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THE TREATMENT FEMALE ADMINISTRATORS RECEIVE FROM FEMALE
FOLLOWERS AND THE RELATIONSHIP AND AFFECT IT HAS ON THEIR
POSITIONS

By
JENNIFER RAE BURNETT

M.Ed. in Educational Leadership, University of Montana
B.A., Elementary Education, University of Montana

Dissertation
presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Doctorate of Education
In Educational Leadership

The University of Montana
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Approved by:
Scott Whittenberg
Dean of the Graduate School

Dr. Frances L. O'Reilly, Chair
Department of Educational Leadership

Dr. John Matt
Department of Educational Leadership

Dr. Roberta Evans
Department of Educational Leadership

Dr. Grace Gardner
Director of UM Summer

Dr. Bruce Whitehead
Department of Educational Leadership

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Educational Leadership

The Treatment Female Administrators Receive from Female Followers and the Relationship and Affect it has on their Position

Chairperson: Dr. Frances L. O'Reilly

Abstract: The barriers and support between female subordinates and female administrators are crucial elements in a successful administrative career. While much research has been conducted on men versus women in leadership positions as well as the treatment subordinates receive from their supervisors, there is little research on the subordinate's treatment of the leader and how it affects their position.

The purpose of this non-experimental mixed methods study was to ascertain the relationship among female administrators and the support and barriers they experience from female subordinates, as well as how it affects their experience and longevity in their leadership positions. Participants included 78 female administrators from the population of 213 female administrators in the state of Montana.

A 21 question, 7-point Likert scaled questionnaire was administered through the University of Montana's Qualtrics survey management system; followed by 6 different phone interviews being conducted with the 3 highest and the 3 lowest quantitative scores. While ratings and responses showed the differences between support and barriers and the ranking of the affects the qualitative portion helped to give reasoning and understanding to the quantitative responses and gives a broader perspective to the effects of support and barriers from female subordinates on female administrators.

Future studies should include a random sample that contains a more diverse representation of female administrators from around the country. Future studies should also look at decreasing the number of demographic questions.

Keywords: Queen Bee, Longevity, Female Administrators, Female Followers

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my daughter, Belle. Know that you will always be my greatest achievement. Thank you for watching all my PowerPoint practices and dealing with a mother who is better at writing papers than making dinner.

I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Jonathan Burnett. Thank you for supporting me, encouraging me and bringing me enormous gallons of Diet Coke when I was beyond frustrated. This doctorate would not have happened without you.

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This dissertation derived from my experiences both as a student and teacher of education. Watching the experiences of my own teachers, administrators and co-workers has and continued to be an eye-opening experience. After this dissertation my admiration for my administrators as well as my colleagues continues to grow exponentially. Neither position is easy and each comes with its own set of support and barriers. However, it is important that anyone involved in a career remembers the power their actions and words can have on their co-workers and leaders. It is important to always put oneself in someone else's shoes before acting or passing judgment.

This dissertation would not have been possible without my parents, Kelly and Jolinda Murphy. Through their 38 years of marriage, raising my amazing siblings Becky, Abby, Zachary, and me, they always managed to have time to support us no matter the endeavor. They instilled in all of us a love of serving others and a hard work/can do attitude that is hard to come by these days. They set the bar high, leading by example. I strive to make them proud every day. I love you, Mom and Dad.

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Chapter One: Introduction to the Study

Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of people to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2016). Stogdill (1948) defined leadership as “the process (act) of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts toward goal setting and goal achievement” (p. 3). This described the way the author believed that leadership was not a mere individual trait but a process of influence upon others. Stogdill (1948) also defined the purpose of that process as: “goal setting and goal achievement” (p. 4). In addition, some define leadership in terms of the power relationship that exists between leaders and followers (Northouse, 2016). While women began teaching in the colonial era it wasn’t until the mid-1800’s that women began dominating the field of education as deliverers of it. That lies in stark contrast to today, where women continue to make up the majority of the teaching field but hold only half to a little over half of the educational administration positions.

Even though K-12 education is largely a female enterprise, men dominate the chief executive's office in the nation's nearly 14,000 districts, numbers that look especially bleak given that the pool of talent is deep with women. Women make up 76 percent of teachers, 52 percent of principals, and 78 percent of central-office administrators, according to federal data and the results of a recent national survey. Yet they account for less than a quarter of all superintendents, according to a survey conducted this summer by AASA, the School Superintendents Association. But that number represents improvement since 2000, when 13 percent were women. (Superville, 2016, p.1)

Overall, 54% of public school principals were female. There was a higher percentage of public school principals who were female in primary schools (67%), than in middle schools (40%), high schools (33%), and combined schools (43%) (Taie &

Goldring, 2019, p. 3). “The search for superintendents also traditionally has pulled from districts’ pool of secondary school principals. Women, who were more likely to be elementary principals, were less likely to be immediately tapped” (Superville, 2019, p. 2).

The dominant question remains why, when the percentage of women is so strong in the teaching workforce, are they underrepresented as a proportion of educational administrators? Why does the move to a higher ranking position account for a 26% decrease in female presence? Is it politics, the high rate of turnover; is the job not advantageous for a female who is also a mother? There are many factors that could contribute into the drop in proportion of female administrators compared to female educators. However, this study aims to examine the support and barriers female administrators receive from female followers and the affects it has on their position.

Statement of the Problem

The problem this study was designed to address is: The support and barriers that female administrators receive from female subordinates affects the enjoyment of their position, ability to do their job affectively, is a major reason to leave their positions, and impacts the longevity in their positions.

When looking at the experiences of female administrators it is important to note that support and barriers look different to every individual; it is important to note that perception plays a pivotal role in how support and barriers are interpreted. Shepard (1998) gave a detailed description of perception as a reality to the person who is doing the perceiving. This perception may not be the truth, but that is not of primary concern to the person making the decision. Perception is what an individual understands or believes to be true.

As more and more women attempt and succeed at breaking the “glass ceiling” in the school administration sector it becomes increasingly important that female administrators surround themselves with the best staff possible that will help them succeed. Staff members whom they trust, who will support them and work positively for them. Much of the literature concerning women and leadership discusses the difference between men and women as leaders. More particularly, the strengths and weaknesses of both genders and how these strengths and weaknesses play out during a career. But what about the women interacting with women work situation and how it affects those involved? The *queen bee* syndrome describes women at the top of the organizational structure exerting their leadership skills including their power and control over their followers. Queen Bee syndrome was first defined by G.L. Staines, T.E. Jayaratne, and C. Tavriss in 1974. It describes a woman in a position of authority who views or treats colleagues and subordinates more critically if they are female. According to psychologist Dr. Audrey Nelson, it encompasses behaviors ranging from women disparaging typically feminine traits to being unsupportive of moves to address gender inequality (Collins, 2018). The ultimate Queen Bee is a woman who makes it to the top of her profession, but refuses to help other women reach the same heights. “Sometimes queen bee behavior entails deliberate attempts to ‘behave in ways more typical of a man,’ which, of course, can damage relations with other females” (Heim & Murphy, 2001, p. 57).

But what if we flipped that scenario? What if, as women, we are the biggest supporters for fellow females to gain some success but the minute they grab that success we begin to think of all the reasons the *queen bee* doesn’t deserve that success, we begin to talk behind their back and judge everything from the way they handle student discipline to how they dress for “dress down day” (Wiseman, 2016).

Purpose of the Study:

While much of the existing research on women in leadership focuses on the differences in traits, skills, dispositions and effectiveness of men and women in leadership positions, there is limited research on how the support and barriers of women leaders by their female subordinates affects the position.

Other respondents (female teachers) said the internal and external political issues inherent within administrative jobs were turn offs. For example, one respondent, the wife of a current school administrator, composed a top ten listing of inhibiting factors; 1. Politics 2. State Requirements 3. Politics 4. Small Town B.S. 5. Politics 6. Teacher Wanna Be's 7. Politics 8. Politics 9. Politics 10. Politics. (Adams & Hambright, 2004, p. 210)

The purpose of this dissertation was therefore, to ascertain the relationship between the support and barriers that female administrators receive from female staff members and how it affects the experience and longevity of their leadership position. For the purpose of this study, educational leadership positions are defined as either a superintendent, principal, or vice principal. The population studied was any female in a leadership position in the state of Montana. In the state of Montana there are 405 school districts representing 823 schools that educate 147,785 students.

Quantitative Research Question:

According to Boudah (2011), research questions clearly and specifically identify the topic one aims to investigate. To measure the relationship, if any, between the support and barriers that female administrators receive from female followers and the affects it has on their position the study will use the following research questions to guide this study: (a) What is the relationship between the support and barriers from female subordinates and the enjoyment of your job as a

female in a leadership position? (b) What is the relationship between the support and barriers from female subordinates and the longevity in the field of administration for a female?

According to Creswell (2009), “Quantitative research question inquire about the relationships among variable that the investigator seeks to know. They are frequently used in social science research and especially in survey studies” (p. 132) According to Hoy (2010), quantitative studies test objective theories that examine the relationship between variables. In the present study, support and barriers will serve as the independent variables and experience and longevity of females in an educational leadership position will serve as the dependent variables.

Qualitative Central Question:

“The procedures of qualitative research, or its methodology, are characterized as inductive, emerging, and shaped by the researcher’s experience in collecting and analyzing the data” (Creswell, p. 22, 2013). The qualitative inquiry in this study was approached as Narrative Research; which explores the life of an individual. “As a method, it begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals” (Creswell, p. 70, 2013).

The central question that will guide the qualitative portion of the study is; can you elaborate on the circumstances that led to your high/low ranking of encountered support and barriers from female subordinates? This question will support and expound upon the information received in the quantitative study.

Definitions of Terms:

In order to better understand this study, the following definitions of terms was used:

Feminism: “At its core, feminism, is about equality of men and women, not ‘sameness’.” (Caprino, 2017, p. 2).

Follower: “Those toward whom leadership is directed,” (Northouse, 2016, p. 7).

Glass Ceiling: “The invisible barrier preventing women from ascending into elite leadership positions,” (Northouse, 2016, p. 399).

Leadership: “A process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal,” (Kruse, 2013, p. 5).

O.P.I.: “Montana Office of Public Instruction is the state education agency of Montana,” (MT.gov, 2018, para. 1).

Phenomenon: “an occurrence, a circumstance, or a fact that is perceptible by the senses; an unusual, significant, or unaccountable fact or occurrence,” (Privitera, 2017, pg. 212).

Queen Bee: “a woman in a position of authority who views or treats colleagues and subordinates more critically if they are female,” (Staines, Jayaratne & Tavis, 1974, p. 3).

Subordinate: “An employee ranked below another employee in term of seniority or office hierarchy,” (Weber, 1919, p. 17).

Delimitations of the Study:

Steinberg (2011) stated that the delimitations of a study help explain the inclusion criteria of a study. The population for this study will include all the female administrators in Montana from K-12 public schools. The administrator inclusion criterion is that they must be 18 years of age or older; this will allow participants to give legal consent without permission from anyone

else, such as a guardian. Female respondents must also have held a school leadership position for a minimum of two years; and their experience does not to be consecutively held to the same school.

Limitations of the Study:

Hoy (2010) stated that the limitations of a quantitative study help describe the general weaknesses of a study. Salkind (2012) stated that “survey research allows the researcher to get a broad picture of whatever is being studied. If sampling is conducted properly, it is not hard to generate to millions of people, as is done on a regular basis with campaign polling” (p. 203). However, in this study the participants will not be randomly selected making this study a non-experimental design by nature. The second limitation of this study is that the sample will not be random, therefore the results of this study cannot be generalized back to the population. The third limitation of the study is that only one type of subordinate is being studied, women; as opposed to men and women combined collectively.

The fourth limitation in this study is an expectation that respondents of this survey are accurate and truthful. The experiences asked to be relived may prove to be difficult or painful to relive, and consequently the subjects might not want to share their stories and/or their experiences, respondents may be too embarrassed or ashamed to relay certain facts. Hoy (2010) stated that by nature survey research is limited by truthfulness of the participants. Although the researcher will rely on the participants providing accurate information, there is no way to guarantee that all participants are providing truthful responses. The fourth limitation includes the threats to internal validity. Creswell (2009) stated, “Experimental researchers need to identify potential threats to the internal validity of their experiments and design them so that these threats will not likely arise or are minimized” (p. 162). “Internal validity threats are experimental

procedures, treatments, or experiences of the participants that threaten the researcher's ability to draw correct inferences from the data about the population in an experiment" (Creswell, 2009, p. 162).

Significance of the Study:

While much of the existing research on women in leadership positions focuses on the men versus women in leadership positions, there is limited research on how the support and barriers from women subordinate's affects women in leadership positions. There is a need for more data and documentation about the support and barriers of female administrators from their female followers and whether it impacts their position. The significance of this study is far-reaching and encompasses a wide audience of female teachers in an educational leadership position will benefit by understanding the learned experiences of women before them. The expected benefits of surveying candidates and understanding their stories will also help school districts as they look to hire and retain female leaders and a potentially, how men are educated.

Where female principals are appointed they will find little help in the academic and professional literature concerning the lived experience of principals since this literature has an androcentric bias. Moreover, since it is arguably the case that different geographic locations heighten differences in the lived experiences of beginning principals, the androcentric bias in the literature may be even more problematic for female principals. (Dunshea, 1998, p. 203)

Summary:

In summary, this dissertation is designed to examine the relationship between female administrators and the support and barriers from women subordinates and the affect they have on both the experience and longevity in their position as a female school administrator in Montana. The research being conducted for this mixed methods study focuses on the research question of, what was the impact of support and barriers from female subordinates in your leadership position? Although existing research discusses the issues that women face in a male dominated position there is limited research on the effect of female to female support and barriers in the school administration area. This study will help fill this gap in literature. The results of this study will help female administrators, potential female teachers looking to enter the field of school administration. This chapter introduced the study, stated the problem and purpose of the study. This chapter also described the two research question that will help guide this study. The delimitations and limitations were acknowledged as well as a comprehensive definition of terms was detailed, and the significance of the study was described. Chapter two will explain the purpose of the review of literature and address the quality indicators of a literature review as designed by Boote and Beile (2005). Chapter two will also provide a comprehensive review of literature on the history of females in administration in regards to this study.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

At its simplest, a literature review evaluates and explains the existing body of research on a given subject. The author uses critical thinking skills to review the strengths and weaknesses of prior research and to discuss the themes of the collective body of work. On a deeper level, the literature review should provide the reader with a clear understanding of what is and what is not within the scope of the investigation with supporting discussion to warrant inclusion and exclusion (Boote & Beile, 2005). Evaluation of a literature review should determine whether the author met this objective. This literature review for this dissertation was conducted according to guidelines provided by Boote and Beile (2005), who suggested five categories of criteria for analyzing literature reviews. The first category, *Coverage*, evaluates both the completeness of the literature review, a chronological history examining societal/sociological trends in careers and the author's justification for the content of the final product. The author must thoroughly search the literature and sift through the results to determine what should be included and discussed, what should be mentioned, and what should be discarded. Support for these judgments should be clear and complete. (Boote & Beile, 2005, p. 7)

Boote and Beile's (2005) second category, *Synthesis*, evaluates the author's success in summarizing the existing literature and identifying remaining work on the subject. This category addresses conflicting information in the literature and the author's ability to promote or refine theories to resolve such conflicts. This demonstration of critical thinking is evidence of the skills commensurate with a doctoral degree (Boote & Beile, 2005). This thought is echoed by Pan and Lopez (2008) who stated that the major purpose of a literature review is to synthesize literature in order to arrive at defensible conclusions.

Methodology is Boote and Beile's third category, assessing the author's success in critically discussing current and prior methods including strengths and flaws. Methodology may also include current trends in findings within the research. The fourth category is *Significance*, where the author should discuss both the practical and scholarly significance of the research problem (Boote & Beile, 2005). *Rhetoric* is the final fifth category that embodies good organization and unambiguous discussion.

In line with Boote and Beile (2005), the first goal of this chapter is to inform the reader of the previous research which has contributed significantly to the history of women in administration, gender issues, politics, glass ceiling, experiences and *queen bees*/administrators and worker bees/followers. The second goal of this chapter is to explain the rationale of selecting female administrators in Montana. The third goal of this chapter is to explicate the quantitative design as the most appropriate method for investigating the problems associated with the negative treatment that female administrators receive from female followers. The fourth goal of this chapter is to provide clear and concise evidence for a discussion in a well-organized manner. Lastly, the fifth goal of this chapter is to portray the study's significance in a manner that is strengthened by providing existing knowledge in the field.

History of Women in Leadership

Although women in administration began appearing in the early 1900's they are still underrepresented in the field of educational administration. A look back through history and a comparison of numbers helps to better understand how female administrators got to where they are today. Statistics help to paint a clearer picture of female representation and are included here as well.

Women have outnumbered men on college campuses since 1988. They have earned at least one-third of law degrees since 1980 and accounted for one-third of medical schools students by 1990. Yet they have not moved up to positions of prominence and power in America at anywhere near the rate that should have followed. In broad range of fields, their presence in top leadership positions – as equity law partners, medical school deans, and corporate executive officers-remain stuck at 5%-20%. Overall, there is an enormous gap between the fortunes of a small number of prominent women at the very top of their fields and the vast majority of women nationwide. A gulf is widening between American women and their counterparts in peer nations as well: Although the United States ranked first in women's educational attainment on the World Economic Forum's 2017 Global Gender Gap Index of 144 countries, it ranked 19th in women's economic participation and opportunity and 96th in women's political empowerment. (Warner, Ellmann, & Boesch, 2018, 7)

The inequities associated with gender imbalance in leadership require national attention. Currently of 435 seats in the House of Representatives, 84 are women; of the 100 senators, 23 are women. 44 women have served or are serving as governors in the United States. Women are

nearly half the workforce, yet make up only 12% of top executives and hold 12.4% of board seats in 500 of the country's largest companies.

The percentage of women in C-suite positions among the top 1,000 U.S. companies by revenue has risen slightly in the last year but is still dramatically lower than that of men, a new study found. The study, conducted in early 2019 by organization consulting firm Korn Ferry, examined the percentage of women in top jobs by title and by industry. The analysis found that across the most prominent C-suite titles, an average of 25% of the top leaders are women, up slightly from 23% a year ago. (Stych, 2019, p. 2)

As the education world continues to move into the future the numbers for female principals continues to rise. The U.S. Department of Education reported in their April 2016 issue that women in principal positions in public schools increase from 25% in 1987-88 to 52% in 2011-12. Education Week posted in their January, 2019 article a slight increase with 54.2% of principals in the U.S. as females. While this positive change is encouraging there is still the question as to why the ratio of female teacher to female principals is still disproportionate.

A brief example of a pioneer in educational administration gives a small snapshot at the budding career development of women in education in the beginning of the 20th century.

Ella Flagg Young savored the magnitude of her accomplishment. In 1909 when she became the first woman superintendent of the Chicago schools...Young's enthusiasm for women's school leadership reflected the palpable momentum among women's activists of the time. After all, in a mere fifty years' women had progressed from having few means of employment outside the home to dominating their new profession of teaching, accounting for around 70 percent of all teachers by 1900. (Blount, 1998)

World War II saw a major shift of women into more male dominated roles as the men went overseas to fight. These roles reversed once again as soldiers came back and claimed their place back in the job market. Education administration was not immune to this phenomenon and women who had obtained principalship and superintendent's positions found themselves back in the classroom.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, thousands of women succeeded in attaining school leadership positions during what Elisabeth Hansot and David Tyack have called a "golden age" for women school administrators. During this time school districts added formal bureaucratic structures and administrative layers, a trend that resulted in a proliferation of administrative positions. Women moved into these positions, becoming lead teachers, teaching principals, supervisors, mid-level administrators, and sometimes ultimately superintendents. (Hansot & Tyack, 1981, p. 13)

The Department of Elementary School Principals report indicated that the percentage of female elementary school principals had declined rapidly after World War II. Where in 1928 women had accounted for 55 percent of elementary school principals, they held only 41 percent in 1948, 38 percent in 1958, and finally only 22.4 percent in 1968. (NEA, 1968, p. 174)

"Few other published reports besides those of the Department of Superintendence documented the existence of women superintendents from the 1920s through the 1960s. The 1960s, however witnessed the emergence of the modern women's movement" (Blount, 1998, p. 20).

“In 1976, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare prepared a report that estimated the distribution for full-time public school superintendents and assistants combined as 94.6 percent male and 5.4 percent female” (Edson et. al, 1980, p. 205).

“Eventually, however, the AASA (American Association of School Administrators) took seriously the need for accurate data on women superintendents. A 1981 AASA report revealed that women held 9 percent of superintendencies in 1950, 1 percent in 1972 and an estimated .5 percent in 1980” (Marshall & Ortiz, 1988, p. 145).

To gather the most up-to-date, comprehensive information on women and the superintendency, AASA recently commissioned a nationwide study of women in the superintendence and women in central-office positions. Using the AASA membership database and data from Market Data Retrieval, 2,500 women superintendents were identified and mailed surveys. An additional 3,000 surveys were sent to women holding central-office positions of assistant superintendent or higher. Responses came from 723 superintendents and 472 central-office personnel – nearly 30% of the total population of women superintendents. (Grogan & Brunner, 2005, p. 1)

This study has gained significant media attention, prompting outsiders as well as insiders to take a hard look at why are there so few women in the top position when the majority of educators are women and women comprise at least half of the students in educational leadership programs. (Grogan & Brunner, 2005, p. 3)

Logan (1998) found that in school administration programs, the percentage of women students now outnumber men. A 1997 survey of member institutions in the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) showed that 74% of certification programs in

respondent institutions had from 51% to 72% women. Thirty percent of these institutions had more than 60% women students in these programs. The survey response rate was 50%. Results from this survey correspond to other research that shows women entering educational administration programs in increasing numbers since the 1970s (Cunanan, 1994; Grogan, 1996; Edson, 1988).

