.7	11.6	
	Column %	12.7	25.0	18.2	14.3	
	% of total respondents	10.4	0.5	1.0	1.6	13.5
	Column	157	4	11	21	193
	Total %	81.4	2.1	5.7	10.8	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(3, N = 193) = 0.74968$, $p = .86146$.

Table 15

Cross Tabulation by Gender-Current Career Thinking

Group	Supt. as career	Seek higher ed. position	Seek outside position	Other	Total
Male	290	18	10	37	355
	81.7%	5.1%	2.8%	10.4%	74.1%
Female	81	12	5	26	124
	65.3%	9.7%	4.0%	21.0%	25.9%
Column totals	371	30	15	63	479
	77.5%	6.3%	3.1%	13.2%	100.0%

Note. χ^2(3, $\underline{N}$ = 479) = 14.49646, $\underline{p}$ = .00230.

Note. Table is adapted from "Superintendents' Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding the Leadership Pool" by T. Zumsteg, 1991/1992, Dissertation Abstracts International, 52(10), 3501A.

superintendents responded similarly with 53.8% of the females and 60.4% of the males selecting the disagree category. The remaining preferences, in order of decreasing priority, included the agree, strongly disagree, and strongly agree categories. The difference was not statistically significant (Table 16).

While the majority of both female and male respondents in the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study also selected the disagree category (female 51.2% and male 62.9%), the p < .05 was found to be statistically significant (Table 17).

None of the female superintendents who responded elected to make comments. Six (4%) of the male superintendents who did respond offered various explanations for their responses. The majority felt "times were changing" and females were becoming more involved. This was especially true if females were employed in other aspects of administration thus allowing them to be more aware of the superintendent position. One respondent indicated that females were restricted by time constraints (requirements).

Question 2: "Do you believe that male administrators are more likely to relocate for career advancement than female administrators?" A majority (63.4% of the male superintendents agreed with this statement, while 29.6% of the female superintendents both strongly agreed and agreed (Table 18). As can be noted from Table 18, three areas, that is, strongly agree, agree, and disagree, were similar. These results, as well as those in Zumsteg's (1991/1992) study, were found to be statistically significant as noted in Table 19.

Table 16

Female Administrators Aspire to Be Superintendents

Group		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Male		10	43	99	12	164
	Row %	6.1	26.2	60.4	7.3	
	Column %	76.9	89.6	87.6	75.0	
	% of total respondents	5.3	22.6	52.1	6.3	86.3
Female	N	3	5	14	4	26
	Row %	11.5	19.3	53.8	15.4	
	Column %	23.1	10.4	12.4	25.0	
	% of total respondents	1.6	2.6	7.4	2.1	13.7
	Column	13	48	113	16	190
	Total %	6.9	25.2	59.5	8.4	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(3, N = 190) = 3.29979$, $p = .34767$. $\chi^2(1, N = 190) = 0.2467$, $p = .87520$.

Table 17

Aspire to Be Superintendent
(Zumsteg, 1991/1992)

Group	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Male	4.3%	20.7%	62.9%	12.1%
Female	10.6%	20.3%	51.2%	17.9%
Totals	5.9%	20.6%	59.9%	13.6%

Note. χ^2 = 10.33933, df = 3, p = .01589.

Note. Table is adapted from "Superintendents' Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding the Leadership Pool" by T. Zumsteg, 1991/1992, Dissertation Abstracts International, 52(10), 3501A.

Few comments were made relative to this question by both female and male superintendents. One female in agreement stated "movement was dependent upon their mates." One male respondent agreed with this statement because of issues related to moving families. Another male superintendent indicated females who are married will not move as freely.

Question 3: "Do you believe that the role of being a mother is incompatible with the role of superintendent?" Both this study (Table 20) and that of Zumsteg (1991/1992) as noted in Table 21, found the majority of females and males disagreed/strongly disagreed with this statement. When combining the totals for the disagree and strongly disagree categories, in excess of 75% of the respondents were in agreement for both studies.

Table 18

Male Administrators Are More Likely to Relocate for Career Advancement

Group		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Male	N	29	104	29	2	164
	Row %	17.7	63.4	17.7	1.2	
	Column %	78.4	92.9	76.3	50.0	
	% of total respondents	15.1	54.4	15.2	1.1	85.8
Female	N	8	8	9	2	27
	Row %	29.6	29.6	33.4	7.4	
	Column %	21.6	7.1	23.7	50.0	
	% of total respondents	4.2	4.2	4.7	1.1	14.2
	Column	37	112	38	4	191
	Total %	19.3	58.6	19.9	2.2	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(3, N = 191) = 13.31362$, $p = .00401$. $\chi^2(1, N = 191) = 6.44530$, $p = .01112$.

Table 19

Relocation for Career Advancement
(Zumsteg, 1991/1992)

Group	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Male	19.3%	62.9%	15.3%	2.5%
Female	39.0%	45.5%	11.4%	4.1%
Totals	24.4%	58.4%	14.3%	2.9%

Note. χ^2 = 21.01485, df = 3, p = .00010.

Note. Table is adapted from "Superintendents' Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding the Leadership Pool" by T. Zumsteg, 1991/1992, Dissertation Abstracts International, 52(10), 3501A.

Most female superintendents believed the positions were not incompatible but strongly suggested a cooperative, supportive spouse was necessary. Two females had children already grown which made the compatibility easier since home duties were not as time consuming.

Male responses were very similar and were presented as one reason women do not enter the superintendency, although one male superintendent felt "the situation of being a mother and a superintendent was no different than his being a father and a superintendent." The analysis was found to be significant.

Question 4: "Do you believe that most boards of education are reluctant to hire female superintendents?" Female superintendents (51.9%) agreed with this question, while the majority of male superintendents (54.9%) disagreed (Table 22).

Table 20

Role of Motherhood Incompatible With the Superintendency

Group		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Male	N	14	27	72	53	166
	Row %	8.4	16.3	43.4	31.9	
	Column %	93.3	90.0	86.7	81.5	
	% of total respondents	7.3	14.0	37.3	27.4	86.0
Female	N	1	3	11	12	27
	Row %	3.7	11.1	40.8	44.4	
	Column %	6.7	10.0	13.3	18.5	
	% of total respondents	0.5	1.5	5.7	6.3	14.0
	Column	15	30	83	65	193
	Total	7.8	15.5	43.0	33.7	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(3, N = 193) = 2.18309$, $p = .53529$. $\chi^2(1, N = 193) = 1.26887$, $p = .25998$.

Table 21

Incompatibility of Role of Motherhood
(Zumsteg, 1991/1992)

Group	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Male	3.7%	12.5%	52.4%	31.4%
Female	4.0%	20.2%	36.3%	39.5%
Totals	3.8%	14.5%	48.2%	33.5%

Note. χ^2 = 10.51387, df = 3, p = .01467.

Note. Table is adapted from "Superintendents' Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding the Leadership Pool" by T. Zumsteg, 1991/1992, Dissertation Abstracts International, 52(10), 3501A.

The female sample population in the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study also agreed to the described school board behavior; but in contrast to this study, the male superintendents (from Zumsteg's study) were almost evenly split (Table 23).

The majority of comments from male superintendents indicated that although they believed other reasons existed for not hiring females, such as "women are not aspiring" and "some are, but most are not" several of the 36% who agreed with this statement indicated "this too is changing."

Of the females responding who agreed, several indicated that "it is getting better." One respondent in her elaboration stated, "One board member asked me in an interview, 'If you were walking toward a door, would you let a man open it for you?'"

Table 22

Reluctance of Board Members to Hire Females

Group		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Male	N	4	59	90	11	164
	Row %	2.4	36.0	54.9	6.7	
	Column %	57.1	80.8	90.0	100.0	
	% of total respondents	2.1	30.9	47.1	5.8	85.9
Female	N	3	14	10	0	27
	Row %	11.1	51.9	37.0	0.0	
	Column %	42.9	19.2	10.0	0.0	
	% of total respondents	1.6	7.3	5.2	0.0	14.1
	Column	7	73	100	11	191
	Total %	3.7	38.2	52.3	5.8	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(3, \underline{N} = 191) = 9.50658$, $\underline{p} = .02326$. $\chi^2(1, \underline{N} = 191) = 5.73947$, $\underline{p} = .01659$.

Table 23

Reluctance to Hire Females
(Zumsteg, 1991/1992)

Group	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Male	4.6%	46.0%	43.4%	6.0%
Female	19.8%	55.4%	22.3%	2.5%
Totals	8.5%	48.4%	38.0%	5.1%

Note. χ^2 = 39.03195, df = 3, p = .00000.

Question 5: "Do you believe a lack of experience is responsible for the small percentage of female superintendents?" As in Question 4, responses for both females and males were in contrast. The majority (58.8%) of males agreed with the statement, while the plurality of females (37%) disagreed and 33.3% strongly disagreed with this statement (Table 24). The differences were found to be statistically significant in this study as well as in the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study whose results are noted in Table 25.

