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A Study of the Relationship between Leadership Responsibility and the Career Aspirations and Salience of College Women

Deborah R. Stevenson

Eastern Illinois University

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A Study of the Relationship between Leadership Responsibility
and the Career Aspirations and Salience of College Women

(TITLE)

BY

Deborah R. Stevenson

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

Master of Science in Education

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1985

YEAR

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THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE IN
THE CAREER SALIENCE AND GOAL ASPIRATIONS OF WOMEN

By

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THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science in Education
in the Department of Educational Psychology and Guidance
Eastern Illinois University

Charleston, Illinois

A Study of the Relationship between Leadership Responsibility
and the Career Aspirations and Saliency of College Women

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Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, 1985

Expanded career opportunities for women have emerged following the women's movement and equal opportunity legislation. Today, statistics show more women, single, married and female heads of the household, are in the work force than ever before. Yet, women are not entering those jobs in which greater earning and advancement potential exist and professional women have not advanced significantly.

The literature discussing issues related to women and work indicates that leadership responsibility may play a role in raising both the career aspirations and saliency of women. If this is so then providing appropriate leadership experience emerges as a potential tool for helping counselors and teachers better prepare women to realistically consider the wider variety of options available to them.

This study was designed to investigate the relationship between leadership responsibility and the career aspirations and saliency of college women. A statistical approach was used to determine if there was a relationship between the independent variable, leadership

experience, and the dependent variables, career commitment, perceptions of support for women working, independence, career aspirations, and self-esteem. Since parental and teacher support have been shown, in part, to influence both career aspirations and salience, they were treated as intervening variables.

One hundred twelve female students enrolled in senior seminar at Eastern Illinois University during fall semester, 1985, participated in the study. This was a 10% sample of all senior females enrolled in the university. Senior seminars were selected using a random number table. This procedure was used to insure a representative sample. The only bias apparent was a timing bias as all seniors do not take senior seminar during the same semester.

The study questionnaire is a composite of several scales that have been validated in other research. Seven scales are incorporated in the questionnaire. These scales measure self-esteem, career commitment, career aspirations, parental support, teacher support, support for women working, and independence. A question defining level of leadership responsibility was drafted for use in the study.

The data were gathered over a three-week period. Senior seminar instructors were extremely cooperative. Students were allowed to complete the questionnaires in class so that the response was 100% for those students who had attended class. It took approximately 30 minutes for a student to complete the questionnaire.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was used to analyze the data. Pearson correlations were run to study the relationship between the independent variable and the five dependent

variables. Three partial correlations were run to control for the possible effect of the intervening variables of parental support, teacher support and parental and teacher support, together. The criterion for significance was established at the .05 level.

Study findings indicate there is a very strong relationship between leadership responsibility and independence ($p=.004$). Although it is not significant at the .05 level, there is a trend toward a relationship between leadership responsibility and support for women working ($p=.07$).

Acknowledgment

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Table of Contents

Chapter		Page
I	<u>The Problem</u>	1
	Women and Career Options.....	1
	Summary.....	9
	Research Questions.....	10
	Definitions.....	11
	Limitations of the Study.....	11
II	<u>Review of Literature</u>	13
	Factors Affecting Career Salience and Aspirations.	14
	The Role of Leadership.....	20
III	<u>Method</u>	24
	Design of the Study.....	24
	Sample and Population.....	27
	Instrumentation.....	27
	Data Collection.....	38
	Data Analysis.....	38
IV	<u>Results of the Study</u>	40
	Descriptive Data about the Participants.....	40
	Correlative Results of the Study.....	42
	Summary.....	50

v	<u>Conclusions and Recommendations</u>	52
	Conclusions.....	52
	Recommendations.....	54
	<u>References</u>	57

List of Tables

Table		Page
1	Participant Data.....	41
2	Leadership Data.....	41
3	Coefficient of Correlation for the Relationship Between Leadership Experience and Career Commitment.....	44
4	Coefficient of Correlation for the Relationship Between Leadership Experience and Support for Women Working	44
5	Coefficient of Correlation for the Relationship Between Leadership Experience and Independence....	44
6	Coefficient of Correlation for the Relationship Between Leadership Experience and Career Aspirations.....	45
7	Coefficient of Correlation for the Relationship Between Leadership Experience and Performance Self-Esteem.....	46
8	The Correlation of Leadership Experience with Career Commitment, Support for Women Working, Independence, Career Aspirations, and Performance Self-Esteem (Holding Parental Support Constant).....	47

9	The Correlation of Leadership Experience with Career Commitment, Support for Women Working, Independence, Career Aspirations, and Performance Self-Esteem (Holding Teacher Support Constant).....	49
10	The Correlation of Leadership Experience with Career Commitment, Support for Women Working, Independence, Career Aspirations, and Performance Self-Esteem (Holding Parental and Teacher Support Constant).....	50

Chapter I

The Problem

In the past decade there has been a lot of rhetoric about the expanding career opportunities for women resulting from the women's movement and equal opportunity legislation. Statistics indicate that more women are in the work force than ever before. According to the U. S. Bureau of the Census (1984) women made up 43% of the total work force and 53% of all women were participating in the work force. Tittle (1982) states:

The percent of employed women working full-time has remained at about 70% for the past decade and, in 1980, 65% of the women aged 25 to 34 were working or looking for work, including 57% of the mothers of those ages who were combining home responsibilities with those of a job. (p. 154)

If there truly are the new possibilities suggested one would expect to find women in nontraditional as well as traditional occupations. The literature does not support this assumption.

Women and Career Options

Inspection of labor force data shows that women are still found in lower paying occupational roles, in the service industries, or in factory jobs (Tittle, 1982; Pfafflin, 1984; Johnson & Waldman, 1983).

According to Young (1983) these are the types of jobs that will be replaced by automation "as new technologies take over functions of the nervous system not only in production but also in the service industries" (p. 412). Pfafflin (1984) views this potential for displacement as a serious threat to women.

Pfafflin (1984) studied the participation of women in science and technology over the last 10 years. The entry of women into science or engineering areas is still low; only 13% in 1983. She found an increase in the number of women graduates from engineering schools up from 1% to 11%, and the number of female medical student graduates up from 6% to 25%. Even with these increases, there are still few females in those nontraditional jobs. U. S. Bureau of Census statistics (1984) show that only 11% of the medical physicians are female and only 4.6% of the engineering work force is composed of females. Johnson and Waldman (1983) found 20% of the employed women in executive, administrative, managerial, or professional roles, and 6% in technical and precision production, craft and repair positions. The remainder of employed women were found in traditional female occupations that are classified as low-skill, low-pay: 38% were in administrative support or sales occupations, 22% were in service occupations, and 14% were in blue collar factory positions. If the opportunity is there, and women are not taking advantage of these opportunities, then there must be other factors involved.