Bell and Chase (1993) reported that women have made up at least half of educational administration program enrollments since the mid-80s. Grogan (1996) said that the number of women awarded superintendent certificates increased nationally between 1970 and 1984 by 15%. Women enrolled in doctoral educational administration programs reflect only a slightly lower percentage than certification enrollments. Logan (1998) showed that the UCEA survey showed 59% of respondents with a majority of women doctoral students. Of those with less than 51% women in educational administration doctoral programs, 30% had between 41% to 50% women. The percentage of women completing these doctoral programs experienced the greatest gain after 1980. Thirty-seven percent of reporting UCEA institutions had 41% to 50% women doctoral completers since 1980, 30% had between 51% and 60%, and one institution reported over 51% women doctoral completers after 1980.

In other research Gupton and Slick (1996) found that women often believe that in order to be hired for administrative positions they must be better prepared than men; therefore, more women than men educational administrative aspirants may seek a doctorate degree. Bowles (1990) said that the low percentage of women employed in school administration line positions cannot be attributed to a lack of aspiration to be principal or superintendent. With the number of women who have entered and completed educational administration programs since 1980, lack of

aspiration is clearly not a barrier. More women than men are entering the applicant pool. Work remains to be done to gain attention for women and minorities as potential school leaders.

The 2015 Mid-Decade Survey also provides information on education preparation and mobility. More than half (60.5%) of all women superintendents have a doctorate or another professional degree (i.e., law, master of business administration). This is a statistically significantly higher percentage than male superintendents (49.7%). Both female superintendents of color and white female superintendents are more likely to have a doctorate/professional degree than male superintendents, (Robinson, Shakeshaft, Grogan & Newcomb, 2017, pg. 5).

Although the number of studies from a woman's perspective has increased, Christman (2003) argues that qualitative feminist research is trivialized and viewed as a threat to the stakeholders of the status quo because it challenges basic assumptions through alternative paradigms. Others point out that most findings are over- or under generalized. For instance, Brown and Irby (2006) caution that a study that generalizes to all principals from a sample that is predominantly male is likely to misrepresent women's experience.

Grogan and Shakeshaft (2011) summarize this nicely by stating that the majority of studies on women leaders are reported in dissertations; few white men study women or people of color; and studies have shifted from gender comparisons to studies of women in their own right...over the past twenty years there has been a slight increase in the percentage of studies of women in leadership that use qualitative methods (from 55 percent to 61 percent of all studies) and a decrease in quantitative approaches (from 40 percent to 28 percent of all studies).

Although occasional gender comparison studies have continued to be published, the bulk of the studies from 1985 to 2009 are single-sex (female) inquiries. These studies add to the literature on the man approaches to affective leadership and now provide a starting point for examining leadership through a number of additional perspectives. (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011, p. 32)

The above literature supports the need for continued research on female only data and their experience obtaining and holding leadership positions.

Brief History of Montana Women and Education

Although Montana's women did not obtain full suffrage until 1914, they have participated in school elections since the 1880's. Helen Clarke and Alice Nichols were the first two women elected to public office in Montana in 1882 as county school superintendents. By 1890 twelve of Montana's sixteen county superintendents were women. May Trumper was Montana's first female State Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1916. Since Trumper's election all but one of Montana's state superintendents has been women. (montanawomenshistory.org, 2014)

The first two women graduated from the University of Montana in 1898 while 1902 saw the graduation of Jeannette Rankin. Jeannette Rankin was an American politician and women's rights advocate, and the first woman to hold federal office in the United States. She was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives as a Republican from Montana in 1916, and again in 1940. 1902 was also the year the U of M hired its first female professional librarian. Mary Stewart was hired in 1907 as the UM's first Dean of Women. The first female ASUM president, Jane Jaffers, was elected in 1945. Some more notable dates for female progress at the University of Montana include; opening of the Women's Action center (1971), opening of the Women's Resource Center (1972), the Montana Women's History Project was established in 1975 and the Women's Studies Program was approved at the UM in 1992. Jackie Mohr was the first female to be named regents professor in 2008 in the state of Montana and in 2016 Sheila Sterns became the first female University of Montana president (Sea-change, 2019).

Women in the Military

The armed services tout themselves as a meritocracy, where people from all walks of life can enlist and then move up through perseverance, commitment and hard work. For women, however, this promise has proved elusive. While some of the barriers for women moving into the highest officer ranks have been slowly lifting, women still aren't promoted at the same rate as their male counterparts. (Youssef, 2019, p. 2)

In the early 1990's the Department of Defense changed its policies so women were allowed to serve in a greater capacity in the military. Through the past couple decades, the number of women in armed services has increased rapidly. Women now make up 20% of the Air Force, 19% of the Navy, 15% of the Army and close to 9% of the Marine Corps (Dever, 2019). While these numbers show a positive change, leadership positions in the military still remain, for the most part, out of reach for females in the service. Army Maj. Gen. Maria Barrett and her sister Brig. Gen. Paula Lodi became the first sisters in the Army's 244-year history to reach the rank of general. Their careers and those of female generals and admirals before them help to illustrate the numerous barriers but also the promise for women leaders in the military (Youssef, 2019).

January 2017 saw the first female Marines graduating from infantry school while 2016 the first female soldiers became infantry officers. (task and purpose.com, 2017) In February 2018, there were 63 female admirals and generals on active duty in the five services compared to 30 in 2000 (military.com, 2019). The given numbers and statistics help to show that women moving up the leadership ladder is still an issue not only in the education world but the military as well.

Gender Issues

While the purpose of this research is on female to female interaction, it is important that when looking at the history of women in administration that gender role play be acknowledged and understood. As more and more women obtain the role of administrator the differences in leadership between men and women continues to be an issue and an important topic to continue to study.

Gender relations are power relations. Often what it means to be a 'woman is to be powerless (quiet, obedient, accommodating). A 'real man,' by contrast, is powerful (outspoken, in control, able to impose his will), particularly in relation to women. These gender roles tend to perpetuate the power inequalities that they are based on. (Koester, 2015, p. 2)

Henig and Henig (2004) said that this characterization of power conjures images of the destructive force of power, reciprocal exchanges, and the ability to create relationships with the powerful influence of gender controlling the process. The traditional conceptualization of power is centered on patriarchal values wherein women played a subordinate role in gender relations. Economic power has been traditionally enjoyed by men and women stay at home to raise families or when they join the work force and are relegated to fields that pay less money while men enjoy employment in the more productive sectors; while Bourdieu (2001) said that traditional relationships have been structured in ways which primarily satisfy the desires of men.

Guramatunhu-Mudiwa (2015) a writer for *Advancing Women in Leadership Journal* added that under traditional power relationships, the appropriate behavior is for women to respect and to follow religiously the social norms of respecting male domination. It is important to

understand the idea that women and men need to be aware of the attitudes held toward women leaders and the extent to which gender bias, that set of attitudes which creates a set of expectations of another's ability by sex, and occupations influence attitudes.

Looking back through the ages Tallerico and Blount (2004) found that while females dominate the ranks of teachers, the field of educational leadership has historically been comprised of males. Similarly, Lárusdóttir (2007) affirmed that:

The hegemony of masculine values over feminine in educational administration is not new. Educational administration as an academic field is a little over a hundred years old and for most of this time women have been largely absent from the field. (p. 263)

Sheryl Sandberg and Rachel Thomas (2019) wrote:

Women are outnumbered in corporate America from the entry level to the C-suite. It's been this way for years, and we need to get real about why. Either men are more talented, harder working, and more ambitious than women-or something unfair is happening. (p. 1)

Questions abound about whether differences in leadership style and preferences are gender related. Without drawing distinct gender lines, it is possible to discuss a set of leadership styles and preferences often associated with the feminine. They include the preference for democratic rather than autocratic organizations, and cultures that are inclusive and collaborative.

A closer look at the typical career paths of men and women in education shows that the pipeline to district-level leadership is narrower for roles that are dominated by women, particularly the elementary school principalship. One plausible explanation is that leaders of high schools (disproportionately men) tend to be perceived as better candidates for

superintendent, given that high schools are typically larger institutions with bigger budgets, more staff and students, larger facilities, more differentiated structures and mission, and far more community visibility. Further, the size of high schools requires principals to play stereotypically masculine roles leading and managing adults rather than stereotypically feminine roles building relationship with individual young children.

(Maranto, Carroll, Cheng & Teodoro, 2018). Literature indicates that women leaders often have an abiding concern for children, especially for marginal students and those without advocates.

Female superintendents gave advice to aspiring female superintendents by responding to the following open-ended question. What advice would you offer to a female aspiring to become a superintendent? Participants advice was categorized by common themes as shown. The top three categories by percent of responses were (a) learn how to do the job, (b) be aware of gender bias issues, and (c) prepare for job related stress. (Wallace, 2015, p. 44)

Wrushen and Sherman (2008) said that educational institutions and professional organizations must support and encourage research on gender issues in educational leadership. Federal and national organizations must improve data collection procedures and examine additional variables, such as sex, in their studies about educational leadership. Of course,

It is the responsibility of K-12 leaders, men and women, worldwide along with universities and bodies preparing school leaders to maximize opportunities for all practicing and prospective leaders so that the capabilities of a larger and more diverse population of school leaders can fully be realized. (Wrushen & Sherman, 2008, p. 466)

In researching the literature, the common theme continues to come across that more female only research needs to be done on experiences in the educational leadership role and the experiences they have had.

Clearly, failure to research women in leadership does constitute discrimination since their experiences are unexplored and therefore devalued. It is as though it is still believed that the experiences of women can be generalized from the experiences of men despite the fact that feminist literature has made it clear over the past 20 years that this is not the case. (Dunshea, 1998, p. 205)

“For researchers’ in the field of educational administration and specifically in the area of the beginning principal, the challenge is clear. By ignoring gender-based differences, scholars involved in research on the arriving principal reaffirm the androcentric bias and sexist bias of most of the literature of educational administration” (Dunshea, 1998, p. 205). To participate in what Young (1990) terms ‘cultural imperialism,’ a form of oppression must occur operating in such a manner that a particular group is ‘invisible at the same time that it is marked out and stereotyped.’ Clearly this form of cultural imperialism is detrimental as newly-appointed women principals do not have the opportunity to learn from research findings specific to their particular needs and are expected to accept generalized or aggregated findings as reality. Dunshea (1998) said that androcentric bias achieves two ends, intentional or not. This research concluded that affirming that the male experience is the ‘right’ experience, it confirms sexism by denying female experience; male voices are dominant and women in school administration are discriminated against as their voices are silenced.

Gender differences and disparate outcomes between men and women populate the landscape. In 2017, women made just 79 cents for every dollar earned by a man.

According to a comprehensive review of the literature in 2016, even after controlling for gendered differences in experience and choice of industry and profession, 38% of that gap remained unexplained. We also know that women are vastly underrepresented in the highest echelons of organizations, both in the C-suite and on boards of directors.

(Galinsky, 2018, p. 1)

Violanti and Jurczak (2011) said that this is problematic for women in leadership because woman and leader are conflicting roles. To be a woman, one must act like a woman. Violanti and Jurczak (2011) continued to describe that a woman needs to be nurturing, relational, and other-centered. To be a leader one must act in a stereotypically masculine manner: direct, autocratic, and task-focused.

The issue of gender bias and double standards is still prevalent and continues to be something that current female leaders must discuss with potential female leaders. Gutgold (2016) said to not forget the case of older women in academe. Gutgold (2016) posited that historically in America, as men age, they are seen as gaining wisdom and power; as women age, we just wrinkle and become superfluous. Gutek and Larwood (1989) stated that women must also deal with lower pay, work/life balance, less recognition and many other issues. “When they do get the job, women often face scrutiny men don’t, some superintendents said. They are told to smile more, their appearances are critiqued, and they can face harsh treatment when they assert their authority” (Superville, 2016, p. 2).

Derrington and Sharratt (2009) offered recommendations from female superintendents. They recommended a strong determination and an iron will and that women have to fight harder, wait longer, and survive more scrutiny to become a superintendent. The second most frequent advice participants in the Derrington and Sharratt (2009) study offered related to gender bias, and included a warning to females that the superintendency is still a majority male field and females should be aware that gender bias still exists. Females aspiring to the superintendency should be aware of this potential gender bias and realize they may have to work harder to get the job and even harder to keep it.

Politics

Politics, whether male to female, same gender to gender have been present since the beginning and continue to the present. Jackie M. Blount (1998) posited that; “ambitious women seeking school leadership positions briefly enjoyed broad-based and enthusiastic support from a powerful emerging political constituency of women”.

Early in the twentieth century, suffrage activism and the larger women’s movement affectively propelled women into school leadership positions. During these years, hundreds of women waged successful campaigns for superintendencies, and by 1930 women accounted for nearly 28 percent of county superintendents and 11 percent of all superintendents nationwide. Activists such as Ella Flagg Young hoped that women would eventually dominate school leadership just as they had teaching.

Blount (1998) continued that once swept into office these young women believed that women would purge corrupt administrative practices, bring an elevated moral purpose to schooling, and improve public education much as they already had improved teaching. During these years’ women found cause for boundless optimism. Victories would not always come

easily, however, as women first won the right to vote on school-related matters in individual communities and then eventually full national suffrage, superintendent groups sought to change superintendencies from elected to appoint positions.

Blount (1998) stated that schools needed expert administrators, they argued; and experts could hardly be chosen in public, politically charged contests. Rather, they believed that popularly elected politicians should select superintendents from pools of qualified, well-trained experts. On the other hand, newly enfranchised women activists doubted that such an appointive system maintained the spirit of American democracy. As they eagerly prepared for their duties as voting citizens, they confronted a growing movement to take the superintendency out of politics. (Blount, 1998, p. 61)

Understanding that politics will always play a role in any professional setting will help any potential educational leader to move forward in a positive manner. Instead of ignoring the issue or pretending it doesn't exist it is important that professionals are open to the issue of politics and how to professionally deal with political issues. This tangled web of expectations and judgment are part of why Bjork (2008) wrote, "gender and politics intersect in a system of relationships and power so rich and entangled that we have only begun to explore them" (p. 30).

A majority of quantitative and qualitative studies focused on subjects "or participants" collective, thematic, or stratified similarities rather than differences. Moreover, few researchers showcase rural women superintendents, although at least 33% of early twenty-first-century schools are in rural areas where a substantial number of the nation's female superintendents serve. (Garn & Brown, 2008, p. 50) In summary Skrla, Scott, & Benestante (2008) stated that "if we are to ever make progress toward redefining the superintendency to include the presence of women's representative numbers, we must

come to a better understanding of how the social constructions of gender, power, and politics play out in lived experiences and the workplace.” (p. 116)

Glass Ceiling

While a definition of the term “glass ceiling” is given in Chapter 1, a more realistic scenario of the term is given by Baker, Graham and Williams (2003).

Consider this picture: You are on the ground floor of a building, one of those modern palaces where balconied floors surround a central atrium reaching all the way to the roof. As you gaze upward, you can see fifteen floors of the building, all containing the expected level of activity: people are walking, alone and in groups, glass elevators are gliding up and down, a few people lean on the balcony railings, admiring the beauty of the architecture. As you continue to watch the people above, you begin to discern a pattern. On the second and third floors, there is a mix of people, young and old, black and white, male and female. But as your focus moves higher, that all begins to change. By the seventh and eighth floors, the people are considerably more homogeneous -- mostly white, and mostly male. On the uppermost floors, minorities and women have pretty much vanished, and even those riding the glass elevators to the rarified air of the top floors are nearly all white, and nearly all men. How you feel about this little vignette depends a great deal upon your own gender.

Occasionally, a newly-introduced term resonates in such a way that it quickly becomes part of everyday language. The words of two Wall Street Journal reporters, Carol Hymowitz and Timothy D. Schellhardt, had such an impact in a 1986 article: “Even those few women who rose

steadily through the ranks eventually crashed into an invisible barrier. The executive suite seemed within their grasp, but they just couldn't break through the glass ceiling" (p. 1).

Thus the term "glass ceiling" came to enter the language, and within five years it had entered the law as well. The Civil Rights Act of 1991 focused on gender discrimination, establishing the U.S. Federal Glass Ceiling Commission (FGCC). The charter of the FGCC was to identify the causes of gender discrimination, and to make recommendations to eliminate it (FGCC, 1995, p. 35).

"Glass Ceiling" means an invisible upper limit in corporations and other organizations, above which it is difficult or impossible for women to rise in the ranks. "Glass ceiling" is a metaphor for the hard-to-see informal barriers that keep women from getting promotions, pay raises, and further opportunities. The "glass ceiling" metaphor has also been used to describe the limits and barriers experienced by minority racial groups. (Lewis, 2019, p. 1)

In a 2015 article published in the *Wall Street Journal* Ben Zimmer gave some variations for the term 'glass ceiling' throughout different cultures and occupations; 'bamboo ceiling' for Asian-Americans, 'celluloid ceiling' for women in Hollywood and 'marble ceiling' for women in government.

In present day, the issue of the glass ceiling can be summarized as "The glass ceiling is not simply a barrier for an individual, based on the person's inability to handle a higher-level job. Rather, the glass ceiling applies to women as a group who are kept from advancing higher because they are women" (Morrison, 2014, p. 1).

Experiences

The following review of literature section hopes to understand the experience of women in the educational administration profession, most notably woman to woman experiences.

Finally, I realized that it was time to do a study focusing on how women treat each other, a study that would show both the external pressures and the internal dynamics that lead to envy, jealousy, and competition. I was particularly concerned to show where this female rivalry begins: in women's insufficient options. In a world where there simply isn't enough to go around, women compete. In a world that limits women to narrowly defined roles, women compete with each other. I also wanted to explore the ways in which female rivalry has intensified as women have moved from 1950s-era housewifery and child raising to the expanded options of the twenty-first century. Ironically, as women's options have grown, so has our rivalry, from the old-fashioned sphere of hearth and home to the brave new world of career and professional success. Although each new breakthrough for women has opened up wonderful new opportunities, it has also created more occasions for competition. (Barash, 2006, p. 10)

Issacs (1999) talked about the importance of voice. "Voice has multiple meanings. Voice is individual and unique, while at the same time requires another to listen and react. The journey towards an authentic voice requires courage and persistence" (pg. 32). Gilligan (1992) stated that voice in feminist literature refers to a way of being that defines female development and encompasses women's value for connectedness. "Voice is compared to vision, a leadership buzzword" (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986, p. 121; Helgesen, 1990). Voice differs from seeing (vision) which is a one-way process that can exist even if it is not

communicated to others. "Voice and listening, on the other hand, suggest dialogue and interaction" (Helgesen, 1990, p. 1; Issacs, 1999).

Reading statistics, journals and books gives a good view of a particular occurrence. However, it is the stories straight from the experiences of people who have lived the event that can paint the most accurate picture of the issues being studied.

So why does it seem like women can't play well with other women at work? For one, the acts of one member of the group can be generalized to the entire group. IF someone has had a bad male boss, he or she would never say, "Men are bad bosses." But we observe a woman undermining another woman undermining another woman and conclude that "women do that." (Miller-Merrell, 2019, p. 1)

Brunner (2000) interviewed twelve women superintendents, along with others in the district, to gather information about professional work experiences. Her findings revealed that women superintendents frequently experienced inequality through gender bias. She also noted that when women broke norms of explicit talk about inequality, there were negative consequences. Lowery and Harris (2000) suggested that, in general, women tried to play down the gender issue by forgetting "that there are women superintendents and men superintendents" and just concentrating on being "a good superintendent" (p. 10). In fact, one female superintendent challenged other females by saying, "Don't get hung up on being a woman," identifying this tendency to lead to a change in significant ways of communicating so that women superintendents did not participate "in their own experiences of inequality" (Brunner, 2000, p. 107).

There is limited information on the experience of barriers between females. While most literature still continues to focus on male and female differences and competition; the following clips are some examples that display the idea of barriers between females.

Women are wired for close friendship in which two people are equals and share intimate secrets. Businesses tend to be hierarchical, and workplace relationships are what Pat Heim calls “friendly.” Managers demonstrate “executive distance” in their relationships with subordinates. This kind of relationship between a “lower level” and “higher level” woman can disappoint expectations for close relationships. A woman may feel rejected by the senior woman. She may take it personally and dislike the senior woman. (Miller-Merrell, 2019, p. 2)

Faniko, Ellemers, Derks & Lorenzi-Cioldi (2017) shared the findings across two correlational studies...we examined whether the opposition of women managers toward quotas is related to self-group distancing tendencies that have been documented as the QB-phenomenon, instead of indicating overall competitiveness among women. To address this, we compared responses of women managers with those of women subordinates. We found that women managers distanced themselves from junior women and were reluctant to support policies that would improve professional opportunities for junior women. By contrast, women managers did not distance themselves from women at the same rank and were supportive of quotas that would benefit women they would be directly competing with. These results showed evidence that QB-phenomenon does not reflect increased competitiveness among women managers and QBs do not perceive themselves as different from all women. These results also help explain why successful women start distancing themselves from other women. We observed that women

managers reported having made personal sacrifices to achieve career success, and realizing this was the case, made them see themselves as different from junior women. (Faniko et. al., 2017, p. 642)

Additionally, many women seem to share the fear that members of their gender tend to cut one another down. Large surveys by Pew and Gallup as well as several academic studies show that when women have a preference as to the gender of their bosses and colleagues, that preference is largely for men. A 2009 study published in the journal *Gender in Management* found that although women believe other women make good managers, “the female workers did not actually want to work for them.” The longer a woman had been in the workforce, the less likely she was to want a female boss. (Miller-Merrell, 2019, p. 1).

