PERCEPTIONS OF GENDERED PRACTICES AMONG TEACHERS AND LEADERS IN RELATION TO SCHOOL MORALE

A Dissertation
by
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Abstract

PERCEPTIONS OF GENDERED PRACTICES AMONG TEACHERS AND LEADERS IN RELATION TO SCHOOL MORALE
(December 2016)

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At the present time, the field of education is experiencing large volumes of change due to high stakes accountability, federally mandated Common Core and Essential Standards, as well as decreased budgets affecting the availability of needed resources. These are a few of the things that have an effect on overall teacher morale which promote high teacher turnover rates each year. Teacher retention is essential to high student achievement. Therefore, it is imperative to identify those factors that affect teacher morale in order to increase teacher retention.

Based on existing research, school administrators are crucial to the morale in a school. The low numbers of female administrators compared to the number of female teachers indicates that equity, diversity, and pluralism do not apply when it

comes to women in leadership roles. It is not uncommon for the gender of the leader to be a consideration when selecting a new principal for a school. This promotes the need for a close examination to the degree to which the gender of the leader impact teacher morale.

This study examined the relationship between the gender of the leader and teacher morale. The qualitative study was set in an interpretative approach, as the researcher was the primary instrument for data collection and evaluation. Four teachers and four principals were purposefully selected and interviewed with the intent of investigating the impact that gendered practices of leaders may or may not have on teacher morale.

The data collected from this study suggests that teacher morale hinges on a set of behaviors, character traits of the leader, or personality of the leader rather than gender of the leader. Respondents used the terms personality and character synonymously throughout. Attributes of leaders were identified from the data as being essential to establishing a foundation for high teacher morale. The identified attributes were necessary in fostering qualities that appeared as recurring themes in the data collected from teachers and principals. The themes were qualities essential to high teacher morale. Additionally, an evaluation of the collected data demonstrated the influence of gender norms on how leaders may be perceived. The view of gender as a binary rather than as a continuum and factors that promote this worldview were also present in the data collected from interview respondents.

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Dedication

To my husband, William Wright Gladstone

To my father, Lonnie Benjamin Rhodes, III

To my brother, Lonnie Benjamin Rhodes, IV

To my children, Anne, Mary Kate, Laine, and Betsy Gladstone

In loving memory of my mother, Anne Ball Rhodes

In loving memory of my grandparents, Janie and L.B. Rhodes, Ella and Carl Ball

In loving memory of my mother-in-law, Nancy Yates Gladstone

In loving memory of my sister-in-law, Elizabeth Gladstone Lyon

Teachers, Mentors, and Friends

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Chapter One - Introduction

At the end of each school year, we have teachers who are closing their classroom doors for the very last time. For some, retirement has come and they have decided to join the ranks of retired veteran educators. However, 30-year veterans are not the only ones who are closing classroom doors for the very last time. Low teacher retention rates show that many teachers are leaving education long before the age of retirement.

At the present time, the field of education is experiencing large volumes of change due to high stakes accountability, federally mandated Common Core and Essential Standards, and decreased budgets that affect the availability of needed resources. These issues make the job of a teacher stressful and demanding. Given the needs and demands of students, it is essential for schools to recruit and retain talented teachers who have been well trained (Lester, 1990). In order to accomplish this goal, administrators must focus on ways to raise teacher morale in order to retain high quality teachers (Lester, 1990).

The principal of the school is the one person most responsible for raising teacher commitment and morale (Lester, 1990). Additionally, scholars believe the leader of the school plays a vital role in establishing the school's climate, which also impacts teacher morale (Kelley, Thornton, & Daugherty, 2005). Morale is defined as the interaction that takes place between a person's individual needs and the goals of the organization (Rowland, 2008). The Merriam-Webster Dictionary further defines morale as "the level of individual psychological well-being based on such factors as a sense of purpose and confidence in the future ("Morale, 2015). Because of the influence that principals have over the direction of the day-to-day environment in a school, it is imperative for leaders to understand the leadership styles and traits that impact teacher morale, whether positive or negative.

In an effort to strengthen the quality of schools, factors affecting teacher morale should be examined. Research on morale must take into account leadership traits and seek to identify those that have an impact on teacher morale. People take pride in saying and believing that they live in a pluralistic society where diversity is accepted and appreciated (Coleman, 2005). However, in regard to pluralism and diversity, Coleman (2005) indicates that gender is the biggest obstacle to truly developing a pluralistic and diverse society. Based on the low numbers of female educational leaders, it appears that equity, diversity, and pluralism do not apply when talking about women in leadership. Do sex stereotypes and gender roles interfere or hinder women from obtaining educational leadership positions? When administrative positions open up in the district where I am employed, it has not been uncommon for conversations with colleagues to indicate that a particular school "needs a man" to crack down on school issues or that the staff at a certain school "needs a woman" to play a caring and nurturing role. When discussing the gender of administrators with a colleague, she suggested, "I worked under male and female administrators. Give me the male administrator any day." The conversation continued with extensive information about the difficult years that she served under the supervision of a female principal. On the surface, it seems that educators in public schools all too often use perceived differences in male and female leadership to guide the hiring and placement of principal leaders. However, the degree to which this phenomenon takes place is still in question. There is a significant need to study the influence of gender on teacher morale by examining whether or not morale is influenced by leader gender identity and, if so, what traits are conducive to the establishment of higher teacher morale.

Research Problem Statement

Gender scripts of principals both compel and constrain teacher attitudes and beliefs and also influence the level of satisfaction among teachers. Stereotypes and gender roles are a product of our society and are developed by societal norms, dictate how men and women should interact. Oftentimes, discord results when women or men do not act in accordance with established gender roles. Due to the lack of research about gendered practices of principals and their effects on teacher morale, there is a legitimate need to study this subject.

Traditionally, western society has defined the gender of a person based upon a binary construct. Psychoanalyst Jonathan Kubie believed that gender identities were a result of the differences in human anatomy. These anatomical differences bring about different drives, traits, and feelings (Corbett, 2011). Because human anatomy is generally confined to a binary of gender, society has developed a binary of gender expression, namely masculine and femininity (Corbett, 2011). Additionally, there is a societal thought that the gender binary cannot be violated (Corbett, 2011). Kubie (1974) describes masculinity and femininity as being "mutually irreconcilable" (p. 372). It was the belief of Kubie that living outside the binary promoted destructive nervous and mental influences as well as an immaturity that weakened society (Corbett, 2011). Kubie (1974) stated, " The human being, child and man, who is not reconciled either to the fact that mankind is divided into children and adults, or into two sexes, may find that he also may reject his own growth toward maturity" (p. 400). In recent years, some who have researched different aspects of gender have come to believe that many human beings do not fit one category or the other. Based upon their research, they have abandoned the rigid binary construct of male and female in favor of a continuum construct that incorporates a "sliding scale" of the traits of both classifications. Their

research recognizes typical traits of male and female leaders; however, they reject essentializing. Essentializing, according to Wood (2011), is "The tendency to reduce something or someone to certain characteristics that we assume are essential to its nature and present in every member of a category, such as men and women." (p. 20). The male-female and masculine-feminine binary is put into question by the variations in anatomical sex and variations in the way people demonstrate and express their gender (Wiseman & Davidson, 2011). Gender expression does not remain static, but changes from moment-to-moment and from day-to day. A person's gender expression may be expressed through the choice of clothing, which can be based on a specific event (Killerman, 2013). There is room for flexibility in gender expression and, according to Killerman (2013), a person will likely move around on the gender continuum throughout a day or a week.

Research Question

What impact do the perceptions of gendered practices among teachers and leaders have in relation to school morale?

Research Guiding Questions

1. **What are the general factors that affect teacher morale?** This question will provide a broad overview from participants about factors that they believe affect teacher morale.
2. **What impact do principals have on teacher morale?**

This question will inform the researcher about the extent to which the principal's gender affects morale both directly and indirectly.

3. **What are the gendered traits and practices observed in male leaders?**

The identification of these traits and practices will lead to the determination of how male leaders differ from female leaders.

4. What are the gendered practices observed in female leaders?

The identification of these gendered practices of females will lead to the determination of how female leaders differ from male leaders.

5. What are the gendered leadership traits and practices that positively impact teacher morale?

This question will identify the factors that are associated with positive morale.

6. What are the gendered leadership characteristics and practices that negatively impact teacher morale?

This question will identify the factors that are associated with negative morale.

Purpose of the Research

At the present time, teacher retention is an important issue in the field of education. Teacher morale impacts the teacher's feelings about the work she does in the classroom (Andrews, 1985). Further, positive sentiments on the part of teachers are more apt to produce positive outcomes for the students. The classroom components that foster positive sentiments for teachers and positive outcomes for students need to be identified in order to establish high teacher morale and improve overall school performance.

In current educational settings, there is a grave disparity between the numbers of male educational leaders and female educational leaders despite the overwhelming large numbers of female teachers who predominate the teaching profession. *The Profile of Teachers in the United States* (2011) underscores that the profession is made up of only 16% men and 84% women (Feistritzer, 2011, p.12). This research seeks to determine what impact the gender imbalance has on teacher morale. Additionally, it aims to highlight differences in male and female leadership behaviors that may affect morale. Throughout this research, there will be

more insight into why there currently are considerably more men than women in leadership positions in K-12 schools throughout the United States and what leadership traits possibly promote or perpetuate the imbalance.

This study of teacher morale in relation to the perceptions of gendered practices among teachers and leaders will attempt to identify the leadership traits most conducive to high teacher morale. If there are differences between the gendered practices of school leaders that affect teacher morale for better or worse, leaders could benefit from the knowledge of their positive or negative effects while administrators and school systems benefit from increased teacher retention and reduced teacher burnout. Educational leadership programs could benefit from the results of this study as well by making leadership candidates aware of leadership behaviors, gendered or gender neutral that are associated with high morale. Teacher education programs could become more focused on developing the "whole educator" by making them aware of the impact of gendered practices on teacher morale. This would allow educators to become more confident when accepting leadership roles outside the classroom. Identifying leadership traits that impact teacher morale, discerning if there are differences between how men and women lead, and understanding the positive or negative impacts of those leadership styles could help women and men become better leaders, as well as facilitate greater numbers of female teachers moving into administrative positions in K-12 schools and school districts.

Definition of Terms

Throughout this study, certain terms particular to leadership, gender, and morale have been present in the literature that was reviewed. In an effort to provide clarity and support to the reader, the definitions used for these terms are included in this section. The origin of the

definition in terms of the source or the individual who created the definition is also included. This is necessary because the definitions of terms can vary from one person to another; therefore, the definitions used in this study have been included.

Postructuralist Theory. According to Hesse-Biber (2014), postructuralism represents the belief that gender should be theorized based on ways other than those which represent the thinking of a patriarchal society. Postructuralism does not stand for one reality or one truth but rather a collection of theoretical positions. Postructuralism provides ways of examining male dominant constructions of reality that serve male interests. Postructuralism serves as a model that suggests knowledge is influenced by the social and material world (Hesse-Biber, 2014); therefore, poststructuralism encourages the examination of the power of patriarchy and the influence patriarchy has on social structures.

Morale. According to Rowland (2008), morale is defined as the interaction that takes place between a person's individual needs and the goals of the organization. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary further defines morale as "the level of individual psychological well-being based on such factors as a sense of purpose and confidence in the future ("Morale", Webster, 2015). Willis and Varner (2010) define morale as "a person's mental state that is exhibited by assurance, control, and motivation to perform a task" (p.45).

Personality. Teacher and principal respondents at times make references to personality of the leader as a factor that shapes teacher morale. The definition of personality for this work is borrowed from Webster's Dictionary as well. According to Webster ("Personality", 2016), personality is defined as, "The complex characteristics that distinguishes an individual or a nation or group; *especially*: the totality of an individual's behavioral and emotional characteristics, b: a set of distinctive traits and characteristics."

According to the definition, an individual's personality is made up of those traits and characteristics that make that individual person different from others.

Character. Teacher and principal respondents at times make references to the character of the leader as a factor that shapes teacher morale. Respondents used the terms character and personality synonymously. The definition for character was borrowed from Webster's Dictionary. Webster's Dictionary ("Character", 2016) defines character as, "The way someone thinks, feels, and behaves; someone's personality."

Gender, gender identity, gender expression, and gender roles. Terms related to gender are used throughout this study. Gender is a classification that is made by society based on genetic and biological factors (Wood, 2011). According to Killerman (2013), biological sex is the term used to identify the organs, hormones, and chromosomes a person possesses. The definition used for gender identity is borrowed from Killerman (2013) and is defined gender identity as the way in which individuals view themselves. Gender expression according to Killerman (2013) is the way in which a person demonstrates his/her gender. Wood (2011) defines gender roles as the outward expressions of what is considered to be masculine or feminine by society (Wood, 2011).

Gender binary/gender continuum. This study focuses on the view of gender as a continuum rather than as a binary construct. According to Thurer (2005), the gender binary is defined as two complementary genders that possess appropriate roles and distinctions. The gender binary determines what is healthy, what is good or bad, and what is right or wrong for males and females (Thurer, 2005). Killerman (2013) breaks away from the view of gender as a binary and feels that gender is a continuum. He defines the gender continuum as a person demonstrating characteristics associated with both masculine and feminine ways of

expression. This expression may change from day to day depending on the event, which in turn causes changes in the way in which a person may dress or interact with others indicating that these things are not constant but change often (Killerman, 2013).

Patriarchy. Patriarchy is associated with much of the literature that was researched in relation to the gendered practices of elementary principals and the effects of the practices on teacher morale. When exploring gender as it relates to curriculum, leadership, and women as teachers, references to patriarchy are present. Patriarchy according to John Bradshaw (1992) represents male domination and power.

Correspondence theory. A review of the historical timeline relating to gender and education indicates that during the 1900s, women were left out of the organization of schools. According to Grumet (1988), efforts of correspondence theorists to denounce capitalist ideas in the 1900s, led to the dominance of masculine work and experience. Russell (n.d.) defines correspondence theory as that truth that relates to the way reality is described by our beliefs (Russell, n.d.). A belief is false when it does not accurately depict the state-of-affairs, occurrence of events, or things in general. In order for our beliefs to be true, our beliefs must agree with what is real (Russell, n.d.). The capitalist ideas at this time were centered on men; therefore, women had no opportunities for growth in terms of class.

Hidden curriculum. Gender as it relates to education focuses on the curriculum taught in schools. According to Holland (2011), the curriculum taught in schools is not only about academics but also schools transmit social norms and behaviors (Holland, 2011). The hidden curriculum is defined as training schools provide in the areas of social norms and behaviors (Holland, 2011).

Role congruity theory. An examination of the some of the literature about gender and leadership touched upon the role congruity theory. This theory connects gender roles with the imbalance between men and women in educational leadership; therefore, the theory provides some explanation for the imbalances that have existed in the past and present time. According to Eagly and Karau (2002), role congruity theory is defined as the alignment between a person's actions and behaviors and those gender roles that are socially acceptable.

Transactional/transformational leadership styles. Research about the gendered practices of elementary principals and the effects of those practices on teacher morale encouraged a review of literature about leadership traits and leaderships styles. It was important to explore various leadership traits and leadership styles and the positive and negative effects they had on teacher morale. Transactional and transformational leadership are leadership styles that were present in literature surrounding educational leadership. Transactional leadership is the term used to describe a mutually beneficial exchange that takes place between a leader and a follower (Dahlvig & Longman, 2010). Literature about leadership styles and high teacher morale demonstrated a strong relationship between transformational leadership and high teacher morale. Dahlvig and Longman (2010) define transformation leadership as that leadership style that changes and transforms people. According to Northouse (2007), transformational leadership is "concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals and includes assessing followers' motives, satisfying their needs, and treating them as full human beings" (p. 175).

Appreciative inquiry theory. Appreciative inquiry theory is a change management approach. Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) define appreciative inquiry theory as:

> The cooperative, coevolutionary search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them. It involves systematic discovery of what gives life to an organization or a community when it is most effective and most capable in economic, ecological, and human terms. (p.8)

This theory can be beneficial to education leadership as it establishes opportunities for all members of the organization to come together regardless of position, title or gender and share information, thoughts and ideas about the organization. As a result, everyone is heard and everyone feels recognized and valued (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). This approach could provide additional insight into building relationships by allowing all stakeholders to be heard and to grow as teacher leaders while also sending the message that teachers are valued. All of these benefits would also work together to create high teacher morale.

Qualitatively Oriented Researcher

As a principal, it is important for me to stay abreast of the morale in my school. I believe that teachers perform at a greater level of excellence when they possess positive sentiments about the school and the work they are performing. Feelings teachers have about the school and the activities taking place are influenced by my leadership practices. I feel that my decisions in regards to personal interactions can shape the climate of the school and affect teacher morale.

In researching the topic of teacher morale, I will discuss factors that connect with my leadership practice. This study will provide information that will allow leaders to promote school climates that foster high morale while also strengthening teacher retention. Higher teacher retention rates will also solidify school communities. Acclimating new teachers to schools each year requires extra support from the administrative team and also grade level

colleagues. Professional development for new teachers requires funding as well as additional time. Long range planning and the implementation of long-range goals become difficult when the faculty at a school changes from year to year. Understanding teacher morale will aid in preventing this.

An exploration of teacher morale cannot move forward without an examination of certain characteristics that presently surround school leadership. Exploration into the leadership styles of men and women will explore the differences and similarities between the two. As a result, the study will provide insight into how these differences and similarities affect teacher morale, for better or worse.

My experience with the topic of teacher morale is based upon a previous pilot project about the topic. While involved in the project, I became interested in the influence that the gender of the leader has on teacher morale. Research about male and female leaders suggests there are stereotypes associated with the leadership of males and females. It is my hope to determine whether the leadership practices of men and women and are different or the same, and to examine how those practices affect teacher morale.

Theoretical Perspectives

This is a study that focuses on gender and the gendered practices among teachers and leaders in relation to school morale. This is not a feminist study; however, feminist theories are examined in relation to gender and the effects of gender on leadership as perceived by the respondents in this study. A gender study refers to the social and cultural constructions related to masculinities and femininities (Garrett, 1992). According to Hesse-Biber (2014), "Research is considered "feminist" when it is grounded in the set of theoretical traditions that privilege women's issues, voices, and lived experiences" (p. 3). This study examines both

male and female leaders and those leadership styles that are demonstrated by male and female leaders in relation to school morale. According to Kleinman (2007):

> I've often heard faculty and graduate students say, 'you can't study gender unless you have data on men and women.' If one treats gender as a variable, then that belief makes sense; comparisons are necessary to see if gender has an 'effect'. (p.47)

The effects of the gender of the leader on teacher morale are explained using practices implemented by male and female school leaders. In a study that examined the roles of men and women in a pluralistic society, Coleman (2005) wrote, "Internationally the teaching profession tends to be numerically dominated by women, but in most countries, women do not occupy a commensurate proportion of senior leadership and management roles" (p. 3). England (1992) provides a useful definition of a pluralistic society:

> Members of diverse ethnic, racial, religious and social groups maintain participation in and the development of their traditions and special interests while cooperatively working toward the interdependence needed for the unity of a nation. The focus of most definitions evolves around the elements of interdependence, development and cooperation among diverse peoples of the world. (p. 2)

A pluralistic society that also pervades school leadership is important for several reasons. Differing viewpoints and interests contribute to the betterment of the communities where we live (Coleman, 2005). When examining pluralism and diversity, one of the most important factors to consider is gender (Coleman, 2005). The world is roughly composed of half men and half women; however, in most areas of the world it is apparent that societies are structured in many ways to favor men (Coleman, 2005). Society's views, beliefs, and

preferred ways of organizing collective life are factors that shape the meaning of gender and how gender is expressed (Brunner, 2008). Gender roles are the outward expressions of what is considered to be masculine or feminine by society (Wood, 2011). Gender roles are demonstrated in the way people dress, speak, and interact with others in our culture. Feminine roles all too often remain subordinate to masculine roles and, in many instances; men are given more opportunities to lead than women (Wood, 2011). According to Austin (2009), the culture and traditions surrounding women affect their involvement in educational leadership. In some cultures, women are positioned in roles according to the socio-political ideology of that culture or country. As a result, women are considered to be responsible for maintaining a culture rather than changing it (Austin, 2009). Women cannot seem to escape being assigned traditional familial and supportive roles, which are given little power (Austin, 2009). Women are associated with gender roles that are responsible for being the primary caretaker of children and maintaining homes for their families (Coleman, 2005).

Similarly, the gender roles of men in those societies connect them with their lives in the work environment outside of their homes. In many instances, the roles of men in provide greater status; however, this is often contrasted with the notions of relative inferiority that society has attached to the work done by women (Coleman, 2005). Male-dominant theories work to further distance females from positions in educational leadership. According to Banks (2007), male dominant theories observe the social order of male dominance of organizational behavior to determine female performance in educational leadership. As a result, studies using this theory view females in leadership through a deficit perspective. Power issues arise because females are frequently told that even though they are excellent

educators, coordinators, and principals, they are unsuited for the job of superintendent (Munoz, Pankake, Ramalho, Mills, & Simonsson, 2014).

Over time, more women have become school administrators; however, total equality has not been established as is evident by the disparity in the numbers of male administrators as compared to female administrators. The population of the United States is 310,383,948. There are 157,244,385 females as compared to males, which make up 153,139,563 of the total population in the United States in 2010 (GeoHive Global population Statistics, 2010). Based on these statistics, females outnumber males in the United States; however, the males still lead in the holding superintendents' positions in this country by 75.9 percent (Kowalski, McCord, Petersen, Young, & Ellerson, 2010).

The representation of females serving as superintendents has fluctuated since the late 1800s. In 1910, women filled 8.9 percent of the superintendent positions in this country (Blount, 1998). There were two factors that supported an increase in the number of women serving as superintendents during the first half of the previous century. The first factor was the large number of small, rural school districts. At the time, the large number of school districts required the employment of more superintendents (Blount, 1998). Secondly, women at the time had far more access to public administrative positions because of the Suffrage Movement (Brunner, 1999). However, by 1982 women held only 1.2% of the superintendents' positions, which was reported as being the lowest level of representation in the twentieth century (Glass, 1992).

The decline in the number of female superintendents in the 1950s was connected to factors such as discrimination and stereotyping (Kowalski & Brunner, 2005). Another factor was school consolidation, which was brought about after World War II because of the time

period's emphasis on efficiency and productivity. Once World War II ended, men returned home and to superintendent positions that had been filled by women during the war. Many of the smaller school districts that employed female superintendents were absorbed into larger districts (Kowalski, 2006; 2010). Since 1982, the number of females serving as superintendents has been increasing. In 1992, 6.6 percent of the superintendents were women and in 2000, this number rose to 13.2 percent (Glass, 2000; Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000). However, since males still occupy a majority of the superintendents' positions in this country, researchers continue to examine the gender related issues surrounding this position (Brunner & Grogan, 2007; Grady, Ourada-Sieb, & Wesson, 1994; Grogan, 1996). Research indicates that the superintendency has been and continues to be a position occupied mostly by men (Kowalski et al., 2010). A study conducted in 2010 (Kowalski et al., 2010) shows an increase of 24.1 percent of females serving as school superintendents, which is a considerable increase over the past decade. The larger districts with more students in them typically have male superintendents according to the *American School Superintendent: 2010 Decennial Study* (Kowalski et al., 2010).

Table 1

Gender and District Enrollment

District Enrollment	Male *f*	Male %	Female *f*	Female %	All *f*	All %
Fewer than 300	118	8.8	50	11.7	168	9.5
300 to 2,999	823	61.4%	224	52.6	1047	59.3
3,000 to 24,999	356	26.6	141	33.1	497	28.1
25,000 or more	43	3.2	11	2.6	54	3.1
Total	1340	100.0	426	100.0	1766	100.0

Note. Adapted from *"The American School Superintendent: 2010 Decennial Study,"* by Theodore J. Kowalski, Robert S. McCord, George J. Petersen, I. Phillip Young, and Noelle M. Ellerson, 2011, p. 86. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

The study reflected in Table One conducted research based on the geographic location of the district and the gender of the superintendent. According to the study, larger urban and suburban areas have a majority of male superintendents and small towns and rural areas have more female superintendents (Kowalski et al., 2010).