One can speculate as to the reasons more women are not entering those nontraditional jobs in which greater earning and advancement

potential exist. Perhaps women do not feel the economic need for higher salary levels. Or it may be that women do not yet know these opportunities exist. It is also possible that the opportunities are not as abundant as believed, or there may still be strong resistance to women working in these nontraditional positions. These issues will be explored in this chapter.

Economic Needs

The U. S. Bureau of Census (1984) reports that female heads of households have increased from 20% in 1970 to 29% in 1982. Of all families, 29.4% have women as the head of the household. Sixty percent of the female heads of households are in the work force. Johnson and Waldman (1983) indicate that most of these women are found in lower paying or lesser skilled jobs.

According to the U. S. Bureau of the Census (1984) the median weekly earnings of married couple families with one worker is \$496. For single parent families maintained by a male the median weekly earnings is \$403. The median weekly earnings of single parent families maintained by a female is \$253. More than 1 in 3 families maintained by women were at the poverty level compared to 1 in 13 other families. Of families with female heads of households, 35% were at the poverty level. Johnson and Waldman (1983) state when the mother had earnings, 29% of the families had incomes below the poverty level; when she did not, 88% were below the poverty level. One hopeful finding shows that younger, divorced women who have had more education are moving into professional and managerial positions in greater numbers. Education appears to

influence the movement of women into positions with more economic potential.

Since 1970 there has been a gradual increase in the number of single women in the work force - from 8% to 11%. These women are dependent on the income they alone generate. Some of these women are entering nontraditional occupations (Pfafflin, 1984; Johnson & Waldman, 1983). Yet they are not entering the kinds of occupations, in any significant number, that would allow them a lifestyle commensurate with their male counterparts.

Studying the differences in median weekly earnings for various nontraditional and traditional occupations for women, one finds that professional and technical workers earn \$410, managers and administrators earn \$430, clerical workers earn \$248, and service workers earn \$203 (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1984). It would appear that female heads of households would benefit from entry into nontraditional professions, technical, managerial, and administrative fields that pay more money.

When comparing the expected lifetime earnings of males and females, one finds the female to be at a disadvantage. The following projections illuminate this discrepancy: (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1984)

Male - age 18 -	high school	\$ 861,000
	college - four years	\$1,190,000
Female - age 18 -	high school	\$ 381,000
	college - four years	\$ 523,000

With more single women in the work force and with more female heads of households, one might conclude that economic need should be a concern for women. In comparing median weekly earnings for both traditional and nontraditional occupations for women, one could observe that professional, technical, managerial, and administrative positions pay almost twice as much as traditional female occupations. In addition, there is a significant gap between the expected lifetime earnings of males and females. It appears that one can not dismiss the dilemma of why women are not grasping their new employment options by concluding that women do not have the need for the higher salaries that could result.

Knowledge of Opportunities

Josefowitz (1980) asserts that for women there is a difference between knowledge of opportunities and "knowing." Knowledge of opportunities is a content orientation. Content is referring to what opportunities may be available. For example, students may have knowledge of greater job opportunities and higher salary expectations for science and technology fields because of the availability of career guidance materials (Super, 1983). "Knowing" is a process orientation; it involves believing that the opportunities are possible and are advantageous for an individual. Josefowitz (1980) believes that women do not have the "real freedom" to capitalize on their opportunities.

Josefowitz (1980) defines real freedom as knowing what needs to be done to prosper without having to rely on the positive regard of other people to survive. To obtain that freedom women must become free of the

guilt produced by transgressing the "shoulds" resulting from socialization. For women to have "real freedom" they must free themselves of the need to always produce, perform, have the right answers, be prepared, win, be a success, finish everything, trust authority, and, finally, be perfect. When women achieve freedom from the "shoulds," they attain freedom for action, freedom to make things happen, to be influential, to be powerful.

If one assumes that there is an increase in opportunities for women and that recruitment practices have made women aware of these opportunities, then one has to question if women "know" they can take advantage of these opportunities. If women do not know there is "real freedom" for them to choose and/or strive to take advantage of these opportunities, then ways must be found to enable them to develop this sense of "knowing."

It still appears as if men and women do not look at careering in the same way (Tittle, 1982, 1983; Hanson, 1983; Gomez-Mejia, 1983). Men know they will be working for 40 to 50 years and plan for a career path unrestrained by marriage and family (Tittle, 1983). According to Tittle women do not establish clearly a vocational role between the ages of 20 and 35 as do men. For many women, it is not until age 30-45 that vocational interest areas are fully developed. This indicates that women do not begin to look at their opportunities until several years into their employment life and this affects their lifetime opportunities.

Gomez-Mejia (1983), in reviewing a large body of research, found that childhood socialization plays a significant role in molding sex-role attitudes that later influence the occupational choices individuals consider. By the same token, differences in the socialization of men and women lead to occupational segregation by sex. Yet, Gomez-Mejia found evidence suggesting that if women are given appropriate on-the-job opportunities, they may internalize those norms/attitudes associated with their more salient male counterparts in these occupations. This helps them better take advantage of their opportunities.

Women may have knowledge of expanding opportunities in nontraditional fields but do they really "know" that these opportunities are possible for them? Women have new possibilities to consider and are considering expanded roles concerning marriage and work. The degree to which these changes have impacted on the occupational choices women consider is not yet known. This is the focus of much of the present research.

Organizational Discrimination

According to a Harris poll reported in Business Week (1982) participating males indicated: (1) they would not hesitate to hire a female in a nontraditional job; (2) the significant promotion of females is still very difficult; (3) and men still do not feel comfortable with female supervisors. Koprowski (1983) believes that men still have ambivalent feelings about female co-workers which cause fear and anxiety in males. A question frequently asked concerns whether or not the

opportunity is really there, or whether females are merely experiencing "pacification by promotion" (Flanders & Anderson, 1973). Flanders and Anderson found that women were promoted to pacify them, and then were not given the authority, responsibility, or salary that a male would receive in the same position. Stewart and Gudykunst's (1982) finding that women received more job promotions than men, but that men's promotions led them to higher pay levels and more responsibility, status, and authority supports Flanders and Anderson's conclusions.

Pfafflin (1984) reports that of male and female scientists who started out in their career with similar credentials had very different career outcomes. Women were less likely to attain tenure or attained tenure much later than did men; they received substantially lower salaries than did men with comparable rank; and they were less likely to receive recognition and reward for scientific achievement. Pfafflin also found that male scientists were generally unaware of problems in these areas.

Affirmative action programs have been credited for increases in the number of women in various positions, yet these programs have not helped professional women advance significantly. According to Sandler (1979), women in higher education are promoted more slowly than men, the unemployment rate for women with Ph.D. degrees in science and social science areas is two to four times that of men; the higher the rank, the fewer the women; and the more prestigious the field or school, the fewer the women. Newman (1979), reports that "Although the number of women faculty has inched slowly upward, the number of women in senior

administrative posts within universities and colleges has made essentially no gain in the past decade. Similar patterns have been found in business and government" (p. 16).