A significant number of women identified jealousy and competition as reasons why they did not support one another. As one participant commented, "In order to advance, someone else has to fail." (Smith & Hale, 2002, p. 2) This underscores the either/or mentality of these professional women. One woman stressed, it is not only the lack of cooperation among coworkers, but also the lack of cooperation among female supervisors and female supervisees:

I've asked for mentoring from all of the female executive leaders who told me, "your time will come...just stick around and see what happens." None were willing to help me develop networks or become a protégé of theirs. Women are going it alone- they're all uber competitive for CEO/VP positions themselves. Since they broke the glass ceiling, I can't help but think it's in their interest not to have more women at that bottleneck with them. (Smith & Hale, 2002, p. 3)

Jones and Palmer reported in their 2011 full research paper that their participants reflected on the perceptions that many women would rather damage the progress of the entire gender than allow another woman to succeed. Some acknowledged suspicions as to how some females earned positions of power, insinuating inappropriate relationships with supervisors. One of the women commented, “There are a limited number of females in higher level positions. Other females seem suspicious as to how they obtained their positions.” Another common trend seemed to insinuate that there were some preferences to work for male managers simply because they “are not petty.” (p. 194)

Isernhagen and Bulkin shared comments from two of their participants in their 2013 full length research paper... Superintendent B also tried to build positive relationships in her school district, but met with less success. One of her successful endeavors was involving teachers in administrative decisions, such as hiring a new P.E. teacher, and shared that “They seemed genuinely honored to be included.” However, she felt that her office staff was less willing to cooperate or “buy in” to her new leadership, which was less top-down than they were accustomed to. She described the situation with the office staff as an “‘us and them’ thing,” and explained, “The office staff runs things to make it easier for them[selves].” This antagonistic relationship with her staff continued throughout the school year: When I ask [the high school secretary] to make calls or fill out a form she [says] she is not going to do my job. She told 2 people that ‘[the superintendent] thinks she is in charge but I am’. . . I tried to be very diplomatic b/c she is quite opinionated. My hope was that if she did get mad she would be mad enough to quit (Isernhagen & Bulkin, 2013, p. 119).

In Edson's research study (1987), a female aspirant described her view of the painful blow that occurred when an established female administrator failed to encourage female aspirants by stating, "My experience with female administrators has not been positive. . . From what I see, it's every woman for herself. The men help each other a lot more than the women do" (p. 76). She also noted, paradoxically, that many women in education find themselves drawing up battle lines instead of forming alliances. In addition, Edson pointed out that a decided concern among many of her respondents was the failure of female educators to support other female administrative applicants. The results of Edson's study revealed that, in spite of many women who were supportive of other women within her study, female aspirants were still concerned with the jealousy, competition, and lack of support shown them by other female educators. Because of these "worst detractors," a serious distrust of women in the field was reported (p. 77).

As one female educator noted (Edson, 1987): "I'm concerned about the harm that successful women do to other women in this district. The men are supportive; the women are jealous and sabotaging. Now that a few women have made it to higher levels, they seem to relish the opportunity to 'do in' other women. At least the men who were in power before were more innocent about it" (p. 249).

In a related vein, Shakeshaft (1995) stated that the complexities in female-to-female interactions in educational administration have not yet been made clear. She also reported that when she travels around the country and speaks with female administrative groups a common theme that has emerged from her audiences is the belief that women are their own worst enemies.

When females leave administrative positions, they often find themselves forgotten or lost in the academy. They are no longer part of administration nor are they readily re-inculcated to faculty culture. Their voices become muted or silenced; their professional frameworks change overnight. One day they are administrators; the next day they find themselves sitting in smaller faculty offices focusing on teaching courses again and revitalizing old research agenda. Mapping out new careers and lives becomes urgent. Because women's voices after they have left administration are rarely heard, this study encourages listening to the stories of former female administrators. (Luna & Medina, 2006, p. 10).

“Identifying problems that women who aspire to be school administrators face is an important component in the process of increasing opportunities for women who seek advancement” (Smith & Hale, 2002, p. 1). Throughout the literature review within different topics the conclusion continues to be that more work and research must be done to better understand the experiences of women in leadership positions and what can be done to increase their presence and once there, make the experience a positive and productive one.

Queen Bees/Administrators and Worker Bees/Followers

This section of the literature review sets to gain a better understanding of the term *queen bee* and the associated terms and the types of negative treatment that occurs between educational leaders and their followers. Egan (1997) and Goldstein (2005) stated that the metaphor has been used as a way to understand occurrences and a way to think and communicate experiences.

“Tapping into the communicative richness of a metaphor has the potential to reveal how subjects comprehend their context and how they generate meaning from their context” (Haack, 1994, p.

12). Lakoff and Johnson (2008) posited that by analyzing metaphors and making associations between communicative expressions and their meanings, the metaphorical expressions of the user disclose how situations are experienced (p. 25).

“The use of metaphors as a way to clarify experience is wide ranging. In the field of medicine, metaphors associated with patients’ experiences and illnesses aid in the communication between medical professionals and their patients” (Korkmaz & Senol, 2014, p. 19). Delouis (2014) claimed that the use of metaphors helps to clarify conceptions of illness and treatment that can override cultural and communication barriers. Metaphors have been analyzed to better interpret how social and political groups influence public discourse and spaces to help shape their politics, action, and change (p. 29). Henderson (2014) continued that metaphors also play a significant role in legal analysis and communication. Henderson then said metaphors are widely used to gauge and interpret conflict and mediation, and gender issues. “The educative value of metaphors underpins the critical role they play in clarification of how learning is taking place” (Boud & Hager, 2012, p. 17). “The impact on the learner and the teacher and the values and beliefs shared about learning” (Nye, Foskey, & Edwards, 2013, p. 3).

Cornelissen (2006) theorized that the use of metaphors in organizational research has been employed as a way to unpack the complexity of organizational identity, and to further organizational theory making (Morgan, 1986; Prange, 1999). “The relationship between the language of the metaphor and the underlying feelings they represent is based on identifying the figurative language links with the unconscious” (McGlone, 2007, p. 109). If metaphors are used well, they are a useful tool for explaining organizational relationships and processes (Morgan, 1986, Tsoukas, 1991).

Gupton and Slick (1996) also found that female administrators, new to their jobs, expected varying types of resistance to their leadership from men but appeared blindsided by the antagonistic behavior of the other women toward them. Benton (1980) reported a related phenomenon and named it the "*Queen bee*" syndrome--one that adds insult to injury in the plight of female administrators who seek support systems from within their own ranks (p. 18). According to Benton (1980), a *queen bee* is a woman in a position of power and authority who works at keeping other women out of leadership in order to protect her queenly status (p. 18). Supporting the relationship of the *queen bee* to the concept of horizontal violence, Ginn (1989) concluded that the *queen bee* phenomenon was about power and noted that there was not enough of this precious commodity to go around. She also indicated that the concept of shared power seemed difficult to grasp for those not usually included in the power loop, resulting in this counterproductive attitudes among many underrepresented female administrators.

In *Queen Bees and Wannabes* Rosalind Wiseman, an American parenting educator, pointed out that some of the perks of being a *queen bee* are the feelings of power and control a woman has over her environment, she can feel like the center of attention and people pay homage to her. On the flip side, Wiseman (2016) suggested some of the negative connotations of being a *queen bee* are that friendships are now defined by power, not mutual support, trust or care. The leader, *queen bee*, according to Wiseman (2016) may easily feel that she can't admit to anyone when she's in over her head because her reputation dictates that she always has everything and everyone under control (p. 32-33).

Professional women in Australia have an interesting term for what happens to talented and outspoken females who rise quickly in their fields. They call it the "tall poppy syndrome" because a poppy that grows higher than the rest often gets its head lopped off (Polley, 1996, p.

75). Such a phenomenon also occurs with women who achieve success in the field of educational administration, "the blue flammers" (Funk, 2000), who rise quickly through the ranks but are often not supported and even sabotaged by other women who work with them. Funk (2000) said many females in educational leadership positions in the United States experience a spectrum of types of negative treatment from female teachers to female superintendents that can be defined as horizontal violence--a term used here to describe the harm that some women do to other women in the educational workplace.

The origin of the term, horizontal violence, is credited to Paulo Freire (1970), a champion of the poor and disenfranchised in South America, who explored the effects of oppression on minorities in his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Within his work, he proposed the use of horizontal violence as a term to indicate the curious behavior of members of oppressed groups who lash out at their peers in response to oppression instead of attacking their oppressors. Using Freire's concept of horizontal violence, minorities and other oppressed groups (women who live in a male-dominated society) rage internally because of their lack of power but take out their anger and violence on their oppressed peers (other women). According to Freire (1970), the causal factor for this behavior is the powerlessness and impotence of the oppressed that would be severely punished if they attacked the powerful individuals who actually control their lives.

Cherne (2003, para. 1) asserted that although women can and do help other women, there are certain women who are not promoters of other women. Women need to be aware of *Queen bees*, *Princess Bees* and *Phantom Bees*. The *Queen bee* believes that she got to the top by her own fortitude and through being savvy. *Queen bees* are non-mentors and non-supporting of other women. In this thinking they believe women get to the top on their own. The *Queen bee* has achieved high rank on the job with associated high pay and social success. These women

according to Staines et al (1974) are often popular with men, have looks going for them and are married. These women do not work for equality for other women and might even oppose programs that do. Mavin (2008) identifies the *Queen bee* as “a bitch who stings other women if her power is threatened,” as she prefers to work with men.

The Princess Bee will support other women as long as they do not violate her territory (Cummins, 2012). Hence, she mentors others as long as they stay separate from her domain. The Phantom Bee will not facilitate finding another woman for a work position (Cummin, 2012). Men, then, are allocated the job and fewer women are afforded access to new work roles (Briles, 1996). Women can and do misuse power, “setting others up, sabotaging them, not giving them credit for appropriate work, or not respecting some of the unwritten rules such as connectedness in the workplace, they continue to poison the well” (Briles, 1996, p. 253). Mavin (2006, p. 264) reports that the syndrome associated with the *Queen bee* is alive and well in the workplace setting. “Bad behavior” exists amongst senior women in management towards other women (p. 352) and it is something very difficult to highlight, let alone discuss. However, ignoring it does not mean that it will go away. Women, then, often do not mesh with each other as natural allies (Legge, 1987; Mavin, 2006: 2008).

So why were the women less generous to other women? Prof Benenson, a psychologist based at Emmanuel College in the US, puts it down to evolution, saying women are not used to forming tight same-sex groups in the way that men are. This goes back to a time, she says, when females had to compete for mates and for resources for their children (BBC News, 2018). Examples from three different sources solidify that, sadly, woman to woman bullying is still going strong in the workforce.

I recently conducted a survey focused on women in the workplace, and found that approximately 70% had been the victim of either workplace bullying or covert undermining by a female boss. Along with the approximately 70% who had endured “the sting” of the Queen Bee boss, 33% had been on the receiving end of a woman on the same level or below being unhelpful, holding them back or undermining them. (Harvey, 2018, p. 1)

A new study has found it’s not just sexist men holding women back in the workplace – but other women, with more than two-thirds reporting they feel bullied by female colleagues in the workplace. The research, published in the journal of *Development and Learning Organizations*, reports 70 percent of female executive feel they have been bullied by women trying to block their professional ambitions. (Whimn, 2018, p. 1)

This above study also found that 33% of the 100 UK executives surveyed had experience a female colleague on the same level or below being unhelpful, holding them back or undermining them (Singh, 2018).

Brunner and Costello (2003) maintained that despite the increasing number of women in America’s workforce, the corporate environment has become even more hostile, especially to women. Instead of laying the groundwork for the advancement of the sisterhood, women have joined men in the harassment of their own gender. They stated that this in no way suggests that women should be denied admittance to the hallowed halls of corporate work; it does, however, encourage examination of the phenomena contributing to this unexpected outcome. What type of system fosters or maintains a bully’s growth? Why do women bullies target women? (Brunner & Costello, 2003).

In his 2017 research paper Sherwin Davidson stated that given the character and significance for the women in leadership interviewed for this study, women-to-women relationships in organizations are a resource worth surfacing and exploring further. He continued that additional studies could include mixed methods using validated instruments to quantify the importance of social support while also investigating in interviews leaders' perspectives on the relationships' instrumental value. It would also be informative to explore with women in business the factors contributing to the quality of the leadership experience to learn whether a different value emerges for women's relationships with other women in more rigidly hierarchical organizations. (Davidson, 2018).

Women Mentoring Women

“There is a special place in hell for women who don't help other women” – Madeleine Albright. While the majority of the above literature referenced negative experiences between women it is important to note that there are a lot of positive women to women interactions. “We need to reverse the stereotype that women don't support other women. There is research that shows women in particular benefit from collaboration over competition. Study after study show women who support women are more successful” (Zalis, 2019, p. 2). Research tells us that women are wired for close relationships. “A study in the *Academy of Management Journal* found that career development for women is tied more to attachment and relationships, whereas career development for men means increases autonomy and separation from others” (chronus.com, 2017).

New research in the *Harvard Business Review* finds that while both men and women benefit from having a network of well-connected peers across different groups, women

who also have an inner circle of close female contacts are more likely to land executive positions with greater authority and higher pay. (Zalis, 2019, p. 2)

“A good mentor can provide career advice, counsel during stressful times, and unwavering support” (Cooney, 2015, p. 5). More women are striving and obtaining higher leadership positions in all professional sectors. Their numbers still don’t compare to their male counterparts so women need all the help and every advantage they can. Sheryl Sandberg stated, “As women see that they’re effective in mentoring each other, and as those women move up in their careers and get older, they start mentoring young women,” (chronus.com, 2017, p. 6).

Conclusion

The goals of this chapter build from the advice of Boote and Beile (2005). First, this chapter sought to inform the reader of previous research which as contributed significantly to the background of history of women in educational leadership; as well as politics, gender, glass ceiling, lived experiences and the phenomenon of *queen bees* and worker bees. Second, it sought to explain the rationale of selecting females in educational leadership. As noted in the literature, further research needs to be completed in this area. There is a substantive need for further connections between female administrators and the treatment they receive from female subordinates. Third, it sought to defend the quantitative design as an appropriate method for investigating the problems associated with the treatment of female subordinates and female leaders and how it affects their position. The established methodology has been determined in this study based on findings in recent literature. Lastly, the study’s significance is strengthened through providing existing knowledge in the field.

The review of literature provided some of the potential reasons for the support and barriers that female followers bestow upon their leaders. It also demonstrates the feelings of the female educational leaders and how it possibly impacts their position. While it is clear that there is both support and barriers experienced by the educational administrators and that they are not always a bad thing, what is not clear is the long term residual effects that support and barriers from female subordinates has on female educational leaders. In addressing this gap in literature and/or research, results from this study have the potential to inform school boards, administrators, future/potential administrators, teachers and the school community at large.

Chapter Three: Methodology

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the relationship among female administrators and the support and barriers they experience from female subordinates and how it affects their experience and longevity in their leadership position. A non-experimental mixed methods design was used to determine this relationship. This mixed method study aimed to highlight the association of female to female support and barriers between the administrator and subordinate and the results of these interactions. Examples of female support and barriers have been illustrated in the literature, the impacts of these support and barriers and its relationship to experience and longevity of females in administration positions needs to be further explored. In this study, female subordinate support and barriers was the independent (criterion) variable and the longevity and experience level of female administration was the dependent (predictor) variable.

According to Boudah (2011), research must have a thorough understanding of the methods and design as well as the problem or question he or she is researching. An exhaustive understanding of the question and all of the potential ways to study the problem and or question is extremely important. A key responsibility of the researcher is to determine which method and design will best help understand the research question. The research question should drive the selection of the research methodology and appropriate design. In light of this the aim of this chapter is to establish a clear connection between the problem being studied and the chosen methodology.

Research Design

According to Creswell (2009) research design is the plan to conduct research. It involves a philosophy, strategies of inquiry, and specific methods for reporting results. According to Hoy (2010) quantitative studies test objective theories via the examination of relationships between or among variables. A non-experimental quantitative design was used to assess the relationship between the support and barriers that female subordinates impart upon female and administrators and how it affects their experience in the job and the longevity in the position. Specifically, the design of this study is a 21 question, Likert Scaled questionnaire administered through Qualtrics survey management system. A Cronbach's alpha test was used to measure the reliability of the instrument. Creswell (2009) stated that survey research provides a numeric description of trends attitudes, or opinions of a population using sample size. This differs from experimental research, which seeks to determine if a specific treatment influences outcome by applying treatment to one group and not the other. According to Hoy (2010), quantitative methodologies are best studied to example the relationship among variables and are thus capable of empirically testing objective theories.

Quantitative Methodology

Creswell (1994) defined the quantitative approach as “an inquiry into a social or human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers, and analyzed with statistical procedures, in order to determine whether the predictive generalization of the theory hold true” (p. 2). Creswell (2009) would characterize it as survey research, because it “provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population” (p. 12).

Research Questions

According to Boudah (2011), research questions clearly and specifically identify the topic one aims to investigate. A well-written question helps guide or determine the appropriate design and method. According to Creswell (2009), “Quantitative research questions inquire about the relationships among variables that the investigator seeks to know. They are frequently used in social science research and especially in survey studies” (p. 132). To measure the relationship of female support and barriers and the affect it has on female administrators this research used the following two research questions to guide this study: a) What is the relationship between support/barriers from female subordinates and the experience as a female in a leadership position? b) What is the relationship between support/barriers from female subordinates and the longevity in the field of administration for a female?

Research Hypothesis

According to Steinberg (2011), a research hypothesis states what the researcher expects to find. Creswell (2009) stated, “Testing of hypothesis employs statistical procedures in where the investigator draws inferences about the population from a study sample. Hypotheses are used often in experiments in which investigators compare groups” (pp. 132-133). Steinberg (2011) noted that a research hypothesis indicates the expected findings whereas a null hypothesis states that there is no expected effect on the dependent variables due to the independent variable. For purposes of this study, it was hypothesized that there was a relationship between the support and barriers that female administrators receive from female subordinates and its effects on their experience and longevity in their position.

Sample and Participants

The participants in this study were a nonprobability sample that included full-time female administrators that have held a leadership position for a minimum of two years; of the currently 213 female administrators employed throughout the K-12 schools in Montana. According to Montana's Office of Public Instruction (2019) Montana has 405 school districts, with 823 schools serving 147,785 students. According to Salkind (2012), in a nonprobability sample, the probability of selecting a single individual is not known. Again, the independent variable that helped guide this study was female subordinate support and barriers and the dependent variables are the longevity and experience level of female administration.

Variables in the Study

Cozby and Bates (2015) described a variable as “any event, situation, behavior, or individual characteristics that varies. Any variable must have two or more levels or values” (p. 73). Creswell (2009) noted that in quantitative research, the use of variables is commonly used in three ways:

The researcher may compare groups on an independent variable to see its impact on a dependent variable. Alternatively, the investigator may relate one or more independent variables to one or more dependent variables. Third, the researcher may describe reasons to the independent, mediating, or dependent variables. (p. 133)

Salkind (2012) stated that a “dependent variable represents the measure that reflects the outcome of a research study (p. 24). Whereas, “an independent variable represents treatments or conditions that the research has either direct or indirect control over to test their effects on a

particular outcome” (Salkind, 2012, p. 25). Although no variables were manipulated or treatment variables where dependent variables can be considered as outcome or affect variables (p. 50).

Independent variable. For purposes of this study, the independent variable is female subordinate support and barriers. Female administrators rated how often they felt they received/encountered support and/or barriers from their female subordinates. The prompts for this variable included female administrators ranking on a seven item Likert scale from *never* to *all the time*.

Dependent variables. In this study, there are five dependent variables, which included enjoyment of your job, ability to do your job, reason you would leave your position and the longevity of your position. All four criterions were measured by a seven-item Likert scale from *not at all important* to *extremely important*. The questions included in this instrument included 1) *how often do you feel you receive support/ barriers from female subordinates*, (Heim & Murphy, 2001, p. 213) 2) *what would you rate the importance of support/barriers from female subordinates affecting the enjoyment of your job*, (Heim & Murphy, 2001, p. 216) 3) *what would you rate the importance of support/barriers from female employees affecting your ability to do your job productively*, (Heim & Murphy, 2001, p. 216) 4) *what would you rate the importance of support/barriers from female subordinates as a reason you would leave your position*, (Heim & Murphy, 2001, p. 216) 5) *what would you rate the importance of support/barriers from female subordinates on the longevity of your position?* (Heim & Murphy, 2001, p. 218)

These questions were based off of the surveys in Chapter 1 - ‘The Golden Triangle: Relationships, Power, and Self-Esteem’ of *In the Company of Women* (2001) by Dr. Pat Heim and Dr. Susan Murphy. I spoke to Dr. Murphy at length, per a phone call on November 15th 2019, about this chapter and the Golden Triangle. Dr. Murphy and Dr. Heim started with this

book as the overwhelming ‘something invisible is going on’ idea became obvious in the stories they were hearing through the work they did. Dr. Murphy validated that she and Dr. Heim tried this instrument out on different groups both quantitatively and qualitatively on many diverse groups; government, corporations, hospitals, schools and academia. She elaborated that 100% of the time they found that indirect aggression was present in every type of survey they did.

Achievement of past background information was measured using a single numerical response. These included 1) what is your age, 2) how many years were you employed in an education position before you became an administrator, 3) how many years have you been an administrator, 4) how many administrative positions have you held, 5) have you held a Curriculum Director position if yes, for how many years, 6) have you held a Vice Principal position, if yes, for how many years, 7) have you held a Principal position, if yes, for how many years, 8) have you held a Superintendent position, if yes, for how many years, 9) how many employees report to you, 10) how many are women. Aside from the reported background and experience information the independent and dependent variables in this study are considered an ordinal level of measurement because these variables can be ordered along a continuum that reflect rankings. “Not only can these values be placed in categories, but they can be ordered as well. For this reason, the ordinal level of measurement often refers to variables as ranking of various outcomes, even if only two categories are involved” (Salkind, 2012, p. 112). In this study, the background information is considered a ratio level of measurement because the female administrators are reporting their own information and it is possible, though highly unlikely, that they could report an absolute zero in those categories. Salkind (2012) stated that ratio level of measurement “describes variables that have equal intervals between them but also have an absolute zero” (p. 113).

Data Collection

Creswell (2009) noted that while conducting research, it is imperative that the researcher engage in ethical practices and to also be able to anticipate ethical issues that may arise (p. 73). In *Research Ethics for Social Scientists*, Israel and Hay (2006) also noted that it is important for researchers to develop a trust and be willing to protect their participants, promote the integrity of the research, and also guard against misconduct and impropriety that might reflect on their institutions. This research will aim to discover the overall effects of support and barriers from the given responses by breaking down response data from each individual question.

