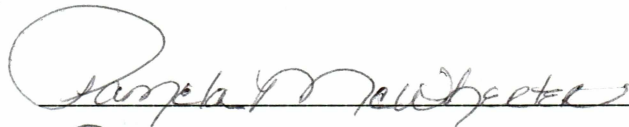


WOMEN AT WORK: PERCEPTIONS OF APPEARANCE, POWER, AND
NEGATIVE COMMUNICATION

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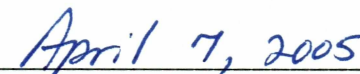
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A
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Abstract

This study is an attempt to understand the professional relationships among women. The purpose of this research was to explore the relationship between female self-concept and female-female negative communication in the workplace. Specifically the effects of self-esteem, communication behaviors, and perception of power on professional females in the workforce were examined.

Females in varying levels of professional positions were asked to respond to a set of statements regarding their own perceived level of self-esteem, power artifacts, and negative communication behaviors. The data were then analyzed to determine if a correlation exists between female age and level of self-esteem, the relation self-esteem has to negative communication behaviors, and to measure the frequency that females report exhibiting, experiencing, and witnessing negative communication behaviors in the workplace.

Results of this study lead to several implications regarding the connection between self-esteem, negative communication behaviors, power artifacts, and age. First, these data suggests that addressing women's self-esteem in the workplace can have a positive effect on the workplace

environment. Next, by mentoring younger women to be more confident at work, they are less likely to exhibit negative communication behaviors. The third key conclusion connects the effects that power artifacts, such as extravagant vacations, expensive jewelry, a college or graduate degree, and fancy cars have on other women. It is apparent that these artifacts are a point of contention for women.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Communication between females in the work environment post World War II has been thought to focus on feminism and the struggle of women to achieve professional equality. However, some women in the workplace still report conflicts with each other rather than focusing on conversations that elevate women's participation in the workplace. Eisenberg and Goodall (2004) describe the results of an Ashcraft and Pacanowsky study indicating that, "women were quick to identify each other as catty, petty, and cliquish, and then seek to distinguish their own behavior as above or beyond that (p. 163). Ashcraft and Pacanowsky (1996) acknowledge that this behavior worsens the stereotype and makes women complicit in their own subordination in the professional arena.

In fact, young women entering the work field may be surprised to find themselves asking the question: Do my older female co-workers discriminate against me? If so, why? Is this perceived discrimination based on my youth or their lack of self-esteem? My own personal workplace experiences and those of acquaintances and co-workers have led me to pursue this topic for further research.

Although academic resources are limited, the popular press consistently reports on women and their seeming inability to get along in the professional world. Their use of the term "cattiness" among women in interpersonal communication may have a clear meaning; however, it has limited definition in academic literature. Although cattiness can be expressed behaviorally as action or communication, the communicative nature of cattiness is being addressed in this study. Cattiness is defined as negative communicative behaviors. Many articles in popular periodicals such as Vogue, Cosmopolitan, and Elle are devoted to this issue. Personal experiences and anecdotal data from other women also provide local evidence that the issue needs to be addressed. Empirical research on the issue may well be useful. By describing how variables such as self-esteem, negative communication behaviors, power artifacts, and age affect women's ability to communicate on a professional level at work, may provide a worthwhile contribution to both professional women and academia.

Wood (2000) states that "we form social relationships with friends, acquaintances, and colleagues" (p. 8); however, many professional relationships are not necessarily also personal ones. Although work relationships

are important to our professional success, they do not necessarily result in close friendships. In fact, Heim's (2001) research finds not only that "professional women fail to support one another," but also that they actively sabotage their female colleagues with subterfuge and "catfights" (p. 1).

Vail (2002) describes females as creatures who are capable of being best friends by day and enemies overnight. According to Uman (2004), "many women bring to professional relationships a sensitivity that enhances teamwork" (¶ 1). However, she further states that some women do not bring that sensitivity to the workplace, creating endless frictions, especially with their female colleagues. Uman points out that girls are "socialized to be nurturing and sweet," however, this "forces them to express their aggression in backhanded ways" (p. 5). Uman posits that those lacking team skills leave many leaders and managers reluctant to employ females. Her experience as a female motivational coach leads her to believe that many women use passive-aggressive behavior to deal with anger, frustration, and powerlessness in the workplace. She insists that individual coaching, team and group coaching,

and mentoring for women in leadership roles will lead to a worthwhile change.

Caldwell (2005) conjectures that as women continue to climb the ladders of success or venture out to start their own businesses, they often unknowingly leave behind peers who experience jealousy, envy, or resentment. With those negative feelings come the loss of friendships and/or unfriendly treatment. Thus, some women experience professional or personal jealousy from their peers, leaving friendships or business relationships in shambles. She warns that this can lead to others attempting to ruin someone's personal or professional reputation due to their own inability to control emotions and maintain a professional code of conduct. She suggests that if "you pay close enough attention, body language and facial expressions serve as an excellent barometer of how people really feel about you" (¶ 17). Caldwell summarizes with, "the ugly truth is that, yes, some women can be their own worst enemy" (¶ 17).

This study explores the issues of self-esteem, negative communication behaviors, power artifacts, and age, for women in the professional arena in an attempt to understand relationships among women at work. Generally,

the purpose of this research is to explore the relationship between female self-concept and female-to-female negative communication in the workplace.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Relevant findings on the communication behaviors of women of different ages in the professional world will be evaluated and discussed. Acquiring an understanding of the different variables involved in comprehending female-female relationships is difficult due to the many areas of possible conflict between women. Research on self-esteem, negative communication behaviors, and power artifacts will be reviewed to provide a foundation for this study.

Self-esteem

Coopersmith (1967) defines self-esteem as "a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitude the individual holds toward himself [or herself]" (p. 20). Contemporary culture, home life with family, friends, and coworkers all impact self-esteem. Self-esteem is evidenced in the work environment by employees' attitude about themselves and their work. Heim and Murphy (2001) propose that women not only diminish their self-esteem through negative self-talk; they also fail to compensate for it by building themselves up when they experience success (p. 37). Guindon (1994) defines *global* self-esteem as one's perception of personal general worth and suggests it is

relatively stable, whereas *selective* self-esteem is determined by a specific situation.

According to O'Connor (2005), authentic self-esteem requires an accurate appraisal of one's own abilities in comparison to those of others. He explains that while one person may be skilled in math but weak at grammar, with a "healthy sense of self, you can accept your weaknesses without feeling like an all-around loser" (p. 1). O'Connor cautions that there are many people who have achieved success by reasonable standards, but remain dissatisfied and unhappy with themselves. Likewise, there are financially poor people who never had the opportunity for economic success, but still maintain a healthy sense of self-identity.