Affirmative action statistics show that men progress more rapidly and earn more money than similarly qualified women. While opportunities for women are increasing they appear to be only at the entry level. Women move up to the "Triple A" level: assistant to, assistant, or associate positions. We are not seeing promotions to line positions in any significant numbers. While opportunities appear to be there for women they indeed seem to be limited.

Summary

Now, more than ever before, there is an economic need for many women to enter those occupational fields which provide the incomes that would enable them to raise their standards of living. In addition, women need to be aware of the opportunities which exist for them and have the real freedom to choose the opportunities they desire. Continued efforts to assure that all jobs, salary levels, and promotions are based on credentials and merit, and not on gender would enhance the opportunity for women to achieve this goal.

These issues indicate that changes must take place both in organizational settings and within women, themselves. Educators and counselors are an integral part of the process where change within women is involved. Farmer (1983) and Tittle (1983) report that some activity is taking place in high schools which should impact on the career aspirations and salience of young women. The role that leadership

responsibility plays in raising both aspirations and salience of women is beginning to emerge as an area of potential for designing educational interventions. The focus of this study will be to further investigate the relationship between early leadership responsibility and the career aspirations and salience in young women.

Research Questions

Eight research questions will guide the design of this investigation:

1. What is the relationship between leadership experience and career commitment scores of females?
2. What is the relationship between leadership experience and support for women working scores of females?
3. What is the relationship between leadership experience and independence scores of females?
4. What is the relationship between leadership experience and career aspirations scores of females?
5. What is the relationship between leadership experience and performance self-esteem scores of females?
6. To what extent does the intervening variable of parental support account for scores on the career commitment, support for women working, independence, career aspirations, and performance self-esteem scales?
7. To what extent does the intervening variable of teacher support account for scores on the career commitment, support

for women working, independence, career aspirations, and performance self-esteem scales?

8. To what extent does the combination of the intervening variables of parental and teacher support account for scores on the career commitment, support for women working, independence, career aspirations, and performance self-esteem scales?

Definitions

The following terms are being defined to understand the focus of the study: career salience, and leadership experience.

Career salience. The thoughtful, intentional planning of long term career goals, either in one occupation or in a series of occupations as interests and opportunities change; becoming committed to achieving those goals; receiving satisfaction from achievement; and integrating this into all other areas of one's life.

Leadership experience. The experience resulting from participating in organizational roles which carry with them responsibility for guiding or directing individuals, groups, or activities.

Limitations of the Study

While there are three areas in need of investigation concerning the pace at which women are exercising the options now available to them, one of these areas is beyond the realm of teachers and counselors. Whether or not opportunity really does exist is not an area that teachers and counselors can impact directly. The second area, that of

women and economic need, is just beginning to be dealt with in schools. Tittle (1983) and Farmer (1983) report finding some evidence that instructional attempts to help women consider realistically some of the challenges they will face and the dilemmas their choices will create when considering dual or single roles in careering and how economic issues impact these roles are beginning. However, there is a lack of specific information on the nature and scope of work being done in schools in this area. Therefore, this area will not be included for study in this investigation.

The focus of this investigation will be to determine if leadership experience is related to the career aspirations and career salience of young women. The support of significant others on the career salience and aspirations has been well documented in the literature. Since parental and teacher support could account, in part, for career salience and aspirations, they will be treated as intervening variables and a partial correlation test will be used with the Pearson correlation.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

More women now have or share the responsibility of economic support for a family or for themselves. Because more women have this responsibility does not mean that women are becoming more career salient. They may not know how to structure their life experiences to aid in the long-term planning of career goals. If so, they could lack career salience, or that intentional, thoughtful designing of a career path, and long-term commitment to it.

There have been gradual cultural changes in the values and norms that have the potential for affecting the career salience of women. Have the changes allowed the commitment of women to a career outside the home to increase? This question has been the focus of many investigations in the past decade (Dowling, 1981; Farmer, 1983; Hanson, 1983; Pfafflin, 1984; Tittle; 1983).

The demands of the varied occupational roles in our present high tech society require workers to think, analyze, make decisions, and be assertive. Many question women's abilities in these areas. Many question women's ability and desire to enter managerial ranks in any significant number. Stewart and Gudykunst (1982) identified leadership ability, competitiveness, objectivity, aggressiveness, forcefulness,

ambition, and desire for responsibility as characteristics necessary for management success. In reviewing the research on these factors, the authors found evidence indicating that both male and female mid-management personnel believe that men possess these traits while women do not. It has been suggested that women acquire these skills through leadership experiences at the high school and college level.

In this chapter literature related to the career salience and aspirations of women will be reviewed. The role leadership responsibility plays in the development of women will also be discussed. The review is intended to establish the theoretical basis for the investigation proposed.

Factors Affecting Career Salience and Aspirations

There are many elements involved in career salience and level of aspiration. Marriage and family plans, role models, parental expectations, and educational experiences influence these variables. Women have never had to be career salient before, at least not to such a degree as now. Previously, there was a lot of pressure on women to fulfill their key role in life first: the role of mother and wife. After they had done this, if they had time left over, they could do something else--like have a career. This concept is changing slowly in our society. Tittle (1983) finds this has put an even greater pressure upon the female. Now she must add the role of "super" worker to the roles of "super" wife and mother.

Women's roles within the family contribute to the stereotyping of them as nonachievers in the work setting. They do not volunteer to work

overtime because they must manage the stress of home and work simultaneously. According to Cooper and Davidson (1983) the female may want to work overtime, but although many husbands of working women accept intellectually and encourage their wives in their careers, few either psychologically or practically support them. The roles within the family are still hard to change. Because they can not be both at home and at work at the same time, they must make a choice, and often they make the former choice. Cooper and Davidson believe that by making some policy changes within an organization, women would be free from the stereotype of nonachiever. These policy changes would include allowing more flexible work weeks for women, paternity and maternity leaves, and day care facilities within the organization.

At the present time, women are considering expanded roles concerning marriage, family planning and work. A related trend is also taking place. Farmer's (1983) study of high school students demonstrates that young men and women may be considering alternatives to formerly stereotyped career/family situations. She found that young men were planning to take mutual responsibility within the family as part of their pursuit of their career and that the career aspirations of the females exceeded that of the male population of her study. Does this mean young women perceive greater support for working and that ten years from now we will find that this new wave of women have taken full advantage of their new options?

Farmer (1983), in a study of 1,234 ninth and twelfth grade male and female students in nine Illinois high schools representing a broad

range of socioeconomic and racial backgrounds, found that females did not endorse a statement about sharing financial responsibility equally with their future spouse. It appears that young women do not yet feel a need to be financially productive. Farmer expresses concern about the achievement gap between female educational and career aspirations as adolescents and their actual educational attainment and occupation later in life. Women still see their salary contribution to the family as supplemental income.