Collection Instrument

The collection instrument is an online survey/questionnaire that was distributed as a link in an email message to each individual in the sample. The instrument was subject to a justification with supporting literature and a peer review to establish validity. Reliability and consistency was supported by pilot testing the instrument, and data was subject to Cronbach's Alpha. A discussion of reliability and validity, the justification, an explanation of how Cronbach's Alpha was applied to question sets and results of the pilot study and peer review are below. The Cronbach's Alpha test was applied to the actual testing data as well to establish the reliability of the final data.

Procedures

Creswell (2009) noted that while conducting research, it is imperative that the researcher engage in ethical practices and to also be able to anticipate ethical issues that may arise (p. 73). In *Research Ethics for Social Scientists*, Israel and Hay (2006) also noted that it is important for researchers to develop a trust and be willing to protect their participants, promote the integrity of

the research, and also guard against misconduct and impropriety that might reflect on their institutions.

Although researchers should be excited and enthusiastic about their work, the most important thing to remember is that human beings are serving as participants in the research. These individuals must be treated so that their dignity is maintained in spite of research outcomes. (Salkind, 2012, p. 85)

Reliability and Validity

Salkind (2012) stated that “assessment tools have to be reliable and valid because they are the first line of defense against incorrect conclusions” (p. 115). “Reliability occurs when a test measures the same thing more than once and results in the same outcome (Salkind, 2012, p. 115); whereas, validity represents the accuracy of the instrument in measuring the variables of interest. Cronbach’s alpha was used to verify and justify reliability and validity with the data from given responses. Creswell (2009) stated that when researchers consider all issues related to validity and reliability, this helps with accuracy and also credibility of the findings. “A test can be reliable but not valid, but a test cannot be valid without first being reliable. In other words, reliability is a necessary, but not sufficient condition of validity” (Salkind, 2012, p. 127).

Salkind (2012) stated that samples should be selected from populations in such a way that you maximize the likelihood that the sample represents the population as much as possible. However, he also stated, “No matter how hard a researcher tries, it is impossible to select a sample that perfectly represents the population” (p. 103).

Data Analyses

Creswell’s (2009) guidelines for analysis of data were followed in this study. First, Creswell (2009) stated that a research should report information about who participated in the

study, and then a researcher should provide an analysis of data for the independent and dependent variables. As a third step, Creswell (2009) suggests that a researcher report inferential statistics on the descriptive data. The descriptive statistics used in this study were reported according to Creswell's (2009) advice on data analysis. Specifically, means, standard deviations, Cronbach alphas, ranges, and frequencies were reported. Cronbach's Alpha, the estimate of reliability of a test is said to have great internal consistency if the alpha is greater than or equal to .9. After running the pilot test, the Cronbach Alpha for this study came in at .97. After the pilot study and dissertation proposal it was determined that the term 'negative treatment' was too biased and inflammatory thus each variable question was doubled with one variable broken into two questions. One question rated support and the other rated barriers in relation to the five variable questions. Qualtrics, EXCEL software and a Cronbach's Alpha test was used to analyze the data in a reliable and valid way. To determine the frequencies for each response, each category in the Likert scale was given a number and then summed for a total score. The high's or lows of the response data, in correlation to the questions they relate to, will help to paint a clearer picture of how support and barriers from female subordinates affects the respondent's enjoyment of their job, ability to do their job, reason one would leave their leadership position and the longevity of their position. A score of '1' was assigned to responses 'never' or 'not at all important' all the way to a score of '7' which was assigned to 'all the time' and 'extremely important'.

Results of Cronbach's Alpha Applied to Pilot Data

- The average age of the participants – 42 years' old
- Average year participants were in an educational position before they became an administrator – 11 years

- Average year participants have been in an administrative position – 4 years
- Average number of administrative positions participants have held – 1
- Two of the five participants have held a Curriculum Instructor position
- One of the five participants has held a Vice Principal Position for 2 years
- Four of the five participants are in a Principal Position with an average of 4 years in the job
- The five participants reported an average of 31 employees reporting to them; from that on average 24 of those employees were women.

Table 1*Results from Pilot Study*

subject	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Total			
1	5	6	7	6	6	30			
2	4	5	5	6	5	25		#items/questions/components	5
3	2	5	3	4	4	18		sum of the item variances	15.76
4	2	2	2	2	2	10		variance of total scores	71.36
5	2	2	2	1	1	8		Cronbach's alpha	0.973935
variances	1.6	2.8	3.76	4.16	3.44				

Results of Peer Review and Pilot Study

The pilot study was sent to 6 female administrators where one chose not to participate and the other five completed the full survey. Participants in the pilot study found no issues either with the study or the wording in the questions. The following is a comment I received from one of the pilot study participants; “That was very interesting! I have always thought that I am maybe in a unique position with my female employees! Thanks for giving me the opportunity to take it.”

Internal Review Board (IRB)

IRB application was submitted through the University of Montana, please see Appendix D.

Statistical Assumptions

Prior to conducting the data analyses, the researcher confirmed that the statistics ran in this study are nonparametric. Steinberg (2011) defined a nonparametric test as statistics that are not based on population parameters reflecting the fact that population parameters are missing or irrelevant. Pallant (2010) stated that there are two assumptions for nonparametric tests. The first includes the utilization of random sampling techniques. The second assumption includes independent observations in which each variable cannot be part of another category and that each variable does not influence the other variable. Although there was not a random sample in this study (included in the limitations), the second assumption of variables not influencing other variables and maintaining independent observations was met.

Qualitative Methodology

Creswell (2013) said that researchers conduct qualitative research because a problem or issue needs to be explored (p. 47). He continued that qualitative research helps us examine complex issues, empower individuals and develop theories. This qualitative inquiry in this study may be characterized as a Narrative Research approach with a social constructivism interpretive framework and a methodological belief (Creswell, 2013).

Research Design

The purpose of the qualitative narrative study was to understand the experiences of the participants by contacting designated female administrators and asking them a series of questions.

Qualitative Central Question

“The intent of qualitative research questions is to narrow the purpose to several questions that will be addressed in the study” (Creswell, 2013, p. 138). To understand the lived experiences

of female administrators the central question for the qualitative study is “can you elaborate on the circumstances that led to your high/low ranking of encountered support and barriers from female subordinates?”

Sub Questions

To expand on the central questions, the following sub questions were asked;

1. How would you define your leadership style?
2. After taking the survey, do you have any comments or insights you'd like to share as I move forward with this research?
3. Do you think that the size of a district affects the issue of support and barriers and female subordinates?
4. I noticed that I had a good number of responses where participants rated support as very important but not barriers, to me that is a bit of an oxymoron...how can one be so important and not the other...what are your thoughts/comments on this?

Participants

In this portion of the study six participants will be selected from the respondents who marked that they would be willing for the researcher to contact them for further questions. The ten quantitative questions with a 7 point Likert Scale response gives a total of 70 points. The three respondents with the highest score out of 70 and the three respondents with the lowest score out of 70 were contacted.

Data Collection/Procedures

“In a narrative study, one needs to find one or more individuals to study, individuals who are accessible, willing to provide information, and distinctive for their accomplishments and ordinariness or who shed light on a specific phenomenon or issue being explored” (Creswell,

2013, p. 147). The researcher will conduct a semi structured interview, via telephone, with designated respondents.

Transferability

The transferability or generalizability of the information obtained from responding participants may prove to be applicable to other female administrator's populations. Both current and aspiring females may be able to use this data to help in their professional career. Female educators may also be able to use the data in working relationships with their administrators.

Trustworthiness/Accuracy

The researcher will aim to provide trustworthy and credibility to the data by completing one on one phone interviews with respondents and taking and summarizing field notes; adding margin notes when needed to further emphasis data points.

Verification Procedures – To include the Role of the Researcher

The researcher aimed to verify procedures by conducting every interview by phone, asking the same questions and repeating responses from participants to verify their responses and clarify any questions either the researcher or respondent may have.

Data Analyses

The researcher analyzed the qualitative data obtained from asking respondents the central question and four sub questions by representing and visualizing the data. The researcher will accomplish this by summarizing the data in chapter four results section of the study.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to help explain the connection between the problems being studied and the chosen methodology. In this chapter, the methodology was explained through the description of the research designs, research and central questions, population and

sample, variables in the study, the data collection and research procedures, how this study was considered reliable and valid, assumptions, as well as how the data was analyzed. To conclude, the purpose of this study is to ascertain the relationship, if any, between the support and barriers that female administrators receive from female subordinates and how it affects their experience and longevity in their leadership position. Although the effects of support and barriers between females in educational leadership positions and female subordinates have been shown in the literature, the impact of both of these interactions and its relationship to the experience and longevity in an administrative position needs to be further explored. This study will also add to the existing body of literature on this topic and aid in further discussion and development of resources provided for potential female administrators, current female administrators and school districts/boards at large.

Chapter Four: Results

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the relationship between the support and barriers that female administrators encounter from female staff members and how it affects the quality of experience and longevity of their leadership position. Participation in this study required an opt-in (consent) from Montana female administrator's respondents through an online survey as well as an option at the end of the survey for respondents to leave their name and number allowing the researcher to contact them for the qualitative portion of the study. Data collection occurred in the Fall 2019 semester. Analyses of the data includes descriptive statistics for both the independent and dependent variable along, inferential statistics and the narrative responses obtained through phone interviews.

An informational email with the survey link was sent to 213 female administrators employed throughout the K-12 public schools of Montana. Three weeks later a second and final email with the survey link was sent out to entice any participants who did not respond to the survey the first time. A total of 78 surveys were returned; 42 participants indicated that they would be willing to be contacted for a follow up interview, 23 participants finished the survey but did not want to be contacted, 4 surveys were started and not completed and 9 surveys were finished but the researcher was unable to use as they had been an administrator for a year or less. With 78 total responses out of 213 the response rate totaled 36.7%. Current literature emphasized that this is an appropriate response rate.

What is the average survey response rate? The short answer? 33%. The long answer is a bit more nuanced though. Since there is no agreed-upon minimum acceptable response rate, it will largely depend on how you go about creating, distributing, and collecting your survey. (SurveyAnyplace, 2019)

Email surveys generally have an average response rate of 30%. People are receiving more spam emails every day and, unfortunately, spam filters are extremely hard on the word survey (SurveyAnyplace, 2019). The researcher felt that 36.7% was an adequate number to work with for the purpose of this study. After the quantitative information was obtained the researcher reached out to six respondents for a follow up qualitative interview.

When expounding on the descriptive statistics of the study, a total number of female administrator respondents who chose to respond is given. Female administrators answered ten background informational questions as well as ten questions dealing with support and barriers pertaining to the purpose of the study including; enjoyment of your job, ability to do your job, reason you would leave your position and the longevity of your position. These ten questions were presented with a 7 point Likert scale and added up for an overall score, 70 points total. The three lowest scores and the three highest scores were used in the selection of participants for the qualitative portion.

Descriptive Statistics

According to Steinberg (2011) descriptive statistics include summary statistics such as mean and standard deviation. These data points help to describe the sample of the study along with a description of the independent and dependent variables.

Sample Size. 78 administrators responded out of 213, this is a response rate of 36.7%. “For an online survey, conventionally, a response rate of 20% is considered as a good response rate, while a 30% response rate is considered to be *really really* good” (Van Dessel, 2013, p. 1).

Management of Non-Responses. Due to the voluntary nature of each question, administrators who chose not to participate simply did not fill out the survey.

Demographics

These graphs visually present the descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations of background information of the respondents.

Figure 1

What is your age?

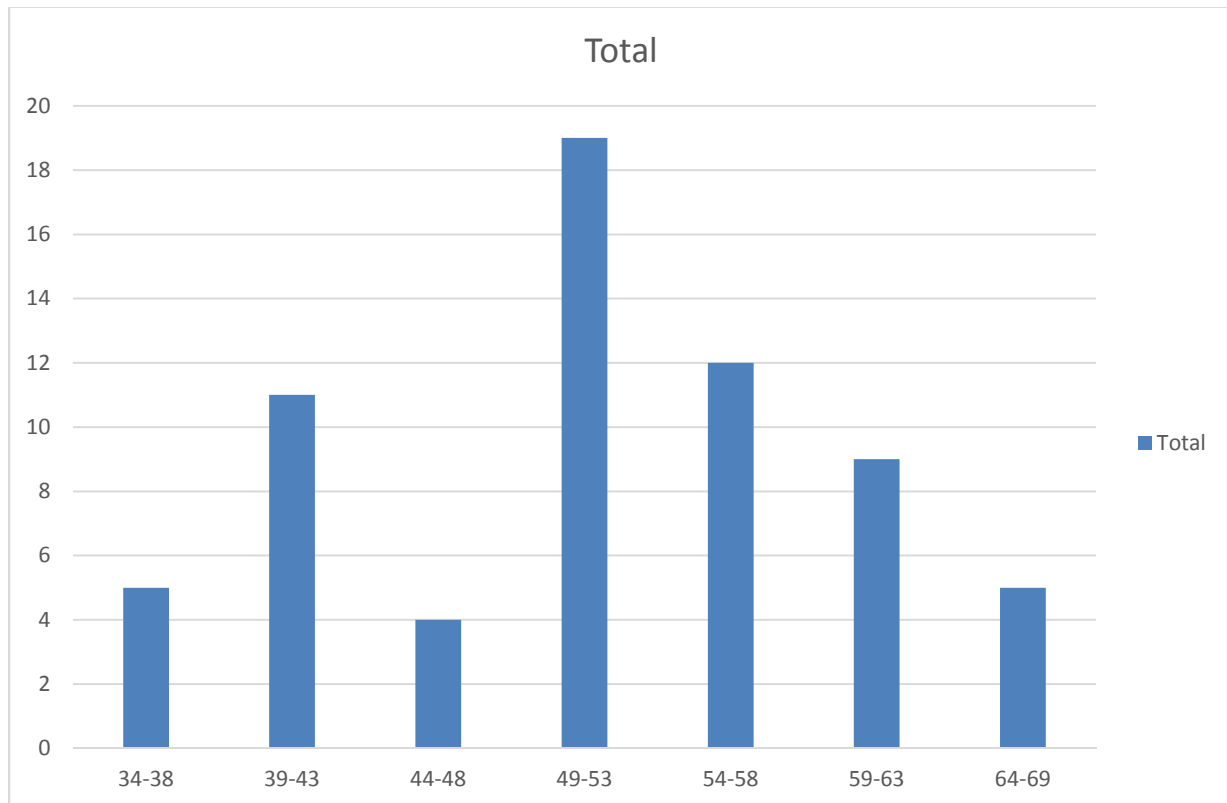


Figure 1 bar graph illustrates the ages of participants and groups them into five year intervals. The majority of responding administrators (19 in number) fall in the 49-53 age range. The numbers make a steady decline from there as the ages increase. However, the age range with the lowest number of participants was 44-48 years with 4 total participants.

Figure 2

How many years were you employed in an educational position before you became an administrator?

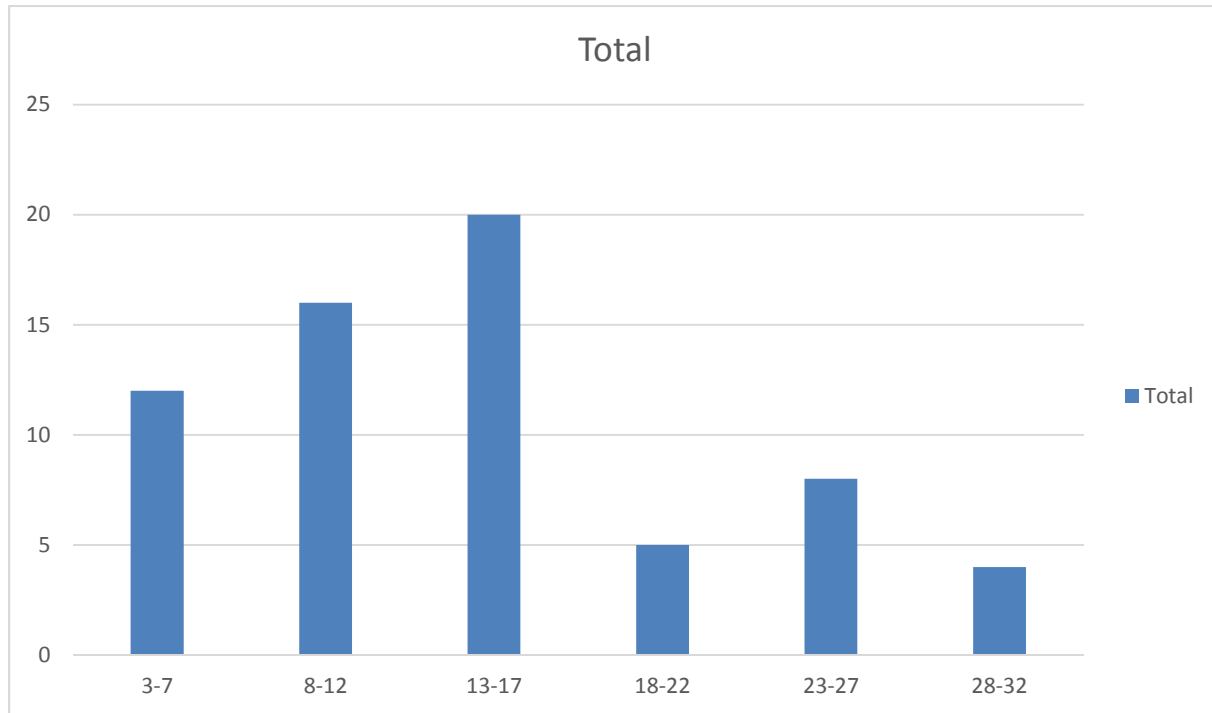
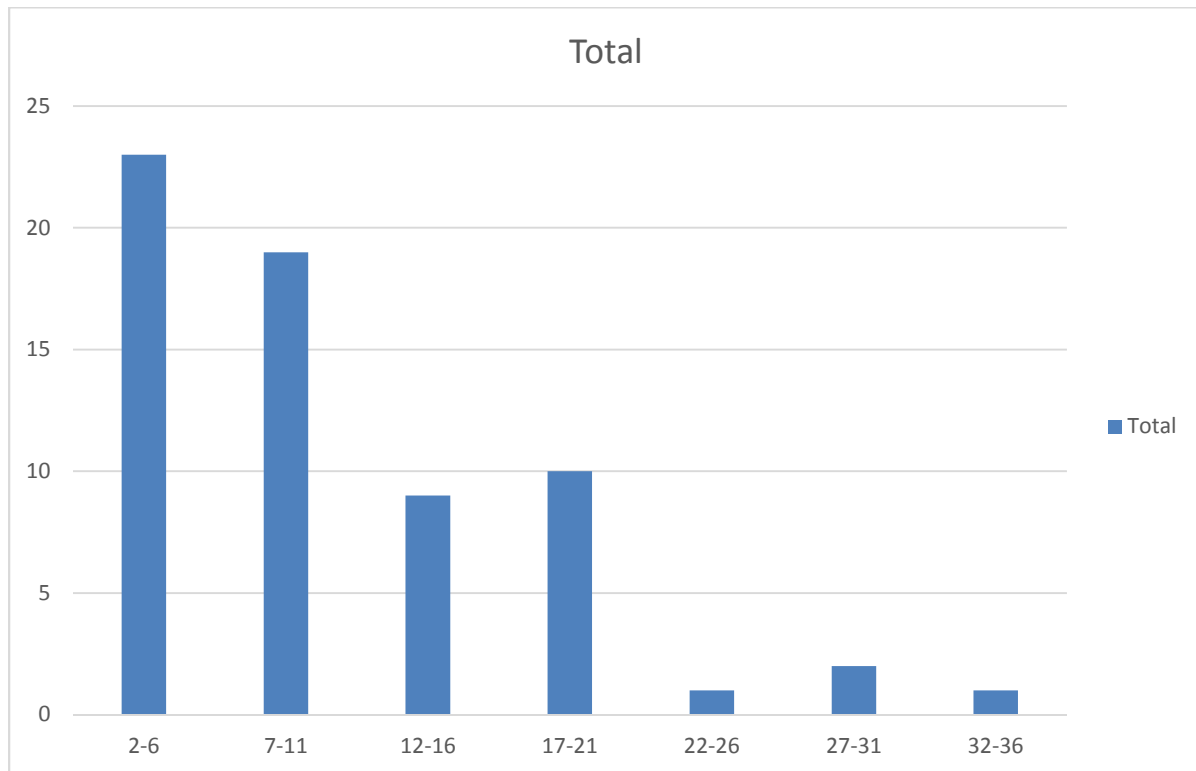


Figure 2 graph shows how many years' respondents worked in education before they were employed as an administrator. Twelve participants responded with 3-7 years and the numbers steadily go up from there until 18-22 years where there is a decrease of 15 participants. The lowest total of years employed prior to being hired as an administrator was the 28-32 years range.

Figure 3

How many years have you been an administrator?



In Figure 3 most respondents answered they have held or are now holding an administrative position from 2-6 years, followed by 7-11 years. In comparison to respondents who have worked in administration for 32-36 years. This wide range of years worked helped to offer a wide range of experience in the position.

Figure 4

How many administrative positions have you held?