Only two comments were submitted by the female superintendents, one of which felt "most females are more experienced," while the other felt it was "difficult to become a principal, initially." Most males who responded to the comment section felt women aspired to central office administrative positions such as curriculum director and do not aspire to the superintendency level. "There is still hope" as several male superintendents felt these attitudes will change.

Table 24

Lack of Experience--Cause for Small Percentage of Female Superintendents

Group		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Male	N	5	97	54	9	165
	Row %	3.0	58.8	32.7	5.5	
	Column %	71.4	94.1	84.3	50.0	
	% of total respondents	2.6	50.5	28.1	4.7	85.9
Female	N	2	6	10	9	27
	Row %	7.5	22.2	37.0	33.3	
	Column %	28.6	5.9	15.7	50.0	
	% of total respondents	1.1	3.1	5.2	4.7	14.1
	Column	7	103	64	18	192
	Total %	3.7	53.6	33.3	9.4	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(3, N = 192) = 26.36805, p = .00001.$ $\chi^2(1, N = 192) = 9.82529, p = .00172.$

Table 25

Lack of Experience
(Zumsteg, 1991/1992)

Group	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Male	4.0%	52.1%	35.8%	8.0%
Female	6.5%	27.4%	33.1%	33.1%
Totals	4.7%	45.7%	35.1%	14.5%

Note. χ^2 = 52.95114, df = 3, p = .00000.

Note. Table is adapted from "Superintendents' Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding the Leadership Pool" by T. Zumsteg, 1991/1992, Dissertation Abstracts International, 52(10), 3501A.

Question 6: "Do you believe that sex discrimination is responsible for the small percentage of female superintendents?"

The greater percentage of females strongly agreed/agreed (15.4% and 69.2%, respectively). Over 84% of the females either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement (Table 26). Differences were found to be statistically significant. Most comments suggested serious concerns, for example, "absolutely;" "I've seen it happen;" and "you can't get in; therefore, you can't move up."

In contrast, 47.2% of the males disagreed and another 19.6% strongly disagreed that gender discrimination existed relative to the hiring of females as superintendents. Several male superintendents who felt gender discrimination existed indicated it was changing, although

Table 26

Sex Discrimination--Cause for Small Percentage of Female Superintendents

Group		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Male	N	4	50	77	32	163
	Row %	2.5	30.7	47.2	19.6	
	Column %	50.0	73.5	98.7	91.4	
	% of total respondents	2.1	26.5	40.8	16.8	86.2
Female	N	4	18	1	3	26
	Row %	15.4	69.2	3.9	11.5	
	Column %	50.0	26.5	1.3	8.6	
	% of total	2.1	9.5	0.5	1.7	13.8
	Column	8	68	78	35	189
	Total %	4.2	36.0	41.3	18.5	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(3, \underline{N} = 189) = 29.14616$, $\underline{p} = .00000$. $\chi^2(1, \underline{N} = 189) = 24.72398$, $\underline{p} = .00000$.

one respondent felt "most women are smarter than men and don't tackle the grief."

Zumsteg's (1991/1992) study found the beliefs of both males and females to be statistically significant (Table 27).

Table 27

Sex Discrimination
(Zumsteg, 1991/1992)

Group	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Male	3.4%	29.7%	47.0%	19.8%
Female	19.4%	56.5%	21.8%	2.4%
Totals	7.5%	36.7%	40.5%	15.3%

Note. χ^2 = 81.43099, df = 3, p = .00000.

Question 7: "Do you believe most female administrators are assertive and competitive enough to be a superintendent?" Unique to this study, neither female nor male superintendents selected the strongly disagree category, while the majority of both females and males selected the agree choice at 50.0% and 69.1%, respectively.

While agreeing with this statement, this researcher felt several females took personal offense to its presentation. Examples of comments which led to this perception are: "This is another example of false perceptions about women." "More than most men." "Much more organized and understanding of needs of people." The strongest statement read as follows, "Who made up these questions—a man?"

Ironically, the survey was developed by Dr. Tresa Zumsteg (1991/1992) (female) whose study is being replicated.

Most male comments were subtle and demonstrated awareness. These included: "Most that I have worked with." "The ones I know are assertive, competitive, and sensitive." "A female who is successful as an administrator would be assertive enough to be a superintendent." This study (Table 28) found the differences to be significant with the 2 x 4 analysis, but not in the 2 x 2 analysis while Zumsteg (1991/1992) found the differences to be statistically significant as noted in Table 29.

Question 8: "Do you believe that most female administrators want the additional responsibility that comes with being a superintendent?" Both female and male superintendents selected the agree category as the majority choice at 44.4% and 52.8%, respectively. The second highest selection varied with the female respondents selecting strongly agree at 40.8% and the male respondents selecting disagree at 34.2%. The difference was statistically significant (Table 30).

Although no females commented on this statement, the male responses could be summarized as follows, "Most males don't want it either." "They say so, but they don't really want the responsibility." "I believe that most who are interested understand the additional responsibility."

Zumsteg (1991/1992) reported a closer relationship between the strongly agree and agree categories in the female responses and found the differences to be statistically significant (Table 31).

Question 9: "Do you believe female administrators are emotionally capable of withstanding the stress and pressure of being a superintendent?" Strong support (74.1%) was given to the strongly agree

Table 28

Female Administrators Are Assertive and Competitive

Group		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Male	N	32	112	18	0	162
	Row %	19.8	69.1	11.1	0.0	
	Column %	72.7	89.6	94.7	0.0	
	% of total respondents	17.0	59.6	9.6	0.0	86.2
Female	N	12	13	1	0	26
	Row %	46.2	50.0	3.8	0.0	
	Column %	27.3	10.4	5.3	0.0	
	% of total respondents	6.4	6.9	0.5	0.0	13.8
	Column	44	125	19	0	188
	Total %	23.4	66.5	10.1	0.0	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(2, N = 188) = 9.07611$, $p = .01069$. $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 1.30158$, $p = .25392$.

Table 29

Assertiveness and Competitiveness
(Zumsteg, 1991/1992)

Group	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Male	24.1%	64.9%	9.9%	1.1%
Female	45.2%	44.4%	9.7%	0.8%
Totals	29.6%	59.5%	9.9%	1.0%

Note. χ^2 = 20.38451, df = 3, p = .00014.

Note. Table is adapted from "Superintendents' Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding the Leadership Pool" by T. Zumsteg, 1991/1992, Dissertation Abstracts International, 52(10), 3501A.

choice by females, while the greatest percentage of the male superintendents (58.8%) selected the agree choice (Table 32). None of the female respondents selected either the disagree or strongly disagree option.

Several females responded to this statement with such comments as: "This is incredible. Are you reflecting our society's bias or your own?" "This is an awful question--or presupposition." Others felt "if females can adjust to a male and rear his children, I assume she is emotionally capable of being a superintendent."

The male responses were very short, "Of course they are." "We're all nuts anyhow." Significant differences in this study were found when the 2 x 4 analysis as well as in the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study (Table 33).

Table 30

Females Desire Additional Responsibility

Group		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Male	N	14	85	55	7	161
	Row %	8.7	52.8	34.2	4.3	
	Column %	56.0	87.6	93.2	100.0	
	% of total respondents	7.4	45.2	29.3	3.7	85.6
Female	N	11	12	4	0	27
	Row %	40.8	44.4	14.8	0.0	
	Column %	44.0	12.4	6.8	0.0	
	% of total respondents	5.9	6.4	2.1	0.0	14.4
	Column	25	97	59	7	188
	Total %	13.3	51.6	31.4	3.7	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(3, N = 188) = 22.09966$, $p = .00006$. $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 5.69822$, $p = .01698$.

Table 31

Additional Responsibility
(Zumsteg, 1991/1992)

Group	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Male	8.3%	51.8%	37.3%	2.7%
Female	23.0%	51.6%	23.0%	2.5%
Totals	12.2%	51.7%	33.5%	2.6%

Note. χ^2 = 21.35118, df = 3, p = .00009.

Note. Table is adapted from "Superintendents' Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding the Leadership Pool" by T. Zumsteg, 1991/1992, Dissertation Abstracts International, 52(10), 3501A.

Professional Relationship With Female Superintendents

The purpose of this section was to determine whether the responses of superintendents' beliefs and perceptions are relative to their experience of having worked with a female superintendent. Utilizing the chi square, a 2 x 2 table was constructed. The categories included those respondents who worked with a female superintendent (yes) and those who did not (no) as related to whether they strongly agree or agree (SA/A) as opposed to disagree or strongly disagree (D/SD) with the statements in Section II of the survey instrument.

