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Mid-level African-American women administrators in higher education institutions : struggles and strategies.

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MID-LEVEL AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN ADMINISTRATORS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: STRUGGLES AND STRATEGIES

A Dissertation Presented

by

PAMELA J. MITCHELL-CRUMP

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

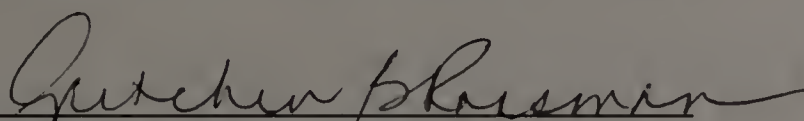DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

May 2000

School of Education

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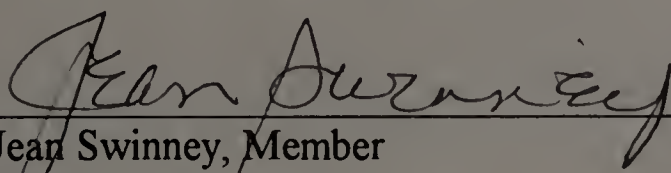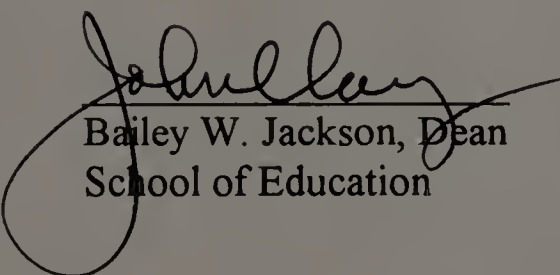
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Gretchen B. Rossman, Chair

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Margaret Jablonski, Member

_____

Jean Swinney, Member

_____

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DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this dissertation to my mother, Anita Louise Thompson, who has always told me that I was special; and has taught me that determination, love, purpose, and hard work can and usually will result in life's successes. With your support, there are no limits to what I can achieve.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are a number of people I want to thank for providing me with the support and encouragement to complete this long and arduous task.

First and foremost, I want to thank God because it is through him that all things are possible.

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My love to my son Kyle and daughter Mercedes who learned to be patient and survived the process with me.

I am extremely grateful to and have the deepest respect and admiration for my committee chair, Dr. Gretchen B. Rossman. She has always been supportive of me and my work and provided advice, feedback and constant encouragement. My heartfelt thanks to her.

I am also grateful to committee members Dr. Margaret Jablonski and Dr. Jean Swinney for their constant feedback and professional support.

I want to acknowledge Dr. Joan Rasool who always assisted in the review and critiquing of my work throughout my years in the doctoral program. Your continuous assistance was invaluable.

I would like to thank my colleague, Teressa Young who was always supportive and assisted me in developing my computer literacy.

ABSTRACT

MID-LEVEL AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN ADMINISTRATORS IN HIGHER
EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: STRUGGLES AND STRATEGIES

MAY 2000

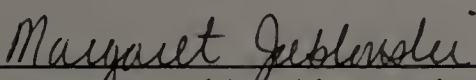PAMELA J. MITCHELL-CRUMP, B.S., WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE
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Mid-level management is often overlooked in studies of higher education

administration. African-American women mid-level administrators are studied even less.

This research study focuses on the experiences of African-American women

administrators (Program Directors and Deans) in higher education institutions, the

obstacles they face in pursuit of upward mobility, the support networks they use and

strategies they implement.

The research study methodology consisted of a mixed-methods approach for the

gathering of data. The first method, qualitative, was implemented through conducting

in-depth interviews with a small sample (7) of African-American women administrators

from varying types of higher education institutions in the northeast region. The second

method, quantitative, consisted of administering a survey questionnaire to a larger sample

(101) of African-American mid-level women administrators in higher education

institutions in the northeast region. From this, a total of 93 usable surveys were returned.

From the qualitative and quantitative research data the researcher identified eight common themes. These themes are: institutional climate and culture; barriers faced; supports used; coping and advancement strategies; skills needed; racism and sexism; how African-American women are perceived; and mentoring. Each theme is supported with quotes from the qualitative data and number and frequencies of responses provided from the quantitative data. These themes serve as a framework for discussing the policy and practice implications of the data for institutions of higher education. Implications for the African-American female administrator are addressed also. Lastly, recommendations for future research are provided.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Middle Management

Middle management is one of the most important and least respected areas in higher education and is often overlooked in studies of higher education administration (Young, 1990). According to Young (1990) mid-management might be the Rodney Dangerfield of administration in that "it don't get no respect" (p. 1). Sagaria (1988) adds that the lack of research on the mobility of administrators in higher education is essential to understanding the effect of organizational decision-making on the careers of women. The acknowledgement from these two researchers as well as others (Rivers, 1992; Johnson, et al., 1991; Mills,1990; Business and Professional Women's Foundation,1992: Featherman, 1993: Morrison, et al, 1995; Ottinger & Sikula, 1993), that middle management is important, yet overlooked and needs more research, cries out for attention from researchers. Thus, this dissertation is in part, an outgrowth of the lack of research data available about middle level women administrators in higher education. This study because of its focus, draws on various strands of literature to help frame it. This is because there is so little information about African-American women mid-level administrators. Thus, the researcher had to draw from statistics about mid-level managers in general, women mid-level managers in general, the experiences of African-American women in the academy in general, and the experiences of women in the academy in general.

Alexander and Scott (1983), like Sagaria (1988), identify the need to research the career progression of female administrators, especially Black female administrators,

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particularly those in predominantly white institutions. Rusher (1996) identifies the need

for research on the African-American female administrator as well but at historically

black institutions. However, review of the literature reveals that little research has been

conducted which focuses on women mid-level administration in higher education, and

even less on mid-level African-American women. Rusher (1996), Jones (1991) and

Jackson (1991) note that only a few studies have been conducted which focus exclusively

on African-American women administrators. The research that is available, however,

reveals a recurring phenomenon for female mid-level administrators. These women

experience barriers to advancement from mid-to-top level administrative positions

(Business and Professional Women's Foundation, 1992; Flanders, 1994; Morrison, et al.,

1995; Rivers, 1992; Jackson, 1985). These barriers are identified and explored in this

research study.

Guiding Questions

Three guiding questions framed this study. The questions are as follows:

1) What is the institutional climate for African-American women in higher education

institutions in the northeast?

2) Are there barriers to advancement for African-American women in the academe,

and if so what are they?

3) Do African-American women administrators use support networks and strategies,

and if so, what role do they play?

Background

Featherman (1993) notes that "although women in the United States ... have made significant gains in access to higher education, they are a long way from having equal representation in senior levels of university management" (p. 165). In fact, women are in the workforce in greater numbers than before, yet their increased numbers have not been matched by a corresponding rise in their representation in senior levels of management (Morrison, et al., 1995; Rusher, 1996; Jackson, 1985; Ottinger & Sikulaa, 1993; Business and Professional Women's Foundation, 1992; Farmer, 1993). According to Ottinger and Sikula (1993) in 1991, there were 54,959 women administrators in higher education, a number representing 4 out of every 10 administrators. Of these 54,959 women administrators 84% were Caucasian, 11% African-American, 3% Hispanic, 2% Asian and less than 1% American Indian. They also note that although women represent 40% of the administrators in higher education, they are found predominantly in low-to-middle level positions (Business and Professional Women's Foundation, 1992; Ottinger and Sikula, 1993; Farmer, 1993).

The U.S. Department of Education in their 'Digest of Education Statistics 1997' indicate that in the fall of 1993, there were 143,675 executive/administrative/managerial staff employed in institutions of higher education. Of this number, 12,619 or 11.38% were African-American and 6,522 or 22% were women (U. S. Department of Education, 1996). The American Council on Education in their "Minorities in Higher Education 1997-98 Annual Status Report" report the number of full-time administrators in higher education for 1993 and 1995. In 1993, there were 6,328 African-American women compared to 6,822 in 1995.

The 1993 figure (6,328) reflects 2.97% of the total number of people of color (including men and women) and 9.10% of the total number of women. The 1995 figure (6,822) reflects 2.88% people of color and 8.99% women (American Council on Education, 1997).

Projections for this millenium indicate that women will comprise two thirds of each new applicant workforce pool, with 'people of color' making up one third of this pool. The Department of Labor projects that the numbers of women in the workforce will continue to increase steadily well into the 21st century. Thus, steady increases are anticipated in the numbers and diversity of those entering the workforce. The sheer numbers of women in the workforce and the projected increases indicate a critical need to address the issue of why so few women - particularly African-American women - are in top-level administrative positions within higher education. There is a crisis brewing!

Women are being admitted into higher education but advancing only minimally and institutions are not taking full advantage of the workforce that they employ (Business and Professional Women, 1992). Women bring a variety of skills and abilities to perform a myriad of administrative tasks, yet are concentrated in lower level management positions. Institutions can not afford to underutilize all the resources that are available to them within their labor force; nor can they ignore the benefits of diversity within the ranks of their top-level administration. Both can add or detract from the viability of an institution.

Historical Context of Women in Education

When we talk about women's role in higher education administration, we must step back and look at how they gained access to education.

During the 1800's, women demanded access to higher education which, at the time, was available primarily to men.

Gaining access to Higher Education

The entry of women into higher education was integrally linked to the social and economic climate of the times. Women first gained entry into higher education when Oberlin College admitted female students in 1837. This was more than 200 years after Harvard - the first men's college was founded (Chamberlain, 1988).

The issues women faced in being accepted into institutions focused around their identity as women, their formal studies, informal associations with administrators and faculty, and their relationships with their colleagues (Soloman, 1985). Women of the 1800's were aware they were pioneers. They proved they were capable of learning. They learned that communications with faculty and administration occurred outside the classroom and were a part of college life and that associations with colleagues of the same and opposite gender provided many personal and social benefits.

The passing of the second Morrill Act (1862), the Civil War, and the Women's Movement in the late 1800's all served to fuel women's initiatives to become educated within institutions of higher education and to become key players within the labor force. From the Civil War to World War I, public education was popular and college/university education was expanding with the number of higher education institutions increasing from 582 in 1870 to 1,928 in 1981. Of the 582, 29% were co-educational, 12% women

colleges and 59% men only. By 1981, of the 1,928 institutions of higher education that existed, 92% were co-educational, 5% women colleges and only 3% were male only (Soloman, 1985).

Representation in Higher Education

Women were primarily employed as teachers in public schools. Women then made the leap from teaching in public schools to teaching in higher education institutions. In addition to the traditional role of teacher, some women were employed in non-traditional professions, one of which was as administrators within higher education institutions, primarily at normal schools.

By the early 1900's women had served in a variety of administrative positions including Deans, Presidents and heading up programs in higher education. These women were of European American as well as African-American descent (Solomon, 1985). For example, in 1892, Marion Talbot worked at the University of Chicago as the Dean of Undergraduate Women and Lucy Sprague was appointed the first Dean of Women at the University of California (Solomon, 1985). African-American women like Lucy Slowe served as the Dean of Women at Howard University in 1922 and Mary McCleod Bethune founded Daytona Normal School (now Bethune-Cookman College) in 1940. These women's ability to effectively serve in such varying administrative roles so long ago provides a substantive legacy to a woman's capacity to serve in these roles today (Soloman, 1985).

In the 1960's, the Johnson Administration was responsible for the noted increase in the number of people of color who participated in higher education. According to

Rusher (1996) in the 1970's, Black administrators (male and female) comprised 7.4 percent of the positions in higher education.

Currently, the percentage of college presidencies held by women is about 15% now. However, despite the success of these women, there are an ever-increasing number of women who enter higher education administration, achieve mid-level status and do not move forward.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to provide an understanding of the experiences and perceptions of mid-level African-Amerian female administrators in higher education institutions in the northeast. More specifically, the study focuses on the experiences of these women, the barriers they face, the support networks they use and strategies they implement. Two types of data were collected from two sample populations of African-American women administrators. One consisted of a small sample of African-American women administrators and the other represented a larger sampling of the same population that represents the various types of higher education institutions (i.e. 2 and 4-year public and private) in the northeast. The study used a combination of research methods to obtain data for the study.

A qualitative approach was utilized to conduct in-depth interviews with 7 African-American women administrators in mid-level positions at a variety of institutions in the northeast. The second method was quantitative. The data gathering method used in this approach was distribution of 101 survey questionnaires to African-American women who belonged to one of three support networks in the northeast region.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons. First, it adds to the limited body of research which specifically focuses on African-American women in institutions of higher education in the northeast. More specifically, this study focuses on African-American women who serve in middle level administrative positions and their plight to advance to top-level positions through identifying the barriers they face, supports they use and strategies they implement. Second, there are a number of themes that have been identified by this study which have previously been addressed in some aspect through current literature. These themes are: institutional climate and culture; barriers faced; supports used; coping and advancement strategies; skills needed; racism and sexism; how African-American women are perceived; and mentoring. This study addresses each of these themes based on the perspectives of African-American women in the northeast. Third, the research data gathered in this study is significant because it provides policy and practice implications for institutions of higher education in the northeast. It also provides suggestions for African-American women administrators.

Definition of Terms

African-American women: A female who has self-identified as having an African-American racial background. They represent the respondents in this study.

Middle-level administrator: For the purpose of this study, "middle-level administrator" has been defined as those who have positions with significant management authority, supervisory responsibility, and who report to someone other than the president or chief

executive officer. The distribution of position titles includes: program director, assistant and associate deans, deans and other similar titles.

Barriers: Any obstacle (actual or perceived) that serves to prevent the career advancement of an administrator.

Advancement: An upgrade or increase in rank/position to a rank/position in the top-level (i.e. vice-president, provost, chancellor, president) above those in middle-level positions as defined in this study.

Womanism: An African-American woman's perspective on feminism. It articulates the experiences of the African-American women as being different but not necessarily mutually exclusive from other women or members of other racial groups.

Feminism: To speak out for the rights of women in areas of economic, political and social equality.

Limitations of Study

1) The combination of qualitative and quantitative data methods focuses on the perceptions of African-American female administrators in institutions of higher education in the northeast region only and therefore its findings are limited due to location.

2) The administrative positions included are limited to middle level posts (as defined) and cannot be generalized to lower or top level positions. Thus, generalizations from the findings will be limited due to sample selection.

3) This study is a sample of the population of African-American women who have been defined as being mid-level administrators. The researcher was unable to determine, however, what the total number of the pool is.

4) The majority of respondents in the quantitative aspect of the study are members of one or more of the following professional organizations or receive their publications; National Association of Women in Education (NAWE), National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), or Women in Higher Education (WIHE); therefore, the sample size and population in this study is limited to these group members.

The Conceptual Framework

This research study is based on several areas of scholarship and research. The definition and role of a mid-level administrator in higher education has been studied by Mills (1990) and Young (1990) and the plight of mid-level women administrators seeking upward mobility has been reviewed by Business and Professional Women's Foundation (1992), Featherman (1993), Morrison, et al (1995), and Ottinger and Sikula (1993). An analysis of primary and secondary sources indicate that women face barriers to advancement and the topic is in need of futher study.

There are a number of key concepts, which are critical to the study of African-American women as mid-level administrators in higher education institutions. The first concept is that of colleges and universities as organizations. The study of colleges and universities as organizations compared to business organizations is relatively new. Writings on colleges and universities first emerged after the mid 1960's,

whereas in business there was research and publication as early as 1911 (Roberts, 1994).

One research study that helped to frame my reference for higher education as an

organization is that of Birnbaum (1988). He suggests that higher education

organizations are complex social systems that operate in a cybernetic framework.

Birnbaum's cybernetic model provides a comprehensive framework for understanding

how organizations work. The dimensions of this model are explained in more detail in

Chapter II.

When trying to understand and analyze the organizational culture or dynamics

within higher education- the institution, I refer to Chaffee and Tierney' (1988) cultural

analysis model. They describe the dynamics of an organization's culture. Their

interactive framework helps to contextualize how people interact, and how they are

viewed. Their model is an interactive, operational one that is used in this study to help

understand the culture of an institution and how it impacts the decision-making that

occurs within an institution.

The third key concept that serves to ground this study is that of womanism.

Womanism is an African-American woman's perspective on feminism. The main

distinction between womanism and feminism is that womanism includes the discussion

of issues including race, while feminism often does not. These differences help to

broaden our understanding of the effects that organizations and organizational culture

have on African-American women, the target population of this study.

The unique circumstances of the female African-American experience may also

contribute to the types of barriers experienced as well as the strategies utilized by these

women which may differ from those experienced and utilized by European American women.

In this chapter the phenomenon being studied is introduced. The remaining chapters in this study contain the following. Chapter Two provides a review of the literature related to the topic of the experiences of middle level African-American female administrators within higher education institutions in the northeast; and Chapter Three describes the design and research methods used in the study. Chapter Four details the findings of the study. This chapter is divided into three sections. The first provides results of the qualitative data; section two quantitative data results; and section three describes common themes gathered from both the qualitative and quantitative reseach data. Chapter Five provides a summary, implications for higher education and African-American women administrators. In addition, recommendations for future research are provided.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature related to the study of African-American mid-level women employed in higher education institutions. As previously mentioned, there is not a vast amount of literature addressing the African-American female administrator and particularly those who hold mid-level positions. Therefore, in order to create a conceptual base for this study, the literature review has considered five areas of research relevant to our study. These are areas that help us understand the circumstances most prevalent in the African-American administrators' experience in higher education institutions in the northeast. The literature addresses the following areas: 1) Higher Education Organizations, 2) Research studies about African-American females, 3) Barriers to advancement of African-American women, 4) Support Networks used by African-American women and 5) The African-American experience in higher education.

Higher Education as an Organization

A review of the literature indicates that there are a significant number of women administrators who are clustered at the middle versus top levels of administration within institutions of higher education. Many of these women have similar experiences as mid-level administrators which can be attributed to the structure and environment within higher education.

The study of higher education institutions as an organization is relatively new. Major reports have been written however by various authors over the years.

Bolman & Deal (1984), Birnbaum (1988), Kuh & Whitt (1988) and Chaufee & Tierney (1988) all describe institutions of higher education as different social constructs and help us understand the nature of these institutions, their uniqueness and complexity.

This study focuses on the works of Bolman & Deal (1984), Birnbaum (1988) -as influenced by Bolman & Deal (1984), and Chaufee & Tierney (1988) because they best define and help frame institutions of higher education as they exist today. The most commonly recognized models used to describe organizations as well as leadership theories are those developed by Bolman & Deal (1984). The four models they describe are: 1) bureaucratic/structural, 2) collegial/human resources, 3) political and 4) symbolic/organized anarchy. This is followed by a discussion of the four models which is helpful in furthering one's understanding of higher education and the various ways they operate as organizational structures. Following a presentation of the models, the researcher presents information relative to Birnbaum's Cybernetic Framework and the role of culture in higher education organizations.

Bolman and Deal's Models of Organizations

The Bureaucratic/Structural frame deals with a centralized system within an organization which is developed for the coordination and control of the work of others. The leader has the final decision-making authority. The system is performance and rationality driven and is a relatively closed system. The focus is on the administrative role of the leader who is viewed as decisive, a long-range planner, rational problem-solver and results orientated.

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Birnbaum (1989), Bolman & Deal (1984) and Bennis (1991) believe that the bureaucratic frame is the mode of operational preference in higher education institutions. This frame is most common and often problematic especially for women of color seeking advancement within these systems. There are a few reasons for this. First, the leader, often a Caucasian male, controls decision-making versus considering diverse viewpoints in the process of making a decision. Second, the leader most often has the concerns of the majority versus minority population at heart. Therefore, the leader does not consider the needs of and benefits for the few versus the many and makes decisions in a vacuum. In male dominated, predominantly Caucasian institutions, this does not bode well for African-American mid-level women administrators.

The Collegium/Human Resource Frame considers members of its organization as equals with differences in status deemphasized. The environment stresses shared power, participatory governance, consultation and consensus decision-making. The leader is seen as serving the interests of group members. This organization relies on tradition and informal power. The psychological aspects of organizational life are important. This institutional frame is found most often in institutions headed by women who generally utilize shared authority and participatory management.

The Political Frame reflects a organization whose culture consists of mediation and negotiation among various political groups. The leader controls the information, manipulates expertise and uses persuasion to build support.

Chliwniak (1997) says, "collegial or bureaucratic institutions that become large and complex tend to evolve into political institutions" (p. 62).