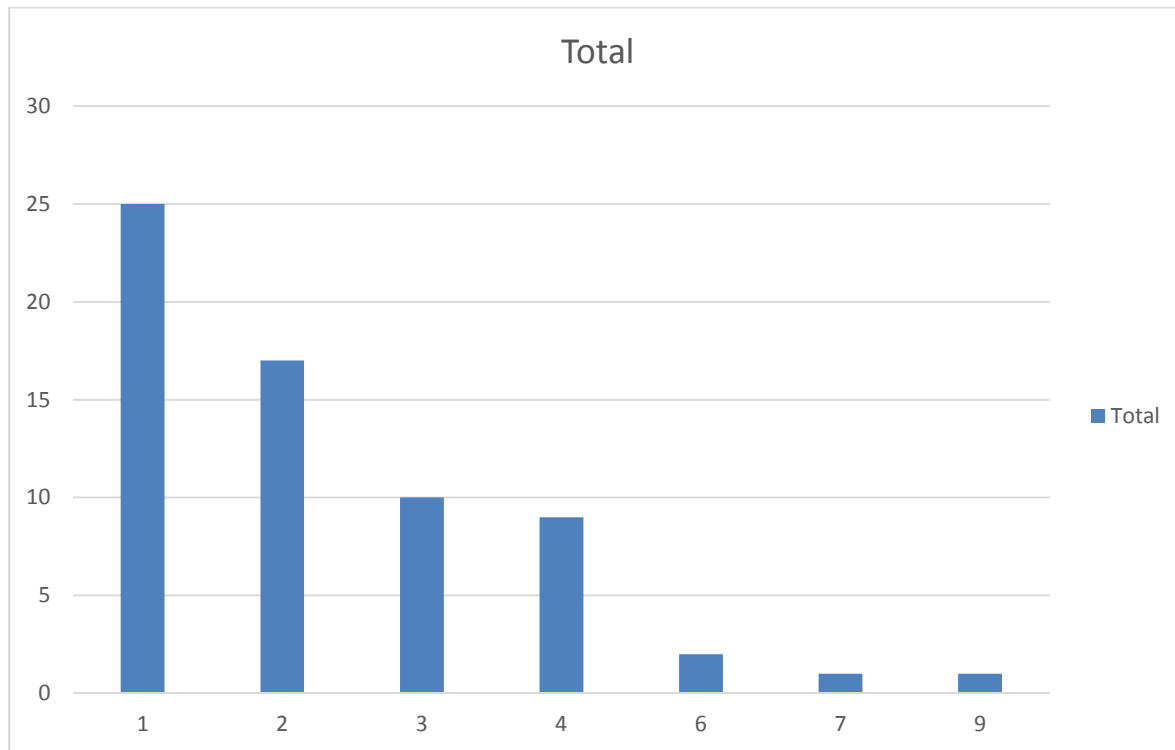


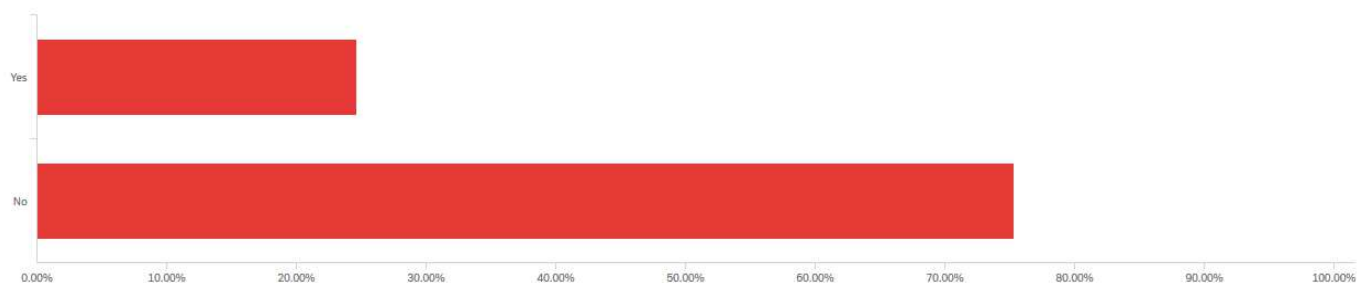
Figure 4 shows the number of administrative positions held shows a broad range of 1-9 positions. This range in positions held provided participants with a wider variety of experience for respondents to pull from when taking the survey. The fact that holding one position had the highest total, 25, is interesting based off of some of the qualitative respondent's thoughts on the quantitative responses. Some qualitative participant interviewees agreed that a variety of positions held as opposed to one might make a difference in the effects of barriers and support.

Figure 5

Have you held a Curriculum Director position?

Q5 - Have you held a Curriculum Director position?

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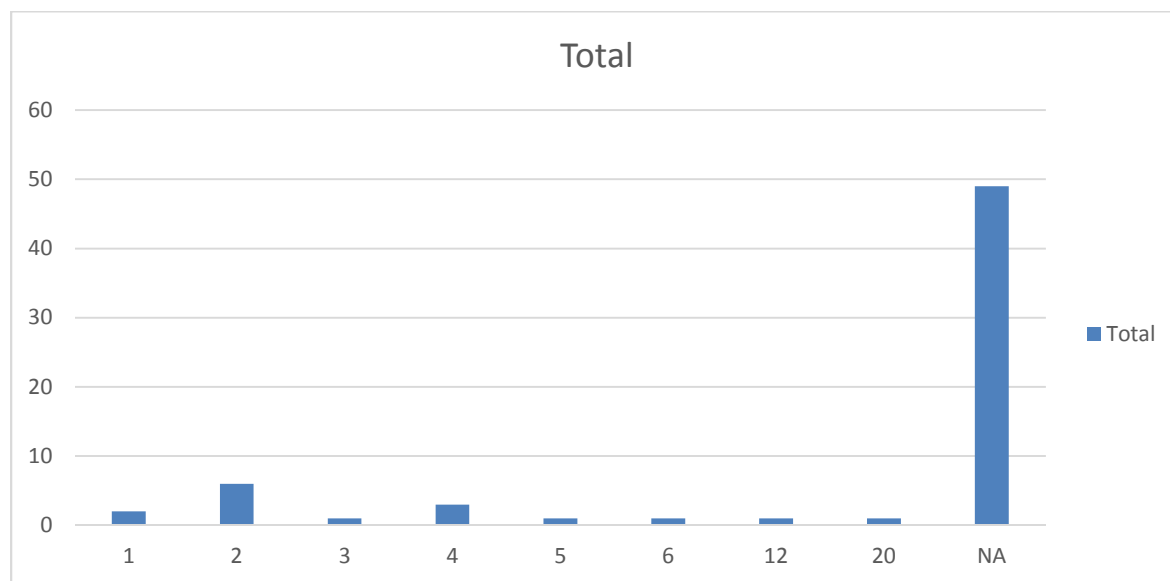


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Have you held a Curriculum Director position?	1.00	2.00	1.75	0.43	0.19	77

The demographic question illustrated in Figure 5 helped to provide some insight into the experiences of the respondents. Twenty-five percent of the respondents had or have held a Curriculum Director position while 75% had not. This question produced a low Mean, or average, of 1.76 of participants who served in this title.

Figure 6

How many years did you hold a Curriculum Director position?



As Figure 5 and Figure 6 showed, very few, if any administrators have held a Curriculum Director position; those that did held it anywhere from 1-20 years. This position is somewhat new in the education world. Since the Common Core State Standards Initiative, our nation has had a growing focus on the role of curriculum in improving students' learning and as such it is becoming increasingly common for K-12 districts to hire a director of curriculum to oversee every aspect of developing, assessing, and modifying the road map for teachers.

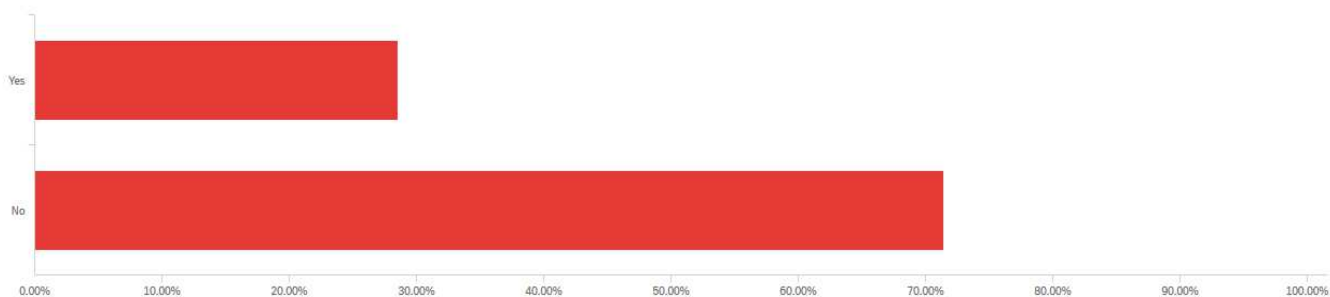
(topeducationdegrees)

Figure 7

Have you held a Vice Principal position?

Q7 - Have you held a Vice Principal position?

Page Options ▾



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Have you held a Vice Principal position?	1.00	2.00	1.71	0.45	0.20	77

The next few figures provide statistical demographic to represent the background of the respondents who participated in the research study. In Figure 7, 29% of respondents had or have held a Vice Principal position while 71% have not. Montana being a rural state, the position of Vice Principal might not be as widely needed as opposed to larger, urban schools. With smaller schools, less staff the need for multiple administrators to oversee operations is unwarranted. Smaller schools also mean smaller budgets so there is less money to spend on staff.

Figure 8

For how many years did you hold a Vice Principal position?

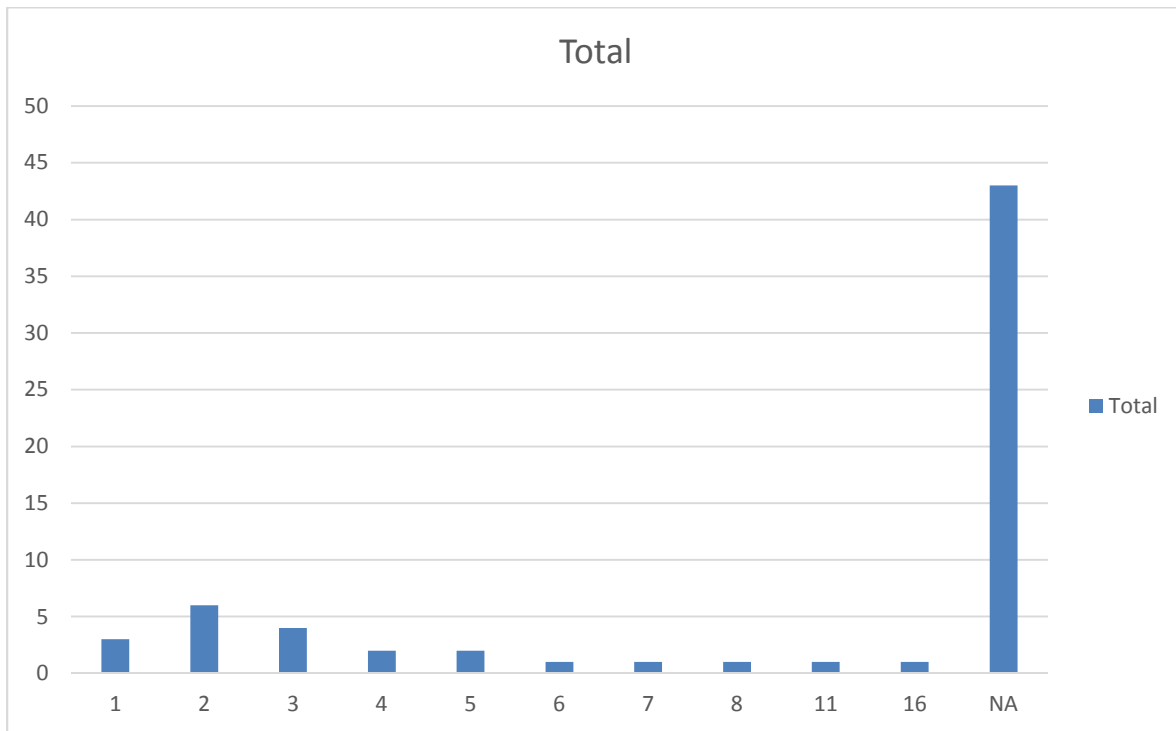


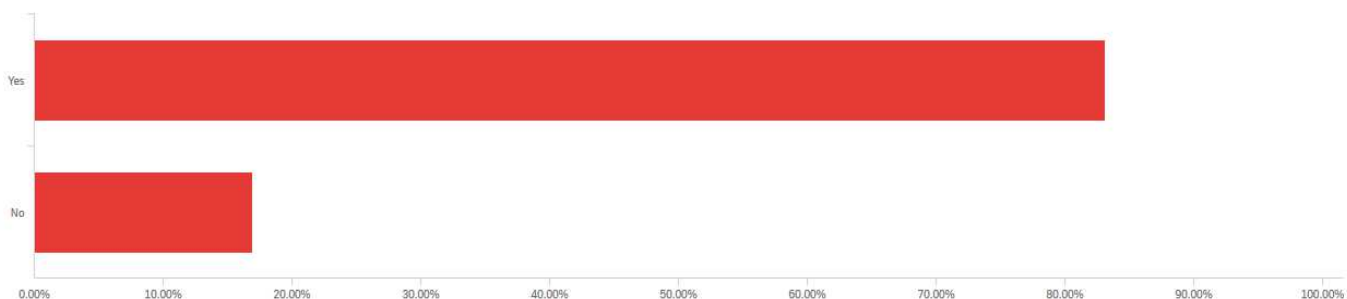
Figure 8 shows the year's respondents have served or are serving in the Vice Principal position. While there is a decent range of 1-16 years served, the 5-year gap between years served was an interesting statistic gleaned from the data. The highest total was that of only 2 years.

Figure 9

Have you held a Principal position?

Q9 - Have you held a Principal position?

Page Options ▾

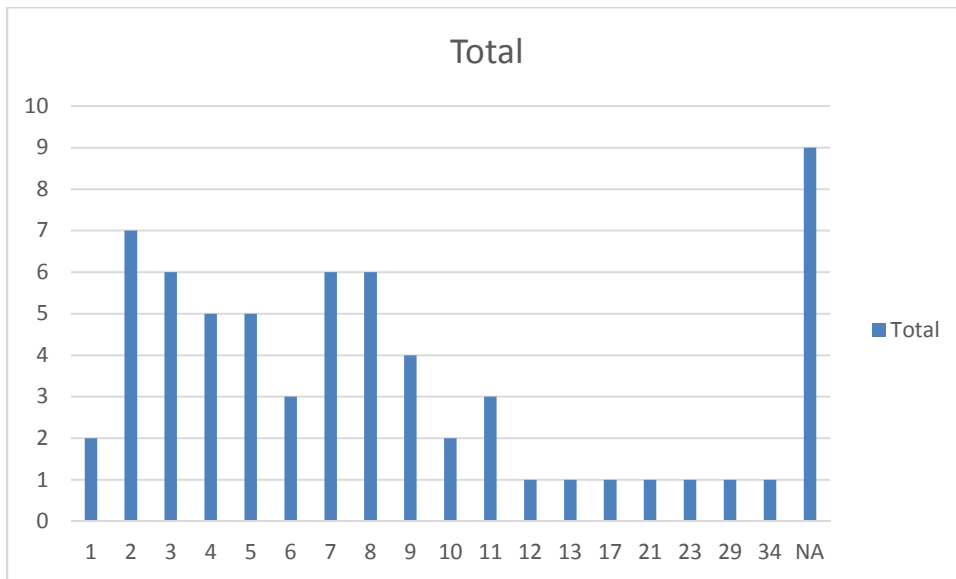


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Have you held a Principal position?	1.00	2.00	1.17	0.37	0.14	77

Figure 9 indicates that the majority of respondents have or are currently serving as a Principal. Eighty-three percent have or are currently holding a Principal position while only 17% have not. Having a majority of participants holding this main position allowed for more confidence in the data. The quantitative variable questions deal with leadership positions and the Principal position is a leadership position held in every school.

Figure 10

For how many years did you hold a Principal position?



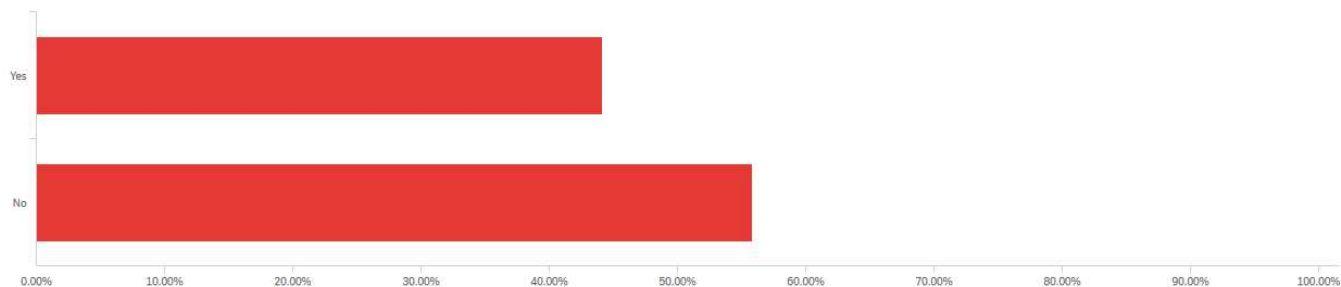
These data in Figure 10 represented the years the responding principals have or are continuing to serve in the Principal position. A wide range from 1 to 34 years is shown. The highest total of years served is 2 years and an overall Mean of 12 years served.

Figure 11

Have you held a Superintendent position?

Q11 - Have you held a Superintendent position?

Page Options ▾

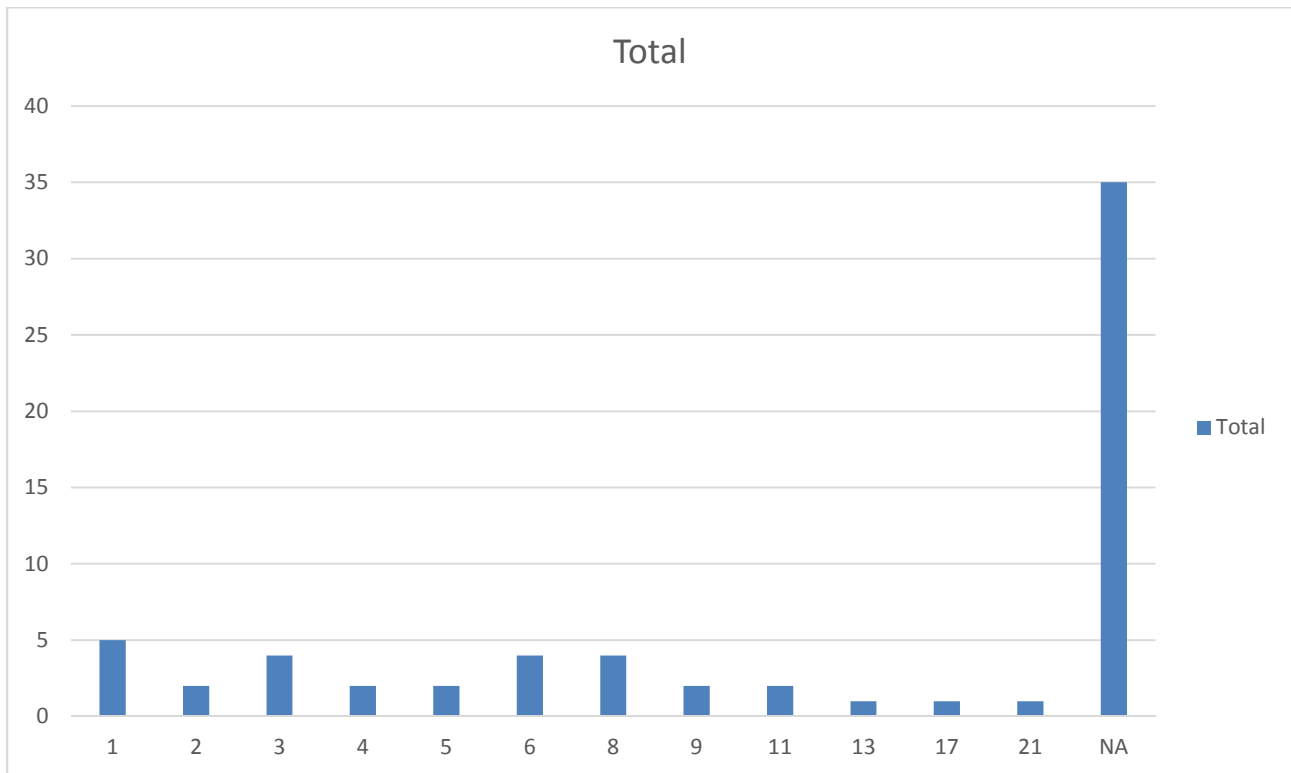


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Have you held a Superintendent position?	1.00	2.00	1.56	0.50	0.25	77

Figure 11 indicates that 44% of the respondents have held or are currently serving in the Superintendents position. Fifty-six percent of female respondents haven't held the top position at a school. There was a 39% drop in service between a Principal position and a Superintendent position.

Figure 12

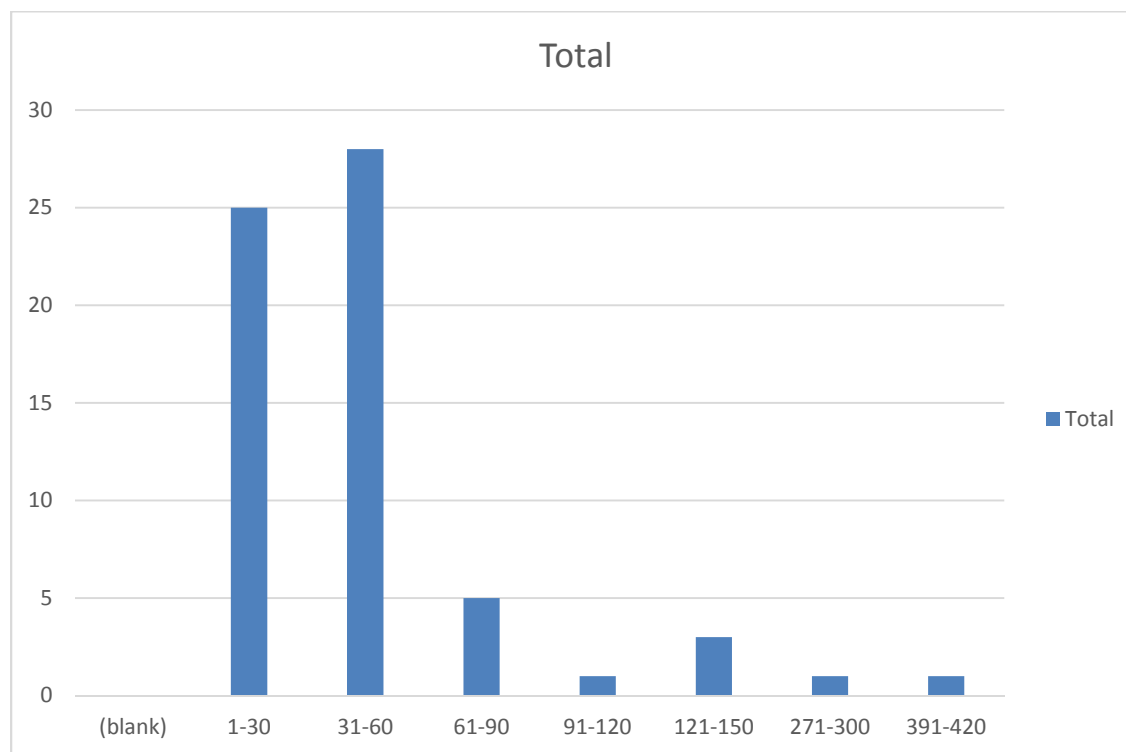
For how many years did you hold a Superintendent position?