Table 2

Gender and District Geographic Descriptor

Descriptor	Male *f*	Male %	Female *f*	Female %	All *f*	All %
Urban	73	5.4	28	6.5	101	5.7
Suburban	279	20.6	90	21.0	369	20.7
Small town/city	271	20.1	97	22.6	368	20.7
Rural	711	52.6	209	48.7	920	51.7
Other	17	1.3	5	1.2	22	1.2
Total	1351	100.0	429	100.0	1780	100.0

Note. Adapted from "*The American School Superintendent: 2010 Decennial Study,"* by Theodore J. Kowalski, Robert S. McCord, George J. Petersen, I. Phillip Young, and Noelle M. Ellerson, 2011, p. 87, Copyright 2011 by the American Association of School Administrators.

Recently, the number of female principals has increased nearly to the number of male principals in the United States. The increases over time could be a result of a combination of factors such as the early suffrage movement, the bureaucratization of schools, and the women's movement of the 1970s (Shakeshaft, 1999). Women held 25% of the principalships in the United States in 1987. This number rose to 35% in 1993. Despite this trend of equalization, the current distribution of women across school levels is far from being even (Gupton, 2009). Gupton (2009) indicated presently that secondary and middle schools have the lowest number of female principals, while elementary schools have a generally equal number of male and female principals. High schools still have more male principals than female principals. Unfortunately, there has been little focus on the study of the influence that gendered practices and beliefs have amongst different educational leadership

institutions (Hall, 2008). As a result, females and their experiences are still marginalized. There is irony in the disparity of who is leading schools and who is teaching students because an overwhelming 72% of teachers are women in the United States (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). Teaching is known as a profession populated mostly by women and is regarded as the "women's profession"; however, it continues to be made of male dominated administrations (Gupton, 2009).

In order for our schools to be truly diverse and pluralistic, it is imperative that women and their differing perspectives be part of educational leadership. According to Coleman (2005), practices associated with female leaders are overall positive and are embraced by teachers. Coleman (2005) writes, "If we are to truly live successfully in a diverse and pluralistic society, we will need to take into account all perspectives rather than relying on one that is dominant" (p.18). Blackmore (1996) stresses the need for a reconfiguration of authority that is not based on gender norms and theories suggesting:

> An approach, which views emotion and reason, justice and care, integral to each other, creates possibilities to develop feminist discourses of leadership that interrogate male/female offer substantive ethical positions, but that can also provide an ongoing analysis of their political effects. (p.56)

Diversity and pluralism need to be present in leadership positions. "The incorporation of feminist and other theories, listening to and including the voices of women and minorities will lead to greater social justice in the vital field of education and an enrichment of the practice and theory of educational leadership" (Coleman, 2005, p.18). Grogan (1996) writes about feminist inquiry and how it prompted her to think about how society's established ways of doing and being are constructed and how these ways have gone

unquestioned for far too long at the expense of women, particularly women in the field of educational leadership. The exploration of feminist theories can lead to a view based on personal experiences that describes and explains conditions present in the lives of women (Kolmar & Bartkowski, 2005). Bell Hooks' (1983) introspection brought her to the realization that "I came to theory desperate, wanting to comprehend—to grasp what was happening around and within me" (p. 59).

Feminist theory focuses on the basic issue of the inequality, subordination, and domination of women by men (Kolmar & Bartkowski, 2005). The exploration of feminist theory provides explanations for why concepts connected to women are often considered to be inferior or less valued than those connected with men (Kolmar & Bartkowski, 2005). The feminist prospective recognizes that there are social inequities, which are in part based on discrimination related to differences of gender (Grogan, 1996). To counter that idea of gender discrimination, feminist research is guided by a desire to terminate "social arrangements which lead women to be other than, less than, put down and put upon" states Kenway and Modra (1992, p. 139). Grogan (1996) believes the feminist prospective recognizes that there are social inequities rooted in the unequal treatment of women throughout society. According to feminist researcher Sherryl Kleinman (2007), those conducting feminist research should examine the ways in which they may be participating both in small and large ways to support the reproduction of inequalities with their everyday actions. "Feminist fieldwork analysis, then, requires honesty about our own lives within the patriarchy" (p. 108). Conducting research in connection with a feminist analysis will "include the ways we have found to adapt to, reject, resist or avoid patriarchal patterns" (M. Frye, 1992, p. 67 as quoted by Kleinman, 2007).

Theoretical Framework

Feminist theories provide some of the answers to the questions surrounding the inequality of women as well as the reasons for the imbalance between men and women in leadership positions that exist today. This lack of equitable gender distribution of superintendents in the United States has prompted researchers to explore the educational gender imbalance. Grogan (1996) suggests that women have faced certain deterrents that men have not encountered in their efforts to become prepared for positions in school leadership. There are pressures present in job situations that serve as deterrents to women seeking educational leadership positions (Osumbah, 2011). Existing work structures and organizational routines found in leadership positions tend to be predominantly male-oriented. This orientation hinders the participation of women in these organizations' decision-making opportunities (Eagley, Carli, & Sampson, 2009). Grogan's (1996) belief that women are being viewed through traditional theoretical lenses and, as a result, they are being measured against ideals and principles that historically were at the heart of what best served men. To her, these problems are often seen as being related to women themselves rather than to the content of preparation programs offered for women and the availability of quality internships for women. She questions the quality of internships available to women and shares that women involved in internships for superintendency programs felt they were not provided the same experiences as male internship participants in her research (Grogan, 1996).

Despite these administrative shortcomings for women, those aspiring to pursue a career in educational leadership can definitely benefit from the support of a role model and mentor. According to Eddy and Cox (2008), mentors and role models play a crucial role in the advancement of women into educational leadership positions. "When women work in

isolated environments (dominated by men), they need those who look like them to reinforce their feelings of self-worth and excellence" reported Nealy (2009, p. 9, as quoted by Sperandio & Kagonda, 2010). Additionally, Chisholm (2001) writes, "When women are successful, they tend to report strong female network support as well as male support" (p. 387). However, it is difficult for women to secure mentors or role models that can relate to them and provide support because there are so few women in the positions of educational leadership (Gupton, 2009). The lack of role models coupled with women's access to present day systems of advancement are also considered to be problematic for women's career goals. The "good old boys network" hinders women and their efforts to secure the superintendency. Not only do more men hold these positions, but also these men tend to secure strong and exclusive networking systems by virtue of the high numbers of men in the superintendency (Grogan, 1996).

The discrepancy between the number of males and females holding educational leadership positions may also be a result of the conflicts brought about due to the demands of home and work. Career aspirations of many women interested in educational leadership can be dampened because of conflicts that arise between the demands of career advancement and home life because of the required energy expenditure for both. The dual responsibilities of employment and family deter some women from pursuing leadership positions (Osumbah, 2011).

Grogan's (1996) initial research efforts surrounding the study of women and school leadership positions support a feminist post-structuralist theory. This theory focuses on social change, which is important to feminist critical theory, and the idea that the educational discourse has been guided in large part by the male majority. Deconstruction was later

combined with feminine poststructuralism in an effort to analyze texts for meaning. Deconstruction questions certainty and opens up different possibilities for the explanation of data (Grogan, 1996). Grogan relies on poststructuralism because it allows the researcher to examine how "language constructs that which is being investigated" (Lather, 1992, p. 94). Grogan later (1996) explains that, for her work to be beneficial to educational leadership, it was imperative for the research she conducted to provide an interpretation of the context of women aspiring to the superintendency, which transcends objective restrictions or hindrances.

Grogan's (1996) analysis through the theoretical framework of feminist poststructuralism indicates that current approaches to the superintendency are still largely linked to stereotypical male styles of leadership. Training programs for the superintendency have traditionally relied heavily upon a male dominated discourse because males have historically held these positions and; therefore, have developed the administrative programs. Litmanovitz (2012) interviewed several female leaders in education in order to further investigate the low numbers of women in school superintendency. Her interview with June Atkinson, North Carolina State Superintendent of Education, reveals that, because of the historical roles that men and women have played, there are few females in school administration positions. Therefore, women interested in school administration have few female role models to look up to (Litmanovitz, 2012). The male-dominated discourse is responsible for what is considered to be the norm and why it is the norm and also explains what makes it such. The male dominated discourse is the system of words, actions, rules, beliefs, and institutions that create the norms for how things should be in the world (Foucault, n.d.). The male-dominated discourse has perpetuated a disparity in the number of

male and female educational leaders. Professors of educational leadership are also males who have had the "on the job" training as superintendents and have created the course work as a result of the male-dominated professoriate of school leadership (Grogan, 1996). From a post-structural perspective, preparation courses provided by universities have been largely based on the foundations of men's lived experiences as superintendents and their male predicated "on the job training." Therefore, their preparation courses are informed by male androcentric theory (Grogan, 1996). Feminist leadership theories and feminist socialization theories must be part of the scholastic preparation of all candidates for positions in educational leadership. This is imperative to ensure that partial and distorted accounts are no longer the norm that tends to favor men as leaders. According to Grogan and Shakeshaft (2011), research on educational administration or leadership indicates that women are underrepresented, making it difficult for the topic of women in leadership to emerge. Leadership theories that are part of scholastic preparation for students in administrative programs are based primarily on studies about men in administrative roles. This results in findings that are not useful for women or men who are trying to develop an understanding of women in leadership roles. This also applies to men who do not fit into traditional patterns (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011).

Women should be provided high quality internship opportunities such as those offered to their male colleagues. A study conducted by Grogan (1996) indicated that female participants felt that their internship opportunities paled in comparison to male candidates; therefore, not fully preparing them by failing to expose female interns to substantial "on the job" training opportunities such as those provided to their male colleagues. Emphasis must also be placed on providing female leadership candidates with mentors and support systems.

Support from networks, sponsors, and mentors are more likely to be provided to males and not females (Shakeshaft, 2006). The lack of support available for females in the form of mentors is also a factor contributing to the low number of females aspiring to and remaining as superintendents (Brunner & Grogan, 2007). Blackmore (1996) reports that women managers appear to be outsiders working within institutions without any involvement in the male networking system that exists in most institutions. It is not a lack of aspiration or confidence but lack of access to the networking system that explains the small representation of women at the leadership level (Cubillo, 1999).

Across cultures, women are viewed as less than men based of perceived differences (Shakeshaft, 2006). These perceived differences suggest that women are more emotional, weaker, and are more suited for nurturing roles and are better suited in a follower role than a leader role. Research conducted to examine the low numbers of women in educational leadership positions strongly suggests that sex stereotypes and sexual discrimination are contributing factors to the low numbers of women in educational leadership (Young, 2005). Integration of feminist leadership theories and feminist socialization theories can identify power relations in educational institutions that are hierarchical and paternalistic (Blackmore, 1999). This identification can lead to actions that can be decreased and eventually lead to eradication of sexual discrimination in educational leadership.

The accomplishments, perspectives, and experiences of women must be included in school leadership programs in an effort to break away from programs designed in accordance with the perspectives and life experiences of male students only. Women's accomplishments and experiences can no longer be ignored in educational leadership. A focus on feminist theories, on leadership theories, and feminist socialization theories will also help to diminish

sexual discrimination (Shakeshaft, 2006). Sexual discrimination in our world is based on the devaluing of women in our society. The devaluing of women comes from the socialization that takes place in our society that hinges on believing in values and principles that support unequal rewards and expectations for men and women in our society (Shakeshaft, 2006).

The incorporation of the perspectives, experiences, and voices of women in educational leadership roles has helped enhance research about women in educational leadership roles. Research on this topic promises to provide insight into the reasons for the low numbers of women in educational leadership positions. However, this research will delve into the life experiences of women inside and outside of the school walls. This research is not considered effective or influential solely because the sample is made up of women. Instead, effective research must draw upon the professional and personal experiences of the women interviewed (Hoff & Mitchell, 2011). Research about women in educational leadership requires the researcher to relate to the participants on an intimate level because the focus on both the professional and private lives of women participating in research provides insight into the differing perspectives. The way women choose to manage their lives, juggle work requirements, and integrate the demands of caring for their homes and families adds richness to their perspectives. The world of leadership could greatly benefit from these differing perspectives (Hoff & Mitchell, 2011).

Through an exploration of myth and literature, Carolyn Heilbrun (1973) analyzes the manifestations of androgyny and the implications of androgyny on the world today. Her exploration of the subject takes place through the examination of literature composed over the course of many years. Conventional ideas about the concept of being "masculine" translate into "equal forceful, competent, competitive, controlling, vigorous, unsentimental,

and occasionally violent." In contrast, "feminine" equals tender, genteel, intuitive, rather than rational, passive, unaggressive, readily given to submission. The "masculine" individual is popularly seen as a maker, the "feminine" individual as a nourisher" (p. 14). Heilbrun (1973) goes on to say:

> The confident assurance that directing traffic or driving trucks somehow disqualifies women for their "feminine" roles, that the care of young children or the working of crewels disqualifies men from their masculine roles, is indicative of the rigidity with which human beings have been divided, not by talent, inclination, or attribute, but by gender. (p. 15)

Heilbrun (1973) also feels that if an argument about androgyny sounds like a feminist argument, she believes this is because of the power men hold in the twenty first century and also because women have little political strength. She also argues that if the use of "feminine" in her writing echoes lost virtue and "masculine" is connected to an accusation of misused power, it is an indication of our present day values and not in the intrinsic virtues of either "masculine" or "feminine" impulses.

Heilbrun (1973) asserts that people are accustomed to the thought that history presents us with a continuous record of masculine social dominance. However, a journey through ancient history indicates a time when the feminine principle prevailed. The earliest gods were women and the earliest societies were matriarchal. However, research by scholars indicated that Greek religion was instrumental in bringing about the transformation from female to male domination in society and brought about the overthrow of matriarchy (Heilbrun,1973). During the 1700s, women were also defined in relation to men. In the case of unmarried women known as "spinsters," these women had no societal "existence"

(Heilbrun, 1973). Heilbrun indicated they had no life without a husband and that suggests that by the time of the Second World War, women had become more or less events in the lives of men.

In *Pedagogy: The Question of Impersonation,* Grumet's (1995) paper titled *Scholae Personae* is included. Grumet writes about her efforts to build discursive bridges between home where we were children, home where we raise our children, and school where we work with other people's children. Grumet feels that throughout the years of her involvement with these activities, the "personal" has been avoided. In this article, Grumet writes, "There was no acknowledgement of the possibility that our original experiences of reproduction, of being children, of having children, might influence our relations to other people's children" (p. 40). She feels that in *Bitter Milk,* she portrays a dialectical relation between reproduction-as we experience it as parents and children-and education (Gallop, 1995). She went on to say that contradictions between the projects of reproduction and the patterns of gender identity provide a space that invites our exploration and transformation. Grumet writes:

> For if the father's project is to claim connection against an epistemological presupposition that assumes separation, and if the mother's project is to foster separation against an epistemological presupposition of attachment, then we require a system of schooling where the fleeing mothers and the finding fathers can meet to make the switch. (p.40)

If inclusion of the adjective "personal" is viewed as a major focus for pedagogical theory, it is because of the thinking and working of "feminist teaching" (Gallop, 1995). Feminism in teaching has and challenged the pre-existing norm to exclude the personal aspects of teachers' lives in the academic setting. Feminist teaching insists the proper

measure of learning is personal and is viewed as a method of pedagogy. According to Gallop (1995), feminist consideration of the "personal" many times refers to the inclusion of personal experiences in discussions that take place in the classroom and academic work.

Psychological Theory

According to Gilligan (1993), psychological theorists have adopted the male life as the norm and theorists have tried to make women out of the fabric representative of men. Gilligan (1993) writes,

> It all goes back, of course, to Adam and Eve—a story, which shows, among other things, that if you make a woman out of man, you are bound to get into trouble.
>
> In this life cycle, as in the Garden of Eden, the woman has been the deviant. (p. 6)

Such thinking was perpetuated well into the twentieth century in the work of Sigmund Freud (1956) when he created the theory of psychosexual development based on the experiences of the male child. This idea became known as the Oedipus complex (Freud, 1956). Freud struggled to work out conflicts relating to his theory due to differences in female anatomy and family relationships of young girls. He artificially tried to fit them into his masculine conceptions by describing women as envying what they missed. Freud came to recognize, in the strength and persistence of women's pre-oedipal attachments to their mothers, a developmental difference. Freud connected the super ego or conscience to castration anxiety. Gilligan (1993) underscores:

> Freud considered women to be deprived by nature of the impetus for a clear-cut Oedipal resolution. Consequently, women's superego-the heir to the Oedipus Complex-was compromised: it was never so inexorable, so impersonal, so independent of its emotional origins as we require it to be in men. (p.7)

Because of this perceived difference, Freud concluded that what is ethically normal for a woman is different than what is ethically normal for a man. This concept led Freud to conclude that, "Women show less sense of justice than men, that they are less ready to submit to the great exigencies of life, that they are more often influenced in their judgments by feelings of affection or hostility" (1925, pp. 257-258, Freud as quoted be Gilligan, 1993).

According to Gilligan (1993), Freud's theory does not accurately describe women's ability to connect and relate to others. Most females are socialized to value connections with others. Females are socialized to communicate a care and responsiveness to the needs of those around them while creating and preserving relationships (Gilligan & Pollack, 1988). Nancy Chodorow (1974) elaborates on this by suggesting that the differences in the ways men and women connect and from relationships are not the result of differing anatomy, but are due to the fact that women are largely responsible for early childcare. She believed the early social environment of children is experienced differently due to the sex of the child; therefore, Chodorow (1974) felt that sex differences recur in personality development. Chodorow (1974) concluded, "In any given society, feminine personality comes to define itself in relation and connection to other people more than masculine personality does" (pp. 43-44).

Gender identity is known as the unchanging core of personality formation. According to Chodorow (1974), gender identity is irreversibly established for both sexes by the time children are three years old. Typically, the primary care giver up until this time in the life of children is a female. However, the interpersonal dynamics of girls and boys during this period of identity formation are different. For females, identity formation takes place in an ongoing relationship between mother and daughter. Chodorow (1974), writes, "Mothers

tend to experience their daughters as more like, and continuous with, themselves" (p. 7). Girls identify themselves as female and experience themselves as being like their mothers, which fuses together the experience of attachment with the process of identity formation. This is in contrast to the mother-son relationship. Gilligan (1993) writes, "Mothers experience their sons as a male opposite and boys, in defining themselves as masculine, separate their mothers from themselves, thus curtailing their primary love and sense of empathic tie" (p. 8). As a result of this, males experience "a more emphatic individuation and more defensive forming of ego boundaries" (Chodorow, 1974, pp. 150,166-167).

Relationships and issues surrounding dependency are other areas in which males and females are considered by some researchers as having different experiences. For men, the process of separation and individualization are closely connected to their gender identity. This is believed to be largely due to the separation from the mother that takes place for males, which is essential to masculinity development. However, there is a stark contrast for females because issues of femininity do not depend on the separation from the mother or the progress of individualization (Gilligan, 1993). "Since masculinity is defined through separation while femininity is defined through attachment, male gender identity is threatened by intimacy while female gender identity is threatened by separation" (p. 8), states Gilligan (1993).

Psychological structures in the mother-child relationships are also thought by some to influence the capacity for caring in women. Based on previously shared information about psychological theory, girls may identify with the person caring for them while establishing identity. For girls, there is no process of separation because they identify with their mother. However, boys separate from their mothers in order to find their identity with the father, who

is considered absent. According to Noddings (2003) research, as a result, boys disengage themselves from the intimate relation of caring (Noddings, 2003).

Summary

The information included in this chapter provides background information regarding the influence of gender, both in educational leadership as well as in the world as a whole. Current research demonstrates the factors that have contributed and continue to contribute to this society that is considered patriarchal in nature. Current psychological perspectives, as well as social perspectives, describe the influence that societal norms have on the views of men and women in any given society and especially how these roles affect gender and educational leadership.

Chapter Two-Literature Review

This project stems from my interest in teacher morale and the factors that create both positive and negative teacher morale. During my eight years as a classroom teacher, I watched morale wax and wane. Sometimes the factors that had a negative effect on teacher morale were obvious. There were other times when morale was taking a downward spiral and the reasons were not easily detected. However, I, along with my colleagues, was totally aware of the low morale. There was also an awareness of the detrimental effects that the low morale had on the school community and, in turn, on student achievement.

As the current principal of a Title 1 school, I am continuously examining programs, initiatives, schedules, and resources to determine what needs to be done in order to maximize learning for all students. My biggest concern focuses on my ability as a leader to determine the best practices to implement that motivate others to follow me. Through the review of current literature that examines morale and the influences that gendered leadership practices have on morale, I hope to develop an understanding of the actions and practices that create the positive climates that motivate teachers to do their very best. As a leader, I feel it is important to research the topics of leaders' practices and teacher morale in order to be more proactive in my efforts to create a school community where the conditions for student learning are optimal.

Gender in Education

The study of gender in text, curriculum, hidden curriculum and all areas of education show that the imbalance in the number of female teachers versus females in educational leadership roles is brought about by the existence of gender roles. Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery and Taubman (1995) state:

> Concerns with gender have taken many forms in education, from questions regarding the value of coeducation to debates regarding the differences and similarities between female and males; from criticism of institutional sexism and heterosexism to analyses of the way gender permeates our concepts of knowledge and our ways of knowing. (p. 359)

Historical Background

An exploration of gender in education would not be complete without attention to the historical background of gender in education. In New England, during the seventeenth century, there were summer schools where women taught classes composed of male and female students; however, only male students attended school in the winter as well. During the winter months, these schools offered classes taught by men. By the early nineteenth century, more and more academies for female students appeared due to the push by education advocates to provide intensive, serious academic training for females as well as males (Pinar et al., 1995). According to Tyack and Hansot, (1990, p.40), early advocates also insisted that the aim of additional schooling was to produce 'sober and rational wives and mothers.' There was still the sentiment among many that coeducation was good for both males and females, but with the biases that girls were not capable of handling the demands of advanced schooling and women were not capable of teaching classes composed of male students (Pinar et al., 1995).

During the second half of the nineteenth century, public schools were largely coeducational. Graded private schools in the north and south were in contrast single sex schools designed for male students. These classrooms were predominately those of female teachers because women worked for lower wages than male teachers. Despite this, school

administrators were mostly men. Since males were the in administrative positions and created the curriculum, schooling was male focused. Such thinking represented the values, thoughts, and beliefs of white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant males who ran schools and considered themselves representative of the middle class as a whole (Pinar et al., 1995).

During the nineteenth century, there were two opposing viewpoints regarding gender in education. William T. Harris felt that coeducation was beneficial for both male and female students because it allowed for men and women to create a balance using their strengths and weaknesses. Coeducation provided the opportunity for the temperaments of males and females to be balanced out (Pinar et al., 1995). Harris stated:

> Where the sexes are separate, methods of instruction …gravitate continually towards extremes that may be called masculine and feminine. The masculine extreme is mechanical formalizing in its lowest shape, and merely intellectual training on its highest side. The feminine extreme is the learning-by-rote system on the lower side and the superfluidity of sentiment in the higher activities. (William T. Harris, quoted in Tyack & Hansot, 1990, p. 103)

Harris was joined by a host of women like Louisa May Alcott, Catherine Dall, Susan B. Anthony, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton who felt strongly about the need for equality of schooling. They believed that single sex schools represented separate, yet unequal education for females. These women advocated equality of education for males and females to promote their ideas of equal opportunity that they believed should exist for men and women (Pinar et al., 1995).

By the twentieth century, coeducation was the norm in public education in the United States. However, differentiation based on gender continued to exist in public schools. "The

emergence of organized sports, home economics, shop or industrial arts, tracking, and sex education or health classes supported the differentiation" (Pinar et al., 1995). Pinar et al., (1995) wrote:

> Organized sports arose in schools in the early twentieth century as a response to three rather different problems: first, to the male countercultures which consisted of male gangs, truants and dropouts; second, the unruliness of adolescent boys generally; and third, the fear that boys were becoming feminized due to the absence of male role models at home and at school. (p.363)

According to Pronger (1990), the inclusion or the addition of sports into the schools was "masculine" in nature because of the competitive and violent behaviors disproportionately demonstrated by males. Pronger felt that sports in public schools produced a certain type of maleness and femaleness. These programs benefitted males at the expense of female students (Pinar et al., 1995). Programs such as sport teams took away from the opportunities for women by ultimately excluding them from reaping the benefits of funding and other resources. At this time, there were growing concerns about the effects that female teachers and students had on male students. Because of this concern, male administrators supported male football teams in an effort to minimize the feminine influence on male students. Sports grew in public schools; however, girls' sports did not receive the same support that male sports received. Most female students resorted to sitting on the sidelines as spectators or being cheerleaders (Pinar et al., 1995). Title IX brought about mandates that helped to bring some measures of equality in regard to athletic programs for female students by way of monetary support. Funding for female athletic programs and female coaches became part of school communities. However, male athletic programs continued to have more financial

support and continued to appear as the greater priority in high school athletic programs (Wood, 2011).

