

**THE PERSONAL PROFILES, CAREER PATTERNS, AND LEADERSHIP  
PRACTICES OF WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS IN KANSAS**

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the personal profiles, career patterns, and leadership practices of women superintendents in Kansas. Three research questions guided the study: (1) To what extent are there similarities in the personal profiles of women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas? (2) To what extent are there similarities in the career patterns of women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas? and (3) To what extent are there similarities in the leadership practices of women superintendents in different sized Kansas school districts? To answer the research questions a quantitative research method was used. The 37 women superintendents in the state of Kansas during the 2009-2010 school year were the population of interest. The sample for the study was the 21 Kansas women superintendents who responded to both of the survey instruments. One instrument was a demographic survey, which consisted of 45 items within four sections: (a) personal demographic information, (b) educational demographic information, (c) career patterns: career paths, and (d) career patterns: other components. The second instrument used in the study was the Leadership Practices Inventory-Self (LPI-Self). The LPI-Self is a self-assessment tool, which identifies the frequency of engagement in behaviors aligned with Kouzes and Posner's five practices of exemplary leadership. Data collected from the two survey instruments were compiled and examined to determine if similarities existed within three categories: Personal Profiles, Career Patterns, and Leadership Practices. The results of the LPI-Self subscale scores for the five exemplary practices were compared across school district size, to determine if leadership practices are affected by district size. Based on the results of this study, there are similarities in the personal

profiles and career patterns. Results indicate women superintendents in Kansas serve in rural school districts, are 51 years or older, fall in the middle of their family's birth order, and followed a career path to the superintendency including the roles of elementary teaching, elementary principal, and secondary principal. District size was not found to be significant in its effect on leadership practices. The results of the study of women superintendents in Kansas during the 2009 - 2010 school year align with many of the findings of studies in other states and nationwide.

## **Dedication**

This work is dedicated to my children, Justin and Eric, and to their wives, Kate and Anne. Never once did you question why I was doing this so late in my career. Your continuous interest, support, and encouragement during this journey kept me motivated and focused on completion. Thank you and love always.

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## Chapter One

### Introduction and Rationale

In Book V of *The Republic*, written circa 360 B.C., Plato and Socrates discussed the roles of men and women in the “new world.”

Socrates declared, “There is not one of those pursuits by which the city is ordered which belongs to women as women, or to men as men; but natural aptitudes are equally distributed in both kinds of creatures. Women naturally participate in all occupations and so do men” (Plato, 1976, p. 136).

The philosophical tenet that both genders partake in all professions, supported by Plato, came to fruition in the public school system in the late 1800s when the first female school superintendent was elected in Kansas. However, the reason for the selection was likely many people believed education to be “women’s work,” rather than a belief that men and women had equally distributed aptitudes (Moss, 1987, p. 257).

In the early 1870’s, men and women were negotiating to determine the proper place and appropriate activities for women in the West. Beginning in 1872, women in Hamilton County, Kansas, although not allowed to vote, were permitted to run for office. Hamilton County, located in the southwestern corner of Kansas, was bursting with women entering politics. During that time, men and women ran and were elected to the job of superintendent. The first woman superintendent in Kansas, Elizabeth (Lizzie) Culver, was elected Superintendent of Public Instruction for Hamilton County in 1887 (Moss, 1987).

Following Lizzie Culver's election, the voting of women into leadership roles spread to positions on the city council. The female municipal suffrage law, having been passed by the state legislature in January 1887, and upheld by the Kansas Supreme Court in March of that same year, had a significant impact on those selected for city council positions. Newspapers encouraged women to support and vote according to their own beliefs, not those of their husband. According to Moss (1987), many men supported the suffrage law, believing the women's vote would have a positive impact on the West. It was expected that women would vote into office "men of morality and upright character, law-abiding men" (p. 255). However, women realized and recognized their voting rights could have a different impact. In April 1887, Syracuse, the Hamilton County seat, became one of two communities in the state and nation to elect a woman to a municipal government position. Syracuse elected an all-female town council; Argonia, located in south central Kansas, elected an all-male council and the first female mayor in the country. As a result, national attention was drawn to the area, and it was considered a testing ground for women's entry into politics (Moss, 1987).

Women increasingly were winning positions of superintendencies in the school system, displacing men, until a shift in politics occurred. Brunner (1999) reported that during the period from the late 1800s into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the number of women in office declined. The women's suffrage movement and the growth of political influence by women seem to have initiated a regional effort to shift the superintendency from an elected position to an appointive system. Brunner also said

that the underlying reason for the movement towards appointment was to limit women's growing power in school affairs.

According to Moss (1987), another factor with an impact on the election of women to public office was the attention focused by constituents on female candidates' personal lives. Women who were single were more readily accepted and elected into public office. As women in office married and had children, political opportunities shifted away from them. Lizzie Culver (Price), who was the first woman elected to the superintendency, later married. It is believed she negatively affected others' opportunity for public office by campaigning for election while pregnant. There is some uncertainty as to what bothered people most about Lizzie's behavior. Some individuals believed it was the assumption of pregnancy as an incapacitating condition. Other individuals had an aversion to someone in such a "private" condition continuing to perform public duties. Although another woman superintendent who served two terms succeeded Lizzie, no woman held any public office in Hamilton County from 1894 until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Moss, 1987).

The loss of momentum for women serving in the role of school superintendent is still evident in today's society. Women remain under-represented in superintendent positions in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, even though nationwide; women have dominated the teaching profession since the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. According to the U. S. Department of Education, in the year 2000, 72% of all kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) educators were female. That same report documented that of the responding superintendents from across the nation; only 13.1% were women (Glass, 2000). Three years later, in a nationwide study commissioned by the American Association of



School Administrators (AASA), the percentage of women superintendents had increased, but to only 18% (Grogan & Brunner, 2005).

In 2007-2008, 75.5% of the more than 3.1 million K-12 public school teachers were women (National Education Association [NEA], 2008). The most recent AASA survey, administered in 2007, indicated continued disconcerting results, as even then, only slightly more than 20% of the nation's public school superintendents were women. These statistics are similar to those in Kansas during the 2009-2010 school year, where 37, or 12.6%, of the 293 school superintendents were women (Kansas State Department of Education [KSDE], 2009a). Table 1, displayed later in this chapter, provides the number of school districts by range of enrollment and the number and percent of women superintendents in each range.

It is intriguing, that nationwide, during the last 100 years, men have held five to thirteen times as many of the superintendent positions as women. Two reasons are most commonly cited for the lack of women in the role of superintendent: First, women are discouraged from preparing for the superintendency and secondly, school boards are reluctant to hire women to fill this top leadership position. Although on the surface there would seem to be some truth to the commonly cited explanations, the reasons are more complicated and complex (Glass, 2000). In Chapter Two of this study, research on causes for the lack of women superintendents is reviewed. Both self-imposed and external limitations are discussed. These limitations include personal choice, gender bias, the glass ceiling, the labyrinth, and educational programming.

## **Problem Statement**

As noted earlier, although the majority of educators in this country are women, women are under-represented in the role of superintendent. This has been true for decades. Most of the research, which includes data collected to reveal the reasons why women are under-represented, consists of case studies that describe experiences of individual women superintendents (Glass, 2000). These case studies typically focus on the barriers, self-imposed or external, which prevent or limit women from attaining the role of school superintendent.

The research on this topic is not complete. There is more to learn about women who have attained the superintendent position and the obstacles they have overcome. Additional study of women superintendent's personal profiles and career patterns is important to completely portray and further understand women superintendents' personal and career experiences prior to assuming the educational management position of superintendent.

## **Background and Conceptual Framework**

During the 2009-2010 school year, 429,460 students attended the 1399 public schools in the state of Kansas. Of the 1445 schools, there were 359 high schools, 258 middle level, and 782 elementary schools. These schools were organized into 293 unified school districts. In each school district a superintendent is appointed by the local board of education to manage the district.

The Kansas State Board of Education holds all 293 school districts and superintendents to the same standards. However, because of the diversity in the state, superintendents come to the position with varied experiences, and the day-to-day

events can look very different. Kansas school districts vary in size and demographic makeup. Rural, suburban, and urban school communities can be found within the state. Within the state educational system, poverty is measured based on a family income low enough to qualify for free or reduced lunch programs. The school districts with the lowest percentage of students living in poverty, 6.13%, and the highest percentage, 86.68%, are both located in northeast Kansas (KSDE, 2009c). The most recent data reports for students qualifying for free or reduced lunch programs nationwide are for the 2007-2008 school year. During that school year, 42.9% of the nation's students, kindergarten through grade 12, were approved for free or reduced-price lunches.

The most recent ethnic percentages for the state's population were collected from data gathered in the 2008 United States Census. The ethnicity reported was 88.7% White (80.3% non-Hispanic white), 6.1% Black, 1% American Indian/Alaska Native, 2.2% Asian, .1% Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 1.8% reporting 2 or more races. The data indicates 9.1% of residents reported being of Hispanic or Latino origin, although this is no longer considered an ethnicity by the federal government. Nationally the reported ethnic percentages were 79.6% White (65.1% non-Hispanic white), 12.9% Black, 1.0% American Indian/Alaska Native, 4.6% Asian, .2% Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 1.7% reporting 2 or more races (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008).

In addition to ethnic and racial diversity across the state of Kansas during the 2009-2010 school year, there was diversity in the educational programs delivered to the students. Of the state's 429,460 students, 65,408 students, 15.2% were identified

to receive special education services through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). During the 2009-2010 school year, 14,592 Kansas students were identified to receive gifted services. That was 3.4% of the state's student population and 22.3% of students on an IEP. The remaining 78.7% of IEP students were identified to receive special education services which address learning disabilities, emotional disorders, speech and language disabilities, etc. (KSDE, 2009c). The most recent special education data reported nationally is for the 2007-2008 school year. During that school year there were 47,289,391 elementary and secondary students enrolled in public schools. Students receiving special education services nationally totaled 5,816,595 students, 12.3% of the kindergarten through grade 12 enrollment. Federal law does not require nor classify Gifted Education within special education services, and students are not served through an IEP in every state. Therefore, the Gifted Education percentages are not reported in the national data (NCES, 2010).

The diversity in Kansas is also evident in student enrollment. The range of the total number of students enrolled in grades kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade in Kansas school districts for the 2009-2010 school year was extensive. The smallest school district, West Solomon, located in Norton County, Kansas, had a total enrollment of 39 students. The largest school district, Wichita, located in Sedgwick County, Kansas, had a total enrollment of 49,744 students. Table 1 provides data on the range of enrollment in Kansas school districts. Also provided in Table 1 are the number of districts within each range and the number of districts managed by women superintendents in each enrollment category (KSDE, 2009c). The variances in Kansas school district size and the diversity of the students within the school districts is

significant to this study, as profiles, career patterns, and leadership practices of women superintendents are compared.

In a nation-wide analysis, Glass (2000), found 31.6% of school districts with enrollments between 1000 and 2999 students were led by women superintendents. The next highest percentage of women superintendents was 19% in districts across the nation with 300 to 999 students, and then 17.7% in districts with fewer than 300 students. The distribution of school district size based on student enrollment followed that same pattern, with the greatest number of United States schools in the 1,000-2,999 range, then 300 to 999 students, and less than 300 students.

Table 1

*Enrollment Range and Number of Districts Managed by Women Superintendents*

K-12 Enrollment	School Districts	Women Superintendents	Women Superintendents As Percent of Total
Less than 100	7	2	5.4%
100-299	61	7	18.9%
300-499	64	9	24.3%
500-999	78	8	21.6%
1000-2,999	52	6	16.2%
3000-4,999	13	2	5.4%
5000-9,999	11	1	2.7%
10,000 or greater	7	2	5.4%

*Note.* From "Kansas K-12 Organizations," Kansas State Department of Education, 2009. Retrieved from KSDE website: <http://www3.ksde.org/k12/k12org.html>.

The data for Kansas school districts does not support Glass' (2000) findings. During the 2009-2010 school year, the largest percentage of Kansas districts led by women superintendents, 45.9%, had enrollments between 300 and 999 students. Kansas districts with a student enrollment of less than 300 students followed, with 24.3% led by women superintendents, and third were districts with student enrollments between 1000 and 2999 students, led by 16.2% of the women superintendents in the state of Kansas (KSDE, 2009b).

Research by Brunner (1999), as well as by Glass (2000), and Grogan and Brunner (2005) provide additional background and a framework for understanding women who attain the role of superintendent. Brunner's research of women superintendents is divided into three interrelated and overlapping domains (1999, p. 30). The first domain, Profiles, include demographics, characteristics, attitudes, and opinions or perceptions of selected issues. The second domain, Patterns, describes career paths, mobility from one incumbency to another, access, mentoring, sponsorship, selection, retention, and exit. Practice, depicted as the nature of a superintendent's work, is the third domain. Further defined, Practice included what superintendents do, how they experience the superintendency, how they exercise leadership, and how superintendents' experiences are shaped by context.

Researchers, Glass (2000), Grogan & Brunner (2005), and Farmer (2007), have examined differences in male and female paths to the superintendency. Factors that affect a woman's pursuit of the superintendency are traditional decision-making approaches, familial constraints, and career paths. Gilligan (1993) found that morality in decision-making guides both men and women, but the two genders have essentially

different tactics. The male tactic is based on the belief that people have certain basic rights and those rights should be respected. This moral belief imposes a restriction on what one can do as a decision-maker. The female approaches morality in decision-making with the belief that people have responsibilities towards one another, and so follows an absolute need to care for others when decisions are made. Gilligan summarized male and female decision-making by saying, "male morality has a justice orientation, and female morality has a responsibility orientation." Using the conceptualization of an ethic of care, women viewed themselves more frequently as healers and nurturers rather than movers and shakers (Gilligan, 1993).

In Brunner's (1999) *Sacred Dreams: Women and the Superintendency*, Brunner, Grogan, and Jackson, who studied women's experiences in a superintendent's role, found that in practice the superintendents demonstrated qualities typically associated with women, such as nurturance, supportiveness, caring, cooperation, and attentiveness to relationships. Katz (2004) cited several barriers preventing or delaying women from becoming superintendents. These included a lack of role models for women, educational theory taught in leadership programs developed from a male-centered framework, family responsibilities, inability to relocate, and exclusion from the "good ole boy network" (Katz, 2004, p. 2). Lee (2000) also identified exclusion from the unofficial socialization process of the "good ole boy network" as a significant barrier. These barriers can affect strands in all three of the domains identified by Brunner (1999): profiles, patterns, and practices. Within Brunner's second domain, patterns, Farmer (2007) found five career paths to be most common for women who attain the position of school superintendent. Some paths

involved more positions than others, but every path had two roles in common. Each path began with the role of secondary teacher and included time spent as a secondary principal. Of all of the positions in the career paths, superintendents most frequently listed the experience as a secondary principal as the most beneficial in preparing for the superintendency (Glenn & Hickey, 2009, p. 5). Table 2 shows women's five most common career paths to the superintendency.

Table 2

*Most Common Career Paths to the Superintendency*

Path	Positions				
1	Secondary Teacher	Secondary Principal	Superintendent		
2	Secondary Teacher	Secondary Assistant Principal	Secondary Principal	Superintendent	
3	Secondary Teacher	Secondary Assistant Principal	Secondary Principal	Assistant Superintendent	Superintendent
4	Secondary Teacher	Secondary Principal	Assistant Superintendent	Superintendent	
5	Secondary Teacher	Elementary Principal	Secondary Principal	Superintendent	

*Note.* From *The Secondary Principal Position: Preparatory Position for the Superintendency*, by T. A. Farmer, February 2007. Paper presented at the Annual Conference within a Conference at the National Association of Secondary School Principals, Las Vegas, NE.

**Significance**

Considering the number of women in the field of education, it would appear there should be a higher representation of women leading school districts in the role of



superintendent. As reported earlier from statistics gathered by the NEA in 2008, 75% of teachers were women. However, the largest percentage of women attaining the role of superintendent in the last century, 20%, occurred in 2007 (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000). This is a disproportionate number in a field where men and women typically follow the same career paths and have the same career experiences leading to the superintendency.

A 1997 survey of member institutions in the University Council for Education (UCE) showed that 74% of the educational leadership programs had between 51% and 72% women enrolled (Katz, 2004). In 2005, the percentage of women enrolled in educational leadership programs was reported to be at 50% (Grogan & Brunner, 2005). The percentage of women enrolled in leadership programs indicates women are interested in pursuing administrative and superintendent positions. Studies, such as this one, which explore the personal profiles, career patterns and leadership practices of women who have attained the role of superintendent, are important to inform and assist women who aspire to attain this position. The personal profiles reported in this study could serve as surrogate role models for women who may not have other females to whom they can look for guidance. Clarity in understanding the career paths most likely to lead to the superintendency could assist female aspirants by providing a type of road map to guide them in their pursuit of the position.

By continuing the study of women who have attained the superintendent position, researchers draw attention to those who have successfully reached that career goal. In 1999, men were 40 times more likely than women were to advance from teaching to a leadership position in the school setting (Skrla, 2000). Four years later,

female participants in the 2003 AASA Survey of Superintendents reported that 72% of them secured jobs as superintendents during the first year they pursued the position. This percentage fell just slightly behind the male participants, who reported 73% secured jobs during the first year of searching (Grogan & Brunner, 2005). It is important for young women to know that although limitations for advancement based on gender still exist in education, as in other areas of society, women no longer have to be constrained by external barriers (Skrla, 2000). The evidence that women have succeeded in attaining a superintendency position will provide encouragement to others as they pursue the position themselves.

Data gathered from the Leadership Practices Inventory-Self (LPI-Self), one of the tools used in this study, could serve to enrich the understanding of women's leadership processes once they are in a position to lead others as the superintendent of a school district. The LPI-Self is a 30-item questionnaire wherein respondents rate themselves on their execution of Kouzes and Posner's (2002) five exemplary leadership practices: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. Women superintendents' responses to the LPI-Self will provide data related to their execution of the identified leadership practices. The results could also be used to develop a component of the higher education programs that develop leadership capabilities, to assist in the preparation for women aspiring to superintendent positions.

The conceptual framework for this study was structured by the results of earlier research. The research focus of Brunner (1999), Glass (2000), and Grogan and Brunner (2005) provides a basis for the study of women superintendents, an

understanding of the barriers to attaining the position, a presentation of personal profiles, and an analysis of the career path that led to the superintendency. This study builds upon previous research by also examining and comparing the leadership practices of women superintendents, specifically those in Kansas.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study was to examine the personal profiles, career patterns, and leadership practices of women superintendents in Kansas. By exploring personal profiles, the characteristics and experiences of these women were identified, and it was determined if similarities in profiles existed. In earlier research, career paths of women, which led to the superintendency, were identified. Through the examination of career paths reported by women superintendents in Kansas, the existence of commonalities in the paths identified in previous studies were determined. The data related to the leadership practices of women superintendents were analyzed. Further analysis clarified if there were differences in leadership practices of women superintendents in school districts of varied sizes.