Super (1983) suggests that women can not make long-term career decisions competently because they can not envision the reality of the situations they will later experience as they become spouses. He asserts it is very difficult for females in high school to make decisions about how they will act when they become wives and mothers. Tittle (1983) has been investigating the possibility that both male and female students consider new career roles and options through values clarification techniques using role playing to consider future career responsibilities and options. Students are asked to view the term "career" with the definition that it is to include three aspects of a person: worker, spouse, and parent (Tittle, 1983). Hanson (1983), following a parallel track, suggests that females can be made aware of family patterns that facilitate and those that constrain achievement. Use of this technique may help to overcome problems of past socialization.

While young men and women have greater potential for sharing family responsibilities, it is difficult to overcome one's

socialization, and these young people have not had the type of role models who show how they can enjoy having both occupational and familial satisfaction by sharing the load at home as well as in the work force. While both men and women allude to changing roles and rules, in reality, women still expected to be home with the children and to prepare dinner. Farmer and Fyans (1983), in a study of women reentering the educational system after having left it for an extended time period, found that married women with high achievement motivation perceived a lack of support from their current family members for their achievement-related goals.

In the past, marriage plans have affected a female's commitment to a career (Tittle, 1983). This has not been true for the male. Hanson (1983) studied the transitions of women and the family transitions to analyze the effects on career patterns. Factors investigated included the age of the children, the number of children in the family, the age of the female at the time of her marriage, and the age of the female at the birth of her children. Hanson reported that women who married later and had established their careers before having children, had higher levels of status and career success. Other women had families very early and, as children established their own homes, they turned their interests toward a serious career, and even though entering the work force late, they were young enough to achieve a successful career. Hanson believes that if women were aware of how family transitions affect career planning they could use this knowledge to plan and set up

the integration of family and occupational choice. This could result in more successful planning of realistic long-term career goals.

Education appears to influence women's career salience and aspirations. Astin and Kent (1983), in a follow-up study of men and women at freshman level in college in 1971 and again in 1980, found that the proportion of women attending college has increased and a greater proportion of these women aspire to enter high-level careers. They assert that higher education has a responsibility to provide female students with educational experiences that will enable them to overcome handicapping socialization. Their study was conducted to determine if sex-role stereotyping lessened at the college level. It was found that it did not decrease at all.

Another educational factor related to increasing the self-esteem and career salience of women was the presence or absence of interrelationships with faculty members. Astin and Kent (1983) found that when faculty members socialized with women, the women measured higher in academic self-esteem. The authors speculated that faculty members, through this action, communicated that the women were to be taken seriously and this confirmed the ability of women. If this is true, faculty members should take on the role of mentors for female students.

Women may not have a clear understanding of the level and the specific positions to which they can aspire on the career ladder because they have not had role models or mentors upon which to pattern their careers. They may not have sponsors to aid them in dealing effectively

with bureaucracy. Mentors teach females organizational savvy. Those few women at the top made it there with the help of mentors (Josefowitz, 1980; Missirian, 1982). Few women at the top did not have mentors. Sponsors are needed for these women to progress through the ranks at a faster pace. With mentors, women at mid-management levels have been able to achieve more in their careers in a shorter period of time, and they have been able to enter the work force at a higher level than women without mentors. It has been shown that they are more assertive, independent, and career salient. These women know what they want, where they want to go, who are their competitors, and what constitutes their specific career paths. In short, they have well-defined career goals (Felstehausen, 1982; Josefowitz, 1980).

Successful experience is a factor in raising goal aspirations. Mentors often can give their proteges the experience and the visibility they need. The resultant success raises the goal aspirations of the protege (Missirian, 1982). If mentors are not available to all females, one must find other ways to raise the goal aspirations of women.

Young (1982) reports that parental influence is another factor in career salience and aspiration. The father's role in the career salience and goals of women has been well documented in the literature (Felstehausen, 1982; Hennig & Jardim, 1976). Young has recently found that the daughters of mothers who participate professionally in the work force are more career salient. In addition, when both parents are professionals with high levels of education, the female tends to plan to attend college and participate as a long-term member of the work force.

The Role of Leadership

Black (1984) defines leadership as "a willingness and an ability to change oneself or others, combined with the achievement of a productive and desirable end" (p. 4). Black has observed the emergence of leadership in students previously suspected of little promise in that realm. He indicates that leadership characteristics evolve when a person's creative response to a demanding or novel situation focuses group energy and attitudes toward a goal beneficial to all. Black emphasizes a pressing need to find relief for a solution is the motivation that fosters leadership. Without this type of clear goal providing the correct motivation, a person may avoid responsibility and growth, and choose to look for an escape hatch.

Black (1984) lists several traits of leaders. Some of these are: self-confident, self-controlled, decision maker, delegator, direction setter, dominant, expectant, flexible, imaginative, motivated, organized, enthusiastic, problem solver, assertive, and responsible. Farmer (1981) lists many similar traits in the independence scale from the CMAP. Some of these are: self-reliant, independent, assertive, creative, decision maker, forceful, dominant, willing to take risks, and leadership. Black (1984) indicates that the person who develops leadership characteristics also develops a strong sense of autonomy and self-worth. The one who does not develop leadership characteristics does not develop autonomy or self-worth, but increases his or her tendency toward dependency.

There is little empirical research reported on the effect leadership experience has on career salience and aspirations. Yet, Astin and Kent (1983) found that those students who had the highest levels of self esteem and the most career salience were also those students who were very active in leadership roles. These leadership roles were in many extracurricular activities in college life. Most were roles involving responsibility as opposed to those involving popularity. Some of these activities were community action programs, ecology programs, production of college newspapers, management of student government, and management of student residence halls.

Astin and Kent (1983) point out that a sense of self-worth and independence is one of two noncognitive areas that affect significantly the basic decisions individuals make about work. These researchers studied changes in the self-esteem and values of individuals who entered college as freshman in 1970 and who were followed up in 1980. Astin and Kent approached the question of changes in self-esteem via a leadership experience perspective. They found that a larger proportion of campus leaders had a more favorable self-image than did students in general. In the follow-up study this not only increased for the entire study population but it was especially true for women. Leadership experience enhanced positively the self-esteem of women and gave them more confidence in their own interpersonal skills. These findings led Astin and Kent to conclude that if women are to emerge from college feeling strong, independent, self-assured and well prepared to take on future

chosen roles, they must assume leadership positions in a broad range of extracurricular activities as undergraduates.

Dowling (1981) tells us that the socialization of the female begins in infancy to reinforce dependent, rather than independent, characteristics. The baby girl learns to become dependent because of the way the mother responds to her needs. Mothers of baby girls respond to crying more quickly than mothers of baby boys. Hence, the baby girl learns that help will come if she cries for it. Baby boys learn that they must comfort themselves, and they learn quickly to become their own emotional caretakers. Therefore, little boys develop self-trust and little girls do not. Their trust is in others. Self-trust is crucial in the development of independence. This is a continual problem that has not changed over the years. Dowling (1981) states:

Shockingly, the picture has changed very little in the past twenty years or so. The ways girls are socialized continues to predetermine an agonizing conflict over the psychological independence that's necessary if women are ever to spring free and take their place in the sun. (p. 99)

Dowling (1981) states that independence results from learning that one can accomplish by oneself, can rely upon one's own abilities, and can trust one's own judgment. Girls are consistently reinforced in the belief that they can achieve only with the help of others. Eventually they internalize the idea that they can not succeed in meeting life's challenges on their own. However, when females are able to assume leadership positions, they can develop their sense of independence.