A Symbolic/Organized anarchy frame within an organization focuses on rituals, and the role of the organization. All elements of the institution are loosely coupled, creating a sense of community as opposed to a sense of organization. Leaders are seen as facilitators and guardians who negotiate their positions of influence. Kuh et al. (1991) lean towards the symbolic frame as being more often utilized by higher education institutions due to the value it places on institutional culture as a focal point of analysis of an institution.

Birnbaum's Cybernetic Framework

Birnbaum (1988) extends the framework of Bolman & Deal (1984) through combining each facet of the bureaucratic/structural, collegium/human resource, political, and symbolic/organized anarchy frames in an integrated model. Birnbaum (1988) contends that these models individually are incomplete in providing a true picture of an organization's structure. The models serve merely as a partial lens to explore the processes within an organization. He suggests that higher education institutions are organizations that have complex social systems operating in a cybernetic framework which uses communication processes as a foundation. His cybernetic model provides a framework that monitors the environment and is self-regulating. The process of information exchange is what makes the system work. It regulates itself by gauging the behaviors and human interactions within the organization. The system's functioning is dependent upon its capacity to utilize negative feedback loops to assess institutional performance and warn it of an imbalance. This negative feedback makes the system act to restore balance.

Negative feedback comes into play when things happen that are not of value to the institution. Below Birnbaum displays a cybernetic loop in the process of dealing with negative feedback.

Environmental Change ⟶ Organization Response ⟶ Important Variable

Controlling Unit ⟵ Sensing Unit
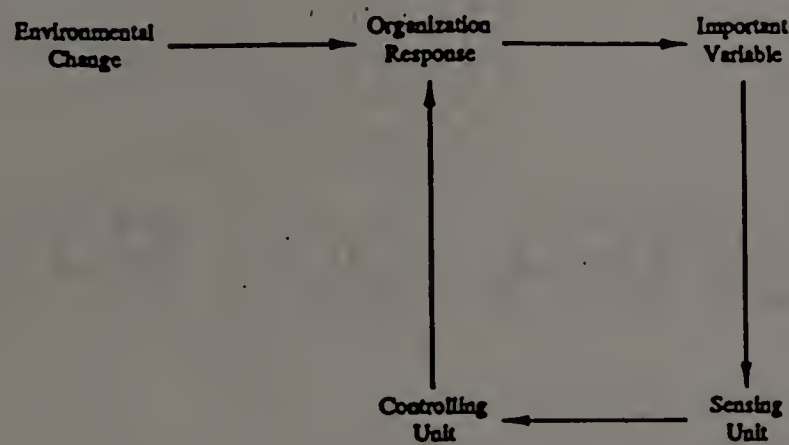
Figure 1: Birnbaum's Cybernetic Loop (Birnbaum, 1988, p. 192)

The cybernetic framework as a system is ultimately interested in maintaining the status quo, not changing the institution. This is not to say that all institutions of higher education operate within this framework, but, according to Birnbaum, many do. Birnbaum (1988) does acknowledge that different institutions have different operating environments and utilize different processes to maintain the system.

The cybernetic framework, however, has negative implications for African-American women administrators. First, the framework focuses on sustaining the status quo which is most often charecteristic of institutions that are unsupportive of the work and promotion of African-American women. Second, actions which are contrary to maintaining the status quo, such as support for the professional development and promotion of African-American women, create negative feedback within the system which gets the sytem off balance. Since the system works to get itself balanced, actions which support African-American would be unacceptable in order to maintain the sytem.

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Role of Culture in Institutions

Birnbaum (1988) suggests that culture is that which bonds a given system and guides what is and is not attended to within an organization. Masland (1985) described culture as establishing a set of expectations and norms through purpose, commitment and order. In other words, culture is that which shapes what is acceptable and unacceptable, valued and frowned-upon. Kuh et al. (1991) indicate that culture evolves as members of an organization affirm the values they believe are most important. Thus, culture determines who and what receives support from the institution financially and that which is granted power and is considered mainstream versus being on the perimeter of an organization. Kuh et al. (1991) indicate that organizational culture affects administration in that resources are allocated based on the values of the institution. Birnbaum (1989) says it best when he says,

> The culture does not prescribe specific boundaries
> and relationships, but it does establish the likelihood
> that participants will behave in certain ways rather
> than in others. Culture thus develops the boundaries
> of the probable (p. 176)

Kuh & Whitt (1988) and Chaffee & Tierney (1988) both describe the concept of culture and provide a framework to assist us in understanding organizational culture. Kuh & Whitt (1988) in The Invisible Tapestry provide a framework for analyzing the culture within a higher education institution. Their cultural analysis framework looks at culture from four perspectives and includes elements of the internal and the external environment. The internal environment involves the institution, the subculture within it, and the individuals and role each one plays within the institutions' environment.

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The external environment is that which surrounds the institution including external constituencies such as community residents, public officials and local businesses.

Shein (1985) developed a model of organizational culture to help explain the many phenomena that take place within higher education. He suggests that organizational culture must be understood by new employees in a system if they are to survive in it. Groups and organizations develop cultures that affect how its members think, feel and act. Shein defines culture as " the….basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organization, that operate unconsciously and that define in a basic 'taken-for-granted' fashion an organization's view of itself and its environment" (p.6). He also says that organizations are "open systems in constant interaction with their many environments, and they consist of many subgroups, occupational units, hierarchical layers, and geographically dispersed segments." (p. 7).

Chliwniak (1997) summed up the culture within the academe when suggesting that the culture supports, " a social matrix that delineates roles, expectations, and aspirations for its members by structuring barriers for some and open opening doors for others" (p. 59).

Chaffee & Tierney (1988) describe a framework which assists in analyzing the culture within a higher education institution. They indicate that all organizations have a culture which is comprised of 3 dimensions: 1) structural, 2) values and 3) environmental. The structural dimension is that which identifies and describes the ways in which an organization performs its activities. This dimension explains the formal and informal relationships as well as how they are reflected in the decision-making process and the role of the leader.

The values dimension reflects the beliefs and norms held by individual members of the organization or group and the dominant group. These beliefs and norms determine the value that is placed on people within an organization. The environmental dimension is that which is created by the organizations' interpretation of the people, events, demands and limitations. This piece affects the roles people play, as well as who gets what, when and how.

Chaffee & Tierney (1988) believe that the 3 dimensions of culture are interrelated. In addition to these three dimensions there are three themes that run through each dimension. These themes are: 1) communication, 2) time and 3) space. These themes represent historical and future perspectives of the organization's members, relationships among and between them and the ways in which these members interpret their environment. They use a Venn diagram to help us understand the interconnectedness of the various elements which comprise the organizational culture.

Chaffee & Tierney's cultural analysis model can be used in understanding culture and its effects on decision-making within organizations. It is also helpful in identifying points at which an institution's progress is hampered and is not at a point of 'dynamic equilibrium' as Chaffee & Tierney (1988) define and depict an ideal organization. The depiction of this ideal organizational state can be seen below in Figure 2.
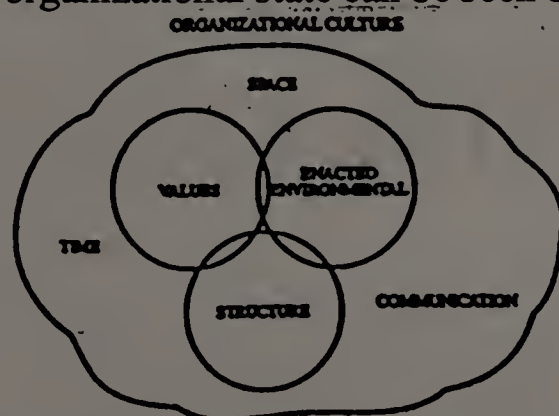
Figure 2: Chaffee & Tierney's Dynamic Equilibrium Organizational Culture
(Chaffee & Tierney, 1988, p. 19)

Some 33 years ago, Peter Drucker discussed the need for organizations to change. He references organizations that have a lack of vision, capacity, and accomplishment as being unable to adapt or change. Organizations unable to change can't suvive the tommorow (Chliwniak, 1997). Chliwniak expands upon this indicating the academe is moving very slowly in adopting diverse leadership and cultural environments. Therefore, institutions are not "changing to maintain equilibrium with external society but rather holding on to old norms to inform current behavior and culture" (p. 64).

A greater understanding of how organizations function provides us with a useful lens for framing the participants' responses and provides the researcher with a means of analysis for their responses. To summarize, institutional culture is a critical force within institutions of higher education. Institutional culture determines what is addressed and what is ignored; what receives resources and what does not; what is centralized and what is on the periphery. As such, understanding the culture of an institution is an important factor for African-American administrators to know, understand and assess when determining institutional support for women, people of color and their opportunities for advancement.

In the next section various related studies of African-American women in higher education are addressed.

African-American female research studies

In 1980, Myrtis Mosley conducted one of the first studies of African-American women administrators at predominantly white institutions.

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She discovered that the majority of women were in staff positions, without mentors and doubtful about their career progression (Rusher, 1996).

In March of 1991, Johnson, et al (1991) surveyed 150 Black female administrators at the department chair level or above in 19 states and 65 different school districts or community college campuses. The study identified 20 variables which impacted their workplace performance and career advancement. The study found that the majority of variables had a positive impact in these two areas. However, skin color was indicated as clearly having a negative impact on workplace performance and career advancement. The study also collected data on position title, area (e.g. student services, academic affairs) and length of service. Respondents were asked to identify variables that negatively or positively affected their career advancement and performance and suggest things that Black women should do and not do in order to advance in their careers. Of the 50 respondents, the profile was as follows: 42% Deans or Vice Presidents, 46% Division or Department heads and 6% President or Provost level. Of the variables responded to, those findings that are interesting for this research study are: 1) educational training was more positive in affecting workplace performance than opportunities for career advancement by 84% and 72% respectively and 2) skin color had a negative impact on workplace performance according to 25 of 38 respondents. The respondents also indicated the need for higher education institutions' climate and culture to be more conducive to people of color. From their study, Johnson, et al (1991) attributed the lack of women in top-level positions to discrimination.

In 1983, Alexander & Scott (1983) researched the career progression of Black female administrators in predominantly white institutions.

As a result of their study they concluded that Black women would need to use specific coping and career strategies to advance within the academe.

Moses (1989) conducted a study of African-American women administrators in historically black and white institutions. She examined the climate, perceptions, and role that gender played. Her study found that race and gender stereotypes combined to create a double obstacle for African-American women. Moses' (1989) research found that the work climate was chilly. These women were perceived to be less qualified, disrespected by their white colleagues and viewed in terms of their gender. She interpreted their being viewed in gender terms to mean they were seen as lacking status and power.

Abney & Richey (1991) conducted a study of African-American women athletic administrators. Their data reported the discrimination these women faced.

Gill & Showell (1991) surveyed the rate of promotions for African-American females at Bowie State University. They found that there was an attempt to limit the progress of Black females and no effort to address the barriers that prevented these women from obtaining top leadership roles in higher education. More specifically, of the 22 respondents, 10 indicated they had received no promotion, 7 received 1 promotion, 3 received 4 promotions, and 2 received 3 promotions. The respondents identified several factors which they considered critical in order to receive promotion opportunities. These factors are: 1) networking, 2) experience, 3) friendships, 4) politics and 5) faculty recommendations. In addition, the respondents also indicated their supervisors were not encouraging or supportive in their efforts for advancement.

Konrad & Pfeffer (1991) studied the hiring of minorities and women in higher education. They found that these two groups were most often hired for positions where someone of their own group had held the position before.

Berrios, Cohen & Mitchell-Crump (1996) conducted a pilot study of the experiences of seven top-level women administrators. The study focused on their rise to the top relative to culture, mobility and support for women college administrators. The pilot study found that upward mobility for women involves many challenges beyond hard work and commitment.

These studies indicate that African-American women experience negative institutional climate, race and gender discrimination, and job segregation. They are perceived as less qualified, disrespected by Caucasian colleagues and viewed in terms of skin color and gender. Survival and coping skills, educational training and networking were suggested as strategies to utilize in order to advance an African-American women's career.

In the next section, the various obstacles to advancement for African-American women are explained in more detail.

Barriers to Advancement

Johnson, et al (1991), Shultz, et. al (1992), Business and Professional Women's Foundation (1992), Rivers (1992), Sandler (1986), Obiakor & Barker (1993), Flanders (1994), and Morrison, et. al (1995) all reveal that women administrators face several barriers in their pursuit of top-level posts. These barriers have been commonly referred to as the 'glass ceiling'.

Rivers (1992) says, "the glass ceiling, it seems, is more than a ceiling. It is a bell jar, which, clamped on American institutions, can kill not only the dreams of many talented individuals for advancement, but can suffocate new ideas, perceptions and ways of thinking that this nation so desperately needs" (p. 9). This statement very clearly and vividly summarizes the detrimental effects that the glass ceiling has on individuals as well as on higher education institutions. Having a diverse group of top level administrators within any institution can only enhance the breath of ideas and foster openness to new and different ways of thinking about things. Unfortunately, research shows that this view is not shared by many institutions of higher education.

Morrison (1995) adds to River's (1992) definition by saying the 'glass ceiling phenomenon' presents a challenge to organizations to identify the barriers and implement practices that successfully overcome these barriers for nontraditional managers. The non-traditional managers that Morrison (1995) refers to are those who are women and/or people of color. These are the people who are disproportionately impacted by the phenomenon as compared to men and European Americans.

In the early 1970s, the 'glass ceiling' phenomenon had not been studied in higher education. However, as women and people of color have increased their numbers in the workforce, the 'glass ceiling' phenomenon has been studied in higher education in recent years (Business and Professional Women's Foundation, 1992). In 1991, the U. S. Department of Labor established a special commission to study the 'glass ceiling' called The Glass Ceiling Initiative. This commission conducted a study of nine companies who had federal contracts. The initial focus of the study was on the executive and highest levels of management.

In the midst of conducting the study, the research team found that it had to modify its study to include lower-levels of management because there were no women and people of color at the top-levels of these companies (Glass Ceiling Initiative Report, 1991). Although the U.S. Department of Labor recognized there was a problem with the advancement of women, they did not realize the extent of the impact at the lowest levels of management.

The Glass Ceiling Initiative Report (1991) found that each of the companies studied had women and people of color concentrated within lower levels of management beyond which they had not advanced. People of color were generally found to be at even lower levels of management than women. The report also found that almost none of the companies had women and people of color at the highest levels of management and when they did, they were in staff functions such as human resources and public relations (The Glass Ceiling Initiative Report, 1991). This study paints a dismal picture for the status of women in the ranks of administration, which unfortunately has not changed much over the last eight years.

Shultz, et al (1992) conducted a study of 400 faculty (female and male) at Kutztown State University in Pennsylvania regarding obstacles perceived in realizing their aspirations as well as networks perceived to support their aspirations. Roughly 49% of the questionnaires were returned of which 60% were female. Of these women 17% indicated a desire to become college/university presidents. Forty five percent (45%) indicated personal obstacles (family obligations) in achieving their goals. The primary support that was identified by women was that of family or spouse.

Only 3% of the women felt that women received greater opportunities for administrative advancement than men did. The study concluded among other things that: 1) there is limited opportunity for administrative advancement for women, 2) a lack of awareness by males regarding difficulties unique to female colleagues, and 3) women felt there was a good 'old boy' network in place which precluded gender equity.

Gender discrimination

Two studies and one report address issues of gender discrimination. Marshall (1995) in Women Managers Moving On: Exploring Career and Life Choices describes the experiences of sixteen female middle and top level managers who were studied. The experiences reinforce the view that women are not accepted as equals when they are at middle and upper levels of management.

Wilson (1989) notes in his article, "Women of Color in Academic Administration: Trends, Progress and Barriers", that despite women of color obtaining a terminal degree, they still are negatively effected, to a large extent, by gender and race in their upward mobility efforts.

Business and Professional Women's Foundation (1992) also identify discrimination as the reason why there is a lack of women and people of color in top-level posts. The Foundation states that the career paths of women differ from those of men from the time of initial hire, with men being promoted more quickly and frequently. Women, on the other hand, hold lower level positions, receive fewer job promotions, experience job segregation and have different career paths than their male counterparts.

Race discrimination

Two studies and one report address issues of discrimination based on race. As mentioned earlier in the Johnson et al (1991) study of Black female administrators, 25 (66%) of 38 respondents in the study perceived that the color of their skin negatively impacted their work performance. They conclude in their study that the lack of women in top-level positions is attributed to discrimination (Johnson et al, 1991).

Morrison (1995) refers to The Center for Creative Leadership's Guidelines on Leadership Diversity (GOLD) project in identifying barriers to advancement. The project conducted in-depth interviews with some 200 managers in sixteen organizations including business, higher education and government agencies. The interviewees were asked, "what barriers existed to prevent nontraditional managers from reaching higher-level ranks of management" (p. 1). Prejudice was the top barrier identified. Elements of the glass ceiling or barriers to advancement rated by more than a third of the managers surveyed were that "traditional managers have greater comfort with their own kind" and the "lack of accountability or incentives for developing diversity" (p. 12). Morrison (1995) notes the importance of studying the glass ceiling phenomena in light of the impact it has on individuals working within the academe and the global impact for women.

Other interesting barriers that are addressed in the research include things such as differential treatment, and traditional organizational structures. Sandler (1993) addresses the subtle ways in which women administrators and others are treated differently in academia. She acknowledges that although obvious barriers have fallen within the academy, more subtle personal and social barriers remain.

Sandler contends that everyday interchanges occur that are discriminatory. She calls these interchanges 'micro-inequities' which are ways in which individuals are singled-out, overlooked, ignored or otherwise discounted based on gender, race or age (Sandler, 1994). The result is that women administrators remain concentrated in low-status areas traditionally viewed as women's fields or in caregiving roles.

Old-Boy Network

Researchers often note the 'old-boys' network as serving to inhibit the advancement of women. This network can be defined as the exclusion of females from social activities that serve as informal business meetings. An example of this may be when a male boss asks 'the guys' in the office to meet after work at a local golf course to play a round of golf. A woman in the office might be asked as an afterthought in order not to seem to be excluding her. The male boss hopes that she will say "no" so 'the boys' can discuss business and make decisions that the female coworker most likely should have been a part of (Business and Professional Women's Foundation, 1992). These types of activities occur all too often. The 'old boy network' is most often informal, yet regardless of whether it is intentional or unintentional, it excludes women, which has obvious disadvantages for women and especially women of color.

Organizational Structures/Culture

As mentioned previously, culture has considerable impact on the comfort level people feel within an organization. There is a notion shared among many researchers that the leader is the one who provides vision and meaning and establishes the culture of an institution (Bolman & Deal, 1984 and Bennis, 1991).

Flanders (1994) says traditional organizational structure is hierarchical in nature, where responsibility, authority and promotion are provided in an upward direction. She says "understanding the structure and culture of your organization is vital to your career prospects" (p. 18). Flanders goes on to provide an example of this. If an institution judges employees by the amount of time spent at work rather than the results they achieve; views women as having low ability and aspirations, provides little or no professional development, and has unfriendly family working practices, it could affect the career prospects of women. "Attitudes of society generally, group or individual prejudice, restrictive male-based working practices, lack of support available to men through their old boy network-these and many more factors conspire to build and strengthen the barriers around and above us" (p. 1).

In addition to barriers based on discrimination and institutional systems, there are other factors that may affect a woman's ability to advance within higher education institutions. These factors are those that can be attributed to an individual's preparation to equip him or herself to be able to compete in the higher education labor market.

In order to advance to top administrative positions within higher education, women need to minimally have an advanced degree and in most cases a terminal degree. Obiakor and Barker (1993) say "education continues to be the key for upward class mobility of [Blacks] in the American society" (p. 219).

Support Networks

The literature also reveals that there are support networks that support woman's issues in higher education. The most noted networks in the New England area are the

Higher Education Resource Services (HERS), American Council on Education (ACE) and the National Association of Women in Education (NAWE). HERS was founded in 1972. It originated as a project to set up a central registry for the names of talented women to which requests for women professionals could be directed. The service also offered referrals, academic career advising and consultation, seminars and administrative skills training for women candidates.

ACE established a National Identification Program in 1977. This program known as ACE/NIP is designed to identify talented women, increase their visibility as leaders and create networks of women and men in the academic community who share a commitment to the advancement of women and could recommend and sponsor these women. ACE's primary constituency is senior level administrators and thus focuses on increasing the number of women as presidents, provosts and vice presidents. The structure consists of a series of networks that connect state-based programs with other activities at the national level. State and national panelists participate in national forums and the program works directly with search committees, presidents and board members to increase the number of women in senior administrative positions.