While the years served in the Superintendent position are less than those established in the Principal position (Figure 10) the range of 1-21 years is a valid range to pull experience from considering the average year of tenure for a Superintendent position is 6 years. (Riddell, 2018) The highest total is 1 year served. The lowest numbers coincide with the highest years served; 13, 17, and 21 years.

Figure 13

How many employees currently report to you?



The highest total of reporting employees was the 31-60 range closely followed by 1-30 employees. While the highest range of 391-420 had a low total it is still a high number of employees to draw experience from. Figure 13 proves very interesting as the vast ranges that are shown in the number of employees reporting to the respondents. However, in a state like Montana with both rural and urban school districts the numbers are not entirely unexpected.

Figure 14

Of the people that report to you, how many are women?

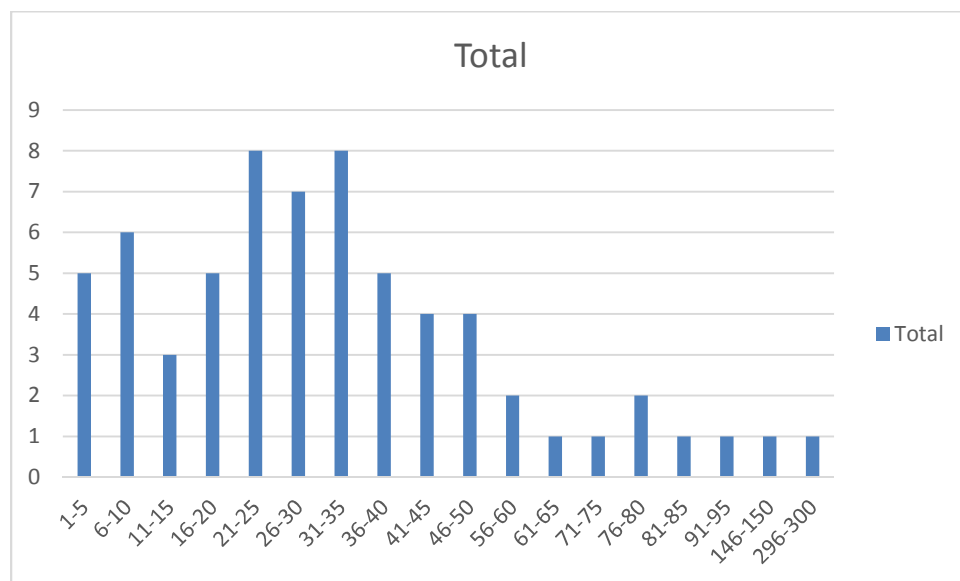


Figure 14 indicates the high yet varied number of female employees/subordinates that the responding female administrators are working with. With a range from 1-5 to 296-300 there is quite a wide range of female employees reporting to female administrators. The 21-25 and 31-35 range tied for the highest total with 8 respondents each.

Table 2

Results of Cronbach's Alpha Applied to Quantitative Data

#questions	10
sum of the item variances	28.07
Variance of Total Scores	128.61
Cronbach's a	0.87

The researcher used these data collected in the survey to test for reliability of the instrument using Cronbach's Alpha. Table 2 presents the results of the Cronbach's Alpha testing. With a = .87 this instrument is shown to have good internal consistency.

The figures and tables that follow are deemed by the researcher to represent the essence of the study. All variable questions are 'doubled'; one asking about the effects of barriers, the other asking about the effects of support.

Through percentages, descriptive statistics such as means, ranges and standard deviations the researcher presents the findings of the five variables of the study.

Figure 15

How often do you feel you encounter barriers from female subordinates?

Q15 - How often do you feel you encounter barriers from female subordinates?

Page Options ▾

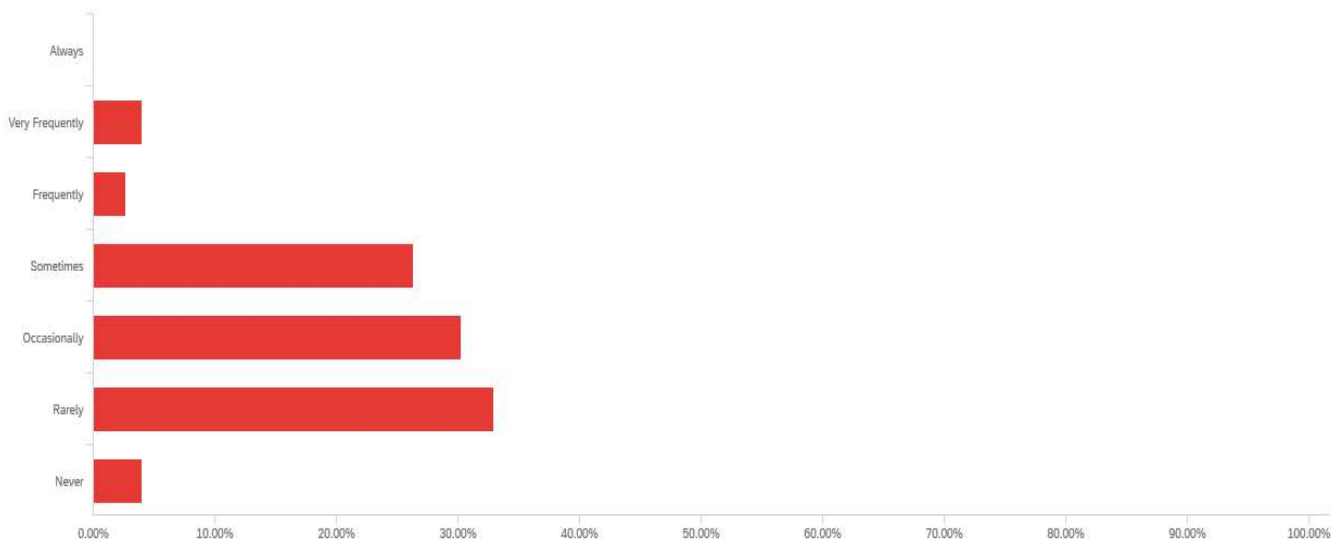


Figure 15 shows that 26.7% of participants responded that they sometimes encounter barriers from female subordinates, 29.3% responded occasionally and 33.33% rarely encountered barriers. The majority of respondents rated encountered barriers on the lower spectrum with only

4% responding that they very frequently encounter barriers and no one always encountered barriers.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Figure 15

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	How often do you feel you encounter barriers from female subordinates?	2.00	7.00	4.97	1.10	1.21	76

#	Field	Percentage
1	Always	0.00%
2	Very Frequently	3.95%
3	Frequently	2.63%
4	Sometimes	26.32%
5	Occasionally	30.26%
6	Rarely	32.89%
7	Never	3.95%
		76

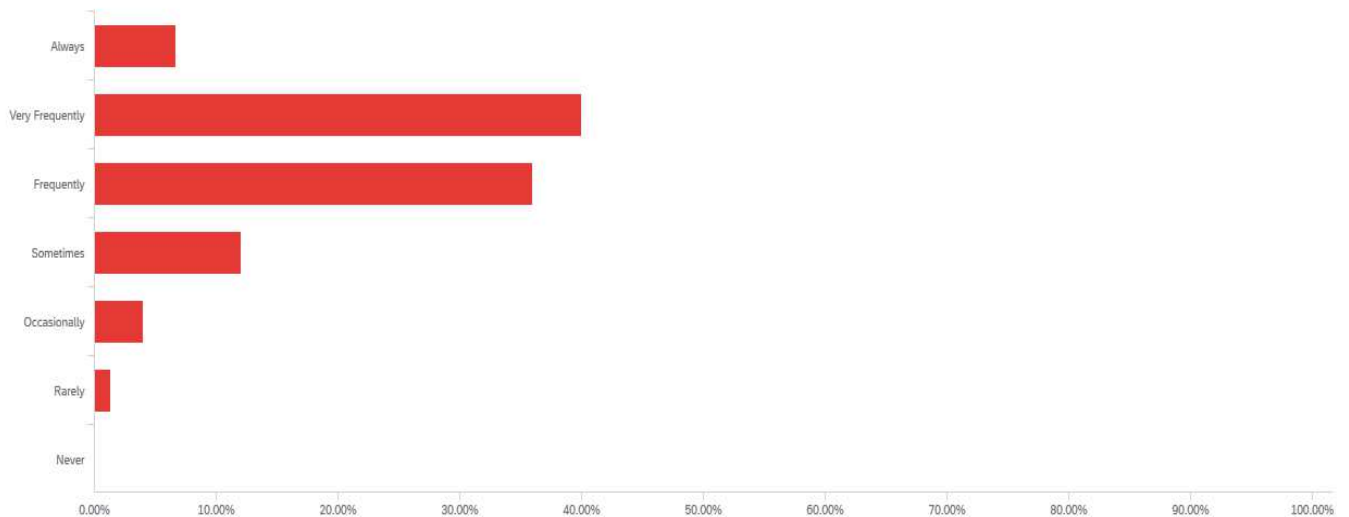
In Table 3 descriptive statistics for encountered barriers include a Mean of 4.97, a range of 5 and a Standard Deviation of 1.11. While barriers exist in the professional world, these statistics show that the female participants who responded have had limited encounters with barriers in the work place. With the majority of respondents having only held one administrative position, see Figure 4, the low ratings of encountered barriers reflect the responses in the Qualitative data as to a possibly reason of the low ranking of encountered barriers.

Figure 16

How often do you feel you receive support from female subordinates?

Q25 - How often do you feel you receive support from female subordinates?

Page Options ▾



In Figure 16 only 6.76% of respondents indicated they always encounter support from female staff. Interestingly, no one responded that they never get support, while 40.54% responded that they very frequently receive support, and 35.14% frequently receive support. This is a reversal from the encountered barriers statistics (Figure 15).

Table 4*Descriptive Statistics of Figure 16.*

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	How often do you feel you receive support from female subordinates?	1.00	6.00	2.71	0.99	0.98	75

#	Field	Percentage
1	Always	6.67%
2	Very Frequently	40.00%
3	Frequently	36.00%
4	Sometimes	12.00%
5	Occasionally	4.00%
6	Rarely	1.33%
7	Never	0.00%
		75

Table 4 shows descriptive statistics for received support including a Mean of 2.70, a range of 5 and a Standard Deviation of 1.00. It is encouraging to see the amount of support that female administrators are receiving in the work place. However, it is interesting to note that 1.35% of participants did respond that they rarely receive support in their workplace.

Figure 17

What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates affecting the enjoyment of your job?

Q16 - What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates effecting the enjoyment of your job?

Page Options ▾

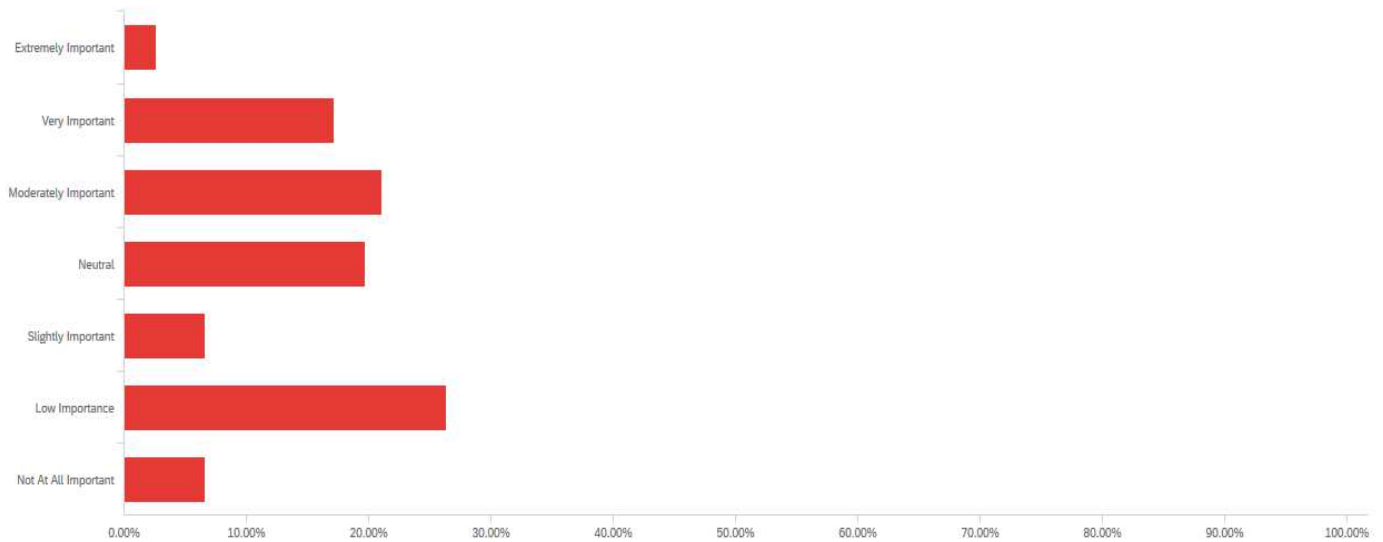


Figure 17 displays the overall responses the majority of female administrators rated barriers affecting the enjoyment of their job as Neutral, Moderately Important and Very Important. Though 26.6% of participants said that barriers were of low importance in affecting the enjoyment of their job, a little over 20% said that they were Very to Extremely Important. The data in Figure 17 suggested that barriers affecting the enjoyment of one's job varies greatly depending on who is asked.

Table 5*Descriptive Statistics of Figure 17*

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates effecting the enjoyment of your job?	1.00	7.00	4.16	1.68	2.82	76

#	Field	Percentage
1	Extremely Important	2.63%
2	Very Important	17.11%
3	Moderately Important	21.05%
4	Neutral	19.74%
5	Slightly Important	6.58%
6	Low Importance	26.32%
7	Not At All Important	6.58%
		76

In Table 5 descriptive statistics for barriers affecting the enjoyment of the position include a Mean of 4.15, a range of 6 and a Standard Deviation of 1.69. The data are spread out more evenly with a spike between Slightly Important, 5.33%, and Not At All Important, 6.67% with Low Importance spiking at 26.67%.

Figure 18

What would you rate the importance of support from female subordinates affecting the enjoyment of your job?

Q26 - What would you rate the importance of support from female subordinates effecting the enjoyment of your job?

Page Options ▾

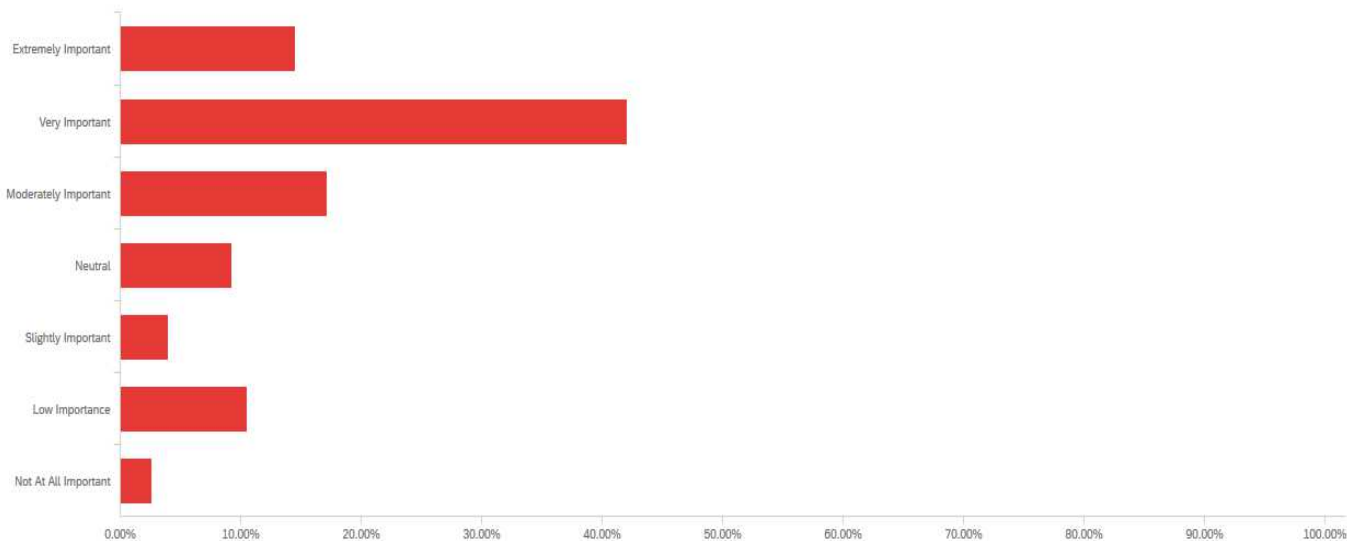


Figure 18 shows the respondents answers when asked only about support the second time. The responses in Figure 18 tell a different story with over 50% of participants rating support affecting the enjoyment of their job as Moderately to Very Important. Over 42% felt that the importance of support affecting their job was Very Important while less than 20% rated it as Slightly Important or lower.

Table 6*Descriptive Statistics of Figure 18*

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates affecting your ability to do your job productively?	1.00	9.00	3.99	1.74	3.01	76

#	Field	Percentage
1	Extremely Important	3.95%
2	Very Important	21.05%
3	Moderately Important	17.11%
4	Neutral	19.74%
5	Slightly Important	14.47%
6	Low Importance	21.05%
9	Not At All Important	2.63%
		76

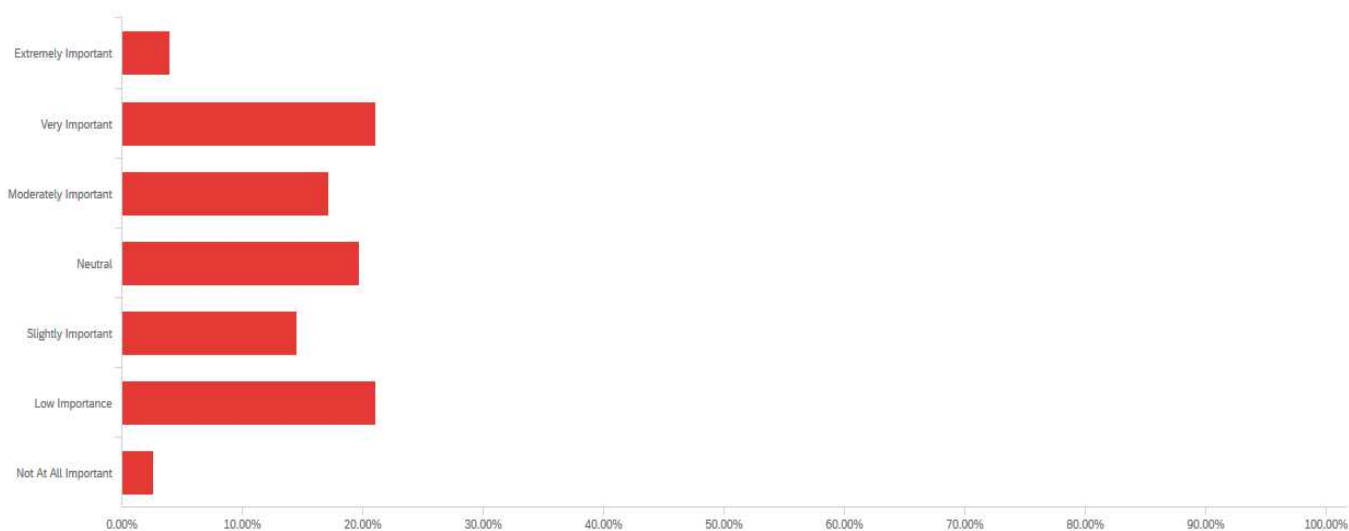
In Table 6, these descriptive statistics for support affecting the enjoyment of your job include a Mean of 2.88, a range of 6 and a Standard Deviation of 1.62. This data set suggests that support is much more important to the enjoyment of a job compared to barriers coming from female subordinates.

Figure 19

What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates affecting your ability to do your job productively?

Q17 - What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates affecting your ability to do your job productively?

Page Options ▾



In Figure 19 ratings of barriers affecting the leader's ability to do their job productively came in at 4% and 2.67%. Respectively these data for this question are pretty evenly spread out. There is no greater percentage difference than 5% throughout the 5 rating scales. This suggested that while barriers are not extremely important in affecting one's ability to do their job productively, it is not at all important either.

Table 7*Descriptive Statistics of Figure 19*

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates affecting your ability to do your job productively?	1.00	9.00	3.99	1.74	3.01	76

#	Field	Percentage
1	Extremely Important	3.95%
2	Very Important	21.05%
3	Moderately Important	17.11%
4	Neutral	19.74%
5	Slightly Important	14.47%
6	Low Importance	21.05%
9	Not At All Important	2.63%
		76

In Table 7 these descriptive statistics for barriers affecting the ability to your job productively include a Mean of 4.00, a range of 8 and a Standard Deviation of 1.74. While these data are spread very evenly, there is no clear answer as to the true affect barriers have on this variable; with the majority of the scale ratings coming in between 15% and 22%. There is no mass response at the top of the scale or at the bottom. The average of 4 is very close to the true average of 3.5 for the Likert 7-point scale. These statistics prove similar to those in Table 5.

Figure 20

What would you rate the importance of support from female subordinates affecting your ability to do your job productively?