Powell and Powell (1983) report that girls enrolled in a private girls' school have a significant advantage over their coeducational counterparts. Students are more academically oriented. They have significantly higher self-esteem. They are more assertive, ambitious, and autonomous. They have more opportunity and are more involved in extracurricular activities and have more active orientation toward life, leadership, and relationships. In coeducational settings "... girls learn as they grow up that their role requires giving over to boys leadership position, ... and certain important attitudes toward learning--such as questioning, challenging, and risk-taking" (Powell & Powell, 1983, p. 55). Astin and Kent (1983) report that research does indeed indicate that women's colleges do offer more opportunities for women to develop leadership skills.

If indeed leadership experience does prove to be a critical event that influences the career salience and level of aspiration of women, then educators can plan interventions in this area. This appears to be an area in which additional study is indicated.

Chapter Three

Method

This chapter is comprised of a description of the design of the study, the sample and population, the instrumentation and pilot testing of the instrument, and the data collection and analysis procedures.

Design of the Study

A statistical study was designed to determine the relationship between the leadership experiences of women and selected elements of careering. The independent variable was leadership experience. The dependent variables were career commitment, perceptions of support for women working, independence, career aspirations, and self-esteem. The intervening variables were parental support and teacher support. T-tests could have been run, and mean scores could have been compared. Since the researcher wanted to control for the intervening variables of parental and teacher support, it was determined to use a correlative study with complete and partial correlations (Elifson, 1982). The following research questions and hypotheses were posed to guide this study:

1. What is the relationship between leadership experience and career commitment scores?

- HO₁ There is no significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and the career commitment scores of respondents.
- Alt. HO₁ There is a significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and the career commitment scores of respondents.
2. What is the relationship between leadership experience and support for women working scores?
- HO₂ There is no significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and support for women working scores.
- Alt. HO₂ There is a significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and support for women working scores.
3. What is the relationship between leadership experience and independence scores?
- HO₃ There is a significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and independence scores.
- Alt. HO₃ There is no significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and independence scores.
4. What is the relationship between leadership experience and career aspirations scores?
- HO₄ There is a significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and career aspirations scores.

- Alt. H_{04} There is no significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and career aspirations scores.
5. What is the relationship between leadership experience and performance self-esteem scores?
- H_{05} There is a significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and performance self-esteem scores.
- Alt. H_{05} There is no significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and performance self-esteem scores.
6. To what extent does the intervening variable of parental support account for scores on the career commitment, support for women working, independence, career aspirations, and performance self-esteem scales?
7. To what extent does the intervening variable of teacher support account for scores on the career commitment, support for women working, independence, career aspirations, and performance self-esteem scales?
8. To what extent does the combination of the intervening variables of parental support and teacher support account for scores on the career commitment, support for women working, independence, career aspirations, and performance self-esteem scales?

Sample and Population

The population studied was female students who were enrolled in senior seminar at Eastern Illinois University during fall semester, 1985. Total fall enrollment figures indicated that 2,056 seniors were enrolled in the university, 1,124 of whom were women. The sample consisted of 10% of the females enrolled.

Since completion of a senior seminar is a graduation requirement, a forum already existed for polling females. There were 26 sections of senior seminar in the fall semester. Care was taken to insure that a representative sample would be taken. After consideration, it was determined that there was no specific incentive for a student to choose one seminar over another. Rather, since seats in senior seminars were limited, the objective was simply to get enrolled. Using a random number table, senior seminars were rank ordered for participation in the study. While a timing bias may have occurred as all students do not take senior seminar the same semester, this appeared to be the best way to get a representative random sample of the population. Of the eight seminars chosen randomly, four were from the College of Arts and Science, one was from the College of Business, two were from the College of Applied Sciences, and one was from the College of Fine Arts. From eight seminars, 115 females participated in the study, but three questionnaires were incomplete, resulting in 112 participants.

Instrumentation

The questionnaire is a composite of several scales that have been validated in other research. Seven scales are incorporated in the

questionnaire. These scales measure self-esteem, career commitment, career aspirations, parental support, teacher support, support for women working, and independence. A question defining level of leadership experience was drafted to be used in the study.

To test for differences in level of self-esteem, Stake's (1979) Performance Self-Esteem Scale (PSES) was used. The Performance Self-Esteem Scale (Stake, 1979a) was developed to be a more accurate measure of a female's self-esteem which relates to perceptions of self-efficacy and ability. Stake found that females had lower expectations for their performance and less confidence in their abilities than did males. This difference did not show up in general self-esteem measures. This instrument was designed to tap a broad range of self-evaluations of ability and performance but to exclude other self-evaluations, such as those specific to likability or moral goodness. This scale appears to measure a separate, distinct dimension of self-esteem. Stake found PSES scores had low correlation with measures of social self-esteem. Also, PSES scores were related to perceptions of past compliments for ability and performance, but were not related to perceptions of past compliments for appearance.

Other scales were taken from the CMAP (Career Motivation & Achievement Planning Inventory) developed by Farmer and associates (1981). CMAP was developed with two key questions in mind: (1) What characteristics, that are particularly amenable to change, affect students' career and achievement motivation and (2) What is the degree of influence of each of these characteristics? Farmer contended that

background characteristics affect a person's self-concept and his or her motivational patterns, but that it is possible to compensate for their influence personal characteristics through awareness of their limiting and facilitating effects by changing identified attitudes and behaviors.

The scales taken from the CMAP (Farmer, 1981) were the Career Commitment Scale, the Parental Support Scale, the Teacher Support Scale, the Support for Women Working Scale, the Independence Scale, and the Career Aspirations Scale. Farmer used a Likert scale with a range from one to five for point values. The reliability ratings for all of the scales are based on Cronbach's alpha (1970), a measure of internal consistency.

Career Commitment Scale

The Career Commitment Scale (Farmer, 1981) determines a person's long-term career prospects or advancement. A person who scores high on this scale enjoys making plans about his or her future, wants to have a job about which he or she can be proud, and views a career as a means of self-expression. The researcher wanted to measure career commitment of females because the research has indicated that career commitment is low compared to males of the same age and educational level (Hanson, 1983; Tittle, 1983).

This scale has an alpha reliability rating of .83. There are 15 items on this scale nine of which are positively stated. The items indicated with an asterisk are scored negatively. To transform scores for items stated negatively into positive scores, the following formula is used. $A=(1+2+3+4+5+10+11+12+15)$, $B=36-(6+7+8+9+14)$, $Score=B+A$.