Question 1: "Do you believe female administrators aspire to be superintendents as often as male administrators?" In response to this question, 37.7% of the superintendents responding who had worked

Table 32

Female Administrators Are Emotionally Capable

Group		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Male	N	58	97	8	2	165
	Row %	35.2	58.8	4.8	1.2	
	Column %	74.3	93.2	100.0	100.0	
	% of total respondents	30.2	50.5	4.2	1.0	85.9
Female	N	20	7	0	0	27
	Row %	74.1	25.9	0.0	0.0	
	Column %	25.7	6.8	0.0	0.0	
	% of total respondents	10.4	3.7	0.0	0.0	14.1
	Column	78	104	8	2	192
	Total %	40.6	54.2	4.2	1.0	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(3, N = 192) = 14.91510$, $p = .00189$. $\chi^2(1, N = 192) = 1.72627$, $p = .18889$.

Table 33

Emotional Capability
(Zumsteg, 1991/1992)

Group	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Male	30.6%	62.3%	5.9%	1.1%
Female	65.0%	32.5%	2.4%	0.0%
Totals	39.5%	54.6%	5.0%	0.8%

Note. χ^2 = 45.85784, df = 3, p = .00000.

Note. Table is adapted from "Superintendents' Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding the Leadership Pool" by T. Zumsteg, 1991/1992, Dissertation Abstracts International, 52(10), 3501A.

with a female superintendent strongly agreed/agreed that females aspire as often as males to administrative roles. In contrast, 62.3% of the respondents who had not worked with a female superintendent strongly agreed/agreed with the question (Table 34).

Two (8.6%) of the superintendents who worked with female superintendents and agreed with this question indicated they believe this has been changing over the last several years. This same comment was provided by one other superintendent who had disagreed with the question.

Of those respondents who had not worked with a female superintendent (64.8%), the concerns most predominantly described centered upon personal restrictions. Such examples included family commitments, lack of time, and personal perceptions of being "thwarted."

Table 34

Female Administrators Aspire

Group		Strongly agree/ agree	Disagree/ strongly disagree	Total
Yes (worked with a female supt.)	N	23	44	67
	Row %	34.3	65.7	
	Column %	37.7	34.1	
	% of total respondents	12.1	23.1	35.2
No (had not worked with a female supt.)	N	38	85	123
	Row %	30.9	69.1	
	Column %	62.3	65.9	
	% of total respondents	20.0	44.8	64.8
	Column	61	129	190
	Total %	32.1	67.9	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(1, N = 190) = 0.11792, p = .73130$.

Question 2: "Do you believe that male administrators are more likely to relocate for career advancement than female administrators?" From this study nearly 78% of the respondents felt males are more likely to relocate (Table 35). The response to the agree/strongly agree category was very high whether the respondent worked with a female superintendent or not. Of the remaining 22% who responded that disagreed/ strongly disagreed, the difference was fairly close between those re-

spondents who worked (45.2%) or had not worked (54.8%) with a female superintendent.

Table 35

Male Administrators Are More Likely to Relocate

Group		Strongly agree/ agree	Disagree/ strongly disagree	Total
Yes (worked with a female supt.)	N	48	19	67
	Row %	71.6	28.4	
	Column %	32.2	45.2	
	% of total respondents	25.0	10.0	35.0
No (had not worked with a female supt.)	N	101	23	124
	Row %	81.5	18.5	
	Column %	67.8 ·	54.8	
	% of total respondents	52.9	12.1	65.0
	Column	149	42	191
	Total %	77.9	22.1	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(1, \underline{N} = 191) = 0.11792, \underline{p} = .73130$.

Comments received were predominantly from those superintendents who had worked with a female superintendent, representing 1.5% of the total respondents. Family considerations and the willingness of their mate to relocate were the predominant considerations in the ability

of females to relocate.

Question 3: "Do you believe that the role of being a mother is incompatible with the role of superintendent?" Of the 69 superintendents who worked with a female superintendent, 15 (21.7%) agreed the roles were incompatible, while 54 (78.3%) disagreed. Of those not working with a female superintendent, 30 (24.2%) felt the roles were incompatible, while 94 (75.8%) believed the contrary (Table 36).

Table 36

Incompatibility of Career Roles

Group		Strongly agree/ agree	Disagree/ strongly disagree	Total
Yes (worked with a female supt.)	N	15	54	69
	Row %	21.7	78.3	
	Column %	33.3	36.5	
	% of total respondents	7.8	28.0	35.8
No (had not worked with a female supt.)	N	30	94	124
	Row %	24.2	75.8	
	Column %	66.7	63.5	
	% of total respondents	15.5	48.7	64.2
	Column	45	148	193
	Total %	23.3	76.7	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(1, N = 193) = 0.15296, p = .69573$.

This question caused the most commentary where the great majority of respondents discussed issues related to children; for example, "depends upon support at home where children are involved," "depends on ages of children," and "depends on family and number of children." Other considerations were given to the "assistance provided by the spouse" and the "preplanning performed by the female superintendent." Comments were similar whether one had worked with a female superintendent or not.

Question 4: "Do you believe that most boards of education are reluctant to hire female superintendents?" According to the research by Zumsteg (1991/1992), the Number 1 perceived barrier by female superintendents to women becoming a superintendent was that school boards were unwilling to hire a female as their superintendent.

In this study 28 (40.6%) of the 69 who worked with a female superintendent either strongly agreed or agreed, while 41 (59.4%) disagreed/strongly disagreed. Fifty-two (42.6%) of 122 who did not work with a female also agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Table 37 represents the summarized results of the remaining data.

Of the 69 respondents who worked with a female superintendent, 5 (7.2%) provided comments to the effect times were changing. One respondent indicated today (1994) there were more female superintendents in their county than there were in the state of Michigan in 1988.

The majority of those superintendents who had not worked with a female superintendent were not as inclined to subscribe to the possibility that "times are changing." Comments such as "some are--some aren't," females are not aspiring," and so forth represented over half of the

Table 37

Reluctance by Boards of Education to Hire Females

Group		Strongly agree/ agree	Disagree/ strongly disagree	Total
Yes (worked with a female supt.)	N	28	41	69
	Row %	40.6	59.4	
	Column %	35.0	36.9	
	% of total respondents	14.6	21.5	36.1
No (had not worked with a female supt.)	N	52	70	122
	Row %	42.6	57.4	
	Column %	65.0	63.1	
	% of total respondents	27.2	36.7	63.9
	Column	80	111	191
	Total %	41.8	58.2	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(1, N = 191) = 0.15296, p = .69573.$

sentiments from this group.

Question 5: "Do you believe that a lack of experience is responsible for the small percentage of female superintendents?" The second most significant barrier to females becoming a superintendent according to male superintendents in the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study was "lack of experience."

This study determined that of those who have worked with a female superintendent the belief was nearly 50-50. Of those having work experience with a female superintendent, 36 of 68 (52.9%) strongly agreed/agreed that the lack of experience contributes to the small percentage of female superintendents as compared to 74 of 124 (59.7%) who did not have employment experience with a female superintendent (Table 38).

Table 38

Lack of Experience

Group		Strongly agree/ agree	Disagree/ strongly disagree	Total
Yes (worked with a female supt.)	N	36	32	68
	Row %	52.9	47.1	
	Column %	32.7	39.0	
	% of total respondents	18.7	16.7	35.4
No (had not worked with a female supt.)	N	74	50	124
	Row %	59.7	40.3	
	Column %	67.3	61.0	
	% of total respondents	38.5	26.1	64.6
	Column	110	82	192
	Total %	57.2	42.8	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(1, N = 192) = 0.98237, p = .32162$.

Four respondents (5.8%) in the yes group had mixed comments. Comments varied from the fact this is changing due to the "movement toward (potentially significant) central office positions" to "most are more experienced than their male counterparts." Of the no group, the majority of respondents believed that the dominance of high school principal positions by males did not allow for movement toward the superintendency. Females occupied "curriculum" or "non-line" positions which this researcher believes to be a hindrance at times to becoming a superintendent.

Question 6: "Do you believe that sex discrimination is responsible for the small percentage of female superintendents?" Shakeshaft (1984, 1987), Sizer (1984), Sholomskas and Axelrod (1986) have demonstrated in their research that gender discrimination is one of the prevailing reasons for the low percentage of female superintendents nationwide.

Table 39 demonstrates that the majority of superintendents surveyed for this research study believe this statement to be untrue. Of those in the yes group, 58.2% and 60.7% in the no group (total average of 59.9%) felt gender discrimination was not a significant factor.

Of the respondents who provided commentary, 56% felt this was changing. One respondent didn't "know what the question meant" and another was more emphatic in his or her response--"absolutely."

Question 7: "Do you believe most female administrators are assertive and competitive enough to be a superintendent?" The responses to this question demonstrated a very high rate of agreement whether one worked with a female superintendent or not. Of the 188 respondents, 169 (89.9%) believed females were significantly assertive

Table 39

Sex Discrimination

Group		Strongly agree/ agree	Disagree/ strongly disagree	Total
Yes (worked with a female supt.)	N	28	39	67
	Row %	41.8	58.2	
	Column %	36.8	34.5	
	% of total respondents	14.8	20.7	35.5
No (had not worked with a female supt.)	N	48	74	122
	Row %	39.3	60.7	
	Column %	63.2	65.5	
	% of total respondents	25.3	39.2	64.5
	Column	76	113	189
	Total %	40.1	59.9	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(1, N = 189) = 0.16870, p = .68127$.

and competitive to serve as a superintendent (Table 40).