The National Association of Women in Education was founded in 1924 as an organization that fosters professional and personal development of its members, advocates for equal educational opportunity for women, and promotes life-long learning. This association was extremely helpful in assisting me with identifying the African-American women who were members of their network.

The National Association for Student Personnel Administrators was established in 1919 as a resource for student affairs and student service professionals.

The association is an extensive network of more than 7,200 professionals, which

provides professional development opportunities through regional and national meetings,

workshops and conferences; a newsletter, journal, books and other publications;

publication and volunteer opportunities. NASPA was very helpful in identifying

members from its readership who are female, African-American, in the defined mid-level

positions and from each of the 11 specified northeastern states.

In addition to these networks, there are other resources that serve to suppport

women in higher education through addressing issues that effect them. One such

resource is Women in Higher Education (WIHE). Established in 1992, WIHE is a news

journal published monthly that provides an overview as well views on issues affecting

women in higher education. The readership for WIHE is more than 12,000. WIHE

served as a useful resource to the researcher in her attempt to identify women in higher

education in the northeastern states.

The African-American Experience in Higher Education

African-American women, particularly those employed within higher education

institutions, have expressed their feelings, views, perceptions of how they believe, and

interpret the way that others (European Americans), particularly those in positions of

power and authority, perceive them. This perception has often been referred to as the

'outsider within syndrome' (Collins, 1990; Farmer, 1993). The 'outsider within

syndrome' describes an individual who is a part of an organizational structure by virtue

of being employed there but is not mainstreamed into the culture, has little to no power

or influence and is seen and treated as being different and serving on the periphery of the

organization. In other words, African-American women who are employed within higher education cope with, but are often times not a part of, the institution's culture, are in positions with little authority, limited ability to effect change and serving in caregiver roles often to minority populations. They are viewed as members but not ones who have an integral role or centralized function within the organization. In essence, these women are devalued and often excluded from those things which directly effect them.

Collins (1990) interprets the 'outsider within syndrome' as the subordinate, oppressive status of Black women academicians in higher education institutions, a status that she believes needs to be addressed through reconceptualization of all the dimensions of the dialogue dealing with African-American women. Collins believes that Black women bring a special angle of vision to the knowledge production process which no other women or other people of color bring.

Womanism

Womanism incorporates not only gender issues but racial, cultural, economic and political considerations in its philosophy (Ogunyemi, 1993). Ogunyemi (1993) points out that African-American women writers-although they share similar aesthetic attributes as white feminist- " ...are distinct from white feminists because of their race, ..they have experienced past and present subjugation of the black population...and present-day subtle (or not so subtle) control..over them by...Western culture." (p. 232). Womanism or African-American feminism brings several oppressive factors to the forefront that are helpful in providing a fuller understanding of the experience of African-American women. Womanism highlights that African-American women are disadvantaged in

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several ways: 1) they are victims of a white patriarchal culture, 2) as women, some-not all- are victimized by black men and 3) as black women they are also victimized on racial, sexual and class grounds by white men (Ogunyemi, 1993). Thus, black women not only face issues which define their femaleness but tackle issues raised by their humanity. Because this study focuses on the experiences of African-American women as opposed to Caucasian women, it is important to assist with understanding the complexity of the disadvantages that they face which are compounded compared to that of Caucasian women.

This philosophy serves as a grounding point in this study because African-American women are the population of interest in this study. Thus, it is more fitting to address the experiences of African-American women through the lens of African-American writers and not just through literature that includes them by virtue of their gender or being a member of a group other than that which is considered dominant.

Womanism or Black feminist thought has been defined by Collins (1990) as "...specialized knowledge created by African-American women which clarifies a standpoint of and for Black women". "It encourages theoretical interpretatons of Black women's reality by those who live it" (p. 23). She points out that in order to fully understand the implications of this definition, one must understand 5 key dimensions/themes of a Black women's position/place in society. The first theme is that of a legacy of struggle. African-American women share a legacy of struggle against racism and sexism despite differences created by historical era, age, social class, sexual orientation or ethnicity says Collins (1990). Cannon (1985) observes that "throughout the history of the United States, the interrealtionship of white supremacy and male

superiority has characterized the Black woman's reality as a situation of struggle- a struggle to survive in two contradictory worlds simultaneously: one White, priveleged, and oppressive, the other Black, exploited, and oppressed." (p. 47).

A second theme is the interdependence of experience and consciousness. The experiences of a Black women's family and work life experiences coupled with their traditional African-American culture suggest that these women experience a different world from those who are not Black and female. As a group, these women share some common experiences which may socialize them to a distinctive consciousness as a group. The connection between shared experience and consciousness shapes the everyday lives of all African-American women.

A third theme is that African-American women, as a group, have similar experiences and therefore have a unique angle of vision. As such, the African-American women's "ability to forge these individual, unarticulated, yet potentially powerful expressions of everyday consciousness into an articulated, self-defined, collective standpoint is key to Black women's survival" (Collins, 1990, p. 26).

The fourth dimension deals with the interdependence of thought and action. This concept suggests that the connections among experiences of oppression of Black women creates a particular standpoint about the experiences. When changes in thinking are accompanied by changes in action then altered expectations may stimulate a changed consciousness. One example of this theme/dimension is seen in hooks (1981) Aint I a Women: Women and Feminism. hooks talks about her experience working as an operator at the telephone company and how that served as the impetus for her to write her book and address the plight of the Black women. She says "…the existence of

Black women was often forgotten, that we were often ignored or dismissed, and my lived experience ...demonstrated the truth of this assertation" (hooks, 1981, p. acknowledgements).

Collins (1990) expresses best the uniqueness of the Black women's experience when she says, "Only African-American women occupy this center and can 'feel the iron' that enters Black women's souls, because we are the only group that has experienced race, gender, and class oppression as Black women experience them" (p. 34). These common themes/dimensions for African-American women help to provide some basic understanding of those things that are similar, common demominators that typify the African-American women's experience in America. This is not to say that all African-American women experience each of these dimensions, experience them in the same way or respond to each of these themes in the same way. These themes apply to African-American women as a group, who are in and of themselves very diverse.

As mentioned earlier, women in administration is a topic that has been the subject of little research attention. The token treatment of the topic of women in management parallels the experience of women in mid-level management positions and is evidenced through the marginalization of women in administrative positions within higher education organizations (Hornby & Shaw, 1996). Marginalization by definition renders women inferior and places them on the periphery, the border or margins of an organization. Epstein (1987) suggests that African-American women administrators should have a place in the organizational structure that positions them to have input and power in the normal exchange system. Schein (1994) and Hornby & Shaw (1996)

suggest that gender or sex-typing constitutes a major barrier to women's progression into senior administration despite their increasing representation in administration.

In summary, the organizational structure within higher education institutions is complex. It is one which often creates an environment that is unwelcoming to and unsupportive of African-American women. Research studies indicate that African-American women experience a variety of barriers which impact their work environment and career advancement. The types of barriers are identified, developed and supported through various studies (Johnson, et. al, 1991; Shultz, et. al, 1992; Business and Professional Women's Foundation, 1992; Rivers, 1992; Sandler, 1986; Obiakor & Barker, 1993; Flanders, 1994; and Morrison et. al, 1995. The experiences of the African-American women as the 'outsider within', and having little power and authority are explained. Then the concept of womanism and its importance in telling the story of African-American women through the works of African-American authors is provided.

In the next chapter, Chapter Three, the design and methodology used to gather the data for this study are described.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHODS

Approach and Rationale

The methodological approach used in this study was a mixed-methods or

Triangulation Design. This design allows for the integration and collaboration of data

from qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The rationale for using this

design method is twofold: First, conducting in-depth interviews with 7 mid-level

African-American women administrators provided them with an opportunity to share, in

some detail, their personal experiences as an African-American female mid-level

administrators. Second, the data collected from this method could then be supplemented

with data obtained from survey questionnaires. Thus, information obtained from the first

method (qualitative) provided for a triangulation or verification of data from the second

method (quantitative). This was possible because the data gathering methods were similar

in that they focused on the same issues (i.e. barriers faced, supports used, strategies

implemented). Thus, the two research methods complement one another and enhance the

validity of themes and patterns discussed from the data.

The data collection methods used are referred to by Jick (1983) and described in

Creswell (1994, p. 174) as a "between methods" approach. The methods used respond to

similar questions within the same paradigm using different approaches with the first

method (qualitative data collection via in-depth interviews) augmented by the second

(quantitative data collection via survey questionnaire). This model is most reflective of

the dominant-less dominant design described in Creswell (1994). The qualitative method

served as dominant and quantitative serving as less dominant.

The model represents a single dominant paradigm for the overall study that is reflective of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. It includes a small sampling in its qualitative component and a larger sampling of the same population (mid-level African-American women administrators) in its quantitative component. The smaller sampling consisted of in-depth interviews with 7 mid-level women administrators. The one-on-one interviews consisted of open-ended questions on the issues which are the focus of the research study (experiences, barriers, supports, and strategies). In addition to the interview questions, each participant received an informed consent letter for review and acknowledgement. A copy of the interview questions and consent form appear in appendices A and B respectively.

The larger sampling consisted of mailing survey questionnaires to 101 African-American mid-level women administrators. Number returned was 56, with a response rate of 60%. The survey questionnaire was designed to gain responses to similar research issues but was based on a standard range of responses rather than open ended questions. The survey questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter which describes the researcher, the purpose of the research as well as information related to confidentiality. A copy of the questionnaire and accompanying cover letter appear in appendices C and D respectively.

The Population of Interest—The Unit of Analysis

The population of interest as well as the focus of the study was mid-level African-American women administrators in higher education institutions.

According to the review of the literature, there is no generally agreed upon list of position title or titles that constitute a mid-level administrator. Although the titles of administrators vary among institutions, often mid-level administrators have the titles of directors and deans. For the purposes of this study, program directors, deans, assistant and associate deans as well as other similar titles were considered middle level administrators. Mills (1990) says, " a precise definition of what constitutes a middle manager proves to be as elusive as developing an exact definition of middle age" (p. 121). Mills describes the role of middle managers in higher education administration as frequently having significant responsibility but with many not having final authority. They implement policy, supervise other staff , yet they are not always an integral part of the decision-making process nor do they make final decisions about staffing levels and compensation.

Young (1990) indicates that "middle managers provide support services and other administrative duties linking vertical and horizontal levels of an organizational hierarchy" (p. 122). He goes on to say they always provide supervision of programs, may supervise staff, implement and interpret policy, but don't create it, have influence in decisions directly influencing their area of expertise and responsibility, may not have direct contact with students, but have a primary relationship with staff. Young identifies middle-level managers as directors and associate directors of functional departments or programs.

The population of interest for this study was mid-level African-American women administrators in higher education institutions in the northeast. The target population served as the pool from which both interviewees and survey respondents were drawn.

The unit of analysis was the individual, focusing on their individual perceptions about barriers, supports, and strategies.

Initial Selection Decisions and Access Negotiation

My intent was to conduct in-depth interviews with 6-8 mid-level African-American women administrators who represent two and four-year public and private institutions in the northeast. In addition, I planned to conduct a survey questionnaire with a larger sampling of 200 African-American woman administrators in the same region. The selection of individuals was based upon their position title/function (director, dean, assistant and associate dean, and other similar titles); years of service within the institution; type of institution (2, 4 year public and privates) and interest in participating in the study. Data was initially collected using in-depth interviews from a small sampling of African-American mid-level women administrators and augmented with data gathered through a larger survey. Questionnaires were sent to a broader sampling (101) of mid-level African-American women administrators.

Negotiating access in order to select women interviewees was through telephone dialogue. The dialogue focused on the importance of the study, the critical role they would play by participating in the study, and allowing me to meet with and interview them. Prospective interviewees were assured that their names would not be identified in the study. They were also assured that any information that was shared -as a result of our meeting- that was not related to the study at hand would be kept confidential and not shared in the report.

The list of the questions covered in the interview and the informed consent letter were sent to the interviewees ahead of time. The purpose here was to allow the interviewee time to become familiar with the scope of the questions, to help them decide what they wished to share with me for the purposes of my research and to inform them of their rights and protection as a participant. A follow-up telephone call was made to see if they were still interested. The researcher made herself available to meet with the interviewee wherever she felt most comfortable- her office, home, or in a public setting.

Selecting Survey Respondents

The quantitative data obtained from the larger sampling of African-American mid-level women administrators was collected through the distribution of a survey questionnaire. The majority of survey respondents were selected based on their membership in one or more of three womens' support networks described below. A few respondents were selected based on referrals given to the researcher by colleagues who knew of women who fit the target population of this study. These support networks used were the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and the National Association of Women in Education (NAWE). The publication utilized was the Women in Higher Education (WIHE). The researcher asked each of the support networks and publication to select, from their respective membership lists, those individuals who were African-American, women, mid-level managers (as defined by this study), and working at higher education institutions in the northeast.

The researcher received a total of 95 names which fit the charecteristics (4) described above. Of the 95 names, 20 were from NAWE, 57 from NASPA, 10 from WIHE, and 8 from colleague referrals. Many more names (150 plus) were given to the researcher, but upon close review these were duplicate names and/or names of persons who did not represent the target population of the study. In addition, there were undeliverable surveys that were returned to the researcher through the U.S. mail.

The survey questionnaire was administered approximately during the same timeframe that the in-depth interviews took place, yet designed to collect data in a way that would indicate the frequency with which certain issues and experiences occur. The same issues and experiences that were examined in the questionnaire were similar to those identified through the in-depth interviews. The rationale for this type approach was to gather a cross-section of perspectives regarding the experiences of African-American mid-level women administrators in higher education institutions in the northeast. This provided a variety of viewpoints from different yet similarly employed women who also occupy different titled positions from a variety of differently categorized higher education institutions.

Primary and Secondary Data Collection Methods

The primary method of gathering data was qualitative and collected through conducting in-depth interviews with a core group of 7 African-American mid-level women administrators. The in-depth interview questions and informed consent letter were self-designed. The interview questions were structured so that open-ended questions were asked.

The use of open-ended questions allowed the interviewees to describe their experiences, the barriers they've encountered and the supports and strategies they utilized. This information was interpreted and recorded based upon the frequency with which it occured (i.e. a majority plus one) among the interviewees.

The second data gathering method was quantitative and data was obtained by administering a survey questionnaire to other African-American women mid-level administrators. The survey instrument was self-designed. It also included a cover letter, confidentiality statement, and questions related to the topic. The scales that were used consisted of a combination of "strongly agree, agree, slightly agree, neutral, slightly disagree, disagree and strongly disagree" and response ratings on three different scales of 1-7 which were ranked in highest to lowest order of importance. It also provided questions designed to capture personal demographic information and provided an area for comments.

Data Management

The data collected was kept in file folders, on cassette tapes and computer diskettes. This information was maintained at my home in my designated work area. A backup disk was also kept at work in case the primary computer disk information was lost or destroyed. Once the data has been analyzed and incorporated into the written report (dissertation) and approved, the researcher will destroy the information to insure the information is unavailable to anyone else. The information will be destroyed through scredding and burning.

Data Analysis

Data obtained from the in-depth interviews was reviewed and analyzed to gain

insight into the experiences of African-American women mid-level administrators in

institutions of higher education in the northeast with respect to their mid-level manager

status, and their perceived opportunities for advancement and the strategies and supports

they utilize to maintain their current positions and obtain higher level positions. The

steps taken in the analysis of data collected from the interviews entailed reviewing hand

written notes, transcribing these notes, reviewing and transcribing cassette tape

recordings and then observing trends in response to the same questions and in the issues

that surfaced.

Data collected from the survey questionnaires was organized and entered into the

Statistical Packages for Social Science Database (SPSS), which generated categories,

themes and patterns related to the conceptual framework. Then the broad research

questions were tested against the data and the researcher went through the exercise of

searching for alternative explanations of the data received.

Data Analysis Steps

The first steps in the data analysis process were to collect, review, interpret and

analyze the raw data received from each data collection method (interviews and surveys).

Preliminary information was gathered from the in-depth interviews with the first few

interviews serving as pilot interviews.

Input was received from the first few interviewees as to the questions asked and whether or not other questions/information should be sought in order to obtain as much information as possible on the issues of focus (barriers faced, supports used, and strategies implemented). Data was collected through the use of standardized open-ended interview questions, which provided a descriptive analytical framework for analysis.

When the researcher analyzed the interview data received, the researcher used cross-case analysis (Patton, 1990). This allowed interviewee responses to be grouped together by answers to common questions. The answers and perspectives were then analyzed as to how they related to the central issues (barriers faced, supports used, strategies implemented).

Analysis of the survey data was performed using a statistical method of frequency distribution, which indicates the number of times a particular response occurs. The researcher also analyzed the data to confirm as well as identify other potential alternative explanations and patterns that may not have been ascertained in the qualitative data method (in-depth interviews). The specific statistical data analysis software used was SPSS. The data from the survey questionnaires was entered into SPSS and the following variables were utilized: 1) name, 2) age, 3) position title, 4) length of service in current position and 5) institution type. The demographic information was supplemented with additional quantitative data, derived through exploratory analysis.

Exploratory analysis was used to describe and summarize the data gathered. The summarization of data occured through running frequency distributions for each rating provided for each question. The average score on each question was calculated and recorded in terms of means and standard deviations. Comparisons were then made among

groups using two of the demographic variables listed above. The first variable is position title. The position titles consist of differently titled administrative positions: 1) dean, 2) associate dean, 3) assistant dean, 4) program director and 5) other similar titles. These five administrative position title categories comprise mid-level administrative positions as defined by this research study. The second major descriptive data-grouping variable was institution type. The two main institutional types were 1) women's institutions and 2) coeducational institutions. Within these two main groupings there were more specific indicators such as: a) 4 year, b) 2 year, c) public, d) private, e) liberal arts, f) research, and g) other. The researcher analyzed how the survey participants responded, added up the scores on all the questions and identified patterns of responses. The researcher's primary goal was to confirm/support the data found in the qualitative research data gathered from in-depth interviews with a small sampling of mid-level African-American women administrators.

A final analysis of both data sources was then conducted. The researcher began by organizing an analysis based on the broad research questions and grounded them in the conceptual framework. This analysis was then supplemented with analytical insights and interpretation that emerged as a result of both data collection processes. Ways to positively impact the future of mid-level women administrators seeking upward mobility in higher education institutions were then recommended.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher's interest in this topic is both professional and personal. The fact that the researcher is a woman, an African-American, and a mid-level administrator who is concerned about equal opportunity and the institutional barriers which impede the upward mobility of African-American women within higher education institutions prompted her interest in the topic. In addition, review of the literature indicates that the subject of women in mid-level administrative positions is scarce in studies of higher education and African-American women's experiences at this level are studied to an even lesser degree. These reasons, coupled with the fact that woman generally, and African-American women specifically, continue to increase their numbers in the workforce, yet a large number of them remain clustered in middle level administrative positions, begs for further research.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher explored the experiences of mid-level, African-American women administrators in middle level administrative positions within higher education institutions in the northeast relative to their opportunities for advancement to top level administrative posts. The experiences of a small select sampling of these women was explored from the personal experience perspective through the indepth interviews. Other African-American women's experiences were identified through survey results gained from a larger sampling of similarly positioned women administrators who belong to one or more women's support networks and a higher education institution in one of 11 states

(Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Deleware) in the northeast.

Generic ethical issues explored in developing this dissertation were one, defining relevance to the subject matter and two, focussing-in on significant information. These considerations continually forced the researcher to redefine parameters and control data.

A second consideration was the effect that using a tape recorder would have in an in-depth interview setting. The device, although impersonal, did not seem to impede the open, honest dialogue that the researcher encountered in each of the 7 interviews. The tape recording device was necessary in that it captured all verbal conversation. If the researcher did not record each interview and just kept notes, some things that were said might have been missed.

A third consideration was the use of an informed consent letter. The researcher agreed not to share any information the interviewee desired not be shared. The researcher was committed to respecting that wish. It is vitally important that the researcher not damage the credibility or reputation of the interviewees who participated in the study. In qualitative research, it is important that the interviewees feel safe to express themselves with ease and in a free flowing manner. Establishing and maintaining a level of comfort with interviewees minimizes the opportunity for pat answers and optimizes the possibility of sharing professional work life experiences. As anticipated, the telling of the experiences by the women interviewed revealed that most of the women had experiences that are more similar than different as African-American mid-level administrators in institutions of higher education.

The fourth and final ethical consideration focuses on how I, the researcher, conducted myself. I presented myself in a professional manner as a mature professional adult and doctoral student with integrity. The researcher did not misuse any information received through the course of her research to harm the subjects nor does she have any prospects for political gain.