(The number six represents the highest response on the Likert scale, i.e. 5, plus one.)

1. I enjoy making plans about my future.
2. I often think about the type of job I'll be in 10 years from now.
3. To me, a career is a means of expressing myself.
4. I would like to have a job about which I am really proud.
5. I like to have a career goal toward which I can work.
- * 6. I do not think much about whether or not I will get ahead in my job.
- * 7. Planning a successful career is not my main concern.
- * 8. I could be happy without having a career.
- * 9. I would want to move ahead, rather than stand still, in my occupation.
10. My career will give meaning to my life.
11. The job that interests me most will give me a chance to be myself.
12. Planning for a specific career is worth the effort.
- * 13. I do not consider myself to be "career-minded."
- * 14. If I won the lottery, I would quit my job.
15. If I had one free class period, I would choose an extra class to help prepare me for entry into a career at a later time.

Parental Support Scale

The Parental Support Scale (Farmer, 1981) measures a person's perception of support from parents for his or her educational achievements. Support from fathers and mothers has shown to influence the career salience and aspirations of females (Felstehausen, 1982; Hennig & Jardim, 1976; Young, 1982).

This scale has a reliability rating of .87. All items on this scale are stated positively. The scoring for this scale is:

Score=(1+2+3+4). The items on this scale are:

1. My father encouraged me to do well in science or math classes.
2. My father encouraged me to do well in English or social studies classes.
3. My mother encouraged me to do well in science or math classes.
4. My mother encouraged me to do well in English or social studies classes.

Teacher Support Scale

The Teacher Support Scale (Farmer, 1981) assesses a person's view of support from his or her teachers. High scorers view their teachers as making them feel competent, capable for being the leader for school projects, and interested in them as persons. This was measured because of the research indicating that females report much higher levels of self-esteem and ability when teachers support them (Astin & Kent, 1983; Powell & Powell, 1983).

This scale has a reliability rating of .68. The items on this scale are stated both positively and negatively. The negative items are denoted with an asterisk. To score the items, the formula for this score is: $A=(2+3+5)$; $B=18-(1+4+6)$; $\text{Score}=A-B$.

- * 1. My teachers are usually not interested in how well I do in their class.
- 2. My teachers are quick to help me when I need it.
- 3. My teachers are interested in me, not just in how well I do in school.
- * 4. My teachers do not care about my future career plans.
- 5. My teachers think I can be a good group leader.
- * 6. My teachers make me feel I am not good enough.

Support for Women Working Scale

The Support for Women Working Scale (Farmer, 1981) assesses a person's view and attitudes about women working and competing in the job market. High scorers view women and men as having similar work patterns, absences from work, and ambitions for promotion. They also believe there is an equal responsibility for the physical and mental health of their children, as well as sharing housekeeping tasks. This measure was used because of the numerous researchers who have found that women consider their role of wife and mother as a priority which frequently precludes or limits their role of worker (Cooper & Davidson, 1983; Farmer, 1983; Hanson, 1983; Super, 1983; Tittle, 1983).

This scale has a reliability rating of .88. There are 12 items on this scale and all are stated negatively. Hence, the score is derived

by summing the scores, then subtracting this total from 72 (the number of items multiplied by six (12 X 6)).

1. Women, rather than men, should have most responsibility for the physical health of their children.
2. Women, rather than men, should have most responsibility for the mental health of their children.
3. Women are absent from work more than men because of illness; therefore, they cost the company more money.
4. Since women do not work as many years or as regularly as do men, their education is largely wasted.
5. When women work they take jobs away from men; therefore women should quit the jobs they have now.
6. Women would prefer not to have promotions or job changes which add to their work load.
7. Women should not compete for men's jobs.
8. Children of working mothers are more likely to become juvenile delinquents than children of non-working mothers.
9. Women, rather than men, should have most responsibility for housekeeping.
10. A woman does not have to support herself; her husband or family will support her.
11. Women are absent from work more than men.
12. Women get married, then quit work.

Independence Scale

The Independence Scale (Farmer, 1981) measures a person's perception of self as independent and self-reliant. High scorers view themselves as willing to take risks and take a stand, as having a strong personality, and as being assertive. This measurement was desired because those females who have higher levels of independence are also those who are more committed to career planning and are more self-assured and willing to take on leadership roles and responsibilities (Astin & Kent, 1983).

This scale has a reliability rating of .81. There are eight items on this scale and all are stated positively. The score is derived by adding the total item responses.

1. I am self-reliant.
2. I defend my own beliefs.
3. I am independent.
4. I have a strong personality.
5. I have leadership abilities.
6. I am dominant.
7. I am aggressive.
8. I act as a leader.

Career Aspirations Scale

The Career Aspirations Scale (Farmer, 1981) assesses the level of occupations in which a person expresses interest. It also assesses the level of education a person expects to complete. Those who score higher on this scale aspire to technical or professional positions. Those who

have higher career aspirations believe they can achieve career goals. Leadership experiences develop this self-efficacy (Hackett & Betz, 1981).

This scale has a reliability rating of .78. The scoring of this scale is derived by adding the values from the three items after values are given to the various occupational choices according to Duncan's Socioeconomic Index (SEI) (Hauser & Featherman, 1977). There are three items on this scale.

1. Indicate the highest level of education you expect to complete.
2. List the career in which you expect to "end up."
3. List the occupations about which you have daydreamed, stating your most recent occupational daydream first.

Performance Self-Esteem Scale

Stake (1979a) used a Pearson correlation between career commitment and performance self-esteem with the result of a +.32 for females at the .01 level. The mean of the adjusted male score was 92.19 and the mean of the adjusted female score for college women was 76.40. Because Stake's scale focuses on self-esteem resulting from perception of ability and the .90 reliability rating of the instrument, this scale was chosen over a more general self-esteem scale.

This scale has both positive and negative statements. The score is derived by totaling the positive and negative responses, then subtracting the negative total from the positive total. The negative items are denoted with an asterisk. There were some items that were

social items, which were not scored. These items are denoted with an ampersand.

1. I am productive.
2. I am assertive.
- & 3. I am friendly.
4. I am clever.
5. I am creative.
- * 6. I am self-critical.
7. I am able to give orders.
8. I am self-sufficient.
- * 9. I am nervous.
10. I am logical.
11. I like responsibility.
- & 12. I am neighborly.
13. I feel good about my own accomplishments.
14. I am tough.
- * 15. I am indecisive.
16. I am competent.
17. I am self-reliant.
- * 18. I am easily hurt.
- & 19. I have a good sense of humor.
- * 20. I am inefficient.
21. I enjoy a challenge.
- & 22. I am pleasant.
23. I am able to get ideas across to others.

