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CAREER PATHS AND PERCEIVED SUCCESS LEVELS OF
WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS
IN THE STATE OF TEXAS

DISSERTATION

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By

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The purposes of this study were to determine the career paths of women superintendents in the state of Texas and their school board members' perceptions of their levels of success.

All women currently serving as superintendents of public schools in Texas, as well as all school board members of districts with women serving as superintendents were surveyed. The findings of this study indicate that the "typical" woman superintendent was hired from inside the district, with a master's degree. She was 48.3 years of age. Her first administrative position was the principalship and she moved directly from the principalship to the superintendency.

The typical woman served in one district as superintendent. Her teaching and prior administrative experience was at the elementary level. Women superintendents perceived the position of teacher as the most beneficial experience prior to the superintendency. Women superintendents perceived leadership as the most important area of her

professional development. School finance was the area perceived by women superintendents as needing to be more extensive in their professional development. Of the women superintendents who responded to this survey, 68.1 percent reported that they did not perceive discrimination in attaining the superintendency.

Of the school board members who responded to this survey, 56.2 percent rated their women superintendents as excellent, 26 percent rated women superintendents as good, 12.5 percent rated women superintendents as average, 4.1 percent rated women superintendents as below average and 1 percent rated women superintendents as poor. Most school board members either strongly agreed or agreed with statements that women superintendents are capable in areas of school finance, school law, personnel, public relations, bonds and building programs and leadership. Women school board members rated women superintendents slightly higher, on the average, than male school board members.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The position of superintendent of schools has traditionally been viewed as exclusively reserved for the male gender in the United States as well as Texas. In the 1972-73 school year, White (1976) reported that there were only three women superintendents out of a possible 1,126 in the state of Texas. This represents .0026 percent of the superintendents in Texas. The national average for the same year was .0051 percent.

Stoker (1969) estimated that 99 percent of all superintendents in Texas were male. Only five of the 800 he surveyed were women.

These female superintendents were probably from small districts where the elementary school was the basic organization. In other words, these few listed as women were likely serving as elementary school principals. This means that a woman had almost no chance of becoming the top administrator.

Although the practice of considering only men for the superintendency is firmly established, it raises the question of fairness to the female sex. It seems that women with outstanding leadership abilities should be considered when superintendents are selected (Stoker 1969, 79).

Peters (1986) reported that nearly 99 percent of all superintendents in Texas were men. In this study involving every superintendent in Texas, it was reported that only thirteen out of a possible 1,068 superintendents were

female. However, in the 1988-89 school year, the number of women superintendents has risen to thirty (Texas Education Agency Public Information Division July 1988).

There have been several major studies concerning the superintendency within the last sixty years. Very few studies, however, have been conducted regarding women superintendents. Carol Shakeshaft (1987) reported,

Few biographies of women administrators are written. Histories, case studies, and ethnographies almost always center on the male principal or superintendent. Consequently, we know little about the individual lives of women who occupy these positions (56).

Although women currently constitute about two-thirds of public school teachers in the United States, women occupy less than one-sixth of the administrative positions. Fewer women are in administrative positions since World War II. As a result, U.S. education is being deprived of a large percentage of the best leadership talent available to it. Strong and effective campaigns are providing women some relief from discrimination and occupational sex-stereotyping.

Fischer (1978) found that women's aspirations decreased as their responsibilities increased. Only a very small percentage of women apply for administrative positions; however, only a very small percentage of either sex apply for administrative positions. Large percentages of both sexes reported that they were unwilling to move to further their education or to move into administrative positions.

The potential for administrative aspirations by female students is adversely affected by the scarcity of female administrators to serve as role models. Also, the virtual male dominance of administrative positions and the perceived unfair odds of the competition intimidates women and inhibits their aspirations (Fischer 1978).

On a more positive note, Fischer found that men's acceptance of women in the profession is increasing. Women teachers are also becoming more willing to accept other women in administration. Men are becoming more willing to accept the idea that women can be successful both as mothers and public school administrators.

The number of women public school superintendents in Texas is increasing. It is important to examine the previous experiences of these superintendents and determine their level of success within their positions. A comprehensive study of career paths and success levels of women superintendents within the state of Texas would serve to explain how these women moved through the ranks to the superintendency and determine how well they are currently doing in their positions.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to determine the career paths of women superintendents of Texas public school

districts and to determine their school board's perception of how well they are performing as superintendents.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study were: (1) to determine if patterns can be ascertained in the career paths of women currently in the superintendency, (2) to determine school board members' perceptions of success levels of women superintendents, (3) to determine the areas of professional development viewed as most important in preparation for the superintendency. This information will benefit women seeking the superintendency, universities which train superintendents, the Texas Education Agency, Texas Association of School Administrators, and the Texas Association of School Boards in the development of programs for administrative leadership.

Research Questions

1. Do women superintendents perceive difficulties unique to their sex in attaining the superintendency?
 2. Are women superintendents being employed chiefly from within the district or from outside the district?
 3. What are the educational levels of women superintendents of schools in the state of Texas?
 4. Have women superintendents had work experience outside the field of education?
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5. What is the current average age of women superintendents?
 6. What was the average age of women when they assumed their first superintendency?
 7. What positions did women hold immediately prior to assuming their first superintendency?
 8. How many districts have women served in (1) prior to assuming their first superintendency, and (2) as superintendents?
 9. After attaining the superintendency, have women moved to superintendencies in larger districts?
 10. At what grade levels (elementary, middle school, secondary) have women superintendents had teaching experience?
 11. At what grade levels (elementary, middle school, secondary) have women superintendents had administrative experience?
 12. What professional positions do women superintendents perceive to be most beneficial prior to assuming the superintendency?
 13. How do women superintendents prioritize the importance of various areas of professional development as preparation for the superintendency?
 14. In what areas do women superintendents think their professional development should have been more extensive?
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Research Questions for School Board Members

1. What are the criteria school board members utilize when selecting women superintendents?
2. How do school board members rate their woman superintendent?
3. Is there a difference in the perceptions of male and female school board members concerning women superintendents?
4. How do school board members rate women superintendents' abilities in the areas of curriculum, finance, business, school, law, personnel, public relations, bonds and building programs?
5. How do school board members rate their woman superintendent's leadership ability?

Definition of Terms

Superintendent - is the chief administrative officer of a public school district.

Board of Education - members who are officially elected and empowered to govern the local school districts in Texas.

Career Path Patterns - the route that individuals take through the ranks in order to obtain the superintendency, i.e., teacher, assistant principal, principal, assistant superintendent, superintendent.

"Good ole boy system" - an almost undefinable but widely used term. Good ole boy is a colloquial expression that

connotes a person who is promoted within an organization based on the idea that others like him because he is male and a Texan, not because he is the best-qualified candidate for the position.

Women Superintendents' Success Levels Survey - questionnaire mailed to every school board member of a district with a women superintendent in the state of Texas (see Appendix A).

Career Path Survey - questionnaire mailed to every woman superintendent of a public school district in the state of Texas. The purpose is to identify the paths women take in progressing to the superintendency (Appendix B).

Demographics - data obtained from the Career Path Survey that is specifically designed to answer questions pertaining to age, number of years in teaching, number of years in administration, and the highest level of education attained.

Background and Significance

In the last decade, several studies have been conducted on the career paths that women take with regard to the superintendency. Several studies have compared women superintendents' career path patterns to that of men superintendents. From these it is possible to examine the characteristics of women superintendents with regard to age, sex, education, career paths, and other characteristics that are similar to male superintendents.

Women begin their careers committed to education. Most women administrators reported that they knew they wanted to teach as early as the beginning of high school. Most women administrators reported that they began teaching immediately after graduation from college.

A few years after beginning to teach, many women take a leave of absence to raise a family. For those that take a leave of absence, it is usually in their early 20s. Many women go through the master's program during their leave of absence. Most specialize in education, although a few major in administration.

Women generally enter into administration in their early 30s, after someone in the district encouraged them to do so. Studies indicate that if a woman seeks her first administrative position on her own and fails, she will try again only once or twice and then cease pursuing administration.

Women usually enter administration via the elementary principalship or as subject matter specialists. Most women stay at this level throughout the remainder of their career. If she moves, she will usually be promoted to a supervisor's position in the central office or as a director or coordinator of curriculum. For that small number of women who become secondary principals and later superintendents, their career paths are more similar to that of men (Shakeshaft 1987).

Gaertner (1981) identified three career paths, two of which lead to the superintendency. In the first, the path is from teacher to supervisor to assistant superintendent to superintendent. Women on this path usually stop at the supervisor level. The second path is from teacher to assistant secondary principal to assistant superintendent to superintendent. Women rarely use this route to the superintendency. The third career path was the most common method used by women to secure the superintendency. The path began at the teacher level to assistant elementary principal to elementary principal to superintendent. This path only ends at the superintendency in elementary districts (i.e., districts containing grades K-6 only), and it is usually a male who becomes elementary superintendent of a district which only has an elementary school.

A study conducted by the American Association of School Administrators in 1960 identified two major career patterns to the superintendency. The most common pattern reported in districts of 100,000 or more students was teacher to principal to central-office to superintendent. In smaller districts, the most common pattern reported was teacher to principal to superintendent (Figure 1).

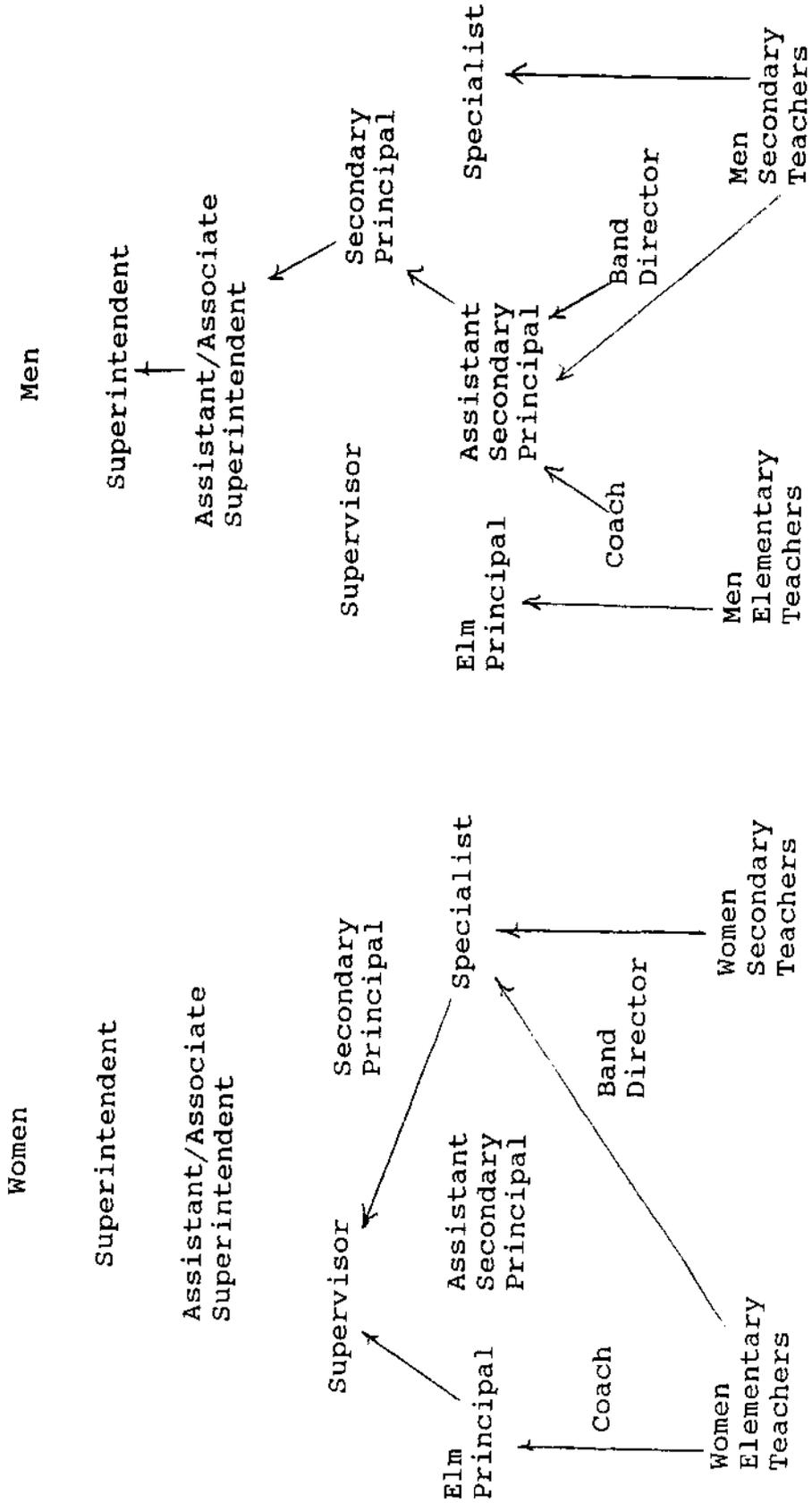
There is a rapidly increasing number of women entering the superintendency in Texas. There has been little research designed to provide information about how these women moved through the ranks to the superintendency. This

study provides a unique opportunity to answer several questions pertaining to their career paths and their level of success as perceived by their school board members. This information should benefit those women who aspire to become superintendents as well as educational institutions which train school administrators.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter I provides an introduction, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, the research questions to be answered, definition of terms and background and significance of the study. Chapter II presents a review of the related literature. Chapter III describes the population tested and the research instruments. It also defines the procedures used in collecting and analyzing the data. Chapter IV consists of the analysis of the data and the findings of the study. Chapter V presents the conclusions, implications and suggestions for further research.

FIGURE 1
 TYPICAL CAREER PATHS OF WOMEN AND MEN IN ADMINISTRATION



Gaertner, K. N. 1981. Administrative careers in public school organizations. In P.A. Schumuch, W. W. Charters, Jr., and R. O. Carlson (eds.). Educational policy and management: Sex differentials. New York: Academic Press, 71.