The delineation of activities for males and females did not apply only to sports but to other areas of the school curriculum as well. Boys were enrolled in industrial arts classes while girls were expected to take home economics courses. Male students were encouraged to attend a four-year college; however, it was more prevalent for female students to attend commercial programs after high school. Little change occurred in the public school arena until the latter part of the twentieth century when the women's liberation movement brought about change for female students and female teachers at this time in history (Pinar et al., 1995).

In the 1970s, the women's liberation movement brought about deeper and more sincere analyses of gender in education. The liberation movement focused on sexism and gender stereotyping that had been engrained in textbooks used in schools, physical properties of schools, the norms of schools, and the interaction in the classroom between students and teachers. School policies were also examined in terms of the gender stereotyping (Pinar et al., 1995).

In the 1960s and the 1970s, researchers began to examine the delegation of authority within our schools in terms of gender. Analyses of education by liberalists and reformists led the movement to explore the stratification of authority according to gender. Research indicates an imbalance between the numbers of female teachers in classrooms compared to the number of females serving in administrative positions (Grogan, 1996). This was especially true in the case of administrative positions in the middle school and high school levels. According to Pinar et al., (1995), female teachers taught 66% of the elementary and

middle school classes; however, only 19% of the elementary schools had female administrators. Furthermore, five% of middle schools had female administrators and female administrators led one percent of the high schools.

Influence of Gender

The involvement of women in classrooms throughout the country in the early 1900s was in direct relation to the Industrial Revolution and its pull on men to leave rural areas and become involved in factory positions in urban settings. In reality, women continued to be oppressed in this and other professions. Women, through their work as students, as mothers and as teachers, were parts of organizations and institutions that perpetuated their subordination and marginalized their ability and desire to nurture students (Grumet, 1988). Schools slowly began to admit girls and to hire more female teachers largely due to economic reasons. Boys and girls could be centralized in one building and female teachers were hired for much less salary than male teachers (Pinar et al., 1995). When World War II ended, the teaching positions and administrative positions held by women were once again reverted back to the men returning from war (Pinar et al., 1995).

For many years, it has been the belief that schools have reinforced a patriarchal or male dominated society. This is evident by the vast efforts that schools have made to exaggerate the characteristics that distinguish males from females. This is especially true of the middle class men of the 1800s and 1900s who controlled public education and left no opportunities for working class men and middle class women to have a voice in the shaping of public education. Once this kind of distinction was made, schools regularly created norms that favored males. The achievements and ideological views of the males continue today to predominate the economy and state sectors (Grumet, 1988).

Although women were allowed into the classrooms during the 1800s and early 1900s, they were expected to teach and lead based on the principles accepted by a patriarchal society. Women were expected to convey to students the rules, laws, and language that had been created by the father, the male principal or the male employer (Grumet, 1988). The ideology of mothers as carriers of republican virtues also supported female teachers even though most of the women were unmarried (Pinar et al., 1995). Patriarchy, according to John Bradshaw (1992) represents male domination and power. Rules of patriarchy governed then and now family systems, religious systems and schools (Bradshaw, 1992). Hooks (2004) shares a similar opinion and believes that patriarchal thinking continues to shape the values of today's culture. Men and women are socialized by their parents, specifically, their mothers, just as their children will be socialized by them. These attitudes of socialization and social norms are reaffirmed outside the home by schools and religious institutions (Hooks, 2004).

During the 1800s and early 1900s, teachers were expected to convey a model of obedience. Their own creativity, decorum, and beauty were often stifled. They were unable to develop a style of practice that they could identify with and take ownership (Grumet, 1988). The patriarchal message to young female teachers from the male principals or headmasters was that of keeping control in the classroom. The belief was that female teachers would civilize the classroom while also adding a maternal and moral touch to the classroom (Pinar et al., 1995). There were others who held a contrasting view and were concerned that mixed schools would diminish the separate spheres of men and women. Some also believed that girls were not equipped for the challenges of advanced schooling and that women were not equipped to teach boys (Pinar et al., 1995).

Women teachers were expected to suspend nurturance and gain control. Female teachers experienced the loss of motherhood through sentimentalism during this time. Many men were away working in jobs in urban areas and women were left without the opportunity to have their own children because there were so few men. At the same time, female teachers were called upon to provide maternal nurturing to the children in their classrooms. This task proved difficult when combined with the demand for teachers to keep control over classrooms (Grumet, 1988). Teachers became burdened by passivity and self-denial that was forced upon them by their male supervisors. Grumet (1988) states,

> The feminization of teaching became a form of denial as the female teachers in the common schools demanded order in the name of sweetness, compelled moral rectitude in the name of recitation, citizenship in the name of silence, and asexuality in the name of manners. (p. 44)

It was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that concerns about schooling and gender became explicit (Pinar et al., 1995). However, because male administrators were still designing curriculum, they often created male-centered curriculum (Pinar et al., 1995).

Grumet indicates that the practices of people as far back as the mid-1800s still impact the feminization of teaching at the present time. Contradictions and betrayals have placed undue stress on the teaching profession. As an end result, female teachers are alienated from their own experiences, their bodies, their memories, their dreams, and from each other. This alienation is a result of schools created in accordance with the rules and expectations established by male administrators. Female teachers are further alienated from their children and from the sisters who are mothers of their children. Grumet (1988) feels the time has

come for female educators to question their participation and practices in public schools. Grumet (1988) writes,

> When we attempt to rectify our humiliating situation by emulating the protectionism and elitism of the other 'professions,' we subscribe to patriarchy's contempt for the familiar, for the personal …for us.
>
> But if we seem immersed in this civilization, we must remember too that we are the mistresses of its ceremonies. Stigmatized as 'women's work,' teaching rests waiting for us to reclaim it and transform it into the work of women. (p. 58).

Sex Roles and Stereotypes

David McClelland (1975) writes, "Sex roles turn out to be one of the most important determinants of human behavior: psychologists have found sex differences in their studies from the moment they started doing empirical research." McClelland goes on to say,

> But since it is difficult to say 'different" without saying 'better' or 'worse' since there is a tendency to construct a single scale of measurement, and since that scale has generally been derived from and standardized on the basis of men's interpretations of research data drawn predominately or exclusively from studies of males, psychologists 'have tended to regard male behavior as the 'norm' and female behavior as some kind of deviation from that norm. (p.81)

Gilligan (1993) responds to these remarks by saying, "When women do not conform to the standards of psychological expectation, the conclusion has generally been that something is wrong with the women" (p. 14).

Piaget's work demonstrates that boys are more concerned with the rules of a game while girls are more concerned with relationships of the players, sometimes at the expense of the game. According to Chodorow (1974), men's social orientation is positional and women's social orientation is personal. The concept of the "personal" versus "positional" echoes ideas of social subordination and moral concern. Women are more apt to include the views and thoughts of others in their thinking due to their sensitivity to others and the responsibility they take for caring for and about others (Gilligan, 1993). Women judge themselves based on the relationships they have with others and how well they handle the responsibilities of caring for others. According to Gilligan (2011):

> In the gendered universe of patriarchy, care is a feminine ethic, not a universal one. Caring is what good women do, and the people who care are doing women's work. They are devoted to others, responsive to their needs, attentive to their voices. They are *selfless*. (p. 3)

According to Gilligan (1993), the roles played by women in man's life cycle have been that of the nurturer, the caretaker, the helpmate, and the weaver of social relationships. Men, on the other hand, have failed to value the idea of care as is obvious by various psychological theories and economic arrangements. Gilligan (1993) writes, "When individuation and individual achievement extends into adulthood and maturity is equated with personal autonomy, concern with relationships is viewed as a weakness of women rather than as a human strength" (p. 17). The capacities of women to care for others and their sensitivity to the needs of others have been traits that defined the "goodness" of women. However, these are the same traits that label them as deficient in moral development (Gilligan, 1993). Gilligan (2011) believes that patriarchy has resulted in creating human

qualities that are either masculine or feminine. "The gender binary and hierarchy are the DNA of patriarchy-the building blocks of the patriarchal order" (p.3). The patriarchal family, power and authority belong to the father and to the human qualities designated as masculine which are considered to be privilege over those human qualities designated as feminine (Gilligan, 2011). Such thinking results in male dominance over females and over time fosters an established patriarchal order. Gilligan writes:

> But in separating fathers from mothers and daughters and sons, bifurcating human qualities into masculine and feminize, patriarchy also creates rifts in the psyche, dividing everyone from parts of themselves. In the gendered universe of patriarchy, care is a *feminine ethic, not a universal one*. (p.3)

Sociological models for family and work that were in existence prior to the 1970s substantiated the thoughts and ideas of Gilligan in relation to the sex roles of men and women. These models argued that girls were brought up to care about and accommodate the needs of others while also accommodating the needs of others (Martin, 1998). At the time, girls grew up believing that they are to be nice, caring individuals who put the needs of others ahead of their own (Wood, 2011). Alternatively, boys were brought up to be assertive, competitive and aggressive with their own success as their main motivator. Prior to the 1970s, there was a division of labor in the family that required the man to represent his family in the cruel, competitive, unbending world of commerce. The roles of competing and succeeding in work and in public affairs were ultimately roles associated with men. Society also attached prestige to these male roles (Wood, 2011). The role of women required them to remain at home and care for the children in the family, while also taking care of the home and supporting the working husband (Martin, 1998).

According to Gilligan (1993), the discrepancy between womanhood and adulthood is evident in numerous studies on sex role stereotypes. The findings of these studies indicate that the qualities necessary for adulthood are clear decision-making, responsible action, and capacity for autonomous thinking. These are associated with masculinity and are considered to be undesirable traits of the feminine self. According to Gilligan (1993), social stereotypes separate love and work and as a result of this separation, expressive capacities are assigned to women and instrumental abilities are assigned to men. These stereotypes reflect a conception of adulthood that represents a preoccupation with separateness of an individual's self rather than connecting with others. As a result of these stereotypes, individuals lean more toward an autonomous life of work rather than interdependence of love and care (Gilligan, 1993).

The discussion of sex roles and sex stereotypes leads to an examination of the terms *masculine and feminine.* According to de Beauvoir (1980), these terms are used symmetrically only as a matter of form such as the use on legal papers (de Beauvoir, 1980). Simone de Beauvoir in her acclaimed book, *The Second Sex,* uses the analogy of two electrical poles to compare males to females. She indicates that in reality, males represent the positive and negative because the term *man* is used to refer to human beings in general (1980). Women are referred to as the negative. Men do not have to begin a narrative by stating that he was a man; whereas, a woman would feel it necessary to define herself by saying she is a woman (de Beauvoir, 1980). According to de Beauvoir (1980), there is no need for a man to indicate that he is a man because it goes without saying. Humanity is male and man defines woman as relative to him but does not define her in terms of herself (de Beauvoir, 1980).

Sex roles and sex stereotypes are a critical dimension in how men and women are perceived. These sex roles and stereotypes are undoubtedly necessary aspects to consider when examining the differences in men and women in educational leadership roles. An understanding of these differences allows me to critically assess the varying levels of teacher morale.

Women as Teachers

Historical events led to fluctuation in the number of women serving in positions such as teachers and administrators at various times during the past. Major wars and the Industrial Revolution took men away from their homes and communities to fight or to work specific jobs that were the result of these events (Grumet, 1988; Pinar et. al., 1995). However, even with the increased number of women in the classrooms of the past, education continued to be male dominated. In Grumet's book, *Bitter Milk*, she describes a Ndembu ritual where mothers deliver their male sons to their fathers so that the sons can be circumcised. Mothers are banished from the area for several months where the transfer from matriarchy to patriarchy for the male offspring takes place. Grumet (1988) compares this ritual to the placement of our sons in the extended ritual we refer to as schooling. The women in our culture are not banished from the site, but rather are employed as teachers in the schools or as mothers who deliver the children to the patriarchy that Grumet (1988) refers to as school.

The European Enlightenment Period brought about debates concerning women in education (Freedman, 2002). At this point, some believed that education was far more important than it had been in the past and should not be withheld from women. Others felt that education was important and was a prerequisite for citizenship that applied to men but not women (Freedman, 2002). Jean Jacques Rousseau, a philosopher of the 1700s, believed

that formal education was an important component of representative government. His thoughts were that a formal education would create citizens who were reasonable, full of virtue, and independent. According to Rousseau, these qualities would ensure that citizens would not be vulnerable or easily manipulated by others. However, Rousseau felt that women were not citizens and were not capable of being independent. He felt that women relied on their powers of manipulation over men to gain support from men. Freedman (2002) wrote, "For Rousseau, women's place was to oblige us, to do service, to gain our love and esteem, these are the duties of the sex at all times and what they ought to learn from infancy" (p. 48). Rousseau believed that education was an unnecessary luxury for women and that women who were educated, might be taken out of the home; thereby, not fulfilling the role for which they were intended (Freedman, 2002).

The views of Rousseau and others during the Enlightenment Period were followed by some changes regarding women and education. These changes opened up opportunities for women but only in terms of how women's efforts could benefit young boys and support them in their efforts to become strong citizens (Freedman, 2002). In some areas throughout Europe and the United States, women in the 1700s were becoming involved in the teaching of their children (Freedman, 2002). This movement was propelled forward by the belief that if women are going to raise sons, then women must be able to teach them. The male sons of the family had to be prepared to enter a literate world and the women held the responsibility to ensure this (Freedman, 2002).

Grumet (1988) feels it necessary to explore the feminization of teaching, which she considers to be a contradiction. In her mind, the feminization of teaching represented both the promotion of women in education as well as actions and practices that sabotaged women

and their involvement in education (Grumet, 1988). During the 1900s, teaching positions that were once filled by men became employment opportunities for women. Grumet (1988) writes, "The process of this change, its causes, and its consequences provides a knot that ties Marxist and psychoanalytic threads of feminist inquiry together with the histories of our current notions of pedagogy and curriculum" (p. 32).

According to Grumet (1988), efforts of correspondence theorists to denounce capitalist ideas in the 1900s, led to the dominance of masculine work and experience. Correspondence theory indicates that truth relates to the way reality is described by our beliefs (Russell, n.d.). A belief is false when it does not accurately depict the state-of-affairs, occurrence of events, or things in general. In order for our beliefs to be true, our beliefs must agree with what is real (Russell, n.d.). The capitalist ideas at this time were centered on men and the economic class structure to which they belonged whereas women had no economic reality or options for growth in terms of class.

As a result of this dominance, the reproductive experiences of mothers, daughters, and teachers were ignored. Consistently, female experiences were left out of the organizations of schools, life of schools, learning theories, curriculum theories and pedagogies. The silence of women's voices in the 1900s was confusing since women held 63 percent of the teaching jobs. Psychological processes and theories were based mostly on male experiences that were used to represent all of human experience. The theories were not inclusive of women's experiences and resulted in a quieting of the voices of women. Gilligan (1993) writes, "I saw that by maintaining these ways of seeing and speaking about human lives, men were leaving out women, but women were leaving out themselves" (p. 13). Gilligan goes on to stay that in regard to psychological processes, men were separating

themselves whereas women were practicing disassociation which leads to "an inner division or psychic split" (p. 13). In the 1970s, some feminists began reexamining the sociopolitical situation of women. According to Hooks (1989), the stories were retold not as women being victimized, but rather as women being survivors. Hooks, along with other feminists, felt that an important form of "resistance was the construction of self through the creation of a memory of a past that either precedes oppression or is a memory of other existing voices" (p. 88, 1993, Feminist Epistemologies). Hooks (1989) goes on to say,

> Social construction of the self in relation would mean … that we would know the voices that speak in and to us from the past …Yet, it is precisely these voices that are silenced, suppressed, when we are dominated… Domination and colonization attempt to destroy our capacity to know the self, to know who we are. We oppose this violation, the dehumanization, when we seek self-recovery, when we work to unite fragments of being, to recover our history. (p. 88)

The silencing of women's voices both then and now in the education realm causes great concerns. Grumet (1988) stresses the importance of an analysis of how female teachers' femininity and their sense of gender in school and how that plays a part in female teachers' pedagogy and curriculum. If inclusion of the adjective "personal" is viewed as a major focus for pedagogical theory, it is because of the thinking and working of "feminist teaching" (Gallop, 1995). As mentioned in Chapter One, feminist views on teaching have challenged the exclusion of the personal from the academic. Feminist teaching insists that the proper measure of learning is personal and is viewed as a method of pedagogy. According to Gallop (1995), feminist consideration of the "personal" many times refers to

the inclusion of personal experiences in discussions that take place in the classroom and academic work.

The silencing of women's voices is a reoccurring theme in much of the research about women as teachers. According to Miller (1982), many women entered the teaching profession because they believed teaching would not require them to abandon or sacrifice the traditional feminine role. Upon conducting interviews with female teachers, Miller found that female teachers felt that the nurturing aspects of teaching conflicted with the concept of professionalism (Pinar et al., 1995). As female teachers shared conversations and autobiographies with Miller, they were released from "fragmentations they experience as representative of the larger social imbalances of control and power" (Miller, 1986, p.112). According to Pagano (Pinar et al., 1995), the art of teaching and the practice of being taught as a woman require that the participants must labor to determine what women know (1988). "Either women are locked out of scholarly discourse or are plagiarists… as the discourses women teach are not their own", (Jo Anne Pagano, quoted in Pinar et al., 1995, p. 385).

The focus on the gender of teachers is crucial because it is interdependent with an individual's experience and understanding. Gender, in terms of sexual identity as it is experienced, acknowledged and owned by the individual is essential to a person's interaction with the world. Without the acknowledgement of women in the world, females are not fully valued. Gilligan questions the actions of men who speak of themselves, their lives, and human nature, while speaking in ways that show no connection between their lives and women. Women tend to speak of themselves as being selfless with no voice of their own and with no desires (Gilligan, 1993). The disconnection of women and the disassociation of

women serve to maintain and are maintained by patriarchal society. Nancy Hartsock (1990) reports,

> We need to engage in the historical, political, and theoretical process of constituting ourselves as subjects as well as objects of history. We need to recognize that we can be the makers of history as well as the object of those who have made history. (p. 71).

Gender in Curriculum

There are several factors that challenged the discourse in education that are a result of gender and its role in education. According to Mitrano (1981), mainstream methodology and ways knowledge is conceptualized and measured reflected patriarchal attitudes. These attitudes were characterized as being goal directed, aggressive, linear, rational, hierarchal, linear, logical and rational (Collins, 1974). According to Martin (1982), "In recent years, literature has developed the ways intellectual disciplines such as history and psychology, literature and the fine arts, sociology and biology are biased according to sex" (p.133). Bias too often occurs in the absence of women being involved in the academic disciplines. An analysis of textbooks and standards in a study conducted by Engebretson (2014) supports the imbalance of gender. A curriculum guide published in 2010 indicated the major focal points of the curriculum were on political and military history (Engebretson, 2014). As a result of the focus on political and military history, men are held in favor and women are absent from the curriculum (Levstik & Barton, 2011). When females are included, they are presented in terms of how they are viewed by males. Feminine contributions or ways of knowing are then denounced because males force females into molds considered to be characteristic of the patriarchal world of education (Martin, 1982).

An examination of the formal curriculum taught in schools provides insight into the imbalance of the representation of males and females in classrooms at the present time. Social studies textbooks serve as examples of this imbalance. There is little mention of the contributions made to government and history by women and people of color as compared to those contributions made by men (Digiovanni, 2004). Accounts of wars focus on military leaders and battlefields. There is little mention of the contribution of women to the battlefields despite the fact that they were responsible for feeding the families and ultimately keeping the families together while the men were away at war. Women were also responsible for manufacturing the supplies needed by the military during a time of war. Similarly, other major societal events such as the Civil Rights Movement, highlight the actions and involvement of male leaders. In terms of the Civil Rights Movement, women's contributions to the movement's progress receive little notice (Wood, 2011). When women are highlighted in the formal school curriculum, the examples typically fall into two categories. The first category is that of women who fit the traditional female stereotypes and the second contains women who are highlighted in history because they distinguish themselves in terms that relate to men or masculine contexts (Wood, 2011). Digiovanni goes on to say, "Women are conspicuously absent from the formal curriculum, leading girls to believe that women do not 'do' history, science, or math. Women are not the important authors, movers, or shakers; their tasks and accomplishments are relegated to the sidelines" (p. 12).

According to Wood (2011), historical epochs are taught in regards to how they affected the men at the time and neglect to mention the impact on the women and minorities. An example is the way in which textbooks portray the Renaissance as a time of rebirth and

progress in human life because it expanded men's options. There is no mention of the impact of the Renaissance and how it reduced the status and opportunities of women (Wood, 2011). The Industrial Revolution is presented in classrooms as that time when mechanization of production systems enabled mass production and created factories, which were the primary workplace for men. There is no focus in the textbooks about how the lives of women changed within their work and their relationships with their husbands as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution (Wood, 2011).

Curriculum scholar Janet Miller pushed for changes to be made to curriculum based on the dominant patriarchal modes present in curriculum fields at that time (Pinar et al., 1995). Miller felt that it was important for curriculum to integrate intellect and emotion. Miller (1992) felt that equity was not enough. She believed that the ways in which educational institutions distorted and denied women's educational experiences needed to be identified. Miller's stance indicates that she believed feminist theory required changes to be made to educational institutions, of academic disciplines, and their representative curricula in an effort to prevent the unconscious internalization by women of patriarchal assumptions about themselves as women and teachers (Pinar et al., 1995).

The absence of females in the formal school curriculum cannot be discussed without considering what has become known as the hidden curriculum into consideration. According to Martin (2002), the hidden curriculum refers to information that is transmitted or not transmitted by the rules and expectations present in schools. The social structures of schools and also the sanctioned activities that take place in the instructional day convey subtle messages to students. Textbooks and audio-visual tools, tracking systems, and also the way the curriculum is prioritized are also components of the hidden curriculum according to

Martin (2002). In order to determine the hidden curriculum, Martin (2002) indicates that one must examine the formal curriculum and decide what students are learning based on what is not being taught in schools. Schmidt (2012) describes the hidden curriculum as the "unintended lessons" in structures and social values that are shared in schools. The hidden curriculum serves as a teacher to young people who are eager to seek out clues about whom they are and the identities available to them. In all societies, gender is a fundamental identity young people form and schools are essential to this identity process. Although gender is rarely a component of the formal curriculum, gender organizes social activities and social dynamics in our schools. The hidden curriculum, with its messages about gender, is instrumental in forming the young women and men that students will become in the future (Schmidt, 2012).

Schools serve as one of the primary means of socialization for the young people in America. While most academic instruction takes place in schools, the influence of schools does not end with academics. Schools provide training for students in the areas of social norms and behaviors (Holland, 2011). Holland (2011) writes, "Giroux calls this clandestine enculturation the "hidden curriculum" of American schools. Giroux (1988) believes that, "Schools are conservative forces which, for the most part, socialize students to conform to the status quo" (p. 34). According to Holland (2011), there is a hierarchical power dynamic that exists between teachers and the students in their classrooms. Because of this dynamic, students are placed on a power continuum with their peers within the classroom. Variables such as race, gender, and socio-economic status shape this continuum of power. Holland (2011) believes that student socialization and gender roles are key influences in the shaping of the power continuum for students. Holland (2011) also states, "Schools are the

conservative force through which traditional gender roles are reproduced" (p. 3). This is the position that is taken when contemporary policies of accountability become solely focused on high stakes testing. According to Cochran-Smith (2004), the following assumption is created: "Teaching is a technical activity, knowledge is static, good practice is universal, being prepared to teach is knowing subject matter, and pupil learning is equal to higher scores on high-stakes test" (p. 161). According to Rodgers (2013), education is then viewed as an important tool needed to grow a strong economy as well as creating productive workers who can compete successfully in a global economy.