Q28 - What would you rate the importance of support from female subordinates affecting your ability to do your job productively?

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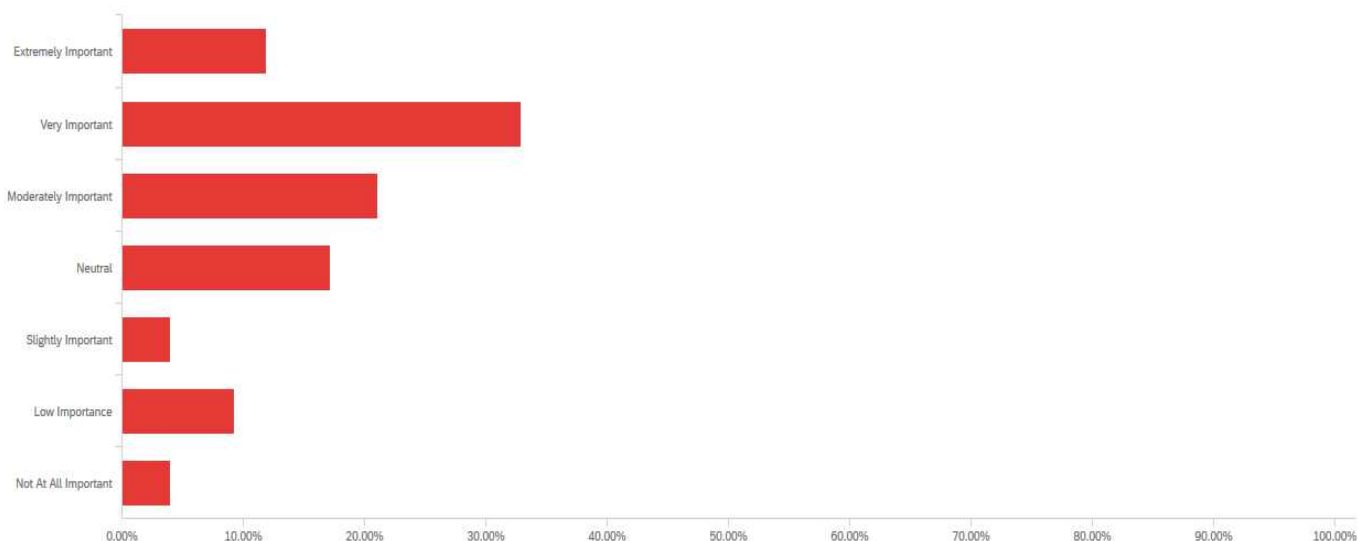


Figure 20 illustrates how support is perceived at affecting one's ability to do their job productively. The respondents show a higher ranking in the Moderately Important to Very Important category, totaling 53.33% of the response rate. However, the ranking of Slightly Important and below accounts for just 17% of the rankings.

Table 8*Descriptive Statistics of Figure 20*

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What would you rate the importance of support from female subordinates affecting your ability to do your job productively?	1.00	7.00	3.12	1.61	2.58	76

#	Field	Percentage
1	Extremely Important	11.84%
2	Very Important	32.89%
3	Moderately Important	21.05%
4	Neutral	17.11%
5	Slightly Important	3.95%
6	Low Importance	9.21%
7	Not At All Important	3.95%
		76

These descriptive statistics for support affecting the ability to your job productively are shown in Table 8. This table shows responses with a Mean of 3.12, a range of 6 and a Standard Deviation of 1.62. While these data collected about barriers affecting this variable are spread very evenly this question has the majority of participants suggesting that support are much more important to one's ability to do their job productively.

Figure 21

What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates as a reason you would leave your position?

Q18 - What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates as a reason you would leave your position?

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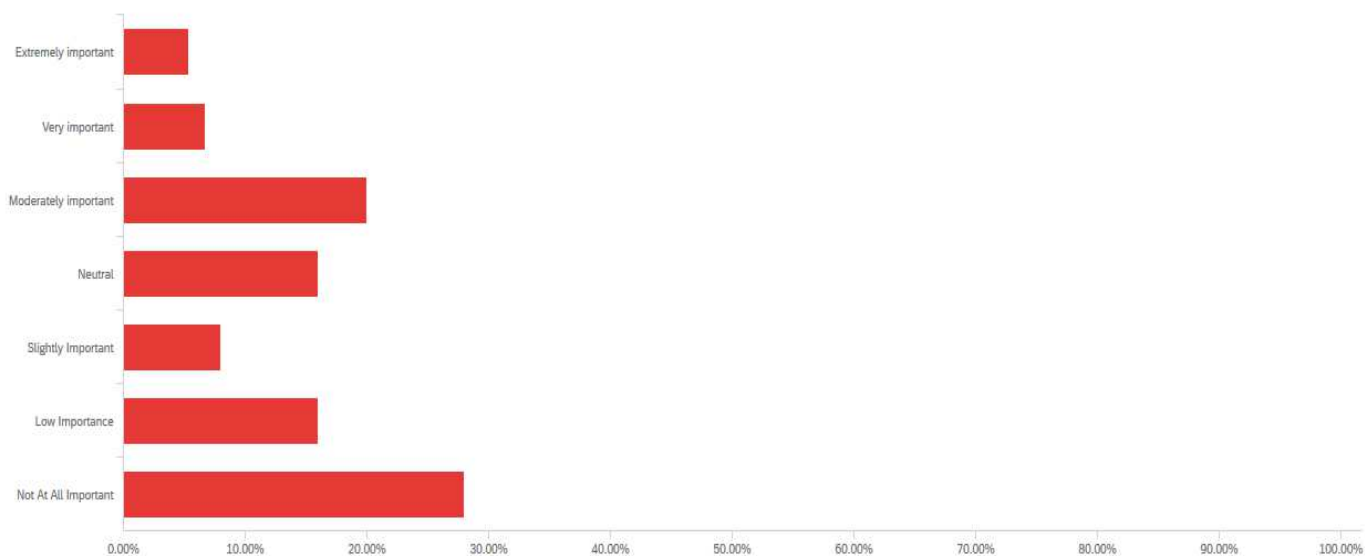


Figure 21 indicates how the respondents rated the importance of barriers from female subordinates as a reason one would leave their position. Again, these data indicated a bit of a widespread rating. However, as suggested in the past barriers variable questions the majority of rankings are shown below the Neutral scale rating. Yet close to 30% rated barriers (Figure 19) as a reason they would leave their position at Moderately Important or higher.

Table 9*Descriptive Statistics of Figure 21*

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates as a reason you would leave your position?	1.00	7.00	4.75	1.91	3.63	75

#	Field	Percentage
1	Extremely important	5.33%
2	Very important	6.67%
3	Moderately important	20.00%
4	Neutral	16.00%
5	Slightly Important	8.00%
6	Low Importance	16.00%
7	Not At All Important	28.00%
		75

These descriptive statistics shown in Table 9 show the respondents answers to the importance of barriers as a reason you would leave you position. This table shows a Mean of 4.77, a range of 6 and a Standard Deviation of 1.91. This question had the highest ranking of Not at All Important (38.38%) out of any of the variable questions. These data suggested that barriers have the least effect on a reason a female administrator would leave their position.

Figure 22

What would you rate the importance of support from female subordinates as a reason you would leave your position?

Q29 - What would you rate the importance of support from female subordinates as a reason you would leave your position?

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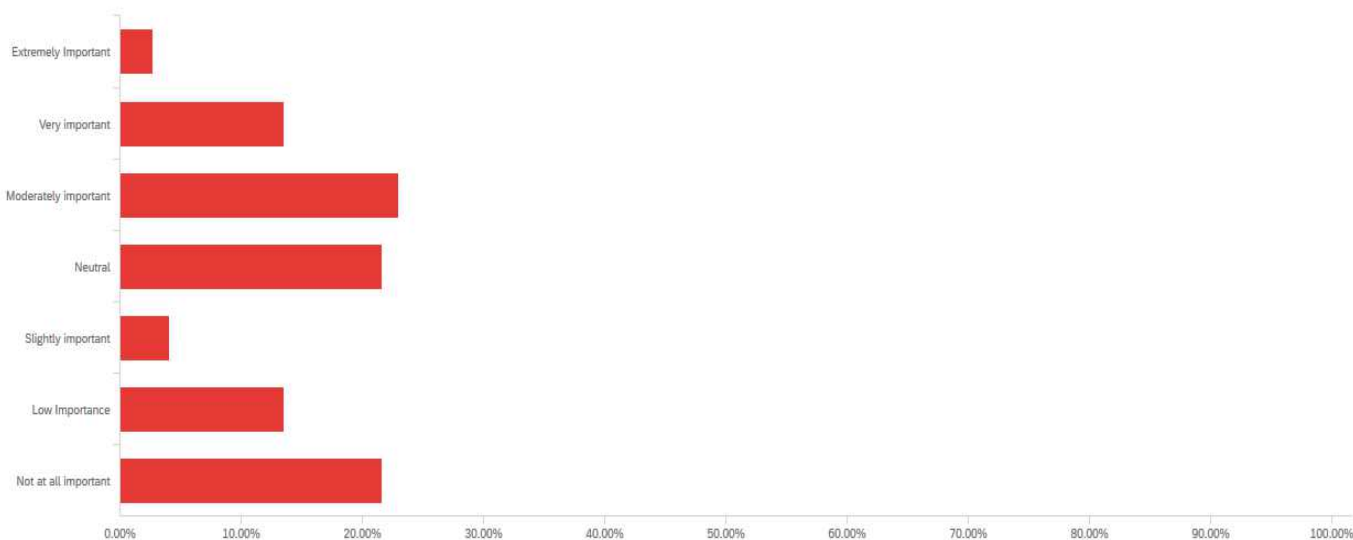


Figure 22 showed the responses from the sample regarding the importance of support from female subordinates as a reason to leave the position. With a mean difference of .78 between ratings of the barriers compared to support as a reason one would leave their leadership position this question had one of the smaller differences in comparison questions. The question of the effects of support (Figure 22) and barriers (Figure 21) had the closest set of data figures out of all the variables.

Table 10*Descriptive Statistics of Figure 22*

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What would you rate the importance of support from female subordinates as a reason you would leave your position?	1.00	10.00	5.53	3.03	9.17	74

#	Field	Percentage
1	Extremely Important	2.70%
2	Very important	13.51%
3	Moderately important	22.97%
9	Neutral	21.62%
4	Slightly important	4.05%
10	Low Importance	13.51%
5	Not at all important	21.62%
		74

In Table 10, these descriptive statistics on the importance of support as a reason you would leave you position include a Mean of 5.53, a range of 9 and a Standard Deviation of 3.03. This question had the highest ranking of Not at All Important out of any of the variable questions. These data suggested that support have the least effect on a reason a female administrator would leave their position coinciding with the barriers on the same variable.

Figure 23

What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates on the longevity of your position?

Q19 - What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates on the longevity of your position?

Page Options ▾



When asked to rate the importance of barriers on the longevity in their position against the female respondents were spread pretty evenly across, no individual ranking really stood out. In Figure 23, the data suggests that feelings on barriers and longevity in a position vary greatly for the participants involved. In the qualitative interviews an emerging theme found that the longer participants were in the field of administration, the more experiences one could pull from. Given the wide variety of years served (see Figure 3) the varied data is not all too surprising.

Table 11*Descriptive Statistics of Figure 23*

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates on the longevity of your position?	1.00	7.00	4.17	1.96	3.85	75

#	Field	Percentage
1	Extremely Important	6.67%
2	Very Important	20.00%
3	Moderately Important	14.67%
4	Neutral	18.67%
5	Slightly Important	6.67%
6	Low Importance	14.67%
7	Not At All Important	18.67%
		75

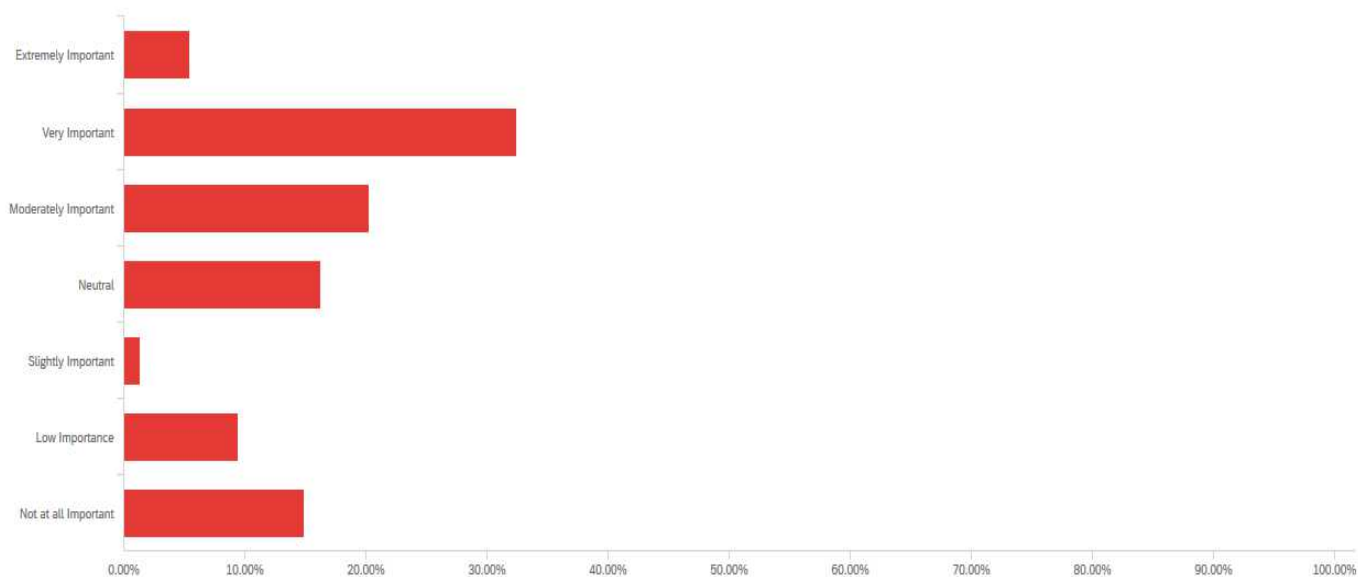
These descriptive statistics in Table 11 represented the importance of barriers affecting the longevity of one's position include a Mean of 4.20, a Range of 6 and a Standard Deviation of 1.96. While Extremely Important and Slightly Important had a percentage rate of less than 6%, this variable question had another equally spread out rating. Participants responded between 15% and 19% for the 5 other listed ratings.

Figure 24

What would you rate the importance of support from female subordinates on the longevity of your position?

Q30 - What would you rate the importance of support from female subordinates on the longevity of your position?

Page Options ▾



In Figure 24, the rankings for female subordinate support on the longevity variable proved to show higher numbers in the Moderately to Very Important category with 52% of the rankings falling into those two categories. This variable question, comparing barriers and support had the biggest disparity of Mean with a difference of 7.35. The difference between the Range was 3 and the Standard Deviation had a difference of 1.1.

Table 12*Descriptive Statistics of Figure 24*

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What would you rate the importance of support from female subordinates on the longevity of your position?	8.00	17.00	11.51	3.05	9.33	74

#	Field	Percentage
8	Extremely Important	5.41%
9	Very Important	32.43%
10	Moderately Important	20.27%
16	Neutral	16.22%
11	Slightly Important	1.35%
17	Low Importance	9.46%
12	Not at all Important	14.86%
		74

These descriptive statistics (Table 12) represented the importance of support affecting the longevity of one's position. The calculation of these data included a Mean of 11.55, a range of 9 and a Standard Deviation of 3.06. As a pattern throughout the ranking, data Slightly Important ranks extremely low at 1.37%.

Summary

In summarizing these data obtained from the responses, the most notable information the researcher gleaned was that when the variable questions asked about support, the majority of the rankings were much more positive. The Moderately to Very Important rankings were checked far more often than when the variable question was asked regarding barriers. After this observation,

the researcher mentioned this matter to the qualitative participants in the phone call interviews. These thoughts can be viewed in the qualitative summary section.

These descriptive statistics told a story regarding how the specified variables in this study influenced the leader. While support was ranked higher, the barrier rankings still consistently had an average of around 4 in a rating scale of 1-7. To the researcher, this showed that while these issues might not have been proven glaringly important they cannot also be dismissed as unimportant. Female subordinate support and barriers do play a part in the working lives of female educational leaders, whether one has been working 5 or 30 years in an administrative position.

Summary of Qualitative Results

What follows are the emerging themes and patterns from the six phone interviews that were conducted. The full conversations and responses can be viewed in Appendix E. The scores from the three highest participants contacted were 58/70, 49/70 and 61/70. The three lowest scores for the contacted participants were 20/70, 16/70 and 16/70. Scores were calculated by adding the points from the 10 variable questions with 7 points possible from each question for a sum of 70 points total.

- **Theme 1** – While barriers between female subordinates and female administrators persist some tend to have more of an issue with barriers than others. This was evident from the wide, ranging totaled quantitative scores.
- **Theme 2** – Interviewees agreed that the size of a school district has an effect on the relationship between subordinates and administrators with female subordinates. Five of the six administrators stated that the smaller the school district the more magnified the barriers and support with the staff; and the more important they become. The one

anomaly, said that she had the opposite experience, she had more issues in a bigger district than a small one. Though it should be noted in her explanation that the issues she experienced seemed to stem more from the districts policies as opposed to the size of it.

- **Theme 3** – Respondents came to the consensus that positive words will encourage positive rankings. “I believe that support is a positive word so they are rating it important as opposed to barriers which is a negative term. I think it is easier to say support is more important rather than barriers.” Administrator A.
- **Theme 4** – Interviewees said that age may play a factor, the older a respondent the more honest they may be. “I would say I think it has to do with experience, the longer you’re in administration the bigger the lens, the more barriers, the more experience you can pull from the more specific the answer.” Administrator D.
- **Theme 5** – Respondents had positive responses to the research and were genuinely interested in the subject matter and excited to see the results.
- **Pattern** – Experience, campus, incorporation of change has an effect on answers.

The five themes and single pattern that were found helped to gain a better understanding of the quantitative results. To hear the stories told in first person by the participating administrators proved very beneficial to the study as a whole.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations

In a quantitative study one only gets answers to the questions they ask. While the data gained in the quantitative portion of this study showed that barriers and support do have an effect on a variety of administrators in certain topics it was clear that the effects of barriers was not near as prevalent as the affects that support had on female respondents.

After conducting the qualitative interviews, it can be summarized that while the barriers and support from female subordinates to female administrators persist some have more of an issue with these variables than others. Things like the size of a district, years served, different buildings or positions served were some of the reasons the phone interview participants gave for the differences in scores.

Creswell (2009) stated that quantitative survey design provides a numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by using a sample size that often employs relationships among variables; while a qualitative researcher strives for “understanding”, that deep structure of knowledge that comes from visiting personally with participants, spending extensive time in the field and probing to obtain detailed meanings (Creswell, 2013). In this study, the researcher determined the effect of the support and barriers females in educational leadership positions experience from their female subordinates and how it affected their experience and longevity in their position. This study was developed to help fill a gap in the literature and inform school districts and employees in the field. In chapter 1 an introduction to the study was described, in chapter 2 a comprehensive review of literature was provided, the methodology was explained and results were provided in chapter 3. This chapter will explain challenges of the study, implications for females in leadership positions and also recommendations for future scholars.

With the development and perceived legitimacy of both qualitative and quantitative research in the social and human sciences, mixed methods research, employing the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches, has gained popularity. This popularity is because research methodology continues to evolve and develop, and mixed methods is another step forward, utilizing the strengths of qualitative and quantitative research. (Creswell, p. 203, 2009)

Creswell (2009) reported that the descriptive statistics calculated for observations and measures at the pre-test or post-test stage of experimental designs can include means, standard deviations, and ranges. While a final step in qualitative narrative research data analysis involves making an interpretation or meaning of the data. Asking. “What were the lessons learned?” captures the essence of this idea (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These lessons could be the researcher’s personal interpretation, couched in the understanding that the inquirer brings to the study from her or his own culture. In Chapter 2 Skrla, Scott, & Benestante (2008) posited that if we are ever going to define and represent women in the superintendency we need to come to a better understating of how gender and power play out in the lived experiences of female superintendents. While the data gained in the quantitative portion of this study showed that barriers and support do have an effect on a variety of administrators in certain topics it was clear that the effects of barriers was not near as prevalent as the affect that support had on the female respondents; however, in a quantitative study one only gets answers to what they ask, nothing more. In the review of literature Wallace (2015) reported on the top three categories of advice that female superintendents would give aspiring female superintendents and the awareness of barriers from female subordinates is nowhere to be found. However, Barash’s (2006) study focused on how women treat each other was supported by the qualitative response of

Administrator D. Barash was concerned with how the rivalry begins...in women's insufficient options. Administrator D cemented this idea by stating that in her old school district there were policies in place that increased competition for transfers to better school districts. Women were unwilling to help each other because they were so busy trying to help themselves.

Administrator A further reinforced the ideas stated by Miller-Merrell (2019) when they stated that managers demonstrate "executive distance" in their relationships with subordinates. This kind of relationship between a "lower level" and "higher level" woman can disappoint expectations for close relationships. A woman may feel rejected by the senior women, take it personally and dislike the senior woman. Administrator A discussed the issues of an all-female staff and the need for more 'testosterone' on her staff.

With Jones and Palmer (2011) research paper asserting that many women would rather damage the progress of the entire gender than allow another woman to succeed, and Whimn (2018) reporting that 70 percent of female executives feeling that they had been bullied by women trying to block their professional ambitions the low percentages associated with barriers and their effects on the tested variables were somewhat unexpected.

Where women being completely honest, is the profession of teaching and administration somewhat immune to female on female sabotaging? Is it possible that the term barriers was simply a term that women were not comfortable associating themselves with? Did age, experience and/or longevity play a bigger role in the responses? These are lingering questions to ponder looking into the future of this type of research.