Of the four surveys which contained comments in the yes category, several examples seemed to purvey a certain sensitivity to this question. Supporting this perception such comments included, "this is another example of false perceptions about women, "who made up this question--a man?" "who says these are necessary components of the superintendency?" and "I have a problem with the word most." This

Table 40

Assertiveness and Competitiveness

Group		Strongly agree/ agree	Disagree/ strongly disagree	Total
Yes (worked with a female supt.)	N	59	6	65
	Row %	90.8	9.2	
	Column %	34.9	31.6	
	% of total respondents	31.4	3.2	34.6
No (had not worked with a female supt.)	N	110	13	123
	Row %	89.4	10.6	
	Column %	65.1	68.4	
	% of total respondents	58.5	6.9	65.4
	Column	169	19	188
	Total %	89.9	10.1	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 0.08384, p = .77216$.

author purports these reactions to be the frustrations representative of years of bias toward females aspiring to the superintendency.

The superintendents who had not worked with a female superintendent shared some of the same frustration, that is, ". . . and have been assertive, competitive, and sensitive." Other respondents felt females had to be assertive to be successful or were as assertive as most men.

Question 8: "Do you believe that most female administrators want the additional responsibility that comes with being a superintendent?" Chase and Bell (1994) contended those females who attempt to be homemakers and career women are burdened by "role overload." By a ratio of 2:1 respondents to this research believe females want the additional responsibility associated with being a superintendent. Results of these data are described in Table 41.

Table 41

Seek Additional Responsibility

Group		Strongly agree/ agree	Disagree/ strongly disagree	Total
Yes (worked with a female supt.)	N	38	28	66
	Row %	57.6	42.4	
	Column %	33.6	36.8	
	% of total respondents	20.2	14.8	35.0
No (had not worked with a female supt.)	N	75	48	123
	Row %	61.0	39.0	
	Column %	66.4	63.2	
	% of total respondents	39.6	25.4	65.0
	Column	113	76	189
	Total %	59.8	40.2	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(1, N = 189) = 0.16870, p = .68127$.

Sixty-six (35%) of those responding to this question had employment experiences with a female superintendent. Thirty-eight (57.6%) strongly agreed/agreed that females seek additional responsibility, while 28 (42.4%) disagreed/strongly disagreed. The majority of comments received seemed to indicate that "because of time commitments," many males/females don't want to be a superintendent or that female aspirations were at least "equal to males."

With the no group of respondents who did not have previous work experience with a female superintendent, the difference increased; that is, 61% strongly agree/agree, while 39% disagree/strongly disagree. In this group, respondent's beliefs were categorized by those who believed, "the desires were the same for both males and females," "most male administrators don't want the additional responsibility either," and "those who want the additional responsibility--seek it."

Question 9: "Do you believe female administrators are emotionally capable of withstanding the stress and pressure of being a superintendent?" One hundred eighty-two superintendents (94.8%) of the 192 respondents felt females had the emotional capability to handle the stress of the superintendency. This question, similar to Question 7, displayed a very high percentage of agreement whether one worked with a female superintendent or not (see Table 42).

Similar to Question 7, the frustration of the respondents appeared to be evident. This perception was precipitated by such comments as, "This is incredible. Are you reflecting our society's bias . . ." "This is an awful question or presupposition," and "if a female can adjust to a

Table 42

Emotionally Capable

Group		Strongly agree/ agree	Disagree/ strongly disagree	Total
Yes (worked with a female supt.)	N	63	5	68
	Row %	92.6	7.4	
	Column %	34.6	50.0	
	% of total respondents	32.8	2.6	35.4
No (had not worked with a female supt.)	N	119	5	124
	Row %	96.0	4.0	
	Column %	65.4	50.0	
	% of total respondents	62.0	2.6	64.6
	Column	182	10	192
	Total %	94.8	5.2	100.0

Note. $\chi^2(1, N = 192) = 0.98088$, $p = .32198$.

male and rear his children, I assume she is emotionally capable of being a superintendent."

Barriers to Women Becoming Superintendents

Section IV of the survey instrument contained four open ended questions which listed (1) the respondents' perceptions of barriers confronting women in their aspirations toward a career as

superintendent, (2) suggestions or advice as to how women could attain a superintendency, (3) reasons why the respondent became a superintendent, and (4) responses to any unique or special situations or problems not mentioned in this survey.

Because many respondents gave more than one answer to several of the questions, the rank order of occurrences was determined according to rate of incidence not in accordance to the number of superintendents responding. Statistical analysis as a result was not possible.

Twenty-six (96%) of the female superintendents provided 31 responses with one superintendent not responding. The top four barriers as perceived by female superintendents included (1) gender bias, (2), public perceptions that women are not capable, (3) family obligations, and (4) boards are unwilling to hire females in the role of superintendent (Table 43).

One hundred ninety-three responses were provided by the male superintendents, while 12 (7%) elected not to respond. The top four barriers according to male superintendents included (1) lack of aspiration, (2) boards unwilling to hire females, (3) lack of appropriate (administrative) experience, and (4) gender bias (Table 44).

According to the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study, the top four barriers according to female superintendents included reluctance by the board of education to hire, perception by the public/community that women are not capable of being leaders, family obligations, and gender bias.

Male superintendents in the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study responded listing their top perceived barriers as women's lack of aspiration, lack

Table 43

Barriers: Female Responses

Female responses	Number of occurrences
Gender bias	6
Perceptions of the public that women are not capable	5
Boards of education unwilling to hire females for the superintendency	4
Family obligations	4
Lack of self-confidence or image	3
Lack of opportunities ("Good Ole Boy's Club")	3
Lack of role models	2
No comment	1
Time constraints	1
Lack of knowledge base (business, finance, plant management, transportation	1
Unwillingness to pay the price	1
Difficulty in getting first administrative position	1

of administrative experience, family obligations, and lack of qualifications.

Suggestions to Help Women Attain the Superintendency

Thirty-two responses were provided by female respondents (Table 45). Respectively, the top three responses included: (1) provide a support system or network, (2) provide mentors, and (3) encourage

Table 44

Barriers: Male Responses

Male responses	Number of occurrences
Lack of aspiration to the superintendency	27
Boards of education unwilling to hire females for the superintendency	29
Lack of appropriate (administrative) experience	25
Gender bias	22
Public perceptions that women are not capable	16
Unwillingness to relocate for job opportunities	13
No comment	12
Family obligations	9
Lack. of qualifications	8
Lack of opportunities	8
Lack of self-confidence or expectations	5
Unwillingness to pay the price	5
Husband's career is dominant priority	4
Lack of knowledge base (business, finance, plant management, transportation)	4
Unwillingness to be building administrator	4
There are no barriers	3
Unwillingness to take on additional responsibilities	3
Too sensitive/too emotional (personality characteristics)	3
Not enough females in positions to become superintendents	2
Lack of encouragement	2

Table 44--Continued

Male responses	Number of occurrences
Takes too much time	2
Lack of financial motivation	1
Lack of mentors	1

women to seek the superintendency. Although not in the exact order just described, Zumsteg (1991/1992) found her top three suggestions to be similar.

The next five suggestions offered with equal frequency included: (1) apply and be willing for central office and line administration training, (2) be persistent, (3) in-service board members that females are capable leaders, (4) acquire more university preparation, and (5) seek help from colleagues.

Male respondents suggested (a) women be provided more opportunities and encouragement, (b) should apply and be willing for central office training, and (c) increase the recruitment and hiring of more female administrators. A complete listing of responses and number of occurrences are described in Table 46. The first three responses were also the top three recommendations in the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study.

Reasons Respondent Became a Superintendent

Of 41 responses, 11 (41%) female superintendents felt they could make a difference, create change, make improvements, or have an

Table 45

Suggestions to Assist Attainment: Female Responses

Female responses	Number of occurrences
Provide a support system or network	7
Provide mentors	6
Encourage women to seek the superintendency	5
Apply and be willing for central office and line administration training	2
Be persistent, become more visible and do your job well	2
In-service board members that females are capable leaders	2
Need more university preparation/seek advanced degrees	2
No comment	2
More help from colleagues	2
Seminars and workshops encouraging women to be administrators	1
More help from placement offices	1
More public awareness	1
Hire more female central office and administrative personnel	1

impact upon the school system. Other responses included (a) provide effective leadership, (b) the job opportunity was a career goal or next step, and (c) the new position would offer a challenge (Table 47). The top three responses provided in the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study were (1) make change/improvement/impact, (2) challenge, and (3) knew they could provide effective leadership.