In contrast, teaching for social justices stresses totally different values. In regard to social justice, the purpose of education is to prepare all people for meaningful work while being able to participate equally in a democratic society (Rodgers, 2013). Teaching becomes regarded as an intellectual activity in which the learner constructs knowledge and practice is contextual. Student learning is focused on academics as well as developing critical habits of the mind while preparing for community and civic engagement (Cochran-Smith, 2004).

Policies and practices found are considered to be transmitters of the hidden curriculum related to gender. According to Lee and Gropper (1974), research relating to gender and the hidden curriculum suggests that the hidden curriculum prevalent in schools reflects gender stereotypes and sustains gender inequities by providing less encouragement and attention to female students. Holland writes, "Martino and Kehler (2007) criticize government policies that confirm gender stereotypes and look to endorse boy-friendly approaches, rather than attempting to change hegemonic gender constructions" (p. 6). According to Shakeshaft (1986), a focus on gender remained neglected by the Department of Education in years past. During the 1980s when schools in the United States were under

scrutiny to determine the "level of excellence" in schools in this country, gender was not considered to be a relevant category to be considered in relation to excellence (Shakeshaft, 1986). *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reforms* (National Commission on Educational Excellence, 1983), a pivotal white paper on educational reform, posits that regardless of race, class or economic status, students are entitled to a fair chance of obtaining an education to develop their minds and spirits (Shakeshaft, 1986). "Maybe the writers were influenced by the reality that gender does limit educational and life choices of females and that many people are satisfied with this situation," writes Shakeshaft (1986, p. 500). This research indicates the unwillingness of society to change the educational arena for females.

In order to more fully understand schools and their role in transmitting gender roles, it is necessary to explore the curriculum and the role it plays in establishing and maintaining said gender roles. Initially, the purpose of schooling in the United States was to primarily serve the public purposes of men's lives and the private lives of women (Martin, 1982). Schools should provide an education that serves the public and private lives of all students, instead of a single focus on the public needs of males. Schools were initially established to educate males and support them in their effort to become public people; therefore, the very essence of schooling was created in accordance with a male image (Shakeshaft, 1986). The existing male dominance is further confirmed by the preoccupation of schools with goals to do what is necessary for males to develop and achieve their public purposes.

The preoccupation with male oriented school goals is evident in school structures largely because school structures serve as the methods by which the school goals are transferred within schools. According to Shakeshaft (1986), knowledge within schools is transmitted by approaches that are aligned with male development. The creation of school

structures is done so in such a manner as to mirror male development. According to Shakeshaft (1995), the formal curriculum in our schools, which all students are exposed to is created in the basis of what boys do not already and the knowledge that society feels they must have. Male students are called upon more in class to answer questions. Male students are more apt to be allowed to speak out in class and interrupt, which encourages girls to be patient and wait to be called upon. This behavior also teaches girls not to answer questions. Making girls wait while boys are being allowed to interrupt sends the message that girls are not important (Shakeshaft, 1995). Classroom activities, curricular materials, and teaching strategies typically do not include the experiences or language associated with girls. For girls to succeed as well, classrooms should be organized in a manner to encourage more cooperative learning because girls are more comfortable with settings that encourage cooperation rather than competition. However, girls need to have opportunities to engage in competitive practices as well (Shakeshaft, 1995).

Because of the lack of emphasis placed on the development of girls in coeducation, single sex schools serve as an important option for female students. Research indicates that learning and growth for female students is often much better in single sex schools (Shakeshaft, 1986). A study conducted by Roberta Hall and Bernice Sandler takes a detailed look at the education of females in classrooms. Although the study focuses on women in college, many of the results are applicable to females attending secondary schools. According to Hall and Sandler (1982), female students do not receive the same educational experience as their male peers in the same classrooms. The behaviors, comments, and language used in the classrooms were exclusionary in nature and prevented female students from participating in activities and discussions as frequently and as in depth as their male

peers. The study indicates that male students are called upon more and tend to dominate classroom discussions two and one half to three times more than their female classmates (Hall & Sandler, 1982). According to Sadker, Sadker and Steindam (1989):

> Teachers from grade school to graduate school ask males more questions, give them more precise feedback, criticize them more, and give them more time to respond. Whether the attention is positive, negative, or neutral, the golden rule of the American classroom is that boys get more. (p. 47)

A study conducted by Cherney and Campbell (2011) reveals female students attending single-sex schools have higher self-esteem, are more motivated, and have higher achievement motive than females in a coeducational setting. Shakeshaft (1986) stated, "In single sex schools, girls exhibit higher self-esteem, more involvement with academic life, and increased participation in a range of social and leadership activities" (p. 3).

Since the founding of America and through much of the twentieth century, females in the United States have had fewer educational opportunities than male students. At the present time, much of the historical discrimination against female students has been eliminated and male and female students have equal access to educational opportunities (Wood, 2011). Research indicates a change in the perception among researchers in the past thirty years as it relates to educational opportunities for male and female students. Gender still affects education in the United States but in ways differing from the past. According to Kindlon and Thompson (1999), "The average boy is developmentally disadvantaged in the early school environment" (p. 23). Their belief is that the early school environment found in preschool, kindergarten, and other elementary school classrooms represents a mostly feminine environment because male educator adult males are greatly

outnumbered by females (Wood, 2011). Young boys typically tend to have more physical energy than their female peers who are the same age. Young male students also typically have less impulse control. Because of these factors, making the adjustment to the school settings where students are expected to follow instructions and sit quietly can be difficult for young boys. As a result, classrooms for young students are generally not particularly "boy friendly." This can result in feelings of frustration and fear and, in turn, creates an educational foundation that is weak and does not support success (Tyre, 2008). When male students do become developmentally ready for the structured school setting, they often lag behind their female peers. Male students do not have the same verbal skills as their female peers and also tend to be more challenged when learning to read (Strauss, 2008; Tyre, 2006). These findings could support the tendency for teachers to call upon male students more in an effort to keep them engaged. Because of the male students need more support in developing verbal skills and support with their ability to become strong leaders, classroom teachers may naturally focus more on the needs and development of male students that female students. This leads to the continuation of biases against students based on gender.

Despite the efforts to eliminate biases against female students, not all discrimination has been eliminated. There are particular fields such as math and science where biases against female students are still present. The belief in the past has been that females innately have less ability and aptitude in the areas of math and science than male students. This belief has created a barrier preventing females from participating in science and math education programs and, ultimately, has prevented women from exploring career paths in math and science (Fogg, 2005). Currently, more and more women are taking math and science classes; however, they drop out of the classes over time. This is largely due to encounters with peers

and faculty members who feel that women are less capable than males in the fields of math and science (Lewin, 2008).

Instructional techniques are important components to explore in regard to the male oriented goals and structures of schools. Competition is used often in classroom settings and is also closely connected to male development (Shakeshaft, 1986). According to Digiovanni (2004), teachers respond differently to boys. Because of this difference, girls become more reserved and their eagerness to participate and answer questions diminishes. The result is a nearly invisible group of girls in the classroom (Digiovanni, 1986). Lever's (1998) observations of leisure patterns in boys and girls stress certain ideas about the activities boys and girls play. Her observations are that boys often engage in activities that encourage interpersonal competition. These activities often take place in the context of socially approved competitive situations and are helpful training in the area of leadership (Lever, 1998). Typically, boys' games are competitive and involve rough play. The games have clearly defined goals and are organized in accordance with rules and roles for different players. The clearly defined goals make discussion and conversation unnecessary (Wilson, 2011). This is in contrast to the games played by girls. Lever (1998) indicates that their games provide training that leads to the development of delicate social skills. Young girls spend more time talking. Clearly defined goals are usually not part of their play sessions (Wood, 2011). The play of young girls usually takes place in a setting or context free of rules and structure; therefore, the organization is more cooperative than competitive (Lever, 1998).

During the 1970s, research relating to gender roles examined the messages related to sex roles that were transmitted in children's literature. Gender stereotyping was obvious in

the depictions found in children's literature. Boys were portrayed as being strong, independent, brave, and imaginative leaders (Lever, 1998). Children's literature depicted girls as being sweet followers who appeared to be dependent, pretty and shy (Lever, 1998). Lever's research also indicates there is a similar depiction in children's literature of adult sex roles.

Gender in Leadership

The imbalance between males and females in leadership positions in current schools transcends the classroom and continues to be perpetuated in educational leadership. According to Brunner (2008), "To be sure, men *and* women, of color or not- in other words, all of us continue to reify the constructions of norms that support and enable exclusionary practices, in particular as they relate to the superintendency" (p. 662). The support of exclusionary practices is usually maintained through what is said and written about those who hold superintendent positions (Brunner, 2008). Discourse is important because as Cherryholmes (1988) reports, "Professions are constituted by what is said and done in their name" (p. 1). What is said and done are based on shared beliefs and values (Cherryholmes, 1988). The dominant discourse largely supports men and limits the success of women who aspire to become superintendents (Brunner, 2008). Characteristics attributed to females aspiring to become superintendents often fall outside the norms and notions that society has deemed appropriate for the superintendency (Brunner, 2008).

Even with the changes that have occurred throughout the years, personal attributes and experiential background assigned to the superintendency have remained the same for the last half of the 20th century (Black & English, 1996). The attributes and background experiences of white males are those most often deemed important for the superintendency

(Tallerico, 2000). Shakeshaft (1989) writes, "Women are overrepresented in teaching and underrepresented in administration" (p. 100). This is not due to a lack of women and members of minority groups pursuing administrative positions (Grogan, 1999).

Table 3

The Composition of the Public School Principalship in Terms of Gender, Race, and Ethnicity between 1987–88 and 1999–2000

	1987–88	1993–94	1999–2000
Female	24.6	34.5	43.6
Male	75.4	65.5	56.4
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.1	0.8	0.8
Asian or Pacific Islander	0.6	10.2	11.3
White	89.5	88.0	87.1
Hispanic	3.3	4.1	5.1
Non-Hispanic	96.7	95.9	94.9

Note. Adapted *from Gender, Race, and Ethnic Diversity Among Principals* in J.Shen and Associates, *School Principals*, 2003. p. 21, New York: Peter Lang.

Table 4

Percentage of Public School Principals Who Were Female in 1987–88 and 1999–2000: A Comparison Between the Elementary and Secondary Levels

	1987–88	1999–2000
Elementary	30.1	51.7
Secondary	11.5	22.9

Note. Adapted from *Gender, Race, and Ethnic Diversity Among Principals*, in J.Shen and Associates, *School Principals*, 2003. p. 21, New York: Peter Lang.

Table 5

Percentage Distribution of Principals by Sex, School Type, and Selected School Characteristics 2011-2012.

School Type and Selected Characteristics	Percent of Male Principals	Percent of Female Principals
All Schools	47.6	52.4
All Public Schools	48.4	51.6
Traditional Public Schools	48.5	51.5
Charter Schools	46.5	53.5
Community Type: City	40.5	59.5
Community Type: Suburban	45.1	54.9
Community Type: Town	51.5	48.5
Community Type: Rural	56.0	44.0
School Level: Primary	36.2	63.8
School Level: Middle	57.7	42.3
School Level: High	69.9	30.1
Combined	60.4	39.6

Note. Adapted from the National Center for Educational Statistics, 2011-2012.

On the contrary, they are in fact certified to hold administrative positions but they are not being chosen for the positions. Inequity still remains at the heart of discussions about schools in America at this time, despite attempts in the past to address this issue. Bastian, Fruchter, Gittell, Greer and Haskins (1985) state, "The implication of current reforms is that they will reproduce rather than transcend societal inequities and stratifications" (p. 183). A review of theories taught in administration classes indicates that they rarely consider gender and that females are ignored in what is a setting that is predominantly composed of females (Murray & Simmons, 1994). Parker and Shapiro (1992) report, "There has been little systematically and formally taught in the areas of race, gender, ethnicity, social class and other areas of difference throughout the entire educational administration curriculum" (p. 20).

Table 6

Number of Educators that Have Completed Masters or Doctorate Degrees in Educational Leadership and School Administration, categorized by gender, (2011-2012).

Gender	Masters Degree	Doctorate
Male	6,510	1,279
Female	11,732	2,210

Note. Adapted from the National Center for Educational Statistics, 2011-2012.

According to Murray and Simmons (1994), theories in educational leadership strongly substantiate a male perspective and consciousness. Murray and Simmons (1994) write, "Androcentrism is defined as viewing the world and shaping reality from a male perspective" (p. 72). After conducting a study about women and the superintendency, Margaret Grogan indicated that she came away with a vivid sense of the white, gendered nature of the K-12 superintendency. Once the study was complete, Grogan felt she was more aware of the extent that gender is a factor in a woman's preparation for the superintendency (1996). Shakeshaft (1989) indicates that the androcentric view of the world presents a hierarchy of status with men at the top and women falling below. In practice, this suggests that men and women do different things and those things that women do are considered to be of less value than those things that men do. Shakeshaft (1989) goes on to report that this results in creating two sets of rules: one set of rules for men and another set of rules for women. Inevitably, this results in sex discrimination in a field that is highly populated by women.

Since the 1970s, women represented 50% of the students in educational leadership programs. However, educational administration continues to be a predominantly male profession. The profession represented male themes such as bureaucracy, control and power. The women who made up 50% of the classes were exposed to course work that presented

values and beliefs that did not incorporate what they valued most as educators, namely their experiences and their behavior (Shakeshaft, Gilligan, & Pierce, 1992). A Pennsylvania study indicates that between 1970 and 1984, there was a 15% increase in the number of superintendent certificates that were awarded to women (Pavan, 1985). Despite the obvious interest of women in the position, the number of female superintendents is consistently low (Ortiz & Marshall, 1988).

Table 7

Female Degrees in Education 1980-81 to 2003-04

	Bachelor's Degrees	**Master's Degrees**	**Doctoral Degrees**
% female 1979-80	73.8	70.2	43.9
% female 1989-90	75.0	75.9	57.3
% female 2003-04	78.5	76.7	66.1

Note. Adapted from *"Increasing Gender Equity in Educational Leadership,"* by Charole Shakeshaft, Genevieve Brown, Beverly J. Irby, Margaret Grogan, and Julia Ballenger, in S.S. Klein (Ed.), *Handbook for Achieving Gender Equity Through Education*, 2007, p. 104, New York: Routledge.

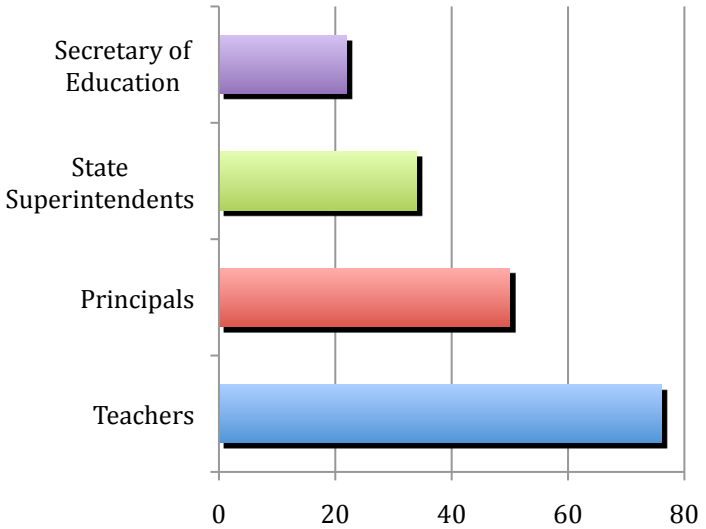
Table 8

Percent Public School Females by Job Title and Level, 1990-2000

	Elementary	**Secondary**	**All**
Teachers	84.9	55.8	74.9
Principals	51.8	21.6	43.8
Superintendents	N/A	N/A	18.0

Note. Adapted from *"Increasing Gender Equity in Educational Leadership,"* by Charole Shakeshaft, Genevieve Brown, Beverly J. Irby, Margaret Grogan, and Julia Ballenger, in S.S. Klein (Ed.), *Handbook for Achieving Gender Equity Through Education*, 2007, p. 104, New York: Routledge.

Figure 1.1 Percent of Women in Education Positions



Note: Adapted from "Beyond the Classroom: Women in Educational Leadership," by Miki Litmanovitz, 2010-2011, *Harvard Kennedy School Review, 11*, p. 25.

At the present time, lack of preparation is no longer a valid reason for excluding women who have successfully completed educational leadership programs from administrative positions. A lack of acceptance of women in administrative roles by society is the informal and subtle reason for the exclusion of women from administrative positions including assistant principals, curriculum developers, curriculum coordinators, and central office staff (Murray & Simmons, 1994). Female participants in a study conducted by Grogan (1996) were viewed first as women and secondly as administrators. Women must fight to overcome the stereotypical view that men should occupy the principal's office. Unfortunately for women, this is the mindset that is held by many community members and parents (Pigford & Tonnsen, 1993). This stereotypical view has perpetuated discrimination against women in the areas of training, hiring, and career advancement. Discrimination occurs both on the conscious and unconscious level in the field of education, which is dominated by men (Murray & Simmons, 1994).

The discrimination mentioned above is a result of conditioning that begins for children when they are very young. The conditioning begins in childhood and, as a result, career possibilities or patterns for men and women are determined long before their identities have been decided. The career patterns for men and women reduce the possibilities that women will pursue leadership roles (Adkison, 1981). Societal norms are violated when women pursue positions as school administrators because society has conditioned men and women to believe that men are capable of holding these positions and women are not. Women pursuing administrative positions represent a deviation from a societal norm. Men who demonstrated ambition and initiative were most likely viewed as leaders; whereas, women demonstrating these same actions would be regarded as being aggressive (Wood,

2011). Because of the conditioning that has taken place over the years, many women feel they are less competent, not because of a lack of competency, but rather because they feel as if they do not know or do not care about the politics of educational administration and leadership in general (Brown & Irby, 1993). Since men have dominated leadership positions for centuries, it is difficult for some women to see themselves in leadership roles. An interview with Deborah Delisle, the Superintendent of Public Instruction for Ohio, indicated that many officials do not view the character traits usually possessed by most women with strong leadership ability. Therefore, women are not encouraged to pursue leadership roles. Women who might make great educational leaders may not pursue the position because they cannot see themselves in the particular role because they receive little encouragement or affirmation of their potential as an educational leader (Litmanovitz, 2012).

Historically speaking, teaching has closely been associated with the female role and female styles. In contrast, educational leadership positions are viewed as being compatible with the roles of men and their styles (Weber, Feldman, & Poling, 1981). Recruiting, training, and replacing people in vacant administrative positions has all too often been a product of "cronyism" or the "good old boy network," which falls in the hands of males. Women do not have the networking systems established to have the knowledge of positions that become available or to be involved in the decisions regarding the educational leader who will be selected to fill open positions (Pigford & Tonnsen, 1993). This practice has been so problematic that litigation has come about to challenge the practice of men selecting other men for administrative positions in order to address these discriminatory practices (Shapiro, 1984).

A closer look at school and district leadership provides insight into the imbalance between men and women in school administration. As stated earlier, women took on the role of teachers and men took on the role of administrators. Men were in control of the highly paid positions such as school principals and superintendents (Blount, 1998). Men being in charge combined with societal norms and political structures have kept gender divisions alive in school administration. A gender shift was necessary; however, that shift could only occur if relationships within schools changed and if the purposes of schools were re-evaluated (Grogan, 2005). This would require that administrators release power and teachers gain more power, which would directly affect women because they largely make up the population of teachers. This would essentially provide a greater number of females with more power because they are the largest percentage of teachers in the schools (Grogan, 2005).

Role congruity theory has been identified as a factor that hinders women from assuming leadership positions in the educational setting. Role congruity theory refers to a person's actions and behaviors being aligned with those gender roles that are socially acceptable. Those characteristics associated with leadership roles are typically traits that are ascribed to being male (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Hyde, 2005). Keohane (2007) writes, "Throughout human history, leadership has been closely associated with masculinity: the king, the father, the boss, the lord are stereotypical images of leadership" (p. 67). When women do venture outside their ascribed roles and become involved in leadership positions that are usually associated with men, they are often met with resistance and criticism. "When women who are leaders violate these prescriptive beliefs by fulfilling the agentic requirements of leader roles and failing to exhibit the communal, supportive behaviors that

are preferred in women, they can be negatively evaluated for these violations" (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001, p. 786). Women are viewed as having less leadership abilities than men and are viewed negatively when they exercise leadership traits compared to men compared (Eagly & Karan, 2002; Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992). Women are considered by many to be less competent and less worthy of leadership positions than men. Men are believed to be more competent and legitimate as leaders than women. This is the belief of both men and women in some cases. The way in which people lead is often influenced by beliefs about gender differences. Hierarchical patterns of social interaction through which males exercise more leadership and exert more influence are also a byproduct of the beliefs that men are more competent and legitimate as leaders (Carli & Eagly, 2001).

The bias against females in educational leadership has serious ramifications as the work of female managers is devalued. When a woman produces work of such a caliber that the value of the work cannot be questioned, some have a tendency to attribute the high quality of work to external factors rather than to the woman's competency. When there are no external factors to contribute the quality of work, people result in disliking and rejecting the successful female managers (Carli & Eagly, 2001).

Patriarchy

When reviewing the literature related to genders practices of leaders and the effects of the practices on teacher morale, patriarchy as it relates to education appears frequently. Literature related to gender and schools emphasizes how schools are viewed as being patriarchal in nature. This was reflected in matters that directly affect students, teachers, and leaders in the schools.

Patriarchy and students. According to Shakeshaft (1986), the role of schools historically was to educate males; therefore, the main focus of schools was that of providing an education aligned with the male image. The purpose of schools was to provide males with the skills to go out into the world and become the leaders of our communities. The structures of schools that are responsible for transmitting information were established in accordance with approaches aligned to male development. The curriculum is designed based on what was thought to be necessary for the development of males, which is further demonstrated by the materials, approaches, and language that tend to include male students while excluding female students (Shakeshaft, 1986).

The middle class men of the 1800s and the 1900s controlled public education and, as a result, a patriarchal society continued. Efforts were made to focus on the characteristics separating male students from female students. The clear distinction between males and females led to the creation of norms that favored the males who dominated the economy and other societal sectors (Grumet, 1988).

A review of literature about gender in the classroom indicates that there are differences in the way male and female students are treated in the classroom. Male students are called upon more frequently (Hall & Sandler, 1982). Male students are also allowed to speak out in class and interrupt while female students were expected to wait patiently and be called upon to speak. As a result, female students are taught not to answer questions, while also sending the message that what female students have to say is not important (Shakeshaft, 1995).

Patriarchy and teachers. During the 1800s and 1900s, women were allowed into classrooms as teachers. However, they were expected to teach and lead based on the rules

established by a patriarchal society. Women were expected to convey to students the rules, laws, and language that had been created by the father, the male principal or the male employer (Grumet, 1988). However, there was still the lurking bias that women were not capable of teaching classes composed of male students (Pinar et al., 1995).

More and more classrooms consisted of female teachers in the second half of the nineteenth century. The increase of female teachers was the result of their willingness to work for lower wages. However, school administrators were largely men and were also responsible for creating the curriculum, which represented the values, thoughts and beliefs of white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant males (Pinar et al., 1995). By the end of the nineteenth century, female teachers dominated the classroom (Acquaro & Stokes, 2016). Female teachers were managed and supervised by their male administrators. Any aspirations held by women to rise to administrative roles were not recognized and remained invisible. Administrative roles were held by men who served as the leaders of the profession (Acquaro & Stokes, 2016).

According to Pronger (1990), the inclusion of sports into schools was "masculine" in nature; therefore, making it important for schools to offer sports for the benefit of male students. During the twentieth century, there were growing concerns about the effects of female teachers and female students on male students. The support of male football teams grew in an effort to minimize feminine influence on male students (Pinar et al., 1995).

Patriarchy and leadership. According to literature about gender and school leadership, men have occupied leadership roles for centuries. An examination of leadership traits over time indicates a strong connection between leadership and masculinity (Keohane, 2007). Training programs for the superintendency have traditionally relied heavily upon a

male dominated discourse because males hold these positions and develop the programs. According to Litmanovitz (2012), the male dominated discourse is responsible for what is considered to the norm and why it is the norm. The male-dominated discourse has perpetuated a disparity in the number of male and female educational leaders by largely supporting men and limiting the success of women who aspire to become superintendents (Brunner, 2008).