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review is based upon readings from books, articles, and dissertations and is divided into two areas. The first area deals with the characteristics of women who aspire to be a school superintendent or who are presently serving as superintendent of schools. The second area concerns the career paths women take in progressing to the superintendency.

Characteristics of Women Who Aspire to be Superintendents or Who are Currently Serving as Superintendent

Much of the recent literature regarding women superintendents has focused on their psychological and cultural attributes. Issues such as child-rearing practices, role conflicts, assertiveness, sex discrimination, and family backgrounds are important to the understanding of the makeup of the individual who chooses the superintendency as a career. From this literature it is possible to examine the traits that are characteristic of women superintendents.

Shakeshaft (1987) reported that women at all levels of administration are older than men in similar positions, are less likely to be married, and are more often members of minority groups. Women at all levels of administration more

often come from urban backgrounds, are politically more liberal, identify as non-Protestants more often, and are likely to have taught longer than men before entering administration. Usually, these women will earn less for doing the same job as a man.

Women begin their administrative careers in their mid to late forties. Black women become administrators younger, on the average, than white women. Picker (1980) indicated that women may be moving into administration earlier in their careers now than in the past.

The typical woman administrator comes from a rural area. Usually she is the firstborn or only child. She was raised in a two-parent family. Her father did not graduate from high school. Most often, her father's occupation would be farming. Her mother generally has a higher level of education than her husband. The typical woman administrator's mother had either a high school diploma or a college degree; however, the overwhelming majority were homemakers. Fifty-six percent of women administrators are married. Sixty-three percent of all black women administrators are married.

Husbands of women administrators are typically college graduates and a large percentage have advanced degrees. Fifty percent of the women administrators reported earning more than their husbands (Shakeshaft 1987).

In comparison, Paddock (1978) reported that the majority of women administrators are Protestants. Half are registered democrats. Women administrators usually belong to educational organizations, League of Women Voters, The American Association of University Women, and the National Organization of Women.

Barnett (1979) found that women's self-worth increases during midlife. Also, middle age usually means less demands on mothers as their children mature. This might explain why women move into administration later than men.

Paddock (1978) found that demands of homemaking were perceived by women as an obstacle in their careers. Over 40 percent of the women in her study reported that they took sole responsibility for housework, cooking, and childcare.

Coatney (1982) found that approximately 75 percent of the women superintendents were between the ages of forty and fifty-nine. Approximately 60 percent were married and nearly 39 percent had no children. Seventy-six percent had no children under eighteen years of age. Nearly two-thirds spent most of their childhoods in rural areas or small towns.

Costa (1969) reported finding that the typical woman superintendent is married, has one or two children and is over forty years of age. Most of the subjects in this study reported working from fifty-five to ninety hours per week. Fifty-one and one-half percent did not employ housekeepers

or babysitters. Unmarried subjects reported working more hours than married subjects.

In comparison, Stepherson (1980) found that the typical woman superintendent is white, married with two or less children, and is between the ages of forty and fifty-nine. Fewer than 8 percent of women superintendents in this study come from an ethnic minority. Ninety-three percent of the respondents in this study had been a superintendent from one to nine years.

Richardson (1979) found that men and women superintendents have similar personal and job-related characteristics. Women, however, were found to be older at the age of first appointment, fewer were married, their salary was lower, and their district size was smaller than male superintendents.

Both men and women perceive their gender to be a factor in helping or hindering them in the attainment of the superintendency. Men felt it to be of help; women felt it to be of no help or a hinderance. There was no single factor to explain why the percentage of women administrators continues to decline.

There is no single set of commonalities inherently prohibiting the majority of women from entering administration. Mauter (1980) found that:

The female administrators perceive themselves as coming from traditional homes and traditional values regarding self-discipline, the work ethic and acceptance of others. Instead of the following traditional role expectations, however, these women have attained career

positions which are considered nontraditional for females. Therefore, they are "unique" among women, but not necessarily unique among administrators (45).

Women who aspire to be administrators view themselves as being independent, assertive, stable, secure, and competitive. These women reported that they have received much support and encouragement from their families and teachers. On the average, these women did very well in grade school and high school. They enjoyed competing with boys in scholastic activities.

Thus it is concluded that the continued socialization of women into traditional sex roles and careers based on stereotypic personality traits and role expectations inaccurately and unfairly limits opportunities for women (Mauter 1980, 45).

Marshall (1979) reported that public school administration is viewed as a male sex-stereotyped role. Women have unequal access to the socialization necessary to fulfill this role so they must go through a special socialization process.

Career demands and informal job criteria which are male-oriented normed conflict with women's homemaker roles and women's sexuality, creating female-role strain. Women have unequal access to sponsored socialization and mobility. Continued efforts should be made to reduce the negative impact that sex bias, stereotyping, and sex discrimination have on women's motivation and on their career development (3794).

Women must change in regards to the cultural expectations for women if they wish to pursue careers in educational administration. While it is necessary to maintain their identities as women, they must also maintain the

school as the focal point, similar to the attitude held by men in administration. As central office personnel, women administrators must integrate their personalities into the organizational demands. Those who are successful are those women who view themselves professionally, who have had much experience working with men, and who are personally motivated to be successful (Shakeshaft 1987).

Many women administrators have not married or become mothers. More than 75 percent reported, however, no concern for stereotypic traditional roles of women. Husbands of women administrators were very supportive of their career goals. A large number of women superintendents reported that they exceeded their husband's educational level and their husband's salary (Mauter 1980).

Jackson (1980) noted that the qualities which contributed to the success and achievement of women administrators are the same qualities that contribute to the success of male administrators. Women administrators were able to juggle both home and career responsibilities by sharing the workloads with their husbands and families. Successful women administrators should have both the ability to work with people and to produce.

Sixty-six percent of all women superintendents surveyed reported that they did not view themselves as different from their female peers during growing up years. Sixty-one percent felt that they had been reared in conservative homes

(Schuch 1980). Seventy-eight percent of women superintendents reported that they experienced discrimination in their professional careers in regards to their sex.

Schuch found that the typical woman superintendent is a Protestant with personality characteristics that include: extraverted, intuitive thinking, and judging. Her value system in order from highest to lowest was theoretical, economical, political, aesthetic, religious, and social (Schuch 1980).

Guy (1979) compared career paths of male and female superintendents in Ohio. She found that many women avoid the conflicting roles of wife, mother, and administrator by not marrying, or those that did marry, had smaller families or no children at all. The conflict of child-rearing duties and professional roles appears to have attributed to women being older when deciding upon administration and older when completing their education.

While men generally reported monetary reasons as a primary influence for becoming a superintendent, women appeared to have more altruistic reasons. The study also concluded that there is an ample number of highly qualified, certified women in Ohio for the superintendency (Guy 1979).

Women superintendents perceived themselves as being humanistic, people-directed individuals. Most reported sex-related items as the most inhibiting factors. Among the ten most inhibiting factors in their careers were attitudes

of men and other women in education regarding women administrators. Career and home responsibilities, mobility, and flexibility were also perceived by some respondents as limiting to their career progress in administration (McShea 1979).

Orland (1986) conducted in-depth interviews with six women superintendents in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut during the 1986 school year. She found that certain early childhood experiences and family values seemed to play a significant role in the success of these women as executives. Combinations or patterns of personality traits, such as self-confidence, assertiveness, perfectionism, and competence seem to facilitate the success of women administrators. Orland identified problems that included resistance and/or sexist remarks from male colleagues, lack of support systems and ineffective recruitment of women.

Career Paths Women Take with Regard to the Superintendency

A study conducted by the National Education Association (1973) found that women begin their administrative careers later than men. In the 1972-73 school year, it was found that the greatest number of women in educational administration were in the central office. The National Education Agency's data for 1970-71 show that 37.5 percent of central office administrators were women. Thirty-eight percent of these women were in instructional and supervisory areas, and

48.2 percent were in general administration. Only 2.9 percent were found to be deputy superintendents, 10.3 percent assistant superintendents, and .6 percent were general superintendents.

In the 1972-73 school year, women were found holding 35 percent of the central office positions, 5.3 percent of assistant superintendents, 6.2 percent of the deputy superintendents and 0.1 percent of general superintendents (NEA 1973).

The generally held assumption is that when women enter the teaching profession they will remain teachers. There are three factors that exist which aid in formulating this perception. Women continue to dominate teaching, especially at the elementary level. Secondly, many people believe that women should be the teachers of young children. Thirdly, many people believe that school administration takes a woman out of the home for too much of the time (Shakeshaft 1987).

Women usually receive tenure in many states after three years of teaching. Although tenure is usually accomplished with relative ease, thirty out of fifty-five aspiring women administrators reported some difficulty in obtaining tenure. This means that women that aspire to advance themselves professionally must be cautious. One direct result of this cautious attitude is the fact that many women move into administration by attaining specialist or staff positions.

The next step for most specialists is generally the supervisor's position.

The most severe obstacles in the career path of women are: (1) the initial departure from teaching; (2) occupying those positions which do not provide opportunities for upward mobility such as the elementary principalships; (3) losing out to white males in the competition for line positions; and (4) coming up with the wrong career paths, as for example, becoming specialists rather than principals (Ortiz 1982).

Coatney (1982) found that all women superintendents surveyed in her study had acquired at least a bachelor's degree, 95.4 percent had a master's degree, and 39.5 percent had earned doctorates. Eighty percent of women superintendents with doctorates had majored in educational administration.

Approximately sixty-nine percent of women superintendents began their careers at the age of twenty-one as an elementary teacher. The average age to begin administrative experience was thirty-four, after ten years of classroom teaching. The average age of women for appointment to the superintendency was forty-two. Sixty-two percent of the women superintendents perceived no barriers in their careers because of their sex. Seventy-eight percent of the women were satisfied in the superintendency (Coatney 1982).

Costa (1969) found that most women superintendents were promoted from within the district rather than being hired from outside the district. The typical woman superintendent moved from teacher to the principalship followed by the assistant superintendency and then to the superintendency.

The majority of women superintendents maintained an uninterrupted career path, with 65 percent not having taken a leave of absence. Most of the subjects in this study had taught fewer than ten years and averaged nine years administrative experience as principals. Ninety-four percent were in their first superintendency. The subjects average 4.2 years in their current superintendency with 50 percent employed in the last 2.5 years. Most had not planned to become superintendents.

Sixty-one percent of the women superintendents identified their sex, lack of definite career goals, and lack of confidence in themselves as obstacles. Ninety-five percent reported having had mentors who helped advance their careers.

Fifty-five percent of the women superintendents reported that they were not their families' chief income recipient. Ninety-eight percent had earned master's degrees, and 33 percent of the women superintendents had earned doctorates (Costa 1969).

Mears (1982) reported finding that women superintendents held master's degrees in higher percentages than men

superintendents. A higher percentage of men held specialist and doctoral degrees. Female superintendents had more experiences in education before becoming superintendent than male superintendents.

Women superintendents are much more positive in their attitudes with regard to women in the superintendency than male superintendents. However, both male and female superintendents held positive attitudes with regard to women in the superintendency. Educational experience, educational level and age, when compared by sex, had no influence on the attitudes of superintendents (Mears 1982). Women superintendents, on the average, are older than their male counterparts.

Stepherson (1980) found that only 15 percent of the women superintendents surveyed have served ten years or more and only 0.05 percent have served as superintendents for more than thirty years. The majority of women superintendents earned between \$30,000 and \$35,000 in 1980.

All women superintendents in the Stepherson study began their educational careers as classroom teachers. Forty-eight percent spent ten or more years in the classroom prior to their first administrative appointment. Approximately 87 percent of women superintendents hold advanced degrees in education.

Most women superintendents attained their position via the principalship and central office. Most are generally

satisfied with their career paths to the superintendency and are planning for another superintendency in a larger school district. Fifty percent of the women superintendents reported that it is very important to establish early career goals. Thirty-one percent agreed that job competency is important (Stepherson 1980).

Female administrators have similar career paths as male administrators with respect to educational preparation and training, but their employment is concentrated in large urban school districts located in metropolitan areas. Discriminatory hiring and promotion practices were listed as a major concern of women administrators. The greatest percentage also indicated the stereotyped attitudes about women's roles was the most limiting factor in pursuit of their goals (Mauter 1980, 45).

Jackson (1980) reported that the majority of women superintendents began their careers at the elementary level or in the central office. Most women superintendents reported being employed as a result of outside influences. These women felt that geographic mobility was an important factor.

There was little or no pattern of sex-role conflicts found in the Jackson study. The majority of women superintendents acknowledged that they dealt with informal systems through unofficial means. Successful women superintendents were found to be sensitive, related well with others, were visible, proactive, hard workers, energetic, and demonstrated good conflict-resolution skills. Weaknesses unique to women superintendents were attributed primarily to socialization and cultural conditions.

Successful women superintendents, on the average, reported that they attained most positions without conscious career planning. They believed that they had less geographic mobility than men and they often utilized unobtrusive means to deal with the informal power structures within their districts.

Leizear (1984) studied the effects mentors had in the careers of women superintendents. The typical respondent in her study was a woman who had served in a central office position or superintendency for fewer than five years. The majority of respondents cited their major duties as curriculum and instruction.

Most of the women in upper levels of public school administration began their educational careers as elementary teachers. They had served in five positions before reaching upper levels of administration. Six out of ten women superintendents were in the six smallest districts in the study. Seventy-six percent of women administrators indicated the presence of career mentors. Eighty-two percent of the respondents who reported having mentors indicated that their mentors had an extraordinary influence on the development of their careers. Eighty-five percent of the respondents with mentors believed that their career advancement was accelerated by their mentor relationships. Seventy-nine percent of the respondents with mentors reported their most

significant mentors were male. Seventy-eight percent of the respondents said that they are serving as mentors.