Table 46

Suggestions to Assist Attainment: Male Responses

Male responses	Number of occurrences
Provide opportunities for women in administrative roles	25
Encourage women	22
Apply and be willing for central office and line administration training	21
Recruit and hire more female administrators	21
No comment	20
Provide mentors	17
University training and preparation/seek advanced degrees	14
Provide a support system or network	10
Be persistent, become more visible and do your job well	10
In-service board members that females are capable leaders	8
No problems (avenues already exist, help themselves)	6
More women should apply	3
Promote more qualified women	3
Hire more objectively	3
Provide internships	2
Relocate	2
Eliminate relocation requirement	2
Need more help from house husband	2
Pay the price	2
Increase awareness of successful women	2
Remove barriers	2

Table 46--Continued

Male responses	Number of occurrences
Provide role models	1
More females on school boards	1
Join and become active in professional organizations	1
Enter administration earlier	1

Table 47

Reasons for Becoming a Superintendent: Female Responses

Female responses	Number of occurrences
Make a change/improvement/impact in the school system, make a difference	11
I knew I could provide effective leadership/ do a better job	7
It was a career goal or next step	7
Challenge	5
Asked or encouraged by others, board, staff, spouse, mentor, etc.	3
Care about students	3
Prestige or status	1
Sometimes I wonder (good question)	1
Ambition	1
Was best candidate	1
Was available	1

The responses from 156 male superintendents (92%), although exactly the same, were in slightly different order. Thirteen males elected not to respond (Table 48). The responses were similar in the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study, except the third most given response was "to improve income."

Table 48

Reasons for Becoming a Superintendent: Male Responses

Male responses	Number of occurrences
Make a change/improvement/impact in the school system, make a difference	36
Challenge	38
It was a career change or next step	26
Affect students in a positive way	23
I knew I could provide effective leadership/ do a better job	20
Improve income	14
Enjoy people and the opportunity presented itself	13
No comment	13
Asked or encouraged by others, board, staff, spouse, mentor, etc.	10
Wanted additional responsibilities	5
Power	4
I often wonder	4
Enjoy being the boss/desire to lead	3
Chance to move	3
Ego	2

Table 48--Continued

Male responses	Number of occurrences
Tired of working for someone else	2
Dedication to community	2
Prestige or status	1
Easier than being assistant superintendent	1
Not sure	1
Curiosity	1
I am still studying that question	1
Job satisfaction	1
Make my own mistakes	1
Family role	1
Move back to home town	1

Special Situations, Problems, or Pressures
Unique to Female Superintendents

Fourteen females (52%) made no comment. Of the 15 responses given, several were offered at least twice. These included (a) community's attitude that a woman can't handle the job, (b) isolation and loneliness, (c) blatant discrimination, (d) need to improve background in finance, and (e) women need to work harder and longer hours than males in order to prove themselves (Table 49).

One hundred twenty-one male respondents (72% of total responding) did not provide answers to this question. Of the 31 who did, the

Table 49

Special Situations, Problems, or Pressures:
Female Responses

Female responses	Number of occurrences
No comment	14
Community's attitude that a woman can't handle the job	2
Isolation and loneliness	2
Blatant discrimination	2
Need to improve background in finances and budgeting	2
Need to work harder and longer hours	2
Leadership styles are different	1
Women are always in minority	1
Need to earn respect of board members and male superintendents	1
Salary variations between male and female	1
Women trying to act like men	1

top three responses included (1) greater scrutiny by staff and public of a female superintendent, (2) family responsibilities are greater, and (3) higher cultural expectations (Table 50).

Summary

LaPointe (1994) discovered that 24% of the successful female administrators credited certain factors as relevant within their career path. These factors involved mentorships, networking, overcoming

Table 50

Special Situations, Problems, or Pressures:
Male Responses

Male responses	Number of occurrences
No comment	121
Staff and public would scrutinize a female more often	7
Family responsibilities/home conflict	4
Higher cultural expectations/discrimination	4
Lack of female administrators as role models	3
Breaking into the network	3
Yes	2
Trying to act like a male	2
Can do just as well as men	2
Reluctance of boards of education to hire females	1
Need to handle stress	1
Lack of support system	1
Self-imposed stress	1
More women need to aspire	1
Some are too pushy and assertive	1
Lack of preparation in secondary administration	1
Harassment of boards and male superintendents	1
Lack of qualifications	1

barriers such as sex discrimination and gender role stereotyping. All of these factors have been discussed in Chapter IV which contains data relative to perceptions of both male and female superintendents within the state of Michigan.

The purpose of this study was to determine potential factors which affect the advancement of females to the role of superintendent. At the time of this study, 40 females were employed as a Michigan superintendent. This study was a replication of a study conducted in 1991 by Zumsteg (1991/1992). A chi-square analysis was performed looking at whether differences were statistically significant or due to chance.

A summary of the demographics was presented representing those superintendents responding to the survey. Such factors as gender, size of school, budget, degree earned, salary, marital status, and so forth, were prepared to determine whether the results were a representative cross section characteristic of schools in Michigan.

Following the demographics summary, data were discussed as to the various beliefs the respondent possessed in relation to biases or barriers confronting female superintendents. The purpose of this section was to determine the criteria practicing male and female Michigan superintendents believed were reasons as to why there were so few female superintendents. Taken into consideration were concerns such as board attitudes towards hiring females, female superintendents' abilities, competitiveness, assertiveness, and lack of experience.

Other concerns dealt with role compatibility, that is, motherhood

versus being a superintendent, gender discrimination, and desire to take on the additional responsibilities the role of superintendents requires. Most responses followed the same course as that of Zumsteg's (1991/1992) nationwide study. Both a 2 x 4 and 2 x 2 analysis was conducted to determine a more statistically significant result.

The ensuing section analyzed the responses from the prior section with respect to whether the respondents had previous work experience with a female superintendent. The purpose was to look at the same questions analyzed in Section II of the survey instrument but to determine whether responses were significantly different when the respondent had worked with a female superintendent as compared to a respondent who had not. Because several cells contained less than five responses and would have resulted in possibly inaccurate data, a 2 x 2 analysis was conducted.

Most noteworthy was the lack of significant difference one might suspect when the responses were analyzed according to having had work experience versus having had no working experience with a female superintendent. Concerns of lack of experience, assertiveness, competitiveness, aspiration, compatibility of roles, and so forth, were minimally different.

The final component listed the perceptions relative to barriers females encounter, methods of helping more females attain a superintendency and why the respondent became a superintendent. The purpose of this section was to first list in numerical sequence (highest to lowest) those barriers felt to be most significant to the career pursuits of a female superintendent. An analysis, separated by responses of the

female and male respondents, was presented. The barriers cited in this study followed the results reported in works by Adkison (1981), Shakeshaft (1987), Edson (1988), Zumsteg (1991/1992), and others.

Recommendations were made as to how female superintendent aspirants could be helped. Some similarities appeared, for example, (a) provide mentors and additional training, and (b) in-service board members, but the order of priority was different. Respondents were questioned as to why they aspired to become a superintendent. Most notable was the response, "to make a difference."

Chapter V provides an interpretation of the data submitted in Chapter IV and focuses on the three main research questions:

1. Do practicing K-12 male superintendents in Michigan have significantly different beliefs and perceptions toward female superintendents than do female superintendents have of female superintendents? Are the reasons synonymous with certain biases, that is, lack of educational aspiration, assertiveness or fear of success, gender discrimination in hiring practices, unwillingness to relocate, and so forth.

2. What experience has the practicing superintendent had in working directly with other female superintendents? Is there a relationship between the attitudes toward females of those who have worked with females and those who have not?

3. What barriers, if any, interfere with a female aspiring to become a K-12 superintendent?

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Although representative of superintendents in the state of Michigan, this study is a replication of a nationwide study conducted in 1991 by Zumsteg (1991/1992). Zumsteg's conclusions were summarized from survey data which was distributed nationwide whose purpose was to explore factors which affected the advancement of females in the superintendency.

The purpose of this study was to determine potential factors which affect the advancement of females in the role as school superintendents in the state of Michigan. The three research questions used for investigation were:

1. Do practicing K-12 male superintendents in Michigan possess significantly different beliefs and perceptions of female superintendents than do practicing female Michigan superintendents?

2. What experiences did the respondent have in working with a female superintendent?

3. What perceptions do Michigan K-12 superintendents have as to the barriers which interfere with females aspiring to become superintendents?

Chapter V is divided into six sections: (1) analysis of demographics; (2) findings for Question 1, beliefs and perceptions held toward female superintendents; (3) findings for Question 2, experiences of

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working with female superintendents; (4) findings for Question 3, barriers which affect aspiring female superintendents; (5) summary; and (6) recommendations for further study.

Analysis of Demographics

The information gathered from the demographics of the survey was analyzed to determine the level of significant factors. Cross tabulations were developed of male and female superintendents related to willingness to relocate, compatibility of career and motherhood, bias of boards of education, marital status, first administrative position, age at which the respondent was appointed to their first superintendency, highest degree held, present annual salary, and current career aspirations.