Personal profiles, career patterns, and leadership practices of women superintendents in Kansas is the specific focus of this study. The rationale for the focus of this study, using the data and insights gathered from the top women K-12 educational executives in Kansas, is to contribute to and expand upon the knowledge base of prior research regarding women superintendents. The data gathered identify what is common or similar amongst women who have attained and are working in the position of school superintendent in Kansas.

### **Delimitations**

Delimitations are self-imposed boundaries set by the researcher on the purpose and scope of the study (Roberts, 2004). The delimitations utilized by the researcher in this study were: (a) the study took place in its entirety during the 2009-2010 school year, (b) only female superintendents of public schools in Kansas were included in the study, and (c) only participants who completed both the paper/pencil survey and the internet survey were included in the study.

### **Assumptions**

Roberts (2004) defined assumptions as what the researcher takes for granted relative to the study (p. 129). The current study was conducted based on the following assumptions: (a) the participating superintendents responded to the demographic and career pattern surveys honestly and accurately; (b) the participating superintendents understood the vocabulary and concepts associated with the Leadership Practices Inventory-Self (LPI-Self); (c) the participating superintendents responded to the LPI-Self with little or no self-report bias; and (e) the interpretation of data from the LPI-Self accurately reflects the leadership practices of the responding superintendents.

### **Research Questions**

A number of studies have examined women who have attained the position of school superintendent. Much of the research has been qualitative, involving personal interviews and responses to demographic surveys. The following research questions guided this study:

1. To what extent are there similarities in the personal profiles of women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas?

2. To what extent are there similarities in the career patterns of women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas?
3. To what extent are there similarities in the leadership practices of women superintendents in different sized Kansas school districts?

### **Definition of Terms**

*Career path.* Positions held during one's career as an educator (Farmer, 2007).

*Career patterns.* Positions held in education that created a career path to the superintendency, mobility from one incumbency to another, and issues related to access, mentoring, sponsorship, selection, retention, or exit (Brunner, 1999).

*Conventional path.* A typical series of positions people advance through as they move to higher levels of responsibility in the organization.

*Educational preparation.* For the purposes of this study, educational preparation is a series of coursework designed to train and prepare one to attain the next higher level of an organization.

*Glass ceiling.* Women as a group are kept from advancing higher because of their gender (Brunner, 1999).

*Leadership practices.* Statements that describe leadership actions and behaviors (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

*LPI-Self (Leadership Practices Inventory-Self).* A self-assessment tool developed by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner (Kouzes & Posner, 1995).

*Mentor.* A trusted counselor or guide (Mentor, 2010).

*Personal profiles.* Studies that help understanding of demographic characteristics, attitudes, opinions, or perceptions of selected issues (Brunner, 1999).

*Role model.* A person whose behavior in a particular role is imitated by others (Role Model, 2010).

*Secondary School.* Schools configured in a variety of configurations for grades 6 through 12.

*Size of school district.* The student enrollment in grades kindergarten through twelfth grade.

*Superintendent.* The Chief Executive Officer of the school district hired by the board of education to manage the administrative affairs of the school district.

*Unified school district.* A group of public schools located within a geographic district, which is administered under the same policies.

## **Overview of Methods**

Using a quantitative research design, women superintendents in Kansas during the 2009-2010 school year were the focus of the research. The survey data identified the personal profiles, career patterns, and leadership practices of women superintendents in the state of Kansas. Similarities in these profiles, patterns, and practices were determined by analyzing the data.

Participants were asked to provide information using two instruments. The first was a demographic survey designed by this researcher to ascertain personal profiles and career patterns of the participants. The second was the Leadership Practices Inventory-Self, a self-assessment in which participants responded to statements using a Likert Scale, a ten point psychometric scale in which the respondent indicated the extent to which they demonstrate specific leadership practices. The inventory tool measures the extent to which leaders perceive

themselves as having adopted the five practices of exemplary leaders defined by Kouzes and Posner (2002).

Data gathered from the demographic survey were used to compare the similarities of the participant profiles. This survey also provided data from which to draw conclusions related to career paths of current superintendents in Kansas. The LPI-Self provided data regarding leadership practices of the current superintendents. The responses were analyzed to determine if there were similarities in leadership practices for superintendents across districts of different sizes.

### **Organization of the Study**

This research study is presented in five chapters. Chapter one provides an introduction and rationale for the study and includes the problem statement, background, the significance of the study, purpose statement, the delimitations of the study, assumptions, research questions, definitions of terms, and an overview of the methodology used in the study.

Chapter two presents a review of the literature, including the history of women public school superintendents, the barriers and strategies for achieving the position, theoretical information on the leadership styles common to women, and personal profiles and common career paths of women who have attained the position. In addition, the five effective leadership practices defined by Kouzes and Posner are explored.

Chapter three describes the methodology used in this study. The research design, population sample, instrumentation, measurement, data collection and data analysis procedures are presented. Chapter four offers the results of the study,

including demographic information, testing the research questions, and results of the data analysis. Chapter five summarizes the study. Interpretation of the results, conclusions drawn and recommendations for future study are included in this chapter.



## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of Literature**

This chapter provides a review of the literature related to women in the role of school superintendent. The review includes variety in the types of published materials discussed: books, clinical research studies, and journal articles, which are research-based and reflection-based. The purpose of this study is to examine the personal profiles, career patterns, and leadership practices of women superintendents in Kansas. Topics that provided the background for components of the study included a historical summary of the number and characteristics of women who have attained the superintendent position, the career paths typically that have led to the role of superintendent, the limitations or barriers for women to attain this role, and common leadership practices of women superintendents.

#### **Historical Perspective of the Superintendency**

Reform movements are not new to education, to the classroom, or to building or district leadership. In the 1920s, the era of scientific management affected education by attempting to manage school districts using an industrial model. In the 1930s and 1940s, John Dewey's progressive education model, with a focus on experiential education, which adapted the curriculum to students' interests and needs, had a direct impact on classroom instruction (Zilversmit, 2004). The golden age initiated in the early 1950s gave way to educational reform of the 1950s and 1960s with a focus on math and science. However, the launch of Sputnik by the Soviet Union in 1957 was a turning point. The Sputnik launch caused society's concern for American security and the desire for

superiority in science and technology to accelerate the reforms in math and science (Bybee, 1997).

The influence felt in the classroom continued in the 1980s, when the National Commission of Excellence in Education published *A Nation at Risk*. The publication placed America's public school system under a microscope by examining the effectiveness of instruction and its impact on student performance. The attention stemming from *A Nation at Risk* pushed public education into the Standards Movement of the 1990s, with nearly every state developing assessment programs to monitor and track student learning (Glass, 2000). Now in the third decade of reform, educators are fully aware of the impact of *A Nation at Risk* and the Standards Movement on changing practices in the classroom.

Whenever there is a significant change in how schools are organized or students are taught, the role of superintendent is affected. In their 2009 study, "The Superintendent Search," Glenn and Hickey provided a description of the changes that have occurred over time in the role, responsibilities, and expectations of a school superintendent. The focus of the first superintendents was to effectively teach students and to conduct school business. Over the last 50 years, social, economic, political, and legal issues have shaped the position. Three socio-political issues have had a considerable impact on education, and, therefore, on the role of the superintendent.

The first issue, and one of the most significant social and legal matters to shape education and the superintendent position, was the United States Supreme Court decision in the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* case. The decision declared as unconstitutional, state laws establishing separate public schools for Black and White

students on the basis the laws denied Black children equal educational opportunities.

This decision led the way for the 1964 Civil Rights Act legislation, which outlawed racial segregation in the public schools, at the workplace, and by facilities that served the general public (Sass, 2010a).

The second issue was The Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965 (ESEA). The ESEA is a statute providing funds for primary and secondary education, while forbidding the establishment of a national curriculum. The Act authorized funds for professional development, instructional materials, resources to support educational programs, and promotion of parent involvement. Originally authorized through 1970, the Act has been reauthorized a number of times (Sass, 2010b). The 2001 reauthorization established the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), an act which holds schools accountable for student achievement levels and provides penalties for schools that do not make adequate yearly progress toward meeting the goals of NCLB (Sass, 2010c).

Third, in 1975, Congress passed Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, now commonly referred to as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The act mandates that state plans must be consistent with federal statutes. In addition, for a state to receive federal funds, state policies must be developed and implemented, which assure a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to all children with disabilities (Sass, 2010d).

These social, economic, political, and legal issues compelled superintendents and school boards to evaluate and, in many cases, alter school district practices. As a result, there has been a shift in the superintendent's role from one of working in isolation to one of public accountability. This accountability has created different roles and leadership

responsibilities for the superintendent. Duties now include budget development, program evaluation, personnel assignment, facility improvement, policy recommendations, day-to-day operations, communication, education, and building a team with the members of the board of education, who are the policy-setting governmental body. The role of school superintendent has also been influenced by technology, and not just technology of information, but, also of communication (Andero, 2001). With all of these changes and additional responsibilities, the superintendent is still expected to be an initiator of school reform.

Even with the evolution in responsibilities over time, Glenn and Hickey (2009) reported that the primary characteristic needed to attain the position of and be successful as a school superintendent is skill in working with others. Additionally, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a focus should be apparent in building influence through strategic communication. Strategic communication in this context is the facilitation of advanced planning by communicating a concept or process, which assists in attaining a strategic goal of the organization. Although a specialized understanding of educational issues is important, interpersonal traits, such as the skill in working with others, provide the foundation for success. Glenn and Hickey (2009) believed that during the past two decades, a superintendent serving as instructional leader has become as common a role as that of a building principal.

Whritner (2009) had a different perspective on the responsibilities of a superintendent than the argument purported by Glenn and Hickey (2009). During the 26 years Whritner served in the role of superintendent, he believed the individual in that role no longer functioned as the chief education officer, but rather as the CPO, chief political

officer. In his personal experience, assistant superintendents for instruction or directors of curriculum managed educational matters. He equated the change in focus for superintendents to the change for presidents of higher education institutions, who must now concentrate on fundraising and leave the task of promoting the educational mission to the provost or someone in another administrative position. Hoyle, Bjork, and Collier (2005) concluded, "school superintendents need political skills similar to those of any other public officer responsible to an elected governing body" (p. 68). He also indicated the majority of political leaders in a community prefer that a school superintendent not act like a politician. However, it is preferred that he/she be politically astute.

Ideally, superintendents of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will possess human, technical, and conceptual skills (Hoyle, 2005). Human skills include, respect for others, respect for self, comfort in empowering others, an appreciation for ethnic diversity, modeling of integrity and honesty, and an ability to find humor in themselves and others. A large repertoire of instructional strategies, knowledge about technology, and a commitment to lifelong learning, and community and corporate education are all components of technical skills. Futurists or "pathfinders" possess conceptual skills. Those in the role of superintendent for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century must have an intuitive and creative potential. This potential is needed to transform ideas into actions, which will then develop school, into places where learning prepares students for their futures. Hoyle's vision of a 21<sup>st</sup> century superintendent is of an "urbane, witty citizen of the world"- any race and either gender – "who realizes that learning without thought is labor lost, that thought without learning is perilous" (Hoyle, 2005, p. 378).

### **Women Superintendent Data.**

A historical perspective of women superintendents begins with data from 100 years ago. Although data reflecting the number of women superintendents in 1910 are available, Glass, Bjork, and Brunner (2000) reported the National Education Association Department of Superintendence administered the first formal survey developed to gather information about the superintendency in the United States in 1920. The purpose of the early survey, not so very different from today's purposes, was to compile demographic profiles, opinions on key educational issues, and best practices for the superintendency (p. iii). Following World War II, the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) continued the surveys, which became known by those in the profession as *10-year studies*, because they are typically administered every 10 years.

The exact number of superintendents is often difficult to assess. This is because in some parts of the nation, superintendents may serve more than one district. In addition, in hundreds of small districts, the superintendent may also be the principal. In these districts, the individuals may report themselves as only one or the other. The number of women superintendents in the United States as reported in the studies referenced above appears in Table 3.

The 2000 AASA sample was the largest of any of the 10-year studies. It included responses from 2,262 superintendents from across the nation. The sample was representative of the differences in the sizes of districts. Of those reporting, 297, or 13.1%, were female and 1,965 were male. Further clarification of the data provided by Glass et al. (2000) indicated that during some decades, the AASA followed up with a survey between the 10-year studies. These survey data are in Table 3 for 1952, 2003, and

2007. The slight dip in the number of women superintendents for 1952 was reported as the result of the consolidation of many small rural school districts. Data reported for 1971, 1982, and 1992 were from studies administered in 1970, 1980, and 1990. The data were not reported until the dates listed in Table 3. Data from 2003 and 2007 were results from surveys distributed as a follow-up to the study in 2000.

Table 3

*Percent of Women Superintendents, 1910 to 2000.*

Year of Study	% Women
1910	8.9
1920	10.9
1950	9.1
1952	6.7
1971	1.3
1982	1.2
1992	6.6
2000	13.1
2003	18.0
2007	20.0

*Note.* Adapted from “The Study of the American School Superintendency, 2000. A Look at the Superintendent of Education in the New Millennium,” by T. E. Glass, L. Bjork, and C. C. Brunner, 2000, Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators.

The gains in the number of women superintendents shown in Table 3 during the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century were impacted by the number of women superintendents in suburban or urban school districts, which served from 3000 to 24,999 students (Glass et al., 2000). The number of women superintendents in such districts nearly tripled, from 5% in 1992 to 14.1% in 2000. At the current rate of

women hired as superintendents overall, a consistent increase over three decades will be necessary before the number of women and men superintendents would be equal. In the 2000 AASA study, another category showing disparity, as reported by the respondents, is the total years of experience as a superintendent. This area shows a marked difference between men and women. Twenty-six percent of men had 14 or more years of experience, while 74.9% of women had less than 10 years of experience as a superintendent. These statistics strengthen the need for and importance of studies such as the current study, to provide women with insight into the challenges they face as they pursue a superintendent position.

Brunner (1999) described school superintendents as typically male, Caucasian, married with children, and Republican. Women superintendents are more often people of color, Catholic, Jewish, single (never married, divorced, or widowed), and Democrats. This description aligns with the demographics reported in the 2000 AASA 10-year study, identifying the typical superintendent as white, male, middle-aged, from a small town, with an advanced degree in educational administration, and sharing common values and opinions among themselves (Glass et al., 2000). In a comparison of male and female superintendents, the 2000 10-year study reported 94.9% of the men and 86.6% of the women superintendents were Caucasian. Other demographics reported included an increase in the percentage of minority superintendents to 5.1%.

Glass (2000) reported nationwide data indicating women made-up more than 50% of graduate students in educational administration programs. They achieved doctoral degrees at rates comparable to those of men; 56.8% of the women held doctoral degrees, compared to 43.7% of the men. However, only 10% of the women had earned



the superintendent credential. The superintendency was characterized by the U.S. Census Bureau as the most male-dominated executive position of any position in the United States (Glass, 2000). Women in the business world are more often promoted to executive leadership positions than women in education are (Sherman, Munoz & Pankake, 2008).

Because of the time required to move through the typical career path followed by a school superintendent, the average age of a superintendent, about 50 years old, has remained constant since the 1950s. Women superintendents tend to be older than the men, with 39.8% of women between 41 and 50 years of age and only 31.1% of men between those ages. One reason for this difference may be women typically have waited until their children were older before pursuing careers that required a significant amount of their personal time. The decision to wait, to assume the first administrative position, manifests itself in women generally assuming their first administrative position in their career path, one which is necessary to becoming a superintendent, later than do men (Glass et al., 2000).

Grogan and Brunner (2005) reported family responsibilities becoming less of a deterrent to women assuming administrative positions. Two factors, which may have influenced this change, are (a) more men share family responsibilities, and (b) a change in society's attitudes towards parenting and women working outside of the home. Men are more likely to be involved in household duties and the day-to-day parental tasks. The change in women's attitudes and the increased involvement of men in family responsibilities allows women to assume careers requiring more time away from home. The Grogan and Brunner research found that 35% of the participants raised children

under the age of 20 while serving as a superintendent and 32% raised children ages 15 and younger.

### **Career Patterns**

The typical career path to the superintendency has not changed over time. Research by Brunner (1999), Glass, Bjork, and Brunner (2000), Farmer (2007), and Glenn and Hickey (2009) all found similarities in the career paths most commonly represented. While as many as five pathways were identified, two appeared most frequently. Teacher, to assistant principal or principal, to central office administrator, to superintendent was the path taken by nearly half of all superintendents, male and female. The second most common was teacher, to assistant principal or principal, to superintendent. The first path was most typical of superintendents in large urban districts with student enrollments of 25,000 or more and urban/suburban districts with student enrollments of between 3000 and 24,999 students. The second path appeared most commonly in suburban/rural districts of less than 2,999 students or small districts with student enrollments of less than 300 students (Farmer, 2007). This is likely because smaller districts have fewer central office positions.

On average, women superintendents spent twice as many years in the classroom as men. Almost half of the males surveyed in the 2000 AASA study reported spending about five years as a classroom teacher. More than 60% of the women surveyed spent at least 10 years in the classroom. The data gathered from responding participants indicated only 33% taught in the elementary grades, while 44.2% taught in a junior high and 59% taught at the high school level. Administrative positions in junior or senior high school

were the first administrative positions held by nearly 50% of the superintendent respondents in the 2000 AASA study (Glass et al., 2000).

Both Farmer (2007) and Glenn & Hickey (2009) found that superintendents identified the high school principalship as the most beneficial position to prepare for the superintendency. Managing a larger student population, more staff, athletic programs, and activities, all create a higher profile position. This in turn requires more interaction and collaboration with community members. Farmer (2007) found female superintendents were more likely to have bypassed that role in their path to the superintendency than their male colleagues. This, too, is likely because women have traditionally dominated elementary teaching and followed a path including the elementary principal instead of high school (Glass et al., 2000). Given that women have traditionally dominated elementary teaching positions, this may be another consideration as to why there are fewer women superintendents.

While some variation may exist between men and women in the path taken to the superintendency, once women make the decision to pursue the role, nearly 60% gain their first position within a year. This is about a four-percent advantage over men (Glass et al., 2000). Grogan and Brunner (2005) reported a smaller difference in percentages for men and women attaining a superintendent position within a year. Their data reflected attainment as high as 72% for women and 73% for men.

### **Limitations to Women Becoming Superintendents**

Knowing that women pursue advanced degrees at the same rate as men, and in fact, achieve doctoral degrees at a higher rate, and they are hired as superintendents within a year of pursuing the position, it is then open to discussion as to why women

continue to be underrepresented as superintendents. The next section discusses the results of studies identifying what many believe to be the barriers, which prevent women from attaining the role of superintendent, as well as ways to overcome the barriers. For purposes of clarity, the limitations are categorized as self-imposed and external.