Ensuring the Trustworthiness of the Study

In order to insure thoroughness of conducting the survey study, Creswell (1994) first guided me in his five-step approach for survey method design. The first steps were useful in this study. Creswell's first step is to indicate the numbers surveyed (respondents, non-respondents) and how the information will be reported (i.e. tables, graphs, etc.).

As stated earlier, there were 7 in-depth interviews and 101 survey questionnaires distributed, with a return of 56. The results are shown in table form indicating the number of respondents and non-respondents and the range of responses to each question asked. The results were analyzed and some preliminary results determined.

The second step in Creswell's design is to discuss the respondents and non-respondents, and the effects of non-respondents on the survey results and the method used to examine responses. Creswell refers to the effects of non-respondents to the survey as "response bias" (p.123). This step examines whether the survey estimates would have substantially changed if more non-respondents had responded.

The methodology used by the researcher was to first, collect and analyze data from a small sampling of 7 African-American mid-level women administrator

interviewees. This data was then used to extrapolate and make inferences which were compared to responses from the larger sampling of women administrators who responded to the survey questionnaire. Data was collected on characteristics such as age, type of position/s held, years of service, type of institution. Questions were asked relative to these women's experiences as mid-level administrators, barriers to advancement, supports utilized, and strategies implemented.

Of the two types of data collection methods, a survey was the preferred method used by the researcher. The primary reason was the economical considerations of time as well as cost (ie. printing and copy costs). A second consideration was the turnaround time to get useful data results. Data collection between both methods took approximately 4 months. Conducting 7 in-depth interviews took approximately 1 – 1 ½ hours with each interviewee. The interviews were scheduled in such a way that they took place over a two month period. Administering the survey questionnaire to the larger sampling of mid-level African-American women administrators took approximately two months from the time of receipt of the questionnaire by the respondent to the time the researcher received the returned questionnaire responses. Two reminder cards were sent to non-respondents in order to maximize survey response and increase validity of the study.

A third consideration was one of geographical location. The in-depth interviews took place with African-American women mid-level administrators located within the northeast region. This region was established based on convenience and a limited time within which to conduct the research. The number of higher education institutions and the numbers of mid-level administrators within the proscribed radius proved to be beneficial in providing a representative research sample. A fourth consideration was the

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value of the data collected. Utilizing the mixed-methods data collection approach provides the ability to be able to identify traits and common attributes between a small sampling of women and compare those with that received from a larger group sampling. Thus, the mixed methods approach worked best within the framework of the research design.

Data results gathered from the in-depth interviews served as a basis for comparison with the data gained from the surveys and helped to further pinpoint particular theme/s that focus on the research questions. Thus, data from one data gathering method (in-depth interviews) compliments that gathered through the survey questionnaire approach. The assumption was that the findings from the smaller sampling (in-depth interviews) would be similar to that in the larger sampling (survey questionnaire) with both being analyzed based on career mobility opportunities and race.

To ensure the dependability of the study, the changing of conditions during the data gathering process for both groups was minimized because of the relatively short data gathering timeframe (4 months) (Rossman & Wilson, 1994). To ensure the confirmability of the study, the mixed-methods approach was used. Mid-level African-American administrators' personal experiences and opinions on their status, condition, upward mobility opportunities, strategies and supports was sought through the two approaches described in the data gathering strategy. In addition, as a mid-level administrator in higher education for seven years, the researcher was able to relate to some of the experiences and stories the interviewees and survey respondents shared.

Gaining perspectives and insights about the status of mid-level African-American women administrators in higher education served as the impetus for describing the social

system of higher education relative to the upward mobility of mid-level administrators in that system. The data results are not biased in that they often reflect the exact words of the interviewee. Quoting from the interviewees also minimizes misinterpretation.

The interviewees' opinions are reflected without the researcher's interpretation. The researcher's thoughts are interjected in their respective place in the summary and implication section of the study.

The note taking aspect of the data collection involved denoting the researcher's thoughts or comments to information received, in the margins of the researcher's field notes. The information gathered directly from the interviewees is reflected within the margins of the paper in the interview notes. The information from interviewees was corroborated with data from the survey questionnaire, which is further explained by the interview results.

A mixed methods approach serves several purposes: corroboration, elaboration, initiation and development, as described by Rossman & Wilson (1994). The authors describe corroboration as a combining of methods (quantitative and qualitative) which uses one method to verify the results of the other. They go on to explain how corroboration can be achieved through the design and analysis stages of research which they view as the two stages that provide multiple opportunities to decide how to combine methods. The researcher demonstrates that data gathered from the qualitative method (interviews) corroborates the quantitative data obtained through the survey questionnaires. This combining of methods uses triangulation to test consistency, and corroboration of the data gathered from one method with that of another.

The second purpose Rossman & Wilson (1994) identify is elaboration. The authors refer to elaboration as "data from one source extend, clarify, illuminate or help interpret data from another method" (p.321). This purpose is used in the researcher's mixed-methods research with the in-depth interview data being used to assist in interpreting the data gathered through the survey questionnaire responses.

The third purpose, development, is defined as data results gathered from one research method helping to shape subsequent data sampling instruments and strategies of analysis of another method. Data gathered from the in-depth interviews, to some extent, helped fine tune and shape the questions utilized in the survey questionnaire.

Rossman & Wilson (1994) define the fourth purpose, initiation, as one method prompting new ideas, thoughts that are contradicting and challenging the initial conceptual framework and research questions. This did occur to a degree for the researcher by virtue of the responses gained from the qualitative approach (in-depth interviews) which helped to identify new questions and ideas to focus on which in turn helped shape the questions utilized in the quantitative approach (survey questionnaire).

According to Greene, et al, (1989) a mixed methods approach can "…enhance, illustrate and clarify results from one method with the results of the other" (Rossman & Wilson, 1994, p. 321). When results from the few pilot interviews were analyzed, it sparked a re-examing of the questions used in the remaining interviews. The results also helped shape the questions and respective data gathered through the survey questionnaire in order to gather more detailed information. The restructuring of the interview questions as well as the survey questionnaire resulted from the continued analysis and development of the data gathering method process. The idea was to help interpret,

extend and extrapolate the data. These processes were used to ensure the thoroughness

and trustworthiness of the study.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

Data collected for this study were used to explore the professional and personal experiences of African-American women who occupy middle-level administrative positions in institutions of higher education in the northeast region. This chapter presents and describes the results and analysis of the data gathered from two methods: 1) qualitative data through in-depth interviews; and 2) quantitative data from survey questionnaire respondents. Data from the qualitative method will be reported in Section One and the quantitative data reported in Section Two. Common themes from each data collection method will be reported and analyzed in Section Three.

Section One: Qualitative Data

General Characteristics and Profile

In-depth interviews were conducted with seven African-American women who self-identified as mid-level administrators, based upon the definition used by the researcher, within the organizational structure of the higher education institution where they work. The interviewees represent two and four year public and private institutions in the northeast region. These women are comprised of Deans, Directors, an Associate Dean, Assistant Dean, and Associate Chancellor. All interviews were tape recorded and all recordings were audible. The data obtained was transcribed from each recording and reported for each question. Each interviewee was asked 14 questions (see Appendix A).

A summary of responses to each of the questions asked is reported in five categories of information which guided the interview questions. The categories were: administrative experience in higher education; institutional climate and its effect on African-American women; barriers encountered in advancing to top level posts; support networks utilized; and strategies implemented to maintain current position and overcome barriers.

Administrative Experience

All seven interviewees indicated having had prior administrative experience. Three of the seven interviewees' administrative experience came from their current as well as other institutions. Four of the seven interviewees received all of their administrative experience within the institution where they currently work.

Interviewees' respective period of service as administrators within their current institution varied from less than one year to 12 years. The average number of years in a current position was four years.

The areas of work where the interviewees are currently employed were: Student Affairs (2); Administrative Affairs (2); and one each from the divisions of Academic Affairs; Minority Affairs; and Liberal Studies.

Institutional Climate

As mentioned earlier, the type of institutions represented by the respondents vary from two year to four year public and private institutions. With the diversity of institution came a diversity in response. When asked, "What is the institutional climate for women at your institution?", the responses ranged from fairly progressive, to 'chilly'.

Other adjectives used to describe the climate were exceptional, extraordinary, friendly, and comfortable.

Effects on African-American women

The effect that an institution's climate has on any one African-American woman can not be presumed to be the same for all others, as these women are individuals in their own right. However, there are some general experiences that these women described which, although different, are not mutually exclusive. When asked, "How has that climate effected you as an African-American woman?, the responses, all quite lengthy, reflect positive and negative effects. The most prominent effect-indicated by three of the seven respondents- was that "there is isolation". A summation of the remaining responses were as follows: 1) "there is a small representation of African-American women in middle or top level positions which means there is a visibility issue"; 2) "your self-confidence is tested and you're forced to make allies"; 3) there is a "feeling of being left out of key decision-making regarding institutional planning"; 4) "there is no influence and power which should accompany my position"; or 5) "there is a difficulty being accepted and getting people to support you and your work".

Barriers to advancement

The interviewees were asked, "Do you think there are barriers to advancement for African-American women at your institution?" and "If so, have you encountered any?" Only two of seven interviewees indicated they had not encountered any barriers. Interviewees were also asked, "What barriers have you encountered?" Responses to this question were: loneliness and insecurity; being young, Black and female; the fact that

Black people are often connected to a subject area dealing with race, multiculturalism or diversity; a personal unwillingness to compromise one's value system; sabotage; and institutional racism. Two interviewees commented that having a Ph.D-in some instances-served as a barrier to advancement in community college settings.

Skills and Abilities

Interviewees were asked, "What skills and/or abilities do you possess which you feel have helped you overcome any barriers associated with achieving your current position?"; the responses to this question varied. Three of seven interviewees indicated, "the ability to listen to others" as being important. Other responses were: "being able to clear others' path of obstacles"; "networking and being known as a hard worker"; "having to constantly balance being passive and aggressive"; "concentration and being able to focus"; and "being a good writer and looking people straight in the eye when talking to them". The key with looking someone in the eye, said one respondent, is "you can often tell when you are being told the truth or not".

Eliminating Barriers

The question of "What do you feel needs to change on your campus to minimize or eliminate barriers to advancement for African-American women?" was also asked of each interviewee. To this question, several possible solutions emerged.

Three interviewees indicated the need for a larger, more critical mass of African-American women at their institution as helping to eliminate barriers for African-American women.

Other responses were: "the attitude that the institution has about African-American women and seeing them as not being promotable as needs to change"; "more diversity training is needed"; "more advocates for African-American women are needed"; "instituting a professional development standard"; "clarifying expectations"; and lastly, "the second coming of Christ".

Support Networks

Interviewees were asked, "Do you use any support networks?", "What are your support networks?", and "How do you use these networks?". All interviewees use some form of informal or formal support network. The formal, external support networks used were the New England Directors Think Tank, the Connecticut Community College Deans Council, the National Association of Student Affairs Administrators (NASPA), and Black Women Administrators. Other external support networks mentioned by interviewees as being used were: other professional women colleagues outside their respective institutions; a female confidante; family; support from the President of the institution; support from an immediate supervisor; other African-American women on campus; and spirituality. One interviewee indicated she had no support network, formal or informal. Interviewees were also asked, "What support do you feel is most important to you?" and "Why?". Three respondents indicated that the support of family and the support of an immediate supervisor as generally being most important. Family was most important because they were "always there". Immediate supervisors were chosen by three respondents as well because they were seen as the key person needed to support you

and your work for advancement opportunities. Other responses given for the most important support were: other colleagues and God.

Strategies

When asked, "What other strategies have you utilized to overcome barriers to advancement as an African-American woman?", the responses were quite interesting. Keeping abreast of what's going on in your profession; being selective about taking on additional tasks; and doing the right thing were a few of the responses. Two women indicated that relying on the strength of colleagues and other women as a strategy to overcome advancement barriers.

Summary and Discussion

In this first section, the researcher summarized the responses of the seven mid-level African-American administrators interviewed based on the five main categories of information identified in the introduction of this chapter. From this information there are some apparent consistencies in the data. These consistencies are discussed in this section.

Six of the seven African-American women have previous administrative experience in higher education. One interviewee had no previous administrative experience in a higher education institution before her current position. On average, the cumulative administrative experience of the interviewees is four years with experiences ranging from one to 34 years.

The institutional climate and its affect on African-American women seemed to vary depending upon the type of institution they represented. For example, those interviewees employed at female-headed institutions, with a critical mass of top-level women administrators, found the climate to be positive generally as well as progressive. On the other hand, interviewees who worked at institutions (both public and private) with male presidents tended to charecterize the climate and culture as exclusionary, 'chilly' and unwelcoming to African-American women who were seen as outsiders. No matter what type of institution- majority women or not, female or male president, interviewees interpreted the institutional climate and culture to be dependent upon the number of African-American hired and the number of African-Americans employed at the institution. The more African-Americans employed and hired the more welcoming the culture and climate.

Two of the interviewees noted they had not experienced any barriers to advancement. These women were representative of a two-year public institution which has a male president and a four-year private institution with a female president. Each institution had significant numbers of women in middle and top-level posts.

Other interviewees responded that they had experienced barriers to advancement as a result of racism, job segregation, not 'playing by the rules' and preconceived notions or perceptions about African-American women by those with the authority and power to bring about change.

Interviewees responding to their use of support networks revealed that both formal and informal networks are used by African-American women. The formal support networks used, however, were relatively few in number. This may be due in part

to the lack of support networks which specifically focus on the needs of African-American women. The researcher had a difficult time trying to identify formal support networks which have an identifiable African-American women membership. These networks were sought as a resource to identify numbers of African-American women, as defined by this study, to whom survey questionnaires could be mailed.

The most common networks utilized were the informal ones. Networking with other professional colleagues or the 'sista network', as it is sometimes referred to, was the most common. A prominent support mentioned was a spiritual grounding and strong belief in the powers of God. Historically, many African-Americans have demonstrated strong spiritual beliefs which provide them with support and comfort.

The most common strategies mentioned were those which focused on having the necessary credentials, including a terminal degree; and gaining a wide-range of administrative experience. Two of the women interviewed, however, indicated that the flaunting of a terminal degree is not advantageous in a community college setting. "Keeping your nose clean" and not taking on the role of being the 'person of color' representative for all the issues that deal with race on campus were also common strategies mentioned.

In conclusion, it appears that African-American women have somewhat of a better chance advancing within institutions that are headed by women, and institutions which have significant representation of women in middle and top-level administrative posts. African-American women appear to have less of an opportunity to advance within institutions that are headed by men, have none to few women in top-level posts, and small numbers of women in mid-level administrative positions. In addition, it was felt

that in order to assume a top-level post, African-American women need to have a terminal degree, prior experience in higher education, persistence, and faith.

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Section Two: Quantitative Data

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General Characteristics and Profile

Data collected for the quantitative portion of the study was gathered through the distribution of survey questionnaires and an accompanying cover letter to 101 African-American women administrators in the northeast region. Of the 101 questionnaires mailed, 93 were deliverable and not returned to the researcher. Each respondent was sent a survey questionnaire along with a cover letter asking them to participate, explaining the research purpose, focus and timeline for submission.

The survey questionnaire consisted of 15 questions (see Appendix D) and provided a range of responses on a Likert scale of one to seven. In addition to the 15 items, respondents were given an opportunity to provide any additional comments they might have on the topic as well as request a copy of the survey results. In addition to the mailing of the questionnaires, two separate mailings of reminder cards were sent to non-respondents. Reminder cards were sent to increase the percentage of respondents and decrease the number of non-respondents.

Of the 93 questionnaires received, 56 (60%) of the surveys were returned. Of the 56 respondents, the majority 41 (73.2%) were from 4 year institutions. Thirty (53.6%) represent co-educational institutions, 25 (44.6%) private, and 14 (25.0%) liberal arts institutions. The respondents were representative of the following position titles: 21

<div style="text-align:center">64</div>

(33.5%) Directors or Directors-indicated in the 'other' category, 16 (28.6%) Program

Directors, 9 (16.1%) Assistant Deans, 3 (5.4%) Associate Deans, and 7 (12.5%) Deans.

The range of respondents' ages was 23 to 61 years. The mean age of respondents was 42

years.

Tables 1 a-c depict the basic charecteristics of respondents by institution type.

Table 1:   Institution Type. a. Two or Four Year. b. Public or Private. c. Liberal Arts or Research

Inst. Type	Frequency	Percent
Women's	3	5.4
Co-educational	30	53.6
Other	23	41.1

a: Two or Four Year.

4-year	41	73.2
2-year	6	10.7
Other	9	16.1

b: Public or Private.

Inst. Type	Frequency	Percent
Public	24	42.9
Private	25	44.6
Other	7	12.5

c: Liberal Arts or Research.

Liberal Arts	14	25.0
Research	11	19.6
Other	31	55.4

Other institution types that were denoted with a frequency of two or more times were

graduate, catholic, liberal arts and research schools. This data indicates that the majority

of respondents represent four-year, private, co-educational, liberal arts institutions in the

northeast region.

The various position titles of respondents are provided below in Table 2. The top

ranking title category was 'other' which was chosen by 21 (37.5%) respondents. In this

category, the position titles chosen most often were: 'Director' or 'Director of'. The

breakdown by title is provided below.

Table 2: Position Title.

Title	Frequency	Percent
'Other'	21	37.5
Program Director	16	28.6
Assistant Dean	9	16.1
Dean	7	12.5
Associate Dean	3	5.4

Age was another factor which was asked of respondents. The range of ages ran

the spectrum with the youngest being 23 and 61 at the opposite end of the spectrum.

The mean age was 42, the mode age was 50. Below in Table 3, the ages of respondents

were depicted based on subgroups of five year spans. There were a total of 55 valid

cases and 1 missing case.

Table 3: Age.

Age	Frequency	Percent
23-27	1	1.9
28-32	9	16.0
33-37	9	16.0
38-42	10	17.9
43-47	6	10.7
48-52	9	16.0
53-57	9	16.0
58-62	2	3.6
'Other'	1	1.9

Administrative Experience of Respondents

Survey respondents were asked, "How long have you been in your current position?" and "How long have you worked at your current institution?". The mode number of years worked by respondents was 3, and mean number was 5.1 years in their current position. In terms of number of years worked within the respondent's current institution, the mode number of years for respondents was 3, the mean number was 11. Below in Table 4, the number of years respondents worked in their current position is shown.

Table 4: Years in Current Position.

Years	Frequency	Percentage
0-5	35	62.2
6-10	17	30.2
11-15	4	7.6

Below in Table 5, the number of years respondents worked at their current institution is shown.

Table 5: Years at Current Institution.

Years	Frequency	Percentage
0-10	34	60.6
11-20	12	21.4
21-30	10	18.0

Respondents were also asked to indicate the areas where they worked. They were given two specified area choices with a third option to write in the area where they worked. The area chosen most often was 'student affairs'. The second largest response area was in the 'other' category, with 'academic affairs' coming in at a close third. The response,

frequency and corresponding percentages of areas worked were as follows:

Table 6: Areas of Work.

Work Area	Frequency	Percent
Student Affairs	32	57.1
'Other'	10	17.9
Academic Affairs	9	16.1
No Response	5	8.9

Of the 10 people who indicated 'other', 71.4 percent did not specify what 'other' area

they worked in. The majority of areas identified by respondents in this category,

however, were in administrative offices such as administrative affairs, affirmative action,

finance and administration and human resources.

In summary, the most frequently observed administrative experience of

respondents was three years within their current position, three years within their current

institution and that experience most often having been in the area of student affairs.

Institutional Climate and Culture

Respondents views on institutional climate and culture are incorporated around

discussion on barriers to advancement, and skills and abilities, see pages 68 through 71.

Barriers to Advancement

The survey questionnaire makes the statement, "There are barriers/obstacles to

advancement for mid-level women administrators where I work." And if so,

respondents were asked to indicated the extent to which thirteen identified barriers were

prevalent where they work. Respondents were to indicate on a scale of 1 to 7 with 1

being 'prevalent' and 7 being 'not prevalent' their response. To this statement there were

52 valid cases and 4 missing cases. Below in Table 7, the responses to this statement are

indicated.