- 24. I have initiative.
- 25. I am a risk taker.
- 26. I am intelligent.
- * 27. I am self-conscious.
- & 28. I am warm.
- 29. I am persuasive.
- 30. I am powerful.
- * 31. I am pessimistic.
- 32. I have good business sense.
- 33. I am willing to take a stand.
- * 34. I make mistakes when I am flustered.
- 35. I am individualistic.
- * 36. I am gullible.
- & 37. I am sociable.
- 38. I am ambitious.
- * 39. I am yielding.
- 40. I am business-like.
- & 41. I am fun to be with.
- 42. I am headed for success.
- * 43. I avoid competition.
- * 44. I lack confidence.
- 45. I am forceful.
- * 46. I am unstable.

Instrument Pilot Testing

The instrument was pilot tested using university students who were not eligible to participate in the study. They were timed as they answered the questionnaire. Afterward, they were asked for feedback concerning clearness of instructions, difficulty of terminology, and general comments. Refinement of the instrument included word changes in directions and removal of some redundancy.

The instrument was then prepared for optical scanning to facilitate the generation of a data file. This instrument was also pilot tested and changes were made again to accommodate suggestions.

Data Collection

The data were gathered over a three-week period. Senior seminar instructors were extremely cooperative. Students were allowed to complete the questionnaires in class so that the response was 100% for those students who had attended class. It took approximately 30 minutes for a student to complete the questionnaire. The instruments then had to be coded for the computer analysis.

Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was used to analyze the data. Pearson correlations were run to study the relationship between the independent variable, leadership experience, and the five dependent variables of career commitment, support for women working, independence, career aspirations, and performance self-esteem. Three partial correlations were also run. A partial correlation was run to control for the possible effect of the intervening variable of

parental support when studying the relationship of leadership to the dependent variables. A partial correlation was run to control for the possible effect of the intervening variable of teacher support when studying the relationship of leadership to the dependent variables. A third partial correlation was run to control for the possible effect of both intervening variables, parental and teacher support, together. It was determined that the criterion for significance would be established at the .05 level.

Chapter Four

Results of the Study

This chapter contains a description of the participants of the study concerning their perceptions of their commitment to a long-term career, their support from parents and teachers, their support for working, and their level of independence. Descriptive data concerning the leadership experience and PSES scores of the participants are reported. The results of the correlations on the eight research questions are also reported.

Descriptive Data about the Participants

Data in Table 1 show that the participants in this study have a high level of career commitment (90.2% have scores in the agree/strongly agree categories) and believe they have support for working as a life long commitment (97.3%). Participants experience more teacher support than they do parental support, even without high parental support for achievement. The women in this study indicated high levels of independence, also.

Data in Table 2 indicate that more than half of the participants in this study believed that they had a high level of leadership experience. Less than one fifth of the participants believed that they had a low level of leadership experience.

Table 1
Participant Data

Scale	Strongly Disagree or Disagree		Neither Agree nor disagree		Agree or Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Career Commitment	0	0.0	11	9.8	101	90.2
Parental Support	14	12.5	35	31.3	63	47.3
Teacher Support	9	8.0	38	34.0	65	58.0
Support/Women Working	1	0.9	2	1.8	109	97.3
Independence	1	0.9	20	17.9	91	81.2

Table 2
Leadership Data

Level of Experience	n	%
Low	20	18.3
Moderate	28	25.7
High	61	56.0

Stake (1979b) measured the performance self-esteem of college women. The norm for college women was 76.4. The mean score from this study was 87. More than two thirds of the of the study participants reported scores higher than Stake's norm.

Correlative Results of the Study

1. What is the relationship between leadership experience and career commitment scores?

HO_1 There is no significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and career commitment scores of respondents.

Alt. HO_1 There is a significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and career commitment scores of respondents.

Table 3 data indicate that the correlation coefficient between leadership and career commitment is .12. This resulted in a probability level of .12. Prior to analyzing the data, the researcher had established the .05 level as the criterion for the level of significance. Based on the data presented in Table 3, the research hypothesis was rejected and the null hypothesis was accepted.

2. What is the relationship between leadership experience and support for women working scores?

HO_2 There is no significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and support for women working scores.

Alt. H_{02} There is a significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and support for women working scores.

The data in Table 4 indicate that the correlation coefficient between leadership and support for women working scores is .14. This resulted in a probability level of .07. Based on the data, the research hypothesis was rejected and the null hypothesis was accepted. It can be noted that at the .10 level the probability level would have been significant.

3. What is the relationship between leadership experience and independence scores?

H_{03} There is a significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and independence scores.

Alt. H_{03} There is no significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and independence scores.

The data in Table 5 indicate that the correlation coefficient between leadership and independence scores is .25. This resulted in a probability level of .004. Based on the data present in Table 5, the research hypothesis was accepted and the null rejected.

Table 3

Coefficient of Correlation for the Relationship Between
Leadership Experience and Career Commitment

<u>Matched Pair</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>r</u>	<u>p</u>
Leadership x Career Commitment	112	.12	.12

Table 4

Coefficient of Correlation for the Relationship Between
Leadership Experience and Support for Women Working

<u>Matched Pair</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>r</u>	<u>p</u>
Leadership x Support for Women Working	112	.14	.07**

** significant at the .10 level

Table 5

Coefficient of Correlation for the Relationship Between
Leadership Experience and Independence

<u>Matched Pair</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>r</u>	<u>p</u>
Leadership x Independence	112	.25	.004*

* significant at the .05 level

4. What is the relationship between leadership experience and career aspirations scores?

H_{04} There is a significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and career aspirations scores.

Alt. H_{04} There is no significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and career aspirations scores.

Data in Table 6 indicate that the correlation coefficient between leadership and career aspirations scores is .12. This resulted in a probability level of .11. Based on the data presented in this table, the research hypothesis was rejected and the null was accepted.

Table 6
Coefficient of Correlation for the Relationship Between
Leadership Experience and Career Aspirations

<u>Matched Pair</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>r</u>	<u>p</u>
Leadership x Career Aspirations	112	.12	.11

5. What is the relationship between leadership experience and performance self-esteem scores?

H₀₅ There is a significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and performance self-esteem scores.

Alt. H₀₅ There is no significant relationship between levels of leadership experience and performance self-esteem scores.

Table 7 data indicate that the correlation coefficient between leadership and performance self-esteem scores is .12. This resulted in a probability level of .11. Based on the data, the research hypothesis was rejected and the null was accepted.

Table 7

Coefficient of Correlation for the Relationship Between
Leadership Experience and Performance Self-Esteem

<u>Matched Pair</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>r</u>	<u>p</u>
Leadership x Performance Self-Esteem	112	.12	.11

6. To what extent does the intervening variable of parental support account for scores on the career commitment, support for women working, independence, career aspirations, and performance self-esteem scales?

Data in Table 8 indicate that the correlation coefficient and the probability levels between leadership and career commitment, support for women working, career aspirations, and performance self-esteem are not significant at the .05 level. For these scales, the null hypothesis would be accepted. However, the probability level of .02 for the independence is significant. Therefore, the research hypothesis was accepted for the correlation between leadership and independence, even when controlling for the possible effects of parental support.