Schuch (1980) found that 56 percent of women superintendents surveyed said their biggest factor in reaching the superintendency was being in the right place at the right time with the right qualifications. Eighty percent felt that they differed from their male colleagues in leadership style and preparation for the superintendency. Forty-four percent saw themselves as better prepared, more experienced, and better qualified than their male colleagues. Fifty-nine percent reported that they would not change districts for a new challenge.

The typical woman superintendent in the Schuch study had been in public education for twenty-seven years, fourteen of those in administration. She had been a principal and assistant superintendent before assuming the superintendency.

Guy (1979) found that women's career paths to the superintendency are significantly different from men with women having a more indirect path. Women hold significantly fewer principalships and reported a lack of mentoring. Being a female was perceived by women to be a detriment to successfully acquiring the superintendency.

Career goals, reasons for entering educational administration, and reasons for earning the superintendent's certification differed for women and men. It was found that

women experience a diminishing of career expectations and aspirations in the pursuit of the superintendency.

Educational administration is a male-dominated profession and women are at a disadvantage in achieving the superintendency since their career paths are significantly more indirect. The lack of the principalship is the main reason women take an indirect route to the superintendency (Guy 1979).

Women experience less opportunity for mobility from staff to line positions and, as a consequence, women often achieve more than men in other ways, such as higher grades, more certifications, and more doctorates.

McShea (1979) found that 12 percent of women superintendents worked in suburban school districts, and another 27 percent were located in rural systems. The largest proportion (48%) of the women were superintendents of elementary districts (i.e., schools containing K-6 only). Dorner (1982) found the typical woman superintendent to be employed by a rural community with a K-12 school system with one to four schools which educates under 3,000 children.

In a study of women administrators in Texas, White (1976) reported that men were found to be much preferred to women for administrative positions. All things being equal, superintendents reported that they were not likely to hire women as administrators.

White also noted that although women predominate teaching positions in Texas, they are poorly represented in administrative roles. For example, she found only five women serving as assistant superintendents in the entire state. Also, women comprised only 10 percent of all principalships in Texas for the 1972-73 school year compared to a 20 percent national average for the same period. Fifty-nine percent of the supervisors in Texas were reported to be women. Most women were found to begin administration after twenty years of classroom teaching.

Perhaps Carol Shakeshaft (1987) explains why there are so few women superintendents:

For many women, the superintendency is not a job that has appeal. It has power and prestige but it lacks for these women, the day-to-day experiences that make work enjoyable. One woman said that she would "no sooner like to be a superintendent than I would a garbage collector. Both are jobs that seem undesirable to me" (73-74).

Patricia Russell-McCloud (1987) emphasized that women educators are proving their skills in public school administration now more than ever. "More women now are moving up the professional ladder," McCloud said. She strongly encouraged the women administrators in attendance at the conference to have a five-year plan for their careers. "Success," she said, "is making the right decisions." She went on to say that women can learn to make the right decisions by learning from their previous mistakes. McCloud recommended that women educators read, seek out mentors and

find other women to help bring them up through the ranks (McCloud 1987).

The number of women in the superintendency has risen from a handful ten years ago to more than 350 nationally today. Ten years ago the Ford Foundation donated a \$140,000 grant to the American Association of School Administrators to help seventy-five aspiring women superintendents. Twenty-one Ford Foundation participants have reached the superintendency and several others occupy a variety of education leadership roles such as the assistant superintendency.

The seventy-five women were chosen from six hundred applicants. The three-day training session focused on preparing women for the superintendency. Each woman was already certified as a school administrator and considered competent in her field.

Because women administrators erroneously believe that hard work alone will eventually be rewarded, the training sessions emphasized practical, social and political skills such as resumes, cover letters and contracts. Participants also watched themselves in simulated job interviews which were videotaped.

Women administrators were encouraged to be visionary and establish mentor relationships. The workshop also established a network of women executives that survives today.

Most of the Ford Foundation participants who attained the superintendency work in districts with fewer than 25,000 students; however, Lee Etta Powell of Cincinnati is a Ford grant alumna. The women work in middle-income districts as well as lower income districts.

The alumna reported that they value the opportunity to make an impact on teachers and students in their districts. Most attempt to involve teachers in the planning process. There is a greater focus on academics. The training workshops enable the participants to better develop programs for student achievement by working with parents. Many participants now have parent meetings on Sunday afternoons so that more parents can attend.

Hazel Malone, superintendent of Grant Joint Union School District in Sacramento, California, established seven clearly stated district goals upon attaining her first superintendency. She discussed these goals and strategic plans to accomplish these goals with the teachers at each campus in her district.

Many women administrators still report sex bias in education, though not necessarily from their own professional ranks. For example, Barbara Hasson, superintendent of schools in Hershey, Pennsylvania, reported that she was not invited to join the Rotary Club, even though the superintendent has traditionally been a member. Also, many women fear that there will be a decline of women that choose

educational administration for careers in the future. Marge Chow, superintendent of Richland School District in southeastern Washington, offers this advice for women educators, "Being a superintendent is the best job in education. It is a role in which you can really make a tremendous difference for kids" (McCloud 1987, 8).

A two-year study by Stephen Stark, associate professor at Texas A&M University, revealed that the number of women superintendents in Texas has tripled in a three-year period from 1985 to 1988. The number of women assistant superintendents jumped from 65 to 115.

Stark believes that this rapid change of hiring women superintendents came about with the passage of House Bill 72 in 1984. This legislation redefined the role of top administrators. It requires that they be master teachers and curriculum specialists. Many male superintendents who had been promoted from coaching and business management were forced out because they lacked the curriculum and instruction expertise (Brown 1988).

Stark also pointed out that women may be better able to understand what will work and will not work in the classroom. Women superintendents are more accepted by women teachers, which may improve morale.

The assistant superintendent for instruction in an East Texas school district said neither she nor the superintendent, a female, have experienced any problems due to

their sex. "When the superintendent was named four years ago, there was only one other female superintendent in the entire state," the assistant superintendent said. "Since that time, three others have been named in East Texas alone. It's a wide-open field for women" (Brown 1988).

In order to be successful as superintendent of schools, women must be able to establish and maintain effective relationships with their boards of education. School boards will select only women that exhibit the necessary qualifications and certifications. A woman applying for the superintendency must also have a personal and administrative style that meshes well with the school board's style. An effective relationship depends on mutual trust, mutual loyalty and clearly defined roles. Women superintendents should strive to develop shared experiences of both formal and informal nature, apart from regularly scheduled meetings to build a positive rapport with their boards of education.

In order to maintain effective school board relations, women superintendents should focus on positive, two-way communication. There should be regular publications of interesting information. Specific communications and personal dialogue are also important. Open but well-planned meetings with predictable agendas that allow participants to prepare also add to good relations (Twiford 1986).

Peters (1986) reported that there were a total of thirteen female superintendents in the state of Texas.

"There is a small but growing minority of the population of superintendents, the additional findings revealed the differences between female superintendents and their male counterparts" (Peters 1986, 142).

More female superintendents in Texas (46.2 percent) hold doctorate degrees than male superintendents (22.5 percent). Female superintendents generally have attained a higher level of education than male superintendents (Peters 1986).

Two women superintendents in the Peters study reported that they had taken time off to raise a family. No male superintendents had taken time off from work for family reasons. Two of the women superintendents who responded to this survey reported outside business experience and two more reported work experience for the Texas Education Agency.

The average age of female superintendents was slightly higher than the reported age of male superintendents. The average age of female superintendents was 49.1 years compared to an average age of 48.6 years for men.

Women superintendents had been in their current positions for 2.3 years. Females had served in this capacity for shorter periods of time than male superintendents. The average length of tenure in the current positions for males was 6.4 years.

In the Peters (1986) study, only one female superintendent reported working in more than one district, and that was for one year. For male superintendents, the average number of years in previous superintendencies was 4.94. There were slightly fewer women that began their administrative careers as a principal than male superintendents. Fewer female superintendents (46.2 percent) began their administrative careers as a principal compared to 62.4 percent of male superintendents.

Female superintendents spent more time in public school education prior to their first superintendency than their male counterparts. Women superintendents averaged 22.9 years in public school education prior to their first superintendency. The average years of experience in public schools for males was 16.2 years prior to their first superintendency. The greatest number of years in public school education prior to the first superintendency for any superintendent was thirty-nine. This superintendent was a female.

Female superintendents held more different educational positions prior to the superintendency than did male superintendents who responded to this study. The average number of positions held by women superintendents was 6.3. For male superintendents, the average number was 4.5 positions.

Women superintendents were more likely to have been assistant superintendents and less likely to have been principals prior to the first superintendency than their male counterparts. Of all female superintendents who responded to the survey, 23.1 percent had been principals, and 38.5 percent were assistant superintendents prior to their first superintendency. In comparison, 55.5 percent of the males had been principals and 21.6 percent had been assistant superintendents prior to their first superintendency.

Female superintendents served in slightly more districts prior to the first superintendency than male superintendents. Females served in an average of 3.2 districts prior to their first superintendency. Male superintendents averaged 2.4 districts prior to their first superintendency. Female superintendents were older than male superintendents upon attaining the first superintendency. Female superintendents were seven years older than males on the average. The average age of women superintendents in Texas was 46.7 years. The average age of male superintendents was 39.4 upon attaining their first superintendency.

Women superintendents served in fewer districts as superintendent, on the average, than their male counterparts. Women served in an average of 1.2 superintendencies compared to 1.5 superintendencies for males (Peters 1986).

The largest number of male superintendents who responded to the Peters study reported that they had been coaches. In comparison, women superintendents reported diverse backgrounds in teaching prior to beginning their administrative careers. There was no one level or field that was found to be predominate for women superintendents. There were no additional areas examined in this study found to be of substantial difference between male and female superintendents (Peters 1986).

Summary

Women at all levels of administration are generally older than their male counterparts. They are less likely to be married, more often members of minorities, more often from rural areas, more liberal and more often non-Protestants than male superintendents. Women superintendents taught longer than male superintendents before entering administration and generally earn a smaller salary and work in smaller districts than male superintendents.

Women superintendents usually begin their administrative careers in their mid-forties. They usually came from two-parent families. Their father generally farmed and their mothers are reported to be more highly educated than their fathers.

Many women superintendents reported their sex, the role of homemaker and parent and a lack of confidence as

hindrances in their careers. Seventy-five percent of women superintendents were found to be between the ages of forty and fifty-nine. They were usually married with one or two children and worked on an average of fifty-five to ninety hours per week.

Women in all levels of administration must share similar attitudes and viewpoints as male administrators. They must hold the school as the central focal point, work with people and produce.

Women generally enter administration via the elementary principalship or central office as a director or specialist. Both of these positions provide little opportunity for advancement.

Ninety-five percent of women superintendents hold a Master's degree and 39.5 have doctorates. Most women superintendents were promoted from within the district. The typical woman moved from teacher to principal to assistant superintendent to the superintendency.

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CHAPTER III

METHOD OF STUDY

This chapter identifies the population on which the study was conducted. The instruments that were utilized in the study are described. The methodology employed in the collection of the data are defined. Finally, the statistical treatment of the data is outlined.

Population

The population for the study consists of all women superintendents of public school districts in the state of Texas and all of their respective school board members as defined by the Texas Education Agency Division of Information Analysis (July 1988). These districts range in size from the largest district with an enrollment of 194,389 to one of the smallest districts in the state, with an enrollment of eighteen.

Districts are divided into six categories according to student enrollment figures as reported by the Texas Education Agency.

Group A	less than 300	11 districts
Group B	300 to 1,499	8 districts
Group C	1,500 to 4,999	5 districts
Group D	5,000 to 9,999	2 districts
Group E	10,000 to 49,999	4 districts
Group F	50,000 or more	1 district

These groups have general staffing patterns of the school districts. Group A schools usually have a superintendent who also serves as principal. There is usually only one section per grade, or there may be more than one grade in a classroom. The schools in Group B have a full-time superintendent, one or more sections per grade and usually have a principal for each campus. The majority of schools in Group C have a full-time superintendent, both an assistant principal and an assistant superintendent. The schools in Group D have a full-time superintendent, usually have more than one high school and several elementary and middle schools. Group E schools have a full-time superintendent, are represented by multiple campuses at all levels, multiple layers of administration, and are occasionally divided into geographic areas. There is only one district in this study that falls into Group F and has a full-time superintendent, multiple campuses at all levels, multiple layers of administration and is divided into geographic areas for administration.

Instrumentation

A panel of experts composed of three college professors from the University of North Texas, three superintendents and three school board members were asked to evaluate the Women Superintendents' Success Levels Survey Form (Appendix A) in September 1988. Several changes were made by the

investigator to improve the instrument from suggestions given by the panel of experts.

The Career Path Survey Form (Appendix B) was piloted in 1985 by Peters. Clarity of the instrument was established in March and April 1985 by fifteen superintendents who read it and recommended changes. There was a 73 percent response rate and the finalized Career path Survey was developed incorporating the suggestions for improvement.

Data Collection

A cover letter and the Women Superintendents' Success Levels Form (Appendix A) and a self-addressed stamped envelope were sent to each school board member in Texas school districts with a woman superintendent during the last week of October 1988. A follow-up cover letter and survey form were mailed during the second week of November 1988. A second follow-up, as well as a phone call, were made during the fourth week of November 1988. Returned responses were grouped according to district size. The response rate was:

Group A	30 responses	43.4 percent
Group B	24 responses	42.8 percent
Group C	17 responses	48.5 percent
Group D	6 responses	42.8 percent
Group E	15 responses	53.5 percent
Group F	4 responses	44.4 percent

A total of ninety-six questionnaires were returned which represents 45.2 percent of the population of school board members involved in the study.