Steinem (1992) suggests that with age comes satisfaction with oneself. She asserts that beauty becomes the way in which one presents self, rather than the worldly definition of beauty. She states that, "aging only adds more proof that the body image in our minds is often quite different from the one others see" (p. 230), and reports that women under 24 are more likely to desire to change something about their body than are older women. As indicated by Maiano et al., "at the end of junior high

school (ages 13 & 14) and during high school (ages 15 & 16), a progressive increase in global self-esteem has been noted that lasts until late adolescence and the early adult years" (p. 55).

According to Lips (1991), self-esteem is a variable that often leads to jealous behaviors, so that women with lower levels of self-esteem may be more prone to jealousy. Jealousy creates negative behaviors such as malicious gossip, which is often done in an effort to feel superior to others. Lips' research evaluates the effect that gender has on power and how power influences everyone's lives, whether or not individuals perceive they are in positions of power. She also analyzes how people view themselves compared to how others view them. Lips' review of the literature supports the belief that views of age, perceived artifacts such as expensive jewelry and clothing, and self-esteem are not only different between women and men, but are also different among females. Women sometimes have a more difficult time than men being comfortable around others of the same sex, and thus respond to this discomfort by finding faults in other women. A possible explanation for this communicative behavior is that men have

historically been involved more in team sports and are more comfortable around each other.

According to Wood (2000), another factor in the way women are treated in the professional workplace is their own self-esteem (p. 8). If a woman is perceived as too self-confident, that confidence can inadvertently have a negative effect on her success. However, if a woman does not have enough self-confidence she may find herself overlooked for employment positions, which are then given to more confident individuals, although they may not be any more qualified. People that exude confidence are generally noticed more because they are not afraid to draw attention to themselves. Farley (2002) infers that the advances for feminism in the work environment creates a double bind for women in a patriarchal culture in which man continues to be sought after, i.e., the "prize." Women will continue to fight among themselves to compete for and align themselves with that valuable resource (i.e., status among men in power).

Jealousy and envy

Self-esteem has been connected to jealousy in the literature (Lips, 1991; Guerrero & Afifi, 1998). Spitzberg and Cupach (1998) state that although jealousy and envy are

considered to be related, they are two very different constructs. Both are emotions; however, they differ in terms of "who possesses the desired person or trait, what other emotions and perceptions accompany them, and how society views their experience and expression" (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1998, p. 35). Desire is the shared quality that creates their similarity. They also suggest that "with jealousy, the desire focuses on preserving an existing relationship in the face of threats, but envy results when the desire focuses on wanting something that one does not have" (p. 45).

According to Harris (2001), jealousy is one of the most powerful and painful human emotions. It is also deadly; according to statistical studies it is ranked as the most common motive for murder (Harris). Pines and Bowes (1992) report that jealousy is a reaction to a threat, real or imagined, to a relationship or its quality, and that "we develop this image very early in life, based on early experiences occurring in childhood" (p. 3). Jealousy has been characterized as lying somewhere in the gray area between sanity and madness (Pines & Bowes).

Jealousy can be expressed in a variety of ways. Guerrero et al. (1995) define the expression of jealousy as

"a behavioral reaction to [the emotion of] jealousy that carries communicative value and has the potential to fulfill individual and/or relational goals" (p. 272). Their research has resulted in the identification of two types of communicative responses to jealousy: general behavioral responses and what Guerrero et al. (1995) call "interactive" responses. General behavioral responses can have communicative value, but may not necessarily take place in a face-to-face context or require a response from one's partner. Interactive responses do occur in a face-to-face context and are partner-directed in nature.

Anderson (2002) reports that in the course of childhood development, "socialization and acculturation foster repressions of envy and jealousy" (p. 455). He suggests that envy and jealousy affect competition and the way it is experienced, and that, "the greediness that takes hold, fueled by the envious person's searing sense of disadvantage, can make a life-and-death struggle of any competition for those things that an individual has come to regard as requirements of life" (p. 464). Such approaches can create hostile feelings of envy and jealousy simply based on another's perceived material possessions.

Research conducted by Bevan and Samter (2004) shows that jealousy is not limited to romantic partners but can, in fact, occur in any partnership that is valued by an individual (p. 15). Many respondents reported that power jealousy transpired when cross-sex friends broke established plans with them for another person. Power jealousy is defined as a situation in which a relationship (with friend or coworker) is lost due to the influence of another individual.

Guerrero and Afifi (1998) report that little research has investigated how jealous individuals use communication to cope with threats to self-esteem and relationships (p. 2). Results of their study indicate that "self-esteem and relationship maintenance goals are related to communicative responses to jealousy" (p. 1). Low self-esteem can be a factor in more frequent negative communication between women in the workplace. Bate and Bowker (1997) theorize that "high self-esteem women show fewer feelings of jealousy than men with either high or low self-esteem" (p. 191). This suggests that self-esteem is directly related to jealousy.

Negative communication behaviors

In social settings, men and women are still expected to behave in certain gender-specific ways; thus, there may be a tendency for both sexes to actually use stereotypical behaviors to their advantage in both social and work situations. Aguinis and Henle (2001) suggest that men are "more likely to use coercion and punishment, while women rely on negotiation, altruism, and smiles to work through conflict situations" (p. 542).

Cox's (1994) research suggests that women still prefer to work with and for men, eliminating the notion of sisterhood. Men are stereotyped to be competitive problem solvers while women are stereotyped as collaborative, nurturing, emotional, and concerned for others. Tannen (1990) suggests that male communication patterns are characterized by report talk, as opposed to the female pattern which she calls rapport talk (p.76). She suggests that women converse as "...a way of establishing connections and negotiating relationships," while men converse to "... negotiate and maintain status in a hierarchical social order" (p. 77). Men are traditionally more direct in their communication and women stress social interaction with the intent to establish relationships. This is likely due to

women being raised from childhood as nurturers and men being raised to be authority figures.

Purvis (2000) assumes that most working women have experienced professional obstacles or setbacks. She suggests that women should have empathy for one another and change their professional communication culture, but instead are simply comparing notes about backstabbing, manipulative, and unprofessional behavior among their female colleagues (¶ 3). She also assumes that most women tend to be insecure about their role or status in the male-dominated workplace, and reports that women historically have been socially conditioned to please or be accepted by men who will supposedly "take care" of them. She posits that although a few working women are fortunate to occasionally encounter supportive female colleagues, most cannot assume they will enjoy much professional camaraderie with the majority of the women they encounter on the job. Purvis implies that one solution to this phenomenon is for women to become more aware of this reality and individually determine how to effectively deal with negative communication behaviors and lack of "sisterhood," i.e., collaborative, collective female cohesion. Therefore, as women began struggling for professional success, many began

to emulate the managerial style of men in the workplace, since most top-level managers were males. They took on communication traits such as assertiveness, in an effort to be more like the men who hold the positions they desired.