Table 7: Barriers at Work.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree (1)	13	23.2
Agree (2)	20	35.7
Slightly Agree (3)	8	14.3
Neutral (4)	4	7.1
Slightly Disagree (5)	2	3.6
Disagree (6)	4	7.1
Strongly Disagree (7)	1	1.8
Missing (9)	4	7.1

From this data, 41 (78.8%) agreed, to some degree, that barriers exist for mid-level

African-American administrators where they work. Seven (12.5%) disagreed with this

statement, and 4 (7.1%) were neutral. In response to the question of the extent to which

thirteen barriers are prevalent at work, the responses ran the spectrum. Respondents were

asked to choose from a scale of 1 to 7, 1 being 'prevalent' and 7 being 'not prevalent'.

The barriers which were selected with the greatest frequency as being 'prevalent' were

'lack of mentor' and 'old-boys network'. The barriers receiving the second highest

response, 'somewhat prevalent' (number 2) were: 1) 'lack of support network', 2)

'negative institution climate and culture', 3) 'fewer promotions', and 4) 'job segregation'.

On the opposite end of the scale, the response which received 'not prevalent' was

'educational preparation'. Of those respondents who indicated responses under 'other',

the responses which were indicated two or more times were: the 'old-girls network',

'infusion of things related to catholicism' and 'handpicked mobility'.

The next set of barrier issues made a statement and then asked a question. The statement said, "I have not encountered advancement obstacles where I work". There were 46 valid cases and 10 missing cases to this statement. Responses to the statement of not having encountered advancement obstacles at work ran the spectrum. Most frequent responses were ten (17.9%) who 'slightly agreed', and nine (16.1%) who 'strongly disagreed'. Ten (17.9%) of the respondents did not answer the question at all. The questions asked respondents to indicate the extent to which 13 specified barriers have been experienced at work.

The questionnaire then asked respondents to, "Please indicate the extent to which you have experienced the following barriers where you work…" Respondents were asked to respond given a scale of 1 to 7 with 1 being 'often' and 7 'rarely'. Of all the 13 barriers identifed in this question, only the 'old-boys network' had 56 valid cases. All other identifed barrier responses were as follows: 1) lack of mentor- 54 valid, 2 missing; 2) educational preparation- 53 valid, 3 missing; 3) lack of support network- 54 valid, 2 missing; 4) racism – 53 valid, 3 missing; 5) sexism – 53 valid, 3 missing; homophobia- 52 valid, 4 missing; 6) institutional climate and culture – 53 valid, 3 missing; 7) fewer promotions-52 valid, 4 missing; 8) job segregation – 51 valid, 5 missing; 9) lack of commitment to diversity – 53 valid, 3 missing; 10) lack of career path – 53 valid, 3 missing and 11) lack of professional development opportunities – 50 valid, 6 missing. Of the 13 barriers identified on the questionnaire, the barrier cited with the greatest frequency, 27 (50.%) of 54 respondents, as being experienced most often was 'old-boys network'. The barrier cited with the second greatest frequency was 'lack of mentor', 22 (40.7%) of 54 respondents. Those barriers cited with the third greatest frequency were

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'racism', 19 (35.8%) and 'institutional climate and culture', 19 (35.8%) both from 53 respondents.

Skills/Abilities

The researcher found it more difficult to assess the skills or abilities of survey respondents versus interviewees without having the benefit of asking open ended questions. The survey instrument did however present two statements. First, "As an African-American woman administrator, I have experienced role conflict at work." Role conflict means having multiple responsibilities/functions which are not clearly defined and/or at odds with certain responsibilities within their respective institutions. The researcher believes that various skills and abilities are utilized when one has to interpret, without having clear instruction, the duties and responsibilities of their position when role conflict exists.

The majority, 37 (66.1%) of 56 respondents indicated they experienced role conflict at work as an African-American woman. The frequency of responses in agreement with this statement were as follows: 17 (30.4%) 'strongly agreed'; 11 (19.6%) 'agreed'; and 9 (16.1%) 'slightly agreed'. The remaining responses were 4 (7.1%) 'neutral', 14 (24.9%) disagreed, to some degree, and one (1.8%) 'other' response.

The second statement presented was, "I utilize strategies to cope with the culture of my institution." There were a total of 55 valid and one missing case for the response. The majority, 51 (92.7%) respondents, indicated they utilized strategies to cope with the culture of their institutions. The frequency of responses in agreement with this statement were as follows: 23 (41.1%) 'strongly agreed', 22 (39.3%) 'agreed', and six (10.7%)

'slightly agreed'. The remaining responses were 3 (5.4%) 'neutral", and one (1.8%) 'slightly disagreed'.

Eliminating Barriers

Respondents were asked to select from five specified actions and given a sixth option of 'other' to indicate those actions which might help them advance in their administrative careers. These actions were as follows: 1) obtain a terminal degree, 2) establish professional support networks, 3) gain political support, 4) establish mentoring relationships and 5) obtain administrative experience in a variety of areas. Respondents were asked to respond on a scale of 1-'very useful' to 7 –'not useful'. The only responses which received 56 valid cases were: professional support networks, and political support. The other identified action responses were as follows: 1) obtain a terminal degree- 54 valid, two missing cases; 2) mentoring relationships- 55 valid, one missing case; and 3) administrative experience - 53 valid, 3 missing cases. The responses were as follows: 1) obtain a terminal degree – 49 (90.7%) indicated the degree would generally be useful, two (3.6%) were 'neutral', one (1.8%) indicated 'seldom useful' and two (3.6%) 'not useful'; 2) establishing professional support networks – 49 (87.5%) indicated these generally were useful, five (3.9%) 'neutral' and two (3.6%) 'not useful'; 3) gaining political support- 40 (71.4%) indicated the support was generally useful, 13 (23.2%) 'neutral', one (1.8%) 'slightly useful' and two (3.6%) 'not useful'; 4) establishing mentoring relationships – 46 (83.6%) selected it as being useful to some degree, seven (12.5%) 'neutral", one (1.8%) 'slightly useful' and one (1.8%) not useful; and 5) administrative experience in a variety of areas – 42 (79.2%) said this experience

was generally useful, five (8.9%) 'neutral", three (5.4%) 'slightly useful", one (1.8%) 'seldom useful' and two (3.6%) not useful.

<div align="center">Support Networks</div>

The survey questionnaire addressed the issue of support networks in a variety of ways in portions of four different questions on the instrument. First, the questionnaire asked if the lack of a support network was prevalent at work. Respondents were given a range of responses on a scale of 1 to 7, 1- 'prevalent' and 7- 'not prevalent'. The total number of valid responses to this question were 56. To the question, 38 (67.9%) respondents indicated it was prevalent, to varying degrees. Other responses were as follows: four (7.1%) 'neutral', seven (12.5%) 'less common', four (7.9%) 'uncommon' and three (5.4%) 'not prevalent'. Second, the survey asked the extent to which women had experienced the lack of a support network at work. Respondents were given a range of responses on a scale of 1 to 7, 1- 'often' and 7 – 'rarely'. To this question, 28 (51.9%) indicated they generally experienced the lack of a support network. Other responses were as follows: nine (16.1%) 'neutral', six (10.7%) 'sometimes', 4 (7.1%) 'seldom' and seven (12.5%) 'rarely'. Third, the questionnaire addressed the extent to which support networks are used as a coping strategy at work. Respondents were given a range of responses on a scale of 1 to 7, 1- 'very often' and 7 - 'rarely'. To this question, the following responses were given, 43 (81.1%) generally used support networks as a coping strategy at work. Other responses were as follows: three (5.4%) 'neutral', two (3.6%) 'occasionally', one (1.8%) seldom, and four (7.1%) 'rarely'. Fourth, the survey instrument asked if there was a need to establish professional support networks to assist

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in advancing one's career. Respondents were given a range of responses on a scale of 1 to 7, 1- 'very often' and 7 –'rarely'. There were a total of 56 valid cases. The following responses were given: 49 (87.5%) generally agreed these networks were useful, 5 (8.9%) 'neutral', and 2 (3.6%) 'not useful'.

Strategies

The questionnaire asked respondents the extent to which three coping strategies were used. Respondents were asked to select on a scale of 1 to 7 with 1 being -'very often' and 7-'rarely'. A space was also provided to identify any other strategies they may have used. The strategies identified were: 'play by the rules', 'support networks', and 'mentoring relationships'. These strategies were indicated as being used generally often by respondents as follows: 1) play by the rules – 42 (77.8%); 2) support networks – 43 (81.1%); and 3) mentoring relationships – 31 (57.4%). Responses in the 'other' option that were ranked as being used 'very often' by five or more respondents was prayer and spirituality. The only 'other' response that occurred two or more times was mentoring outside the institution.

Summary and Discussion

The quantitative data in this study depicts some very interesting data relative to the barriers identified as being faced by mid-level African-American women within institutions of higher education in the northeast region. Table 7 (page 68) shows that 41 (78.8%) of African-American women believe there are barriers to advancement for mid-level African-American administrators at the institutions where they currently work. Not

only do barriers exist but they are prevalent where they work. The 'old-boy' network

and lack of a mentor were the most prevalent barriers chosen by respondents. This data

supports the literature which indicates that the 'old-boys' network is strong and prevalent

(Locke, 1997; Cannon, 1995; Farmer, 1993). This network often has a negative impact

on the ability of mid-level African-American women to advance to top level posts. This

in turn leaves few, if any, top-level African-American administrators to mentor African-

American women in mid-level administrative posts. Thus, the cycle of having a small

number of top-level African-American administrators to mentor mid-level African-

American women is perpetuated. Having a mentor when seeking advancement provides

a needed support for African-American women. Often times, African-American women

have to seek out mentors where they work who are of a different race and/or gender.

Another option is for African-American women to seek out mentors from other

institutions. Despite the barriers identified as being prevalent where the survey

respondents work, education preparation was not considered to be a barrier for 35

(62.6%) of the African-American women respondents.

Thirty seven (66.1%) respondents indicated they experienced role conflict at

work. This can often serve as a barrier to advancement for African American women.

These women often find themselves serving as the minority representative for all people

of color on campus or mentoring students of color. These added responsibilities can

create difficulty in performing the duties of one's position because they are in conflict

with other responsibilities.

Of the list of factors identified as being helpful in advancing their careers,

respondents indicated that obtaining a terminal degree, professional support networks,

political suppport, mentoring relationships, and administrative experience in other areas were all useful in advancing their administrative careers. The factors that the majority of African-American women chose most often as helping (to varying degrees) their ability to advance were: 1) background experience in other areas and 2) having the terminal degree. Background experience was chosen by 46 (83.6%) women and the terminal degree selected by 36 (64.3%). This supports the idea that having different administrative positions and experiences within institutes of higher education is a plus. Most often African-American women are selected to serve in positions and roles which are of a caregiving nature. These experiences may prove to be rewarding but can also be overwhelming and limiting in scope, power and authority. Having the terminal degree will most often prove to be an asset in helping an African-American woman's opportunity for advancement.

The issue of support networks or the lack thereof is an important issue that was addressed in several different ways on the survey instrument. Forty three (81.1%) of the women indicated they used support networks as a coping strategy at work However, 28 (51.9%) of 54 respondents noted there was a lack of support networks for African-American women. The researcher can attest to the difficulty of identifying such networks through her attempts to contact such entities to obtain mailing lists with names of African-American women who fit the target population of this study.

Section Three: Common Themes

Sections One and Two of this chapter discussed in some detail the qualitative and quantitative data gathered in this study. Each section provides modes, frequencies and

percentages as well as a summary and discussion of the data. This section provides an analysis of that data through comparing consistencies in the information shared by participants in both the qualitative and quantitative research data. The integration will be expressed using themes supported by quotes from the interviewees and survey data from respondents. The researcher identified eight (8) themes that appear to be the most profound including those which highlight or center around the three key elements of the research study: barriers faced, supports used and strategies implemented. Each theme will be introduced separately with a brief introduction followed by quotes from the interviewees and supporting quantitative data.

Theme One - Institutional Climate and Culture

We learned from the literature review in this study that the institutional culture or climate for African-American women in higher education is not the most welcoming (Green, 1997; Locke, 1997; Cannon, 1995; Farmer, 1993; Jackson, 1985; hooks, 1984). There are myriad reasons for this which have been explored throughout this research study. Below are quotes from the mid-level African-American women administrators who were interviewed in this study. These quotes address how they perceived climate and culture within the institutions of higher education where they work:

"I find it chilly. When you look at women generally it is less chilly
than for women of color (meaning African-American women)."

"There is a culture here that is not always welcoming of outsiders."

"The rules are not clear here. The prospect of confrontation and terror
of the Black race is a true fear here."

"I always felt that I didn't quite fit and I was left out of certain aspects

of institutional planning."

Quantitative data which supports this sense of climate was obtained in three areas.
First, 32 (52.7 %) respondents indicated that a negative institutional climate was
prevalent (to some degree) as a barrier at their institution. A negative institutional
climate ranked second only to the 'old-boys network' and 'lack of a mentor' as barriers
to advancement at the institutions where respondents worked. Table 8 below indicates
the actual responses, frequencies and correlating percentages for a 'negative institutional
climate'.

Table 8: Negative Institutional Climate.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Prevalent (1)	5	8.9
Somewhat Prevalent (2)	15	26.8
Slightly Prevalent (3)	12	21.4
Neutral (4)	8	14.3
Less Common (5)	4	7.1
Uncommon (6)	5	8.9
Not Prevalent (7)	7	12.5

The second area that supports a negative institutional climate for African-
American women is when respondents indicated the extent to which they had
experienced a negative institutional climate and culture. Fifty three (94.6%) of 56
respondents answered this question to which 32 (60.4%) indicated they had experienced
a negative institutional climate.

The third piece of data which supports a negative institutional climate for
African-American women is found in the statement which says, "I utilize strategies to

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cope with the culture of my institution." To this question, there were 55 valid cases and 1

missing case. Fifty one (92.7%) respondents indicated they agreed with this statement.

A frequency distribution chart of the responses to this statement can be seen on page 78.

Table 9: Utilization of Coping Strategies.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree (1)	23	41.8
Agree (2)	22	39.3
Slightly Agree (3)	6	10.7
Neutral (4)	3	5.4
Slightly Disagree (5)	1	1.8
Disagree (6)	0	0
Strongly Disagree (7)	0	0
Missing (9)	1	1.8

As you can see there are no respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with this

statement. Only one respondent indicated she slightly disagreed.

One can infer from the quotes of interviewees and the frequencies of respondents

that the institutional culture and climate for African-American women, particularly those

in mid-level administrative positions, is negative. From the adjectives used to describe

the climate, one gets a sense of a cold, unfriendly, isolating environment, a climate where

there is a lack of clear or standard rules and one filled with obstacles to advancement.

Theme Two - Barriers Faced

The fact that barriers to advancement exist is not new. However, twenty years

ago it was an unknown term (Business and Professional Women's Foundation, 1992).

Despite the fact that barriers exist, it is interesting and important to note African-American womens' perceptions and experiences of barriers to advancement, especially if one is to pinpoint 'why' barriers exist. Attempts at answering the 'why' will assist in developing approaches to tearing down the barriers. These forces apparently continue to hold women, particularly African-American women, from receiving top-level posts.

Let us take a look at quotes from the African-American women interviewed in this study and what they identified as the 'why' or cause of the various issues which presented themselves as barriers to their advancement. The first set of quotes are those which had been determined to be inflicted by others and/or are a part of society. These are often the most difficult to address.

"I think most of the attitude is, 'I can afford to bypass them (African-American women) and they will still do the work anyway'."

"The classic sabotage in the academy, Who are you?, Where are you from?, and What are your credentials?"

"It's pretty well understood here (at work) that my values are such that I'm not going to compromise because I know I will be the first one to go and I've said that. So, that's where it's been limiting to an extent because they just don't know how far to go with me when they're playing their games."

"They do the things that are harder to quantify but you know it intuitively at some level. Then you know the language...the language they use when they are trying to discredit somebody based upon their race, but it sounds essentially the same. It starts with the credentials game, it kind of feeds off into examining a persons life and their work history completely inappropriately, because they don't do it to anybody else. Or, people try and play others based upon the belief that you too are racist and you really don't want them or her making decisions about us or having that or doing that or having that authority."

"The obvious laws, we can get rid of them but, there is so much that is not the law, those untouchable, unwritten things that we (African-American women)

have to guard against."

"As long as the world is not settled yet in any way about how it respects 'the other' (anyone not European American) there will always be those attitudes present in this place. And therefore, what that will mean is that there will be barriers to women, hatred towards 'the other' and significant, significant differences in pay."

"The racism that pervades the whole society."

"You know the pecking order of life – white men, white women, black men and black women."

The next few quotes are more personal and can be addressed by and are dependent upon the actions of African-American women as individuals.

"The major barrier in higher education is not having the Ph.D."

"We (African-American women) are not good at promoting our work."

"The same as usual, loneliness and insecurity."

The quantitative data that supports these statements is numerous. The first piece of survey data indicated that 41 (78.8%) of 52 respondents said that barriers to advancement existed for mid-level African-American administrators where they work. When asked to rate, on a scale of 1 to 7, 1 being 'prevalent' and 7 'not prevalent', the extent to which a list of 13 barriers seem prevalent at work, eleven barriers were found to be prevalent. These eleven barriers are: 1) 'old-boys' network; 2) lack of mentor; 3) lack of support network; 4) racism; 5) sexism; 6) negative institutional climate; 7) fewer promotions; 8) job segregation; 9) lack of commitment to diversity; 10) lack of career path; and 11) homophobia. In Tables 10, a-j., the responses, frequencies and corresponding percentages for all the above barriers except negative institutional climate and culture (see Table 8, page 78) are identified.

Table 10: Barriers to Advancement. a. Old-Boy Network. b. Lack of Mentor. c. Lack of Support Network. d. Racism. e. Sexism. f. Fewer Promotions. g. Job Segregation. h. Lack of Commitment to Diversity. i. Lack of Career Path. j. Homophobia.

a.: Old-Boy Network.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Prevalent (1)	18	32.1
Somewhat Prevalent (2)	17	30.4
Slightly Prevalent (3)	8	14.3
Neutral (4)	3	5.4
Less Common (5)	1	1.8
Uncommon (6)	4	7.1
Not Prevalent (7)	5	8.9

b: Lack of Mentor.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Prevalent (1)	16	28.6
Somewhat Prevalent (2)	16	28.6
Slightly Prevalent (3)	6	10.7
Neutral (4)	6	10.7
Less Common (5)	5	8.9
Uncommon (6)	1	1.8
Not Prevalent (7)	6	10.7

c: Lack of Support Network.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Prevalent (1)	9	16.1
Somewhat Prevalent (2)	16	28.6
Slightly Prevalent (3)	13	23.2
Neutral (4)	4	7.1
Less Common (5)	7	12.5
Uncommon (6)	4	7.1
Not Prevalent (7)	3	5.4

d: Racism.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Prevalent (1)	11	19.6
Somewhat Prevalent (2)	13	23.2
Slightly Prevalent (3)	17	30.4
Neutral (4)	7	12.5
Less Common (5)	3	5.4
Uncommon (6)	5	8.9
Not Prevalent (7)	0	0

e: Sexism.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Prevalent (1)	9	16.1
Somewhat Prevalent (2)	13	23.2
Slightly Prevalent (3)	14	25.0
Neutral (4)	8	14.3
Less Common (5)	3	5.4
Uncommon (6)	5	8.9
Not Prevalent (7)	3	5.4
Missing (9)	1	1.8

f: Fewer Promotions.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Prevalent (1)	12	21.4
Somewhat Prevalent (2)	15	26.8
Slightly Prevalent (3)	9	16.1
Neutral (4)	10	17.9
Less Common (5)	5	8.9
Uncommon (6)	1	1.8
Not Prevalent (7)	4	7.1

g: Job Segregation.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Prevalent (1)	6	10.7
Somewhat Prevalent (2)	3	3.2
Slightly Prevalent (3)	9	16.1
Neutral (4)	13	23.2
Less Common (5)	2	3.6
Uncommon (6)	4	7.1
Not Prevalent (7)	7	12.5
Missing (9)	2	3.6

h: Lack of Commitment to Diversity.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Prevalent (1)	9	16.1
Somewhat Prevalent (2)	12	21.4
Slightly Prevalent (3)	14	25.0
Neutral (4)	9	16.1
Less Common (5)	4	7.1
Uncommon (6)	5	8.9
Not Prevalent (7)	2	3.6
Missing (9)	1	1.8

Table 10 continued.

i: Lack of Career Path.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Prevalent (1)	9	16.1
Somewhat Prevalent (2)	10	17.9
Slightly Prevalent (3)	15	26.8
Neutral (4)	9	16.1
Less Common (5)	5	8.9
Uncommon (6)	4	7.1
Not Prevalent (7)	4	7.1

j: Homophobia.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Prevalent (1)	9	16.1
Somewhat Prevalent (2)	9	16.1
Slightly Prevalent (3)	11	19.6
Neutral (4)	15	26.8
Less Common (5)	1	1.8
Uncommon (6)	4	7.1
Not Prevalent (7)	6	10.7

Only two barriers were determined to not be prevalent- educational preparation, and lack of professional development opportunity.