A cover letter and Career Path Survey Form (Appendix B) and a self-addressed stamped envelope were mailed to each woman superintendent in the state of Texas during the last week of October 1988. A follow-up cover letter and Career Path Survey Form were mailed during the second week of November 1988. A second follow-up cover letter and survey form were mailed during the fourth week in November 1988. In addition, each female superintendent who had not returned the questionnaire was called by the investigator and encouraged to respond. Returned responses were also grouped according to district size. The number and percentage of woman superintendents who responded were:

Group A	10 responses	90.9 percent
Group B	6 responses	75 percent
Group C	3 responses	60 percent
Group D	1 response	50 percent
Group E	2 responses	50 percent
Group F	0 response	0 percent

A total of twenty-two Career Path questionnaire forms were returned out of a total population of twenty-nine women superintendents for a percentage of 75.8.

Analysis of Data

The returned Career Path Survey Forms and Women Superintendents' Success Levels Forms were divided into six categories according to district size. The data were scored, and the results were compiled to answer each research question. The results were reported by number of

respondents as well as by percentages for the total population.

Research questions one through fifteen were answered using the Career Path Survey Form. Results are reported by frequencies and percentages of respondents for each group and the total population. The current mean age for research question five was derived by averaging the mid-point of each class interval.

The Women Superintendents' Success Levels Form was used to answer the last six questions. The results are reported in frequencies and percentages for each group and total population.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This chapter presents the results of the study of career paths and success levels of women superintendents in the state of Texas. A total of twenty-two women superintendents and ninety-six school board members responded to the survey. In some instances, individuals omitted specific responses to questions asked on the survey. Therefore, the totals presented in the discussion of research questions may be less than the total number of respondents.

The responses of the superintendents and school board members were analyzed for six groups according to district size and for the total group. Group A districts have a total student enrollment of less than 300. Group B has a student enrollment of 300 to 1,499. Group C school districts have a student enrollment of 1,500 to 4,999. Group D school districts have a student enrollment of 5,000 to 9,999. Group E school districts have a student enrollment of 10,000 to 49,999 and Group F school districts have a student enrollment of 50,000 or more.

Research Question One

Do women superintendents perceive difficulties unique to their sex in attaining the superintendency?

Fifteen women superintendents, 68.1 percent, responded that they perceived no difficulties or discrimination due to their sex. Seven women, 31.9 percent, responded that they did perceive difficulties unique to their sex. In Group A school districts, six superintendents, 60 percent, reported that they did not perceive any difficulties and 40 percent, 4 superintendents, reported that they have perceived difficulties unique to their sex. In Group B schools, five superintendents, 83.3 percent reported no discrimination because of their sex. One superintendent, 16.7 percent, reported that she did perceive difficulties unique to her sex. In Group C school districts, two women superintendents, 66 percent, reported that they perceived no difficulties while one superintendent, representing 33 percent, reported that she did perceive difficulties unique to her sex. In Group D, one superintendent, 100 percent of respondents, reported no discrimination. In Group E schools, one superintendent, 50 percent, reported no difficulties and one, 50 percent, reported that she did perceive difficulties. There were no respondents in Group F schools. These results indicate that women superintendents are slightly more likely to perceive difficulties in Group A and Group E schools that are unique to their sex.

Explanations given by those women reporting perceived difficulties included: dealing with the "good ole boy system," some school boards refused to interview a woman,

apprehension among both male and female employees, questions about mental toughness, small town stereotyping, and the belief that most women are weak in finance and school facilities. The results of research question one are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS
IN TEXAS WHO PERCEIVED DIFFICULTIES UNIQUE TO
THEIR SEX IN ATTAINING THE SUPERINTENDENCY

	Perceived difficulties		Did not perceive difficulties	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Group A	4	40	6	60
Group B	1	16.7	5	83.7
Group C	1	33	2	66
Group D	0	0	1	100
Group E	1	50	1	50
Group F	0	0	0	0
Total	7	31.9	15	68.1

Research Question Two

Are women superintendents being employed chiefly from within the district or from outside the district?

Thirteen women superintendents, 59 percent of the respondents, reported that they were employed from within the district where they were employed. A total of nine

women, 41 percent, reported that they were employed from outside the district. In Group A schools, five superintendents were hired from inside and five were hired from outside. In Group B school districts, four, 66.6 percent, were promoted from within the district, while 33.3 percent were hired from outside. In Group C school districts, two superintendents, 66.6 percent, were hired from within, and one superintendent, representing 33.3 percent, was hired from outside the district. In Group D schools, one woman superintendent responded and reported that she was promoted from within the district. In Group E schools, one woman was promoted from within and one woman was employed from outside the district. There were no respondents from Group F school districts. These results indicate that Group A schools, that is, districts with less than three hundred students, were slightly more likely to employ women superintendents from outside the district. Group B and C districts were more likely to promote women to the superintendency from within the district. These results are presented in Table 2.

Research Question Three

What are the educational levels of women superintendents of schools in the state of Texas?

A total of sixteen women superintendents, 72.9 percent, reported that they had earned a master's degree. Six women,

TABLE 2
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS
 IN TEXAS EMPLOYED FROM INSIDE OR OUTSIDE
 THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

	Inside		Outside	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Group A	5	50	5	50
Group B	4	66.6	2	33.3
Group C	2	66.6	1	33.3
Group D	1	100	0	0
Group E	1	50	1	50
Group F	0	0	0	0
Total	13	59	9	41

27.1 percent, reported that they hold a doctorate. In Group A schools, all ten respondents have a master's degree. In Group B schools, three women have a master's and three have a doctorate. In Group C schools, two, 66.6 percent, have master's and one, 33.3 percent, has a doctorate. In Group D schools, one woman superintendent, representing 100 percent of the respondents, holds a master's degree. In Group E schools, two women, representing 100 percent of the respondents, hold a doctorate degree. There were no respondents in Group F.

These findings indicate that women superintendents in larger districts are more likely to have a doctorate than those in smaller districts. Group A superintendents, with

schools that have less than three hundred students, are least likely to have a doctorate. These results are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3
EDUCATIONAL LEVELS OF WOMEN
SUPERINTENDENTS IN TEXAS

	Master's Degree		Doctorate	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Group A	10	100	0	0
Group B	3	50	3	50
Group C	2	66.6	1	33.3
Group D	1	100	0	0
Group E	0	0	2	100
Group F	0	0	0	0
Total	16	72.9	6	27.1

Research Question Four

Have women superintendents had work experiences outside of public school education?

The women superintendents included work outside public school education in answering this question. Work experiences included university teaching, work with the Texas Education Agency, Regional Education Service Center, as well as business experience. Of the twenty-two women superintendents who responded to the survey, five reported

work experience with the Texas Education Agency. This figure represents 22 percent of the total population. A total of three, 13.6 percent, women reported having worked as a university professor. Four women, 18.1 percent, had work experience with a Regional Service Center. Three women, 13.6 percent, listed full-time business experience. Three women listed time off to raise a family.

Four Group A superintendents reported work experience with a Regional Service Center, one had business management experience, one consulting experience, and two had worked for the Texas Education Agency. In Group B districts, two had worked for the Texas Education Agency, two worked for the Regional Service Center, one worked as a director of housing at a university, one worked as dean of women, three had business experience, three took time off to raise a family, and one woman reported that she had full-time work experience as an opera singer. In Group C schools, one superintendent reported having college teaching experience. In Group D, one woman reported college teaching experience and one woman reported work experience at the Texas Education Agency.

Research Question Five

What is the current average age of women superintendents?

The mean age of women superintendents in the state of Texas is 48.3 years. Of the twenty-two women that responded to this question, one is 30 to 34 years of age, three are 35 to 39, four are 40 to 44, five are 45 to 49, four are 50 to 54, three are 55 to 59, and one is 60 to 64.

The average age of the ten women in Group A is 44 years of age. One is between the ages of 30 to 34, three are 35 to 39, one is 40 to 44, one is 45 to 49, one is 50 to 54, one is 55 to 59, and one is between the ages of 60 and 64 years of age. Of the six women superintendents who responded from Group B, one is 40 to 44, three are 45 to 49, and two are 50 to 54 years of age. The average age of women superintendents in Group B is 47.8 years.

Three women superintendents in Group C responded to the question. One reported to be between the ages of 40 to 44, and two reported to be between the ages of 55 and 59. The average age for Group C is 52 years.

Group D had one respondent and she reported to be between the ages of 50 and 54. The average age of respondents in Group E is 44.5 years. One is between the ages of 40 to 44, and one is between the ages of 45 to 49. There were no responses from Group F.

The analysis of the data indicates that the average age of superintendents is lowest in the smallest districts and increases as district size increases with the exception of Group E. These results are presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4

CURRENT AGE OF WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS IN TEXAS

Group	Mean	30-34		35-39		40-44		45-49		50-54		55-59		60-64		65+	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	44	1	10	3	30	1	10	1	10	1	10	1	10	1	10	0	0
B	47.8	0	0	0	0	1	16.6	3	50	2	33.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	52	0	0	0	0	1	33.3	0	0	0	0	2	66.6	0	0	0	0
D	53	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
E	44.5	0	0	0	0	1	50	1	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	48.3	1	4.5	3	13.6	4	18.1	5	22.7	4	18.1	3	13.6	1	4.5	0	0

Research Question Six

What was the average age of women when they assumed their first superintendency?

The average age of women superintendents in Group A when they assumed their first superintendency is forty. Of the ten respondents from Group A, one each reported starting ages of 29, 33, 35, 37, 39, 42, 44, 45, 46, and 50 years of age. Group B has an average starting age of 46.5 years. There was one each reporting a starting age of 42, 43, 45, 47, 50, and 52 years of age.

In Group C the average age of women when they assumed their first superintendency was is forty-seven years of age. The three women respondents report starting ages of 41, 47 and 53 years of age. In Group D there was one respondent and her reported age when beginning the first superintendency was forty-nine years. Group E has an average age of 41.5 years. One woman reported a starting age of forty-one and one woman reported an age of forty-two. There were no respondents in Group F.

This data indicates that women enter the superintendency at the earliest age in the smallest districts and increasingly begin at an older age as the district size increases with the exception of Group E superintendents. The results are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5
 FREQUENCY OF AGE WHEN WOMEN ASSUMED FIRST SUPERINTENDENCY

		Age upon attaining first superintendency																								
Group	Mean	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53
A	40	1				1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1		1				
B	46.5													1	1	1		1		1		1				1
C	47													1						1						
D	49																				1					1
E	41.5																									1
F	0													1	1											
Total	43.2	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	3	1	1	2	1	2	0	1	2	0	1	1

Research Question Seven

What position did women hold immediately prior to assuming the first superintendency?

Of the twenty-two women superintendents that responded to this question, six reported that they had been assistant superintendents immediately prior to assuming their first superintendency. Four women reported being principals of kindergarten through twelfth grade schools. Two reported being elementary principals. Two reported being high school principals. Two reported as having been employed by the Texas Education Agency, one each reported to having been an elementary teacher, one a combination elementary teacher and principal, one a technical assistant to the superintendent, one a curriculum coordinator, one reported as having been Associate Commissioner at the Texas Education Agency.

In Group A schools, four women superintendents were principals in kindergarten through twelfth grade schools. One had been an elementary teacher, one had been a combination elementary principal and teacher, one had been an elementary principal, one had been a curriculum coordinator, one had been a technical assistant to the superintendent and one had been an assistant high school principal.

In Group B schools, two women reported having worked at the Texas Education Agency immediately prior to assuming their first superintendency. One reported having been a

high school principal, one an elementary principal, one a curriculum coordinator and one an assistant superintendent.

In Group C schools, one woman reported to having served as assistant superintendent and one woman as a high school principal. The one respondent in Group D had been an assistant superintendent. In Group E, one woman reported that she had worked as an assistant superintendent and one reported having been an associate commissioner of the Texas Education Agency. There were no respondents in Group F.

These data indicate that women in the smallest districts, Group A, tend to move from the principalship of kindergarten through twelfth grade schools and from elementary principalships into the superintendency. As district size increases, women tend to move from assistant superintendencies or the Texas Education agencies into the superintendency. These data are presented in Table 6.

Research Question Eight

How many districts have women served in (1) prior to assuming the first superintendency, and (2) as superintendents?

A total of six women, 27.2 percent, reported having worked in only one district prior to assuming their first superintendency. Nine women, 40.9 percent of those surveyed, had worked in two districts. Two, 9 percent, reported having worked in three districts and one woman had

TABLE 6
 FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF POSITIONS IMMEDIATELY
 PRIOR TO FIRST ATTAINING THE POSITION
 OF SUPERINTENDENCY

Group	Principal		Assistant Superintendent		Texas Education Agency		Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	6	60	1	10	0	0	3	30
B	2	33.3	1	16.1	2	33.3	1	16.1
C	1	50	1	50	0	0	0	0
D	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
E	0	0	1	50	1	50	0	0
F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	9	40.9	5	22.7	3	13.6	4	18.1

worked in ten districts prior to assuming her first superintendency.

In Group A, two respondents had worked in only one district, five had worked in two districts, one had worked in three districts, and two had worked in five districts. In Group B, three had worked in two districts, one had worked in three districts, one had worked in ten districts. In Group C, two had worked in one district and one had worked in two districts. In Group D, one respondent worked in only one district. Group E had one superintendent that

had worked in one district and one had worked in six districts. Group F had no respondents.

These data indicate that Group B respondents were slightly more mobile prior to assuming their first superintendency than the other groups. The data are presented in Table 7.

TABLE 7
NUMBER OF DISTRICTS IN WHICH SUPERINTENDENTS
WORKED PRIOR TO ATTAINING THE
FIRST SUPERINTENDENCY

Group	Number of Districts									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
A	2	5	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
B	0	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
C	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
E	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	6	9	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	1

One woman superintendent out of the twenty-two respondents reported that she served in more than one district as superintendent.

Research Question Nine

After attaining the superintendency, have women moved to superintendencies in larger districts?