Littlejohn (2002) finds that because of power inequalities in communication, "women are forced to learn the male systems of communication" (p. 225). The skill of modeling male managerial characteristics could be a result of women having to change their style in order to be heard at work. When women acquire male communication characteristics, they no longer fit the stereotype for women. As a result, they are often perceived in various negative ways (e.g., too aggressive). Women who are perceived as too aggressive are generally thought to be abrasive and uncaring, which goes against the traditional characteristics of females. When women or men are not perceived to follow social expectations, others in the workplace may evaluate them negatively.

Ashcraft and Pacanowsky (1996) used conversational interviews to study an organization founded by, led by, and employing females. The research resulted in stories that conjure an image of backstabbing, jealous women, unwilling or unable to approach conflict directly. The stories

suggest that female employees recognize a destructive cycle of indirect competition as part of the 'female' identity of their community" (p. 229). One member was disappointed after joining the office because it was "supposedly founded by a woman with feminist ideals, she expected to find a work haven for women - 'a girls' club': only what you don't realize is that they already have a lot of clubs - and they're very hard to get into" (p. 230). Ashcraft and Pacanowsky describe the final facet as "us vs. them: suggest[ing]s an ironic feature of the 'female cattiness' story. As members talked of their perceptions, they frequently mourned yet accepted these tendencies as part of a 'female' way of being and doing" (pp. 230-231). They used such terms as "cattiness," "competition," "intense defensiveness," "female jealousy," "too much pettiness," "a real hen factory," "a complete cat house - in spite of the participants' qualifications," and "female."

Hellmich (2002), in an article entitled *Caught in the Catty Corner*, reports that experts call the female to female negative behavior *relational aggression*, but adolescent girls say peers are just plain mean. Hellmich suggests that this behavior begins during adolescence and continues into adulthood. One girl says, "... the meanest

people I ever met . . . were all girls" (p. 1). Experts use the term relational aggression to describe this cattiness, meanness, and nastiness that happens between people, but especially girls. Hellmich theorizes that this behavior does not end when adolescents become adults. Her research suggests that girls would experience "less relational aggression with other girls if they learned to be more straightforward and honest about their feelings, rather than being socialized to be indirect and thus feel unheard" (p. 4). However, Cristina (2000) found that relational aggression may fulfill a normative function in female social development by serving to create and maintain intimate dyads that are the hallmark of girls' social interactions (§ 1).

Bertero (2003) notes that indirect aggression has neither been widely studied nor understood, because it is challenging to measure and define given that the attacker's identity usually remains unknown and her tactics are often subtle and somewhat clandestine (§ 1). Bertero suggests that aggression is a natural component of human interaction and interfamily relations; indirect aggression is most commonly observed in using such methods as exclusion,

gossip, snide remarks, or subtle "putdowns" to attack an opponent or competitor (§ 1).

When women model traditional masculine nonverbal characteristics such as direct eye contact, they can be viewed negatively because they are expected to communicate in a traditionally feminine and recognizable way. Barrett (1998) reports that all verbal and nonverbal parts of messages contribute significantly to meaning, and that during "face-to-face communication, the great majority of self-maintenance content in any message is suggested non-verbally" (p. 28).

Aguinis et al. (2001) evaluated the effective use of power, and perception by peer employees and supervisors, in order to determine if the appraisal of the subjects' confidence and nonverbal behavior affects the way they are viewed in the workplace. Aguinis et al. reference Dubrin's research (1991) to suggest that women are more likely to use appearance, charm, and compliments, while men use assertion, jokes, and threats as communication tactics in the workplace.

To summarize what has been addressed in this section, communication behaviors have been looked at in terms of nonverbal behaviors, gender-specific approaches, and

managerial styles. Specifically, negative communication behaviors, which include gossip, untrue or jaded information, or statements intended to misrepresent another person, have been characterized as catty behaviors.

Power artifacts

Heim and Murphy (2001) define power as a variable that refers to the "external force you wield in the world" (pp. 21-22). Power can be expressed in a variety of different ways. Several examples include position titles, the degree of financial wealth one has, relationships, appearance, and one's personality. Heim and Murphy (2001) suggest that power exists "in relation to someone or something else but never in a vacuum" (p. 25).

Research cited by Arneson and Johnson (1991) indicates, "...women tend to stereotype women in power as catty, masculine, tough, and mean," all traditional male stereotypes (p. 26). Cattiness itself is a communication behavior, and while it is thought to be gender-related (i.e., only a female behavior), it is really only labeled in terms of gender. For example, a male interrupting someone in a meeting is thought to be assertively bringing his thought to the table, while a female would be labeled catty. Heim and Murphy (2001) report that they have heard

from male executives who indicate they are reluctant to hire or promote women because they "always turn into a bitch" (p. 11). This is the double-edged sword of power, which is experienced more by women than men because it is still more socially acceptable for men to demonstrate power on the job than it is for women (Heim & Murphy).

Beamer and Varner (2001) indicate that "in spite of all claims to democracy and equality, symbols of power are everywhere in U.S. businesses": everything from size and location of offices to type of furniture indicate power (p. 192). Thus, one way to operationalize power would be as artifacts, such as fancy clothing, expensive cars, elaborate homes, and nice jewelry. Most individuals would not readily admit to being jealous or envious of another's possessions; however, research indicates that these artifacts may in fact be a point of contention among females.

Chia et al. (1998) posit that people make judgments about others based on little or no information. One of the first observations is another's physical attractiveness, and many judgments are based solely on appearance. It is also suggested that appearance will greatly affect others' perception of job performance, as well as a student's

success academically. Studies done by Chia et al. (1998) cite Felson's (1980) research concluding, "Physical attractiveness has been shown to be correlated to actual performance, task evaluation, teachers' expectations of students, and teachers' attributions of student ability".

People often form an opinion about someone based on their first impression of the person. Josselson (1996) posits, "she will be responded to for how she is deemed to be, not for what she wills or for her skills" (p. 227). If a woman is young and attractive, perceivers may judge that she is ignorant or intelligent, depending on their previous experiences. The way men and women see the young and attractive woman often varies. While a man may interpret the woman to be a potential colleague, someone who will be fun to work with or someone who has potential in the organization, a woman may see the same female as a professional or social threat.