Table 8
The Correlation of Leadership Experience With
Career Commitment, Support for Women Working,
Independence, Career Aspirations,
and Performance Self-Esteem
(Parental Support is Constant)

<u>Leadership With:</u>	r	P
Career Commitment	.11	.26
Support for Women Working	.12	.21
Independence	.23	.02*
Career Aspirations	.12	.23
Performance Self-Esteem	.09	.34

* significant at the .05 level

7. To what extent does the intervening variable of teacher support account for scores on the career commitment, support for women working, independence, career aspirations, and performance self-esteem scales?

Table 9 data indicate that the correlation coefficient and the probability levels between leadership and career commitment, support for women working, career aspirations, and performance self-esteem are not significant at the .05 level. For these scales, the null hypothesis would be accepted. However, the probability level of .02 for the independence is significant. Therefore, the research hypothesis was accepted for the correlation between leadership and independence, even when controlling for the possible effects of teacher support.

8. To what extent does the combination of the intervening variables of parental support and teacher support account for scores on the career commitment, support for women working, independence, career aspirations, and performance self-esteem scales?

The data in Table 10 indicate that the correlation coefficient and the probability levels between leadership and career commitment, support for women working, career aspirations, and performance self-esteem are not significant at the .05 level. For these scales, the null hypothesis would be accepted. However, the probability level of .02 for the independence is significant. Therefore, the research hypothesis was accepted for the correlation between leadership and independence, even when controlling for the possible effects of parental support.

Table 9
 The Correlation of Leadership Experience With
 Career Commitment, Support for Women Working,
 Independence, Career Aspirations,
 and Performance Self-Esteem
 (Teacher Support is Constant)

<u>Leadership With:</u>	r	p
Career Commitment	.10	.29
Support for Women Working	.10	.28
Independence	.23	.02*
Career Aspirations	.12	.22
Performance Self-Esteem	.11	.25

* significant at the .05 level

Table 10

The Correlation of Leadership Experience With Career Commitment
 Support for Women Working, Career Aspirations,
 Independence and Performance Self-Esteem
 (Parental and Teacher Support Constant)

<u>Leadership With:</u>	r	P
Career Commitment	.10	.32
Support for Women Working	.09	.36
Independence	.22	.02*
Career Aspirations	.12	.23
Performance Self-Esteem	.09	.35

* significant at the .05 level

Summary

Participants in this study indicate they have a high level of career commitment and feel they have support for working and planning for a life-long commitment to work. The majority report they have experienced support from teachers and almost half of the participants feel parental support. Responses indicate they possess high levels of independence. The majority report having had extensive leadership responsibility. The self-esteem scores of the participants are higher than Stake's (1979b) mean scores for college women. There is a very

strong relationship between leadership responsibility and independence. And, although it is not significant at the .05 level, there is a trend toward a relationship between leadership responsibility and support for women working.

Chapter Five

Conclusions and Recommendations

In this chapter conclusions from the results of the study are drawn. Recommendations based on the conclusions are made.

Conclusions

There was a positive relationship between leadership experience and independence at the .05 level of significance. This was shown to be a very significant relationship (originally .004) that was not affected negatively by the intervening variables of parent support or teacher support, or the combination of the two. Slightly over one half of the women in this study had leadership experiences in which they had been responsible for accomplishing tasks for several or numerous committee, appointive, or elective positions.

According to the literature, leadership experience develops independent characteristics. Black (1984) tells us that as leadership develops within individuals, so does their belief in themselves, and in their reliance upon themselves to solve problems with innovative solutions. Hackett and Betz (1981) report that, when women believe that they can achieve, they do achieve. Their theory is one of self-efficacy. This says that the ability of a person hinges in that person's belief in his or her ability. Dowling (1981) states that

independence results from learning that one can accomplish by oneself, can rely upon one's own abilities, and can trust one's own judgment. Astin and Kent (1983) have shown that students who have the opportunity to take on more leadership roles and greater responsibilities increase their belief in themselves, become more independent, and level of their career aspirations and career commitment are raised. Stewart and Gudykunst (1982) identified leadership ability, competitiveness, responsibility, assertiveness, and self-confidence as important factors in career success.

Many have indicated that women do not always get the strong support they need to increase their career aspirations or career salience. They may not get support at work or at home (Cooper & Davidson, 1983; Hanson, 1983; Farmer & Fyans, 1983; Tittle 1983). If this is true, then leadership experience and independence become very important factors to career aspirations and salience. Women will need a belief in themselves and the independence to aspire to nontraditional careers, as well as to become more committed to those career choices (Dowling, 1981; Hackett & Betz, 1981). Missirian (1982) stresses the importance of successful experience as a factor in raising goal aspirations in the career commitment of women. The findings of this study would seem to support the research which challenges that if we can give students the leadership experience that will develop independence, and if we can guide those experiences so that they are successful, then career aspirations and career salience of women could increase.

While the relationship between leadership experience and the women's feelings of support for working was not significant at the .05 level ($p=.07$) it would have been significant at the .10 level. It appears that leadership experience is a factor involved in women's feelings of support for work. Feelings of support for work indicate that women see themselves as having work patterns, absences from work, and ambitions for promotions that are similar to those of men. They believe they and their spouses share equal responsibility for the physical and mental health of their children, as well as sharing household tasks. It is too early to determine whether or not this indicates that this may be the beginning of an inroad to overcoming the socialization of women so they can have and enjoy both occupational and familial satisfaction by sharing the load at home. However, this is a hopeful finding which deserves further research.

Recommendations

While the findings of this study should not be considered conclusive or generalizable to a larger population, the following recommendations are made.

1. Women should be encouraged to actively seek leadership roles in service, vocational, and/or professional organizations. These roles should be those which demand responsibility, rather than those which are based on popularity.
2. Teachers could infuse more situational responsibility into the traditional classroom experience in a way that requires women to participate in leadership roles where they are responsible

for particular tasks which require decision-making and problem-solving skills.

3. High school students could be encouraged to participate in such organizations as student government, Future Farmers of America, Future Secretaries Association, and others which would give females experience in accomplishing tasks and solving problems innovatively.
4. Sponsors of school organizations should make certain they give students leadership responsibilities and set high standards of achievement. They should be a facilitator rather than a provider of knowledge.
5. Sponsors of social service organizations in the community should solicit more strongly the aid of young people and give them responsibility for task accomplishment.
6. Illinois Office of Education, Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education personnel should encourage schools with vocational programs to make student organizations available. Vocational students need to experience leadership responsibility in student vocational organizations.
7. Further studies on the relationship between career aspirations, career salience and leadership would be helpful since there is little research material currently available.
8. Parents need to create and foster experiences in the home whereby students can develop a greater sense of

self-confidence and independence through task accomplishment and problem solving when handling increasing responsibility.

9. Teachers, sponsors, community leaders, and parents should encourage more joint leadership and responsibility in organizational tasks whereby male and female leaders can work together and learn from one another.

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