Lastly, respondents were also asked the extent to which they experienced the list of 13 barriers at their work and to rate each barrier on a scale of 1 to 7, 1 meaning 'often' and 7 'rarely'. Of this list, nine barriers were experienced often. These nine barriers are: 1) 'old-boy' network; 2) lack of mentor; 3) lack of support network; 4) racism; 5) sexism; 6) negative institutional climate; 7) fewer promotions, 8) lack of commitment to diversity and 9) lack of career path. On pages 85 through 87 in Tables 11 a-i, the responses, frequencies and corresponding percentages for these barriers are identified.

Table 11:   Barriers Experienced. a. Old-Boys Network. b. Lack of Mentor. c. Lack of Support Network. d. Racism. e. Sexism. f. Negative Institutional Climate and Culture. g. Fewer Promotions. h. Lack of Commitment to Diversity. i. Lack of Career Path.

a: Old-Boys Network.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Often (1)	11	19.6
Somewhat Often (2)	16	28.6
Occasionally (3)	9	16.1
Neutral (4)	4	7.1
Sometimes (5)	4	7.1
Seldom (6)	3	5.4
Rarely (7)	7	12.5
Missing (9)	2	3.6

b: Lack of Mentor.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Often (1)	11	19.6
Somewhat Often	11	19.6
Occassionally (3)	6	10.7
Neutral (4)	7	12.5
Sometimes (5)	4	7.1
Seldom (6)	7	12.5
Rarely (7)	8	14.3
Missing (9)	2	3.6

c: Lack of Support Network.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Often (1)	6	10.7
Somewhat Often (2)	8	14.3
Occassionally (3)	14	25.0
Neutral (4)	9	16.1
Sometimes (5)	6	10.7
Seldom (6)	4	7.1
Rarely (7)	4	7.1
Missing (9)	2	3.6

d: Racism.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Often (1)	6	10.7
Somewhat Often (2)	13	23.2
Occassionally (3)	13	23.2
Neutral (4)	7	12.5

Sometimes (5)	8	14.3
Seldom (6)	2	3.6
Rarely (7)	4	7.2
Missing (9)	3	5.4

e: Sexism.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Often (1)	6	10.7
Somewhat Often (2)	9	16.1
Occassionally (3)	12	21.4
Neutral (4)	9	16.1
Sometimes (5)	7	12.5
Seldom (6)	4	7.1
Rarely (7)	6	10.7
Missing (9)	3	5.4

f: Negative Institutional Climate and Culture.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Often (1)	8	14.3
Somewhat Often (2)	11	19.6
Occassionally (3)	13	23.2
Neutral (4)	4	7.1
Sometimes (5)	5	8.9
Seldom (6)	5	8.9
Rarely (7)	7	12.5
Missing (9)	3	5.4

g: Fewer Promotions.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Often (1)	6	10.7
Somewhat Often (2)	10	17.9
Occassionally (3)	12	21.4
Neutral (4)	11	19.6
Sometimes (5)	4	7.1
Seldom (6)	4	·7.1
Rarely (7)	4	7.1
Missing (9)	4	7.1

h: Lack of Commitment to Diversity.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Often (1)	8	14.3
Somewhat Often (2)	8	14.3
Occassionally (3)	14	25.0

Table 11h continued.

Neutral (4)	8	14.3
Sometimes (5)	3	5.4
Seldom (6)	5	8.9
Rarely (7)	7	12.5
Missing (9)	3	5.4

i: Lack of Career Path.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Often	6	10.7
Somewhat Often (2)	5	8.9
Occassionally (3)	17	30.4
Neutral (4)	7	12.5
Sometimes (5)	6	10.7
Seldom (6)	5	8.9
Rarely (7)	7	12.5
Missing (9)	3	5.4

Four of the 13 barriers were determined to not be experienced often – educational preparation, homophobia, lack of professional development opportunities and job segregation.

When comparing the barriers identified as being prevalent at work (Tables 10 a-j) and those being experienced most often (Tables 11 a-i) it is interesting to note that educational preparation, professional development opportunities, homophobia nor job segregation are prevalent or experienced often by the women in this study.

One last aspect of barriers which was addressed with interviewees which was difficult to frame as a question for a survey questionnaire was ways to get rid of barriers. Interviewees shared interesting thoughts on eliminating barriers which the researcher believes are noteworthy.

These quotes are as follows:

> "…if this were a 'closed society' we could solve the problems because we would have the same people here and they would absolutely get the problems solved. There is never going to be

a time in a situation that calls itself a 'place where people come to debate the issues' (higher education)…a place where they act out the feelings they bring from where they live, that the problems will be solved."

"God needs to come."

<div align="center">Theme Three - Supports Used</div>

Numerous statements were made by women focusing around those things they

had used to help them cope and survive within the environment in which they work.

Some supports are internal, others external and then some are classified as 'other

supports'. The interviewees quotes are divided and listed in these three categories.

Internal Supports

"You can't make it if you don't have a good boss."

" I would tell anyone taking a management job that managers need to be supportive and you need to know if your supervisor will be supportive of you and you need to ask those questions up front to your supervisor."

"My network is a network that says, when I walk this hall or if I'm in someone's area, I will poke my head in and say, 'How are you doing?' (and mean it) and if they say I'm a little down I will send them a note in a couple of days saying, 'Is there anything I can do?', 'Do you want to have lunch?"

"Most of my career here, most African-American staff have been supportive. We go out to lunch, happy hour and tell jokes about 'working on the plantation? We're able to keep a sense of humor which I think is extremely important."

"I have an Irish mother who adopted me. She just kind of took me under her wing and always told the truth about everything. It didn't matter what it was – people, marriage, color (race), everything. That's one of the primary reasons why I survived it (all the nuances of this institution) because she always told the truth."

External Supports

"Keep up with what's going on in your profesion. It's okay to have anecdotal information but you need to have factual information as well."

"The most important networks are the informal ones. They affirm that it is not I and this is nothing I have done. They help me to come out intact. 'And still we (African-American women) rise!' "

"My biggest supporters are my family. Sometimes I come home and share something with my husband (something I can't share with anyone at work, no matter what the relationship is) and he says, 'The hell with them' and I say okay. This is very simple, basic and to the point and I feel better."

Other Supports

"When I embraced my crisis as an opportunity to embrace God, I received the strength I needed."

"Some days you just have to close your door and get on your knees and ask God to help you through the day before you snap and give you peace to help you get over whatever it is and get home safe."

"Family first, secondly, the support of the President and then my immediate supervisor."

The quantitative data which reinforced the data gained from the indepth interviews appeared in the question which asked respondents the extent to which five identified actions might help to advance their administrative careers. These actions were: 1) obtain a terminal degree, 2) establish professional support networks, 3) gain political support, 4) establish mentoring relationships, and 5) obtain administrative experience in a variety of areas. Three of these five actions focused on types of supports used. These supports are: establish professional support networks, gain political support and establish mentoring relationships. To these three supports the responses, frequencies and corresponding percentages are provided on the next page.

Table 12: Advancement Supports. a. Establishing Professional Support
Networks. b. Gain Political Support. c. Mentoring Relationships.

a. Establishing Professional Support Networks.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very Useful (1)	20	35.7
Useful (2)	20	35.7
Somewhat Useful (3)	9	16.1
Neutral (4)	5	8.9
Slightly Useful (5)	0	0
Seldom Useful (6)	0	0
Not Useful (7)	2	3.6

b: Gain Political Support.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very Useful (1)	21	37.5
Useful (2)	16	28.6
Somewhat Useful (3)	3	5.4
Neutral (4)	13	23.2
Slightly Useful (5)	1	1.8
Seldom Useful (6)	0	0
Not Useful (7)	2	3.6

c: Mentoring Relationships.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very Often (1)	9	16.1
Somewhat Often (2)	12	21.4
Occassionally (3)	10	17.9
Neutral (4)	9	16.1
Sometimes (5)	5	8.9
Seldom (6)	5	8.9
Rarely (7)	4	7.1
Missing (9)	2	3.6

As one can see, professional supports were generally useful to 49 (87.5%) of 56

respondents. Political support was generally useful to 40 (71.5%) of 56 respondents.

Mentoring relationships was used by 31 (55.4%) of 56 respondents.

<u>Theme Four - Coping/Advancement Strategies</u>

This study found that African-American women used many strategies to cope and/or advance within the institutional climates where they work. Some of these strategies were similar while others were different. These women seem to know what it took to survive, advance to their current positions and/or try to advance to a top-level post. Let's take a look at quotes from the women interviewed in this study on coping and/or advancement strategies.

<u>Coping</u>

"There are African-American women that I admire and I will
call them up and vent. They give me pep talks of 'keep the
faith'; or 'it doesn't make you bitter it makes you better'."

"My momma told me that when your elders (not so much by age
but by having knowledge) want to pull your ear you listen and
then decide if it's accurate or not. You do not denounce the
learning (information) before you get it."

"You must have a sense of humor."

"I am strategic about what I take on."

"…being able to network and get information from all levels of
this campus. And if it wasn't for the secretaries, I'd be dead
because that's where I get all my information."

"Sometimes I need some important information and I can get it
from the secretaries. But, that's the kind of thing you have to
do to survive here and it may be because that 'old-boy' network
isn't going to tell me anything so you talk to the 'old-boy' network
secretaries."

"I keep my nose clean."

"Sometime I will drive people nuts with doing the right thing but
that's self preservation. I've seen many people fall by the wayside

side due to some dishonest actions."

"You have to outplay them. My grandmother taught me that years ago. I get here before they do, I'm here after they go home. My work is done before theirs is done. I have platinum with emerald and diamonds evaluations and have had for the last 17 years, that's how you do it."

"You really have to learn and understand the culture here and play by the rules. You don't treat support staff terribly, or come in late. Buy your secretary gifts. You don't destroy your relationship with your supervisor."

"Get to know all the key secretaries in the place. They are the keepers of the Holy Grail and they will clear your path. Talk to them like they're your best girlfriends. Secretaries are grossly underrated."

"I received support from the person who hired me which makes a difference. No one wants to admit that they made a bad human resource decision so my boss invested in me."

"It's all about common sense, mother wit and hard work. That's it."

Advancing

"Whenever I assume a new position, I soon begin to think about my next move."

"Always take on opportunities to do things in another area."

"A strong work ethic. I am not an 8 to 4 person. The job has to be done so I do it. I may take some work home. If you give it to me I will get the job done. I have that kind of reputation and that has been helpful for me."

The quantitative data which supports these coping and advancing strategies is found in several elements of the questionnaire. For coping strategies, there is a question on the survey which asks respondents the extent to which three identified coping strategies had been used. These coping strategies were: 1) play by the rules; 2) support

networks and 3) mentoring relationships. Respondents were also given a fourth option to identify any other coping strategy they used. The responses, frequencies and corresponding percentages for the two of the three coping strategies used are shown in Tables 13a-b. Table 12c, page 90, shows the responses, frequencies and corresponding percentages for the third coping strategy, mentoring relationships.

Table 13: Coping Strategies. a. Play by the Rules. b. Support Networks.

a. Play by the Rules.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very often (1)	14	25.0
Somewhat often (2)	12	21.4
Occassionally (3)	16	28.6
Neutral (4)	4	7.1
Sometimes (5)	6	10.7
Seldom (6)	1	1.8
Rarely (7)	1	1.8
Missing (9)	2	3.6

b: Support Networks.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very Often (1)	16	28.6
Somewhat Often (2)	17	30.4
Occassionally (3)	10	17.9
Neutral (4)	3	5.4
Sometimes (5)	2	3.6
Seldom (6)	1	1.8
Rarely (7)	4	7.1
Missing (9)	3	5.4

Of those respondents who indicated a support in the 'other' category, five (9.0%) indicated prayer or spirituality. Two (3.6%) said mentoring outside the institution. All 'other' responses were indicated only once.

When addressing advancement strategies, there is a statement on the survey about not having encountered advancement obstacles at work. To this statement, the greatest frequency of respondents, 10 (17.9%) indicated on a scale of 1 to 7, 1- 'strongly agree' and 7-'strongly disagree', that they 'slightly agreed' (#3). The next largest response from respondents on this question were 9 (16.1%) who 'slightly disagree' (#5).

Respondents were then asked the extent to which one of five actions might help them advance in their careers. These actions were: 1) obtain a terminal degree; 2) establish professional support networks; 3) gain political support; 4) establish mentoring relationships and 5) obtain administrative experience in a variety of areas. A sixth option was provided to fill in another action of their choosing. The responses for each action were on a scale of 1 to 7, 1-'very useful' and 7-'not useful'. Tables 14 a-c show the responses, frequencies and corresponding percentages to actions 1, 4 and 5. The responses to actions 2 and 3 can be found in Tables 12a and 12b respectively.

Table 14: Actions to Advance Career. a. Obtain a Terminal Degree. b. Establish Mentoring Relationships. c. Obtain Administrative Experience in a Variety of Areas.

a. Obtain a Terminal Degree.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very Useful (1)	30	53.6
Useful (2)	13	23.2
Somewhat Useful (3)	6	10.7
Neutral (4)	2	3.6
Slightly Useful (5)	0	0
Seldom Useful (6)	1	1.8
Not Useful (7)	2	3.6
Missing (9)	2	3.6

Table 14 continued.

b: Establish Mentoring Relationships.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very Useful (1)	20	35.7
Useful (2)	14	25.0
Somewhat Useful (3)	12	21.4
Neutral (4)	7	12.5
Slightly Useful (5)	1	1.8
Seldom Useful (6)	0	0
Not Useful (7)	1	1.8
Missing (9)	1	1.8

c: Obtain Administrative Experience
in a Variety of Areas.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very Useful (1)	28	50.0
Useful (2)	9	16.1
Somewhat Useful (3)	5	8.9
Neutral (4)	5	8.9
Slightly Useful (5)	3	5.4
Seldom Useful (6)	1	1.8
Not Useful (7)	2	3.6
Missing (9)	3	5.4

As you can see from these tables, all five options were selected by the majority

of respondents as being useful to some degree. Of the responses written in 'other', there

was no response which was selected by more than one individual.

The last item dealing with advancement strategies asked the extent to which six

factors positively or negatively effected their ability to advance upward. These factors

were: 1) age, 2) race, 3) gender, 4) educational preparation, 5) background experience,

and 6) political contacts. Of these factors, educational preparation, background

experience and 'other' were selected most often by the majority of respondents as

'greatly helping' or having a positive effect on their ability to advance. Noteworthy

write-in responses under 'other' which had a positive impact on respondents ability to

advance were: 1) being in the right place at the right time, 2) openness to moving, and 3) being well liked and respected.

From the quantitative data and interviewee quotes, one can infer several things. First, the institutional climate and culture within the higher institution where an African-American administrator works plays a critical role (negative or positive) in the opportunities she has for diverse administrative experiences and advancement opportunities. In climates and cultures that are unwelcoming and unsupportive of African-American women, many of these women utilize support networks. These networks are often informal and family or spiritually based. Second, there are many factors which serve as barriers to advancement to African-American women within institutions of higher education. Many of these barriers are incorporated in the structure of the organization, perpetuated by the leadership and charecterize the mindset of maintaining the status quo. Individual barriers are most often few and seldom at issue. Third, African-American women use coping strategies at work. The strategies most often used were mentoring relationships and support networks, primarily those which are informal. These strategies are used most often for survival and/or for attainment of their current position.

Theme Five - Skills Needed

We know that in addition to the more tangible credentials, there are certain skills that African-American women indicated were needed to survive and/or advance within the academe. Some of the skills pointed out are somewhat obvious whereas others were less obvious. Some were somewhat unique and others more profound.

The obvious, often expected skills were noted in the following quotes:

"One has to come with good writing and analytical skills…
but the skills that have really helped me overcome barriers
are self-determination and problem-solving skills that teach
you that you have to go under, around or over things and
this is one thing that African-American women have is
problem solving skills."

"The networking and being known as a hard worker are the
two main things I would say have helped me immensely."

"I am always willing to listen to the other people and try to
clear them of something and it has propelled me along my
way faster than any other talent that I have. People want
you to fix it. I don't send people on a chase, I go and fix it."

"I don't leave things hanging."

Other quotes addressed the less obvious and some reflected those things which may be

particularly characteristic of African-American women. For instance,

"…having a lot of faith…, a positive attitude and …good
interpersonal skills are needed…"

"Focus, orientation and spirituality."

"I've learned to listen more than I speak."

"It has helped me to discover where I could be humorous
and how important it was to maintain that. One can't take
oneself or other people too seriously or it will make you nuts."

"It's good to develop good ego props."

"I have always been steadfast and not let people determined
to undermine me deter me."

The quantitative data which supported the skills mentioned by the interviewees

were found in several questions. First, 51 (92.7%) respondents indicated they utilized

strategies to deal with the culture of their institutions. Secondly, the survey asked the

extent to which three identified coping strategies were used with a fourth option of 'other' being provided. Respondents were asked to rate the strategies on a scale of 1 to 7, 1- 'very often' and 7- 'rarely'. The first strategy, 'play by the rules', was determined to be used generally often by 42 (77.8%) of 54 respondents. Support networks, the second strategy, was also used generally often by 43 (81.1%) of 53 respondents. Mentoring relationships, the third strategy was used generally often by 31 (57.4%) of 54 respondents. There were several responses indicated under 'other'. Some of the responses worth noting were: 1) understanding/playing politics, 2) off campus mentoring relationships and 3) dealing with the situation.

Therefore, there were certain skills noted as being needed by both the interviewees as well as the survey respondents. Those that appeared most often were the obvious skills of having a terminal degree, good writing and communication skills, and playing by the rules. Despite having the obvious and less obvious skills or those skills that are particularly important for African-American women to advance within institutions of higher education, there are other forces which effect their abillity to advance. These forces are often societal and/or a part of the institutional structure within certain institutions where the 'old-boy network' thrives. In the next theme, we address certain aspects of societal forces that exist in the world in which we live today.

Theme Six - Racism and Sexism

From the literature review, indepth interviews and survey questionnaires women have spoken out about the differential treatment that they received because of their race and/or gender (hooks, 1981; Jackson, 1985; Farmer, 1993; Cannon, 1995; Locke, 1997;

Moses, 1997). The African-American women in this study spoke out about the way they

had been treated within higher education institutions as well as the larger society based

upon their gender and race. Some of the interviewees in this study and others (Moses,

1989; and Wilson, 1989), refer to this dual treatment based on race and gender as being a

'double obstacle'. By this term they believe that African-American women have been

penalized because of both gender and race. The differential treatment of women because

of their gender and race often has detrimental effects on the ability of African-American

women to advance within higher education. Below are quotes from the women

interviewed in this study. These thoughts were shared about their experiences as women

and as an African-Americans.

> "It seems to me that when people go up against barriers of
> racism and sexism is when those in decision-making positions
> have limited definitions of what people of color are like."

> "To the degree that you can expand those definitions or at least
> help people see how they're stereotypes or assumptions may be
> limiting their ability to perceive other peoples abilities, I would
> think that would be important."

> "We have to move now to protect the interest for the race and
> guard against racism and all the 'isms'."

> "I experienced racism and sexism and when I thought I was
> experiencing it, I spoke up about it and called them on it, but
> there was a penalty. I don't regret having done it however.
> I think that that is the challenge and a lot of people find
> themselves confronted with such situations and then you
> must often decide what the risks are, what are the cost
> benefits."

> "It is to your advantage to speak up even if it is scary."

> "I can tell people don't rest. I can not foresee a day when
> ideas or people's idiosyncrasies, subjective little racism and
> all the little 'isms' will disappear. Some things we will have to

fight for forever. So what do I say to people? 'Don't get tired!'
I hope the issues will get better or differ but they won't get gone."