Appearance is another element in the perceived image of someone. Wood (2000) states that clothes are a major factor in how we perceive one another and ourselves. Sometimes the outfit makes one feel and look better, but the same outfit will look differently on someone else, and will likely make them feel differently as well. Beamer and

Varner (2001) suggest that the way we dress is also a form of non-verbal communication.

Artifacts, such as clothing, jewelry, or hairstyle can affect the way women are perceived by other women. For example, when a female dresses in a navy suit rather than a flowing dress, she may be using masculine artifacts to appropriate power. Heim and Murphy (2001) suggest that, "...various displays must be cautiously managed because female co-workers may become resentful of them" (p. 29). Another example highlights the difference in the way women and men have been encultured to respond to artifacts. If someone in a fancy sports car pulls up to a group of men and women, the men will likely admire the car, while the women wait to see who the driver is. If a man gets out, they may perceive the car positively. If a woman emerges, some females may respond negatively and find a way to devalue both the car and what it represents about the woman driving the car.

Van Maanen (1991) found that female Disneyland employees assigned more power on the appearance of an employee's uniform than employee rank. For example, when the ride "It's a Small World" first opened, the ride operators were outfitted in shorter skirts and more

revealing blouses than those of the Tour Guides, who "traditionally headed the fashion vanguard at Disneyland" (p. 63). The Tour Guides apparently felt they were being "upstaged by their social inferiors." Van Maanen's findings suggest that women base perception of power on appearance, thus competing for what they determine to be the best and sexiest outfit. While Heim and Murphy's implication to downplay personal appearances focuses on reducing negative feelings among females, Van Maanen is pointing out the use of appearance to compete for power.

Age

Female-female conflict may conceivably be a result of women in different age groups (with different values and belief systems) working together. Cultural differences between disparate generations result in cohorts operating under dissimilar sets of rules. Because older generation women had to pave the way for achieving gender equality in the workplace, they often perceive that women entering the professional workforce today are naïve and ignorant of the feminist and civil rights struggles of the second wave of feminism of the 1960s and 1970s. If Baby Boomers would look back twenty-five years and recall who they were, many would see themselves as twenty- or thirty-something women

dreaming and striving to be independent, much like the twenty- and thirty-something women of this new millennium, and might mentor the younger generation rather than impatiently anticipating hearing "thank you" from younger women, as if appreciation were owed to them (English, 2002). English believes that some women in positions of power who could mentor younger women do not do so for fear of being upstaged by new talent.

The reviewed literature supports the position that self-esteem, negative communication behaviors, power artifacts, and age have an impact upon female-to-female interaction. The four variables of self-esteem, negative communication behaviors, power artifacts, and age have been explored in other social science disciplines. Self-esteem and communication behaviors have been addressed by not only Communication scholars, but also by scholars in Psychology, Philosophy, and Management. Power artifacts have been reviewed in depth by the popular press, as well in Psychology and Communication disciplines. Lastly, age has been addressed by Psychology scholars specifically, and is often a variable of interest in other disciplines. What remains to be explored, however, is the relationship among these variables and the effects they have on relationships

among women in the workplace; specifically, it is important to explore the communication phenomenon of professional women conflicting with each other.

Research questions and hypotheses

The literature reviewed suggests a relationship between self-esteem, negative communication behaviors, and power artifacts. However, the degree of association between the elements has not yet been demonstrated. This will be addressed by the questions and hypotheses driving this research.

Generally, the purpose of this research was to explore the relationship between female self-esteem and female-female negative communication behaviors in the workplace. Specifically, the present study examined the effects of self-esteem, communication behaviors, and power artifacts of professional females in the work environment.

Lips (1991) reports that self-esteem is a variable linked to jealous behaviors, suggesting that women with lower levels of self-esteem may be more prone to jealousy. Jealousy is primarily expressed in communicative ways. The following hypothesis addresses the extent to which self-esteem affects female-female communication in the organizational context:

H1: Professional women with lower levels of self-esteem will exhibit higher levels of negative female-female communication in the workplace.

In addition to understanding the effect that self-esteem has on female-female communication in organizations, it is also important to determine if age is a distinguishing variable in the work environment. Maiano et al. (2004) conclude that a progressive increase in global self-esteem has been noted that lasts until late adolescence and the early adult years. However, it is not known whether that upward trend continues throughout adulthood. Therefore, the following question will seek to determine if age has an effect on the level of self-esteem among women in the workforce:

RQ1: In what way does age relate to self-esteem?

Steinem's (1992) indication that with age comes satisfaction with oneself was based upon the finding that women under 24 are more likely to want to change something about their physical appearance than older women. Although this does not suggest a specific transitional point for adult self-esteem change, a mid-point in a female career was selected to test whether there was a difference in

self-esteem between younger and older working women. The following hypothesis was proposed:

H2: Women who are 35 or older have higher levels of self-esteem than do women 34 and under.

Heim and Murphy's (2001) research indicates that there is a relationship between power artifacts and negative communication behaviors and that "various displays must be cautiously managed because female co-workers may become resentful of them" (p. 29). To further understanding of power artifacts and the perceptions female co-workers may draw based upon them, the following question was asked:

RQ2: In what ways are power artifacts associated with receiving negative communication?

The popular press has devoted many resources to the study of female to female communication behaviors and relationships; however, empirical evidence will clarify the scope of this problem in the workplace. Therefore, the following question was asked:

RQ3: How pervasive are negative communication behaviors among women at work?

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Females in varying levels of professional positions were asked to respond to a set of statements regarding their own perceived level of self-esteem, power artifacts, and negative communication behaviors. The data were then analyzed to determine if a correlation exists between female age and level of self-esteem, and between self-esteem and negative communication behaviors, and to measure the frequency that females report exhibiting, experiencing, and witnessing negative communication behaviors in the workplace. The presence of power artifacts and frequency of received negative communication behaviors was also analyzed.

Research Design

This questionnaire was conducted electronically via the Internet. Respondents were anonymous. The survey required the respondents to focus on their perception of self, their own communication with female co-workers, and the way they perceive their colleagues and peers communicate with them. Additionally, respondents were asked to indicate their age to allow the researcher to link age to the different variables under study. Geographical

location and organization size data were gathered for exploratory study. Survey data were collected during early spring, 2005.

Procedures

The goal for this study was to collect data from a diverse female population. The survey instrument was placed on the Internet. An electronic survey was selected based on ease of distribution and minimal cost to the researcher to disseminate the survey to a varied group of participants. The Internet was also the best approach to reach the most people. Ali et al. (2002) examined the feasibility of delivering a survey to medical students by e-mail. Their results indicated that the overall response rate was 79.8%, and that electronic mail was by far the most popular mode of contact.