**Self-Imposed Limitations.** The term *self-imposed limitation* is used here to describe conscious decisions women make that impact their career options (Derrington & Sharratt, 2009b). Isaacson (1998) provided one example of this conscious decision: women do not think they can make a difference and already have to sacrifice family life. One of the self-imposed limitations identified by Glass (2000) was the lack of interest some women have in pursuing the role of superintendent due to personal reasons. He found in his study that women, especially younger women, find the long work hours unappealing and prefer to maintain a better balance between work and family.

In previous research women superintendents have identified the demands of career and family as a significant barrier to attaining the role of superintendent. The limitations identified were consistent with traditional socialization norms wherein women choose to spend time away from work with family, unlike men, who are socialized to be leaders (Lee, 2000). Walder (2000) found that women constantly needed to prove to other women, to men, and to themselves they are willing to work the additional years to gain administrative experience, earn a doctoral degree, and spend time honing their skills. This has manifested itself in a self-imposed standard of personal sacrifices, of time away from their families, and a sense that women need to earn the right to lead. Wickham (2007) reported similar results in a study of women superintendents in California. She

found respondents identified the responsibilities of family and an inability to relocate as self-imposed barriers to pursuing the role of superintendent.

Another finding by Glass (2000) was that women tend to enter the field of education with different objectives than men. They possess a high motivation to teach children rather than be administrators. Furthermore, women who are interested in management and organizational leadership pursue opportunities in the private sector, which are more lucrative and provide higher salaries. The results of the study by Glass (2000) supported the findings mentioned earlier in this chapter, indicating women traditionally remain in the classroom longer than men do. Women educators often take years off for child rearing, which places them in the competition for superintendencies later in their careers.

Goodman (2002) identified geographic immobility as another self-imposed limitation. Women commonly place value on societal and familial roles as wives and mothers and limit themselves in pursuing available positions in deference to the wishes of family members. Categorizing women as child-centered, student achievement-oriented, knowledgeable about instruction, collaborative and facilitative, Goodman described women as having the skills to get the job done, but not to get the job. Women do not seem to aspire to these positions.

Phelps (2002) considered the fact that many women educators are reluctant to enter the pool of superintendent candidates because they believe the emotional and practical costs are too high, to be a self-imposed limitation. Derrington and Sharratt (2009b) stated that some women make the choice between career and family because in traditional gender roles women were told they could do both, but not told they could do

both at the same time. The choice of females then became forgoing family needs to meet job needs, or limiting career to satisfy family needs.

The first step, for women aspiring to the role of superintendent, in overcoming these self-imposed limitations is to recognize them as barriers. The next step is to look for solutions such as switching traditional gender roles or negotiating roles by being flexible in assuming the responsibilities associated with job and family. As the definition would imply, self-imposed limitations may be personally controlled. Other types of limitations, those that are external, are more difficult to manage (Derrington & Sharratt, 2009a).

**External Limitations.** As the title implies, external limitations are barriers from the outside. The literature identified a number of barriers. It is important for women to understand the experiences of other women superintendents as they think about, pursue, and sign contracts for superintendency positions (Brunner, 1999). Connecting with a mentor, particularly a female, can enhance this understanding.

Edson (1995) implemented a study about females aspiring to be principals. Of those who had mentors early in their careers, 42% attained the principalship or positions beyond within 10 years, whereas only 17% who did not have mentors advanced. Because leadership is overwhelmingly male in the social construction of educational systems, it is often difficult to identify a female mentor. While 75% of teachers are female, the range of female superintendents is 13% to 20% (Skrla, 2000). Manuel (2001) reported 62% of the women superintendents in her study had a mentor. However, more than eight of every 10 of the mentors were men.

Buell, Schroth, and DeFelice (2002) believe the first step in women breaking through external barriers is awareness that the process is different for men and women. Understanding the differences creates the potential for making changes, and increasing the numbers and success of women administrators. Barriers that are specific to women include gender bias, the glass ceiling, labyrinth, and educational programming. Suggestions for breaking the barriers are discussed in the next several sections.

**Gender bias.** Brunner (1999) stated that women of all races credentialed and trained, not hired because of racial and gender bias, comprise the greatest untapped group of capable candidates for the position of superintendent of schools (p. xv). Glass (2000) identified gender bias by school boards to include views that women are not strong managers and lack the skills to handle budgeting and finances. Perceptions exist that women allow emotions to affect administrative decisions. Goodman (2002) believed the problem of gender bias in American education to be systemic and prevalent at all levels. She identified gender bias as not only the over-qualification and underemployment of women, but also as the underrepresentation of women in career advancement tracks.

Goodman (2002) theorized several factors have contributed to gender bias in the American educational system in the last 30 years. The first is the political climate of the 1980s. During that time, progress in the women's movement of the 1970s took a step backward. The political climate led by President Reagan and his failure to support legislation felt to be sympathetic to women is evidence. Probably the most notable legislation was the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), which intended to make discrimination on the basis of sex unlawful.

During Reagan's campaign for the presidency in 1980, he expressed strong opposition to the ERA, on the premise he didn't believe it provided women more rights than they already had. After 40 years of Republican support, his influence in the Republican Party caused a reversal of the party's support for the amendment (National Organization for Women, 2010). Formerly proposed and approved by the full U. S. Senate in 1972, the ERA failed to gain ratification before its 1982 deadline.

Secondly, Goodman (2002) identified the lack of awareness of gender bias by classroom teachers as a contributing factor, which translated into subtle discrimination against female students and gender inequities. This belief was supported by numerous other researchers, including Sadker (2000), Sadker and Zittleman (2005), Frawley (2005) and the "Where the Girls Are: The Facts about Gender Equity in Education" study published by the American Association of University Women in 2008 (Corbett, Hill, & St. Rose, 2008).

The third factor identified by Goodman was the education profession itself. Recruitment practices are designed to attract primarily male applicants. Search consultants and school board members, most of whom are White males, are usually responsible for hiring superintendents. The interview process is likely to filter out many female applicants (Goodman, 2002).

***Breaking the barrier of gender bias.*** Skrla (2000) conducted a case study of three superintendents and sexism in the workplace. Reports included in the study indicated women were reluctant to speak out about gender bias or discrimination. Women superintendents viewed experiences as individual and failed to understand how gender served as a segregating factor. Others preferred not to credit gender with that type of



influence, believing it might suggest an inability to function as an acceptable leader in the given structure. There was a desire by some women to get past the gender issues, to “be better than that” (Skrla, 2000, p. 62).

In the Banuelos (2008) study, women reported they were accustomed to gender bias in education. As a teacher, such bias was equated to sexual harassment, but as an administrator, it was nameless. In order to keep their jobs, the need to keep silent was implicitly understood by women. Women perpetuated gender bias through their own silence by ignoring, forgetting, or just moving on. Banuelos believes it is both a moral and professional responsibility for women to break the silence. Skrla (2000) and Banuelos (2008) suggested the implementation of the following actions to break the barrier of gender bias.

- Provide instruction in administrative preparation programs, such as inclusive conversations about the role gender plays, role-plays, and other situational teaching models.
- Hire more female leaders as role models.
- Provide a forum in administrator professional organizations to voice gender bias issues.
- Provide mentorship for female administrators.
- Provide training for boards of education.
- Assist individuals on interview panels and boards in recognizing their own subconscious preferences so they are able to check themselves for bias in decisions and selections.

- Initiate change in women's upbringing. "The women who have it together have some softness, they've got some of the steel, and they're comfortable with who they are. That defines their femininity, not femininity defining who they are" (Skrla, 2000, p. 69).

Newton (2006) advised organizational representatives who have the desire to avoid recruitment practices perpetuating the notion that the superintendent's position is *male*, to emphasize all components of the job, and to place value on a broad range of experiences. By emphasizing all major roles of the job, the recruitment message will be more likely to focus on attributes of the job appealing to either men or women. Placing value on a broader array of experiences may encourage more women to apply for position vacancies.

In addition to the males or females making hiring decisions in the workplace, women must also be actively engaged and held accountable if they are to break through the barrier of gender bias. Individuals should expect, regardless of gender, to be considered for employment based on their skills, attributes, and experiences. When situations occur because this is not the practice, individuals should not remain silent, and they must assume the responsibility to speak out.

***Glass ceiling.*** The glass ceiling refers to when women as a group are kept from advancing higher because of their gender. It is another external limitation preventing women from attaining the position of superintendent (Brunner, 1999, p. 81). The women's movement and equity legislation have had a positive impact on females in our society. However, neither the movement nor equity legislation has had a dramatic

enough effect to change norms and values that perpetuate the glass ceiling, and limit career advancement opportunities for women (Glass, 2000).

In the 2000 AASA study, (Glass, et al., 2000) 82% of the women superintendent respondents believed school boards did not see women as strong managers, and thus were reluctant to hire women as superintendents. Of those same respondents, 61%, felt within school management a glass ceiling existed, which reduced opportunities for women to be selected. Of the male superintendent respondents, 43% agreed school boards tended to consider women as incapable of managing a school district (Glass et al., 2000). Dana & Bourisaw (2006) portray the hiring process as school boards and search groups, the majority of whom are white men, selecting other white men to carry on the legacy of the school superintendency. This disparity in the selection and promotion of females into the role of superintendent is an example of the continued existence of the glass ceiling.

*Labyrinth.* Eagly and Carli (2009b) suggested the metaphor of a glass ceiling, a single unvarying obstacle that cannot be seen, as outdated. They posited the problem with the metaphor is that it implies an absolute barrier in a situation where men and women have the same access to entry or mid-level positions. Because of external limitations, such as gender bias, there is not equal access. They describe the challenges for women advancing to be multiple, complex, and changing. Newton (2006) agrees, listing multiple factors as barriers or challenges. Included in her list are the individual agency, educational structures, professional norms, and the larger sociocultural context, which converge to propagate the demographic profile of a superintendent as male. Statistics provided by Eagly and Carli (2009b) indicate women are making strides toward equity. Women surpass men earning 58% of bachelor's degrees and a majority of the

advanced degrees. In addition, the income women earn has risen to 80% of what men earn, up from 62% in 1979. However, women have not reached equality in the workplace. This is especially true in traditionally male-dominated fields like corporate management. In Fortune 500 corporations, only 16% of corporate officers and 15% of boards of directors' members are women. Career fields traditionally considered to be dominated by women reflect the following employment percentages: 97% of preschool and kindergarten teachers, 97% of secretaries and administrative assistants, and 92% of registered nurses are women (Eagly & Carli, 2009b).

Even after attaining a corporate position, women do not move ahead as fast as men do and they are more apt to drop out. Women tend to encounter problems from the beginning of their careers, not just late in careers or as they near the top. Eagly and Carli (2009b) described the path to leadership for women as complex and circuitous, and they used the metaphor of a labyrinth. Compared to the direct route taken by men, women often have to put forth more effort, be more patient, and plot their course more carefully to avoid and overcome obstacles.

Challenges such as family care responsibilities affect more women than men; women tend to reduce hours in the workplace or quit jobs. This causes a delay, and in some situations, a major setback in their career. Often women experience two competing pressures: to prove they are capable and to continue to be warm and giving. When women exhibit communal characteristics, they are often disrespected and considered incompetent and weak. If their behavior is businesslike, they are often disliked and considered cold and difficult. Resistance to women in leadership roles occurs most frequently in occupations that have few women. The competence of women is

recognized, but some in the workplace feel threatened and resist providing gender equality in leadership opportunities (Eagly & Carli, 2009b).

***Breaking through the glass ceiling or labyrinth.*** Middle level women managers who have broken through the glass ceiling have demonstrated that effective leaders do not all come from the same mold (Rosener, 1990). The first generation of female executives followed the leadership styles generally associated with men, believing the only way to be successful was to adopt male behaviors. The second wave of women executives has demonstrated success can come from drawing upon personal skills and attitudes to modify the traditional male style. These women have succeeded because the characteristics traditionally considered feminine, have been found to be appropriate for 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders (Rosener, 1990).

Women must possess the resilience to endure when seeking a superintendency (Sherman, Munoz, & Pankake, 2008). Breaking through the glass ceiling or working through the labyrinth requires combining the best of masculine and feminine qualities (Eagly & Carli, 2009b). Sampson (2009) called this a combination of *machismo*, defined as an exaggerated sense of power or strength, and *mamisma*, defined as the feminine nature of maternal qualities to build relationships rather than the exercise of power in a leadership role (Rubin, 2007). A critical component of overcoming the labyrinth is making networking connections with those in the community and those at the district level of leadership.

Networking with others and learning from mentors assists in taking advantage of opportunities to grow, as well as facilitating career advancement (Griffith & Thompson, 1998). As a result, a transformational style of leadership can develop. Transformational

leaders, as defined by Lunenburg and Ornstein (2008), motivate their subordinates to do more than they originally expected to do. They motivate in three ways: by raising the level of consciousness about the importance and value of designated outcomes and the ways to reach them, by getting followers to transcend their own self-interest for the sake of the organization, and by increasing the followers' need levels to the higher order needs, such as self-actualization (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008, p. 151). Further discussion on the ways women lead appears later in this chapter.

**Educational programming.** Glass (2000) reported there is very little literature on preparation programs for superintendents. Most is generalized to administration, which includes principals and other types of administrators. Glass believed preparation programs for the superintendency are in need of restructuring and improvement. As identified earlier in this chapter, the roles and necessary skills for a 21<sup>st</sup> century school superintendent are changing. Superintendents spend more time with community groups, issues related to state assessments, and promoting public education, which now competes for enrollment, in times of school choice, such as vouchers, homeschooling, and private schools.

Women pursuing the superintendency have an additional challenge because the knowledge base and curriculum context in preparation programs lack the female perspective (Goodman, 2002). The results of other studies support Goodman's identification of a lack of female perspective. Brown, Irby, and Iselt (2002) reported in their study on superintendent preparation programs, that traditional paradigms and cultural biases present in public school systems and higher education institutions generate barriers to women who pursue school superintendency positions. Women executives

who have attained the role of superintendent found the preparation programs less relevant than male superintendents did (Brown et al., 2002, p. 163). Barrios (2004) maintains university preparation programs do not provide a broad knowledge of the issues, concerns and experiences women will encounter in the role of superintendent.

Grogan and Brunner (2005) reported the continued cycle of male dominance in the field manifests itself in the preparation programs. The coursework in these higher education programs is based on traditional male models of leadership theory, such as an authoritative leadership style. These models emphasize managerial theory over community engagement models, which are more often aligned with a female leadership style. As noted earlier in this chapter, differences exist between male and female leadership styles and their approaches to making decisions (Gilligan, 1993).

In the 2000 AASA study (Glass, et al., 2000), only half of the men responding felt the “good old boy” network helped them gain a position. In contrast, 75% of the female respondents in the 2000 AASA study believed networking made the difference and reported that, through a network, someone had helped them get their positions (Glass et al., 2000). Women superintendents in California (Wickham, 2007) identified exclusion from the “good old boy” network as one of the three most significant barriers to acquiring a superintendent position.

In related research, Goodman (2002) attributed an underrepresentation of women in leadership positions at the university level to the shortage of role models for women. Although women and men enter universities as assistant professors at almost the same percentages, women make up only about 1/3 of the associate professors and 1/5 of the full professors. Furthermore, in higher education administration, most people believe that

recruitment and retention policies are gender-neutral and there is no need for a structure of mentoring or networking for women. Katz (2008) encouraged adult educators, mentors, superintendents, and professors in educational programs to be cognizant of gender differences. She encouraged the awareness to facilitate an appreciation of the differences, which will then assist in providing program designs appropriate for learning and leadership styles of both men and women.

*Proposed changes in educational programming.* As a result of her research on administrator preparation programs, Goodman (2002) provided several suggestions to assist women in higher education programs designed to prepare educators for a superintendent position. She advocated the programs should:

- Infuse gender issues throughout the curriculum used to prepare administrators and superintendents.
- Include case studies presenting concrete scenarios of equitable and inequitable treatment of females in a variety of settings as a part of the course curriculum.
- Establish university-based mentoring programs to guide women into positions of leadership.
- Establish a network or professional organization consisting of female graduate students and alumni who are practicing school administrators.
- Provide school-based internship experiences, which would benefit prospective employers by exposing them to the qualifications and competence of female administrators in the program.



- Urge female faculty and school administrators to work collaboratively in designing and selecting the curriculum for the preparation program.

From their research on gendered perspectives of superintendent preparation programs, Brown et al. (2002) provided a list of eight topics, currently absent, which they believe should be included, to best prepare women for the superintendency. The topics included legal issues, organizational culture and climate, ethics, working within the cultural and political system, collaboration, networking, using mentors, and interviewing practice.

Superintendents participating in the study reported one topic, theory of educational administration, consistently lacking in relevancy. Participants reported that the theory was emphasized heavily in preparation programs. This assessment of preparation programs is not surprising and, as was referenced earlier in this chapter, aligns with Grogan and Brunner's (2005) description of the traditional male model of leadership as a basis for using the data and insights gathered from the top women K-12 educational executives in Kansas r preparation programs. Whritner (2009) wrote, gender aside, the reality of the preparation for a superintendent position in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should focus less on the reason the individual went into education, teaching and learning, and more on leading with political savvy. Political savvy includes a focus on politics, the art of negotiating and seeking compromise, sales ability, and the use of psychology in the dynamics of human relations. The change in the role of the superintendent requires a change in the training provided.

To break through the barrier of the educational programs, those responsible for the design of university preparation programs must consider the research and feedback of

women completing the coursework. As professors restructure programs, not only should they give attention to the barriers existing for women, but they should also attend to the weaknesses identified by studies focused on the preparation.

### **Leadership Practices of Women**

Tallerico (1999) reported women often do not pursue the position of superintendent because their perceptions of the position originate in experiences working with male superintendents. Often these perceptions are not congruent with the way women view themselves or their preferred ways of leading. Blackmore (1989) conducted a study to analyze how some females conceptualized and practiced administrative leadership as a superintendent. Results from the study indicated leadership theory has cast women as “the other,” women’s interests as “particular,” and women as “deficient” if they fail to fit the male model of leadership, and “deviant” if they do (p. 21). From a central notion of “leadership as responsibility to others,” three themes emerged in the way participants practiced leadership:

1. The way work was defined and the relationship between the bureaucracy and client were premised upon a sense of community.
2. An educative view of policy formulation and implementation was based upon interaction between theory and practice and how current managerialists’ values inhibited this view.
3. An individual’s responsibility to women and girls, and the dilemmas of working in a masculine bureaucracy were addressed (Blackmore, 1989).

The participants agreed the position of superintendent provided system-wide legitimacy and some influence. A common theme among the respondents was the

enjoyment gained from establishing connections between people, between people and ideas, and between people and policy. It was the respondents' belief that leadership is learned from within a field of their expertise, among special interest groups and practitioners. Credibility comes from knowing what is going on in the schools. An overview of events and practices comes from working with others on the same issue and provides leeway to act. The respondents adhered to the concept of public service, which rejects the hierarchy implied in the notion of the professional knowing what is best for others (Blackmore, 1989).