Of the twenty-two women superintendents responding to this question, only one reported having served in more than one superintendency. She served in a district with an enrollment of three hundred students for one year. She moved to a district with a student enrollment of four hundred and has been there for the last four years.

Research Question Ten

At what grade levels (elementary, middle school, secondary) have women superintendents had teaching experience?

Of twenty-two women superintendents who responded to this question, fourteen, 63.6 percent, reported having worked as elementary school teachers. Six women, 27.2 percent, reported middle school teaching experience. Seven women, 31.1 percent, worked as high school teachers. Seven respondents served as teachers at two different levels, and one served as teacher at all three levels.

In Group A, eight women, 80 percent, served as elementary school teachers, three, 30 percent, served as middle school teachers and three, 30 percent, served as high school teachers. Group B had three women, 50 percent, reporting to have taught at the elementary school level and three, 50

percent, taught at the middle school level. In Group C all three respondents reported to having taught in both elementary and middle schools. Group D had one respondent, and she had been a high school teacher. Group E had one woman who had been an elementary school teacher, and one who had served as a high school teacher. Group F had no respondents.

These data indicate that the largest percentage of women superintendents in Texas have served as elementary school teachers prior to assuming the superintendency. In the smallest districts there was a greater percentage of superintendents who had served as elementary school teachers. As district size increased, the percentage of women who had taught at the middle school or high school level increased. The data are represented in Table 8.

TABLE 8
FREQUENCY OF GRADE LEVEL TEACHING EXPERIENCE
OF WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS IN TEXAS

Group	Elementary	Middle School	Secondary
A	8	3	3
B	3	3	0
C	2	0	2
D	0	0	1
E	1	0	1
F	0	0	0
Total	14	6	7

Research Question Eleven

At what grade levels (elementary, middle school, secondary) have women superintendents had administrative experience?

Of the twenty-two respondents, nine, 40.9 percent, reported having served as elementary principals. Six, 27.2 percent, had been middle school principals, and five, 22.7 percent, had been school principals. Three women reported having served as principal at all three levels, and one worked at two levels.

In Group A, six, 60 percent, had been elementary school principals. Three, 30 percent, had been middle school principals and four, 40 percent, had been high school principals. Three women, 30 percent, had not served as principals prior to assuming the superintendency. These three women moved from teaching positions directly into the superintendency. Group B had two women, 33.3 percent, who reported elementary principalship experience. One woman, 16.6 percent, had worked as middle school principal and three, 50 percent, had been high school principal. One woman, 16.6 percent, moved from counselor to assistant superintendent of curriculum, to the superintendency.

Group C had one each working at the elementary school, middle school, and high school levels. Group D had one respondent and she had not served as principal. She moved from teacher to director to assistant superintendent to the

superintendency. Group E had one respondent who had worked as a middle school principal and one respondent who moved from assistant high school principal to director to assistant superintendent to the superintendency. Group F had no respondents. These data are shown in Table 9.

TABLE 9
FREQUENCY OF ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS HELD
PRIOR TO ASSUMING THE SUPERINTENDENCY

Group	Elementary	Middle School	High School	Other
A	6	3	4	3
B	2	1	3	1
C	1	1	1	0
D	0	0	0	1
E	0	1	0	0
F	0	0	0	0
Total	9	6	8	5

Research Question Twelve

What professional positions do women superintendents perceive to be most beneficial prior to assuming the superintendency?

Seven respondents, 31.8 percent, reported that the position of teacher provided the most beneficial experience prior to assuming the superintendency. Two, 9 percent, of the respondents reported the elementary school principalship as most beneficial. Six women, 27.2 percent, perceived the

secondary school principalship as most beneficial. Four, 18.1 percent, felt the assistant superintendency, and one each reported a supervisor or technical assistant position as being most beneficial.

In Group A respondents, four, 40 percent, of the respondents reported that the position of teacher was most valuable. Three, 30 percent, perceived the secondary principalship, and one each reported the elementary principalship, supervisor or technical assistant as being most beneficial.

In the Group B, two, 33.3 percent, perceived being teacher; one, 16.6 percent, the elementary school principalship; two, 33.3 percent, the secondary school principalship, and one, 16.6 percent, reported the assistant superintendency as most beneficial. In Group C, one each reported being a teacher, secondary school principal, or assistant superintendency as the most beneficial position prior to assuming the superintendency.

The one respondent in Group D reported the assistant superintendency as most beneficial. In Group E, one reported administration at the Texas Education Agency, and one reported the assistant superintendency as most beneficial. Group F had no respondents. It is shown from these data that respondents in the smaller districts perceive being teacher or principal as being most beneficial. As district size increases, superintendents report the

assistant superintendency position more often as being most beneficial. This information can be seen in Table 10.

There were nineteen responses that listed principal as first, second, or third in order of importance as most beneficial position prior to assuming the superintendency. There were fourteen responses for teacher, eighteen for assistant superintendent, three for director, two for assistant principal and three for other.

In Group A there were eight responses for teacher, nine for principal, seven for assistant superintendent, and one each for assistant principal, supervisor, or other. In Group B there were three responses for teacher, seven for principal, one for assistant principal, one for supervisor, one for director, and five for assistant superintendent.

In Group C there were two responses for teacher, two for principal, three for assistant superintendent and one for other. Group D had one response each for teacher, director, and assistant superintendent.

Group E had one response for principal, director, and other. There were two responses for assistant superintendent. Group F had no responses. These data are presented in Table 11.

TABLE 10

FREQUENCY OF POSITIONS CONSIDERED BY WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS
TO BE MOST BENEFICIAL PRIOR TO THE SUPERINTENDENCY

Group	Teacher	Elementary Principal	Secondary Principal	Supervisory Consultant	Texas			
					Education Agency	Assistant Superintendent	Other	Other
A	4	1	3	1	0	0	0	1
B	2	1	2	0	1	1	1	0
C	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0
D	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
E	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	7	2	6	1	1	4	1	1

TABLE 11

FREQUENCY OF POSITIONS CONSIDERED BY WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS
TO BE FIRST, SECOND, OR THIRD IN IMPORTANCE PRIOR
TO ASSUMING THE SUPERINTENDENCY

Group	Teacher	Assistant Principal	Principal	Supervisor Consultant	Director	Assistant Superintendent	Other
A	8	1	9	1	0	7	1
B	3	1	7	1	1	5	0
C	2	0	2	0	0	3	1
D	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
E	0	0	1	0	1	2	1
F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	14	2	19	2	3	18	3

Research Question Thirteen

How do women superintendents prioritize the importance of various areas of professional development as preparation for the superintendency?

Ten women, 45.4 percent, listed leadership and management as the most important area of their professional preparation. Five respondents, 22.7 percent, reported curriculum. Three, 31.6 percent, reported school finance, and one, 4.5 percent, reported public relations and one, 4.5 percent, reported educational theory.

In Group A, one, 10 percent, reported school finance; two, 20 percent, reported curriculum; one, 10 percent, reported school law; four, 40 percent, reported leadership or management; one, 10 percent reported public relations; and one, 10 percent, reported educational theory.

In Group B, one, 16.6 percent, reported either curriculum and one, 16.6 percent, reported school law. Four, 66.6 percent, reported leadership and management. Group C had one, 33.3 percent, report either school finance, one reported curriculum and one reported leadership. Group D had one respondent report leadership as the most important area of professional development. Group E had one respondent report school finance and one report curriculum. Group F had no respondents. It appears from these data that the response rates are evenly distributed across the various groups. These data are shown in Table 12.

TABLE 12

FREQUENCY OF AREAS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PERCEIVED
BY SUPERINTENDENTS AS MOST IMPORTANT

Group	Finance	Curriculum	Law	Bond Build. Prog.	Personnel	Build. Oper. Main.	Leadership Management	Pub. Rel.	Theory
A	1	2	1	0	0	0	4	1	1
B	0	1	1	0	0	0	4	0	0
C	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
D	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
E	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	3	5	2	0	0	0	10	1	1

There were eighteen responses for curriculum that were first, second, or third. There were fifteen for school finance, thirteen for leadership, five responses for school law, five for building operations, five for public relations and two for educational theory.

In Group A, eight selected curriculum, six finance, six leadership, two law, two public relations and one theory. In Group B, four responses for finance, four curriculum, two law, four leadership, two public relations, and one for theory.

In Group C, three responses for school finance, three curriculum, one building operations, and two for leadership. Group D had one response for curriculum, leadership, and public relations, respectively. Group E had two responses for finance, two for curriculum, one for law, and one for building operation. Group F had no responses. From these data it appears that there is little difference between the various groups. This information is presented in Table 13.

Research Question Fourteen

In what areas do women superintendents think their professional development should have been more extensive?

Eleven superintendents, 50 percent of the respondents, reported that school finance should have been more extensive. There were five, 22.7 percent of the respondents, for curriculum; three, 13.6 percent for school law;

TABLE 13

FREQUENCY OF AREAS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PERCEIVED BY WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS
AS FIRST, SECOND, OR THIRD IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE

Group	Finance	Curriculum	Law	Bond Build Prog.	Personnel	Build. Oper. Main.	Leadership Management	Pub. Rel.	Theory
A	6	8	2	1	0	3	6	2	1
B	4	4	2	0	0	0	4	2	1
C	3	3	0	0	0	1	2	0	0
D	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
E	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	15	18	5	1	0	5	13	5	2

four, 18.1 percent, for bonds and building programs; and three, 13.6 percent, for building operations.

In Group A, five, 50 percent, cited school finance; four, 40 percent, curriculum; one, 10 percent, law; and one, 10 percent, bonds and building programs. In Group B, there were four, 40 percent, responses for school finance; two, 20 percent, law; three, 30 percent, bonds and building programs; and one, 10 percent, for building operations. Group C reported one each, 33 percent, for finance, curriculum, and bonds and building programs. Group D had one, 100 percent response for finance. Groups E and F had no responses to this question.

From these data it can be shown that the women superintendents responding to this question from smaller districts cited school finance and curriculum as areas that should have been more extensive. Respondents from larger districts cited almost no areas needing to be more extensive. This information is shown in Table 14.

Research Question One for School Board Members

What are the criteria school board members utilize when selecting women superintendents?

School board members were asked to respond to this question by selecting one of the following: (1) best qualified candidate, (2) knowledge of business, (3) knowledge of finance, (4) knowledge of curriculum, (5) next in

TABLE 14

FREQUENCY OF AREAS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS
MOST OFTEN THINK SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE EXTENSIVE

Group	Finance	Curriculum	Law	Bond Build Prog.	Personnel	Build. Oper. Main.	Leadership Management	Theory	Pub. Rel.
A	5	4	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
B	4	0	2	3	0	1	0	0	0
C	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
D	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
E	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	11	5	3	4	0	3	0	0	0

line, and (6) other. Four board members responded that they were not on the school board at the time the superintendent was employed. This represents 4.1 percent of all respondents. Forty-nine, 51 percent, listed that the superintendent was the best qualified candidate. Four, 4.1 percent, chose knowledge of finance as the reason for selection. Knowledge of business was selected by two board members, representing 2.8 percent. Nineteen, 19.7 percent, chose knowledge of curriculum as the reason for selection. Five, 5.2 percent, checked next in line, and eleven, 11.4 percent, selected other as the reason for employment.

In Group A, thirteen, 43.3 percent, selected best qualified candidate. One, 3.3 percent, chose knowledge of finance. Two, 6.6 percent, were not trustees at the time of employment. One, 3.3 percent, answered knowledge of curriculum; three, 10 percent, selected next in line; and three answered other. In Group B, thirteen, 54.1 percent, responded best qualified candidate. One, 3.3 percent, responded finance. One, 4.1 percent, was not a trustee; five, 20.8 percent chose curriculum; and four, 16.6 percent, marked other.

In Group C, ten, 58.8 percent, responded with best qualified candidate. One, 5.9 percent, each selected finance or not a trustee. Two, 11.7 percent; chose curriculum and three, 17.6 percent marked other. In Group D, five, 83.3 percent, responded with best qualified candidate; and

one, 16.6 percent, selected next in line as reason for employment. In Group E, four, 26.6 percent chose best qualified candidate; one, 6.6 percent, finance; one, 6.6 percent, business; five, 33.3 percent curriculum; one, 6.6 percent chose other. All four respondents in Group F chose best qualified candidate.

From this data, it appears that the groups generally selected best qualified candidate or knowledge of curriculum as the most important criteria in the decision to employ a woman as superintendent of schools. The data are presented in Table 15.

Research Question Two for School Board Members

How do school board members rate their woman superintendent?

Fifty-four, 56.2 percent of all school board members responding to this question, rated their superintendent as excellent. Twenty-five, 26 percent, rated their superintendent as good; twelve, 12.5 percent, rating them as average; four, 4.1 percent, rating them as below average; and one rated the superintendent as poor.

In Group A, twelve, 40 percent, rated their superintendent as excellent; twelve, 40 percent, rated them as good; four, 13.3 percent, rated them as average; and two, 6.6 percent, rated them as below average. In Group B, seventeen, 70.8 percent, rated their superintendent as

TABLE 15

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS' RESPONSES TO
DECISION TO EMPLOY A WOMAN AS SUPERINTENDENT

Group	Best Qualified Candidate		Knowledge of Finance		Was not a Trustee at the Time		Knowledge of Business		Knowledge of Curriculum		Next in Line		Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	13	43.3	1	3.3	2	6.6	1	3.3	7	23.3	3	10	3	10
B	13	54.1	1	4.1	1	4.1	0	0	5	20.8	0	0	4	16.6
C	10	58.8	1	5.8	1	5.8	0	0	2	11.7	0	0	3	17.6
D	5	83.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	16.6	0	0
E	4	26.6	1	6.6	0	0	1	6.6	5	33.3	1	6.6	1	6.6
F	4	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	49	51	4	4.1	4	4.1	2	2.8	19	19.7	5	5.2	11	11.4

excellent. Three, 12.5 percent of the respondents, rated her as good. Four, 16.6 percent, rated the superintendent as average.