Professional women's associations were contacted by email, requesting permission to distribute the survey to their membership. Access was granted from four professional organizations. A point of contact was then established who accepted responsibility for forwarding the survey information onto members. This maintained the confidentiality of participants and did not require the organization moderator to release their membership

information to the researcher. The full membership of each association was sent an email asking them to click on the link to the survey and then to complete it. The email included a cover letter addressing all needed issues of informed consent. The survey responses moved directly to a database upon submission. This process allowed for an easy, efficient data collection process and eliminated potential data entry errors. Participants had approximately two weeks to complete the survey. Approximately four days into the data collection process, a follow-up email was sent out to the list contacts thanking subjects who had already responded and reminding others to please respond.

Population and sample

Several professional female associations were approached with a request to distribute the survey to their listserv. The purpose of sampling professional female associations was to increase the breadth of the sample. The participants in this study were 94 females in professional positions who have female colleagues. The respondents ranged in age from 21 to 62, with a mean age of 37.49 years. This was a national survey and respondents were from the following geographical locations: Alaska (54%), Pacific North West (4%), Mid West (17%), South (4%), North East

(7%), and West (3%). Ninety two of the respondents provided their organizational size which ranged from zero (for two consultants) to 3,000 organization members: 72.8% of the participants were from small organizations (0-100 members), 18.5% were from the medium range (100+ to 500 members) and 8.7% were from large organizations (500+ members).

Measures

The primary variables of interest were self-esteem, negative communication behaviors, power artifacts, and age. Questions measuring global and selective self-esteem were taken from existing scales, while questions measuring negative communication behaviors and power artifacts were created by the researcher for this study. Participants were asked to respond to several demographic questions. Finally, a single open-ended question provided qualitative data on the overall topic of women's negative communication in the workplace.

Self-esteem. Self-esteem was divided into global and selective factors, global self-esteem being the self-evaluation of one's general worth, and selective self-esteem representing self-appraisal specific to a particular feature or responsibility. Global self-esteem was measured

by the 10-item Rosenberg (1979) scale (Appendix 2). Examples of items from this scale include, "I am able to do things as well as most other people" and "I take a positive attitude toward myself." A 5-point response scale (1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly agree) was used to record responses. Global self-esteem had an alpha reliability coefficient of .714.

Selective self-esteem was measured to address self-appraisal in an organizational setting. The Pierce, Gardner, Cummings, and Dunham (1989) organizational-based self-esteem scale was used (OBSE; Appendix 2). Examples of items from this scale include, "There is faith in me around here" and "I count around here." A 5-point response scale (1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly agree) was used to record the responses. Organizational based self-esteem had an alpha reliability coefficient of .919.

Communication behaviors. Negative communication behaviors are defined as behaviors whereby individuals do something verbally or nonverbally that is negative to another individual, such as relational aggression. The frequency of negative communication behaviors was measured in three ways. Respondents were asked to indicate the frequency with which they observed, received, and exhibited

certain behaviors. A 5-point response scale (1=never; 5=frequently) was used to record the responses. Examples of behaviors included ignoring, interrupting, and snide remarks. Observed, received, and exhibited negative communication behaviors had an alpha reliability of .939, .934, and .850 respectively

Power artifacts. Power artifacts was operationalized as assigning power to an individual based on her clothing, possessions, or personal characteristics. The respondents were asked to respond to a set of artifacts to determine if they were present when the respondent received negative communication behaviors from other women. Examples include natural beauty, expensive jewelry, large offices, and fancy cars. A 5-point response scale (1=untrue; 5=true) was used to record the responses. The power artifacts measure had an alpha reliability coefficient of .872.

Age. Respondents were asked to record their age in years. The continuous level data allowed a test to determine if there is a correlation between age and the level of self-esteem measured. The data were also collapsed into the following age ranges: 20-34 and 35 and above. These age groups were chosen in order to differentiate between females who have recently entered the professional

workforce and women who have been working for approximately 15 years or more.

Pretest

A pretest was conducted to determine whether the stimulus statements and items on the survey were clear. This test was sent to five individuals who completed the questionnaire and provided comments to the researcher. A few minor alterations were made to the questionnaire and to the stimulus statements according to the feedback collected from the pretest. After the survey was built on the Internet, the survey was tested again with a slightly larger population in order to determine if the changes made to the original survey were adequate and to work out any technical problems. There were a few difficulties with the web-based version of the survey, which were adjusted prior to distribution to the participating audience.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Analysis

Correlations, descriptive statistics, and reliability for the study variables are presented in Table 1. Reliabilities for the measures were established through coefficient alpha and are sufficient. Of note in Table 1 are the correlations between global self-esteem and negative communication behaviors, and organization based self-esteem and negative communication behaviors. Also of interest are the correlations between age and observed and received negative communication behaviors.

Hypothesis one stated that women with low levels of self-esteem would send negative communication more frequently. A *t*-test was used to determine whether there was a difference for respondents with low self-esteem and respondents with high self-esteem on how frequently they exhibited negative communication toward female co-workers. The hypothesis was supported for global self-esteem [$t(86) = 2.22, p < .05$]. Based on the Levene's test for equality of variances, equal variances were assumed for the *t* statistic. The hypothesis was also supported for organization based self-esteem [$t(11) = 3.34, p < .05$].

Table 1.

Correlations among Variables with Descriptive Statistics

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Global SE		.560**	-.299**	-.351**	-.326**	.228	-.042	.113	.204*
2. OBSE			-.459**	-.547**	-.472**	.145	-.053	.270	.249*
3. Observed Negative Comm.				.779**	.690**	.297*	.153	.105	-.333**
4. Received Negative Comm.					.643**	.272*	.262*	-.005	-.307**
5. Given Negative Comm.						.085	.019	.015	-.198
6. Personal Artifacts							.459**	.481**	-.106
7. Possessed Artifacts								.378**	.043
8. Professional Artifacts									.201
9. Age									
<i>N</i>	94	94	90	90	88	62	64	65	94
<i>M</i>	3.99	4.10	2.61	2.17	1.83	3.16	2.08	2.42	37.49
<i>SD</i>	.579	.747	1.19	1.12	.766	1.21	1.26	1.30	11.25
Minimum/Maximum	1.9/4.7	2.2/5	1/5	1/5	1/4.75	1/5	1/5	1/5	21/62
Minimum/Maximum	1.9/4.7	2.2/5	1/5	1/5	1/4.75	1/5	1/5	1/5	21/62
Coefficient Alpha	.714	.919	.939	.934	.850	.827	.878	.860	

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Levene's test was significant for organization based self-esteem, therefore, equal variances could not be assumed. The results of the *t*-test indicate that women with lower levels of self worth will exhibit negative communication behaviors more frequently than women with higher levels of self worth. A bivariate correlation was also used to determine that as self-esteem increases, the frequency of given negative communication behaviors decreases (global self-esteem: $r = -.326$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .106$; organization based self-esteem: $r = -.547$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .299$).