The majority of the respondents (59.1%) were employed as a superintendent in a rural school. Since this question was not given any parameters as to what factors (square miles, population numbers, etc.) separated rural from small town, small city, and so forth, individual discretion was to be utilized by the respondents in their selections. The smallest percentage (1.5%) of respondents represented large urban centers.

In comparison, representation by size of the school district was much more evenly divided. The largest percentage of responses (36.2%) were received from superintendents in school districts with enrollments of 1,001 to 2,000 students. The smallest percentage of responses (3.6%) were received from superintendents serving in school districts of 3,001 to 4,000 students.

Two other categories presented similarities when comparing demographic data, that is, age and current career plans. The majority of both male and female respondents (68.9%) were found between the ages of 45 and 54. A difference did exist when examining the next largest category where males (18.4%) represented the 55-64 age group and females (20.8%) fell into the age bracket of 35-44.

When questioned as to their current thinking as to their future, the majority (81.4%) of all respondents indicated they will continue with the superintendency as a career. None of the aforementioned chi-square analyses were statistically significant when performed at p < .05.

Statistically significant differences between the male and female superintendent respondents were noted in the areas of marital status and first administrative position. Although not statistically significant, notable differences existed in areas of age of first superintendent appointment, highest degree held, and salary.

The research results of this study demonstrated that a greater percentage of the males (94.7%) were married versus females (59.3%) and that 40.7% of the females were either divorced, widowed, or never married as opposed to 5.3% of the male respondents. This difference was found to be statistically significant at p < .05. The conclusion was that marital status is a factor when females select a superintendency as a career and those females who select this career have a greater chance of being single than their counterparts.

Most males held their first administrative position either as an assistant principal (37.3%) or an elementary principal (20.7%). The majority of females held their first administrative positions in

assignments other than the perceived traditional positions, that is, elementary, middle school, or secondary principalships; assistant principalships, and assistant superintendents. These were identified as positions similar to curriculum directors or librarians. This comparison, too, was found to be statistically significant which allows the conclusion that females follow different career paths to becoming a superintendent.

The age when a superintendent received their first superintendency demonstrated the belief that females have to wait longer than males to become the key administrator in a school district. The greater percentage (58.3%) of males received their first assignment between the ages of 36 and 45, while females (50.0%) received their first superintendent position between the ages of 46 and 55. To be noted, 41.7% of the females did become a first time superintendent between the ages of 36 and 45.

Similar to the "age of first superintendency" category, it is noteworthy to discuss the type of degree the respondents held. The greater percentage (37%) of females obtained a Ph.D./Ed.D. with 33.3% having an Ed.S. and 22.3% an MA + 30. When comparing this to the male respondents, one discovers that the order of majority is opposite; that is 31.4% with an MA + 30, 30.2% an Ed.S., and 28.3% a Ph.D./Ed.D.

With respect to salary, 34.6% of the female superintendents and 30.5% of male respondents earn between $60,001 and $70,000 per year. Although not statistically significant, but interesting, in the top salary group ($100,000 +), 10.4% of males and 11.5% of the females were observed, a comparatively close similarity.

In summary, although several interesting demographic comparisons were noted, only the areas of marital status and nature of the respondents first administrative position were statistically significant.

Zumsteg (1991/1992) not only found significant differences relative to marital status and type of first administrative position, but also noted differences in (a) age when one was first appointed to a superintendency, (b) highest degree held at time of being surveyed, (c) salary received, and (d) current career thinking.

Zumsteg (1991/1992) found female superintendents were single significantly more often than males. In her study, 89.6% of the respondents were married; 5.4% divorced; and 5.0% were either separated, widowed, or never married. When analyzed by category, males were married 96.1% and divorced 2.0% of the time with the remainder of the respondents separated, widowed, or never married. Females were married 71%; divorced 15.3%; and either separated, widowed, or never married 13.7% of the time. This establishes the conclusion that 30% of female superintendents were single.

Relative to their first administrative position, Zumsteg (1991/1992) found female superintendents were likely to begin as nontraditional administrators such as curriculum specialists and secondly elementary principals, while males were employed either as an assistant or high school principal. As indicated earlier, the results of Zumsteg's (1991/1992) study were similar to this author's study, while results were statistically significant in both studies.

Other findings which Zumsteg (1991/1992) found to be statistically significant included (a) female superintendents were older

than their male colleagues when attaining their first superintendency, (b) females earned more advanced degrees (Ph.D. and Ed.D.), (c) females made less money, and (d) more females had plans to consider other careers.

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**Findings for Research Question 1: Reasons for Low
Percentage of Female Superintendents**

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The purpose of this section was to determine why it is perceived there is a relatively low percentage of female superintendents in the state of Michigan. This determination was accomplished by analyzing the responses to questions which represented certain beliefs held by both male and female superintendents related to abilities, community attitudes, aspirations, and qualifications of female aspirants or practicing superintendents.

Both female (53.8%) and male (60.4%) respondents (total average 59.5%) disagreed with the question that asked whether female administrators aspire to be superintendents as often as male administrators. The second highest selected category (agree) was similar for both female (19.3%) and male (26.2%) respondents (25.2% total average). Although "times are changing" as one superintendent commented, the data follow a similar result of the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study of which 59.9% disagreed, while 20.6% of the total agreed. Others (Edson, 1988; Pavan, 1987; Whitaker & Lane, 1990) have also found these results to be true. Zumsteg found her responses to be statistically significant.

When questioned whether male administrators are more likely to relocate for career advancement, the most selected response (agree) was given only 29.6% of the time for females and 63.4% of the time for males. In fact, the female responses were predominantly divided between strongly agree (29.6%), agree (29.6%), and disagree (33.4%). In the Zumsteg (1991/1992) study, both females (45.5%) and males (62.9%) agreed, which demonstrates some improvement in the relocation barrier. Results of both studies were statistically significant, from which one might conclude relocation is easier and often expected for the male superintendent.

Compatibility of motherhood and career roles have been a continuous bias concern for many years (Chase & Bell, 1994; Gotwalt & Towns, 1986; Zumsteg, 1991/1992). Of those superintendents responding to the question as to whether the role of being a mother is incompatible with the role of superintendent, 40.8% of the females and 43.4% of the males disagreed (43.0% total average). Most intriguing were the responses of disagree and strongly disagree encompassing 76.7% of the total responses. Although not statistically significant, the results were similar to Zumsteg's (1991/1992), whose results were significant. These results do demonstrate a slight change of attitude, at least in this study, reflecting that the two roles are becoming more compatible.

In 1981, the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) reported that 15% of superintendents and 25% of board presidents surveyed believed that a woman in a leadership role is unacceptable. Of the female respondents in this author's study, 51.9% agreed

that boards are reluctant to hire females, while 37% disagreed with this question. Contrarily, 36% of the male respondents agreed, while 54.9% disagreed. Given the results were statistically significant, it can be concluded there is a difference in the manner in which males and females are being hired (Montenegro, 1993).

In comparison, Zumsteg (1991/1992) found a high percentage of female superintendents perceived boards of education were reluctant to hire females. Compared to over half of the male respondents, three quarters of the female respondents agreed that there is a barrier to females being hired due to bias by board members.

The next survey question asked whether a lack of experience was responsible for the small percentage of female superintendents. Similar to the preceding question while also statistically significant, a contrast of responses between male and female responses resulted where 61.8% of males strongly agreed or agreed and 70.3% of the females either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Zumsteg (1991/1992) also found the results to be similar and significant. More than half of the female superintendents believed that women had sufficient administrative experience, while more than half of the male superintendents believed that women lacked sufficient administrative experience. It can be concluded that the perceptions of administrative experience may be interpreted differently.

One might hypothesize, since the results were statistically significant, differences between the females (nearly 85% strongly agreed/agreed) and males (nearly 67% disagreed/strongly disagreed) responding to the questions of whether they believe gender discrimination continues

to be responsible for the small percentage of female superintendents is a bias that presently remains.

Zumsteg's (1991/1992) study demonstrated 75.9% of the female respondents perceived gender discrimination to be responsible for the small percentage of female superintendents. The majority (66.8%) of the males did not believe gender discrimination was a factor in the low number of female superintendents. Gender discrimination is considered to be one of the most recurring reasons there are so few female superintendents (Chase & Bell, 1994; Gotwalt & Towns, 1986; Shakeshaft, 1979/1980, 1987).

When asked whether female administrators are sufficiently assertive and competitive and can withstand the stress of being a superintendent, both female and male superintendents, 96.2% and 88.9%, respectively, either strongly agreed or agreed. Zumsteg (1991/1992) reported very similar and statistically significant results. Eighty-nine percent of the males and 89.6% of the females agreed that females were assertive and competitive enough to be successful superintendents.