Career possibilities or patterns are determined early on within the conditioning that takes place in childhood. Because of these career patterns, men typically assume leadership roles and women do not. Women serving in leadership roles are a deviation from a social norm because the "norm" is that only men are capable of holding leadership positions (Adkison, 1981).

Theories in educational leadership strongly substantiate a male perspective and consciousness (Murray & Simmons, 1994). As experienced by Murray and Simmons (1994), "Androcentrism is defined as viewing the world and shaping reality from a male perspective" (p. 72). After conducting a study about women and the superintendency, Margaret Grogan (1996) came away with a vivid sense of the white, gendered nature of the K-12 superintendency. Shakeshaft (1989) indicates that the androcentric view of the world presents a hierarchy of status with men at the top and women falling below. Grogan's (1996) belief is that women are being measured against ideals and principles that historically were at the heart of what best served men. The power of social and cultural norms and expectations play a role in shaping the view that the office of the superintendent should be filled by men (Sampson, Gresham, Applewhite, & Roberts, 2015). Eagly and Karau (2002) report, "When a woman seeks the superintendency, she may find role incongruity where women are

expected by organizations to be secondary to males in leadership. Because it is the social and cultural expectations that superintendents are to be men, women who do rise to the position of superintendent are sometimes viewed negatively and are subject to more strict evaluation measures (Munoz, Pankake, Ramalho, Mills, & Simmonsson, 2014).

Practices of Effective Educational Leaders

In an effort to research gendered practices and the effects the practices have on teacher morale, one must first examine leadership styles. This examination will give insight into those qualities that are connected with quality leadership and leadership that is connected with school environments where teacher morale is high. One such leadership style is transformational leadership. Transformational leadership refers to that leadership style that changes and transforms people (Dahlvig & Longman, 2010). Northouse (2007) describes transformational leadership as being "concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals and includes assessing followers' motives, satisfying their needs, and treating them as full human beings" (p. 175). According to Burns (1978), the interaction between leaders and followers is a great indicator of leadership effectiveness. "Transactional" is the term used to describe a mutually beneficial exchange that takes place between a leader and a follower. Transformational leadership takes the relationship between the leader and the follower to another level, which results in increased productivity and motivation for both the leader and the follower (Dahlvig & Longman, 2010).

Transformational school leaders are in continual pursuit of three fundamental goals. Transformational leaders strive to assist school personnel with developing and maintaining a professional school culture where collaboration is embraced with fidelity. The

transformational leader fosters teacher development and provides extensive support in terms of assisting teachers with effectively solving problems together as a team (Leithwood, 1992).

Various tiers in a leadership hierarchy are what are used to define levels of leadership success (Sergiovanni, 1984). The various levels in the hierarchy are the technical, human, educational, symbolic, and cultural levels. The technical level pertains to a leader's focus on time management. The effective technical leader plans, organizes, and creates schedules for the school that maximizes effectiveness (Sergiovanni, 1984). The human level relates to a leader's ability to harness available human resources and is emphasized when the leader shows that the members of the school community and the stakeholders are important and valued by providing support, encouragement and professional growth opportunities. The educational leader is the clinical practitioner and brings expert knowledge to the school. This leader diagnoses problems, counsels teachers, and provides supervision to help staff members grow. The symbolic leader defines the values of the school, which are used in establishing the vision and the purpose of the school. The last tier in the hierarchy is the cultural level. The cultural leader assumes the role of "high priest." This leader works to define and strengthen the enduring beliefs, values, and culture of the school, all of which give a school its unique identity (Sergiovanni, 1984). All of these levels of the leadership hierarchy working together support a leader in creating not only a competent school, but also an excellent school (Sergiovanni, 1984).

Effective leaders analyze existing structures to determine whether or not inequities exist. Administrators are oftentimes preoccupied with district, state, and federal mandates that breed high stakes testing and accountability systems. An effective leader will examine the fairness of this system, and will not be instruments used to advance the reform agenda.

Instead, they will serve as advocates for students by questioning the fairness of the policies, the inequities of the policies, and the result of those inequities on the students they serve (Dantley & Tillman, 2006). This quality is known as transformational moral leadership according to Dantley and Tillman (2006). Dantley and Tillman (2006) state, "Moral transformative leadership deconstructs the work of school administration in order to unearth how leadership practices generate and perpetuate inequities and the marginalization of members of the learning community who are outside the dominant culture" (p. 289)

An exploration of teacher morale would not be complete without a discussion of effective leadership practices. Fullan (2005) argues that, "leadership at the school and district levels was identified as crucial to success" (p. 3). It is important for leaders to create an atmosphere that fosters shared decision-making while also building and strengthening internal capacity (Schulte, Slate, & Onwuegbuzie, 2010). According to Lambert (2003), "Shared learning, purpose, action, and responsibility demand the realignment of power and authority. Districts and principals need to explicitly release authority, and staff need to learn how to enhance personal power and informal authority" (p. 20).

Effective school leaders work to create a collaborative culture in their schools because of the importance that collaboration has in professional development (Vail, 2005). It is important for teachers to be intellectually stimulated. Therefore, schedules must allow time for teachers to collaborate about lesson plans and activities associated with lesson plans. According to Vail (2005), time to collaborate with peers is one of the reasons that many teachers remain in the classroom. Time for collaboration with peers assists teachers in the development of leadership abilities (Protheroe, 2006). Schmidt (2005) states,

> Teaching can be lonely work. The isolation may be reinforced by colleagues, operating under the famine mentality, who see power and knowledge as finite commodities to be doled out. But every campus also has gifted teachers who believe in sharing ideas, especially with novices. With encouragement, these teachers can collaborate with one another, in effect conducting their own professional growth. (p. 58)

Teachers who are afforded the opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and serve in leadership roles are more satisfied with their career choices to be teachers than those teachers who were not part of a school culture that endorsed collaboration (Perrachione, Petersen, & Rosser, 2008). Collaborative supervision is built upon the premise that administrators and teachers must both be involved in the work surrounding supervision (Shautz, 1995). For collaborative supervision to be established, administrators and teachers must share information, ideas, and viewpoints surrounding topics. Through problem solving and negotiating, a mutually acceptable plan will come forth (Shautz, 1995). Listening to each other, providing clarification when needed, and reflection are important components of the collaborative supervision (Shautz, 1995). It is important for teachers and principals to respect the opinions and ideas of each other. A major component of collaborative leadership is that it is based on equity; therefore, problems are solved as a group (Shautz, 1995). Because of the benefits associated with collaboration, teachers are more satisfied in their working environment because they feel supported by their school community.

The sense of trust is an integral part of a school with high teacher morale. The behaviors of a principal are highly connected to the feelings of trust experienced by faculty members (Tarter, Bliss, & Hoy, 1989). Trust amongst faculty can come about as a result of a

school administrator's efforts to engage in behaviors that support teachers. A principal's respect and personal regard for members of the school community help to create trust. Leaders demonstrating competence in their responsibilities and personal integrity were also factors connected to trust among school personnel. An administrator's ability to relinquish control and encourage shared leadership practices and collective decision-making is typical in schools where trust within the school community is prevalent (Tarter et al., 1989).

It is important for educational leaders to collaborate with the staff members in the building. Relationships based on mutual trust and respect are essential to building a strong school climate. The leader needs to have a relationship with other staff members that encourage the sharing of ideas and viewpoints. The actions and decisions that are made in school communities should reflect an alignment between the ideas of members in the school community. In essence, these school decisions should be made with a dependence on the staff members in mind. Additionally, members of the school community need to operate in an environment that demonstrates an ethic of caring. Under this ethic of caring, the greatest obligation of educators is to pay attention to the ethical ideas of the people with whom they interact. These ideas should be acknowledged and also nurtured by educators (Noddings, 2003).

Effective administrators must make high visibility a top priority. High visibility and movement throughout the building allow for more frequent interaction with the stakeholders of the school community. School leaders must be available to the stakeholders when they are needed. High visibility makes this possible (Flore, 2000). Principals must not stay in their offices but must be visible throughout the building frequently. According to Niece (1989), effective principals are people oriented and interactional. The high visibility of effective

principals allows them to serve as role models for students and teachers. The presence of school leaders serves as comfort for both teachers and students, especially if high visibility has historically been the norm for school leaders in the school (Flore, 2000). When principals are visible throughout the building, they have more opportunities to collaborate with teachers and also provide support to teachers (DuFour, 2004). Visibility throughout the building is conducive to the ethic of caring because it allows principals to see the positive activities and work of teachers making it easier to recognize their work while also providing opportunities to notice people who need support.

An effective leader will establish a school-wide vision for the school. Principals create the vision and go about the task of getting the other stakeholders on board with the vision statement (Mendels, 2012). The vision created by the principal also is instrumental in setting the expectations for the teachers and the students. Once effective leaders have shaped the vision of the school, they must focus on creating teacher leaders so that teachers can play their part in bringing the school vision to fruition. The principal must take on the role and responsibility of being the visionary for the school. School leaders must always be on the lookout for improving the school while also encouraging the improvement of the teachers in the school. Effective leaders are those who create a vision that is centered on the belief that all students can achieve while also instilling this expectation in the minds of the teachers (Mendels, 2012). Administrators must be connected to the communities they serve, and they must pay attention to the organizational core values that are just and fair (Murphy, 2002). Ershler (2007) states, "Educational leaders must communicate well within and between the many communities that make up the general community" (p. 3). Educational leaders must need to not only be attuned to the diversity in their communities, but they need to maintain a

focus on extinguishing inequities for the people of the community that may result from accountability systems.

An important component of effective leadership is the ability of leaders to reflect on their core values and capabilities. Quinn (2005) references, "A fundamental state of leadership to describe effective leadership moments when leaders draw upon their own values and capabilities" (p. 80). Defining moments and the fundamental state of leadership are connected to a leader's ability to reflect and then apply lessons based upon the leader's core values. Defining moments refer to those decisions that are made at pivotal times in someone's life and usually under challenging circumstances. Defining moments connect to a leader's core values and have the potential to enhance leadership effectiveness (Dahlvig & Longman, 2010).

Practices of Female Educational Leaders

Noddings (2003) describes the notion of caring as being charged with the protection, welfare, or maintenance of something or someone. In the case of educational leadership, research indicates that caring on the part of the leadership is significant. This caring manifests itself in the leader's efforts to support staff, and take steps to empower staff as leaders. Mayerhoff (1971) writes, "To care for another person, in the most significant sense, is to help him grow and actualize himself" (p. 1). As a leader, caring is expressed within the various forms of support provided by administrators to help school members grow and, as a result, reach self-actualization.

Shared decision-making is a favorable trait for school administrators. Shared decision-making is associated with those leaders who are not hierarchical in their use of authority or power. Shared decision-making and a collaborative environment are instrumental in creating

high morale amongst teachers (Protheroe, 2006). According to research, the employment of shared decision-making and collaboration are associated specifically with the leadership styles of women (Shautz, 1995). Women leaders and their focus on the caring of others serve as the foundation for their interaction with teachers, rather than a means to express their rights as administrators within their interactions with teachers (Shautz, 1995). According to Shakeshaft, Nowell, and Perry (1991), women administrators prefer involvement with activities that empower teachers such as shared decision making and providing immediate feedback. Based on the research conducted by Leithwood and Jantzi (1990), successful schools are those schools that have a collaborative environment rather than schools led by dynamic and charismatic leaders. According to Shautz (1995), school environments shaped by leaders who provide a caring and supportive environment are schools with greater teacher satisfaction. This translates into high morale on the part of teachers (Gross & Trask, 1976; Shakeshaft, 1989). Shields (1995) writes, "Lyons (1990) associated women in leadership with 'a morality of care', which stems from leading interdependently rather than autonomously" (p. 76).

Caring on the part of the leaders of schools is an important component that creates a school climate that can maximize student achievement. According to Noddings (2003), the primary goal of all educational institutions and the goal of all actions taken in the institutions should be directed at the establishment, maintenance, and enhancement of caring. The ethic of caring that is established within an institution provides the lens through which all goals and practices that are part of the institution are examined (Noddings, 2003). According to Noddings (2003), "The one-caring has one great aim: to preserve and enhance caring in herself and in those with whom she comes in contact" (p. 172).

Traits associated with female administrators that are accredited with creating a positive school environment for teachers also benefit students as well. Shields (1995) wrote, "Some traditional and dichotomous conceptions of leaders affirmed that women are collaborative, caring, supportive, relational, and transformative" (p. 76). Collaborative approaches associated with female leaders are not linear and separate (Luttrell, 1989). This shift moves toward a community approach that would utilize such practices as professional learning communities in order to implement collaboration and collective decision-making (Buffman & Hinman, 2006; DuFour, 2004; Hord, 1997). This shift seems appropriate because "women are thought to be caring, tolerant, emotional, intuitive, gentle, and predisposed towards collaboration, empowerment, and teamwork" (Coleman, 2003, p. 30). These characteristics are associated with the transformational leadership style (Sanchez & Thornton, 2010).

Practices of Male Educational Leaders

Research about the leadership traits of male school administrators stresses the importance of a focus on administrative matters and external contacts (Kruger, 1996). Male leadership practices are usually identified as transactional (Austin, 2008). The transactional leadership style is "more directive and authoritarian" (Austin, 2008). Men are viewed as individualistic as compared to collaborative (Gross & Trask, 1976; Shakeshaft, 1986) and the male administrator tends to be more authoritative or hierarchical in his approach to leading a school than the female administrator. Male administrators are more preoccupied with justice along with possessing and exercising power (Shields, 2005). According to Skrla (2003), candidates who are interviewing for administrative positions are "assertive, competitive, outer oriented, stoic, just, objective, unyielding, risk takers, rational, and impassive." The

leadership practices of men are viewed by some as being focused on managerial tasks and the implementation of hierarchical styles of leadership (Coleman, 2003; Dana & Bourisaw, 2006; Fennell, 2005; Grogan, 2005).

Gender as a Continuum

The term *sex* refers to a designation that is made based on biology. Society designates a person as male or female based on external genitalia (Wood, 2011). The term *gender* is socially constructed and expressed. Gender is a classification that is made by society based on a genetic and biological factor. People are born male or female, but learn to act in accordance with masculine or feminine ways of expression (Wood, 2011). In accordance with the concept of male and female, the gender binary exists as two complementary genders that possess appropriate roles and distinctions. This binary system impacts social science, education, child rearing practices, and the law. The gender binary determines what is healthy, what is good or bad, and what is right or wrong for males and females (Thurer, 2005). Although a person may demonstrate characteristics associated with both masculine and feminine ways of expression, a person's overall gender is defined by society and is expressed when that person interacts with others. Killerman (2013) breaks away from the traditional views of the gender binary and believes that gender is expressed along a continuum. People are born male or female but learn to act masculine or feminine over time and may fall on every point of the continuum at any given moment (Wood, 2011).

The idea of gender as a continuum leads to an examination of certain components associated with gender. Killerman (2013) expresses his efforts to break away from the concept of gender as a binary by drawing focus to three things that exist as part of the gender continuum. Biological sex is the term used to identify the organs, hormones, and

chromosomes a person possesses. Killerman (2013) emphasizes the importance of realizing that a person may appear to be one sex whereas, in reality, that person could possess the reproductive system of the opposite sex. Gender identity is the term that Killerman (2013) defines as being the way in which individuals view themselves. This is the personal perception someone has of himself (Killerman, 2013). Gender identity refers to how people view themselves in terms of societal roles, whether it is male, female, or both. Killerman (2013) defines gender expression as the way in which a person demonstrates his/her gender, often through the manner in which a person dresses, behaves, and interacts with others. This expression may change from day to day depending on the event. For example, a person may dress or interact with others differently depending on the formality of an event, which indicates that things are not constant but change often (Killerman, 2013).

Breaking away from viewing gender as a binary construct reduces essentializing. *Essentializing* is the term that refers to the practice of reducing someone or something to certain characteristics that are assumed to be essential to people assigned to a certain category (Wood, 2011). Assuming that all males are the same and that females are the same is considered essentializing. The transition from viewing gender as a continuum, rather than a binary, helps to explain why a male leader may demonstrate characteristics typically associated with female leaders and vice versa depending on situational factors. A leader's gender expression demonstrates a variety of traits that are representative of traits found on the continuum for both males and females.

Gender, as a continuum rather than a binary, has impact on the manner in which school leaders are viewed because they are constantly being repositioned on various points on the continuum. Based on previously stated research, there are traits that are common for

most male and female leaders. However, research indicates that there are leaders who also demonstrate traits that are associated with the opposite gender. Gender as a continuum is important to the question of gendered practices of school leaders and the effects these practices have on teacher morale because it helps explain major contradictions of the gender binary. The dominance of the masculine stereotype still prevails in the roles of educational leaders (Chard, 2013), which is problematic when taking into consideration those male leaders who demonstrate collaborative leadership styles, that are typically associated with female leadership styles (Chard, 2013). When leaders demonstrate traits not typically associated with his or her gender orientation, they are viewed negatively. In relation to female managers, Hughes (2004) states, "Too masculine and she is threatening. Too feminine and she is whimpish" (p. 538). An exploration of this topic will lead to answers about the gender expression of leaders and the effects that expression has on teacher morale. Gender is presently viewed more as something that is performed rather than prescribed (Francis, 2010). After generations of changing attitudes toward gender, society tends to regard gender, not simply based on physical factors, but also one's actions and how a person identifies herself. Because of this transition in thinking about gender, people have more freedom to explore and express their gender identities, which breaks the previously constructed molds about the leadership positions that a woman can fill as opposed to a man. Gender is now embedded in the performed behavior displayed by an individual, rather than based on physical characteristics of the body (Francis, 2010).

Teacher Morale

There are a variety of standards and definitions of teacher morale. Research on teacher morale, however it is defined, and the impact of teacher morale on students'

achievement (Willis & Varner, 2010) has demonstrated a positive correlation. In regard to the definition of morale, Willis and Varner write:

> Morale is a person's mental state that is exhibited by assurance, control, and motivation to perform a task. As cited in the *Administrator's Handbook for Improving Faculty Morale* (1985), Smith defines morale as a confident state of mind that progressively looks to achieve an essential and shared function. (p. 45)

Based on the various definitions stated above, it is clear that morale is how one feels about the things he or she is doing in relation to the goals or vision of an organization. In the world of education, it is important for teachers to have high morale. This prevents the constant influx of new teachers coming in to replace those who have become disenchanted with their work. Low teacher morale not only affects the individual, but climate of the entire school as well (Willis & Varner, 2010); therefore, making high teacher morale a priority for all schools.

The influence of morale in schools is extensive. According to Andrews (1985), teachers with high teacher morale put more time, effort, energy and enthusiasm in their work and also take more of an interest in their students. Low morale is thought to hinder teacher productivity and to cause a detachment between teachers and their students (Lumsden, 1998). It goes without saying that relationship building between teachers and students is important to student achievement. Students must feel that teachers are connected to them and genuinely care about them for learning to take place in the classroom. In schools where the sentiment is absent, teacher morale is closely associated with unfavorable school climates and classroom climates (Lumsden, 1998).

School administrators can work to maintain a positive school climate by implementing efforts to maintain high teacher morale. Many teachers feel they receive little recognition for their work and efforts (Briggs & Richardson, 1992). Briggs and Richardson (1992) wrote, "Educators recognized the lack of recognition as the most common causative descriptor of low morale" (p. 8). School leaders need to make teachers aware that they are doing a good job (Vail, 2005). Public recognition of teachers' achievement, coupled with public support of teachers by school leaders, makes teachers feel they are important and appreciated (Protheroe, 2006). It seems that simply seeking opportunities to celebrate the accomplishments of teachers inside and outside the classroom has a large influence on teacher morale. Staff members need to know that their hard work is recognized and important to the leader so that they do not feel that they are taken for granted and are more motivated to perform in accordance with a high standard.

However, each of the above mentioned efforts can be thwarted by lack of thorough communication between teachers and administrators hinders the school's ability to establish and maintain high teacher morale (Briggs & Richardson, 1992). Teachers relate weak communication with an autocratic and also inspectional supervision styles. Supervision styles of leaders that provide continual feedback, while also providing information for growth and improvement for teachers, establish high teacher morale (Protheroe, 2006). However, feedback must be strategic and must begin on a positive note to promote high teacher morale (Hoerr, 2013). Communicating the positive affirmation initially makes it easier for teachers to hear both their strengths and their areas that need improvements (Hoerr, 2013).

Quality of instruction in the classroom is sacrificed when teachers struggle and do not receive support (Vail, 2005). This is especially true of new teachers coming directly from teacher education programs (Vail, 2005). It is important for school leaders to employ mentoring opportunities and proper professional development in an effort to support both new and veteran teachers (Vail, 2005).

Lack of Administrative Support for Discipline. According to Briggs and Richardson (1992), the lack of support offered to teachers by administrators with regard to discipline matters that arise in the classroom greatly affects the morale of teachers. This becomes more of an issue when class sizes are large preventing a good student to teacher ratio (Briggs & Richardson, 1992). An administrator's inability or unwillingness to become involved in addressing discipline matters causes many teachers, both new and experienced, to leave the profession (Vail, 2005). Administrators must provide consistent support in regards to discipline in order to prevent conflicting messages being sent to students and teachers. Mixed messages regarding discipline make it difficult for teachers to manage behavior problems in the classroom (Vail, 2005). As a result, lack of support on the part of the principal when dealing with discipline matters negatively impacts teacher morale.

Valued as Members of the School Community. For school communities to foster high teacher morale, teachers must feel that they are valued members of the school communities and that their opinions and beliefs regarding school related topics are respected. High teacher morale hinges on the involvement of teachers in the decision-making processes relating to instructional matters (Vail, 2005). Teachers that experience feelings of satisfaction with their work are typically working in schools where they are encouraged to take part in important decision-making processes in the school (Protheroe, 2006). The administrators at

such schools are constantly seeking out opportunities to discuss instructional practices with teachers by actively involving teachers in the decisions (Protheroe, 2006). According to Willis and Varner (2010), "...student learning and teacher morale were related to a positive school culture that is characterized by respect, shared decision making, communication, and administrative support."

Understanding low morale is crucial in understanding various school climates. Productivity and quality of work are jeopardized, teachers become disconnected from their colleagues and the organization, and teacher burnout becomes more prevalent when morale is low. As a result of this, many qualified teachers leave the profession. In some cases, teachers with low morale may even develop cynical or dehumanizing feelings toward or about their students (Mendel, 1987).

When teacher morale is high, teachers experience feelings of satisfaction about themselves and their colleagues. They feel good about their accomplishments and the work they are doing together to achieve goals they share within their school community (Hoy & Miskel, 1987). There are some common factors that are essential to establishing high teacher morale. One factor worthy of consideration is that of the school leader. Administrators and their capacity to establish a healthy school are integral in maintaining positive morale. Principals who take ownership over the control of contingencies in the workplace serve to improve and raise morale. The actions of these principals provide reinforcement for teachers that positively fortify the self-esteem of teachers and their teaching behaviors (Adams, 1992).

Chapter 3

Introduction to Mode of Research

Storytelling is a way in which information has been passed from generation to generation for hundreds of years. Learning about people and their experiences by listening to their stories allows them to provide the listener or the audience with a clear picture of the context of the story, as well as other information that may not be apparent when relying on surveys or other quantitative approaches. Because of the utility of hearing people's stories, a qualitative research approach was selected for exploring in depth the effects of gender practices of administrators on teacher morale. My goal as the researcher was not to explain, but rather to explore and discover as the research process unfolded (Creswell, 2005). The questions that were formulated were easily changed to accommodate the direction that the inquiry took as I moved through the research process.

It was important to interview male and female educators who had worked for both male and female leaders. It was also important to interview male and female principals who served as teachers under male and female principals as well. A survey was used to identify candidates who had worked under the supervision of both male and female leaders.

Based on the nature of my research topic, a qualitative approach allowed opportunities to get answers to questions while also being able to dig deeper and uncover important details that surrounded answers. According to Glesne (2011), qualitative research provides opportunities to engage feelings because people are asked to reflect on things; therefore, realizing things they may not have noticed before. Information was collected over the course of several months, using surveys and in depth interviews. These were followed by data analysis. Interviewing participants created an opportunity for strong interaction between

the interviewer and the participant. The interview process allowed for the development of relationships with the interviewees, which was important in my efforts to work with them over the duration of the project. The relationships created the foundation for very real and meaningful research rather than research that would have otherwise been meaningless or unauthentic due to a lack of personal approach that was taken during this data collection process.