Research question one asked in what way age relates to self-esteem. The bivariate correlation indicated a low, but significant positive correlation ($r = .204$, $p < .05$, $r^2 = .041$) between global self-esteem and age. Additionally, a low positive correlation ($r = .249$, $p < .05$, $r^2 = .062$) was determined between organization based self-esteem and age. The results suggest that as women get older in age, their level of self-esteem will increase.

Hypothesis two predicted that women who are 35 or older would have higher levels of self-esteem than women 34 and under. The results of the *t*-test indicate that there is no significant difference in self-esteem level at the 35

year old break point at the .05 level. Hypothesis two was not supported.

Research question two asked in what ways power artifacts are associated with receiving negative communication behaviors. The power artifacts measure was constructed addressing several types of artifacts. Conceptually, scoring the measure as a whole may be less valid than looking at its components. For that reason, a principle-components factor analysis with a varimax rotation was used to test the factor structure of the nine items measuring power artifacts. The items were divided into three factors: personal, possessions, and professional artifacts (see Table 2). Personal artifacts included natural beauty, college or graduate degree, appealing figure, or positive appearance. Possessed artifacts represented extravagant vacations, expensive jewelry, and fancy cars while professional artifacts included a large office or impressive job title. Alpha reliabilities for the resulting factors were acceptable.

There was a significant low positive correlation between received negative communication behaviors and personal ($r = .272, p < .05, r^2 = .074$) and possessed ($r = .262, p < .05, r^2 = .069$) artifacts. These results indicate

Table 2.

Factor Loading of Personal, Possessed, and Professional Power Artifacts Components Factor Analysis With Varimax Rotation

Factor→ Artifacts ↓	Personal Artifacts	Possessed Artifacts	Professional Artifacts
Natural Beauty	.829		
Extravagant Vacations		.915	
Expensive Jewelry		.890	
College/Graduate Degree	.655		
Appealing/physically fit figure	.861		
Impressive Job Title			.837
Large Office			.936
Positive Appearance	.735		
Fancy Car		.775	

that the professional factor is not related to negative communication behaviors, however personal and possessed artifacts are.

Similarly, of the three factors, two were found to significantly correlate with specific negative communication behaviors. A significant correlation was found between personal artifacts and sarcasm ($r = .294$), shoulder shrugs ($r = .255$), eyebrow raises ($r = .262$), and poor listening ($r = .259$) at the .05 significance level. Additionally, a significant correlation was found between

possessed artifacts and rudeness ($r = .299$), eyebrow raises ($r = .280$) at the .05 significance level, and snide remarks ($r = .331$) at the .01 level of significance. These results indicate that as the presence of personal and possessed artifacts increase, received negative communication behaviors also increases.

When looking at received negative communication overall and individual power artifacts, positive correlations were found with expensive jewelry ($r = .357$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .127$) as well as the presence of a college or graduate degree ($r = .301$, $p < .05$, $r^2 = .090$). These results indicate that women who have a college or graduate degree or expensive jewelry are more likely to receive negative communication from other women.

Table 3 represents the relationships among individual power artifacts and individual negative communication behaviors. There was also a significant positive correlation between extravagant vacations and rudeness ($r = .262$, $p < .05$, $r^2 = .069$). There was a significant positive correlation between the presence of expensive jewelry and every negative communication behavior on the questionnaire: ignoring ($r=.267$), interrupting ($r=.250$), sarcasm ($r=.301$), shoulder shrugs ($r=.270$), eyebrow raises ($r=.299$), and poor

listening ($r=.296$) at the .05 level, as well as rudeness ($r=.353$), and snide remarks ($r=.343$) at the .01 level.

Table 3.

Correlations among Received Negative Communication Behaviors and Power Artifacts

Behaviors→ Artifacts ↓	Ignoring	Interrupting	Sarcasm	Rudeness	Snide Remarks	Shoulder Shrugs	Eyebrow Raises	Poor Listening
Natural Beauty	.119	.175	.239	.189	.211	.146	.180	.185
Extravagant Vacations	.164	.081	.189	.262*	.222	.131	.191	.096
Expensive Jewelry	.267*	.250*	.301	.353**	.343**	.270*	.299*	.296*
College or Graduate Degree	.165	.218	.285*	.226	.249*	.300*	.285*	.368**
Appealing Figure	.026	-.016	.229	.126	.229	.175	.184	.084
Impressive Job Title	.083	.048	.176	.199	.102	.015	-.004	.127
Large Office	.009	-.132	-.053	.016	-.158	-.147	-.221	.054
Positive Appearance	.013	.111	.084	.048	.117	.163	.206	.099
Fancy Car	.136	.000	.129	.182	.300*	.186	.238	-.033

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

In addition, significant positive correlations were also present between college or graduate degrees and sarcasm ($r=.285$), snide remarks ($r=.249$), shoulder shrugs ($r=.300$), and eyebrow raises ($r=.285$) at the .05 level, while poor listening was positively correlated ($r=.368$) at the .01 level. Finally, there was a low positive correlation ($r=.300$, $p<.05$) between fancy cars and snide remarks. All correlations are low, but they are present, indicating that women are more likely to receive negative communication behaviors if they take extravagant vacations, wear expensive jewelry, have a college or graduate degree, or drive fancy cars.

Research question three asked how frequent negative communication behaviors occur among women at work. Respondents had the option of selecting 1 (not at all) through 5 (frequently) on a scale to indicate the frequency of occurrence of negative communication behaviors. To create interpretable categories, the range of responses from each behavior was divided into thirds representing low, medium, and high levels of behavior. Of the 90 respondents who answered the questions regarding observed negative communication behaviors, 31.1% indicated a low level of frequency (1-1.63; 9.6% stating not at all) of the

occurrence, 37.8% indicated a mid-level (1.88-3.25), and 31.1% observed the negative communication behaviors at a high level (3.38-5). Of the 88 respondents who addressed the questions pertaining to given negative communication behaviors, 52.3% (1-1.63; 14.9% stating not at all) indicated exhibiting at the low level of frequency, 43.2% at the mid-range (1.75-3.13) level, and only 4.5% indicated giving negative communication behaviors at the high (3.5-4.75) level of frequency. There were 90 responses to the received negative communication behaviors, with 45.6% reporting receiving at the low level (1-1.63; 16% stating not at all), 35.5% at the mid-level (1.75-3) range, and 18.9% at the high (3.5-5) frequency of receiving. Observed negative communication was relatively evenly split at the low, medium, and high breakpoint, while given negative communication was more heavily weighted at the low end of the scale and received at the mid and high ranges. Although, 18.9% receive and 31.1% observe negative communication behaviors at the high level of frequency, only 4.5% of respondents indicate demonstrating the behaviors at the higher level.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the issues of self-esteem, negative communication behaviors, power artifacts, and age, in the context of interpersonal interaction between women in the professional arena with the hope of better understanding the professional relationships among women. Generally, the research explored the relationship between female self-concept and female-to-female negative communication in the workplace. This study contributes to the literature on self-esteem, age, power artifacts, and negative communication behaviors, providing a basis for explaining why negative communication occurs among females in a professional environment.