Rosener (1990) called the leadership style of women "interactive leadership" (p. 120), because typically women leaders work diligently to make the interactions with those they supervise positive for everyone involved. Women typically encourage involvement, share authority and information, enhance other people's sense of worth, and get others enthused about their work. This leadership style reflects a belief that permitting employees to contribute and to feel powerful and valuable is a win-win situation for both employees and the organization. As has been reported previously in this study, Gilligan's (1993) description of the female attitude towards morality is that people have responsibilities towards toward each other, and follow a mandate to care for others.

Rosener (1990) identified four components in interactive leadership. The first is to encourage the participation of all. Inclusion is the focal point of interactive leadership. In the second component, the leader makes people feel part of the organization by sharing power and information. Open communication and soliciting input create loyalty and set an example for those in the organization. A third component is to enhance the self-worth

of others. A by-product of sharing information and encouraging participation is that the employee feels a sense of importance. Energizing others, the fourth component, spreads and shares enthusiasm for work.

Rosener (1990) found that interactive leadership comes naturally for women. This is attributed to the socialization and career paths of women leaders. The average age of respondents in the study was 51 years. This is old enough to have had experiences that were significantly different because of gender. The 1960s, the era in which most of the respondents were young girls, was a time when expectations were very different for men and women. Women's roles, and role models for these young women, were of wife, mother, community volunteer, teacher, or nurse. Attributes such as cooperative, supportive, understanding, gentle, and serving are common to all of these roles. The focus for each role listed was that of caretaker, with satisfaction and self-esteem gleaned by helping others. In contrast, men's roles required attributes such as competitiveness, toughness, strength, decisiveness, and controlling. Women have learned to lead without formal authority or control (Rosener, 1990).

Gilligan's (1993) research on the psychological theory of women's development identified three stages of development: selfishness, belief in conventional morality, and post-conventional morality. As children, females start with selfishness. They then learn to care for others and find that self-centeredness is morally not right, that it is inappropriate to act in their own best interest; and that the interests of others should be valued. Finally, they learn that it is equally as wrong to ignore their own interests. In the end, young girls gain the understanding that connections or relationships involve two people; if either is not cared for, it harms the relationship. This phenomenon is

demonstrated in children's play. When boys have a disagreement during play, they typically work actively to resolve it. When girls have a disagreement, they typically suspend playing in order to protect the relationship.

Socialization and moral decision-making of men and women are manifested in different styles of leadership (Brunner, 1999). Because the societal realities in which men and women live are dissimilar, there are differences in the socially appropriate behaviors each gender has acquired. Gender, defined by Brunner (1999) as the social meaning given to being female or male, includes a transactional relationship between people. The expectation of others and one's sense of self are often formed through the social construction of being female or male (Brunner, 1999, pp. x-xi).

Brunner (1999), Glass (2000), and Haar (2002) had similar descriptions of the characteristics of female leaders. All identified the characteristics of female leaders as different from those of male leaders. Brunner (1999) concluded women have already been trained to be the kind of leaders we are looking for today: facilitative, communicative, and empowering. Positive feminine qualities of nurturance, supportiveness, caring, cooperation, and attentiveness to relationships align with leadership styles in the superintendency setting. In this setting, men and women define power differently. The male definition emphasizes *power over*, while the female emphasizes *power to*. The female emphasis is a focus on the ability to get things done through collaboration and consensus building.

Glass (2000) also depicted characteristics of female school administrators as highly desirable qualities for leaders in educational reform initiatives. He described women administrators as more involved with teachers and marginal students, more

motivational, and placing more value in working with stakeholders. Haar (2002) found in her research “Characteristics of Effective Women School Leaders,” “women appear to intuitively know not only what is required to create and maintain a learning organization, but also how to actually do it” (p. 22). A word commonly used to describe women’s leadership is empowerment.

Kouzes and Posner (1995) described empowerment as “enabling others to act,” and further stated that those who enable others to act:

“foster collaboration and build spirited teams; actively involve others; demonstrate mutual respect to sustain extraordinary efforts; strive to create an atmosphere of trust and human dignity; strengthen others by sharing information and providing choice; give their power away; [and] make each person feel capable and powerful” (pp. 23-24).

The description of leadership skills needed for the future match characteristics that come naturally for most female leaders (Haar, 2002). Katz (2008) described women’s style as a “soft-touch leadership,” establishing relationships, and doing things together.

Caliper, a global consulting firm for hiring, developing, team building, and organizational concerns, completed a study in 2005 identifying “The Qualities That Distinguish Women Leaders.” In the study, women were found to be more persuasive than their male counterparts were. Women learn from adversity and carry on with an “I’ll-show-you” attitude. Female leaders also demonstrate an inclusive, team-building leadership style of problem solving and decision-making, and when too limited by rules and regulations, are more likely to ignore rules, take risks, and develop innovative solutions (Caliper Corporation, 2005).

The Caliper (2005) study provided preliminary evidence that women bring distinct personality and motivational strengths to leadership. As a result of the study, researchers asked the question, "Are women creating a new paradigm of leadership?" Libby Sartain of Yahoo! Inc., one of the subjects in the study, responded in this way,

"So much of what it takes to be a leader has been historically defined by men. And, while I was determined to be a leader, the last thing in the world I was going to do was to try to be like a man." (Caliper Corporation, 2005, n.p.)

Eagly and Carli (2009a) determined there are increasing numbers of women leaders in education, business, politics, and other fields. The results of their research reflect a change in attitudes about the importance of family and career by both men and women. Both genders have become family-focused, with more men staying home with children while the woman works outside the home. A change in attitudes about women and leadership is also evident. In today's society, when individuals are asked if they prefer to work for a man or woman, most say "no preference." The increase in the presence of women leaders should weaken the gender stereotypes and reduce resistance to women in positions of leadership. People are more likely to aspire and pursue an opportunity when there is a reasonable chance of attaining it. Therefore, as more women appear in prominent leadership roles, women are more likely to aspire to positions of power and influence.

Women have developed a style of leadership that is timely and effective in meeting the needs of organizations in today's society. In the next section, a review of the leadership practices identified as most effective and assessed by the Leadership Practices

Inventory developed by Kouzes and Posner will be discussed in relation to the leadership style of women.

### **The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership**

Kouzes and Posner (2003a) described leadership as a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow. Sometimes the relationship is between two people and other times it is between one person and many people. Regardless of the numbers, individuals must master the dynamics of the relationship to emerge, grow, and thrive as leaders. A leader must learn how to mobilize others to want to strive to reach shared goals of the organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a, p. 1).

By studying times when leaders performed at their best, Kouzes and Posner (2003a) were able to identify five practices common to effective leaders and their most extraordinary leadership achievements. Two strategies, referred to as commitments, within each practice provide further clarification.

#### 1. Model the Way

- a. Clarify values by finding your voice and affirming shared ideals.
  - Effective leaders do not force their views on others. They instead work to build consensus based on a set of common principles.
- b. Set the example by aligning actions with shared values.
  - Constituents become willingly engaged when they know leaders have the courage of their own convictions.

#### 2. Inspire a shared vision

- a. Envision the future by imagining exciting and ennobling possibilities.
  - Leaders must passionately believe they can make a difference.



- b. Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations.
  - Leaders get others to see how their own dreams will be realized through the common vision.
3. Challenge the process
  - a. Search for opportunities by seizing the initiative and by looking outward for innovative ways to improve.
    - Status quo is unacceptable to leaders; their work is change.
  - b. Experiment and take risks by constantly generating small wins and learning from experience.
    - One-step at a time gets the job done. Leaders demonstrate courage when they continue despite opposition and setbacks.
4. Enable others to act
  - a. Foster collaboration by building trust and facilitating relationships.
    - Leaders know they cannot succeed alone. An attitude of “We’re all in this together” is demonstrated.
  - b. Strengthen others by increasing self-determination and developing competence.
    - Leaders understand that mutual respect sustains extraordinary efforts.
5. Encourage the heart
  - a. Recognize contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence.

- Leaders keep hope and determination alive by showing appreciation for excellence.
- b. Celebrate the values and victories by creating a spirit of community.
- Leaders create a spirit of community by sharing the rewards of their efforts. (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a, pp. 1-7)

The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) has been called “the most reliable leadership development instrument available today” (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a, p. 9). Researchers have consistently found that leadership, as measured by the LPI, is related to positive employee and organizational outcomes. To minimize self-report biases, responses from the LPI-Observer are used in the analyses rather than responses from the LPI-Self, (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

Numerous research studies have been cited to identify the leadership styles, personal attributes, and skills common to women leaders. These align very closely with the practices and commitments of exemplary leadership identified by Kouzes and Posner (2003a). Given that women have the skills to lead organizations, specifically as school superintendents, the next step is to “just do it!” In the last section of this chapter, advice for seeking and attaining the position of school superintendent is provided.

### **Job Seeking Advice**

Doll (2008) studied leadership success strategies of U. S. Army women general officers. The identified strategies were simple and straightforward and they align with the advice provided by women who have attained the role of superintendent (Katz, 2008).

- Demonstrating professional competencies
- Exhibiting effective interpersonal skills

- Establishing a good reputation
- Taking and excelling in demanding positions
- Taking advantage of luck and timing
- Not aspiring too early
- Acquiring a mentor/sponsor/coach

Similar strategies were reported in a study of women superintendents by Lee (2000).

- Obtaining a doctorate
- Formulating and adhering to a plan of action
- Enhancing interview skills
- Developing a strong self-concept
- Increasing the flexibility to relocate

Cooper, Fusarelli, and Carella (2000) found that while superintendents are proud of and satisfied with their accomplishments, they are also concerned about finding talented and qualified leaders to take their places. Katz (2008) reported women superintendents believe more women should take the risk and apply for the position of superintendent to address the concern about finding replacements. These current superintendents described women as natural managers, instructional leaders, and nurturers, all qualities needed to lead 21<sup>st</sup> century schools. Possessing these qualities places women in a position to attain the superintendent role. Participants in the Katz (2008) study agree, adding that generally women have more direct knowledge about curriculum and instruction. Those in the study described women as understanding leadership and collaboration, and skilled at working with teams. Women leaders were also described as less likely to have an authoritarian approach to leadership. Other

attributes identified in the study, needed to be successful in attaining and maintaining the job, are dedication, which establishes credibility as a leader; coming up through the ranks; remaining centered and focused on the work; and knowing oneself, what centers one, and why one desires the job (Katz, 2008).

### **Summary**

The information in this chapter provided a historical timeline of the superintendency, job expectations, and the numbers of women who have attained the position. Career paths and patterns of women superintendents were discussed. Both self-imposed and external limitations to women attaining the position were described, followed by discussion of how to break through those barriers. Leadership practices of women leaders were articulated and their alignment to exemplary practices was outlined. In closing, findings of the research were reported, which supported the suggestions provided to assist women in attaining and maintaining the position of school superintendent. Chapter three provides the specific methodology used in the study.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Methods**

The problem addressed by this study is that although the majority of educators in this country are women, women are under-represented in the role of superintendent. The purpose of the study is to examine the personal profiles, career patterns, and leadership practices of women superintendents in Kansas. A better understanding of women who currently hold the position of school superintendent has the potential to not only increase the number of women who attain the position, but also to increase the likelihood they will be successful in that role. The methodology utilized to answer the research questions and to test the hypotheses is presented in this chapter. The chapter is organized into two sections. Research Design includes subsections of (a) Population and Sample, (b) Sampling Procedures, (c) Instrumentation, and (d) Data Collection Procedures. The second section is Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing. The following research questions guided this study:

1. To what extent are there similarities in the personal profiles of women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas?
2. To what extent are there similarities in the career patterns of women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas?
3. To what extent are there similarities in the leadership practices of women superintendents in different sized Kansas school districts?

#### **Research Design**

A quantitative research method guided the design of this study. Prior to initiating the study, three variables of interest and one independent variable were identified. The

variables of interest or dependent variables were personal profiles, career patterns, and leadership practices. The independent variable was the size of the school district, as measured by student enrollment, in kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade (K-12). Data were collected using two surveys: a demographic survey designed by the researcher and Kouzes and Posner's Leadership Practices Inventory-Self (LPI-Self).

**Population and Sample.** The population of interest was women who were employed as superintendents in the state of Kansas during the 2009-2010 school year. The sample for the study was the 21 women superintendents serving in Kansas who responded to both surveys. The state of Kansas is divided into 10 Kansas State Board of Education (KSBE) districts. The constituents of each district elect and are represented by a member of the Kansas State Board of Education. Figure 1 provides a visual depiction of the geographic locations of the KSBE districts and the unified school districts, represented on a map of Kansas. KSBE districts are determined according to population of the state. Each district encompasses four state senatorial districts. Redistricting occurs after the completion of a census. The last redistricting occurred in 2002. Women superintendents were employed in school districts located in all but one of the 10 KSBE Districts.

Figure 1. Kansas State Board of Education Districts for the 2009-2010 School Year

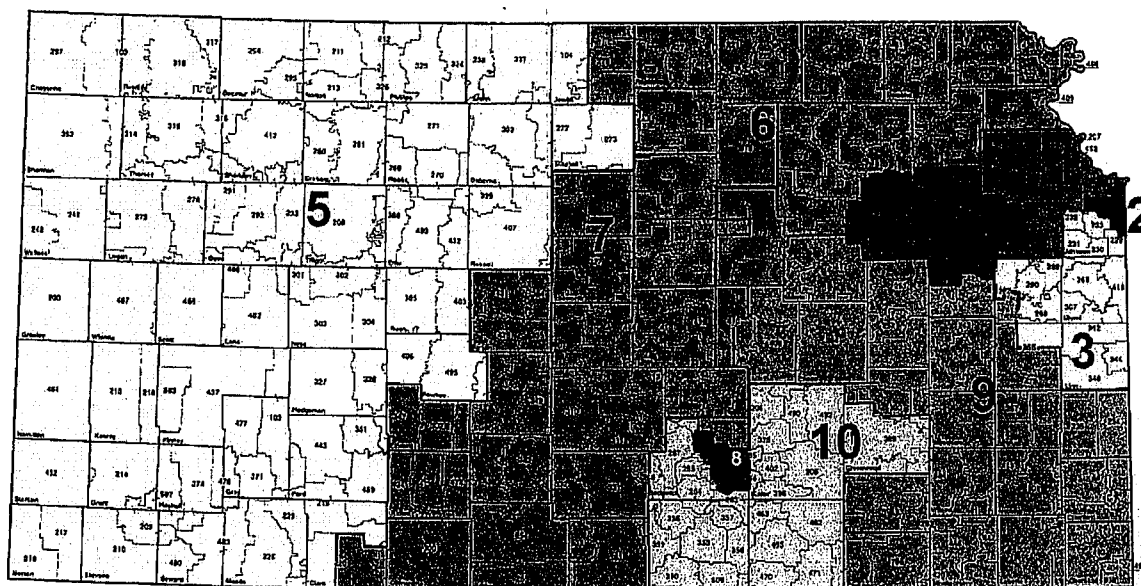


Figure 1. 2009-2010 boundaries of the 10 Kansas State Board of Education districts overlaid on a map of Kansas counties and unified school districts. Adapted from Kansas State Department of Education website: <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1860>.

The number of school districts with a woman superintendent within each KSBE District is displayed in Table 4. The KSBE district with the greatest number of women superintendents is District 5. District 5 covers the largest geographic area of the state and encompasses all or part of 41 Kansas counties. District 2, which covers the smallest geographic area, represents parts of two counties, Johnson County, Kansas and Wyandotte County, Kansas. The largest school district in Kansas, Wichita Unified School District (USD) 259, is located in District 8. The smallest school district, West Solomon USD 213 is located in District 5.

Table 4

*Number of Women Superintendents in Each KSBE District*

KSBE District	<i>n</i>
1	5
2	1
3	3
4	1
5	9
6	3
7	5
8	0
9	6
10	4

*Note.* From “Kansas K-12 Organizations,” Kansas State Department of Education, 2009b. Retrieved from KSDE website: <http://www3.ksde.org/k12/k12org.html>. Number of women superintendents in each district computed with information retrieved from KSDE: <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1860>. Some school districts fall within the boundaries of two Kansas State Board of Education Districts.

**Sampling Procedures.** Purposive sampling, a nonrandom technique of sampling, was used in this study. The use of purposive sampling is appropriate when a specialized population is the focus of a study (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). This method was strategically selected because of the intent to study a specific population, women superintendents in Kansas during the 2009-2010 school year. Only subjects who met that criterion were invited to participate in the study. All 37 women superintendents were invited to participate.



**Instrumentation.** Two instruments were utilized in the study. The first survey questionnaire was designed by the researcher to gather demographic and career pattern data from the participants. The survey was developed on the SurveyMonkey website, which is an online survey and questionnaire resource. The basic service provides access for the development of simple online surveys for a limited number of participants, collections of responses, and simple data analysis. For purposes of this study, the professional service was utilized to provide access to more extensive data reporting.

The demographic survey consisted of 45 items within four sections: (a) personal demographic information, (b) educational demographic information, (c) career patterns: career paths, and (d) career patterns: other components. The survey items were a combination of questions in three formats: multiple choice, multiple mark, and open-ended. This open-ended option was provided in the event the choices offered did not match the respondent's experiences. A copy of the survey is located in Appendix A within Appendix A of the Baker University Institutional Review Board Request document.

Part 1 of the demographic survey, titled Personal Demographic Information, consisted of 15 questions, which gathered personal information about the superintendents. Questions were asked about the participant's personal demographics, such as age, ethnicity, current position, length of time in the position, size and type of school district (rural, suburban, or urban), and family history. Family history included number of siblings; birth order; number of parents in the home and their level of education; if the respondent grew up in a rural, suburban, or urban community; and the number and ages of the respondent's children.

Part 2 was titled Educational Demographics Information. The four questions in this section gathered information about the participant's highest educational degree earned, as well as the types, sizes, and locations of higher education institutions they attended. Career Patterns: Career Paths was the title of Part 3. Eight questions in this section gathered information on the years and grade levels of participant's teaching experience and building administrative experience, and the years and positions in a central office position. The last question in this section asked the respondents to identify the educational roles in their career path to the superintendency.

The last section, Part 4 was titled Career Patterns: Other Components. The 18 survey questions were related to the length of time the participant had held a superintendent license, number of years a superintendent position was pursued, and influences or other factors, such as who encouraged the participant to pursue the position, mentors, role models, and the gender of those who may have impacted their attainment of the superintendency.

The second instrument used in the study was the Leadership Practices Inventory-Self (LPI-Self). The LPI-Self is a self-assessment tool, which identifies the frequency of engagement in behaviors aligned with Kouzes and Posner's five practices of exemplary leadership. Kouzes Posner International granted permission to reproduce the inventory for use in paper and pencil form as a part of this study. The assessment consists of 30 behavioral statements; which include six statements that measure each of the five key practices identified as those of exemplary leaders: modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart.