There are certain characteristics related to interviewing that make the use of interviews the necessary mode of data collection for this project. The interviews were semi-structured which resulted in open-ended questions as well as questions that asked specific information (Creswell, 2005). Open-ended questions allowed me to ask new questions that came about based on the responses of the participants. In-depth probing took place during the course of the interviews in order to gain more information about responses made by participants. Expressions such as "tell me more" and "explain" (Glesne, 2011) were used to move past initial answers.

A review of existing literature indicates the need for further research about teacher morale and also about gender and its effects on morale. Teacher morale is a topic in the education arena that currently bears little information based on academic research studies. Research exploring the gendered practices of leaders and the effects of these practices on teacher morale is almost nonexistent. Qualitative research allowed me to explore and discover the effect of gendered practices on teacher morale rather than explain a problem. Had I sought to explain a problem, a quantitative approach would have been appropriate. In regard to this topic, there was not a need for an explanation but rather exploration and discovery (Creswell, 2005).

Site Selection and Participant Pool

The research process surrounding the topic of the relationship between administrator gender and teacher morale took place in several different sites. Interviews conducted with teachers and administrators took place at schools, homes, and a restaurant. The interviewees chose the site for the interviews in order to assure they were convenient for the interviewees, as well as to increase the level of comfort with the interview process on the part on the interviewees. Teachers were selected based on the number of years of experience they had as a classroom teacher. This was necessary because first year teachers have no years to compare their feelings to in terms of the existing morale in their present school. New teachers are preoccupied with learning many new things about the grade they are teaching, as well as district policies. Teachers with more years of experience have a reference point because they have seen programs and initiatives come and go. Veteran teachers have had more opportunities to work under both male and female administrators, and are more seasoned in recognizing various forms of leaders.

Four teachers were selected to participate in the interviews for the research process. Surveys were submitted electronically to all elementary teachers in my district. Once the surveys were returned, teachers were selected based on their answers to the survey questions. Selections were made based on whether or not the responders had worked under both male and female leaders, their number of years of experience, and their gender identity. Two teachers were male and the other two were female. Since human subjects were a part of this study, a consent form was issued that can be found in Appendix A.

Four principals were selected to participate in the interview process. A survey was sent to all elementary principals in my district. Once the surveys were returned, selections

were based on their gender identity, the number of years of experience they had as a principal, and also whether or not they served as teachers under male and female principals. Two of the principals were female and the other two were male.

In order to conduct my research, I met with the Director of Research and Evaluation of a large school district in the Southeast. A written description of my research project was provided to her. Permission was requested to send out surveys to elementary teachers and elementary principals in order to select interviewees. Once permission was granted, interview candidates were selected based on survey information.

Once the possible interviewees were identified, they were contacted and a description of the research topic was provided to them. A follow-up with a written description about the topic of the study and the process was provided so that the possible subjects were aware of the details surrounding this study and their participation. This information was listed on an informed consent form that participants signed prior to their first interview.

Data Collection Methods

Because of the qualitative nature of my research project, interviews were the major form of data collection. The stories of teachers and administrators provided rich information about whether or not gender practices of the leader affect the morale of teachers. The interviews will serve as the guide for future steps that may warrant additional interviews based on information that is uncovered. The questions for the surveys and interviews are listed below. It is my hope that these questions will provide answers to the interviewer that will prompt more questions. These questions may change as the research process progresses.

How do you describe your gender identity?

_____ Male _____ Female

1. **How many years of experience do you have in the classroom?**

   ___1-3 years ___4-8 years ___ 9-12 years ___ 12+years

2. **Have you always worked in the elementary school setting? If no, please indicate which other levels you have worked.**

   _____

3. **As a classroom teacher, have your worked under a female leader, male**

   ___ Female _____ Male _____Both

4. **Do you believe school leadership impacts the morale at your school?**

   _____ Yes _____ No

   Why? Please explain.

   _____

5. **If you have worked in schools led by both male and female leaders, which did you perceive to foster higher teacher morale?**

   _____ Female _____Male _____ Neither

   Why? Please explain.

Figure 3.2 **Survey Questions for Teachers**

1. How do you describe your gender identity?

____ Male ____ Female

2. How many years of experience do you have working as an administrator?

__ 1-3 years __ 4-8 years __ 9-12 years __ 12+ years

3. How important is teacher morale to student achievement?

__ Very Important __ Important

__ Unimportant __Neither Important nor Unimportant

4. Before becoming a school administrator, what level did you teach?

__ Elementary __ Middle __ High

5. Prior to becoming a school administrator, did you serve under a male administrator, female administrator or both?

__ Female __ Male ___ Both

6. Did morale in your school during your time as a classroom teacher affect your current leadership style?

__Yes ___No

How? Please Explain.

_____

Figure 3.3 **Survey Questions for Principals**

Once surveys containing the questions in Figures 3.2. and 3.3 were returned, they were reviewed and the selection process for the interview phase began. After a review of the surveys, possible interview candidates were identified and they were contacted and informed that they had been selected to participate in the interviews. Once the interviewees agreed to participate and signed the informed consent form, interviews took place. The interview questions for teachers and principals are listed below.

Interview Questions for Teachers

Question 1: As you know, I have become interested in the idea of teacher morale. One of the ways I think is most useful to explore this idea is through hearing teacher stories. I would like for you to think back over the years that you have worked as a teacher. Thinking back over your career as a teacher, tell me your story about a time when you feel morale was high.

Rationale: This is a great opening question because it orients the interviewee to the topic of teacher morale. The "grand tour" style question encourages the interviewee to think back over his/her entire career when answering this question about teacher morale (Glesne, 2011).

Question 2: Suppose you are in a school that has high teacher morale. What are the kinds of things that I would see taking place in that environment that support high teacher morale? Tell me things your leader does that give you high morale.

Rationale: This question is designed to get the interviewees to identify those activities or practices that build high teacher morale in a school.

Question 3: Put yourself in a school environment where teacher morale is low. How would you describe to me the things that are taking place in the school that create the low morale of the staff?

Rationale: This question is designed to identify those activities, practice, procedure, or leadership traits that promote low morale.

Question 4: If you were a leader of a school, what is the leadership style that you would adapt in order to establish high teacher morale?

Rationale: This question will encourage the interviewee to provide feedback about different leadership styles that will promote high teacher morale.

Question 5: Morale is a very broad term, covering everything from feelings and attitudes towards one's work to behaviors enacted to either maintain, boost, or protect oneself. Based on your experiences as a teacher, tell me your story about a time when morale was taking a downward spiral. Looking back on this time, what do you identify as warning signs that morale was taking a downward spiral?

Rationale: This question is designed to get the interviewees to speak about their first hand experiences about morale going downward. Asking for their story will give a more complete picture of the context. The second part of the question acts as a follow-up question if more probing is necessary to get to the signals of the downward-spiraling morale.

Question 6: You have been a teacher for a number of years and you have worked in a school led by a female principal. Describe to me the morale that was present at this school and influence of the leader on morale.

Rationale: This question asks the interviewee to indicate the gendered practices of the female leader and the way that leader's traits shaped morale.

Question 7: Give me examples of women who have led well and those who did not lead well. What are some of the good and bad practices you have seen used by female leaders?

Rationale: This question invites the interviewee to include others besides those people they have worked under. This will provide additional information by opening the topic up past their personal experiences.

Question 8: During your career as a teacher, you have also worked in a school led by a male principal. Describe to me the morale in that school and the influence that you believe the male leader had on the morale of that school.

Rationale: This question guides the interviewee in providing information about the morale present in the school led by a male administrator and identifying the gendered practices of the male leader that impacted teacher morale.

Question 9: Give me some examples of men who have led well and those who did not lead well. What would be some examples of good and bad practices you have seen used by male leaders?

Rationale: This question invites the interviewee to include others besides those people they have worked under. This will provide additional information by opening the topic up past their personal experiences.

Interview Questions for Principals

1. Please tell me about experiences that have led you to this point in your career. What were factors that influenced your decision to become a school administrator?

Rationale: This question provides some background about the administrator's career up to this time.

2. Describe your leadership style.

Rationale: This question will provide me with information about how the leader views his/her leadership style. I will be able to compare this answer to how the interviewee feels his/her staff perceives her.

3. Tell me about being a female principal. Are there barriers that you have experienced due to your gender?

Rationale: This question will provide information about how the interviewee feels about barriers relating to her experiences as a female administrator.

4. From your experiences, describe any advantages that you experienced as a female administrator based upon your gender?

Rationale: This question will provide information about how the interviewee feels about gender based on advantaged they may have experienced while being an administrator.

5. Tell me about being a male principal. Are there barriers that you have experienced due to your gender?

Rationale: This question will provide information about how the interviewee feels about barriers relating to his experiences as a male administrator.

6. From your experiences, describe any advantages that you experienced as a male administrator based upon your gender?

Rationale: This question will provide information about how the interviewee feels about gender based on advantages they experienced while being an administrator.

7. Do you think your leadership style impacts teacher morale in your building? Think about a time when morale was low. What were the factors causing the low morale? Think about a time when morale was high. What factors caused the high morale?

Rationale: This question focuses on the factors affecting morale and will demonstrate whether or not the leader feels he/she influences morale. Insight will be given to other factors that leaders feel are responsible for shaping morale that the interviewee believes is not related to him/her.

8. What steps or actions have you taken to improve morale in your school?

Rationale: An identification of the steps or actions of the interviewee will also provide insight into the leadership style of the interviewee. The answer to this question will be compared to answers for questions 2, 3, 4, and 5.

9. How do you believe that your staff perceives you?

Rationale: The question will give information about how the administrator feels his/her staff views her. Comparisons between the answers to this question can also be compared to answers to questions 2, 3, 4, and 5.

10. How do you gauge morale in your school?

Rationale: This question will provide insight into the signs that the interviewee goes by to determine the level of morale in her school.

11. Do you believe there are differences between male leaders and female leaders? Please describe those differences and share how they might affect morale.

Rationale: This question will provide information from male and female leaders based on their personal experiences. Answers from this question can be compared to answers to

questions 3 and 4 based on the gender of the interviewee. The answers to this question can also be compared to question 2 about perceived leadership styles.

Ethical Considerations

Before the research process began, the necessary information about this project was submitted to the review board at Appalachian State University. Once permission to proceed with the project was granted, I met with the Director of the Department of Research of the Moss Hill School District. At this time, a description of my project was given to the director. This meeting gave the director an opportunity to ask questions about my study. The director also completed a form granting approval for the study.

The teachers and administrators selected to participate in the interviews were given an informed consent form. The form provided a description of the research project while also providing information about the purpose and the aim of the study and how the results were to be used. Principals and teachers were advised that they could withdraw from the research project at any time. The form indicated that the names of teachers and principals, as well as the names of their schools, will remain anonymous at all times (Glesne, 2011). No type of financial reward was given to the participants. However, I will explore ways to "give back" to the principals and the teachers for their willingness to allow me to conduct interviews. In an effort to give back to principals, I will share with them information that I have learned about teacher morale in an effort to help them strengthen morale in their schools.

As with all research projects, there are legitimate concerns about ensuring that the research process is conducted in a manner reflecting the highest ethical standards. that is One of the major concerns about the research process associated with this project is related to the location of the interviews. It was important for teachers and administrators to feel

comfortable with the interview process. Some teachers could feel ill at ease about participating in an interview about teacher morale while physically in their school. This concern could affect the truthfulness with which interviewees respond. They may worry that colleagues or administrators will overhear them and may wish for colleagues not be aware that they are participating in the research study. In order to eradicate these concerns, teachers and administrators were asked to decide on where they wanted the interviews to take place. Teachers and administrators who are selected to participate in the interviews were employed in the Moss Hill School District. However, teachers at my school were not selected because they may not have been truthful about their answers for fear that their responses would jeopardize their relationship with me. It was important for teachers to provide truthful information; otherwise, the data is unreliable.

The surveys for teachers and administrators were submitted via the email for the Moss Hill School District. The group listing for all the elementary principals was used. The same applied to the teachers; however, teachers at my school were excluded from the group list.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process involved examining the information collected from surveys and interviews. The surveys were used to identify interview candidates. The interviews were recorded to ensure that all information was gathered. The recordings were transcribed so that the conversations can be read easily and make the coding process easier. A thematic analysis was used to examine the data that focused on the identification of themes or patterns. Data coding is an integral part of thematic analysis. Once the coding was complete, data was examined to identify those codes that were the same and make a determination about what

was at the core of the data (Glesne, 2011). It is important at that point to examine the factors that promote the reoccurring themes that were seen in the research. An examination of the data was conducted to find information that was coded the same way while paying attention to information relating to gendered practices of the administrators and the effects of those practices on morale that separate along the lines of gender. The thematic analysis of the interviews aided in detecting connections between information gathered from teachers and principals regarding gendered practices and the effects of those practices on teacher morale.

Audience

The information gathered about teacher morale and the affects that gendered practices of the principals have on morale will provide information to principals and school districts that can hopefully improve the working relationships between teachers and school leaders. Ultimately, it could also improve school climate and in turn enhance productivity. Previous research has examined factors that affect teacher morale, indicating that the leadership practices of principals can promote either and low or high teacher morale. Using findings from the research in this study on the effects of gendered practices, principals and district leaders will be able to develop new strategies and approaches that could enhance teacher morale. By promoting a greater understanding of the effects of gendered leadership practices, school leaders will be able to improve teacher retention rates, thereby heightening student achievement. Both female and male leaders will develop a deeper understanding of gendered practices and the impact those practices have on teacher morale. This information can help both female and male school administrators grow as educational leaders by understanding, identifying, and implementing practices that positively impact teacher morale. Equipped with this insight, male and female leaders can step outside gender norms and adopt

gendered practices associated with the opposite sex to help them create healthy school climates. The study will also provide new information to teachers that hopefully will cause them to look less at gender and more about particular leadership traits that a leader demonstrates, regardless of their gender.

It is also my hope that this study will provide important stories that reveal the complex challenges that women in educational leadership face and will encourage educational researchers to conduct additional research about women in educational leadership. Research must delve deeper and focus not only on the professional level but also the personal level (Strahan, 1993). Future research must include information about the balancing act between the professional responsibilities of female educational leaders and their personal responsibilities (Strahan, 1993). The study of educational leadership can benefit from this information and all leaders, regardless of gender, can grow as a result of sharing the information from this study.

Validity

An important component of my project pertains to the selection of the interviewees. The number of different people who were interviewed, interview transcripts, descriptions and themes from the interviews added depth to the research. This triangulation added to the accuracy of my findings because it relied on multiple sources of information, which constituted accuracy in the findings (Creswell, 2005). The interview questions serve as guideposts for conversations; however, close attention was made to opportunities to ask further questioning based on responses from interviewees.

Limitations and Strengths

It is not unusual for the participants in a study to feel uneasy about sharing certain information with the researcher. For some participants, there may be an innate fear that information could get back to their superiors regardless of the steps the researcher takes to prevent this disclosure. As a result, there is a possibility that not all information that is shared is truly representative of how the participants really feel about gendered practices of the administrators and how they believe the practices affect teacher morale.

There is also a concern about various participants being unable to remain with the project throughout completion. Things may occur in the lives of the participants that could prevent them from being able to remain with the project until it is completed. However, in the case of this study, there were no participants who were unable to complete the interview process. This prevented the sample size from being jeopardized. If the sample size is altered in any way, it can affect whether generalizations can be made about the findings (Creswell, 2005).

An obvious strength of my research conducted on this topic is my background as an educator. My past as a classroom teacher provides me with firsthand experiences about things that negatively and positively affected my morale and my colleagues' morale. As a classroom teacher, I worked under female administrators and as an assistant principal, I worked at a school led by a male principal. Because of this, I had a unique ability to relate to the interviewees on a personal level of experience.

The pool of candidates who were selected to participate also served as a strength of this research study. Male and female teachers were selected who had experiences working

for both male and female leaders, while male and female principals were selected who had experiences working under male and female principals when they were teachers. These interviewees were able to compare teacher morale at schools led by men to teacher morale in schools led by women. This prevented me, the researcher, from making assumptions or drawing conclusions by comparing information from teachers who had only been led by men to feedback from teachers who had only been led by women. The attitudes and beliefs of the male and female administrators also added varying viewpoints that touched on how administrators view factors that affect morale and their thoughts about gendered practices in school administration.

Summary

Due to the nature of this study, a qualitative approach was appropriate for studying the gendered practices of principals and their effects on teacher morale. Data was obtained from this interpretative study that will add to our knowledge of leadership, gender, and teacher morale. The next chapter will introduce themes and subthemes that emerged from data collected from teacher and principal respondents.

Chapter Four-Findings

This study was designed to explore the gendered practices of elementary principals and the effects of those practices on teacher morale. Teachers and principals in a large urban school district in Southeastern US were selected as the participants in this study.

The following are research questions established at the beginning of this investigation about the effects of gendered practices of elementary principals on teacher morale:

- What are the general factors that affect teacher morale?
- What impact do principals have on teacher morale?
- What are the gendered traits and practices observed in male leaders?
- What are the gendered traits practices observed in female leaders?
- What are the gendered leadership traits and practices that positively impact teacher morale?
- What are the gendered leadership traits and practices that negatively impact teacher morale?

In order to explore these questions, qualitative research methods were used. The researcher relied on an interpretative approach by interacting with the participants in the social settings of the participants. The researcher gained information by talking with participants about their perceptions (Glesne, 2011).

Participants in the study were identified through the use of a self-reporting questionnaire. A survey was sent out to all elementary school teachers and elementary school principals in the Moss Hill School District. The purpose of the survey was to gather information about teachers and principals as it relates to teacher morale. Questions focused

on the respondents' years of service, the level of schools in which they worked, whether or not morale is important, the role the administrator plays in shaping morale, and also their thoughts about the influence that an administrator's gender has on leadership. All responses were reviewed and results were recorded. Additionally, the selection of teachers and principals to participate in interviews was made based on their answers to the survey questions. Data was also collected from the surveys of people who were not selected to participate in interviews. Interviews were used in order to examine what cannot be seen about the research topic, while also investigating alternative explanations of what is seen about the gendered practices of elementary principals and the effects of the practices on teacher morale (Glesne, 2011).

Respondents' Autobiographies/Experiences

Teacher and principal respondents who were interviewed gave accounts of their experiences working under the leadership of male and female principals. Their responses to questions about gender and leadership and their stories based upon personal experiences revealed their thinking about how the gender of a leader and teacher morale are connected. Initially, some interview respondents believed that gender impacted leadership styles. However, during interviews respondents began to reflect upon characteristics of leaders that were not gender specific. As the listener, I was able to make connections between their past experiences and their answers to questions about leadership traits, the gender of the leader, and teacher morale.

The experiences of the teacher and principal respondents clearly impacted their thoughts on teacher morale. The leadership attributes that were shared by the respondents could oftentimes be traced back to specific interviewees' biographies. Introspection about

their personal experiences and stories during the interview process led them to identify attributes or practices that they felt resulted in either high or low teacher morale.

Attributes Identified By Respondents

Teacher and principal respondents shared leadership attributes associated with high teacher morale during interviews. The attributes that were identified were specific observable qualities. The attributes are:

- exemplary role models,
- character and ethic practices/values,
- leaders who created trust in the school community,
- leaders filled with integrity, and
- respect and value for teachers.

The attributes or qualities that were identified in leaders by interviewees were used as the foundation for certain themes that were identified in this study. These themes were indicated as factors that foster and maintain high teacher morale. The attributes establish the foundation for important themes to grow and develop within a school community.

Themes Generated from Data

Current literature on this topic describes the changes over time in regards to the acceptance of men and women in education leadership throughout this research. The leadership traits attributed to creating high teacher morale were outlined as well as traits that are typically associated with male and female leaders. Themes and subthemes were identified that represent traits that are factors in establishing high teacher morale. The themes and subthemes are as follows:

- Trust based on:
    - Sharing decision-making, collaboration, and freedom to try new ideas.
    - Personal integrity and respect for teachers.
- Providing administrative support to teachers.
- Visibility of administrator throughout the building based on:
    - Open door policy
    - Approachability
- The personal and collective recognition and celebration of teachers' accomplishments.
- Expectations and vision.
- A personal sense of fair treatment and fairness interwoven throughout the school community based on:
    - Sense of family.
    - Focus on people rather than on test scores.

These themes include the need for of trust between teachers and administrators, a collaborative relationship that engages teachers in the decision-making process, and an environment that fosters a teacher's creativity and desire to try new ideas. Data also suggests that the respect and personal integrity of the school leader is an influential factor in establishing high teacher morale. Support for teachers and the high visibility of the leader were themes that led to high morale in the school. Specifically, interviewees mentioned the idea of an "open-door" policy and also approachability as examples of high visibility. Teachers and principals felt that recognition and acknowledgement for the teachers' work, aids in maintaining high teacher morale, for the individual, and the collective group.

Principals similarly suggested that celebrations in the school serve as arenas in which they can support high teacher morale. According to teacher respondents, high morale cannot be maintained when there is not a clearly defined vision for the school community developed by the leader. In cooperation with the vision of the school community comes the "sense of family" within the school community. A sense of family is developed when a leader seeks to treat everyone with fairness and with equity within in the school community. In order to support high teacher morale, respondents felt that leaders need to maintain focus on the school family and not to become preoccupied totally with test scores.

Trust

The first theme that is important to high teacher morale is trust. Based on data from this study, a sense of trust is an integral part of a school with high teacher morale. The behaviors of a principal are highly connected to the feelings of trust experienced by faculty members (Tarter, Bliss, & Hoy, 1989). A school with high morale will have a sense of trust woven through the school community. Teacher respondents were asked to put themselves in the place of school leaders and to identify those things they felt would be necessary for them as leaders to have in schools with high morale. A teacher respondent answered this question by saying, "I would have to say trust, but trust has to be earned. It can't just be given. It must be earned. I would want an atmosphere of trust. I would work to have my faculty be able to trust me." A female principal suggested that trust was the most necessary important component of high teacher morale. She stated:

> I mess up every single day but I think they know that and that I am like, 'Uh, oh. Sorry I messed up guys and I am so sorry.' And that is the biggest piece is just trust. Is there trust? Everything else I can mess up on, but

> I've got to keep that trust and that is with parents and the kids and the community and everything else. Without that, you're just sunk. So, if I fail at everything else, if I have trust, I'm good.

Based on the stories shared by principals and teachers, the data did not indicate that the gender of the administrator mattered in the establishment of trust among school personnel. In addition, the participants' responses did not indicate that gender was important in their identification of trustworthy qualities.

Trust in shared decision-making, collaboration, and the freedom to try new ideas. Trust in shared decision-making, collaboration, and the freedom to try new ideas is the first subtheme of trust. Teacher and principal respondents spoke about the importance of trust in relation to teachers sharing in decision-making. Both teacher and principal respondents felt that teachers should feel they have trust from their leaders to try new ideas and approaches to problems. Beyond that, respondents indicated that trust exists in school communities where collaboration is highly valued. An administrator's ability to relinquish control and encourage shared leadership practices and collective decision-making are typical in schools where trust within the school community is prevalent (Tarter et al., 1989). Respondents felt that teachers want to be trusted to try new things without the worry of being reprimanded if they fail. Without that concern, teachers feel they have the freedom to try new things without having every move scrutinized and every detail micro-managed.

Similarly, principal respondents felt that teachers need opportunities to grow as teacher leaders, which requires trust and collaboration. The norm of shared decision-making provides the foundation for the growth of teacher leaders (Protheroe, 2006). Leaders who control all aspects of the school community jeopardize teachers' creativity and tendency to

experiment because there is not an appropriate framework of freedom in which they can try new ideas and approaches. Without that opportunity, teachers can feel that their leaders do not value their ideas. Interview data from both principals and teachers indicate that there was no connection between gender of the leader and the opportunities for collaboration and shared decision making. The same applies to the freedom to try new ideas without the fear of being reprimanded if those ideas fail. A teacher respondent felt that teachers need the "freedom to try new things, freedom to fail, freedom to have things fail and not be reprimanded."