In Group C, 66.6 percent, rated the superintendent as excellent, and two, 33.3 percent, rated her as good. Group E had twelve, 80 percent, rank her as excellent; one, 6.6 percent, good; one, 6.6 percent, average; and one, 6.6 percent, rated her below average. In Group E, three, 75 percent, rated her as excellent, and one, 25 percent, rated her as good. The data indicates that all groups rate their superintendents highly. Groups B, D, E and F rated their superintendents excellent more often than Groups A and C. The data are represented in Table 16.

Research Question Three for School Board Members

Is there a difference in the perceptions of male and female school board members concerning women superintendents?

There were a total of eighty-nine respondents that answered this question. Sixty-seven, 75.2 percent were male and twenty-two, 24.8 percent, were female. Forty-one, 61.1 percent of all male respondents, rated their superintendent as excellent. Ten, 14.9 percent of the males, rated their average. No woman school board member rated their female superintendent as poor.

TABLE 16

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS'
RANKINGS OF WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS

Group	Excellent		Good		Average		Below Average		Poor	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	12	40	12	40	4	13.3	2	6.6	0	0
B	17	70.8	3	12.5	4	16.6	0	0	0	0
C	6	35.2	6	35.2	3	12.5	1	4.1	1	4.1
D	4	66.6	2	33.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
E	12	80	1	6.6	1	6.6	1	6.6	0	0
F	3	75	1	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	54	56.2	25	26	12	12.5	4	4.1	1	1

superintendent as good. Twelve, 17.9 percent of the males, rated their superintendent as average. Three, 4.4 percent of the males, rated their superintendent below average. One board member, 1.4 percent of the males, rated his superintendent as poor.

Fourteen, 63.6 percent of the female board members, rated their superintendent as excellent. Five, 22.7 percent of the women board members, rated their superintendent as good. One female board member, representing 4.5 percent, rated her superintendent as average. Two, 9 percent of the female board members, rated their superintendent as below

From these data, it can be determined that the women respondents rated their female superintendent slightly higher than their male counterparts. The data are represented in Table 17.

TABLE 17
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS'
RATINGS OF WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS BY SEX

Rank	Male Board Members		Female Board Members	
	N	%	N	%
Excellent	41	61.1	14	63.6
Good	10	14.9	5	22.7
Average	12	17.9	1	4.5
Below Average	3	4.4	2	9
Poor	1	1.4	0	0
Total	67	75.2	22	24.8

Research Question Four for
School Board Members

How do school board members rate women superintendents' abilities in the areas of curriculum, finance, business, school law, personnel, leadership, bonds, and building programs?

Curriculum

In the area of curriculum, fifty-two board members, 54.1 percent of all respondents, strongly agree that women superintendents are competent in curriculum matters. Forty-one, 42.7 percent, agreed that women superintendents are competent in curriculum; one was undecided; one disagreed; and two strongly disagreed.

In Group A, fourteen, 46.6 percent, strongly agreed that women are competent in curriculum matters. Fifteen, 50 percent agreed, and one, 3.3 percent strongly disagreed. Group B had thirteen, 54.1 percent, who strongly agreed; ten, 41.6 percent, agreed; and one, 4.1 percent, was undecided. Group B had five, 29.4 percent, that responded strongly agree; eleven, 64.7 percent, that agreed; and one, 5.8 percent, strongly disagreed.

Group D had four, 66.6 percent, that agreed; and two, 33.3 percent, that disagreed. Group E had thirteen, 86.6 percent, who strongly agreed; and two, 13.3 percent, who agreed. In Group F, three, 75 percent, strongly agreed, and one agreed. From these data, it can be determined that the larger districts rated the abilities of their superintendent higher in curriculum matters than the smaller districts.

School Finance

In the area of school finance, forty-five board members, 46.8 percent, strongly agreed that women

TABLE 18

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS' RATINGS OF WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS' ABILITIES IN CURRICULUM MATTERS

Group	Women Superintendents are Competent in Curriculum Matters					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
	N	N	N	N	N	N
	%	%	%	%	%	%
A	14	15	0	0	1	3.3
B	13	10	1	0	0	0
C	5	11	0	0	1	5.8
D	4	2	0	0	0	0
E	13	2	0	0	0	0
F	3	1	0	0	0	0
Total	52	41	1	1	2	2
	54.1	42.7				

superintendents are knowledgeable of school finance. Forty-six, 47.9 percent, responded agree; one undecided; two disagreed; and two strongly disagreed. In Group A, seventeen, 56.6 percent, strongly agreed; twelve, 40 percent, agreed; and one strongly disagreed.

In Group B, ten, 41.6 percent, strongly agreed; thirteen, 54.1 percent, responded agree; and one, 4.1 percent, responded undecided. In Group C, five, 29.4 percent, responded strongly agree; nine, 52.9 percent, responded agree; two, 11.2 percent, disagreed; and one, 5.8 percent, strongly disagreed. Group D had four, 66.6 percent, strongly agree; and two, 33.3 percent, agree.

In Group E, six, 40 percent, strongly agreed; and nine, 60 percent, agreed. Group F had three, 75 percent, strongly agreed; and one, 25 percent, strongly disagreed.

These data indicate that Groups A, D, and F strongly agree more often than the other groups regarding women superintendents' abilities in school finance. These data are shown in Table 19.

Business Matters

Thirty-three board members, 34.3 percent, strongly agreed with the statement that women superintendents are strong in business. Forty-seven, 48.9 percent, reported that they agree with the statement. Six, 6.2 percent, were

TABLE 19

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS' PERCEPTIONS OF
WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS' KNOWLEDGE OF SCHOOL FINANCE

Group	Strongly Agree				Agree				Undecided				Disagree				Strongly Disagree			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
A	17	56.6	12	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4.1		
B	10	41.6	13	54.1	1	4.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
C	5	29.4	9	52.9	0	0	0	0	2	11.7	1	5.8	0	0	0	0	0	0		
D	4	66.6	2	33.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
E	6	40	9	60	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
F	3	75	1	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Total	45	46.8	46	47.9	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2		

undecided; six, 6.2 percent, disagreed; and four, 4.1 percent, strongly disagreed.

In Group A, seven, 23.3 percent, strongly agreed, eighteen, 60 percent, agreed; three, 10 percent, were undecided; one, 3.3 percent, disagreed; and one, 3.3 percent, strongly disagreed. In Group B, six, 25 percent, strongly agreed; thirteen, 54.1 percent, agreed; one, 4.1 percent, was undecided; two, 8.3 percent, disagreed; and one, 4.1 percent, strongly disagreed.

In Group C, five, 29.4 percent, strongly agreed; seven, 41.1 percent, agreed; one, 5.8 percent, was undecided; three, 17.6 percent, disagreed; and two, 11.7 percent, strongly disagreed. Group D had four, 66.6 percent of the respondents, who strongly agree; and two, 33.3 percent, agreed.

Group E had eight, 53.3 percent, who strongly agree with the statement that women superintendents are strong in business matters. Six, 40 percent, agreed; and one, 6.6 percent, was undecided. In Group F, three, 75 percent, strongly agreed; and one, 25 percent, agreed. From this data, it can be determined that Groups D, E, F, the largest districts, rate their superintendent higher on their handling of business matters than the school board members in smaller districts. These data are shown in Table 20.

TABLE 20

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS' RANKINGS OF
WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS' ABILITIES IN BUSINESS MATTERS

Group	Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	7	23.3	18	60	3	10	1	3.3	1	3.3
B	6	25	13	54.1	1	4.1	2	8.3	1	4
C	5	29.4	7	41.1	1	5.8	3	17.6	2	11.7
D	4	66.6	2	33.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
E	8	53.3	6	40	1	6.6	0	0	0	0
F	3	75	1	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	33	34.3	47	48.9	6	6.2	6	6.2	4	4.1

School Law

Thirty-six school board members, representing 37.5 percent of all respondents, strongly agreed with the statement that women superintendents are knowledgeable of school law. Forty, 41.6 percent, responded that they agreed; eleven, 11.4 percent, were undecided; five, 5.2 percent, disagreed; and four, 4.1 percent, strongly disagreed.

In Group A, twelve, 40 percent, strongly agreed; eight, 26.6 percent agreed; six, 20 percent, were undecided; one disagreed; and three, 10 percent, strongly disagreed. In Group B, twelve, 40 percent, strongly agreed; eight, 33.3 percent, agreed; two, 8.3 percent, were undecided; and two, 8.3 percent disagreed. Group C had three, 17.6 percent, who strongly agreed; eight, 47 percent, agreed; three, 17.6 percent, were undecided; two, 11.7 percent, disagreed; and one, 5.8 percent, strongly disagreed. In Group D, two, 33.3 percent, strongly agree; four, 66.6 percent; and agree. Group E had four, 26.6 percent, strongly agree; and eleven, 73.3 percent, agree. Group F had three, 75 percent, strongly agree; and one, 25 percent, agree. The larger districts, Groups D, E and F, rated women superintendents more highly in the area of school law. These data are presented in Table 21.

TABLE 21

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS' PERCEPTIONS OF
WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS' KNOWLEDGE OF SCHOOL LAW

Group	Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	12	40	8	26.6	6	20	1	3.3	3	10
B	12	50	8	33.3	2	8.3	2	8.3	0	0
C	3	17.6	8	47	3	17.6	2	11.7	1	5.8
D	2	33.3	4	66.6	0	0	0	0	0	0
E	4	26.6	11	73.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
F	3	75	1	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	36	37.5	40	41.6	11	11.4	5	5.2	4	4.1

Personnel Administration

In the area of personnel administration, thirty-three school board members, 34.3 percent of the respondents, strongly agreed with the statement that women superintendents are strong in this area. Thirty-seven, 38.5 percent, agreed; seven, 7.2 percent, were undecided; eight, 8.3 percent, disagreed; and two, 2 percent, strongly disagreed.

In Group A, nine, 30 percent, strongly agreed with this statement; fifteen, 50 percent, agreed; two, 6.6 percent, were undecided; and three, 10 percent, disagreed. In Group B, seven, 29.1 percent, strongly agreed; twelve, 50 percent, agreed; three, 12.5 percent, were undecided; and two, 8.3 percent, disagreed. In Group C, eight, 47 percent, strongly agreed; six, 35.2 percent, agreed; two, 11.7 percent, disagreed; and one, 5.8 percent, strongly disagreed.

In Group D, two, 33.3 percent, strongly agreed with the statement that women superintendents are strong in the area of personnel. Three, 50 percent, agreed; and one, 16.6 percent, were undecided. In Group E, seven, 46.6 percent, strongly agreed; six, 40 percent, agreed with the statement. One each were undecided or disagreed. Group F had three respondents to strongly agree; and one, 25 percent, disagreed.

The data indicate that ratings of school board members in the larger districts, Groups D, E, F, were more favorable

regarding this question. These data are presented in Table 22.

In the area of public relations, forty-seven, 48.9 percent of the respondents, strongly agree with the statement that women superintendents are competent in the area of public relations. Thirty-nine, 40.6 percent, agreed with the statement. Six, 6.2 percent, were undecided. Three, 3.1 percent, disagreed with the statement; and one, 1 percent, strongly disagreed with the statement.

In Group A, eleven, 36.6 percent, strongly agreed with the statement. Fifteen, 50 percent, agreed that women are competent in public relations. Three, 10 percent, were undecided; and one, 3.3 percent, disagreed with the statement.

In Group B, twelve, 50 percent, strongly agreed, Nine, 37.5 percent, agreed. Two, 8.3 percent, were undecided; and one, 4.1 percent, disagreed with the statement. In Group C, six, 35.2 percent, strongly agreed. Eight, 47 percent, agreed, One each, 5.8 percent, either were undecided, disagreed, or strongly disagreed. In Group D, three, 50 percent, strongly agreed, and three, 50 percent, agreed. In Group E, twelve, 80 percent, strongly agreed, and three, 20 percent, agreed. In Group F, three, 75 percent, strongly agreed; and one, 25 percent, agreed with the statement that women superintendents are competent in the area of public relations.

TABLE 22

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS' RATINGS OF WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS' ABILITIES IN THE AREA OF PERSONNEL

Women Superintendents are Strong in Personnel Administration

Group	Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	9	30	15	50.0	2	6.6	3	10	1	3.3
B	7	29.1	12	50	3	12.5	2	8.3	0	0
C	8	47	6	35.2	0	0	2	11.7	1	5.8
D	2	33.3	3	50	1	16.6	0	0	0	0
E	7	46.6	6	40	1	6.6	1	6.6	0	0
F	3	75	1	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	33	34.3	37	38.5	7	7.2	8	8.3	2	2

These figures indicate that all groups rated their superintendents' abilities high in this area. There was a higher rating among Groups D, E, F, which are the larger districts. This information is presented in Table 23.

Bonds and Building Programs

In the area of bonds and building programs, twenty-nine school board members, representing 30.2 percent of the respondents, strongly agreed with the statement that women superintendents are knowledgeable concerning building operations and maintenance. Thirty board members, 40.6 percent, agreed with the statement; fourteen, 14.5 percent, were undecided; seven, 7.9 percent, disagreed; and four, 4.1 percent, strongly disagreed.

In Group A, four, 13.3 percent, strongly agreed with the statement regarding women superintendents' abilities in bonds and building programs. Seventeen, 56.6 percent, agreed. Five, 16.6 percent, were undecided. Two, 6.6 percent, disagreed; and one, 3.3 percent, strongly disagreed. In Group B, eight, 33.3 percent, strongly agreed; nine, 37.5 percent, agreed; three, 12.5 percent, were undecided; one, 4.1 percent, disagreed; and one 4.1 percent, strongly disagreed.