The conclusion from earlier studies is that as more women are exposed to the opportunity to become a school superintendent, the more their colleagues or boards of education are shown their true abilities (Edson, 1986; Gross & Trask, 1976). As time goes on and more opportunities are available, this statistic will rise nationwide although close scrutiny of their success (or the lack of) will continue.

Finally, the results to the question of whether female administrators desire additional responsibility were noteworthy. Although the most

recurring response was agree, selected 52.8% of the time by the males and 44.4% by the females, the next most regular response was in contrast, that is, 34.2% of the males disagreed while 40.8% of the females strongly agreed. This difference is possibly due to the fact that the nature of the job requires additional responsibility and the female respondents believe they understand the role and actually possess this quality.

Similarly, Zumsteg's (1991/1992) results were comparable. Of the females, 51.6% agreed while slightly over 51% of the males also agreed. The second most selected choice for the female respondents was divided between strongly agree (23%) and disagree (23%), but for males the selection was the disagree option (37.3%).

Findings for Research Question 2: Professional Relationships With Female Superintendents

The purpose of this question was to analyze responses to questions relative to beliefs and perceptions toward females as superintendents from the perspective of whether or not they had experience in working with female superintendents. The options of those who worked with a female (Yes) or those who did not (No) were either strongly agree/agree (SA/A) or disagree/strongly disagree (D/SD).

Most notable was the similarity of results to questions relative to beliefs of female aspiration. When asked whether female administrators aspire to the superintendency as often as males, 67.9% of the total either disagreed or strongly disagreed. Nearly 66% of those respondents who worked with a female superintendent selected the D/SD category, while 69.1% of those who did not work with a female superintendent

also selected this same response.

Responses to several other questions where working with a female superintendent appeared to make little difference included: (a) males are more likely to relocate (71.6% Yes, 81.5% No), (b) roles of motherhood and the superintendency are compatible (78.3% Yes, 75.8% No), (c) females are assertive and competitive enough to be superintendents (90.8% Yes, 89.4% No), and (d) females are emotionally capable (92.6% Yes, 96% No).

The conclusion of this author was that although the differences in beliefs and perceptions may exist between males and females, there is no statistical difference whether one has worked or not worked with a female superintendent.

Zumsteg (1991/1992) approached this question in a slightly different manner. The research question studied was, "Is there a relationship between the number of female administrators one works with and his or her perceptions of female administrators?" The results were as follows:

1. Districts of female superintendents had significantly higher percentages of female administrators than those with male superintendents.

2. Male superintendents in suburban districts employed a higher percentage of female administrators than male superintendents in other types of communities.

3. The higher the percentage of female administrators in a male superintendent's district, the more likely female administrators would aspire to a superintendency.

Findings for Research Question 3: Barriers to Women Becoming Superintendents

The purpose of Question 3 was to determine whether male and female superintendents perceived that similar barriers existed to aspiring female superintendents or whether they were significantly different.

Three of the greatest barriers according to female respondents included gender, perceptions of the public that women are not capable, and boards of education are unwilling to hire females as superintendents. According to the male respondents, lack of aspiration, boards of education being unwilling to hire females in the role of superintendent, and lack of appropriate experience were the top selected barriers. Gender bias and public perception that women are not capable were in the top five male responses.

As can be observed, the responses to this question were quite similar and parallel studies by Shakeshaft et al. (1984), Dopp (1985/1986), and Zumsteg (1991/1992). When asked to list important ways to help women attain a superintendency, several similarities were evident, for example, provide mentors, encouragement, opportunities, and a system of support with planned programs to in-service school board members.

One of the greatest similarities in male and female responses was evident when asked why the candidate became a superintendent. The Number 1 response was "to make a difference, make changes and improvement." Should the barriers mentioned earlier in this section continue to exist, one would conclude that one group of professionals, trained in the administrative field, may not be able to provide new and

innovative leadership qualities or vision, that is, the female superintendent.

In comparison, Zumsteg (1991/1992) found female superintendents perceived the reluctance of school boards to employ females as the Number 1 barrier to their attainment of a superintendency. Also, female superintendents believed that the perception held by the public/community was the second greatest barrier.

Male superintendents identified women's lack of aspiration as the greatest barrier while their lack of administrative experience was second in their struggle toward attaining the position of superintendent.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine the potential factors which affect the advancement of females to the role of superintendent. Three research questions were proposed to determine (a) whether practicing K-12 male superintendents in Michigan have different beliefs and perceptions toward female superintendents than do female superintendents relative to aspirations, desire to relocate, role compatibility, competitiveness, assertiveness, experiences, and emotional stability; (b) whether working with a female resulted in significantly different responses to the above beliefs and perceptions than not having had employment related experience; and (c) what perceptions K-12 Michigan superintendents had as to the barriers which interfere with females aspiring to becoming a superintendent.

The review of the literature in Chapter II centered around four basic areas, that is, (2) historical perspectives of women, (2) barriers

that confront women, (3) legal perceptions affecting the advancement of women, and (4) leadership and its relationship to the superintendency.

This study was predicated upon a replication of a study conducted in 1991 by Zumsteg (1991/1992). After a pilot study of her instrument, Zumsteg surveyed, nationwide, 400 male superintendents and 200 female superintendents of which, after two mailings, 357 males and 124 females responded.

After securing permission from Zumsteg (1991/1992), this author replicated her study utilizing her survey instrument, making allowances for updating necessary information. The instrument was a four-part Likert type survey consisting of four components: (1) demographic information, (2) attitudes and beliefs of male and female superintendents relative to females aspiring toward the superintendency, (3) a comparison of those attitudes and beliefs relative to whether they had working experience with a female superintendent, and (4) responses to perceived barriers which aspiring females encounter.

The population for this study consisted of 578 K-12 superintendents in the state of Michigan, 40 females and 538 males. The sample utilized all 40 females and 241 males of which, after two mailings, 27 female responses and 169 male responses were received.

The superintendents participating in this study provided very interesting and valuable data attributable to further research potential. Of interest to the particular research questions were the following findings:

The majority of male superintendents were (a) from a rural district with student enrollment of from 1,001 to 2,000 students; (b) between

the ages of 45 and 54, married, and held their first superintendency position between the ages of 36 and 45; (c) the highest degree held is an MA+30 and the majority earns an average salary between $60,001 and $70,000; and (d) plans on continuing on as a superintendent.

The majority of female superintendents were (a) employed in a rural school with a population between 1,001 and 2,000 students; (b) between the ages of 45-54, married, and acquired their first superintendency between the ages of 46-55; (c) the highest degree held was a Ph.D./Ed.D., and earn between 60,001 and $70,000 annually; (d) plan on continuing on as a superintendent.

The majority of male superintendents believed male administrators are more likely to relocate for career advancement, that a lack of experience is responsible for the small percentage of female superintendents, females are assertive and competitive enough to be a superintendent, seek the additional responsibility, and are emotionally capable to withstand the stress of the job.

In contrast, the majority of these same male superintendents did not agree that females aspire to become superintendents as often as males, gender discrimination is responsible for the small percentage of female superintendents, motherhood and a superintendency career are incompatible, and boards of education are reluctant to hire females.

Females responding to this survey believed males are more likely to relocate than females for further career advancement, boards of education are reluctant to hire females, gender discrimination towards females does exist, females are assertive and competitive enough to be a superintendent, seek the additional responsibility of a superintendency,

and are emotionally capable of handling the stress of the job.

Female respondents did not agree that females aspire to be a superintendent as often as males, the roles of motherhood and superintendent were incompatible, and females lacked the experience necessary to become a superintendent.

When analyzing the results, there was no significant difference when the responses were distributed between those who had worked with a female superintendent and those who had not.

The barriers to acquiring a superintendency listed by both male and female respondents were very similar with gender bias, unwillingness of boards to hire females, and the public perception that females are not capable the most predominant responses. Suggested ways to help women attain a superintendency were similar, that is, provide support or mentors and encourage women to apply or pursue the career.

In conclusion, this study demonstrated that differences between male and female superintendents do exist as to the beliefs and perceptions of why there are so few female superintendents. When one has worked with a female superintendent, the range of differences was insignificant as compared to those superintendents who have not.

Recommendations for Further Study

Significant research has been conducted which demonstrates a very strong possibility of bias towards females continues to exist (Kanter, 1977; LaPointe, 1994; Schmuck, 1986; Shakeshaft, 1987; Zumsteg, 1991/1992). With the majority of educators being females, the number of female superintendents should be greater than the 7%

nationwide that are presently employed. To help enhance this increase the following studies may be conducted:

1.   Perform replications of similar studies in other states.   A comparison of enhancing the possibilities for women to enter the superintendency could serve as models to other states.

2.   Plan nationwide programs through the National Association of School Boards (NASB). Using a pretest/posttest instrument, an analysis could be conducted to discern whether school board members' attitudes have changed.

3.   Conduct further studies related to a comparison of the numbers of females serving on school boards relative to the number of female administrators in the school system.