The quantitative data which addressed the issues of race and gender and what effect, if any, these factors had on the individuals surveyed were explored through several components of the survey instrument. Respondents were asked if racism and sexism were prevalent at the instituion where they work. Forty one (73.2%) respondents indicated racism was prevalent and served as a barrier to advancement where they worked. Sexism was also viewed as a prevalent barrier to advancement by 36 (65.5%) of the respondents. Respondents were then asked the frequency with which they had experienced racism and sexism as a barrier to advancement at their work. Racism was determined to have been experienced on a frequent basis by 32 (60.4%) respondents. A little more than half, 27 (50.9%), noted that sexism had been experienced 'often' as a barrier to advancement. Thus, racism was seen as being pervasive and being experienced more often as a barrier to advancement than sexism. This data supports the contention of the 'double-obstacle' phenomenon referenced earlier in this section.

The survey asked whether the respondents whether they as African-American women had experienced role conflict at work. A total of 37 (66.1%) of 56 respondents indicated they generally agreed with this statement of which 17 (49.5%) 'strongly agreed'. The literature (hooks, 1981; and Higgenbotham, 1993) as well as the interviewees of this study indicated that African-American women, unlike other women, are often expected to do the impossible. They are to perform duties without clear instruction which is left to interpretation. In addition, they often have little power or authority to effectively perform the duties and responsibilites of their position. They are

often expected to serve as the minority representative on several campus committees and provide guidance and support to all students of color on the campus. This presents a very precarious and difficult situation-at best- for the African-American woman administrator.

When the survey respondents were asked about the effects that racism and sexism had on their ability to advance to top-level posts, responses were mixed. Twenty one (37.5%) respondents believed race helped their ability to advance. Fourteen (25.0%) were 'neutral' and 21 (37.5%) believed race had hindered their ability to advance. Gender, on the other hand, was believed to have hindered respondents' ability to advance more often than helped their ability to advance. Eighteen (32.7%) believed it helped and 21 (37.6%) believed it hindered. Below in Tables 15 and 16 (page 101 and 102), the responses on race and gender as a help or hinderance on ability to advance are provided. Respondents were given a range of responses on a scale of 1 to 7 with 1- being 'greatly helped' and 7-'hindered greatly'.

Table 15: Race Factor on Advancement.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Greatly Helped (1)	2	3.6
Slightly Helped (2)	5	8.9
Helped (3)	14	25.0
Neutral (4)	14	25.0
Hindered Slightly (5)	10	17.9
Hindered (6)	8	14.3
Hindered Greatly (7)	3	5.4

Table 16: Gender Factor on Advancement.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Greatly Helped (1)	2	3.6
Helped (2)	4	7.1

Table 16 continued.

Slightly Helped (3)	12	21.4
Neutral (4)	16	28.6
Hindered Slightly (5)	10	17.9
Hindered (6)	8	14.3
Hindered Greatly (7)	3	5.4
Missing (9)	1	1.8

Lastly, respondents were presented with the statement, "I feel I am paid less than people of other races who performed similar work at their institution." Respondents were asked to select based on a scale of 1 to 7, 1 being 'strongly agree' and 7 'strongly disagree'. There were a total of 55 valid cases and 1 missing case to this statement. The responses were as follows: 26 (46.4%) respondents were in agreement (to some degree) that they were paid less than others who performed the same work, 13 (23.2%) were 'neutral' and 16 (28.5 %) 'disagreed' with this statement.

From the data presented in this study dealing with race and gender, one finds that there were generally mixed feelings about the effects of race and gender on African-American womens' ability to advance within institutions of higher education. Despite the fact that the feelings of respondents were mixed, the data demonstrates that race and gender are factors which effect (positively or negatively) the upward mobility of African-American women of this study in the institutions where they work. We also know from the findings in this study that race and gender in conjunction with other factors most often have a negative affect on an African-American woman's ability to advance within institutions of higher education. This can make it difficult to pinpoint the exact factors which negatively impact an African-American womens' ability to advance. One other factor which needs to be considered when identifying and examining factors which impact an African-American womans' ability to advance is how she is perceived. How

African-American women are perceived by those in positions of authority to decide who will receive an opportunity for advancement is important. In the next theme we will take a look at just that.

Theme Seven - How African-American Women are Perceived

African-American women, unlike women of other races, are viewed differently by the majority race, particularly European American males. These men are often the ones who serve as the chief executive officer or in a key position of power and authority to make decisions about who receives top-level positions. We know from the literature that most often these men hire or select individuals who look like themselves to key administrative positions in higher education (Business and Professional Women's Organization, 1992). This makes it difficult for a woman, let alone an African-American woman, to attain positions which her credentials and abilities often indicate she is qualified to hold. The perception of her as a woman and an African-American is different than those of other women, as stated earlier. This is most likely due in part to the subservient role African-American women have been forced to play in the history of our nation (hooks, 1981; Locke, 1997). These experiences include being held as a slave and forced to submit to the desires of the slave master (European American male), bearing children who were often taken away, having to cook, clean and nurture the slave owner and his family, and living with the fear of being sold to another slave owner (hooks, 1981). This is a horrific chapter in the history of America and one that seems to have been imprinted in the minds of many today, including those who are in positions of power and authority within institutions of higher education. It seems as though the role

once served by African-American women is what has established the mindset of European American men and often dictates the plight of African-American womens' ability to advance, a mindset which has impacted the expectation and treatment of African-American women. The form of servitude today is naturally different than it was some 400 years ago, nonetheless the mindset and level of expectation appears to be the same. Let's hear what the women of this study had to say about how they believe they are perceived as African-American women.

> "Black women who are clear, candid, directed, forceful, and aggressive get all kinds of euphemistic wording attached to them…"

> "…it has to do with the attitude in the institution about how we think about African-American women. People don't think about us as being promotable. They think we do a really good job and they will acknowledge us about that but when it comes time for advancement or promotion they don't think of us."

> "We are not the primary. We always have to be an asterisk and there is a price to pay for that."

> "All of us are here by the skin of our teeth."

> "Black folks have to work twice as hard to be equal. There is wisdom in that. It's not fair but that's how it is."

Quantitative survey data which addresses how African-American women are perceived and the effects of that perception relative to their advancement opportunities within institutions of higher education can be seen in questions which ask about barriers to advancement. For those African-American women, the 'old-boys' network was the most prevalent barrier being experienced 'often' by 43 (76.8%) of 56 respondents. In fact, of the thirteen barriers identified on the survey instrument, the 'old-boys' network

was noted as the barrier experienced most often. The second most prominent barrier was racism. Racism was chosen by 41 (73.2%) of 56 respondents as being prevalent. The 'old boys' network, a network of European American men, often perceive African-American women in a negative, limiting way. This coupled with the fact that racism exist and appears to be thriving in the world today pose barriers that will take prayer and continual advocating for change to positively impact these two barriers alone. These two barriers are so entrenched and deep seeded in our society that it will take years to even make a dent in the mindset, philosophy of those who hold positions of power. It is a sad state of affairs yet one that is real and threatens the livelihood of African-American women.

The perception of African-American women as caregivers seems to be evidenced in part, by the areas in which they work. Thirty two (57.1%) of the African-American women respondents in this study work in the area of student affairs. The area of student affairs within the academe serves the needs of students and often includes programs which focus on diversity, multiculturalism, and minority affairs.

In summary, African-American women believe they are perceived in ways which most often negatively impact their ability to advance. These women believe these negative perceptions of African-American women most often are influenced by their gender and race, neither of which (gender or race) can be changed without changing one's biological composition. The negative perception of race and gender often come at the expense of considering an African-American woman's qualifications and ability to perform the duties of a top-level position. The perceptions of European American males are difficult to qualify or quantify. As such, these perceptions often lend themselves to

answering the question of 'why' so few African-American women hold top-level

positions within institutions of higher education in the northeast. One answer may lie in

the necessity of African-American women to find a mentor within their institutions as

well as one outside, someone who will assist African-American women to succeed and

be upwardly mobile within the institutions where they work or another institution within

the higher education enterprise.

The next area in this section focuses on the theme of mentoring, its importance

and the role it plays in the advancement of African-American women. The theme

addresses the information which was provided from the interviewees and survey

respondents in this study.

Theme Eight - Mentoring

The literature (Elam, 1989; Pickron, 1991; Locke, 1997), interviewees and survey

respondents support the contention that having a mentor is important to the effectiveness

as well as the successful achievement of anyone seeking to be upwardly mobile within

higher education institutions. For African-American women, the need for a mentor is

most often exacerbated because of the various barriers she faces as a woman and as a

person of color within the academe. Those who do not have a mentor often find it

difficult to survive and/or maneuver within the academe to advance their administrative

careers. Below are quotes from the women interviewed in this study regarding

mentoring and mentoring relationships.

> "…to the degree that we do all understand how important
> it is to be successfully hooked to someone else, to be willing
> to share, pull, hold hands and pull, pull tightly together I

think that there are barriers."

> "The only other African-American dean in this state's community
> college system, at that time, took me under her wing. I was
> fortunate to have her."

> "I've found that people who don't have one (a mentor) don't
> do well. A mentor is only as good however as what they know
> about the institution. Someone who can give you the low-down
> and scoop about what the institution is."

The quantitative data which supports the necessity for a mentor or mentoring relationship is seen in certain aspects of questions on the survey instrument. First, respondents were asked if the lack of a mentor served as a barrier and whether it was prevalent or not within the instituion where they worked. Thirty eight (67.9%) of 56 respondents indicated the lack of a mentor to be a prevalent barrier where they work. Second, since mentors are often established through support networks, it is appropriate to address the survey responses regarding the prevalence that the lack of a support network had as a barrier to advancement. The responses to the lack of a support network were the same, 38 (67.9%) of respondents indicated this network was a prevalent barrier as well.

The third instance where data was captured about mentors or a lack thereof was in a question which asked the extent to which 1) the lack of a mentor and 2) the lack of a support network had been experienced at work. The lack of a mentor was noted by 28 (51.9%) of 54 respondents as being experienced often at their work. The lack of a support network had been experienced often as well by 28 (51.9%) of 54 respondents.

In summary, the lack of a mentor does impact the success and upward mobility of African-American women in a profound way. Establishment of a mentor at the institution where one works is of upmost importance for the African-American woman as

evidenced by the data from both research methods used in this study (qualitative and quantitative). Equally important is the need for African-American women who have reached top-level posts to support and help pull up other African-American women who are looking to advance within an organization. This serves to help break down the barriers that exist for African-American women.

The importance of utilizing support networks has also been seen in the data gathered in this study. Support networks serve many purposes of which the mentoring function is only one. There is a need, however, to establish more support networks which focus exclusively on the needs of African-American women administrators in higher education.

In the last chapter of this study, a summary and analysis of the data presented in the previous chapters is given. Implications of the data for policy and practice changes at the institutional level are discussed. Implications for African-American administrators are provided. Recommendation are made and suggestions for future research presented.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study has been to identify the experiences and perceptions of African-American mid-level female administrators within higher education institutions in the northeast region. More specifically, it strove to describe their perceptions and experiences as African-American women, the barriers faced in trying to advance, support networks used and strategies implemented.

There is a dearth of information about mid-level administrators generally and even less about African-American women who serve in this role. Recent literature focuses on administration with the majority focusing on top-level administration versus administration at the middle level. Literature which focuses on African-American women primarily focuses on those who are faculty versus those in administration.

The data in this study was collected from two methological approaches: one qualitative and the other quantitative. The qualitative data was gained through indepth one-on-one interviews between researcher and interviewee. From the data obtained in the qualitative method, the researcher identified common themes among interviewees. Quantitative data was collected from survey questionnaires. Data gained from this method was reported within themes, established through the qualitative data, offering the response type and frequency with which the response occurred. Common data findings and variations in the data were then discussed.

Chapter One provides a context for studying the middle level administrator. It provides questions which guided the study and presents historical information about

women in higher education, and the role they have played. The status of African-American women in higher education institutions and links this to current research are addressed. The purpose of the research and significance of the study are described. Terms used throughout the study are defined. Limitations of the study are presented. Lastly, the conceptual framework for the study is described.

Chapter Two reviews the literature on: 1) higher education as an organization. 2) research studies about African-American women, 3) barriers to the advancement of African-American women, 4) support networks used by African-American women and 5) the African-American experience in higher education. The various types of barriers to advancement for African-American women are described. Finally, a summation and conclusion of the literature in all the five areas just mentioned is provided.

Chapter Three provides a description of the design of the study and rationale for the research methodology. The population of the study is defined. The approaches to the collection, maintenance and analysis of data are described. Finally, a biographical statement of the researcher and ethical considerations are provided.

Chapter Four is divided into three sections. The first section shares data collected from the qualitative method. General characteristics and demographic data of the sample interviewed is provided. Then the responses to the three primary areas of focus- barriers faced, supports used and strategies implemented- are detailed through the eight themes identified based upon specific questions asked. The second section provides data results from the quantitative method based on survey questions which address each area of focus. General charecteristics and demographic data of the population surveyed is provided. Then responses to the primary areas of focus are detailed through the themes

based upon questions from the survey questionnaire. Section three discusses common themes noted by the researcher from the qualitative data and correlates it to data gained through quantitative research. Finally, a summary and discussion of the results gathered in both research areas is provided.

Institutional Implications

The implications of this study have been divided into three categories: policy changes at the institutional level, practice implications at the institutional level and implications for African-American women administrators.

Institutional Policy Changes

In Chapter Four common themes are used to identify data gathered from the interviews and the survey questionnaires. These themes were under eight different headings: institutional climate and culture, barriers faced, supports used, coping/advancement strategies, skills needed, racism and sexism, how African-American women are perceived and mentoring. These headings provide an organizational framework in which to discuss the policy and practice implications for higher education institutions as well as implications for African-American mid-level administrators.

Institutional Climate and Culture

Most institutions do not have policies which address institutional climate and culture. Some however, have a code of ethics or civility statement for administrators and other professional staff which outlines those things which effect the working

environment such as respect and working collaboratively. Having respect for the roles and responsibilities of those who work, live and learn within a given higher education community is a fundamental expectation within most institutions of higher education. Employees are also often expected to work collaboratively with their fellow colleagues, as well as others within the campus community, to build a strong, positive campus. Thus, the researcher suggests establishment of two policies. First, a policy which defines and clearly stipulates expectations for issues such as: 1) common courtesy, 2) respect for others, 3) individual rights to goods, services and a safe work and learning environment, and 4) equal treatment. Penalties for lack of adherence to the stipulations of such a policy should be specified and fully enforced by supervisors and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Second, a policy which encourages and supports a racial and culturally diverse culture amongst the various campus contingents, especially among middle and top-level administrators is needed. This can be accomplished through concerted institutional recruitment and hirings of persons of color. In order to make a campus climate more welcoming to people of color, especially African-American women, there need to be significant numbers of people of color represented in the campus community. Having significant numbers of people of color, particularly in the administration, is reflective of a diversified culture which ultimately effects the climate of an institution. Such a policy would also stipulate that each administrator be responsible to put forth efforts to promote a hospitable, racially and culturally diverse campus culture. An administrator's individual efforts and success at diversifying the campus community would become part and parcial of their annual evaluation, which would also be stipulated in the policy. This

reinforces the notion that individual efforts for diversifying the campus population is an institutional commitment and one that is valued. Lastly, institutions should support and provide opportunities for the integration of African-American women's concerns and perspectives into institutional policies. Integration of these women's perspectives in the construction of policies ensures a diverse perspective and avoids potential discriminatory impact for administrators within the institution.

Barriers faced

Barriers identified by African-American women such as lack of mentor, lack of suport networks, racism and negative institutional climate and culture can be addressed through institutional policies.

Lack of Mentor

To address this situation, a policy should be established which would link each mid-level administrator with a top-level administrator to form an internal support network. This linkaging would entail periodic assessments of the relationship to determine if the linkage is a good match and if it was productive for the mid-level administrator. The policy would stipulate that successful linkage to a mid-level administrator was a component of the top-level administrator's overall evaluation.

Lack of Support Networks

Coupled with the one-on-one internal linkage of a top-level administator to a mid-level African-American administrator would be institutional support for development and/or expansion of other support networks for African-American women. One internal support would be that each top-level administrator would have to

successfully link a mid-level administrator to one other support person within or outside of their institution. This would ensure a minimum of two networks of support for each mid-level manager. Institutions must also commit to providing opportunities for mid-level administrators to participate in professional development opportunities such as conferences, meetings, and trainings in order for African-American women to be in settings where they can establish 'support networks' among their peers.

Racism

Most institutions have a policy on racism. For those institutions that do not have such a policy, one needs to be developed. The key with such a policy is enforcement. This becomes a true challenge, however, when the perpetrator is also the enforcer. In other words, European American males in particular are often the ones in positions of power and authority whereby they institute policies and procedures for the institution. When these males are also the main violators of these policies, enforcement takes on a whole new meaning. Enforcement in this instance becomes synonymous with free reign. In addition, based on the researcher's seven years of professional experience working in the field of equal opportunity, proving discrimination based on race under the law is one of the most difficult forms of discrimination to prove. Nonetheless, such a policy is needed and enforcement is paramount to its effectiveness. To ensure effective enforcement of such a policy, the Chief Executive Officer and the Board of Trustees must support such a policy both in word and in deed. Lastly, policy suggestions for a negative institutional climate have been discussed in a previous section, see pages 111, 112 and 113.

One of the most prevalent barriers identified by African-American women was that of the 'old-boys' network. The 'old-boy' network is also one of the most longstanding barriers perpetrated by European American men. Since these men most often establish policies for and within higher education institutions, they most likely are not going to willingly establish a policy which would diminish or abolish their longstanding network of position, power and authority. This network has and will most likely continue to serve as the 'mode of operandi' for European American males. Farmer (1993) says, "obstacles to changing power dynamics partially result from a belief that (a) only the 'outsider' group will benefit from change and (b) these outsiders will take from the 'insiders'." (p. 213). Based upon the belief of Farmer (1993) coupled with having positions of power and authority, the researcher believes that to even suggest establishment of such a policy would be futile at best.

Supports used

An institutional policy which would link a top-level administrator to a mid-level administrator reinforces the establishment of an internal support network. Providing opportunities to establish external support networks through encouraging and providing financial support for the professional development of African-American women also demonstrates institutional support of networks. These efforts were all discussed earlier as policy solutions under the 'barriers faced' section, see pages 113, 114 and 115 above.

Coping/Advancement Strategies

A policy which would mandate coping strategies is not recommended by the researcher. It is very difficult to establish a policy which dictates individual skills and abilities that should or should not be used by African-American women to cope with their work environment. A policy on advancement strategies for African-American women, however, would be best addressed through a clear identification of the various barriers to advancement and stipulation about the ways in which the institution will address these barriers in order to minimize or alleviate them. For instance, a policy which says, there will be a minimum of 50% representation of 'women of color', including African-American women who hold positions at the senior level administration. Or, one which says, there will be an evaluation of pay rates and positions held by men compared to those held by women on an annual basis. Such policies would stipulate that adjustments will be made to ensure equitable representation and equal pay for equal work. As with all policies, they are only as effective as the enforcement behind them. The enforcement of an advancement policy should be the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer and enforced by the Board of Trustees.

Skills needed

There should be a policy which mandates participation and provides professional development monies for mid-level administrators to advance their education and/or skill level in their position, a related area or within another area in the institution. The policy would require that all mid-level administrators participate in some type of professional development activity each year. Failure to do so would be reflected in their evaluation.

Providing monies for the individual development of each mid-level adminstrator shows the institution's commitment to providing opportunities for women to prepare themselves for expanded responsibilities and/or advancement opportunities.

Racism and Sexism.

Most institutions have policies which prohibit discrimination based upon race and gender. If not, such policies should be established. The difficulty with such policies, however, is getting top-level administrators to believe in and commit to practicing anti-racist and anti-sexist behavior 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is also difficult to prove that someone is non-compliant. However, behavior and actions at work can be monitored. To facilitate acceptance of and compliance with of such policies, institutions need to commit to on-going training. Such training is essential in addressing and attempting to change attitudes and behaviors. One way to measure anti-racist and anti-sexist attitudes and behaviors is to conduct periodic assessments. One assessment can be seen in the type and number of employees who work within institutions. In other words, an assessment of the number of employees who are female, African-American, and persons of color and a determination of whether departments have hired these individuals when given an opportunity to do so can be made. Institutions should stipulate to academic and administrative departments that, when given an opportunity to hire, they are to engage in various efforts to diversify the racial and gender compositions of their respective area/department. When departments do not capitalize on such opportunities, the Chief Executive Officer should take away department positions.

How African-American women are perceived

One way to address the negative perceptions of African-American women is to develop a policy which dispels myths about African-American women. A policy which addresses the respect for, acknowledgement of skills and abilities, and provision of growth opportunities for women of color, particularly African-American women, is one way to recognize and help to dispel the myth. To reinforce this policy, top-level administrators could be accountable to conduct a semi-annual activity which promotes awareness of the contributions of women, including women of color, within their institution. This would help dymystify negative stereotypes which are often associated with African-American women.