Each statement on the inventory is an “I” behavioral statement; for example, “I set a personal example of what I expect of others” (LPI Self-Online, 2009). Participants’ responses reflect the frequency with which they believe they engage in each identified behavior. The continuum offers responses from 1 = *almost never* to 10 = *almost always* (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Each participant’s ratings for the six statements within each of the five exemplary practices are summed to determine a total score for that practice.

Kouzes and Posner’s Leadership Practices Inventory was developed through both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Through a series of in-depth interviews and written case studies of managers in middle to senior-level organizational positions, the five leadership practices comprising the conceptual framework were identified. Individuals were asked to describe a “personal best as a leader,” an experience in which the leader got something extraordinary accomplished in an organization. The conceptual portion of the five exemplary practices was generated from the collection and analysis of personal-best leadership experience case studies (Posner & Kouzes, 1988, p. 484).

Personal bests were then categorized into five areas. Actions that were representative of the five practices were translated into behavioral statements used in the inventory. Posner and Kouzes (1988) reported, “more than 80% of the behavior and strategies described in respondents’ personal best case studies and interviews can be accounted for by these factors” (p. 485). There are two forms of the LPI, Self and Observer; which differ only in whether the behavior is rated by the respondent (Self) or by another person (Other) (Posner & Kouzes, 1988). For purposes of this study, only the LPI-Self was used. A copy of the LPI-Self can be found in Appendix A within Appendix A of the Baker University Institutional Review Board Request Document.

**Measurement.** The demographic survey is a tool designed to gather information from which a personal profile and career pattern could be determined for each participant. The personal profile includes information related to current position, family history, childhood history, higher education institutions attended, and educational degrees earned. Work experiences in the field of education and other factors or influences in their career history provide the career pattern details. The data gathered from Part 1, Personal Demographic Information, and Part 2, Educational Demographic Information, were analyzed to answer research question one, determining personal profiles and their similarities for women superintendents in Kansas. To answer research question two, identifying career patterns of women superintendents and similarities in those patterns, data from Part 3, Career Patterns: Career Paths, and Part 4, Career Patterns: Other Components were analyzed.

The LPI-Self is an instrument that measures the behaviors of leaders relative to the five exemplary leadership practices identified by Kouzes and Posner (2003a). The feedback report provided two pieces of information for each of the five practices. The first was a total score compiled by summing the ratings for the six statements associated with each practice. The second piece of information, based on the total scores for each practice, was a rating of high, moderate, or low, indicating the frequency each practice was exhibited (LPI Self Online, 2009). These data were analyzed to answer research question three, determining the effect size of the school district has on the leadership practices of women superintendents in Kansas.

**Validity and reliability.** Reliability, defined by Lunenburg and Irby (2008), is the degree to which the instrument consistently measures what it says it is measuring. The

measurement instrument utilized should be both valid and reliable. Validity (does the instrument measure what is intended to be measured) is the most important characteristic. However, an instrument must be reliable to be valid. If it does not provide reliable measures, it cannot provide valid results (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008)

It was not necessary to determine content validity and reliability for the demographic survey. Demographic surveys, such as the survey developed for this study, are commonly used as a method to gather concrete factual information from study participants. The questions and responses providing data are self-reported, low-inference statements related to personal characteristics such as gender, age, birth order, and so on.

The LPI has been administered to over 350,000 managers and non-managers with different demographic backgrounds in various organizations and disciplines. Validation studies over a 15-year period conducted by the developers, as well as other researchers, have consistently confirmed the validity and reliability of the Leadership Practices Inventory and the five practices of exemplary leaders model (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Administration of the inventory to individuals in a variety of careers provided the following examples of validity in measuring leadership practices.

- Principals of Blue Ribbon schools consistently had higher LPI scores than their counterparts.
- LPI scores were significantly higher as a result of collegiate leadership development programs.
- Significant relationships between LPI scores for pastors and the job satisfaction of their ministerial staff members were reported.

- LPI scores were significantly related to employee commitment levels (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

Cronbach's alpha coefficients for instrument reliabilities above .70 are considered to be very good. The reliabilities for the LPI tested through analysis of internal reliability are consistently above this criterion. There is a tendency for the reliability coefficients from the LPI-Self, with ranges between .75 and .87, to be lower than the LPI-Observer, with ranges between .88 and .92 (Posner, 2009).

The reliability of the LPI has been found to be unrelated to various demographic characteristics such as age, marital status, years of experience, and educational level. The same is true for organizational factors such as size, functional area, and staff position. The findings have held true across a wide variety of non-business settings as well as health care administrators, church pastors of large congregations, law enforcement officers, hotel managers, and educational personnel, including school superintendents, principals, and administrators (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

**Data Collection Procedures.** Data collection began after the research request was approved by the Baker University Institutional Review Board (see Appendix A). The women superintendents in Kansas were contacted via an e-mail inviting them to participate in the study. Those who did not respond within a week were contacted by telephone with a follow-up invitation. Subjects were asked to respond via e-mail to confirm their interest and voluntary participation in the research. A written agreement indicating their willingness to participate was acquired prior to their involvement in the study. A sample of the agreement may be found in Appendix A within Appendix D of the Baker University Institutional Review Board Request Document.

On the same document by which superintendents indicated their willingness to participate, the respondents could also request a copy of the completed study. Upon receipt of the consent form from the targeted population, the two instruments used in the study, the demographic survey and the LPI-Self, were sent to the participant. The link for the online demographic survey was included in an e-mail. The LPI-Self was sent to the superintendent via U.S. mail.

Participants were asked to respond to both instruments within a 2-week time period. A reminder e-mail was sent to those who had not responded within 10 days from the original request from the researcher. At the end of 2 weeks, an additional contact, by either e-mail or telephone, was made to non-respondents, inquiring as to the subject's intent to participate. No further contact was made after 6 weeks from the original communication. Data published in the study was the compilation of results designed to maintain the anonymity of individual participants.

### **Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing**

The research questions explored the similarities of personal profiles, career patterns, and leadership practices of women superintendents in Kansas. The descriptive statistics used in the analysis included measures of central tendency and correlation. Hypotheses one through six were used to answer research question number one, and hypotheses seven through 16 were used to answer research question number two. Chi-square tests, a nonparametric statistical technique, were used to test these hypotheses. Hypothesis 17 was used to answer research question number three. A one-factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test this hypothesis. The following are the hypotheses which were proposed and tested.

*H1:* Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas lead rural school districts.

*H2:* Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas lead districts with fewer than 1000 students.

*H3:* Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas are 51 years or older.

*H4:* Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas fall into the older end of children's birth order in their families

*H5:* Mothers of women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas completed post-high school education.

*H6:* Fathers of women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas completed post-high school education.

*H7:* Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas had teaching experience at the secondary level.

*H8:* Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas had experience as a building principal at the secondary level.

*H9:* Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas held a position in the district central office prior to their superintendency.

*H10:* Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas followed a common career path, which included holding both secondary administrative and district central office positions.

*H11:* Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas, possessed superintendent credentials 5 years or less prior to securing the position.



*H12:* Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas actively pursued the position 5 years or less prior to securing the position.

*H13:* Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas were hired in the district in which they were currently working.

*H14:* Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas were hired following a male superintendent.

*H15:* Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas did not have a mentor.

*H16:* Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas had a female role model.

*H17:* Leadership practices of women superintendents in Kansas are affected by the size of the school district.

For use by the researcher, each participant was assigned a number. Each participant's response to demographic questions was quantified by the assignment of a score. A legend identifying the scoring process used is included in Appendix B. Responses were entered into a spreadsheet, which facilitated descriptive statistical analysis of the data. Frequency tables were developed for the characteristics identified as components of personal profiles, and chi-squared tests were applied. The quantitative data analysis of the LPI-Self included calculations of means and standard deviations for the sub-scale scores in each of the five exemplary practice categories. Chi-squared tests were applied to the frequencies of superintendents reporting leadership practices in the low, moderate, or high range, as delineated by Kouzes and Posner (2003b). A one-factor ANOVA was used to compare the means across the size of school district.

Data collected from the two instruments, the demographic survey and the LPI-Self, were compiled within three categories: Personal Profiles, Career Patterns, and Leadership Practices. Demographic data related to personal profiles were compiled in an attempt to develop a common profile for women superintendents in Kansas. Responses were compared to identify similarities in the profiles of the subjects. The same procedure was applied to data collected related to career patterns. Data were examined to look for similarities in the career patterns of the women who had attained the position of superintendent. Results from the LPI-Self were compared across the five exemplary practices and district size, looking for the effect size of district had on the superintendents' reported leadership practices. The results of analysis of The Profiles, Patterns, and Practices are described in Chapter four of this study.

**Limitations.** Roberts (2004) defined limitations as those areas in a research study over which the researcher has no control. This study had two primary limitations. First, school superintendents self-reported their own demographic and career pattern information. There is the potential for deliberate and/or inadvertent inaccuracies in information reported in this way. Second, school superintendents self-selected their leadership practices on the LPI-Self. There is the potential for self-selection bias.

### **Summary**

This chapter provides an overview of the methodology used in the study of Personal Profiles, Career Patterns, and Leadership Practices of women superintendents in Kansas. Data from the three categories were compiled and analyzed to determine what similarities exist within these three categories. Chapter four provides presentation and

discussion of the results compiled from the study. Chapter five follows, with interpretation of the results and recommendations.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Results**

Chapter four presents data gathered from the respondents regarding personal demographics, educational demographics, career paths and other components of their career patterns. Additional data include the results of self-reported leadership practices of Kansas women superintendents. The statistical analyses used to test the hypotheses associated with each research question are also described and discussed.

#### **Descriptive Statistics**

The population of interest was women who were employed as superintendents in the state of Kansas, during the 2009-2010 school year. Twenty-one of the 37 women superintendents serving in Kansas responded to both surveys used to gather data for this study. This is a response rate of 56.8%. These 21 respondents were the sample for the study. The statistical program SPSS was utilized to analyze the data.

The 21 women superintendents represent school districts from across the state of Kansas. Respondents identified the type of school district in which they were employed during the 2009-2010 school year. The type of community, rural, suburban, or urban, categorizes the type of school district. The majority, 17 of the 21 women superintendents (81%), in the study work in rural communities. Table 5 contains the frequency and percentage of women superintendents within each type of district.

Table 5

*Type of School District*

Type	Frequency	Percent
Rural	17	81.0
Suburban	2	9.5
Urban	2	9.5
Total	21	100.0

The 21 women superintendent respondents were asked to identify the size of the school district in which they were employed during the 2009-2010 school year. Eight of 21 respondents (38.1%) were employed in school districts with student enrollments from 300 to 999. Only three superintendents (14.3%) worked in school districts with an enrollment over 3000 students. Table 6 contains the frequency and percentage of women superintendents within each district enrollment size.

Table 6

*Enrollment Size of School District*

Size	Frequency	Percent
Less than 300	6	28.6
300 to 999	8	38.1
1000 to 2999	4	19.0
3000 or more	3	14.3
Total	21	100.0

The 21 women superintendent respondents were asked to identify their age during the 2009-2010 school year. The largest number, 13 of the 21 respondents (61.9%) were 51 years or older. One superintendent fell in the 30 to 40 year range. Table 7 contains the frequency and percentage of women superintendents within each age range.

Table 7

*Age of Superintendent*

Age	Frequency	Percent
30 to 40 years	1	4.8
41 to 50 years	7	33.3
51+ years	13	61.9
Total	21	100.0

The 21 women superintendent respondents were asked to identify where they fell in the birth order of the children in their family. Categories are representative groups within the family and not necessarily the oldest, middle, or youngest child. Thirteen of the 21 respondents (61.9%) reported their birth order to fall in the middle group of children in their families. Table 8 contains the frequency and percentage of women superintendents within each birth order group.

Table 8

*Birth Order of Superintendents*

Group	Frequency	Percent
Oldest	5	23.8
Middle	13	61.9
Youngest	3	14.3
Total	21	100.0

The 21 women superintendent respondents were asked to identify the level of education completed by their mother. Thirteen of the 21 respondents' mothers (61.9%) completed post-high school education. Table 9 contains the frequency and percentage of women superintendents within each completed level of mothers' education.

Table 9

*Level of Education Completed by Superintendent's Mother*

Level	Frequency	Percent
Non-HS Graduate	2	9.5
HS Graduate	6	28.6
Post-HS Education	13	61.9
Total	21	100.0

The 21 women superintendent respondents were asked to identify the level of education completed by their father. Fourteen of the 21 respondents' fathers (66.7%) completed post- high school education. Two of the three superintendents reporting in the Non-HS Graduate category provided additional information. One superintendent reported her father quit school in the eighth grade to help take care of his family. Another indicated her father is unknown to her. Table 10 contains the frequency and percentage of women superintendents within each completed level of fathers' education.

Table 10

*Level of Education Completed by Superintendent's Father*

Level	Frequency	Percent
Non-HS Graduate	3	14.3
HS Graduate	4	19.0
Post HS Education	14	66.7
Total	21	100.0

The 21 women superintendent respondents were asked to report their teaching experience, at both the elementary and secondary levels. Secondary levels include both middle schools and high schools. Responses were recorded as yes/no, indicating experience at each level. Twelve of the 21 respondents (57.1%) had experience teaching at the elementary level, and 14 (66.7%) had experience teaching at the secondary level. Tables 11 and 12 contain the frequency and percentage of women superintendents with teaching experience at elementary and secondary levels.



Table 11

*Elementary Teaching Experience*

Elementary	Frequency	Percent
Yes	12	57.1
No	9	42.9
Total	21	100.0

Table 12

*Secondary Teaching Experience*

Secondary	Frequency	Percent
Yes	14	66.7
No	7	33.3
Total	21	100.0

The 21 women superintendent respondents were asked to report their experience as a building principal, including both elementary and secondary positions. Secondary includes both middle school and high school levels. Responses were recorded as yes/no, indicating experience at each level. Thirteen of the 21 respondents (61.9), had experience as an elementary principal and 11 (52.4%) had experience as a secondary principal. Tables 13 and 14 contain the frequency and percentage of women superintendents with building principal experience at elementary and secondary levels.

Table 13

*Elementary Building Principal Experience*

Elementary	Frequency	Percent
Yes	13	61.9
No	8	38.1
Total	21	100.0

Table 14

*Secondary Building Principal Experience*

Secondary	Frequency	Percent
Yes	11	52.4
No	10	47.6
Total	21	100.0

The 21 women superintendent respondents were asked to identify experience in a district central office position prior to attaining the superintendency. Thirteen of the 21 women superintendents (61.9%) held central office positions prior to attaining the role of superintendent. Table 15 contains the frequency and percentage of women superintendents with experience in a central office position.

Table 15

*Experience in a Central Office Position Prior to Superintendency*

Position	Frequency	Percent
Yes	8	38.1
No	13	61.9
Total	21	100.0

Prior research studies have identified five common career paths women follow to attain a school superintendent position. The five paths were discussed in Chapter 1 of this study. Table 2, located in Chapter one, displays the common career paths. The 21 women superintendent respondents were asked to identify the career path, which best described their experience prior to attaining the role of school superintendent. Path 6 was an *other* option if none of the common paths listed fit their experience. Twelve of the 21 respondents (57.1%) selected option 6 to describe their career experiences. All 12 indicated they started their careers as elementary teachers. Following that position, they held teaching and administrative positions at both the elementary and secondary levels. Table 16 contains the frequency and percentage of women superintendents identifying each career path.

Table 16

*Career Path Prior to Superintendency*

Path	Frequency	Percent
1	4	19.0
2,3, or 4	4	19.0
5	1	4.8
6	12	57.1
Total	21	100.0

The 21 women superintendent respondents were asked to identify the number of years they held superintendent credentials prior to attaining the superintendency.

Seventeen of 21 respondents (81%) had credentials one to five years prior to attaining a superintendent position. Table 17 contains the frequency and percentage of women superintendents within each range of years.

Table 17

*Number of Years Superintendent Credentials Held Prior to Attaining the Superintendency*

Years	Frequency	Percent
1 to 5	17	81.0
6 to 10	3	14.3
11 to 15	0	0
16+	1	4.8
Total	21	100.0

The 21 women superintendent respondents were asked to identify the number of years they actively pursued a superintendent position prior to attaining the role. Twenty of 21 respondents (95.2%) pursued a superintendent position one to five years prior to being hired. Table 18 contains the frequency and percentage of women superintendents within each range of years.

Table 18

*Number of Years Superintendency Actively Pursued*

Years	Frequency	Percent
1 to 5	20	95.2
6 to 10	1	4.8
11+	0	0
Total	21	100.0

The 21 women superintendent respondents were asked if at the time they were hired as a superintendent, they were employed in that same district. Eleven of 21 respondents (52.4%) said yes. Table 19 contains the frequency and percentage of women superintendents who indicated they were employed in the same district for which they were hired to lead in the role of superintendent.

Table 19

*Employed in District at the Time Selected as Superintendent*

Employed	Frequency	Percent
Yes	11	52.4
No	10	47.6
Total	21	100.0

The 21 women superintendent respondents were asked to identify the gender of the superintendent serving in the district prior to their hiring. All 21 respondents (100%) reported the prior superintendent was male. Table 20 contains the frequency and percentage of superintendents within each gender serving immediately prior to the respondents.

Table 20

*Gender of Prior Superintendent*

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	21	100
Female	0	0
Total	21	100

The 21 women superintendent respondents were asked if they had a mentor during their pursuit of a superintendent position. Thirteen of the 21 respondents (61.9%) reported they had a mentor. Table 21 contains the frequency and percentage of women superintendents reporting they had a mentor.

Table 21

*Mentor During Pursuit of Superintendency*

Mentor	Frequency	Percent
Yes	13	61.9
No	8	38.1
Total	21	100.0

The 13 women superintendent respondents who responded yes to having a mentor, were asked to identify the gender of the mentor who had worked with them during their pursuit of the superintendency. Of the 13 superintendents who had a mentor, 11 (84.6%) reported the mentor to be male. Table 22 contains the frequency and percentage of the gender of mentors to superintendent respondents during the time they were pursuing a superintendent position.

Table 22

*Gender of Mentor*

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	11	84.6
Female	2	15.4
Total	13	100.0

The 21 women superintendent respondents were asked if they had a role model during their pursuit of a superintendent position. Eighteen of the 21 respondents (85.7%) reported they had a role model. Table 23 contains the frequency and percentage of women superintendents reporting they had a role model.

Table 23

*Role Model During Pursuit of Superintendency*

Role Model	Frequency	Percent
Yes	18	85.7
No	3	14.3
Total	21	100.0

The 18 women superintendent respondents who responded yes to having a role model, were asked to identify the gender of the individual who served as a role model during their pursuit of the superintendency. Fourteen of the 18 superintendents who had a role model (77.8%) reported the role model to be male. Table 24 contains the frequency and percentage of the gender of role models to superintendent respondents during the time they were pursuing a superintendent position.