Personal integrity and respect. Personal integrity and respect were identified as a second subtheme of trust. A principal's respect and perceived personal integrity by members of the school community help to solidify trust. Leaders demonstrating competence in their responsibilities and personal integrity were also factors connected to trust among school personnel (Tarter et al., 1989). When asked to share her thoughts on leaders and their actions that support high morale, a teacher respondent stated, "Well, I think that, first and foremost, the leader needs to be a good person. They are a leader. They are a leader of a school. People are looking at them. They see how they behave and how they handle themselves." Respondent data indicates that low morale that is the result of a lack of respect and integrity is particularly multi-faceted because of the perceived connection between trust and respect by teachers. Respondent data indicated that mutual respect between the leader and teachers placed the leader on the same level as the teachers, which is important to relationship building, and, ultimately

These relationships, based on mutual trust and respect, are essential to building a strong school climate (Noddings, 2003). In regard to school leaders and respect, one teacher

respondent reported, “Principals should command respect, not as an authoritarian, but to be able to draw that respect from people.” The leader needs to make teachers feel secure in sharing ideas and viewpoints and then use those ideas and views to help create the overall vision of the school community. The actions and decisions that are made in school communities should reflect an alignment between the ideas of members in the school community. Additionally, members of the school community need to operate in an environment that demonstrates an ethic of caring. Under this ethic of caring, the greatest obligation of educators is to pay attention to the ethical ideas of the people that they are leading. These ideas should be acknowledged and nurtured by educators (Noddings, 2003). During interviews, many respondents shared their ethical ideas. One respondent made the following statement about school leaders, “They need to have integrity. They need to know right from wrong and they need to be consistent and they are a leader and they are role models. Integrity is huge.” Participants did not indicate any differences based on the gender of the leader. Once again, these desired attributes transcend gender.

Support

Support is the second theme that was identified from the teacher and principal. According to Sergiovanni (1984), there are four levels of the leadership hierarchy. The human level relates to a leader’s ability to harness available human resources. Based on that, it can be asserted that human relations are important to the leader. The leader shows that the members of the school community and the stakeholders are important and valued by providing support, encouragement and professional growth opportunities. The educational leader acts as the clinical practitioner and brings expert knowledge to the school as he or she diagnoses problems, counsels teachers, and provides supervision to help staff members grow.

In fact, support is so vital to a school that the theme of support was mentioned by all four of the teachers in the interview group. In many instances, support was mentioned in reference to principals supporting teachers when situations occurred that involved parents. However, support in the form of resources related to curriculum and instruction were also suggested as being motivators of high or low morale of the teachers. Some respondents also indicated that during the explorative trial and error process, leaders need to provide support to aid in the success of these new ideas. Providing additional assistance to classroom teachers in the form of human resources was identified as an essential form of support that strengthens teacher morale.

In addition to the above-referenced forms of support, principal respondents spoke about their efforts to create school-wide schedules that provide support to teachers by allowing time for collaboration and counseling. Principal respondents also shared their thoughts about the importance of support for teachers with areas relating to curriculum and instruction. Several principal respondents spoke about their efforts to support teachers and expressed the belief that the staff should know that there is someone to listen and help arrive at a solution, regardless of the problem. A principal respondent stated:

> Teachers are the ones on the front lines so I've got to support them. I've got to make sure they have what they need. Resources, whether it be time, [taking] something away to provide more time for planning or teaching. I listen to what they need.

According to the data from principals and teachers, participants did not indicate a difference in perceptions of support based on gender. Instead, there are examples of both male and

female leaders who are extremely supportive as well as those who do not provide sufficient support to their teachers.

Visibility

Visibility is the third theme that was identified from the interview data collected from teachers and principals. For all of the study participants, visibility of school leaders was voiced as a top priority for creating high teacher morale. According to Flore (2000), school leaders must be available to the stakeholders when they are needed. This is accomplished by maintaining high visibility (Flore, 2000). One respondent shared his experience with a leader that was not visible by saying, "Autonomy is good, but when there is no general leading the army, I think that breeds insecurity." Respondents indicated that highly visible principals visit classrooms with frequency and that these visits allow relationships to develop between the leader, the teachers, and students. One teacher reported, "I like it when my administrators come into my room and take the time to, you know, chat or talk to my kids. I like it when I see the people who lead our school come sit in the classrooms."

Other respondents felt that principals who are not visible are not available to see that some people may not sufficiently fill their role and that their responsibilities go unfulfilled. This idea of a "missing link" leads other teachers to feel uncomfortable and potentially insecure in their own roles. On the other hand, low visibility also prevents administrators from observing or acknowledging all that some teachers are doing. Others expressed that the presence of school leaders serves as comfort for both teachers and students, especially if high visibility is the norm for school leaders (Flore, 2000).

The comfort that comes from the active presence of school administrators was unanimously cited by all principal respondents as essential to high teacher morale. Leaders

felt that high visibility allowed them to judge the morale in the building, while giving them the opportunity to determine who might need various forms of support. One principal respondent felt that being out and about sends the message to staff that the leader is not, "just sitting around in some ivory tower, making decisions and talking on the phone, but that you're out in the building, you know their names, you know the kids' names, that you are out there makes a big difference." According to Niece (1993), effective principals are people oriented and interactional. The high visibility of effective principals allows them to serve as role models for students and teachers, and not just figureheads.

Interview data from teachers and principals does not indicate that gender of the leader influenced their perceptions of leader visibility. That is, participants did not think that females or males differed in their visibility behavior in schools. Respondents shared stories of male and female leaders who were highly visible as well as male and female leaders who were not visible.

Open-door policy and approachability. Interview data collected from teachers and principals identified open-door policy and approachability as a subtheme of visibility. Not only is the high visibility of school leaders essential to high teacher morale, but taking the time to meet and talk with staff members is important as well. According to respondent data, an open-door policy and approachability are subthemes of visibility. Respondents shared stories about the school leaders who, regardless of how busy they are, will take the time to talk with teachers. Respondents felt that the "open-door policy" makes principals accessible to teachers. One respondent shared that highly accessible leaders are able to build a connection between teachers and students and, as a result, the principal is placed on the same level, as opposed to a superior level, with the teacher and students. Principal respondents felt

that an open-door policy and approachability were important in their efforts to counsel, listen, and provide feedback to teachers. One principal respondent talked about the importance of creating relationships with his staff. He shared that it is important for his staff to trust that the door to his office is always open to them in the event they need support. Based on interview data from teachers and principals, participants did not articulate perceptions of differences between males and females with regard to an "open-door policy" in their practices.

Recognition and Acknowledgement

The fourth theme identified from teacher and principal interview data is recognition and acknowledgement. Teachers and principals feel that recognition and acknowledgement are important to teacher morale. According to literature about teacher morale, failure to recognize accomplishments can have a detrimental effect on the morale in schools. In fact, many teachers feel they receive little recognition for their work and efforts. Briggs and Richardson (1992) suggest, "Educators recognized the lack of recognition as the most common causative descriptor of low morale" (p. 8). Respondents feel that failure to recognize people for their hard work sends the message that the work of the teachers in the building is not important to the administration. The data reflects that everyone should have a chance to be recognized and that the same people should not be recognized all the time. However, respondents did make a point to indicate that this recognition could be private or public. A teacher respondent described his past experiences with a female principal at a time that stood out as having the "poorest morale" in his career. The teacher said:

> No matter what you did, it was never good enough. In fact, in the years I worked for this person, I never once got a 'good job' or a 'thank you'. I am not embellishing that. Never once. Never thanked. Never told I had done a good job. Never.

Principal respondent data indicates that all the principals that were interviewed feel that recognition and acknowledgement are important to teacher morale and they shared their stories about the various ways they recognize and acknowledge teachers at their schools. Based on the interview data from both teacher and principal respondents, participants did not articulate perceptions of differences between males and females with regard to recognition and acknowledgement of staff members.

Celebrations. Oddly, based on the analysis of the data collected from interviews, celebrations were identified as a subtheme of recognition and acknowledgement for principals, but not for teachers. All four of the principals spoke about their efforts to have celebrations for their staff members. Regardless of the size, the principal respondents feel that staff celebrations were important to morale. They also shared information about the importance of also celebrating teachers' individual accomplishments at staff meetings such as new babies, engagements, and mentioning National Board Certification recipients and other accomplishments. Principals feel that it is important to acknowledge staff members with cards on their birthdays as well as with hand written notes for other things that have taken place. Holiday celebrations are also important to the principal respondents. When talking about celebrations, a male principal respondent said, "We celebrate our successes together, but I take the failures."

Expectations and Vision

The analysis of the interviews with teachers led to the identification of expectations and vision as a fifth theme. Respondent data demonstrates the problems that arise when school communities do not have a clear vision and set of expectations for staff members. An effective leader will establish a school-wide vision for the school upon which the effectiveness of the school is dependent. It is up to the principals to create the vision and go about the task of getting the other stakeholders on board with the vision statement (Mendels, 2012). The vision created by the principal is also instrumental in setting the expectations for the teachers and the students. Once effective leaders have shaped the vision of the school, the leaders then assume the role of creating teacher leaders that can put the wheels into motion to bring the school vision to fruition. Teacher respondents reflected on the importance of leaders establishing clear expectations and a clear vision for school communities. One respondent said, "Tell me what your priorities are. You don't have to tell me how to do it, but tell me what your priorities are so I can design my program so that it matches the principal's goals, the school improvement goals, and everyone has the same standards." This respondent feels it necessary for the leader to communicate very clear guidelines about what the administration feels is important based on the whole school picture because he feels that he, personally, does not have access to the whole school picture and relies on the principal for a summation.

As the person that takes on the task of laying out a clear vision for the school, principals are expected to act as visionaries for the school based on teacher respondents' feedback. School leaders must always be on the lookout for opportunities to collectively

improve the school and the teachers within the school. Effective leaders are those who create a vision that is centered on the belief that all students can achieve while also instilling this expectation in the minds of the teachers (Mendels, 2012).

A teacher respondent felt that female leaders found it easier to create a vision as well as establish clear expectations for a school. She stated:

> Expectations are very direct, very specific, and you know what the expectation is. There's clarity, there's no gray area, you lay it on the line, you tell me what your expectation is, you tell me what you want me to do to get there, and I am good to go.

This respondent feels that male leaders have more difficulty with being direct and clear when their staff is predominately women. She feels that the expectations of male leaders are not quite as clear because men spend time wondering about how their predominately female staff will process the information that the male leaders are relaying. This teacher respondent felt the "wishy-washy" expectations of a male leader did not provide clarity for the staff in terms of how to get from "Point A to Point B." She indicates that the leader was reluctant to point out what needed to be done. She stated, "You're saying, 'What am I doing? Where am I going? Why are people saying that we're not doing well enough, but nobody's bothering to tell us what we are not doing right?" Gender seems to be important when this participate did not respect the administrator's behaviors. However, other respondents shared stories about male leaders who are well versed at establishing the vision and expectations for a school, suggesting that the gender of leaders does not affect their ability to establish a clear vision and clear expectations for members of the school community.

Despite this obvious emphasis on expectations and vision for the school community, only one principal respondent shared thoughts about this overarching subject. She indicated that it is important for the leadership team and the school administrator to be "on the same page" in regards to the plans for moving the school forward. This principal respondent feels that it is imperative for the entire school community to have a thorough understanding of the leader's vision for the school.

Fair Treatment of Everyone

Teacher and principal interview data identified fair treatment of everyone as a sixth theme. A cause of low morale that continued to come up within the interviews associated with this study was partiality toward staff members. School administrators must pay attention to the organizational core values that are just and fair (Murphy, 2002). Teachers participating in the interviews spoke about the importance of everyone being treated fairly, while also being expected to conduct themselves by the same standards. In other words, some teachers should not to be expected to perform in accordance with one set of standards while others are allowed to do as they please. A teacher respondent stated:

> Things that I have not enjoyed are partiality where some teachers are reprimanded for things and others are not. Some teachers get privileges, others do not. Some teachers may be working their tails off, others may not be working very hard, but yet it is the same for everybody.

Other teacher respondents described blatant favoritism as a problem associated with female leaders. Both male and female teachers described experiences with female leaders where favoritism was present within the schools. One female teacher respondent advised, "What I don't like that I see or have seen in women is that they have favorites and that can

really do in morale as quickly, in my opinion, as anything. Because once your teachers start seeing that there's a group of people that you tend to cling to more, that is not a good situation at all."

Another teacher respondent indicated that favoritism in the school manifests itself through uneven workloads. Some teachers are expected to do more than others, while some teachers are allowed to go without fulfilling the responsibilities associated with their roles within in the school. However, these are problems that were also connected with some of the male leaders described by respondents; therefore, there is no correlation between unfair treatment and gender of the school leader based on teacher respondent data.

During one interview, a female principal respondent elaborated on her efforts to maintain fair treatment of everyone by aiming to, "keep [her] pulse on the school so that everyone is treated fairly." She also spoke about how teachers have varying personalities that make some easier to build relationships with than others. However, she stressed the importance of treating everyone the same way even if some are easier to connect with than others.

Sense of family and focus on test scores. Interview data collected from teachers and principals identified a sense of family and focus on test scores as a subtheme of fair treatment of everyone. Throughout the interviews associated with this study, several of the members of the interview group spoke about the dangers associated with a constant focus on test scores. They feel that focus on nothing but test scores is a factor associated with low morale in schools. During an interview, a male teacher respondent reflected back over his experiences with a female principal that was predominately focused on test scores. He commented,

"There was a heavy, heavy, emphasis on test scores, as in, that's all that mattered at the end of the day. Um, forgetting that each child is a person that means the world to somebody." Based on the interview data collected from this teacher respondent, the respondent felt that this heavy emphasis on test scores and lack of concern for the students was something he had only observed with a female leader and not the male leaders that he had worked with in the past.

In contrast, interview data emphasized that high morale was present in schools where staff members considered themselves to be members of a cohesive family. When asked to talk about times when morale was low, one respondent spoke about a time when the main focus of the school was on test scores. She explained:

> I think anytime that I have been in a place where morale got kind of bad, it is because the group of teachers feel the focus is just on test scores and how all that stuff is going. All the good stuff kind of just gets lost in the shuffle and then you feel like all you are is somebody that's there to raise test scores. Testing is important but that is not what really needs to be focused on all the time.

Teacher respondents feel that creating a sense of family and an overall message that "we are all in this together" is essential to high teacher morale. A teacher respondent stated, "We need good leaders, yes, but we all have to work together because it's like a family. And if your leader is not a pivotal part of your family, it's just hard to make it work for me."

This sense of family within a school community was considered important by all of the school administrators that were included in the interview group. Respondents feel that staff members must view the leader as one of them and as being "in their corner." Leaders

also feel that it is important to build relationships with staff members by connecting with teachers, not only on a professional level, but also on a personal level. One principal respondent feels that this connection helps him to gain cooperation from his staff members.

Additionally, all of the principal respondents shared experiences about their efforts to address issues that arise in the "school family" they work hard to preserve. Leaders suggested that they work out issues as a school just as a family works out problems that may arise. One principal respondent stated, "I always say family comes first. And, so, we really work it out if there are family issues and we are a family. We work really hard to be a family." During one interview, a male principal respondent described a female leader that he believes to be an example of a strong administrator. His comments about this woman were, "She gets people. It's not all about numbers and all about results. It's about what is good for people."

The principal respondent interview data, as well as the teacher respondent data, demonstrates that gender is not connected with the "sense of family" that is considered to be important to teacher morale. Both male and female principals shared their beliefs about the value of creating the sense of family in schools and teachers shared stories indicating that, in some instances, male and female leaders are too focused on tests scores; however, there were also stories shared that demonstrated the ability of both male and female leaders to create those school climates where people feel they are part of a family and that they are more important that test scores.

My Story Based on Research

According to my review of the available literature on this topic, there are traits that have been traditionally identified as being exclusive to male or female leaders. However, the

data collected during this study indicates that teacher morale is not influenced by the gender of the school leader, but rather by the behaviors exemplified by the leader, regardless of their gender. There are no attributes that were considered by the participants to be exclusive to a particular gender. Both male and female principals were known to possess the attributes that encouraged those themes associated with high teacher morale such as valuing teachers, treating teachers with respect, and providing them with support. There were also both male and female leaders who were unable to demonstrate these actions. There were examples of school communities led by either men or women where collaboration and shared-decision making took place as well as those school communities led by either a man or a woman where the authoritarian leadership was prevalent. The same applied to the visibility of leaders and the ability of leaders to treat everyone fairly.

The data collected from respondents of this study indicates an overwhelming belief that teacher morale is not based upon the gender of the leader, but more on character of the leader. Some respondents indicated that the key to teacher morale lies in the personality of the leader. Additionally, other respondents suggested that leaders demonstrate varying "sets of behaviors" that ultimately can have an impact on the tone and morale of the school as a whole. It seemed that some respondents had preconceived notions about the way a leader's gender impacts morale, but found that that, as they discussed their experiences working for different leaders with different "sets of behaviors," gender was not the primary factor that influenced the way they looked at good and bad leaders. Specifically, one respondent began the interview clearly believing that gender of the leader affects teacher morale; however, during the conversation that took place in the interview, the teacher stated, "You know, I

think it is not about the leader but about the individual and the character traits of the leader" that affect teacher morale.

In this assertion that gender does not seem to be evident in stories told by participants of administrators who practiced the behaviors described here or who seems to embody the attributes of a quality leader. Both teacher and principal interview respondents discussed the belief that the behaviors, character, and personality of the leader determines the morale rather than the gender of the leader. Despite this consensus, the conversations that took place during this research, indicated that both teachers and principals find themselves looking at gender as a distinct binary, rather than a sliding-scale continuum depending on varying circumstances. The idea of gender continuum is unique as it takes not only biological sex, but also gender expression into account when discussing a person's gender. Gender expression, as described by Killerman (2013) refers to the way people dress, behave, and interact with other people based on their specific environment or situation. Because people are adaptable to different scenarios, they oftentimes change the way they dress or converse with others, which suggests that people express their gender in a way that is constantly changing (Killerman, 2013). Administrators are constantly subject to a changing gender expression and inevitably express themselves differently depending on the situation they are in at the time. They may be stern in one situation and more relaxed in another from day-to-day. In summation, based on research data collected from this study, there is no identified set of characteristics or behaviors that should be attributed to leaders solely on the basis of their gender. The data collected from this study, however, did show that respondents retreated to gender norms and gender stereotypes when the respondents became dissatisfied within specific situations. Remarkably, this study also identified observable leadership traits

attributed to effective leaders that transcend gender. Those traits should be developed in both male and female leaders. In turn, teachers should focus on the traits rather than the gender of the leader when evaluating their performance.

Trust/Mistrust

Trust seems to be the overarching factor in establishing high teacher morale. An analysis of interview data collected from teacher and principal respondents led to the identification of other themes that were present in the data, all of which were directly or indirectly related to trust or the absence of trust in the school community.

As teachers and principals were interviewed, they gave negative and positive accounts of their various professional experiences, many of which shared a common underlying theme of trust, regardless of whether or not these experiences were being recalled in a positive or negative light. A sense of trust prevailed in those school communities where teachers felt they were free to try new ideas, collaborate, and take part in decision making. Those respondents who felt supported and respected by their leaders also felt these leaders could be trusted. This respect aided in establishing relationships that allowed a bond of trust to develop. When leaders were not respectful or did not demonstrate integrity, any sense of trust in the school community diminished. In these cases, gender seemed important and was identified as a characteristic voiced by some participants. This was exemplified in teacher discussions of favoritism and the unfair treatment of colleagues. Leaders who recognized and acknowledged their staff members were those leaders who typically had high teacher morale. Because staff members saw that the leader was not taking all the credit for the accomplishments within the school, inevitably, teachers under these administrators had a higher sense of self-worth, which added to the sense of trust in the school.

The principal respondents provided accounts throughout their interviews that support the strong connection between trust and teacher morale. Principal respondents suggested morale is dependent upon the trust their staff has in them and vice versa. Their trust in the staff is shown in their ability as leaders to relinquish control and allow teachers to participate in shared-decision making. Leaders felt that their trust in teachers is demonstrated when they, as leaders, create opportunities for members of the school community to come together and collaborate about matters related to the goals of the school. Leaders felt that they must demonstrate trust in teachers by allowing them to "think outside the box" and be creative. Teachers must feel they have the freedom to try new ideas without the fear of a reprimand if things fail. One principal respondent felt that the first step in creating the trust in his building is to make certain that he is approachable and that he has an open door policy for all staff members. This leader feels it is important for teachers to trust in the fact that he is approachable and that they can at any time come to him for help in solving a problem.

Summary

Based on data collected from this study, the leadership style of principals defined set of behaviors, values, and personality were identified to exemplify a quality leaders. Only a few participants indicated that gender was important. Participants shared stories during their interviews that reflected their dissatisfaction with particular leaders. Leaders, regardless of their gender, who possess the qualities observed in this research study, can promote, enhance, and maintain high morale according to this study. Certain attributes observable in leaders provide the necessary foundation for themes associated with high teacher morale to emerge. Stories shared by teachers and principals demonstrated the influence that personal experiences had on respondents' thoughts about leadership gender and teacher morale.

Chapter Five-Analysis

A review of respondent data indicates that effective leadership that is respected by teachers because of its ability to promote positive morale should not be attributed to the gender of the leader, but rather to the leader's character and specific traits that are valued by rank and file. Despite this revelation, in this study, teachers frequently returned to the traditional binary lens, which attributed specific leadership traits, both good and bad to the leader based upon their gender. This was evident during the interviews when respondents suggested that the actions demonstrated by the leaders were related to their gender rather than to the leader's personality of the leader, behaviors, character or values. However, when prompted to reflect on their past experiences, gender began to fade away and the focus of their analysis became more about attributes or sets of gender-neutral behaviors. As mentioned in Chapter Four, some respondents referred to a "set of behaviors" the leader demonstrates that sets the tone for morale in the school community. One respondent began the interview clearly believing that the gender of the leader affected the teacher morale. During the interview, however, the teacher stated, "You know, I think it is not about the leader but about the individual and the character traits of the leader" that affect teacher morale.

Teacher and principal interview respondents frequently shared information indicating that gender did not influence teacher morale. In their eyes, the behaviors, character, or personality of the leader is more of a motivating factor that influences the morale in the building than the gender of the leader. However, an analysis of interview data clearly suggests that under certain circumstances, teachers and principals retreat to viewing gender as a binary or through a binary lens rather than as a continuum. Gender only mattered when

the respondents were unhappy with the traits and behaviors of their administrators. Gender expression is the manner in which a person dresses, behaves, and interacts with others. Gender expression may change from one moment to the next depending on the event (Killerman, 2013). Changes based on an event can promote changes in the way a person dresses or interacts with others; indicating that these things change and are not constant (Killerman, 2013). Various situations call upon school administrators to express themselves differently depending on circumstances surrounding the situations. Men and women alike are required to express characteristics that have been defined traditionally as belonging to a specific gender. However, upon introspection, many participants in this study were eager to describe qualities of effective leaders that seemed to transcend gender, thus bringing the traditional binary representation of gender into question. Instead, most participants repeatedly indicated there should not be a specific set of behaviors assigned exclusively to one gender or the other.

Patriarchy

Historically, the patriarchal model has framed the roles and positions of men and women in education. To some extent, the vestiges of patriarchy are still present. This is evident in the comment of one male respondent who felt that two female leaders could not work together effectively because "they were wired the same." This respondent did not indicate that this would also be the case with two male leaders. Based on the research in this study, there is much hope that the patriarchal model can be replaced by one that focuses on the defined qualities of the leader rather than their gender. A review of literature about gender in education provides information indicating that patriarchy has long been evident in education. The influences of patriarchy have affected the design of the curriculum in schools

as well as the placement of teachers. Information presented in Chapter Two demonstrates, not only the influence of patriarchy in the development of curriculum, but also the distinctions that are made between male and female students in the classroom. Because schools and the people who work in them are situated in a society governed by patriarchy, the imbalance between males and females in leadership roles is evident. Female teachers are far more present in the classroom than males (Gupton, 2009). However, the literature in Chapter Two indicates that this is not the case when considering females in leadership roles. Based on data collected from this study, the imbalance is not due to traits that are associated only with females, but because, for so many years, educational leadership positions were held by males rather than females due to stereotypical attitudes and beliefs about the roles of men and women in society and the workplace. This is also a result of a society governed by patriarchy. According to Murray and Simmons (1994), theories in educational leadership strongly substantiate a male perspective and consciousness.