Mentoring

A policy which would require that each top-level administrator establish a mentoring relationship with a mid-level administrator, particularly those who are African-American women, was addressed earlier within this section under Barriers faced, see pages 113 and 114. In addition, each mid-level administrator would be required to mentor an entry level African-American administrator. This would develop a pool of mentees who will most likely become mid-level managers and mentors themselves.

Institutional Practice Implications

In addition to the institutional policy changes provided in the previous section, there are practice implications for institutions which reflect the daily interactions, discussions, and activities that institutions should engage in. In this section, practice

implications are provided for each of the eight areas/themes outlined throughout this study.

Institutional Climate and Culture

Participants described their institutional climates as being unfriendly and unwelcoming. In order to cope and ultimately survive in an environment that is exclusive versus inclusive and chilly versus warm, one must have a strong sense of self, purpose and determination. The data which supports this type of work environment demonstrates the need for several integrations. First, there is a need to hire more African-American women administrators at all levels within institutions, particularly at the top levels of administration. This would help to change the environment and make it more welcoming to other African-American women. In order to achieve this, there needs to be active recruitment, hiring and retention of African-American women and other people of color to achieve racial and cultural diversity. Second, institutions should provide socialization opportunities for mid-level administrators within the organization. Socialization opportunities can occur in training sessions, orientations and recognitions which acknowledge employees' work, or campus community days. Such opportunities would assist these administrators in their understanding of the culture of the institution and provide an opportunity for administrators to meet others whom they may never see or otherwise meet on campus because of the area they work in and/or their location on campus. Third, top level adminstrators, especially those who are African-American, should also commit themselves to making the campus environment more hospitable for other African-American women.

Barriers faced

Participants indicated several common and prominent barriers that existed. These barriers are: 'the old-boys' network, lack of mentor, lack of support networks, racism and negative institutional climate. In order to break down barriers for African-American women, there are several implications for practice. First, a critical mass of African-American women at all levels within institutions, particulary at the top and middle level of adminstration needs to take place. Once there are significant numbers of African-American women, this lends itself to the establishment of a 'sista network' to combat the 'old-boy' network. These 'sistas' could work together to advocate for a change in their status and to be seen for the unique individuals they are, regardless of their race or gender. These 'sistas' would also serve as a network of support for one another, others who can relate to what an African-American women experiences on a day-to-day basis having experienced it themselves. Lastly, top-level administrators should identify and evaluate the different career paths of both women and men administrators, as well as women and African-American women administrators within their institutions on a regularly scheduled basis. Ways should then be established for removing barriers which impact individuals based upon their gender and/or race.

Supports used

Participants indicated they used supports such as colleagues at other institutions, family and prayer. Having colleagues at other institutions is beneficial and often necessary in light of the scarcity of a critical mass of African-American women within a given higher education institution. Often through professional development activities,

support networks with women from other institutions are established. These relationships can be nurtured and become lifelong relationships. African-American women also need to have a mentor and support network of colleagues at the institutions where they work. Institutions should encourage mentoring relationships and the establishment of support groups for African-American women on campus.

Coping/Advancement Strategies

Participants indicated they used coping strategies to deal with the culture within their institutions. The strategies identified were: 'playing-by-the-rules', support networks, and mentoring relationships. Practice implications relative to 'playing-by-the-rules' are straightforward. Institutions should use the same rules they establish and apply them in the same way to all their employees regardless of their gender and/or race. Often times, African-American women follow all the rules only to find out that the rules have changed or that they have been applied differently to them. This disparate treatment of African-American women is all too often a common occurrence for these women. Institutional practice implications for support networks and mentoring relationships have already been discussed in previous sections. The key to providing support to these women in their advancement efforts is institutional encouragement and support for support networks, mentoring and professional development opportunities. Monitoring the successes of institutional efforts in these areas is critical.

Skills Needed

Participants indicated they had the coping skills and educational preparation needed to advance to top-level posts. This being the case, institutions need to provide more frequent opportunities for African-American women to work in other areas of the institution. For instance, an African-American administrator who works in student affairs is given an opportunity to work in academic affairs where she would have more contact with different type administrators. This would provide an opportunity for these women to expand their areas of background experience, develop different skill competencies and make them more marketable within the institution as well as outside the institution. In addition, African-American women should not only be thought of as best occupying positions which deal with multiculturalism, minority affairs, affirmative action or in other caregiving roles which often are within the division of student affairs. These women should also be thought of and considered for positions traditionally held by men such as Treasurer, Historian or in areas of Academic Affairs. Unless African-American women are given the opportunity to utilize the various skills and abilities they have, are exposed to different projects, different program areas within the institution, the institution is not capitalizing on its human resources and depriving African-American women growth opportunities.

Racism and Sexism

Participants indicated that racism and sexism played a role in their ability to advance. They also indicated that racism played a role more often then sexism in their advancement. Wilson (1989), however, says that both "sex and race measurably affect

the upward mobility of women of color independent of degree attainment or field of study" (p. 92). Thus, institutions need to acknowledge African-American women as individuals regardless of their race and gender and allow them to obtain positions where their skills and abilities can fully be utilized. Although institutions have generally acknowledged that women have a role within institutions of higher education, many African-American women, more often than European American women, find themselves in lower level positions with less power and authority. The results of this study tell us that race and gender often impact their ability to advance. Institutions must also consistently provide training and forums for discussion to members of the campus community which address racism and sexism issues on the campus. These trainings should be mandatory for administrators and assessments made of the knowledge learned from the trainings. Open dialogues and discussions on racism and sexism will raise awareness, consciousness, dispel myths and add to the betterment of the entire campus community. It would be desirable that someone who has some deep-seeded hatred towards people of color would be able to realize that their hatred was unfounded and begin to work towards trying to get to know, understand people who are different than themselves and not just dislike those whom they do not understand.

How African-American women are perceived

Participants indicated that they were perceived differently than their white colleagues. They said they were often seen as being incapable of performing certain duties, responsibilities and/or ignored as individuals. Farmer (1993) says, "an African-American women is viewed through lenses colored by gender and racial biases; therefore

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ideas, instructions, and feedback from her may be received hostilely, in a patronizing manner or sometimes blatently ignored, with impunity. Typical responses to her words may be immediate challenge, dumbfounded silence, and/or a continuation of conversation as though she had not spoken at all" (p. 206). In response to this, institutions need to be responsive to and accepting of African-American women, their expressed opinions and ability to perform varying duties and responsibilities. Institutions need to respond through daily actions, decisions and interactions with African-American women within the campus environment. The directive for being responsive, accepting and inclusive of these women must come from the CEO to the top-level administrators so they understand the commitment, importance and effects of not participating in the inclusion of African-American women. This is a message that the CEO must reinforce consistently. It must also be practiced by the CEO and all top-level administrators on a daily basis.

Mentoring

Participants indicated that they had mentors but seldom were those mentors someone from within their own institution. Institutions should encourage, develop, support and develop a mentoring program for promising mid-level African-American administrators. Each senior level administrator, African-American or not, should commit to sponsoring, mentoring and advancing a mid-level African-American administrator. Through such a mentoring relationship, barriers to advancement can be minimized and potentially alleviated. The relationship would also assist African-American women to learn who the key players are, find out the unwritten rules, and learn which actions to

participate in and actions to avoid. These mentors would be an invaluable organizational frame of reference for African-American mid-level administrators.

Broad-based Implications

In addition to the practice implications for insitutions of higher education as discussed in the eight themes, there are other broad-based implications that are important. First, CEO's should be educated about the importance of diversifying their workforce if they wish to remain a viable institution in the global economy of the new millenium. The world is becoming a place with more people of color and fewer European Americans. Institutions need to be more reflective of the larger society. This would increase the likelihood that people of color within institutions can be more comfortable. Second, the CEO should educate the Board of Trustees of their institution about the importance of diversifying the workforce. In doing so, the CEO needs to get the Board of Trustees to accept, support, and make a commitment to hiring more people of color. Third, the CEO must promote, constantly encourage and commit to the advancement of women of color, particulary African-Americans through internal support networks. The CEO's commitment must be visible through increased numbers of women who advance to top-level positions and receive opportunities to work in other areas. The CEO can not just talk the talk, she/he must walk the walk.

Implications for African-American Women

There are several practice implications for mid-level African-American women administrators employed in higher education institutions. First, they should learn about

organizational structures, political processes and unwritten rules within their institution. Knowing the politics and unwritten rules may impact an African-American woman's ability to advance more than knowing the written rules. It is often those things which are less obvious and unspoken which impact African-American women because of issues of racism and sexism. These unwritten rules can often be learned from an internal mentor, one who is a person of color, particularly an African-American. Persons of color are often more sensitized to race and/or gender issues and can relate, often directly, as a mentor to the experiences of African-Americans. Second, African-American women should seek a mentor within their institution. This internal mentor should be someone who has been with the college for a period of time and be familiar with the workings of the institution, male or female. Third, African-American women should develop a network of support which is often important to their well-being, survival, and potentially their advancement opportunities. Fourth, African-American women should get a terminal degree (i.e. Ed.D or Ph.D). Most top-level administrative positions require a terminal degree. Farmer (1993) however says, "though the possession of a doctorate, ... is supposed to lead to upward mobility within the academe, its attainment offers little protection to African-American women from the detrimental effects of racial/sexual biases on professional mobility." (p. 199). This may be the case. However, not having this credential can provide justifiable cause, in many instances, for not considering an African-American women for advancement opportunities, especially to top level positions.

Fifth, African-American women must seek out opportunities to get the experiences that are of value to their institutions. Some of these include offering to take

on a leadership role for an institutional self-assessment study or chairing a search committee for a top-level position within the institution. These type of activities are often looked upon as opportunities to demonstrate leadership skills, and coordinate a team effort.

Sixth, African-American women must maintain a strong sense of self, be determined and never give up on their goals. Seventh, until the time when African-American women occupy top-level decision making postions, they need to learn how to bend, or work around the rules in order to maneuver and navigate through the system. Finally, African-American women can always rely on their faith and know that through God all things (good or bad) happen for a reason.

Suggestions for future research

There are a few suggestions for future research which would expand upon the scope and depth of data gathered in this study. First, a population from a more diverse geographical area would strengthen the study findings. Data from other geographic areas could then be compared and contrasted with the data gathered in the northeast region. For example, African-American women in the northeast may experience different cultural norms within predominantly European-American institutions of higher education than African-American women at historically Black institutions of the southeast. Another example would be the different ways that institutional racism expresses itself in institutions that are predominantly white versus those which are predominantly black. To be able to find similarities as well as differences and be able to infer the reasons or possible causes behind each would add significantly to this study.

Second, a study which compared the data of this study with data gathered from a study of European American mid-level women administrators would add to this study. It would be interesting to identify obstacles to advancement for European American women and compare and contrast those with that of mid-level African-American women. From a comparison of data from both studies, one would be able to identify factors other than gender which account for the different obstacles experienced. To be able to identify the similarities and the differences between mid-level African-American and European American women administrators may also be useful and of interest to a wider reading audience.

A third suggestion for future research would be to identify the salaries and the career tracks of each women interviewed and surveyed in this study.
It would be interesting to see how the salaries of these women differ and how these differences compare with the market rate for the positions they hold. Market rate is often determined by supply and demand. A comparison of those salaries with those of European American women who hold similar positions within higher education institutions would also expand the depth of the study.

Fourth, a study which provided a comprehensive listing of survival strategies identified by mid-level African-American administrators from all higher education institutions in the northeast would be helpful. Lastly, a 'how to' guide on advancement to top-level posts by successful top-level African-American women administrators would be most beneficial.

APPENDIX A

PERSONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

PERSONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interviewee: _____   Position: _____

Institution: _____   Date: _____

1. How long have you been in your current position?

2. What other positions have you held in higher education and for how long?

3. What is the institutional climate for women at your institution?

4. How has that climate affected you as an African-American woman?

5. Do you think there are barriers to advancement for African American women at your institution? If so, have you encountered any?

6. What barriers have you encountered?

7. What skills and/or abilities do you possess which you feel have helped you overcome any barriers associated with achieving your current position?

8. Do you use any support networks? (If no, skip #'s 7,8,9)

9. What are your support networks?

10. How do you use these networks?

11. What support do you feel is most important to you? Why?

12. What do you feel needs to change on your campus to minimize or eliminate barriers to advancement for African-American women?

13. What other strategies have you utilized to overcome barriers to advancement as an African-American woman?

14. Are there any other questions/issues that I may not have asked you which you feel would help my research in identifying the experiences of African-American women as mid-level managers, the barriers/struggles they face, supports used and strategies implemented?

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Informed Consent Letter

Research Purpose: To conduct in-depth interviews with a small sampling of mid-level African American women administrators in higher education institutions in order to identify their experiences as mid-level managers, the obstacles faced in pursuit of upward mobility, the support networks they use and the strategies adopted to overcome the obstacles.

CONSENT FOR VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

I volunteer to participate in this qualitative study and understand that:

1. I will be interviewed by Pamela Mitchell-Crump using a guided interview format consisting of fourteen questions.

2. The questions I will be answering address my experiences as an African American mid-level women administrator. I understand the primary purpose of this research is to identify issues that effect the upward mobility of African American women in higher education institutions in order to increase the awareness of institutional leadership.

3. The interview will be tape recorded to facilitate analysis of the data. The tape recordings will be maintained at the home of Pamela Mitchell-Crump in her designated work area. At the end of the study the tape recording will be destroyed to insure the information is unavailable to anyone else.

4. My name will not be used, nor will I be identified personally in any way or at any time. I understand it will be necessary to identify participants in the dissertation by position and institution type (e.g. a Program Director, Assistant or Associate Dean, Dean of a 2 or 4 year public, private institution said ...).

5. I may withdraw from part or all of this study at any time.

6. I have the right to review material prior to the final oral exam or other publication.

7. I understand that results from this survey will be included in Pamela Mitchell-Crump's doctoral dissertation and may also be included in manuscripts submitted to professional journals for publication.

8. I am free to participate or not to participate without prejudice.

_____ _____   _____ _____
Researcher's Signature   Date   Participant's Signature   Date

APPENDIX C

SURVEY COVER LETTER

Dear Administrator,

There is a limited amount of research and literature available on African-American women in higher education, especially those in mid-level administrative positions. Your input is needed to assist in correcting this deficiency.

In an attempt to reach as many African-American women in the Northeast as possible who are deans, associate deans, assistant deans, program directors and those with similar titles, I am sending this survey to subscribers of the newsletter <u>Women in Higher Education</u>, members of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and the National Association of Women in Education (NAWE). If you receive more than one questionnaire or do not fit one of these position categories, please pass this on to another African-American women in these categories.

As part of my dissertation research on mid-level African-American women administrators advancement, support networks, and strategies I am asking for your help by completing the enclosed survey and return it by May 14th. My hopes are that the survey will yield valuable information on the plight of African-American women in higher education administration.

This survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Your individual responses will remain confidential. I am interested only in group statistical data.

Please return the survey in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope by **May 14th**.

Your response to this survey is crucial to the advancement of African-American women in higher education.

I wish to thank you in advance for taking your valuable time to complete this survey.

Thank you,

Pamela Mitchell-Crump
60 Old Stage Road
Westfield, MA 01085

Enclosures

APPENDIX D

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions for Answering Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8. For each statement, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree. There are 7 possible responses: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Slightly Agree (SLA), Neutral (N), Slightly Disagree.(SLD), Disagree (D), or Strongly Disagree (SD). Show your response by circling one of the 7 choices. There are no correct responses to these questions – the best responses are those that reflect your feelings and opinions.

1. There are barriers/obstacles to advancement for mid-level women administrators where I work. (Please circle one.)

SA   A   SLA   N   SLD   D   SD

Please indicate the extent to which the following barriers are prevalent where you work by circling one number for each barrier. (The number 1 indicates a barrier is widely prevalent, and 7 indicates it is not prevalent. Circling number 4 indicates that you are neutral or undecided.)

	Prevalent			N/U			Not Prevalent
1.1 'old-boys' network	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.2 lack of mentor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.3 educational preparation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.4 lack of support network	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.5 racism	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.6 sexism	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.7 homophobia	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.8 negative institution climate/culture	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.9 fewer promotions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.10 job segregation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.11 lack of commitment to diversity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1,12 lack of career path	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.13 lack of professional development opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.14 other _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(please specify)

2. I have <u>not</u> encountered advancement obstacles where I work. (Please circle one).

SA   A   SLA   N   SLD   D   SD

Please indicate the extent to which you have experienced the following barriers where you work by circling one number for each barrier. (The number 1 indicates that you have personally experienced a barrier often, and 7 indicates you rarely face a barrier. The number 4 indicates that you are neutral or undecided.)

	Often			N/U			Rarely
2.1 'old-boys' network	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.2 lack of mentor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.3 educational preparation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.4 lack of support network	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.5 racism	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.6 sexism	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.7 homophobia	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.8 negative institution climate/culture	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.9 fewer promotions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.10 job segregation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.11 lack of commitment to diversity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2,12 lack of career path	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.13 lack of professional development opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.14 other _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

        (please specify)

3. As an African American woman administrator, I have experienced role conflict at work. [*Role conflict means to have multiple responsibilities/functions within an institution, which are not clearly defined and/or are at odds with certain responsibilities.*] (Please circle one).

SA   A   SLA   N   SLD   D   SD

4. I utilize strategies to cope with the culture of my institution. (Please circle one).
SA   A   SLA   N   SLD   D   SD

Please indicate the extent to which you have used each of the following coping strategies where you work. (Circle one number for each strategy. 1 indicates you use a strategy very often, and 7 indicates you rarely use a strategy. 4 indicates that you are neutral or undecided.)

	Very Often			N/U			Rarely
4.1 "play by the rules"	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.2 support networks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.3 mentoring relationships	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.4 other _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(please specify)

5. Indicate the extent to which each of the following actions might help you advance upward in your administrative career. (Please circle one number for each strategy. 1 indicates that an action is very useful, and 7 indicates it would not be useful. 4 indicates that you are neutral or undecided.)

	Very Useful			N/U			Not Useful
5.1 obtain a Ph.D. degree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.2 establish professional support networks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.3 gain political support	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.4 establish mentoring relationships	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.5 obtain administrative experience in a variety of areas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.6 other _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(please specify)

6. Indicate the extent to which each of the following has positively or negatively effected your ability to advance to a top-level position within the academe. (Please circle one number for each thing. 1 indicates that it has greatly helped, and 7 indicates it has greatly hindered your ability to advance. 4 indicates that you are neutral or undecided.)

	Greatly Helped			N/U			Hindered Greatly
6.1 age	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.2 race	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.3 educational preparation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.4 background experience	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.5 political contacts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.6 other _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(please specify)

7. I feel I am paid less than people of other races who do similar work at my institution.
(Please circle one.)

SA   A   SLA   N   SLD   D   SD

8. I am happy at my work? (Please circle one)

SA   A   SLA   N   SLD   D   SD

ADDITIONAL PERSONAL/EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

9. Name: (optional). *First* _____*Last*
_____ .

10. What is your age? _____ years.

11. What is your title? (Please circle one.) *If Other, Please Specify*
_____ .

Dean   Associate Dean   Assistant Dean   Program Director   Other

12. What division/department do you work in?
_____ .

13. What type of institution do you currently work at? (Please circle all that apply.)

Women's   4-year   Public   Liberal Arts

Co-educational   2-year   Private   . Research

If Other, Please Specify

_____ .

14. How long have you been in your current position? _____ years.

15. How long have you worked at your current institution? _____ years.

Thank you for taking time to complete this survey! Please return your completed survey by mailing it using the self–addressed/stamped envelope. Your assistance is greatly appreciated!

Feel Free to Add Comments Here:

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APPENDIX E

FIRST REMINDER CARD

FIRST REMINDER

Dear Survey Recipient,

This postcard serves as a reminder! I hope you take a few minutes to fill out the survey you received on 'Advancement, Support Networks, and Strategies of African-American mid-level Administrators.' Your input is critical to the success of this research. Thank you again for taking your valuable time to help.

Sincerely,

Pamela Mitchell-Crump

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APPENDIX F

SECOND REMINDER

SECOND REMINDER

You recently received the Survey on Advancement, Support Networks
and Strategies of African-American mid-level Women Administrators.
If you have already returned it, I appreciate your time. If you have not
had the time to complete it, please do so by May 14, 1999.

Thank you.

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