Implications

Results of this study lead to several implications regarding the connection between self-esteem, negative communication behaviors, power artifacts, and age. First, these data suggest that addressing women's self-esteem in the workplace can have a positive effect on the workplace environment. Second, by mentoring younger women to be more confident at work, they may be less likely to exhibit negative communication behaviors. The third key implication

is these power artifacts such as extravagant vacations, expensive jewelry, a college or graduate degree, and fancy cars affect women's communication behavior. It is apparent that these artifacts are a point of contention for women.

The first conclusion is that addressing women's self-esteem in the workplace can have a positive effect on the workplace environment. As self-esteem increases, individuals reported exhibiting, receiving, and observing fewer negative communication behaviors. With regard to exhibiting, this finding is consistent with Vail's (2002) conclusion that aggressive behaviors are directly linked to lack of self-esteem as an adult.

In each case, the relationship was stronger between the communication behavior and selective self-esteem than it was for global self-esteem. Therefore, impacting women's self-esteem, particularly their personal worth grounded in the workplace, may affect this negative communication phenomenon overall. Further, there is a significant difference in the amount of negative communication received by women with low levels of self-esteem and those with high levels of self-esteem. Low levels of self-esteem may manifest in defensive behaviors. Communicatively, these behaviors may be verbal attacks such as exclusion, gossip,

snide remarks, or subtle "putdowns". Bertero (2003) indicates that these are often attacks of indirect aggression toward a perceived competitor.

Organizations can influence the level of negative female-female communication in the workplace by instituting programs that positively impact women's self-esteem levels. Global self-esteem appears to be more stable (Guidon, 1994), but self-esteem that is specific to the organizational context could be positively influenced by training that improves women's confidence in performing their professional roles. These programs might be instituted to increase employee productivity; however, it is important that organizational members and leaders first recognize this negative communication phenomenon and be willing to implement such programs to address it. A program designed to increase selective self-esteem will be different from a program solely focused on performance issues.

The second implication is that mentoring younger women to be more confident at work, may make them less likely to exhibit negative communication behaviors. As Uman (2004) suggests, individual coaching, team and group coaching, and mentoring for women in leadership roles can lead to a

worthwhile change, specifically in passive-aggressive behaviors.

The age categories, split at 35 years old, were not significantly different for levels of self-esteem. However, low positive correlations were found for age and both global and organization based self-esteem. The literature suggesting an increase in self-esteem with age specifically referenced an increase from childhood up to 24 years of age. The 35 year point was selected for this study as the middle of a woman's professional career. This cutoff did not prove useful; however, responses to the open-ended question about the survey topic indicated that older women saw a relationship between self-esteem and age. One respondent, in her 50's, commented that "there is much jealousy in the workplace among women. I believe this lessens with older women and is more prevalent among younger women." Another, also in her 50's, said, "I think the answers will vary based on the individual's self confidence and age. As you age others' opinions matter less than what you think of yourself." This supports Steinem's (1992) suggestion that with age comes satisfaction with oneself.

Because self-esteem appears to increase with age, it is important for older women to realize that younger women are not as confident and may be more apt to be jealous of possessions and achievements that they do not hold. Although there may always be negative communication behaviors in any professional situation, simply understanding the reality can make women feel more comfortable in their professional environment. Uman (2004) recognizes that women, in particular, tend to ignore this phenomenon. As Purvis (2000) suggests, one strategy is for women in the workplace to become more aware of this reality and determine how to deal with negative communication behaviors and lack of "sisterhood." Older women are in a position to help younger women understand this reality and mentor them in other ways as well.

The third implication concerns the effects that power artifacts have on other women and their communication choices. The power artifacts question was structured so that respondents would have to have experienced a negative communication behavior to be able to respond. All correlations were positive, which suggests that when extravagant vacations, expensive jewelry, college or graduate degrees, and fancy cars are present, received

negative communication behaviors increases. One issue these artifacts have in common is that money is needed to acquire them. Artifacts that cost a good deal of money seem to garner negative comments from co-workers. One possible explanation for this is low self-esteem on the part of the observer. Lips (1991) relates self-esteem to jealous behaviors, suggesting that women with lower levels of self-esteem may be more prone to jealousy. Anderson (2002) references a sense of disadvantage that manifests in envious or jealous co-workers perceiving these artifacts in negative ways. By choosing to perceive the person possessing artifacts as superior, they react defensively and exhibit negative communication behaviors such as malicious gossip.

Based on Purvis' (2000) suggestion that individual women determine coping strategies, the following practical recommendations are suggested. Women could fare better in the workplace by not discussing vacations, wearing fancy jewelry to work, and exhibiting college degrees. It is better for women to minimize these artifacts. Rather than providing details to co-workers, keep this information personal. This does not mean women should hide these artifacts, but they should refrain from talking about them.

However, if a co-worker comments about something, women should indicate that they feel fortunate. This behavior takes forethought on the part of the owner. Through mentoring, women can learn what is professional to discuss at work.

Limitations

The key limitation of this study relates to the sampling procedure. Two issues impacted generalizability. First, level of access granted by the professional women's associations precluded a random sampling procedure. Second, the lack of response from several participating associations to questions about their membership limited the understanding of the varied types of professions and positions represented in the sample. In addition, access issues for distribution prevented the researcher from personally contacting respondents in the distribution process. This made it more difficult to obtain a large sample (only 94 participants), which then limited the power for the statistical tests.

Future research

The fact that all correlations are of low strength may indicate that delineating these issues requires future research that explores other variables, employs different

measurement strategies, and utilizes other methodological approaches. First, women in the public sphere could benefit from future research to identify other variables contributing to negative communication behaviors. For example, one issue that was not addressed in this study which might have a significant effect is the way in which the employee presents, wears, or talks about to these artifacts. A woman who talks about her jewelry or brags about her education may receive more frequent negative communication behaviors. This study only measured the presence of power artifacts. Perhaps a higher level of correlation would exist if verbal communication behaviors and attitudinal nonverbals accompanying the power artifacts were measured.