Table 24

*Gender of Role Model*

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	14	77.8
Female	4	22.2
Total	18	100.0



Responding to the Leadership Practices Inventory-Self, the 21 women superintendents rated themselves on each of the 30 leadership behaviors. The rating indicated how frequently, as superintendents, they engaged in that behavior. The statements were categorized into five effective leadership practices, and the six scores within each practice were added together to create 5 separate subscale totals. Descriptive statistics were computed using the 21 superintendent's subscale scores for each of the five effective leadership practices. The maximum total score possible for each subscale is 60. Reported in Table 25 are the minimum and maximum scores for each of the five subscales. In addition, the mean scores and standard deviations are reported for each leadership practice.

Table 25

*Descriptive Statistics for the Five Effective Leadership Practices*

Leadership Practice	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Model the Way	43	59	51.1905	3.78971
Inspire a Shared Vision	41	56	49.0476	4.23646
Challenge the Process	37	57	48.8095	6.45460
Enable Others to Act	39	60	51.5714	4.91499
Encourage the Heart	37	60	48.0000	5.94138

Based on the distribution of subscale scores acquired during the reliability and validity testing of the Leadership Practices Inventory-Self, three categories of engagement in the leadership practices were identified (Kouzes & Posner, 2003a). Subscale scores for each of the five effective leadership practices are categorized as High, Moderate, or Low engagement. The ranges of subscale scores assigned for each category within each leadership practice are displayed in Table 26.

Table 26

*Range of Scores for Categorical Descriptions by Leadership Practice*

Leadership Practice	High	Moderate	Low
Model the Way	51 – 60	44 - 50	10 – 43
Inspire a Shared Vision	50 – 60	40 - 49	10 – 39
Challenge the Process	50 – 60	43 - 49	10 – 42
Enable Others to Act	53 – 60	47 - 52	10 – 46
Encourage the Heart	52 – 60	43 - 51	10 – 42

Subscale categorical frequencies for the 21 women superintendent respondents in this study were computed. Table 27 contains the frequency and percentage of scores for each of the five effective leadership practices within the high, moderate, and low categorical identifications for the women superintendents.

Table 27

*Leadership Practice Categorical Frequency*

Leadership Practice	High		Moderate		Low	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
MW	11	52.4	9	42.9	1	4.8
ISV	9	42.9	12	57.1	0	0.0
CP	12	57.1	5	23.8	4	19.0
EOA	9	42.9	10	47.6	2	9.5
EH	6	28.6	12	57.1	3	14.3

*Note.* The following abbreviations for the leadership practices were utilized: MW = Model the Way, ISV = Inspire a Shared Vision, CP = Challenge the Process, EOA = Enable Others to Act, and EH = Encourage the Heart.

**Hypothesis Testing**

The hypotheses for each of the research questions were tested. In this section, each research question is stated, followed by the hypothesis or hypotheses, and the data used to test the research question. Data are displayed in tables 28 through 49. A report of the results of the testing follows each data table.

To test the hypotheses for Research Question One the nonparametric chi-squared test of equal percentages was computed. Tables providing both the observed and expected data are presented for each hypothesis. The chi-squared test results and significant differences, or categories where there are significant differences, between observed and expected frequencies follow each table.

Research Question 1: To what extent are there similarities in the personal profiles of women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas? Six hypotheses were tested to answer Research Question 1.

*H1*: Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas lead rural school districts.

Table 28

*Type of School District*

Type	Observed	Expected
Rural	17	7
Suburban	2	7
Urban	2	7

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the question: Which best describes your school district, rural, suburban, or urban? The results of the test ( $X^2 = 21.43, df = 2, p < 0.01$ ) indicate there was a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. Further analysis of the standardized residuals indicated 17 superintendents, more than would be expected by chance (7), described their school district as rural. The responses were distributed in the three categories in a way that indicated some similarity. Women superintendents in Kansas tend to serve in rural districts.

*H2*: Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas lead districts with fewer than 1000 students.

Table 29

*Enrollment Size of School District*

Enrollment	Observed	Expected
Less than 300	6	5.25
300 to 999	8	5.25
1000 to 2999	4	5.25
3000 or more	3	5.25

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the question: What is the current enrollment of your district? The results of the test ( $X^2 = 2.81, df = 3, p = 0.42$ ) indicated there was not a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. The size of school district results were not significant, indicating there were no response tendencies. Therefore, the responses were distributed randomly within the four categories. The superintendents did not answer in a similar manner.

*H3*: Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas are 51 years or older.

Table 30

*Age of Superintendent*

Age	Observed	Expected
30 to 40 years	1	7
41 to 50 years	7	7
51+ years	13	7

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the question: What is your current age? The results of the test ( $X^2 = 10.29, df = 2, p = 0.01$ ) indicate there was a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. Further analysis of the standardized residuals indicated 13 superintendents, more than would be expected by chance (7), were 51 years of age or older. The responses were distributed in the three categories in a way that indicated some similarity. Women superintendents in Kansas tend to be 51 years of age or older.

*H4*: Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas fall into the older end of children's birth order in their families

Table 31

*Birth Order Group of Superintendents*

Group	Observed	Expected
Oldest	5	7
Middle	13	7
Youngest	3	7

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the question: Where did you fall in the birth order of your siblings? The results of the test ( $X^2 = 8.0, df = 2, p = 0.02$ ) indicate there was a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. Further analysis of the standardized residuals indicated 13 superintendents, more than would be expected by chance (7), identified their birth order as in the middle group. The responses were distributed in the three categories in a way that indicated some similarity. Women superintendents in Kansas tend to fall in the middle of the children's birth order in their families.

*H5*: Mothers of women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas completed post-high school education.

Table 32

*Level of Education Completed by Superintendent's Mother*

Level	Observed	Expected
Non-HS Graduate	2	7
HS Graduate	6	7
Post-HS Education	13	7

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the question: What was your mother's highest educational level? The results of the test ( $\chi^2 = 8.86, df = 2, p = 0.01$ ) indicate there was a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. Further analysis of the standardized residuals indicated 13 superintendents, more than would be expected by chance (7), identified their mother's highest educational level as post-high school. The responses were distributed in the three categories in a way that indicated some similarity. Women superintendents in Kansas tend to have mothers who completed post-high school education.



*H6*: Fathers of women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas completed post-high school education.

Table 33

*Level of Education Completed by Superintendent's Father*

Level	Observed	Expected
Non-HS Graduate	3	7
HS Graduate	4	7
Post-HS Education	14	7

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the question: What was your father's highest educational level? The results of the test ( $X^2 = 10.57, df = 2, p = 0.01$ ) indicate there was a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. Further analysis of the standardized residuals indicated 14 superintendents, more than would be expected by chance (7), identified their father's highest educational level as post-high school. The responses were distributed in the three categories in a way that indicated some similarity. Women superintendents in Kansas tend to have fathers who completed post-high school education.

To test the hypotheses for Research Question Two the nonparametric chi-squared test of equal percentages was computed. Tables providing both the observed and expected data are presented for each hypothesis. The chi-squared test results and

significant differences, or categories where there are significant differences, between observed and expected follow each table.

Research Question 2: To what extent are there similarities in the career patterns of women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas? Eleven hypotheses were tested to answer Research Question 2.

*H7: Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas had teaching experience at the secondary level.*

To gather data to test Hypothesis Seven, participants were asked to respond to the following multiple choice multiple answer statement: Please indicate level(s) of teaching experience prior to attaining the role of superintendent. Participants were asked to select all that applied from the choices, which included Elementary, Middle Level, High School, and Higher Education. When compiling the data for analysis, responses were categorized for each possible response. If a choice was selected it was categorized as *yes*, and if not selected it was categorized as *no*. Middle Level and High School responses were both considered secondary experience. Table 35 displays the number of responses for secondary teaching experience.

Table 34

*Secondary Teaching Experience*

Secondary	Observed	Expected
Yes	14	10.5
No	7	10.5

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the statement: Please indicate level(s) of teaching experience prior to attaining the role of superintendent. The results of the test ( $X^2 = 2.33, df = 1, p = 0.13$ ) indicated there was not a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. The secondary teaching experience results were not significant, indicating there were no response tendencies. Therefore, the responses were distributed randomly within the two categories. The superintendents did not answer in a similar manner.

*H8*: Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas had experience as a building principal at the secondary level.

To gather data to test Hypothesis 8, participants were asked to respond to the following multiple choice multiple answer statement: Please indicate all experience(s) as a principal. Choices included Elementary, K-8, Middle Level, 7-12, High School, K-12, and other. When compiling the data for analysis responses were categorized as yes or no for each possible response. Middle Level, 7-12, and High School responses were all

considered to be at the secondary level. Table 36 displays the number of responses for secondary building principal experience.

Table 35

*Secondary Building Principal Experience*

Secondary	Observed	Expected
Yes	11	10.5
No	10	10.5

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the statement: Please indicate all experience(s) as a principal. The results of the test ( $X^2 = 4.76, df = 1, p = 0.83$ ) indicated there was not a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. The secondary building principal experience results were not significant, indicating there were no response tendencies. Therefore, the responses were distributed randomly within the two categories. The superintendents did not answer in a similar manner.

*H9:* Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas held a position in the district central office prior to their superintendency.

Table 36

*District Central Office Position Held Prior to Superintendency*

Position Held	Observed	Expected
Yes	13	10.5
No	8	10.5

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the statement: Please indicate all positions held at the central office. The results of the test ( $X^2 = 1.19, df = 1, p = 0.28$ ) indicated there was not a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. The district central office experience results were not significant, indicating there were no response tendencies. Therefore, the responses were distributed randomly within the two categories. The superintendents did not answer in a similar manner.

*H10*: Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas followed a common career path, which included holding both secondary building administrative and district central office positions.

Table 37

*Career Path Prior to Superintendency*

Path	Observed	Expected
1	4	5.25
2,3,4	4	5.25
5	1	5.25
6	12	5.25

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the statement: Please select the response which best describes your career path prior to attaining the role of superintendent. The results of the test ( $X^2 = 12.71$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) indicated there was a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. Further analysis of the standardized residuals indicated 12 superintendents, more than would be expected by chance (5.25), selected the *other* category to describe their career path to the superintendency. The responses were distributed in the four categories in a way that indicated some similarity.

*H11*: Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas, possessed superintendent credentials for 1 to 5 years prior to securing the position.

Table 38

*Number of Years Superintendent Credentials Held Prior to Attaining the Superintendency*

Years	Observed	Expected
1 to 5	17	5.25
6 to 10	3	5.25
11 to 15	0	5.25
16+	1	5.25

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the statement: Please indicate the number of years you possessed superintendent credentials prior to attaining the role of superintendent. The results of the test ( $X^2 = 35.95$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) indicate there was a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. Further analysis of the standardized residuals indicated 17 superintendents, more than would be expected by chance (5.25), had possessed credentials five years or less. The responses were distributed in the four categories that indicated some similarity. Women superintendents in Kansas tend to have held credentials one to five years prior to attaining the superintendency.

*H12:* Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas actively pursued the position 5 years or less prior to securing the position.

Table 39

*Number of Years Superintendency Actively Pursued*

Years	Observed	Expected
1 to 5	20	7
6 to 10	1	7
11+	0	7

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the statement: Please indicate the number of years you actively pursued the role of superintendent prior to obtaining your first superintendency. The results of the test ( $X^2 = 36.29, df = 2, p < 0.01$ ) indicate there was a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. Further analysis of the standardized residuals indicated 20 superintendents, more than would be expected by chance (7), had pursued a superintendent position five years or less. The responses were distributed in the three categories that indicated some similarity. Women superintendents in Kansas tend to have actively pursued the superintendency one to five years.



*H13*: Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas were hired in the district in which they were currently working.

Table 40

*Employed in District at the Time Selected as Superintendent*

Employed	Observed	Expected
Yes	11	10.5
No	10	10.5

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the question: Were you an employee of the district when you were selected as superintendent in your current district? The results of the test ( $X^2 = 0.04$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p = 0.83$ ) indicated there was not a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. The employed in district results were not significant, indicating there were no response tendencies. Therefore, the responses were distributed randomly within the two categories. The superintendents did not answer in a similar manner.

*H14*: Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas were hired following a male superintendent.

Table 41

*Gender of Prior Superintendent*

Gender	Observed	Expected
Male	21	10.5
Female	0	10.5

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the statement: What is the gender of the superintendent who served before you in your current district? The results of the test ( $X^2 = 21.0, df = 1, p < 0.01$ ) indicate there was a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. Further analysis of the standardized residuals indicated 21 superintendents; more than would be expected by chance (10.5), were preceded by a male superintendent in their current position. The responses were distributed in the two categories that indicated some similarity. Women superintendents tend to have been hired following a male superintendent.

*H15*: Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas did not have a mentor.

Table 42

*Mentor During Pursuit of Superintendency*

Mentor	Observed	Expected
Yes	13	10.5
No	8	10.5

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the question: Did you have a primary mentor during the time you pursued the role of superintendent? The results of the test ( $X^2 = 1.19, df = 1, p = 0.28$ ) indicated there was not a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. The mentor results were not significant, indicating there were no response tendencies. Therefore, the responses were distributed randomly within the two categories. The superintendents did not answer in a similar manner.

*H16*: Women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas had a female role model.

Table 43

*Role Model During Pursuit of Superintendency*

Role Model	Observed	Expected
Yes	18	10.5
No	3	10.5

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the statement: Did you have a role model during the time you pursued the role of superintendent? The results of the test ( $X^2 = 13.8, df = 1, p < 0.01$ ) indicate there was a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. Further analysis of the standardized residuals indicated 18 superintendents, more than would be expected by chance (10.5), report having had a role model. The responses were distributed in the two categories that indicated some similarity. Women superintendents tend to have had a role model while pursuing the role of superintendent.

Table 44

*Gender of Role Model*

Gender	Observed	Expected
Male	14	9
Female	4	9

A chi-squared test of equal percentages was conducted using the responses to the statement: If you had a role model, please indicate their gender. The results of the test ( $X^2 = 5.56, df = 1, p = 0.02$ ) indicate there was a significant difference between the expected and observed counts. Further analysis of the standardized residuals indicated 14 of the 18 superintendents who had role models, more than would be expected by chance (9), had a male role model. The responses were distributed in the two categories that indicated some similarity. Women superintendents in Kansas tend to have male role models.

The hypothesis for Research Question Three was tested using a one factor Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The results of the ANOVA and a determination of the significance of the relationship between district size and leadership practice follow each table.

Research Question 3: To what extent are there similarities in the leadership practices of women superintendents in different sized Kansas school districts? Size of a school district was classified by student enrollment. One hypothesis was tested to answer Research Question 3. A one factor ANOVA was conducted for each of the five exemplary leadership practices.

*H17*: Leadership practices of women superintendents in Kansas are affected by the size of the school district.

Table 45

*Model the Way Subscale Means and Standard Deviations by School District Size*

District Size	Mean	Standard Deviation
Less than 300	50.33	4.89
300 to 999	52.13	3.00
1000 to 2999	52.00	4.83
3000 or more	49.33	2.31

A one factor ANOVA was conducted to compare the means of the Model the Way subscale scores on the LPI-Self across district size displayed in Table 46. The results of the test indicated no significant difference [ $F(3,17) = 0.53, p = 0.67$ ] across groups for Model the Way subscale means. The Model the Way mean comparison results were not significant, and showed no support for Hypothesis 17.

Table 46

*Inspire a Shared Vision Subscale Means and Standard Deviations by School District Size*

District Size	Mean	Standard Deviation
Less than 300	47.33	5.89
300 to 999	49.13	3.68
1000 to 2999	51.75	3.77
3000 or more	48.67	0.58

A one factor ANOVA was conducted to compare the means of the Inspired a Shared Vision subscale scores on the LPI-Self across district size displayed in Table 47. The results of the test indicated no significant difference [ $F(3,17) = 0.86, p = 0.48$ ] across groups for Inspired a Shared Vision subscale means. The Inspire a Shared Vision mean comparison results were not significant, and showed no support for Hypothesis 17.

Table 47

*Challenge the Process Subscale Means and Standard Deviations by School District Size*

District Size	Mean	Standard Deviation
Less than 300	43.67	9.24
300 to 999	50.25	3.45
1000 to 2999	53.50	3.00
3000 or more	49.00	4.00

A one factor ANOVA was conducted to compare the means of the Challenge the Process subscale scores on the LPI-Self across district size displayed in Table 48. The results of the test indicated a marginal significant difference [ $F(3,17) = 2.62, p = 0.08$ ] across groups for Challenge the Process subscale means. The Challenge the Process mean comparison results, although marginally significant, showed limited support for Hypothesis 17. A potential for differences exists between leadership practices in district sizes less than 300 and 1000 to 2999 students.

Table 48

*Enable Others to Act Subscale Means and Standard Deviations by School District Size*

District Size	Mean	Standard Deviation
Less than 300	49.33	7.12
300 to 999	53.00	3.55
1000 to 2999	54.00	4.08
3000 or more	49.00	1.00

A one factor ANOVA was conducted to compare the means of the Enable Others subscale scores on the LPI-Self across district size displayed in Table 49. The results of the test indicated no significant difference [ $F(3,17) = 1.29, p = 0.31$ ] across groups for Enable Others subscale means. The Enable Others mean comparison results were not significant, and showed no support for Hypothesis 17.

Table 49

*Encourage the Heart Subscale Means and Standard Deviations by School District Size*

District Size	Mean	Standard Deviation
Less than 300	45.17	5.27
300 to 999	51.13	5.03
1000 to 2999	50.00	7.34
3000 or more	42.67	0.58



A one factor ANOVA was conducted to compare the means of the Encourage the Heart subscale scores on the LPI-Self across district size displayed in Table 50. The results of the test indicated a marginally significant difference [ $F(3,17) = 2.70, p = 0.08$ ] across groups for Encourage the Heart subscale means. The Encourage the Heart mean comparison results, although marginally significant, showed limited support for Hypothesis 17. A potential for differences exists between leadership practices in district sizes 300 to 999 and 3000 or more students.

### **Summary**

This chapter introduced the results of the study and presented descriptive statistics for the sample. Data gathered from the demographic survey and LPI-Self were displayed in tables. The three research questions and seventeen hypotheses, developed to answer the research questions, were also articulated. The results of hypotheses analysis were reported in the last section of the chapter. Chapter Five, which follows, will provide an interpretation of the results and recommendations.

## Chapter Five

### Interpretation and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to examine the personal profiles, career patterns, and leadership practices of women superintendents in Kansas to determine if similarities existed, and if leadership practices were affected by the size of the school district led by the superintendent. Two survey instruments were used in this study, a demographic survey designed by the researcher and Kouzes and Posner's Leadership Practices Inventory-Self (LPI-Self). This chapter provides a summary of items discussed in chapters one through four; including a study summary, findings related to the literature, implications for action, and recommendations for future research.