4.   Analyze collegiate post baccalaureate programs as to type and amount of preparation available to women enhancing their interview and survival skills for a career as a superintendent.

Women have been the minority in key administrative positions. It is the author's opinion that a very viable resource is being lost when allowing biased decision makers to lead the schools.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Permission Letter From Tresa Zumsteg

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January 12, 1994

Mr. Dennis J. Stanek
7230 Lake Bluff
0.75 Lane
Gladstone, MI   49837

RE: Dissertation Survey

    Enclosed is a copy of the survey titled, "Factors Affecting
the Advancement of Women to the Position of Superintendent" from
the 1991 doctoral dissertation, <u>Superintendents' Beliefs and
Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding
the Leadership Pool</u>. You have my permission to reproduce in part
or in totality this survey for your research purposes.

    Good luck, and please remember, I would appreciate a copy of
your completed study. My address is: Berkley Public Schools, 2211
Oakshire, Berkley, MI   48072.

                              Sincerely,

                              Tresa Zumsteg, Ph.D.

Appendix B

**Confirmation Letter From Human Subjects
Institutional Review Board**

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Human Subjects Institutional Review Board

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Date: June 9, 1994

To: Dennis J. Stanek

From: Kevin Hollenbeck, Chair *for K. Hollenbeck*

Re: HSIRB Project Number 94-06-06

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project entitled "Superintendents of Michigan: Their attitudes towards females in the position of supervintendent" has been approved under the exempt category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

You must seek reapproval for any changes in this design. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: June 9, 1995

xc: Warfield, EL

Appendix C

Initial Survey Letter to Superintendents

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DELTA-SCHOOLCRAFT INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

2525 Third Avenue South
Escanaba, Michigan 49829-1298
Phone: (906) 786-9300
FAX: (906) 786-9318

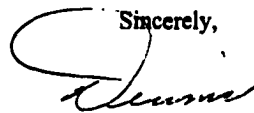June 10, 1994

Dear Superintendent:

Education, as you know, is in a state of change. Public school administration has been under great scruitiny during the last several years. One aspect which deserves further study is the ratio of female to male superintendents.

Currently I am completing my doctoral studies through Western Michigan University. Because of your experience and expertise, information regarding the employment of superintendents is being requested. This is a busy time of the year but, due to the anticipated large turnover in superintendencies, I need to receive input from those who have had experience in this position.

You should find the attached survey easy to read and can be completed within 10 to 15 minutes. I am asking that you complete the survey and return by **June 24, 1994** in the self addressed, stamped envelope. The number on the return envelope is for determining responses received and where follow-up may be needed. Your identity will not be made public in any way.

Thank you for your participation and help. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Please indicate on the enclosed response sheet whether you would like a copy of the survey results upon completion.

Sincerely,

Dennis J. Stanek
Superintendent

DJS/bw
Encl:

GENERAL, SPECIAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Appendix D

Follow-up Letter to Superintendents

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PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

DELTA-SCHOOLCRAFT INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

2525 Third Avenue South
Escanaba, Michigan 49829-1298
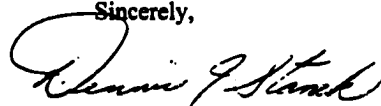Phone: (906) 786-9300
FAX: (906) 786-9318

June 27, 1994

Dear Superintendent:

Approximately three weeks ago I mailed out surveys on the subject of females in the K-12 superintendency position in the state of Michigan. This survey is to gather data for the completion of my doctoral thesis.

I realize summer schedules are somewhat less structured than those of the school year but, even though the return deadline has passed, if you would take the time to complete the survey I would be most appreciative.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Dennis J. Stanek
Superintendent

DJS/bw

GENERAL, SPECIAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Appendix E

Survey Instrument

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FACTORS AFFECTING THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN TO
THE POSITION OF SUPERINTENDENT

> **Section I**

Demographic Background

1. Your district can best be characterized as:

   [ ] Rural   [ ] Town or small city   [ ] Suburban

   [ ] Large urban center [ ] Other, please specify _____

2. The enrollment in your district is: _____.

3. The year of your birth is: 19_____.

4. Sex   [ ] Male   [ ] Female

5. Are you:

   [ ] Married   [ ] Divorced   [ ] Separated   [ ] Widowed   [ ] Never Married

6. What was the nature of your first administrative or supervisory position? (Check only one)

   [ ] Ass't Principal   [ ] Supervisor [ ] Ass't Superintendent

   [ ] Elem. Principal   [ ] MS Principal . [ ] HS Principal

   [ ] Other, please specify _____

7. At what age were you appointed to your first public school superintendency? _____

8. Highest degree presently held:

   [ ] BA/BS   [ ] MA/MS   [ ] MA + 30   [ ] Ed.S.   [ ] PH.D./Ed.D.

9. What is your present annual salary? Do not include fringes or cash in lieu of.

10. Which of the following statements best characterizes your current thinking about your career in administration (check one):

    [ ] I plan to make the superintendency my career.
    [ ] I plan to seek a position in higher education.
    [ ] I plan to seek a position outside of education.
    [ ] Other, please specify _____

Presently 2% of the public school superintendents in the United States are female. The following questions have been hypothesized as being reasons for this percentage. Please answer the following questions either (SA) strongly agree, (A) agree, (D) disagree, or (SD) strongly disagree. If you feel the need to qualify or elaborate on your answer, a comment section has been included.

1. Do you believe female administrators aspire to be superintendents as often as male administrators?

    [ ] SA   [ ] A   [ ] D   [ ] SD

    Comment _____

    _____

2. Do you believe that male administrators are more likely to relocate for career advancement than female administrators?

    [ ] SA   [ ] A   [ ] D   [ ] SD

    Comment _____

    _____

3. Do you believe that the role of being a mother is incompatible with the role of superintendent?

    [ ] SA   [ ] A   [ ] D   [ ] SD

    Comment _____

    _____

4. Do you believe that most Boards of Education are reluctant to hire female superintendents?

    [ ] SA   [ ] A   [ ] D   [ ] SD

    Comment _____

    _____

5. Do you believe that a lack of experience is responsible for the small percentage of female superintendents?

    [ ] SA   [ ] A   [ ] D   [ ] SD

    Comment _____

    _____

6. Do you believe that sex discrimination is responsible for the small percentage of female superintendents?

    [ ] SA   [ ] A   [ ] D   [ ] SD

    Comment _____

    _____

7. Do you believe that most female administrators are assertive and competitive enough to be a superintendent?

    [ ] SA   [ ] A   [ ] D   [ ] SD

    Comment _____

    _____

8. Do you believe that most female administrators want the additional responsibility that comes with being a superintendent?

    [ ] SA   [ ] A   [ ] D   [ ] SD

    Comment _____

    _____

9. Do you believe female administrators are emotionally capable of withstanding the stress and pressure of being a superintendent?

    [ ] SA   [ ] A   [ ] D   [ ] SD

    Comment _____

    _____

Section III

---

1. Have you ever worked in a professional capacity with a female superintendent?

    [ ] Yes   [ ] No

    Comment _____

    _____

2a. Are there any female assistant superintendents in your district?

    [ ] Yes   [ ] No

    Comment _____

    _____

2b. If yes to number 2a, how many? _____

3. What is the approximate percentage of women in administrative roles (not in the teaching union) in your school district? _____ %

Section IV

Please respond briefly to the following questions:

1. What do you perceive as the greatest barrier(s) to women becoming superintendents?

    _____

    _____

2. What do you perceive as the most important way(s) to help women attain the superintendency?

    _____

    _____

3. Why did you become a superintendent?

    _____

    _____

4. Do you feel there are any special situations, problems or pressures unique to superintendents who are female not mentioned in this survey?

    _____

    _____

****

Thank you for completing this survey. Please return it in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Dennis J. Stanek, Delta-Schoolcraft Intermediate School District, 2525 Third Avenue South, Escanaba, MI 49829.

Appendix F

Response Sheet

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RESPONSE SHEET

_____ Yes, I would like to receive a copy of the survey result.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

RESPONSE SHEET

_____ Yes, I would like to receive a copy of the survey result.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

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January 12, 1994

Mr. Dennis J. Stanek
7230 Lake Bluff
0.75 Lane
Gladstone, MI 49837

RE: Dissertation Survey

      Enclosed is a copy of the survey titled, "Factors Affecting the Advancement of Women to the Position of Superintendent" from the 1991 doctoral dissertation, <u>Superintendents' Beliefs and Attitudes Toward Female Administrators: Implications for Expanding the Leadership Pool</u>. You have my permission to reproduce in part or in totality this survey for your research purposes.

      Good luck, and please remember, I would appreciate a copy of your completed study.
My address is: Berkley School District, 2211 Oakshire, Berkley, MI 48072.

                              Sincerely,

                              Tresa Zumstag, Ph.D.

ADDENDUM

I give permission for UMI to supply copies of my survey on demand.

Tresa Zumsteg, Ph.D.
April 12, 1995