Ending the research on a positive note, while half of the phone interviewees agreed that support and barriers do have an effect on leadership positions the majority of the responses

clearly stated that support from female subordinates was far more prevalent, and important, than barriers. As Laura Mignott, CEO of DFlash said:

Be human, be helpful and be authentic. I've built my career by lifting as I climb and paying it forward. There is no greater thing you can do than to give to others. No one needs to spend every waking minute, but you can by being a good person, following up and being nice. (Dasilva, 2019, p. 6)

Challenges of the Study

The biggest challenge of the study was obtaining enough responses from female administrators. After two emails were sent out enough responses were obtained to account for 30% of the population. Another challenge was understanding the reasoning behind the ratings the administrators gave. While six interviews were conducted it was a challenge to understand why so many respondents rated 'support' high but 'barriers' low.

Implications for Leaders

Female Administrators. The results of this study are important for female administrators in the education world for a variety of reasons. Results may help female administrators reflect more on the importance of establishing positive relationships with their female subordinates. Depending on the size of the district these relationships have the ability to 'make or break' an administrator's career. With the majority of the teaching field occupied by females it is important to understand the relationship between female teachers and female administrators and the affects the support and barriers from teachers has on the experience and longevity in the female administrator's position.

Aspiring Female Administrators. The results of this study can help to support the importance of the female-teacher relationship to female administrators. There are so many issues

and concerns for aspiring administrators to consider when deciding to enter the administrative field it is essential that they understand all the dynamics of their potential staff and the issues they may run into.

Female Educators. While this study is geared toward female administrators the results have important implications for female educators as well. The teacher-administrator relationship is one of the most important relationships either staff member will have in their career. As statistics show, the majority of teachers are female while only a little over half of administrators are female, and the numbers for female Superintendents are even lower. Having a positive relationship with colleagues is crucial for a career. Understanding the dynamics from both sides is essential to an optimistic, workable relationship.

More than just awareness the information from this study could be the catalyst for specific training for administrators as they work towards positive working relationships with their staff; setting the precedence for open, honest and safe communication to deal with support and barriers. Administrators could work with their staff to create team standards and/or codes of conduct to facilitate healthy relationships with and between all staff members.

Recommendations for Future Studies

After conducting the study and analyzing and interpreting the data, four recommendations for future studies are recommended. Creswell (2009) stated that validity is the extent to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure and performs how it is supposed to. Content validity refers to the appropriateness of the content of an instrument, which essentially accurately assesses what the researcher wants to know. In this study, content validity was met. The instrument (Qualtrics) was sound and helped the researcher discover the answers to the research questions. However, since the sample is not random and the attempt at a consensus

was not met this data did not meet external validity. Therefore, the results of this study cannot be generalized from a sample to a population. For future studies, it would be recommended to obtain a random sample so that the results can in fact be generalized back to the population. By obtaining a random sample, the researcher could also gain a more diverse representation of female administrators from different states and school district's. It would be interesting to question the respondents who rated that barriers had no effect on the enjoyment of their job and how often they actually felt they encountered them in further studies as well.

While demographic questions are important, the researcher believes that there were possibly too many and the 13 demographic questions could have been condensed to 10. The curriculum director questions along with the years they were a curriculum director proved to be inconsequential. The questions dealing with staff members and the number of female staff members were informative but overall the researcher felt that information did not prove necessary for the study implications.

Asking the respondents to differentiate between how many of their staff is female as opposed to male to obtain a more holistic idea of how many female subordinates are reporting to the administrators to, possibly, gain a better understanding of the impacts of barriers and support. Keppel (1991) stated that with random selection or random sampling, each individual has an equal probability of being selected from the population ensuring that the sample will be representative of the population.

The idea of a 'pack mentality', where a group of teachers are essentially working against an administrator would be an interesting research focus to combine with the results of research. Jorgenson and Peal (2008) stated the gap between teacher and administrator can lead to negative stereotypes of principals: that they are motivated more by self-interest and salary than serving

children, or that their priorities and allegiances lean more toward bureaucracy and budgets than teaching and learning. Teachers feel that administrators don't "get it" and this perception feeds an "us versus them" mentality.

Another future research study could focus on the occurrence of female administrators and the support and barriers they offer to their female teachers. This study could focus on the perspective of the teacher.

Summary

Dewey (1916) pointed out that experience and education cannot be directly equated and that learning experiences should meet certain stringent criteria. They should be growth enhancing, arouse curiosity, strengthen initiative and enable the individual to create meaning. It was this concern for learning that led him to place such a great emphasis on experience. By obtaining the quantitative results and supporting them with the qualitative interviews the researcher was able to get a more well-rounded study that aimed to understand the lived experiences of support and barriers that female administrators received from female subordinates.

This study was designed to research the support and barriers female administrators receive from female subordinates and how they affect the experience and longevity in the position. The results of this study aimed to contribute to the literature on female leadership and inform researchers in the field.

Cozby and Bates (2015) stated that research is important because it can provide us with the best answers to questions and is a way "to satisfy our native curiosity about ourselves, the world, and those around us" (p. 3). It is important that research on this topic continue. While literature on female leadership continues to grow more areas of interest need to be explored. It is

the researchers hope that this study can be a catalyst for other researchers to expound on the given topic.

End Note

In a phone call on Jan. 22nd, 2020 to Dr. Susan Murphy, co-author of *In The Company of Women*, we discussed the responses obtained both quantitatively and qualitatively. She shared that she was not overly surprised at the ‘middle of the road’ responses the research received from participants. Dr. Susan Murphy revealed that in all her continuous work that women in general try to avoid conflict whenever possible, and the term barriers is associated with conflict. She said that even though the study was anonymous, the neutral responses can come from a fear that respondents will still be ‘found out’ and their data shared with their community. Dr. Susan Murphy also communicated that by saying “rating: that yes, they had encountered barriers, respondents perceive that as a negative reflection on themselves and their career. Responding that one encounters barriers can possibly make someone look weak; thoughts of “I knew that she couldn’t handle the position, I knew she would struggle” are all sentiments that can be associated with identifying barriers. Dr. Susan Murphy (personal communication, January 22, 2020) expressed the researcher and stated her enthusiasm for the research.

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Appendix A

Email to female administrators

Hello,

My name is Jennifer Burnett and I am a doctoral candidate in the department of Educational Leadership at the University of Montana. You are invited to participate in an online survey for a research study that should take approximately 4-5 minutes. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship (if any) between the support and barriers that female administrators receive from female subordinates and how it affects their position. You must be at least 18 years old to participate in this study. Please click [HERE](#) to take the survey OR copy and paste this link into a different browser

Thank You!

Jennifer Burnett

Jennifer R. Burnett
Ed.D Candidate
University of Montana
E: Jennifer.burnett@mso.umt.edu
C: (406) 239-0783

Appendix B

Survey

Relationship Between Support/Barriers and Its Effect on Administrative Position

SURVEY CONSENT FORM

You are invited to participate in an online survey for a research study that should take approximately 5-7 minutes. The purpose of this study will be to examine the relationship (if any) between the negative treatment that female administrators receive from female subordinates and how it affects their position.

Investigators

Jennifer Burnett (doctoral candidate): Jennifer.burnett@mso.umt.edu

Dr. Frances O'Reilly (professor): Francee.O'Reilly@mso.umt.edu

Participation & Risks

Your participation in this survey is voluntary and responses was kept anonymous to the degree permitted by the technology being used. This survey has no anticipated risks, compensation, or other direct benefits to you as a participant.

Withdrawal

You have the option to not respond to any questions that you choose and withdrawal from this study at any time. Participation or non-participation will not impact your relationship with the University of Montana or your institution. Submission of the survey will be interpreted as your informed consent to participate and that you affirm that you are at least 18 years of age.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about the research, please contact the Principal Investigator, Jennifer Burnett via email at Jennifer.burnett@mso.umt.edu or the faculty advisor, Dr. Francis O'Reilly at Francee.O'Reilly@mso.umt.edu. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact the UM Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (406) 243-6672.

Confidentiality

There will be no individual, school, or institutional names that will be used in this dissertation, final reports, or publications.

Yes I consent (1)

No I do not Consent (2)

Q1 What is your age?

Q2 How many years were you employed in an education position before you became an administrator?

Q3 How many years have you been an administrator?

Q4 How many administrative positions have you held?

Q5 Have you held a Curriculum Director position?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Q6 For how many years did you hold a Curriculum Director position?

Q7 Have you held a Vice Principal position?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Q8 For how many years did you hold a Vice Principal position?

Q9 Have you held a Principal position?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Q10 For how many years did you hold a Principal position?

Q11 Have you held a Superintendent position?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Q13 For how many years did you hold a Superintendent position?

Q14 How many employees currently report to you?

Q20 Of the people that report to you, how many are woman?

Q15 How often do you feel you encounter barriers from female subordinates?

- Always (1)
- Very Frequently (2)
- Frequently (3)
- Sometimes (4)
- Occasionally (5)
- Rarely (6)
- Never (7)

Q25 How often do you feel you receive support from female subordinates?

- Always (1)
- Very Frequently (2)
- Frequently (3)
- Sometimes (4)
- Occasionally (5)
- Rarely (6)
- Never (7)

Q16 What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates affecting the enjoyment of your job?

- Extremely Important (1)
- Very Important (2)
- Moderately Important (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Slightly Important (5)
- Low Importance (6)
- Not At All Important (7)

Q26 What would you rate the importance of support from female subordinates affecting the enjoyment of your job?

- Extremely Important (1)
- Very Important (2)
- Moderately Important (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Slightly Important (5)
- Low Importance (6)
- Not At All Important (7)

Q17 What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates affecting your ability to do your job productively?

- Extremely Important (1)
- Very Important (2)
- Moderately Important (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Slightly Important (5)
- Low Importance (6)
- Not At All Important (9)

Q28 What would you rate the importance of support from female subordinates affecting your ability to do your job productively?

- Extremely Important (1)
- Very Important (2)
- Moderately Important (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Slightly Important (5)
- Low Importance (6)
- Not At All Important (7)

Q18 What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates as a reason you would leave your position?

- Extremely important (1)
- Very important (2)
- Moderately important (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Slightly Important (5)
- Low Importance (6)
- Not At All Important (7)

Q29 What would you rate the importance of support from female subordinates as a reason you would leave your position?

- Extremely Important (1)
- Very important (2)
- Moderately important (3)
- Neutral (9)
- Slightly important (4)
- Low Importance (10)
- Not at all important (5)

Q19 What would you rate the importance of barriers from female subordinates on the longevity of your position?

- Extremely Important (1)
- Very Important (2)
- Moderately Important (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Slightly Important (5)
- Low Importance (6)
- Not At All Important (7)

Q30 What would you rate the importance of support from female subordinates on the longevity of your position?

- Extremely Important (8)
- Very Important (9)
- Moderately Important (10)
- Neutral (16)
- Slightly Important (11)
- Low Importance (17)
- Not at all Important (12)

Q23 Would you be willing to be contacted, by phone, for a highly confidential, brief discussion on your career as an administrator and the experiences you have had?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Q24 Please provide your first name and a contact phone number.

Click to write Choice 1 (1) _____

Thank you for participating in this survey! The results of this study will help the researcher better understand the relationship between the negative treatment that female administrators receive from female subordinates and how it affects their position.

If you would like a copy of the results, or have specific questions about this study, please contact Jennifer Burnett at Jennifer.burnett@mso.umt.edu or (406) 239-0783.

Appendix C

Qualitative Phone Interview Questions

Qualitative Questions

Administrator Interviewed: Total Score: /70

Identified as: Administrator

1. Can you elaborate on the circumstances that led to your high or low ranking of encountered support and barriers from female subordinates?
2. How would define your leadership style?
3. After taking the survey, do you have any comments or insights you'd like to share as I move forward with this research?
4. Do you think that the size of a district affects the issue of support and barriers and female subordinates?
5. I noticed that I had a good number of responses where participants rated support as very important but not barriers, to me that is a bit of an oxymoron...how can one be so important and not the other...what are your thoughts/comments on this?

Appendix D

IRB application was submitted and approved prior to the pilot test. It was approved under the exempt category of review by the Institutional Review Board, IRB #168-19. On 12/2/19 the amendment request was approved under the expedited review by the IRB in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 46, section 110.

Appendix E

Administrator A

Total Score: 58/70

1. Can you elaborate on the circumstances that led to your **high** or low ranking of encountered support and barriers from female subordinates?

I think from my experience overall, having taught at the middle school before being an elementary principal I didn't notice any issues at all with female subordinates because it was pretty much an even split between males and females in the middle school. When I moved to elementary and the majority of my staff was female I thought thank god because women like to work. However, it didn't take long, maybe 6 months before I realized I needed testosterone in the building. You can tell there is a difference on how women interact with women as opposed to how they treat a male administrator. There is absolutely more respect for the male absolutely.

2. How would you define your leadership style?

I am an inclusive administrator; I consider myself more of a facilitator. I do not lead from the top down... I like facilitating leadership within my staff. I like collaboration working together with my staff.

3. After taking the survey, do you have any comments or insights you'd like to share as I move forward with this research?

When I saw the survey and thought of this person running it I thought finally someone wants to listen. Our Superintendent is female here and we have talked about this issue, issues with female subordinates and how we feel we are treated differently because we are female. I know it's out there this feeling of being treated different. I want you, the researcher, to just keep going because this is an issue that needs to be recognized and dealt with.

4. Do you believe the size of a district plays a part in the issue of support and barriers?

I can see where this issue is magnified in smaller districts. Relationships are more magnified so support and barriers play a bigger part.

5. I'm noticing a lot of respondents rating support high but not barriers, to me these absolutely coincide and I do not understand this, what are your thoughts on this?

I believe that support is a positive word so they are rating it important as opposed to barriers which is a negative term. I think it is easier to say support are important rather than barriers...maybe it's a confidence thing...

Administrator B

Total Score: 49/70

1. Can you elaborate on the circumstances that led to your **high** or low ranking of encountered support and barriers from female subordinates?

I work with a small number of females so my relationship with them makes or breaks the job. I have to get along with my female subordinates and have a good relationship with them for me and the school to be successful.

2. How would you define your leadership style?

I lead with the belief that we are all on the same team. The staff makes or breaks a school and the teachers and I are the front line of how the school functions.

3. After taking the survey, do you have any comments or insights you'd like to share as I move forward with this research?

As a County Superintendent I believe that rural schools are a whole different world as opposed to the bigger districts. One teacher can devastate a school. We have a 3-member school board and if we aren't a team and aren't in sync it will be bad for everyone.

4. Do you believe the size of a district plays a part in the issue of support and barriers?

As I said, I absolutely believe the size plays a major role in the issue of support and barriers.

5. I'm noticing a lot of respondents rating support high but not barriers, to me these absolutely coincide and I do not understand this, what are your thoughts on this?

I think it accounts to administrators wanting to be positive. Even though it's anonymous they are making it personal and not general. They would rather be labeled as being on the support spectrum instead of the barrier spectrum.

Administrator C

Total Score: 61/70

1. Can you elaborate on the circumstances that led to your **high** or low ranking of encountered support and barriers from female subordinates?

I was in a position as an educator and worked in the same building for 27 years. I got my masters and got a job as an administrator in the same building. It is a heavy female staff and now I was the supervisor of former colleagues. There were some staff that were not okay with that. After 8 years on the job I am getting smarter. I have had to sever friendships and say I'm not your friend anymore, I can't go to drinks or sit with you at sporting events.

2. How would you define your leadership style?

I consider myself open minded. My new staff would tell you that, I'm always there, I'm loyal and not empathetic; but I care about my staff and what they're going through but I believe that you have a job to do and no excuses for that. I am very open to ideas and suggestions but I am not a servant leader. If one of my staff members has a great idea and I'm supposed to figure it out and follow through and do it then no, I'm not open to that. I don't want people to manage my time. Now if I have a piece to put in it, I'm part of an idea then yes I am on board. I have resources to give and I can be a person to lean on.

3. After taking the survey, do you have any comments or insights you'd like to share as I move forward with this research?

The whole female to female thing is an issue. I work very hard with one female staff member who is very confrontational. She will come to me, be in my office and vent frustrations however with males she does nothing of the sort. I believe a female is more likely to be rude to another female but not to a male, they tend to take it a different way.

4. Do you believe the size of a district plays a part in the issue of support and barriers?

I think smaller district makes a difference. There are more conversations across and with the staff. With a bigger staff you might not even see people so negativity and positivity don't get to develop as much because you don't cross paths as much.

5. I'm noticing a lot of respondents rating support high but not barriers, to me these absolutely coincide and I do not understand this, what are your thoughts on this?

I think that we want everybody to be happy. I think that they possibly do not have enough experience to realize the barriers that exist, I think it takes a couple years to realize the barriers and what's happening, in the beginning you don't know they're there. It took me awhile to realize this. In a new job or if you switch up schools maybe you don't see barriers right away. It

takes longer to see barriers, they definitely become evident when you initiate change and rock the boat.

Administrator D

Total Score: 20/70

6. Can you elaborate on the circumstances that led to your high or **low** ranking of encountered support and barriers from female subordinates?

I'm new to Montana since August majority of my experience comes from a large southern state. I'm from a very large school district with over 700 students and over 100 staff members. I have an all-female staff now and I have nothing but good relationships. In my old district there were policies in place that increased competitiveness, teachers were always looking for transfers to better schools, so there was a lot of attitudes from subordinates because 'I don't like where I am right now' so I'm going to be miserable until I get to go where I want. I had an issue with a female staff member who wanted a vacant Vice Principal job on campus and I didn't want her there, she didn't get the job and it was a bad relationship after that.

7. How would you define your leadership style?

I have a collaborative leadership style. I like to bring teams together to make decisions. I very rarely make a big decision without bringing in stakeholders.

8. After taking the survey, do you have any comments or insights you'd like to share as I move forward with this research?

From my perspective I'm always advocating for my female subordinates to excel, I'm helping people pad their resumes so they can move on to better positions. I know other female administrators but it is hard to get to the Superintendent position; it is a male dominated society. I think that females shoot each other in the foot when we have to compete. When there are more women in similar positions we tend to not network as well together as men do. In the state that I come from you can watch the search firms and they have a pool of people, men, that they just cycle around to place in administrative positions, this is run by old male administrators. This has not been a problem for me but I'm relentless, women give up because they can't break into the click. We call it the bubba syndrome, a coach becomes a principal and so on...

9. Do you believe the size of a district plays a part in the issue of support and barriers?

I've had the absolute opposite experience, I think the larger the district the bigger the issue of support and barriers although I don't have much of a Montana perspective as I've only been an administrator for a year here. Where I'm from the politics in administrative position, it is cutthroat women vs. women vying for positions, I've seen some really nasty interactions between women who felt threatened. I was in situations where women who thought I knew more

than them so instead of being collaborative they try to bring me down. In larger districts with more opportunities women are fighting to not lose their position.

10. I'm noticing a lot of respondents rating support high but not barriers, to me these absolutely coincide and I do not understand this, what are your thoughts on this?

I would say I think it has to do with experience, the longer you're in administration the bigger the lens, the more barriers the more experience you can pull from the more specific the answer. I have been in big and small and medium districts so I have a myriad of experiences. If people have only been in one district they really only have one experience...

Administrator E

Total Score: 16/70

1. Can you elaborate on the circumstances that led to your high or **low** ranking of encountered support and barriers from female subordinates?

I feel like the position I'm in I am supported in many ways and either way it wouldn't affect what I do. I would still do what I do regardless of what other people thought.

2. How would you define your leadership style?

I have a shared leadership style. I believe everyone has to have input, to a degree. If everyone feels like they are buying in to what you are doing, then they are passionate about it. I have worked on a culture where everyone has a spot on the bus. If you're not loving your job, I want to know why and how I can help. I do believe that people do the very best they can with the information they have. If they are struggling, it's because they haven't been trained or don't understand or don't know it's an issue...

3. After taking the survey, do you have any comments or insights you'd like to share as I move forward with this research?

For me I've never considered gender to be an issue. There's been a long history at this school with only having males as administrators, I was the first female and it has not been a big deal.

4. Do you believe the size of a district plays a part in the issue of support and barriers?

The thing that I've realized over the years is that when there is an issue or problem people will complain but won't come to the person who can fix it, they just want to complain. I do believe there has to be a reason we are doing things; we're not doing things just because it's tradition. I do believe that if it's not broken don't fix it, but we can think outside of the box and what works one year may not work the next. I am consistent no matter who I'm speaking to and everybody is responsible for the wellbeing of a school, maybe if I had a rougher crew things would be different. In smaller schools you have your hand in everything.

5. I'm noticing a lot of respondents rating support high but not barriers, to me these absolutely coincide and I do not understand this, what are your thoughts on this?

N/A – Time Constraints

Administrator F

Total Score: 16/70

1. Can you elaborate on the circumstances that led to your high or **low** ranking of encountered support and barriers from female subordinates?

I wouldn't leave my job or let people dictate any of that for me. I will say from my sense I am an anomaly; I am a high school female principal. I think the female staff is more supportive because I am a female administrator with more males than females around.

2. How would you define your leadership style?

I am more of a supportive leader. I like to approach it as I'm willing to climb into the battle field with them, I move forward with them. I am not a top down leader. I like to work with my staff, I like to work with each other and having conversations, visiting with staff and not micromanaging.

3. After taking the survey, do you have any comments or insights you'd like to share as I move forward with this research?

I think it's fascinating and I'm very interested in finding out the results. I have very supportive staff but my staff is half and half gender wise. I am young and I have older employees, I think age might have something to do with that. Also I was part of staff before that, they might respond to someone differently...

4. Do you believe the size of a district plays a part in the issue of support and barriers?

I think that people do feel their female co-workers are supportive of them but I'm not going to let someone I have to deal with on a day to day to basis dictate my life choices. I will work to repair relationship but continue to move on no matter the outcome. My work ethic might have something to do with it, you keep trying you keep moving on. I know I'm not always going to make people happy but I'm not going to let it impact me. There's always going to be naysayers. I do feel that female administrators have to prove so much more. We're considered too emotional so being consistent with our actions is huge.

5. I'm noticing a lot of respondents rating support high but not barriers, to me these absolutely coincide and I do not understand this, what are your thoughts on this?

N/A – Time Constraints