#### Study Summary

Women superintendents in the state of Kansas during the 2009-2010 school year were the focus of this study. All 37 women superintendents were invited to participate in the study, 21 responded and provided information related to their personal profiles, career paths, and leadership practices. The study focus was to identify similarities within each of the three identified variables of interest, and to determine if the impact of the independent variable, size of district, affected leadership practices. Data gathered was analyzed utilizing chi-squared tests and a one factor Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

**Overview of the Problem.** The problem is that although the majority of educators in Kansas and the United States are women, women are under-represented in the role of superintendent.

**Purpose Statement and Research Questions.** The purpose of this study was to examine the personal profiles, career patterns, and leadership practices of women

superintendents in Kansas. By exploring these three domains, it would be possible to determine if similarities exist between women superintendents. The rationale for this focus was to contribute to and expand upon existing research. Three research questions guided this study.

1. To what extent are there similarities in the personal profiles of women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas?
2. To what extent are there similarities in the career patterns of women who have attained the role of school superintendent in Kansas?
3. To what extent are there similarities in the leadership practices of women superintendents in different sized Kansas school districts?

**Review of the Methodology.** Three variables of interest and one independent variable were identified. Two surveys were used to collect data; a demographic survey designed by the researcher, and Kouzes and Posner's LPI-Self. The demographic survey consisted of 45 items within four sections: (a) personal demographic information, (b) educational demographic information, (c) career patterns: career paths, and (d) career patterns: other components. The survey items were a combination of questions in three formats: multiple choice, multiple mark, and open-ended. The open-ended option was provided in the event the choices offered did not match the respondent's experiences. The LPI-Self is a self-assessment tool, which identifies the frequency of engagement in behaviors aligned with Kouzes and Posner's five practices of exemplary leadership. The assessment consists of 30 behavioral statements; which include six statements that measure each of the five key practices identified as those of exemplary leaders: modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and

encouraging the heart. The population of interest was the 37 women superintendents in Kansas during the 2009-2010 school year. The sample for the study was the 21 women superintendents who responded to both surveys.

To test the hypotheses and determine if similarities existed in the personal profiles and career paths of the Kansas women superintendents, the data were analyzed using a chi-squared test of equal percentages. A one factor ANOVA was conducted to test the hypothesis by comparing the means of leadership practices across school district size.

**Major Findings.** Significant results were found for five of the six hypotheses tested to answer research question one regarding similarities in the women superintendents' personal profiles. Results related to the type of school district, indicate women superintendents in Kansas tend to serve in rural school districts. By testing the hypothesis related to the age of women superintendents, the results were that women superintendents tend to be 51 years or older. The results from the hypothesis test for birth order found women superintendents tend to fall in the middle of the birth order for families. The two hypotheses tested related to the level of education completed by the mothers and the fathers of Kansas women superintendents both produced the same result. Mothers and fathers of women superintendents both tend to complete post-high school education. Results for testing the hypothesis related to the enrollment size of districts led by women superintendents showed no significance. The results of the data analysis for five of the six hypotheses tested indicate there are similarities in the personal profiles of women superintendents in Kansas.

The results of the data analysis testing the eleven hypotheses which answered research question two, regarding similarities in career paths, were not as clear as those for

research question one. Significant results were found in the career path, which led to the superintendency (elementary teaching, elementary principal, and secondary principal). Also significant was the length of time the superintendents held credentials prior to securing a position (1 to 5 years), and the length of time the superintendents actively pursued the position (1 to 5 years). The hypotheses testing related to the number of women hired following a male superintendent (21), and the number of women superintendents who had a male role model (14), also produced significant results. Results not found to be significant were the number of superintendents who had teaching experience at the secondary level (14) or who had been principals at the secondary level (11). The number of superintendents who had experience at the district central office (8), those who were hired as superintendent in the district they were working (11), and those who did not have a mentor (8) were also not found to be significant.

To test the hypothesis developed to answer research question three, which addressed the effect of district size on leadership practices, a one factor ANOVA was conducted. The means of subscale scores for each of the five effective leadership practices were compared across district size. For all five leadership practices results were not significantly different for superintendents at different sized school districts. However, two practices Challenge the Process and Encourage the Heart were approaching significance and could be considered marginally significant.

### **Findings Related to the Literature**

Commonalities between the results of the research studies reviewed in Chapter two and the results for this study can be identified. Glass, et al. (2000) reported that nationwide, the number of women superintendents leading districts with more than 3000

students nearly tripled between 1992 and 2000. In the year 2000, it was reported that nationwide 14.1% of women superintendents led districts with more than 3000 students. That statistic is comparable to the findings for 2009 - 2010 in Kansas, where 14.3% of women superintendents led school districts with enrollments over 3000 students. According to Glass, et al. (2000), because of the time that is required to move through the typical career path followed by a school superintendent, the average age of a superintendent is about 50 years old. The age of the women superintendents in this study supports this finding. Respondents in this study were asked to report their age, and 61.9% indicated they were 51 years or older.

Identified career paths in prior research and the superintendents' career paths in this study also show similarities. The most typical career path for women superintendents reported by Brunner (1999), Glass (2000), Farmer (2007), and Glenn & Hickey (2009) included the roles of teacher, principal, central office, and superintendent. The second most common path reported was teacher, principal, and superintendent. The second path occurred most often in suburban or urban school districts with less than 3000 students or small rural districts with less than 300 students. The lack of a central district office position in the second path was attributed to the fact that in smaller districts there are fewer central office positions. This study found the most common career path of the respondents to be that of elementary teacher, principal, and superintendent. This result, not surprising since 91.9% of Kansas school districts have an enrollment less than 3000 students, aligns with the second most common path identified in earlier studies. Additionally, results in this study support previous research stating that women superintendents most often lead school districts with fewer than 3000 students. Results

of this study found that 18 of the 21 respondents, 85.7%, led districts of fewer than 3000 students, and six of the 18 districts, 33 1/3%, had student enrollments of less than 300 students.

Twenty of the 21 superintendents in this study reported attaining a superintendent position within 1 to 5 years of pursuing the role. This finding aligns with previous studies, which found women superintendents attained the position within a year of pursuit (Glass, et al. 2000, Grogan & Brunner, 2005). Research related to mentors for women pursuing leadership positions indicated that typically 80% of the mentors were male (Manuel, 2001). Of the women superintendents in this study, 13 or 61.9% reported having a mentor during their pursuit of the superintendency. Of the 13 superintendents who had a mentor, 11 or 84.6% reported the mentor to be male.

Kouzes and Posner's LPI-Self has been determined to be a reliable tool in measuring the behaviors of leaders related to the five effective leadership practices. Validation studies over a 15-year period have determined the implementation of the leadership practices is unrelated to demographic characteristics and organizational factors such as size (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). The findings of this study align with Kouzes and Posner's earlier research. The analysis of the effect of district size on the five leadership practices was not found to be significant.

The findings of this study, although limited to respondents from Kansas, were consistent with results of prior research regarding women superintendents. Earlier and related research was reviewed in Chapter Two, Review of Literature. Conclusions drawn from the findings of this study will be discussed in the next section.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the results of this study and those of prior research there are similarities in the personal profiles and career paths of women superintendents. The results of the study of women superintendents in Kansas during the 2009 – 2010 school year align with the findings of studies in other states and nationwide. As indicated in the discussion of findings of previous studies, the size of the school district may have an impact on characteristics and staffing patterns of a district. However, the results of this study indicate size does not significantly affect leadership practices.

## **Implications for Action**

The findings of this study found similarities in the personal profiles and career paths of women superintendents, and no significant relationship between district size and leadership practices. The number of women superintendents continues to increase both in Kansas and nationwide. As reported in the literature review in Chapter two, networking opportunities, mentors, and role models are key to women attaining advanced leadership positions. However, as the findings in this study and others indicate male mentors and role models for women pursuing a superintendent position continues to be the norm. The disparity in numbers between men and women serving as superintendents produces the result of men mentoring or serving as role models to women. Until there is a significant increase in the number of women superintendents, this model is not likely to change. The implication is for women who have already attained the superintendency, or other advanced leadership position, to develop a method of networking or mentoring which would assist other women in attaining like positions. Kamler (2006) describes a collaborative program in Nassau County, Long Island, New York whereby the



superintendents' council, the regional school leadership center and a local university have developed an inclusive mentoring network called the Aspiring Superintendents' Study Group. The structure of the program promotes interest in becoming a superintendent by identifying and tapping promising leaders. A program such as this could serve as a model for programs in other states. The findings of this study related to the lack of affect district size has on leadership practices would indicate networking, mentoring, or role model relationships to enrich and support leadership could occur between women leaders regardless of district size.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

As this researcher analyzed the results and reflected on the findings of this study, recommendations were developed for future research. The recommendations are summarized and could be considered by other researchers who wish to contribute to the study of women superintendents.

The population of Kansas women superintendents was the focus of this study. During the year of the study, the total population was 37 women. The sample, determined by those who agreed to participate, was 21 women superintendents. The recommendation would be to expand the study to a larger population, perhaps across two or more states. A larger sample could potentially provide more reliable and useful results.

In addition to creating a larger sample, expanding the population to include two or more states could add ethnic diversity to the personal demographics of the participants. Kansas has a large number of rural school districts; expansion to other states could increase the number of suburban and urban school districts available for the study.

Another recommendation would be to include men and women in a study. Including men would provide a contrast of the profiles, career paths, and leadership practices between genders.

The design of educational programs to prepare superintendents, and in particular women superintendents, was discussed in the literature review as a potential limitation for women to attain the superintendency. Further study could focus on current programs and ways to improve preparation, and to make the program more valuable to those pursuing the role of superintendent.

A qualitative component with case studies of women superintendents combined with quantitative methods would enrich the study. Personal interviews with women superintendents would change the methodology and could provide more in-depth results specific to one or more of the domains; profiles, paths, or practices, addressed in this study.

### **Concluding Remarks**

It was the intent of this researcher to contribute to and expand upon the knowledge base of prior research regarding women superintendents. An analysis of the data gathered from the top women K-12 educational executives in Kansas during the 2009-2010 school year, identified similarities in personal profiles, career paths and leadership practices, which were consistent with the findings of research studies in other states and nationwide. Based on the percentages of males and females in the field of education, it is known women are under-represented in the role of school superintendent. During the last few decades, research studies have established similarities in personal profiles, career paths, and leadership practices of women who have attained the position.

To address the under-representation of women, the focus of research and implementation of change will need to be directed toward exploring means of breaking through the barriers limiting women's advancement to the superintendency.

New demands of school leaders require characteristics and skills traditionally associated with women and identified as feminine. A focus on social justice along with qualities such as supportive, collaborative, empowering, and energizing have been connected to an interactive leadership style. Changes in current societal norms and gender stereotyping, in conjunction with new global realities, set the stage for more women to assume the school executive position of superintendent. It is time to stop looking at why women are not superintendents, and begin to focus on how to bring about a change in the representation of women in that role. The deciding factor in choosing a superintendent should not be influenced by the gender of the candidate, but rather on the candidate's qualifications.

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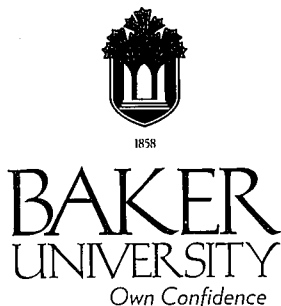
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Appendix A:

Baker University Institutional Review Board Request Document

IRB Appendices A through D

February 02, 2010



Dear Ms Yurkovich:

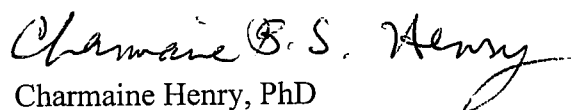
The Baker University IRB has reviewed your research project application (M-0082-0126-0202) and approved this project under Exempt Review. As described, the project complies with all the requirements and policies established by the University for protection of human subjects in research. Unless renewed, approval lapses one year after approval date.

The Baker University IRB requires that your consent form must include the date of approval and expiration date (one year from today). Please be aware of the following:

1. At designated intervals (usually annually) until the project is completed, a Project Status Report must be returned to the IRB.
2. Any significant change in the research protocol as described should be reviewed by this Committee prior to altering the project.
3. Notify the OIR about any new investigators not named in original application.
4. Any injury to a subject because of the research procedure must be reported to the IRB Chair or representative immediately.
5. When signed consent documents are required, the primary investigator must retain the signed consent documents for at least three years past completion of the research activity. If you use a signed consent form, provide a copy of the consent form to subjects at the time of consent.
6. If this is a funded project, keep a copy of this approval letter with your proposal/grant file.

Please inform Office of Institutional Research (OIR) or myself when this project is terminated. As noted above, you must also provide OIR with an annual status report and receive approval for maintaining your status. If your project receives funding which requests an annual update approval, you must request this from the IRB one month prior to the annual update. Thanks for your cooperation. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Charmaine Henry, PhD  
Chair, Baker University IRB



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
GRADUATE DEPARTMENT

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
IRB PROTOCOL NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_  
(IRB USE ONLY)

**IRB REQUEST  
Proposal for Research  
Submitted to the Baker University Institutional Review Board**

**I. Research Investigator(s)** (Students must list faculty sponsor first)

**Department(s)**      School of Education Graduate Department

Name	Signature	
1 Dr. Ann Sanders	_____	Faculty Sponsor
2. Peg Waterman	_____	Research Analyst
3. Dr. Sandra Schumm	_____	Committee Member
4. Dr. Marlin Berry	_____	Committee Member

Principal investigator: Stacey Yurkovich  
 Phone: 913 268 5246  
 Email: [syurkovichprt@olatheschools.com](mailto:syurkovichprt@olatheschools.com)  
 Mailing address: 6713 Caenen Lake Rd.  
 Shawnee, KS 66216

Faculty sponsor: Dr. Elizabeth Ann Sanders  
 Phone: 913 344 1227  
 Email: [sanders@bakeru.edu](mailto:sanders@bakeru.edu)

**Expected Category of Review:**     Exempt     Expedited     Full

**II: Protocol Title**

The Personal Profiles, Career Patterns, and Leadership Practices of Women Superintendents in Kansas

**Summary**

The following summary must accompany the proposal. Be specific about exactly what participants will experience, and about the protections that have been included to safeguard participants from harm. Careful attention to the following may help facilitate the review process:



**In a sentence or two, please describe the background and purpose of the research.**

Compared to the number of women educators in Kansas, women are underrepresented in the role of superintendent. The specific focus of the research will be on personal profiles, career patterns and leadership practices of women superintendents in Kansas. The purpose of the study will be to add to a body of knowledge which describes the personal demographic characteristics and career experiences common for women who have attained this position. In addition, leadership practices of women superintendents from across the state will be examined.

**Briefly describe each condition or manipulation to be included within the study.**

There is no manipulation within this study.

**What measures or observations will be taken in the study? If any questionnaire or other instruments are used, provide a brief description and attach a copy.**

Variables of interest in this study will take the form of three categories: personal profiles, career patterns and leadership practices of the women superintendents in Kansas. Subjects will be asked to complete a demographic survey which will also include questions related to their career path prior to attaining the position of superintendent. In addition, they will be asked to complete the Leadership Practices Inventory – Self (see Appendix A).

**Will the subjects encounter the risk of psychological, social, physical or legal risk? If so, please describe the nature of the risk and any measures designed to mitigate that risk.**

The subjects will not encounter any psychological, social, physical, or legal risk in this study.

**Will any stress to subjects be involved? If so, please describe.**

No stress will be experienced by any of the subjects in this study.

**Will the subjects be deceived or misled in any way? If so, include an outline or script of the debriefing.**

The subjects will not be deceived or misled in any way.

**Will there be a request for information that subjects might consider to be personal or sensitive? If so, please include a description.**

The subjects will be asked to provide personal demographic information. Some of the categories include; age, ethnicity, marital status, parental status, years of experience, and types of experience. In addition, they will be asked to self-assess and report their leadership practices.

**Will the subjects be presented with materials that might be considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading? If so, please describe.**

The subjects will not be presented with materials that might be considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading.

**Approximately how much time will be demanded of each subject?**

It is expected that each survey will require 20-30 minutes to complete, equaling a total of 40 minutes to one hour.

**Who will be the subjects in this study? How will they be solicited or contacted? Provide an outline or script of the information which will be provided to subjects prior to their volunteering to participate. Include a copy of any written solicitation as well as an outline of any oral solicitation.**

Women superintendents in Kansas will be the subjects in this study. The initial contact to each subject will be via email (see Appendix B). To non-respondents, the email contact will be followed by a phone call and, if necessary another written communication requesting a response (see Appendix C).

**What steps will be taken to ensure that each subject's participation is voluntary? What if any inducements will be offered to the subjects for their participation?**

A written agreement indicating a willingness to participate will include a statement which documents the subject's participation is voluntary (see Appendix D). The return of the agreement provides consent. Receipt of a copy of the results of the study will offered as an inducement for participation.

**How will you ensure that the subjects give their consent prior to participating? Will a written consent form be used? If so, include the form. If not, explain why not.**

A written confirmation for participation via email will be requested from the subject.

**Will any aspect of the data be made a part of any permanent record that can be identified with the subject? If so, please explain the necessity.**

No data from this study will be made a part of any permanent record.

**Will the fact that a subject did or did not participate in a specific experiment or study be made part of any permanent record available to a supervisor, teacher or employer? If so, explain.**

Individual data will not be published nor made a part of any permanent record available to a supervisor, teacher or employer.

**What steps will be taken to ensure the confidentiality of the data?**

The data gathered will be reviewed only by the researcher, and will remain confidential. Individual names will not be associated with personal data or responses reported in the results of the study.

**If there are any risks involved in the study, are there any offsetting benefits that might accrue to either the subjects or society?**

There are no risks involved in this study. Benefits to this study are to add to the knowledge base of earlier studies investigating women superintendents' personal profiles, career patterns and leadership practices. Additional research will encourage and assist women who aspire to this position. This research will also assist education organizations seeking to broaden their talent pool and to establish mentoring programs for women leaders. The findings related to leadership practices will add to theoretical studies of leadership for both men and women.

**Will any data from files or archival data be used? If so, please describe.**

No data from files or archival data will be used. Data gathered will be information or responses provided by the subjects.