The idea of patriarchy generates a gravitational pull on society. History and literature perpetuate this gravitational pull. We are in a new age of feminist research and leadership research. We are faced with the task of how to pull away from old stereotypes and move forward with new ideas that are ethically and character based rather than gender based. However, because of the shifting paradigm, we must be prepared for the fact that people continue to retreat to patriarchal influences. We are in a time in which women are emerging as leaders and gender seems less important than the qualities of a person in a leadership role. The present time calls upon us to look at the attributes related to leadership rather than gender.

Return of Gender as a Binary

Specific situations remembered by the participants where teachers or principals experienced encounters with leaders that were not pleasant or favorable prompted them to return to the gender binary. This is a major finding that resulted from this study. Situations where teachers felt stressed caused the gender binary to surface due to the fear and uncertainty brought on by the unfavorable leadership traits that they experienced with a leader of a particular gender. Lack of support and perceived leadership favoritism brought about those unfavorable conditions that further encouraged the use of the gender binary in respondent descriptions. In such instances, the respondents reverted back to their preconceived view of specific traits, good or bad that they attribute to each gender and ascribed those traits to that leader. This resulted in generalizations being made about the leader based solely on gender, rather than the specific leadership traits used by that leader.

Persistence of Sex Roles and Gender Stereotypes

Despite the fact that teacher respondents and principal respondents felt that morale was shaped by the character or behaviors demonstrated by the leader, rather than the gender of the leader, there was evidence of gender stereotypes and gender roles present when interviewing teachers and principals. Based on personal accounts of the teacher and leaders respondents, in some situations the personal experiences of the respondents encouraged them to make generalizations about males and females based on personal experiences with a particular male leader or a particular female leader. A male teacher respondent indicated that women were viewed as feeding off empathy and emotion, which affects how they perceive issues. This same male teacher respondent described men as having a herd mentality. Some

portrayed female leaders as having difficulty treating everyone fairly, while male leaders were described as finding it difficult to establish high expectations for fear of upsetting the emotional females on staff.

Based on data collected from this study, gender expression transcends the traditional definition, which indicates that gender expression is related to how an individual presents himself as either masculine or feminine in society. In leadership, gender expression relates to the actions, approaches, and behaviors leaders express in a given situation or context and how those actions are perceived by teachers. Increasingly, from this study, we might surmise that people are seemingly able to judge others with out regard to gender. However, teachers and leaders come with biases about how men and women lead or should lead. An example of this is the male teacher respondent who believed that women leaders fed off empathy and emotion while male leaders were described as having a herd mentality. This is evident from the data collected from interviews with teacher respondents. For the purposes of this study, gender expression is about the way people acts and how those actions are connected to how they feel in terms of their relation to the gender continuum and how people in the culture handle it. The gender continuum is changing how we view gender expression. This shift also informs us about how we should look at leaders.

It seems that we might be beginning to look beyond gender to describe leadership. The gender continuum serves as a metaphor in that people can be who they think they are. People are starting to step outside themselves and are looking at this continuum. In the past, women were described as leading one way and men another way based on gender, but now people are questioning this assumed belief. Historically, definite patterns occurred and continue to occur. During the interviews, some respondents came to a realization that

maybe this issue is not about gender but characteristics of the leader. Actually reflecting on their past experiences and talking about their experiences seemed to lead participants to this realization. Gender stereotypes were held by teachers or voiced typically when teachers were unhappy with certain administrators. They discovered they needed to step outside of gender and examine this new notion. The continuum informs teachers and they are starting to look beyond gender to describe leadership.

Teacher respondents were not the only ones who held these gender stereotype beliefs. The persistence of deeply rooted sexual stereotypes support a need for schools to employ both male and female leaders. The interview data from one principal respondent indicated that he felt the principal and the assistant principal should be of the opposite gender. This belief was based upon the thought that men can relate better to male students and women can relate better to female students.

During the interviews with principal respondents, sex roles and gender stereotypes were also obvious. Women were described as being huggers and good listeners. Women were also portrayed as being more detail-oriented while male leaders were thought to be "big picture," data-driven thinkers. However, male principal respondents identified themselves as "huggers" and "nurturers." Male leaders shared the efforts that they expend to create a supportive and caring school community just as the female leaders shared their stories about being supportive and caring.

Personal Experiences Influence Respondents' Stories

An analysis of the interview data collected from teachers and leaders shows that they connect their stories with their experiences. As the respondents took the time to self-reflect and talk through their answers to the interview questions, they came to the realization that

maybe gender did not always account for what they were seeing. The focus shifted to attributes unrelated to gender that they saw or did not see in their leaders that ultimately affected the morale of the teachers.

Trust/Anti-Trust

Regardless of whether a person is a follower or leader, the way that person thinks about leadership should draw less from gender and more from identifiable leadership traits that promote trust and improve teacher morale. According to data collected from this study, trust is a fundamental principle needed to establish the foundation necessary to create high teacher morale. Trust must be present in order for the themes associated with high teacher morale to emerge. According to Tschannen-Moran (2014), it is difficult for schools progress and reach their goals if a sense of trust is not present in the school community. The visions of school leaders are unobtainable when leaders have not earned the trust of their staff members. As a result, failure and frustration on the part of the staff members becomes prevalent (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). The respondents temporarily abandoned the societal norm, established role, or stereotype of leadership traits being tied to a specific gender. It was, however, not until they stopped and thought about their experiences during the interview process that they begin to think about trust, support, integrity, and fairness as attributes that can be attributed to both men and women. Based on this study, it seems that trust generally functions as the articulated and important indicator of school morale. Throughout the interviews in this study, teachers and principals described a "do or die" mentality in regards to trust. Without trust, teachers indicated that they have little faith in a leader and, as a result, have depressed morale. Similarly, principals suggested that, as long as there is trust between the teachers and principal, problems are solvable and the school

community is able to grow through its experiences. When trust is present, teachers and principals can work together to solve problems while also creating a learning environment that breeds success (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Trust allows shared decision-making processes to take place and flourish in a school. Teachers value the opportunity to take part in shared decision-making while also feeling that they are trusted when allowed to be a part of the decision-making processes in schools. Support with discipline from administrators as well as an eagerness of administrators to address and solve conflicts encourages a sense of trust within a school community. Leaders who micromanage and feel compelled to exert their power result in diminishing any existing trust in the school community (Tschannen-Moran, 2014).

As the interview respondents continued to describe their feelings on leadership, it became clear that they do not believe that their feelings of trust or mistrust are assigned specifically to each gender. Instead, women, as well as men, according to these participants, are able to create environments where feelings of trust prevail. Men and women are also able to create school communities where respect and integrity exist.

Themes

The data collected from principal interviews provided similar conclusions about the relationship between gender and school morale as the data collected from teachers. Both teachers and principals suggested for the most part, respect for a school leader is not rooted in gender, but rather in specific leadership qualities. Both agreed that leaders must trust teachers to collaborate and share in decision-making processes and trust them to try new ideas. Leaders must exemplify character traits that show personal integrity and respect for teachers. Teachers must trust that they will receive support from the leader when needed. A highly visible leader who has an "open-door policy" and who is approachable is identified as

a steward of high teacher morale. Leaders must recognize and celebrate both individual and collective accomplishments with their staff members. It is important for morale that leaders are well versed at establishing high expectations and a vision for the school community.

The culmination of expectations and vision for a school are part of what create the sense of family within a school. Teacher respondents focused heavily on the school community and sense of family and stressed their desire to work in a school that has a family feeling. Teachers want to work in a school community where everyone is valued and treated fairly. It is important to morale that here is a "sense of family" within in the school. The people of the school community are the focus rather than a preoccupation with test scores.

Further Research

Limitations of the study on the topic of the gendered practices of elementary school principals and their effects on teacher morale do present opportunities for further study. A total of 252 teachers responded to the survey that was sent to teachers. Twelve of the respondents were male, 238 were female, and two did not respond to the item asking for gender identity. The low number of male teacher respondents is a limitation to this study. Future studies with a larger sample size for males would be beneficial. However, this low male sample size correlates with the low number of male teachers in the elementary setting as compared to female teachers in the elementary setting. Future studies relating to this topic could include a focus on middle school and high school teachers because there are more males in the middle and high school classrooms than in the elementary school setting.

Along the same vein, one male principal respondent suggested the importance of studying differences between a male leader and a predominately male staff as compared to a female leader with a predominately female staff. His thoughts were that sometimes there is

more of a "rub" between a female leader and a female staff because as he put it, "they are wired more similarly." This belief further substantiates the hold that patriarchy still has on society. The thought that women can sometimes not work together indicates that women can be weak and this weakness can hinder their ability to be effective leaders when working together. There was not mention of men being wired the same and that problems could result from two men working together in a school. These ideas need to be explored further. Moving forward, we need to examine the hold that patriarchy continues to have on society, most especially in education.

The differences between male-male relationships and female-female relationships can be identified using the change management approach known as *Appreciative Inquiry*. This theory can be beneficial to education leadership as it establishes opportunities for all members of the organization to come together regardless of position and title and share information, thoughts and ideas about the organization. As a result, everyone is heard and everyone feels recognized and valued (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). Further research on this change management approach and how it can be implemented into school communities to support the vision and goals of the school would be beneficial. This approach could provide additional insight into building relationships by allowing all stakeholders to be heard and to grow as teacher leaders. This approach would also send the message that teachers are valued.

Overall, there needs to be more of an emphasis and focus on gender in leadership in graduate school leadership programs. Based on the findings from this study, effective leadership should be based on a set of behaviors based on effective leadership practices rather than the gender of the leader. Teachers and leaders need to become more aware of the

human tendency to quickly fall back into gender stereotypes and gender roles whenever we become dissatisfied or unhappy with the actions or traits of administrators. Graduate school leadership programs need to continue to study the impact of gender on leadership and the hold that patriarchy continues to have on educational leadership. Classes should also examine the behaviors associated with effective leadership that supports high teacher morale while examining how and why those factors can cause others to retreat to gender stereotypes. It is important for graduate leadership programs to promote an awareness of this issue. Based on interviews with respondents in this study, several respondents seemed unaware of their biases until they took the time to reflect about their beliefs and experiences during the interviews. Classes in the leadership programs should serve as arenas in which the topic of gender biases is identified and discussed. Gender as a concept should be examined not as a set of binary factors, but as a continuous spectrum on which a school leader is placed. In in-service programs for assistant principals as well as leadership programs, there needs to be an initiative to move away from using perceived gendered characteristics as themes for leadership. The focus should be on those values and sets of behaviors that are important regardless of the gender of the school leader. These in-service programs should be geared toward teasing out gender binaries. The programs should also reveal that gender becomes important when teachers are unhappy with their administrators.

Conclusion

The introduction for this study began with a focus on teacher morale because of the impact on student achievement, most especially, during an era of hyper-accountability from federal, state, and local levels of government and the public. Low teacher morale can result in high teacher turnover rates, as well as attitudes that can negatively impact student

achievement. It is important to develop awareness of the factors that impact morale whether positively or negatively. Ultimately, this information can be used to help districts improve teacher retention rates and student achievement. Much of the existing research about teacher morale stresses the important role that school leaders have in shaping morale in a school community. Because educational leadership has largely been a male-dominated arena until the latter part of the 20th Century, research should be carried out with the awareness that the reality of the world has been shaped by the male perspective (Murray and Simmons, 1994). Schools, and all aspects of schools, have been governed by the rules and approaches dictated by a male dominated society. In the past, this patriarchal approach has excluded women from educational leadership roles.

Despite this, more females are now serving as school principals, especially in the elementary setting. While school administration still continues to be a male-dominated profession, the increasing numbers of females in leadership positions and present state of teacher morale are important factors to determine if gendered practices of school leaders affect morale.

These discussions of gender and leadership are vital in theory as well as application. As mentioned in the introduction, when administrative positions opened up in my district, it was not uncommon for people to speculate about the people who would apply for the principalships at the various schools. It was also not uncommon for the conversation or comments to immediately focus on the gender of the leader based on the perceived needs of a particular school. Comments such as "this school needs a man" or "I worked under male and female administrators. Give me the male administrator any day" suggests there are perceived differences in the leadership of males and leadership of females. This led me, as a

practitioner and researcher, to explore the impact of gender on teacher morale in schools in a practiced sense as well as a theoretical sense.

This study encompasses an examination of gender in many areas of education. Examinations of gender as it relates to students in the classroom, the basis for curriculum, influence of gender, gender in curriculum, and leadership were combined to explore gender in this study. A historical timeline of gender as it relates to education, demonstrates the changes that have occurred for female students, as well as, female leaders, throughout the history of the United States. Special attention was made of the fact that, for many years, schools were patriarchal (Grumet, 1988). Almost all aspects of public schools were strongly influenced by the patriarchal society that prevailed for many years. Individuals have been conditioned by a patriarchal society to view gender and gender roles through a specific set of stereotypes that exclude women from positions of leadership. Ultimately, those same stereotypes are what allow for the patriarchy to exist in the first place. In this sense, the patriarchy and the constructed gender stereotypes present in our society exist in an interdependent cycle, which allows for one to continuously allow for the existence of the other. This cycle has been supported in the education field not only through the structure of the administration, but through the developed curriculum and provided extra-curricular activities that overwhelmingly support the well-being and development of male students and their post-educational advancement.

However, parts of the patriarchy have disappeared overtime. Curriculum adjustments have been made and efforts to create extra-curricular opportunities for female students have been carried out as well. Although, more and more women have joined the ranks of school administrators, this has been more prevalent in the elementary school setting than in middle

schools and high schools.

Research on the topic of the gendered practices of elementary school principals and the effects on teacher morale led to an examination of the traits of strong leaders coupled with an examination of leadership traits associated traditionally with either male or female leaders. This also led to a study of sexual stereotypes and gender norms. The data led me to explore gender, not only as being a static binary relationship frozen in time, but also rather as a developing continuum. All of these things coupled together have given me greater insight into leadership as it is relates to teacher morale. Based on the research that has been compiled from the interviews with teachers and principals, the leadership characteristics that promote high teacher morale hinge on what some may refer to as a set of valued behaviors. Others say that morale is shaped by the personality of the leader. However, whether it is the leadership characteristics or the personality that a teacher focuses upon when assessing school leadership, the most valued trait is the character or ethical nature of the leader. The values and ethics that the leader exemplifies are probably the most important trait that impacts teacher morale, regardless of the gender of the leader.

During the research surrounding this study, it became apparent that it was sometimes difficult for respondents to get past sexual stereotypes and gender norms that society has created. This was complicated because of the biographies of the respondents. They often fell prey to the sexual stereotypes or gender norms because they were seeing the world through their personal experiences. A teacher or principal may have worked under a female leader who was a "control freak" and, as a result, the teacher or principal associated the "control freak" tendency with all female leaders. Another teacher may have worked under the leadership of a male leader who was always closed off in his office, which resulted in

male leaders not being approachable, visible or available. This teacher considers male leaders as not being approachable or as well versed at establishing relationships as female leaders. The personal experiences or biographies of the teachers and principals sometimes continue to promote the view of gender as a binary rather than as a continuum.

The findings collected from male and female principals about the effects of gendered practices of school leaders on teacher morale mirror the data collected from male and female teachers. An analysis of the data collected from the principal interviewees demonstrated that there was no trait that was present only in one gender, regardless of whether it was a positive or negative attribute. Members of the principal interview group emphasized that perceived differences shaped by societal norms and stereotypes exist. However, the principals suggested that it comes down to what some referred to as the personality of the leader. Others suggested that the set of behaviors exemplified by the principal shapes the morale of the teachers.

Based on the analysis of data collected from interviews with male and female teachers as well as male and female principals, certain traits of leaders and actions of leaders that support high teacher morale became evident. Themes and subthemes relating to traits were identified when the interview responses were analyzed. There is also literature to support the themes that were evident in the research relating to teacher morale.

The data collected during this study frequently did not align with the traditional body of literature about gendered leadership practices, but it did underscore the lingering biases internalized by the personal experiences that men and women continue to assess school leaders. The literature attributes specific traits to leaders based on the gender of the leader and asserted that they are for the most part gender specific. Much of the literature indicated

that certain traits belonged exclusively to male or female leaders. However, the data from this study clearly indicated that the quality of a leader is not determined by their gender but by personality, specific sets of behaviors, and the values that behavior exemplifies. Based on the data collected in this study, there are no traits that should be exclusively assigned to one gender or the other. The data collected from principal interviews had the same implications regarding gender as did the data collected from teachers. Both teachers and principals that were interviewed suggested similarly that respect for a school leader is not rooted in gender, but rather in the specific leadership qualities:

1. Trust based on:
    a. Sharing decision-making with teachers.
    b. Close teacher-administrator collaboration.
    c. Being friendly to new ideas.
2. Providing administrative support to teachers.
3. Visibility of administrator throughout the building based on:
    a. Open door policy
    b. Approachability
4. The personal and collective recognition through:
    a. Celebration of teachers' accomplishments.
5. Expectations and vision.
6. A personal sense of fair treatment and fairness interwoven throughout the school community based on:
    a. Sense of family.
    b. Focus on people rather than on test scores.

Perceived social norms and stereotypes have often led men and women to believe that each gender has a set of specific traits that impacts the quality of a leader. However, in this study, when given the opportunity and the time to reflect about their personal biographies on issues of gender, school leadership, and teacher morale, men and women came to a similar conclusion that good leadership is the product of a set of behaviors that are not inherent in one gender or the other. Consequently, either gender can internalize and learn to lead using these behaviors, resulting in school leadership that can almost certainly improve the morale of teachers. The implications are clear. The assessment of effective leaders should be based upon identifiable behaviors that transcend the traditional gender binary. Similarly, leadership programs in colleges and universities should perhaps abandon the assumption that men and women are uniquely different based on the characteristics of gender that is engrained in leadership training programs that are gender specific. Instead, these programs should focus on the characteristics identified in this study that teachers consider essential to maintaining high teacher morale.

Interviewing teachers and principals in my district has been an experience that I believe has been of great benefit to me and I hope to others. The experiences shared with me through the stories of the teachers and principals have provided me with rich information that has led to conclusions about leadership behavior that can benefit, not only school leadership, but leadership in business, politics, and the military. My research reveals that school leadership programs should make a conscious effort to educate the next generation of school leaders about the importance of what leaders and teachers value when either leading or being led by a school administrator. Effective leadership does not depend on the gender identity of the leader. Rather, it depends on the character, ethics, and values of the leader. Effective

leadership requires that a leader create a sense of trust in the school community. Leaders must serve as role models who are filled with integrity and are respectful of everyone. School leaders must provide teachers, students, and parents with on-going support. Leaders must establish clear expectations and vision for members of the school community, while making certain to treat everyone fairly. Being visible and available to teachers is equally important to building the morale of those that are being led. Leaders must also recognize and acknowledge staff members for their personal and collective accomplishments. Providing opportunities for teachers to grow as teacher leaders by being involved in shared-decision making activities sends the vital message that they are valued and respected. Both school leaders and teachers would be wise to look past a leader's gender and instead focus on leadership behaviors that improve teacher morale. These leadership behaviors transcend gender.

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Appendix A: Survey and Interview Cover Letter for Email
Dear Colleague:

At the present time, I am serving as an elementary principal at Mineral Springs Elementary in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School District. I am also a doctoral student at Appalachian State University.

As partial completion of research collection for my dissertation on the effects gendered practices of school leaders on teacher morale, I am conducting a survey of teachers and principals. A better understanding of leadership traits and their effects on morale will serve to strengthen our school communities while also increasing teacher retention rates.
This survey should only take approximately 10 minutes of your time. The link to the survey is (individual survey link). The surveys will be returned via a platform that provides settings to encrypt transmitted data and not collect IP addresses.

Upon completion of the survey, you may or may not be asked to participate in a second phase of the study which would include a one-hour interview. Selection of interview candidates will depend upon the answers to the survey questions.

For the second part of my dissertation research, I intend to conduct interviews with five elementary school teachers and five elementary school principals. I will be looking at teacher morale, leadership traits, leadership by male principals and leadership by female principals and the effects of various leadership styles on teacher morale. I am planning on interviewing each interviewee initially for one hour. Depending on how the research unfolds, I may request an additional interview with those people who have agreed to participate.

Other than the amount of time expended for the interviews, I do not think that anyone will be placed at any risk during the interview sessions. Confidentiality and anonymity will be respected.

Participants may receive a copy of the final dissertation via email. Requests for a copy of the dissertation and any questions you may have should be made to me at 336-703-6788 or 336-528-5767 or dgladsto@wsfcs.k12.nc.us.

Debra R. Gladstone
Doctoral Student

Appendix B: Informed Consent
Title: "The Gendered Practices of Principals and Their Effects on Teacher Morale"

Dear [Teacher or Principal's Name]:

The following information is provided to help you decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that you are free to decide not to or to withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with Appalachian State University or the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School District.

The purpose of this study is to research gendered practices of principals and whether or not the practices positively or negatively affect teacher morale.

Data will be collected by interviews. There will be one to two interviews with a possibility of a third interview depending on how the research unfolds. The interviews will last for about one hour.

Other than the amount of time expended for the interviews, I do not think that anyone will be placed at any risk during the interview sessions. You may choose not to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable with during the interviews. I do request that I be allowed to record the interview sessions and also take notes during the sessions. My notes and the tape recordings will be kept in a secure place at all times and will not be shared with others. I do not plan in disclosing the names of any of the participants in this study. Confidentiality and anonymity will be respected. Breach of confidentiality is a potential risk; however, locations of interviews will be determined by the interviewee to reduce the risk of breach of confidentiality. Interviewees will be assigned a letter rather than using the person's name on the tape recordings.

Do not hesitate to ask questions about the study before participating or during the study. I would be happy to share the findings with you after the research is completed. Your name will not be associated with the research findings in any way and only I will know your identity. A copy of the dissertation can be sent to you via email upon request.

There are no known risks and/or discomforts associated with this study. The expected benefits associated with your participation are the information about the experiences in learning research methods.

Participation is voluntary and refusal to participate or a decision to discontinue participation at any time will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the participant is otherwise entitled. If you choose to not answer a question on the survey or an interview question, your refusal to answer will have no effect on employment at WSFCS.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 336-528-5767, or my Dissertation Adviser, Dr. Vachel Miller, at millervw@appstate.edu. Questions regarding the protection of human subjects may be addressed to the IRB Administrator, Research Protections, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC 28608 (828) 262-2692, irb@appstate.edu.

This research project has been approved on 5-19-15 by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Appalachian State University. This approval will expire on 5-19-16 unless the IRB renews the approval of this research.

By signing below, you are acknowledging that you have read this form, had the opportunity to ask questions about the research and received the satisfactory answers, and want to participate. Please sign this consent form. A copy of this form will be given to you to keep.

_____ _____

Signature Date

Debra R. Gladstone, Doctoral Student, Appalachian State University

336-528-5767

Biographical Information

Debra Rhodes Gladstone was born in Kinston, North Carolina to Lonnie Benjamin Rhodes, IV and the late Anne Ball Rhodes. Debra grew up in Lenoir County and now resides in Winston-Salem, N.C. She is married to William Wright Gladstone and they have four daughters, Anne, Mary Kate, Laine and Betsy Gladstone.

Debra graduated from high school at Saint Mary's Episcopal Girls School in Raleigh, N.C. in 1976. She received an Associate's Degree from Saint Mary's in 1978. In 1980, she received a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of North Carolina, majoring in sociology. In 2000, she earned a Master's Degree in the Art of Teaching from Salem College in Winston-Salem, N.C. In 2008, Debra received a Master's of School Administration from Appalachian State University in Boone, N.C. She earned an Educational Specialist degree from Appalachian State University in 2011.

Upon graduating from the University of North Carolina, Debra worked as an Adult Probation/Parole Officer in Raleigh, N.C. from 1981 until 1984. She served as a Case Analyst for the North Carolina Parole Commission in Raleigh, N.C. from 1984 until moving to Winston-Salem in 1985. The next seven years, Debra and her husband were self - employed as small business owners in Winston-Salem, N.C. She began her career in education as a teacher at Old Town Elementary in Winston-Salem, N.C. from 2000 until 2008. From 2008 until 2011, Debra served as the assistant principal for Prince Ibraham Elementary School in Winston-Salem, N.C. In 2011, she was named principal of Mineral Springs Elementary School in Winston-Salem, N.C. Debra was named principal of Mineral Springs Middle School in Winston-Salem, N.C. in July, 2016. She is currently serving as the principal of Mineral Springs Elementary School and Mineral Springs Middle School.