Although self-esteem was significantly related to age, only 6% variance was accounted for. This strongly indicates the presence of other variables. Perhaps the experience and competence gained working in organization leads tenure to be more related to organization based self-esteem than age. The literature makes strong connections between jealousy and negative communication behaviors and between jealousy and self-esteem. Perhaps jealousy is a mediating variable that needs exploration. Another variable that could be

explored for a better understanding of what causes negative communication behaviors between women is network standing within the organization (i.e., professional and personal relationships within the workplace).

Next, there may be more useful measures of negative communication behaviors that would yield better results. The list of behaviors for this study was created from anecdotal data collected by the researcher, as well as from indications in the literature reviewed. Two other approaches may enhance the validity of the list of negative communication behaviors. Observation or interview techniques could each be used to determine a different set of negative communication behaviors that may be more valid measures for catty behavior. For example, observations of group interaction in an organizational department known to have negative female to female communication or interviews with women who have experienced negative communication could also access specific behaviors not addressed in this study.

Finally, studies that employ human science approaches may more clearly distinguish the definite but small relationship between self-esteem and age, as well as explore the phenomenon more holistically. The open-ended

question at the end of the survey provided more support for future research. One respondent, age 27, responded, "I think that these questions are very relevant if considering perceptions of women with ambition. It would also be interesting to see correlations in career women and depression." A 35 year-old commented, "More research should be done about this. I think it is an excellent topic. I notice that the higher up the corporate ladder I move, the more some of these situations occur. MOSTLY AMONG WOMEN!" Another in her late 40's said, "I think it is a good thing to research. Woman typically have a hard time working together especially the more you get into an office." Another asked, "If you ever figure out why women are so hard to deal with, will you please share the secret?"

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Appendix 1

Electronic Cover Letter

This is addressed to the researcher's e-mail address so that all participants' email addresses can remain confidential.

Communication and Self-Esteem at Work

You are invited to take part in a study of how women's self-esteem affects the way they communicate at work. This study is my thesis project. I am a M.A. of Professional Communication student at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. You are being asked to participate as someone who is a professional female. If you participate, you will be 1 of approximately 150 people in the study.

You will be asked questions about perceptions of yourself and communication in your organization.

Participation in this project is voluntary and your responses will be anonymous. Your name will never be connected with your answers. In addition, your choice regarding participation will have no effect on your relationship with your place of employment or the university connected with this project (the University of Alaska Fairbanks). Although information is valuable to the study, if there are individual items on the questionnaire that you would prefer to leave blank, you may do so. If you have any questions about this questionnaire or any other portion of this research, please contact me at the email address listed below (or you may call my Thesis Chair, Dr. Christine Cooper at 907-474-5060). If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Coordinator in the Office of Research Integrity, at (907) 474-7800 (Fairbanks area), or 1-866-876-7800 (outside the Fairbanks area), or by e-mail at fyirb@uaf.edu.

To fill out the questionnaire simply double click on the following web address, www.uafcommsurvey.com, and you will be transferred directly to the questionnaire home page. If

not, simply enter the web address in your Internet browser. The process should take approximately 5 minutes. Your response to the questionnaire is the indication of your agreement to participate. Please keep this email for your records. It is important that you respond within a week of receiving this email (deadline: March 4, 2005).

If responding to any of the items causes you to feel any discomfort, you can contact someone at the following number for support: 1-800-784-Help. Thank you very much for your participation and assistance.

Amanda I. Wall
Graduate Student
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Appendix 2

Rosenburg Self-Esteem Scale

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement. One (1) represents the strongest level of disagreement and five (5) represents the strongest level of agreement.

- 1- - - -5
1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
 2. * At times I think I am no good at all.
 3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
 4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
 - 5.* I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
 - 6.* I certainly feel useless at times.
 7. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
 - 8.* I wish I could have more respect for myself.
 - 9.* All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
 10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

Note: Items with an asterisk are reverse scored.

Note. Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the Adolescent Self-Image*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Appendix 3

Selective Self-Esteem Measure

Listed below are a series of statements that you might have about yourself in relation to your job. Please indicate the degree to which you disagree with each statement. One (1) represents the strongest level of disagreement and five (5) represents the strongest level of agreement.

1- - - -5

1. I count around here.
2. I am taken seriously around here.
3. I am important around here.
4. I am trusted around here.
5. There is faith in me around here.
6. I can make a difference around here.
7. I am valuable around here.
8. I am helpful around here.
9. I am efficient around here.
10. I am cooperative around here.

Note. From "Organization-Based Self-Esteem: Construct Definition, Measurement, and Validation," by J.L. Pierce, D.G. Gardner, L.L. Cummings, and R.B. Dunham, 1989, Academy of Management Journal, 32, p. 634.

Appendix 4*Power Artifacts Measure*

Women may form opinions of others based on the following items. If negative comments have been made about you, were any of the below items true in your life or appearance at that time? Please indicate the degree to which you agree that each statement is true. One (1) represents untrue and five (5) represents true. If this does not apply to you, please skip to the next section.

1- - - -5

Natural beauty

Extravagant vacation

Expensive jewelry

College/Graduate degree

Appealing/physically fit figure

Impressive job title

Large office

Positive appearance

Fancy car

Note: Created by this researched for this study.

Appendix 5

Negative Communication Behaviors Measure

Think about the following communication behaviors as they occur between women in your workplace. Respond to each item by indicating the frequency of occurrence in the last week. Please respond to each item in three different ways: (1) with you as observer of these behaviors among others, (2) with you as the recipient of these behaviors, and (3) with you as the giver of these actions. In each column indicate the number that corresponds with the frequency you recall for the last week, with one (1) representing not at all and five (5) representing frequently.

You as Observer	1 - - - -5
Ignoring	
Interrupting	
Sarcasm	
Rudeness	
Snide Remarks	
Shoulder Shrugs	
Eyebrow Raises	
Poor Listening	
You as Recipient	1 - - - -5
Ignoring	
Interrupting	
Sarcasm	
Rudeness	
Snide Remarks	
Shoulder Shrugs	
Eyebrow Raises	
Poor Listening	
You as Giver	1 - - - -5
Ignoring	
Interrupting	
Sarcasm	
Rudeness	
Snide Remarks	
Shoulder Shrugs	
Eyebrow Raises	
Poor Listening	

Note: Created by this researched for this study.

Appendix 6*Exploratory Study Survey Questions*

What is your age (in years)? _____

Approximately how many people are employed at your agency
(your location, not world-wide)? _____

In which part of the country is your organization located?

Alaska

Pacific Northwest

Mid West

South

Northeast

West

Hawaii

Outside the USA

Note: Created by this researched for this study.