Appendix A: Demographic Survey

Leadership Practices Inventory-Self permission

Leadership Practices Inventory-Self

# Personal Profiles of Women Superintendents in KS

## 1. Personal Demographic Information

### 1. Please complete the following contact information.

Name:

School District:

USD:

Address:

City/Town:

ZIP/Postal Code:

Email Address:

Phone Number:

### 2. Which of the following best describes your school district?

- rural  suburban  urban

### 3. What is the current student enrollment of your district?

- 100 or less  501-999  5000-9999
- 101-300  1000-2999  10,000+
- 301-500  3000-4999

### 4. Current Age

- 30-35 years  41-45 years  51-55 years
- 36-40 years  46-50 years  56+ years

### 5. Please indicate your ethnicity.

- White, non-Hispanic  Black, non-Hispanic  Pacific Islander
- Hispanic  Asian  American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Other (please specify)

### 6. Number of siblings

- 0  1-2  3-4  5+

### 7. Where did you fall in the birth order of your siblings?

- oldest  middle  youngest
- oldest half  youngest half

If oldest half or youngest half please provide a description. e.g. 2nd of 5

# Personal Profiles of Women Superintendents in KS

## 8. Growing up I was raised by

- mother & father                       father                       father & stepmother
- mother                       mother & stepfather
- Other (please specify)

## 9. My mother's highest educational level

- high school dropout                       2 year college degree                       master's degree
- high school graduate                       technical or trade school                       specialist degree
- some college / no degree                       4 year college degree                       doctoral degree
- Other (please specify)

## 10. My father's highest educational level

- high school dropout                       2 year college degree                       master's degree
- high school graduate                       technical or trade school                       specialist degree
- some college / no degree                       4 year college degree                       doctoral degree
- Other (please specify)

## 11. I attended school (K-12) in (choose as many as apply)

- NE KS                       SW KS                       S Central KS
- SE KS                       N Central KS
- NW KS                       Central KS
- Other (please specify)

## 12. I grew up in the following type of community (choose as many as apply)

- rural                       suburban                       urban

## 13. Current marital status.

- single                       divorced                       widowed                       married

## 14. Number of children.

- 0                       1                       2-3                       4-5                       6+

# Personal Profiles of Women Superintendents in KS

## 15. Number of school age children still living at home.

0

1

2-3

4-5

6+

# Personal Profiles of Women Superintendents in KS

## 2. Educational Demographics

### 1. List degrees earned.

Bachelor with major

Masters with major

Specialist with major

Doctorate with major

### 2. Type of higher educational institution(s) attended. (mark all that apply)

public  private

### 3. Size of higher educational institution(s) you attended?(mark all that apply)

Large (15,000+ students)

Medium (5000 - 14,999 students)

Small (less than 5000 students)

### 4. Location of the educational institution where your highest degree was earned.

Kansas

Other (please specify)



# Personal Profiles of Women Superintendents in KS

## 3. Career Pattern: Career Path

### 1. Please indicate years of teaching experience.

- 1-5 years       6-10 years       11-15 years       16-20 years       21+ years

### 2. Please indicate level(s) of teaching experience prior to attaining the role of superintendent.

- Elementary       Middle Level       High School       Higher Education

### 3. Please indicate years of experience as a school administrator prior to attaining the role of superintendent.

- 1-5       6-10       11-15       16-20       21+

### 4. Please indicate all experience(s) as an assistant principal.

- Elementary Assistant Principal       Middle Level Assistant Principal       High School Assistant Principal  
 K-6 Assistant Principal       7-12 Assistant Principal       K-12 Assistant Principal  
 Other (please specify)

### 5. Please indicate all experience(s) as a principal.

- Elementary Principal       Middle Level Principal       High School Principal  
 K-6 Principal       7-12 Principal       K-12 Principal  
 Other (please specify)

### 6. Please indicate years of experience at the central office prior to attaining the role of superintendent.

- 0       1-5       6-10       11-15       16-20       21+

### 7. Please indicate all positions held at the central office.

- Director       Associate Superintendent  
 Assistant Superintendent       Deputy Superintendent  
 Other (please specify)

## Personal Profiles of Women Superintendents in KS

**8. From the drop-down menu select the response which best describes your career path prior to attaining the role of superintendent. (The term secondary is used to describe both middle level and high school experience.)**

# Personal Profiles of Women Superintendents in KS

## 4. Career Pattern: Other components

**1. How would you describe the continuity of your career pattern in relation to family?**

**2. At what age did you aspire to the superintendency?**

- 25-29 years       41-45 years       56+ years  
 30-35 years       46-50 years  
 36-40 years       51-55 years

**3. Please indicate the number of years you have possessed superintendent credentials.**

- 1-5       6-10       11-15       16-20       21+

**4. Please indicate the number of years you possessed superintendent credentials prior to attaining the role of superintendent.**

- 1-5       6-10       11-15       16-20       21+

**5. Please indicate the number of years you actively pursued the role of superintendent prior to obtaining your first superintendency.**

- 1       4-5       9-10  
 2-3       6-8       11+

**6. Please indicate years of experience in the role of superintendent.**

- 1-5       6-10       11-15       16-20       21+

**7. Please indicate years of experience as superintendent in your current district.**

- 1-5       6-10       11-15       16-20       21+

**8. Were you an employee of the district when you were selected as superintendent in you current district?**

- yes       no

**9. Please indicate the number of school districts where you have served in the role of superintendent.**

- 1       2       3       4       5+

**10. Are you the first woman to serve as superintendent in your current district?**

- yes       no

# Personal Profiles of Women Superintendents in KS

**11. What is the gender of the superintendent who served before you in your current district?**

Male

Female

**12. Who encouraged you most to pursue a superintendency?**

yourself

parent(s)

professor(s)

spouse

colleague(s)

sibling(s)

supervisor

Other (please specify)

**13. Did you have a primary mentor during the time you pursued the role of superintendent?**

yes

no

**14. If yes, please indicate the relationship with your mentor.**

Professor

Central Office Personnel

Superintendent

Principal/Supervisor

Assistant Superintendent

Other (please specify)

**15. If you had a mentor, please indicate their gender.**

Male

Female

**16. Did you have a role model during the time you pursued the role of superintendent?**

yes

no

**17. If yes, please indicate the relationship with your role model.**

Professor

Central Office Personnel

Superintendent

Principal/Supervisor

Assistant Superintendent

Other (please specify)

**18. If you had a role model, please indicate their gender.**

Male

Female

## Personal Profiles of Women Superintendents in KS

**19. Thank you for your participation. Please provide additional information you believe to be relevant to your personal profile or career pattern to the superintendency.**

--

KOUZES POSNER INTERNATIONAL  
1548 Camino Monde  
San Jose, California 95125  
FAX: (408) 554-4553

October 23, 2009

Stacey Yurkovich  
6713 Caenen Lake Road  
Shawnee, KS 66216  
Email: yurkovics@hotmail.com

Dear Ms. Yurkovich:

Thank you for your request to use the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) in your dissertation. We are willing to allow you to *reproduce* the instrument in written form, as outlined in your request, at no charge. If you prefer to use our electronic distribution of the LPI (vs. making copies of the print materials) you will need to separately contact Lisa Shannon (lshannon@wiley.com) directly for instructions and payment. Permission to use either the written or electronic versions requires the following agreement:

- (1) That the LPI is used only for research purposes and is not sold or used in conjunction with any compensated management development activities;
- (2) That copyright of the LPI, or any derivation of the instrument, is retained by Kouzes Posner International, and that the following copyright statement is included on all copies of the instrument; "Copyright © 2003 James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner. All rights reserved. Used with permission",
- (3) That one (1) electronic copy of your dissertation and one (1) copy of all papers, reports, articles, and the like which make use of the LPI data be sent promptly to our attention; and,
- (4) That you agree to allow us to include an abstract of your study and any other published papers utilizing the LPI on our various websites.

If the terms outlined above are acceptable, would you indicate so by signing one (1) copy of this letter and returning it to us. Best wishes for every success with your research project.

Cordially,

Ellen Peterson  
Permissions Editor  
epeterson@scu.edu

I understand and agree to abide by these conditions:

(Signed) Stacey Yurkovich Date: 11-17-09  
Expected Date of Completion is: May 2010

# LPI<sup>!</sup>SELF

## Leadership Practices Inventory

by JAMES M. KOUZES  
& BARRY Z. POSNER

### INSTRUCTIONS

Write your name in the space provided at the top of the next page. Below your name, you will find thirty statements describing various leadership behaviors. Please read each statement carefully, and using the RATING SCALE on the right, ask yourself:

#### “How frequently do I engage in the behavior described?”

- Be realistic about the extent to which you *actually* engage in the behavior.
- Be as honest and accurate as you can be.
- DO NOT answer in terms of how you would like to behave or in terms of how you think you should behave
- DO answer in terms of how you typically behave on most days, on most projects, and with most people.
- Be thoughtful about your responses. For example, giving yourself 10s on all items is most likely not an accurate description of your behavior. Similarly, giving yourself all 1s or all 5s is most likely not an accurate description either. Most people will do some things more or less often than they do other things.
- If you feel that a statement does not apply to you, it's probably because you don't frequently engage in the behavior. In that case, assign a rating of 3 or lower.

For each statement, decide on a response and then record the corresponding number in the box to the right of the statement. After you have responded to all thirty statements, go back through the LPI one more time to make sure you have responded to each statement. *Every* statement *must* have a rating.

The RATING SCALE runs from 1 to 10. Choose the number that best applies to each statement.

- |                     |
|---------------------|
| 1 = Almost Never    |
| 2 = Rarely          |
| 3 = Seldom          |
| 4 = Once in a While |
| 5 = Occasionally    |
| 6 = Sometimes       |
| 7 = Fairly Often    |
| 8 = Usually         |
| 9 = Very Frequently |
| 10 = Almost Always  |

When you have completed the LPI-Self, please return it to:

---

---

---

Thank you.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

To what extent do you typically engage in the following behaviors? Choose the response number that best applies to each statement and record it in the box to the right of that statement.

- |     |  |                      |
|-----|--|----------------------|
| 1.  | I set a personal example of what I expect of others.   | <input type="text"/> |
| 2.  | I talk about future trends that will influence how our work gets done.   | <input type="text"/> |
| 3.  | I seek out challenging opportunities that test my own skills and abilities.  | <input type="text"/> |
| 4.  | I develop cooperative relationships among the people I work with.  | <input type="text"/> |
| 5.  | I praise people for a job well done.   | <input type="text"/> |
| 6.  | I spend time and energy making certain that the people I work with adhere to the principles and standards we have agreed on.                         | <input type="text"/> |
| 7.  | I describe a compelling image of what our future could be like.  | <input type="text"/> |
| 8.  | I challenge people to try out new and innovative ways to do their work.  | <input type="text"/> |
| 9.  | I actively listen to diverse points of view.   | <input type="text"/> |
| 10. | I make it a point to let people know about my confidence in their abilities.   | <input type="text"/> |
| 11. | I follow through on the promises and commitments that I make.  | <input type="text"/> |
| 12. | I appeal to others to share an exciting dream of the future.   | <input type="text"/> |
| 13. | I search outside the formal boundaries of my organization for innovative ways to improve what we do.   | <input type="text"/> |
| 14. | I treat others with dignity and respect.   | <input type="text"/> |
| 15. | I make sure that people are creatively rewarded for their contributions to the success of our projects.  | <input type="text"/> |
| 16. | I ask for feedback on how my actions affect other people's performance.  | <input type="text"/> |
| 17. | I show others how their long-term interests can be realized by enlisting in a common vision.   | <input type="text"/> |
| 18. | I ask "What can we learn?" when things don't go as expected.   | <input type="text"/> |
| 19. | I support the decisions that people make on their own.   | <input type="text"/> |
| 20. | I publicly recognize people who exemplify commitment to shared values.   | <input type="text"/> |
| 21. | I build consensus around a common set of values for running our organization.  | <input type="text"/> |
| 22. | I paint the "big picture" of what we aspire to accomplish.   | <input type="text"/> |
| 23. | I make certain that we set achievable goals, make concrete plans, and establish measurable milestones for the projects and programs that we work on. | <input type="text"/> |
| 24. | I give people a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work.   | <input type="text"/> |
| 25. | I find ways to celebrate accomplishments.  | <input type="text"/> |
| 26. | I am clear about my philosophy of leadership.  | <input type="text"/> |
| 27. | I speak with genuine conviction about the higher meaning and purpose of our work.  | <input type="text"/> |
| 28. | I experiment and take risks, even when there is a chance of failure.   | <input type="text"/> |
| 29. | I ensure that people grow in their jobs by learning new skills and developing themselves.  | <input type="text"/> |
| 30. | I give the members of the team lots of appreciation and support for their contributions.   | <input type="text"/> |



**Appendix B: Initial communication sent to respondents**

**The following is the script of the initial contact via email.**

Hello,

My name is Stacey Yurkovich and I am a student working on an EdD in Educational Leadership at Baker University. I have finished coursework and am now beginning work on my dissertation. The focus of the study will be to identify and determine the similarities of personal profiles, career patterns and leadership practices of women superintendents in Kansas.

This email is an invitation to participate in the study. Should you agree to participate you can be assured that your personal/identifying information will be confidential. Your participation, aside from the fact you are a women superintendent in Kansas, will be anonymous to everyone but me. In the next few days I will contact you by telephone to discuss confidentiality, the possibility of your participation, share more information about the study, and answer any questions you might have.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Stacey Yurkovich  
Principal, Prairie Trail Jr. High School  
Olathe, KS  
913 780 7283  
[syurkovichprt@olatheschools.com](mailto:syurkovichprt@olatheschools.com)

## Appendix C: Follow-up communication to non-respondents

**A follow up to the email communication will be made by telephone.**

Hello, I am Stacey Yurkovich, a doctoral student at Baker University. I sent an email this week inviting you to participate in my clinical research study. Did you receive the email?

**If the email was not received**, I will briefly describe the information in the contact email. I will continue the conversation by asking if she has any questions. I will follow up with, "Would you be interested in participating in the study?" If she agrees to participate, I will verify the email address to which I sent the contact email and if incorrect note the correct contact email. The conversation would continue with: Thank you. In the next few days you will receive a second email which will request confirmation of your willingness to participate in the study. Upon receipt of your confirmation, I will send an email with links to the demographic survey and leadership practices inventory. Both items will be completed online. I assure you your participation, aside from the fact you are a women superintendent in Kansas, will be anonymous to everyone but me.

If she declines to participate, "Thank you for your time".

**If the email was received**, I will continue the conversation with the following information:

As was stated in the email, the focus of the study is to identify the personal profiles, career patterns and leadership practices of women superintendents in Kansas. In addition, an examination of what similarities exist in these three categories will also be explored.

What questions do you have about your participation in the study?

After responding to all questions I will continue: Would you be interested in participating in this study?

**(yes)**

Thank you. In the next few days you will receive a second email which will request confirmation of your willingness to participate in the study. Upon receipt of your confirmation, I will send an email with links to the demographic survey and leadership practices inventory. Both items will be completed online. . I assure you your participation, aside from the fact you are a women superintendent in Kansas, will be anonymous to everyone but me.

“Thank you for your willingness to participate.”

**(no)**

Thank you for your time.

**Appendix D: Respondent's statement of voluntary participation**

Dear Superintendent,

This communication is to confirm your willingness to participate in the clinical research study we discussed during our phone call. Please complete the attached form and return to me via email. Upon receipt of your consent, information will be emailed to you regarding the completion of the personal profile and career pattern survey. In addition a copy of the Leadership Practices Inventory-Self will be mailed to you for completion.

Thank you for your assistance with this research.

Sincerely,

Stacey Yurkovich  
Principal, Prairie Trail Jr. High School  
Olathe, KS  
913 780 7283  
[syurkovichprt@olatheschools.com](mailto:syurkovichprt@olatheschools.com)

**Clinical Research Study Consent to Participate**  
**“The Personal Profiles, Career Patterns and Leadership Practices of**  
**Women Superintendents in Kansas.”**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Superintendent of USD \_\_\_\_\_ consent to participate in the clinical research study conducted by Baker University doctoral student, Stacey Yurkovich. By signing this consent I affirm that my participation is voluntary.

\_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of consent

Please send me a copy of the study upon its completion.       yes       no

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study. If you have questions, please contact me.

Stacey Yurkovich  
 6713 Caenen Lake Rd.  
 Shawnee, KS 66216  
 913 780 7283 (day)  
 913 268 5246 (evening)  
[syurkovichprt@olatheschools.com](mailto:syurkovichprt@olatheschools.com)



Appendix B:

Demographic Scoring Legend

## Demographic Survey Scoring Legend

### Part 1

Q 1-2	rural	1	Q 1-10	HS drop-out	1
	suburban	2		HS Grad	2
	urban	3		Post-Sec	3
				College grad	4
Q 1-3	<300	1		Other	5
	300-999	2			
	1000-2999	3	Q 1-11	Geog locale	1 = yes
	3000+	4			0 = no
Q 1-4	30-40 yrs	1	Q 1-12	Commun type	1 = yes
	41-50 yrs	2			0 = no
	51+	3			
Q 1-5	White, non His	1	Q 1-13	single	1
	Hispanic	2		divorced	2
	Black, non-His	3		widowed	3
	Other	4		married	4
Q 1-6	0	1	Q 1-14	0	1
	1-2	2		1	2
	3-4	3		2-3	3
	5+	4		4+	4
Q 1-7	Oldest	1	Q 1-15	0	1
	Middle	2		1	2
	Youngest	3		2-3	3
				4+	4
Q 1-8	Mom & Dad	1			
	One parent	2			
	Parent+step	3			
Q 1-9	HS drop-out	1			
	HS Grad	2			
	Post-Sec	3			
	College grad	4			
	Other	5			

**Part 2**

Q 2-1	Degrees earned	1 = yes 0 = no	Q 3-1	1-5 yrs 6-10 11-15 16+	1 2 3 4
Q 2-2	type of school	1 = yes 0 = no	Q 3-2	Levels of teaching exper	1 = yes 0 = no
Q 2-3	Size of school	1 = yes 0 = no	Q 3-3	1-5 yrs 6-10 11-15 16+	1 2 3 4
Q 2-4	Location Kansas Other	1 2	Q 3-4	Level of Asst Prin exper	1 = yes 0 = no
			Q 3-5	Level of Principal exper	1 = yes 0 = no
			Q 3-6	0-5 6-10 11-15 16+	1 2 3 4
			Q 3-7	Positions at Cent Office	1 = yes 0 = no
			Q 3-8	Career Paths drop down menu	1 2 3 4 5 6

## Part 4

Q 4-1	Continuity of career drop-down menu	1 2 3 4 5	Q 4-9	1 2 3+	1 2 3
Q 4-2	25-35 36-45 46-50 51+	1 2 3 4	Q 4-10	yes no	1 2
Q 4-3	1-5 6-10 11-15 16+	1 2 3 4	Q 4-11	Male Female	1 2
Q 4-4	1-5 6-10 11-15 16+	1 2 3 4	Q 4-12	Self Family member Prof Colleague Other	1 2 3 4
Q 4-5	1-5 6-10 11+	1 2 3	Q 4-13	yes no	1 2
Q 4-6	1-5 6-10 11-15 16+	1 2 3 4	Q 4-14	ID mentor	
Q 4-7	1-5 6-10 11-15 16+	1 2 3 4	Q 4-15	Male Female	1 2
Q 4-8	yes no	1 2	Q 4-16	yes no	1 2
			Q 4-17	ID role model	
			Q 4-18	Male Female	1 2