In Group C, six, 35.2 percent, strongly agreed. Two, 11.7 percent, agreed with the statement. Four, 23.5 percent of the respondents, were undecided. Three, 17.6 percent,

TABLE 23

FREQUENCY OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS' RATINGS OF WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS' ABILITIES IN THE AREA OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Group	Strongly Agree				Agree				Undecided				Disagree				Strongly Disagree			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
A	11	36.6	15	50	3	10	1	3.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
B	12	50	9	37.5	2	8.3	1	4.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
C	6	35.2	8	47	1	5.8	1	5.8	1	5.8	1	5.8	1	5.8	1	5.8	1	5.8		
D	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
E	12	80	3	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
F	3	75	1	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Total	47	48.9	39	40.6	6	6.2	3	3.1	3	3.1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		

disagreed; and two, 11.7 percent, strongly disagreed. In Group D, three, 50 percent, strongly agreed, and three, 50 percent, agreed. In Group E, five, 30 percent, strongly agreed with the statement. Seven, 46.6 percent, agreed; two, 13.3 percent, were undecided. One, 6.6 percent, disagreed with the statement. In Group F, three, 75 percent, strongly agreed; and one, 25 percent, agreed.

From these data, women superintendents were rated higher in bonds and building programs, in Groups D, E, F. The data are presented in Table 24.

Research Question Five for School Board Members

How do school board members rate their women superintendent's leadership ability?

A total of forty-seven respondents, 48.9 percent, strongly agreed with the statement that women superintendents are competent leaders. Thirty-eight, 39.5 percent, responded that they agreed with the statement. Five, 5.2 percent, were undecided; three, 3.1 percent, disagreed; and three strongly disagreed.

In Group A, ten, 33.3 percent, strongly agreed that women superintendents are competent leaders. Seventeen, 56.6 percent, agreed with the statement. One, 3.3 percent, was undecided. One, 3.3 percent, disagreed, and one, 3.3 percent, strongly disagreed. In Group B, twelve, 50 percent, strongly agreed with the statement that women

TABLE 24

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS' RATINGS OF WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS' KNOWLEDGE OF BONDS AND BUILDING PROGRAMS

Group	Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	4	13.3	17	56.6	5	16.6	2	6.6	1	3.3
B	8	33.3	9	37.5	3	12.5	1	4.1	1	4.1
C	6	35.2	2	11.7	4	23.5	3	17.6	2	11.7
D	3	50	3	50	0	0	0	0	0	0
E	5	30	7	46.6	2	13.3	1	6.6	0	0
F	3	75	1	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	29	30.2	39	40.6	14	14.5	7	7.9	4	4.1

superintendents are competent leaders. Ten, 41.6 percent, agreed with the statement. Two, 8.3 percent, were undecided. In Group C, eight, 47 percent, strongly agreed. Three, 17.6 percent, agree with the statement. Two, 11.7 percent, were undecided; two, 11.7 percent, disagreed; and two, 11.7 percent, strongly agreed.

In Group D, four, 66.6 percent, strongly agreed; and two, 33.3 percent, agreed. In Group E, ten, 66.6 percent, strongly agreed; and five, 33.3 percent, agreed. In Group F, three, 75 percent, strongly agreed; and one, 25 percent, agreed. These data indicate that Groups D, E, F, the larger districts, rated women superintendents higher in the area of leadership than the smaller districts. These data are presented in Table 25.

Ancillary Question One

Do school board members perceive that women experience discrimination when applying for the superintendency?

Thirty-one school board members, 32.2 percent of all respondents, reported that they were undecided regarding this question. Five, 5.2 percent, strongly agreed that women are discriminated against when applying for the superintendency. Thirty, 31.2 percent, agreed with the statement. Nineteen respondents, 19.7 percent, disagreed; while ten, 10.4 percent, strongly disagreed. A total of thirty-five respondents believed women are discriminated

TABLE 25

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS' RANKINGS OF
WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS' LEADERSHIP ABILITIES

Group	Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	10	33.3	17	56.6	1	3.3	1	3.3	1	3.3
B	12	50	10	41.6	2	8.3	0	0	0	0
C	8	47	3	17.6	2	11.7	2	11.7	2	11.7
D	4	66.6	2	33.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
E	10	66.6	5	33.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
F	3	75	1	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	47	48.9	38	39.5	5	5.2	3	3.1	3	3.1

against, while twenty-nine perceived no discrimination and thirty-one were undecided.

In Group A, two strongly agreed; six, 20 percent, agreed; ten, 33.3 percent, were undecided; ten disagreed; and two, 6.6 percent strongly disagreed. In Group B, one strongly agreed; nine, 37.5 percent, agreed; nine were undecided; three disagreed; and one strongly disagreed. In Group C, eight responded agreed; three, 17.6 percent were undecided, three disagreed; and three strongly disagreed.

In Group D, four, 66.6 percent, agreed; one was undecided; and one, 16.6 percent, strongly disagreed with the statement. In Group E, one strongly agreed; three, 20 percent, agreed; six, 40 percent, were undecided; two disagreed; and three, 20 percent, strongly disagreed. In Group F, one strongly agreed; two were undecided; and one, 25 percent, disagreed with the statement regarding discrimination. The data are presented in Table 26.

Ancillary Question Two

What is the typical career path of women superintendents in Texas?

Of the twenty-two women superintendents who responded to this study, eight, 36.3 percent, moved from teacher to principal to superintendent. Five, 22.7 percent, went from teacher to principal to central office to superintendent. Three, 13.6 percent, moved from teacher to central office to

TABLE 26

FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS' RATINGS OF THEIR PERCEPTIONS
REGARDING DISCRIMINATION OF WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS

Group	Strongly Agree				Agree				Undecided				Disagree				Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
A	2	6.6	6	20	10	33.3	10	33.3	2	6.6								
B	1	4.1	9	37.5	9	37.5	3	17.6	1	4.1								
C	0	0	8	47	3	17.6	3	17.6	3	17.6								
D	0	0	4	66.6	1	16.6	0	0	1	16.6								
E	1	6.6	3	20	6	40	2	13.3	3	20								
F	1	25	0	0	2	50	1	25	0	0								
Total	5	5.2	30	31.2	31	32.2	19	19.7	10	10.4								

superintendent. Three, 13.6 percent, went from principal to the Texas Education Agency prior to attaining the superintendency. Three, 13.6 percent, used some other route to the superintendency, such as from teacher directly to the superintendency.

In Group A, five, 50 percent of the respondents, progressed from teacher to principal to superintendency. One, 10 percent, went from teacher to principal to central office to superintendent. One, 10 percent, moved from teacher to central office, to superintendent; and three, 30 percent, moved from teacher to the superintendency.

In Group B, one used the teacher to principal to superintendent route. Two, 33.3 percent, used the teacher to principal to central office to superintendent route. One, 16.6 percent, moved from teacher to central office to superintendent; and two, 33.3 percent, used teacher, principal, Texas Education Agency to superintendency route.

In Group C, two, 75 percent, used the teacher to principal to superintendent route and one used the teacher to principal to central office to superintendent route. Group D had one respondent, and she used the Texas Education Agency path. Group E had one respondent utilize the teacher to principal to central office to superintendent path, and one to employ the teacher to principal to Texas Education Agency to superintendent route. Group F had no respondents. These data are presented in Table 27.

TABLE 27
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF CAREER PATHS OF WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS

Group	T-P-S		T-P-CO-S		T-CO-S		T-P-TEA-S		Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	5	50	1	10	1	10	0	0	3	30
B	1	16.6	2	33.3	1	16.6	2	33.3	0	0
C	2	75	1	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
D	0	0	0	0	1	100	0	0	0	0
E	0	0	1	50	0	0	1	50	0	0
F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	8	36.3	5	22.7	3	13.6	3	13.6	3	13.6

T = Teacher, P = Principal, S = Superintendent, CO = Central Office, TEA = Texas Education Agency

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary, findings, and conclusions of the study. Recommendations for further research are also included.

Summary

This study investigates the career paths of women superintendents in the state of Texas. It also examines women superintendents' success levels as perceived by their respective school board members.

A Career Path Survey was mailed to the twenty-nine women currently serving as superintendent of public schools in the state of Texas during the 1988-1989 school year. These superintendents were identified with the help of the Texas Education Agency Department of Information. Of the twenty-nine women currently serving as superintendent, twenty-two responded to the survey. This is a response rate of 75.8 percent. The career path survey was mailed to each woman superintendent in Texas during the month of October 1988. A second and third follow-up were mailed in the month of November 1988. In addition, each superintendent that did not respond to the first two questionnaires was called by the investigator to request cooperation with the study.

The responses were divided into five categories according to district enrollments: Group A districts, less than 300; Group B districts, 300 to 1,499; Group C districts, 1,500 to 4,999; Group D districts, 5,000 to 9,999; Group E districts, 10,000 to 49,999; and Group F districts, 50,000 or more. The response rate for Group A was ten, 90.9 percent; Group B, six, 75 percent; Group C, three, 60 percent; Group D, one, 50 percent; Group E, two responses, 50 percent; and Group F, no responses.

The Women Superintendents' Success Levels Survey Form was mailed to each board member of a woman superintendent during the month of October 1988. A second and third follow-up were mailed during the month of November 1988. The response rate of the school board members was a total of 45.2 percent. In Group A, the response rate was 43.4 percent. In Group B, the response rate was 43.4 percent. The response rate for Group C was 48.5 percent. The response rate for Group D was 42.8 percent. The response rate for Group E was 53.5 percent, and Group F had a response rate of 44.4 percent.

Findings

The following findings resulted from this study.

1. When applying for the superintendency, the majority of women superintendents in Texas who responded to this survey reported that they perceived no difficulties or

discrimination unique to their sex. A total of 68.1 percent of the respondents reported no discrimination. A total of 31.8 percent of the women superintendents reported that they did experience discrimination. Explanations as to the types of discrimination ranged from: having to deal with the "good ole boy system," some school boards refusing to interview a female applicant, apprehension among male and female employees, questions or concerns about a woman's mental toughness, and the belief that most women are weak in school finance and facilities.

The largest majority of each group reported no discrimination in seeking the position of superintendent. In Group A, the smallest districts, 40 percent, perceived discrimination. Fifty percent of Group E, a larger district group, perceived difficulties unique to their sex.

2. At the time of attaining their first superintendency, 59 percent of the respondents in this study were hired from within the district. Forty-one percent of the respondents were hired from outside the district. Groups A and E had 50 percent hired from inside and 50 percent hired from the outside. All other groups had a substantial majority of women hired from within the district. Women superintendents hired from outside the district usually came from a principal or central office position.

3. A large majority of women superintendents have a master's degree. Of the twenty-two respondents, sixteen,

72.9 percent, have a master's degree. Six, 27.1 percent, have a doctorate degree. Women superintendents with doctorate degrees are more likely to work in a larger district. In Group A, 100 percent of the respondents have a master's degree. In Group E, a larger district group, 100 percent have doctorates.

4. Women superintendents listed work experiences including university teaching, Texas Education Agency, Regional Service Center as well as business experience. Of the respondents, five, 22 percent, reported work at the Texas Education Agency, 13.6 percent were university professors, 18.1 percent worked at a Regional Service Center and 13.6 percent had business experience. A small percentage, 13.6 percent, of the respondents reported that they took time off to raise a family.

5. The average current age of the women superintendents in Texas is 48.3 years. The youngest superintendent is thirty and the oldest is sixty-one. The mean age of women in Group A is forty-four years, the youngest of any group. Age increased as district size increased, with the exception of Group E.

6. The average age of women superintendents upon attaining their first superintendency was 43.2 years. The youngest mean age of any group is A with an age of forty years upon attaining the first superintendency. Age increased as district size increased, with the exception of

Group E, whose mean age was 41.5 years. Group B was 46.5; Group C was 47; and Group D was 49.

7. The largest group of women superintendents held the position of principal immediately prior to attaining the superintendency. A total of 40.9 percent of the respondents reported they held the principalship immediately prior to the superintendency. The percentage of respondents who were assistant superintendents immediately prior to attaining the superintendency was 22.7 percent. A total of 13.6 percent of the respondents worked at the Texas Education Agency immediately prior to the superintendency. Employment in other positions such as teacher or technical assistant was reported by 18.1 percent. In the smaller districts, A, B and C, superintendents were much more likely to have been principal or teacher immediately prior to attaining the superintendency. In the larger districts, D, E and F, the respondents were much more likely to have been assistant superintendents.

8. Forty percent of women superintendents in Texas served in two districts prior to attaining the superintendency. Twenty-seven percent worked in one district. Nine percent worked in three districts, nine percent worked in five districts, nine percent worked in six districts and 4.5 percent worked in ten districts.

9. Only one respondent in this study served as superintendent in more than one district. She served as

superintendent in a district with an enrollment of three hundred for one year and then moved to a district with an enrollment of four hundred and has been there for the last four years.

10. The majority of women superintendents in Texas reported teaching experience at the elementary level. A total of 63.6 percent worked as elementary teachers. Twenty-seven percent served as middle school teachers and 31.8 percent served as high school teachers. Respondents who taught at two different levels was 31.8 percent, and 4.5 percent taught at all three levels.

11. The largest number, 40 percent of the respondents, served as elementary principals prior to assuming the superintendency. Twenty-seven percent had been middle school principals. The percentage of respondents who had been high school principals prior to assuming the superintendency was 36.3 percent. The percentage of respondents in the "other" category, meaning they did not serve in the principalship prior to the superintendency, was 22.7 percent. Nine percent of the respondents worked at two different levels as principal, and 13.5 percent served as principal at all three levels.

12. A total of 31.8 percent of the respondents perceived the position of teacher to be the most beneficial prior to becoming superintendent of school. Six, 27 percent, perceived the secondary principalship as providing

the most valuable experience in preparation for the superintendency. A small percentage of respondents, 18.1 percent, perceived the assistant superintendency as providing the most valuable experience. An equal percentage of respondents, 4.5 percent, perceived the position of consultant and the experience in administration at the Texas Education Agency as the most beneficial experience prior to moving into the superintendency. In the smaller districts, the position of teacher, elementary principal, or secondary principal were more likely to be selected. In the larger groups, the position of assistant superintendent was much more likely to be selected.

When superintendents were asked to rank their responses to the question regarding most beneficial experiences prior to the superintendency, there were nineteen responses for principal, fourteen responses for teacher, eighteen responses for assistant superintendent, three for director, three for other, two for supervisor, and two for assistant principal.

13. Of the women superintendents who responded to the survey, 45.4 percent perceived leadership and management as the most important area of their professional development. Curriculum development was perceived by 22.7 percent as most important, and 13.5 percent perceived finance as the critical area of professional development.

When women superintendents rank ordered the various areas of professional development, curriculum was selected eighteen, 27.2 percent, of the time. Finance was selected fifteen times, 22.7 percent. Leadership and management had thirteen, 19.6 percent, responses. School law, building operations or public relations was selected by 7.5 percent of the respondents.

14. Fifty percent of the women currently serving as superintendent perceived school finance as the area of professional development that should have been more extensive. Curriculum was selected by 22.7 percent of the respondent as an area that should have been more extensive and 18.1 percent perceive bonds and building programs needed to be more extensive.

In the smaller schools, Groups A, B and C, respondents were much more likely to select finance and curriculum as the areas with a need to be more extensive. In the larger schools, Groups D, E, F, superintendents were much more likely to report that no areas were in need of improvement.

School Board Members

SB.1 Fifty-one percent of the school board members who responded to the questionnaire listed "best qualified candidate" as the reason for employing a woman as superintendent. Knowledge of curriculum was selected by 19.7 percent of the respondents. Knowledge of finance was

listed by 4.1 percent, and 4.1 percent were not trustees at the time of appointment. Knowledge of business was perceived by 2.8 percent, 5.2 percent chose next in line, and 11.4 percent checked "other" as the criteria for appointment.

SB.2 The majority of school board members of women superintendents in Texas rated their superintendent as excellent. A total of 56.2 percent of the respondents perceived their superintendent to be excellent. Twenty-six percent perceived their superintendent to be good. Twelve percent perceived their superintendent to be average. Below average was chosen by 4.1 percent, and 1 percent chose poor as the response to rating their superintendent. Group C rated their superintendents lower than all other groups.

SB.3 Women school board members rated their superintendents slightly higher than male school board members. A total of 63.6 percent of the women school board members rated their superintendent as excellent compared to 61.1 percent of their male counterparts. A larger percentage, 22.7 percent, of the women school board members rated their superintendent as good compared to 14.9 percent of the male respondents. More male respondents, 17.9 percent, rated her as average compared to 4.5 percent of the female respondents. Nine percent of the female board members rated their superintendent below average compared to 4.4 percent

of the males, and no women listed their superintendent as poor compared to 1.4 percent of their male counterparts.

SB.4 School board members were asked to rate women superintendents' abilities in the areas of curriculum, finance, school law, business, personnel, public relations, bonds and building programs. In the area of curriculum, the majority of school board members strongly agreed that women are competent in this area. A large percentage, 54.1 percent, of the respondents reported that they strongly agreed; 42.7 percent agreed; 1 percent was undecided; and 2 percent strongly disagreed.

The largest percentage of school board members either strongly agreed or agreed that women superintendents were knowledgeable of school finance. A total of 46.8 percent of the respondents strongly agreed, and 47.9 percent agreed with the statement. Groups A, D and F strongly agreed more often than the other groups.

A smaller percentage, 34.3 percent, strongly agreed with the statement that women are strong in business compared with 48.9 percent who agreed; 6.2 percent disagreed; 4.1 percent strongly disagreed; and 6.2 percent were undecided. School board members from the largest districts rated women superintendents's abilities in business more highly than board members from the smaller districts.

In the area of school law, 37.5 percent of the school board members strongly agreed, and 41.6 percent of the board

members agreed with the statement that women superintendents are knowledgeable of school law. Respondents who were undecided made up 11.4 percent of the total; 5.2 percent disagreed; and 4.1 percent strongly disagreed. School board members in the larger districts rated women superintendents more highly in their knowledge of school law than did school board members in the smaller districts.

Of the total number of respondents, 34.3 percent strongly agreed, and 38.5 percent agreed with the statement that women superintendents are strong in the area of personnel; 7.2 percent of the board members were undecided; 8.3 percent disagreed; and 2 percent strongly disagreed. School board members in larger districts rated women superintendents more highly than board members in the smaller districts.

Of the total number of respondents, 48.9 percent strongly agreed that women superintendents are competent in the area of public relations; 40.6 percent of the board members agreed with the statement; 6.2 percent were undecided; 3.1 percent disagreed; and 1 percent strongly disagreed with the statement.

Respondents who strongly agreed with the statement that women superintendents are knowledgeable of bonds and building programs made up 30.2 percent of the total; 40.6 percent agreed; 14.5 percent were undecided; 7.9 percent disagreed; and 4.1 percent strongly disagreed.

SB.5 The largest percentage, 48.9 percent, of the school board members strongly agreed that women superintendents are competent leaders, followed by 39.5 percent who agreed; 5.2 percent were undecided; 3.1 percent disagreed; and 3.1 percent strongly disagreed with the statement. The larger school districts rated women superintendents stronger in leadership than the smaller districts.

Additional Findings

1. The largest percentage of school board members, 32.2 percent of the respondents, were undecided regarding the statement that women are discriminated against when applying for the superintendency. Respondents who agreed that women are discriminated against when applying for superintendencies made up 31.2 percent; 5.2 percent strongly agreed with the statement; 19.7 percent disagreed; and 10.4 percent strongly disagreed with the statement. In Group D, composed of larger school districts, 66.6 percent of the respondents agreed that women experience discrimination.

2. The largest percentage, 36.3 percent of women superintendents in Texas had a career path that went from teacher to principal to superintendent. A smaller number, 22.7 percent, went from teacher to principal to central office to the superintendency; and 13.6 percent of the respondents followed a career path that began with teacher to central office to the superintendency. A career path of

teacher to principal to the Texas Education Agency to the superintendency was reported by 13.6 percent; and 13.6 percent of the respondents followed some other path such as teacher to superintendency.

In the smaller districts the typical career pattern was teacher to principal to the superintendency. In the larger districts the typical career path pattern was the teacher to principal to central office or the teacher to principal to the Texas Education Agency to superintendent route.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn based on the findings of the study.

1. The majority of women currently serving as superintendent do not perceive any discrimination when applying for the position.
2. The majority of women superintendents are hired from within the district in which she was presently employed.
3. Most women superintendents have a master's degree, but superintendents in larger school districts are more likely to have a doctorate.
4. The typical career path of women superintendents in Texas is teacher to principal to superintendent.

5. The majority of women superintendents in Texas served in two districts prior to attaining the superintendency.

6. The majority of women superintendents in Texas have been elementary teachers, but as district size increased there is a tendency for more of them to have taught at the secondary level.

7. There is a tendency for women superintendents to have been elementary principals prior to attaining the superintendency, but no organizational level could claim a majority.

8. Having been a teacher seems to be the most valuable experience for a woman before becoming a superintendent.

9. In the area of professional development, leadership and management is perceived as the most important by women superintendents.

10. School board members selected a woman as superintendent of schools because she was the best qualified candidate.

11. Women school board members rate their superintendents slightly higher than male school board members.

12. School board members generally rate women superintendents very high in areas of curriculum, finance, school law, business, personnel, public relations, bonds and building programs.

Recommendations

The results of this study have several important implications for women aspiring to the superintendency, universities which train educational administrators, school board members considering employing a superintendent, and educational consultants which aid school boards in searches for superintendents.

The results of the research question regarding professional development has specific implications for universities that are involved in the education of superintendents. Women superintendents reported that school finance and curriculum were the two areas of their development that should have been more extensive. It is therefore recommended that superintendents be provided more extensive training in these areas.

The results of the research question regarding perceived discrimination indicates that the majority of women superintendents in Texas perceived no discrimination when applying for the superintendency. It is therefore recommended that universities that train public school administrators be aware of this research finding and encourage women to continue to seek the superintendency.

The results of this study indicate that women superintendents perceive the position of teacher as the most beneficial experience prior to the superintendency. It is recommended that the state of Texas continue to require

teaching experience as a prerequisite for administrator's certification.

The results of this study indicate that the majority of school board members are satisfied with a women serving as their superintendent. Women superintendents received high marks in the areas of finance, curriculum, business, personnel, public relations, school law, and building programs. It is therefore recommended that school board members, as well as educational consultants, be made aware of this finding.

It is recommended that this study be replicated in five to ten years to determine changing patterns.

It is recommended that universities which train public school administrators make women aware that the majority of women currently serving as superintendent were employed from within the district and were promoted from the position of principal.

Recommendations for Further Research

The following recommendations for further research are made based on the findings and conclusions of the study.

1. The study should be replicated nationally to confirm the findings and conclusions of the present study.
2. A study should be conducted involving the success levels of male superintendents and a comparison should be drawn between male and female superintendents.

3. A study should be conducted involving women in mid-management positions to determine the percentage who perceive discrimination when applying for superintendencies.

4. A study should be conducted involving public school administrators at all levels pertaining to their perceptions regarding their professional development.

APPENDIX A
WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS' SUCCESS LEVELS SURVEY

Women Superintendents' Success Levels Survey

Sex: Male_____ Female_____

Highest level of education:

High School Graduation_____

Bachelor's Degree _____

Master's Degree _____

Doctorate Degree _____

Other _____

Number of years as a school board member_____

Please circle the response that best fits your perception:

Strongly Agree	SA
Agree	A
Undecided	U
Disagree	D
Strongly Disagree	SD

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. Women are capable of being superintendent of school. | SA A U D SD |
| 2. Women superintendents are knowledgeable of school finance. | SA A U D SD |
| 3. Women superintendents are competent in curriculum matters. | SA A U D SD |
| 4. Women superintendents are strong in business matters. | SA A U D SD |
| 5. Women superintendents are knowledgeable of school law. | SA A U D SD |
| 6. Women superintendents are strong in the area of personnel administration. | SA A U D SD |
| 7. Women superintendents are knowledgeable of building operations and maintenance. | SA A U D SD |
| 8. Women superintendents are competent leaders. | SA A U D SD |
| 9. Women superintendents are competent in the area of public relations. | SA A U D SD |

10. Women superintendents are knowledgeable of bonds and building programs. SA A U D SD

11. Women are discriminated against when applying for superintendencies. SA A U D SD

How would you rate your superintendent?

1. Excellent
2. Good
3. Average
4. Below Average
5. Poor

Please prioritize, highest to lowest (1-10) the strengths of your superintendent.

_____	Finance
_____	Curriculum
_____	Law
_____	Bond and Building Programs
_____	Personnel
_____	Building Operation
_____	Maintenance
_____	Leadership
_____	Management
_____	Public relations

What criteria was used in the decision to employ a woman as superintendent of schools?

_____	Best qualified candidate
_____	Knowledge of business
_____	Knowledge of finance
_____	Knowledge of curriculum
_____	Next in line
_____	Other

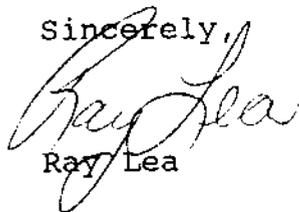
1223 Stuart
Denton, Texas 76201
November 1, 1988

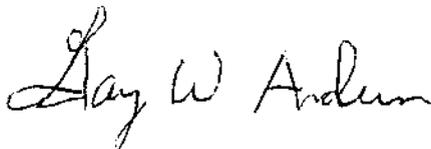
Dear School Board Member:

I am a doctoral student at the University of North Texas in Denton, and the enclosed questionnaire is part of a dissertation being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Gary Anderson. The subject of my dissertation is Career Paths and Perceived Success Levels of Women Superintendents in the State of Texas. Each school board member in public school districts with women currently serving as superintendent will be asked to respond to the Women Superintendents' Success Level Survey questionnaire. All responses will be confidential and anonymous. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and there will be no penalty for non-participation.

If you are interested, I would be more than happy to share the findings of this study with you. Your cooperation in returning this questionnaire will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,


Ray Lea


Dr. Gary Anderson

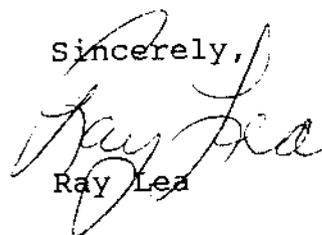
1223 Stuart Dr.
Denton, TX 76201
November 12, 1988

Dear School Board Member:

There is a small but rapidly growing number of women superintendents in the state of Texas. It is important to find out how successfully these women are carrying out the mission of their schools. In order for this study to be meaningful, we need a large percentage of board members to respond by taking a few minutes to fill out the attached questionnaire.

You can be assured that all responses will be kept completely confidential and anonymous. If you have already responded, please disregard this followup. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Ray Lea

P.S. If you are interested, I would be more than happy to mail you the results of this study. Please request the results and give me a mailing address.

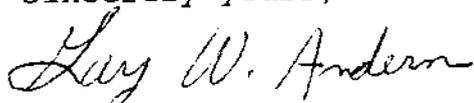
November 26, 1988

Dear School Board Member:

One of my doctoral students, Ray Lea, is conducting an important study of the career paths and success levels of women superintendents in the state of Texas. Since there is such a small number of women currently serving in this position, it is imperative that we receive your input.

I would deeply appreciate your taking a few minutes to complete his questionnaire. We are hopeful that his study will provide greater insight into how we might improve administrator preparation and assessment programs for women. Please disregard this followup if you have already responded to the survey.

Sincerely yours,



Gary Anderson
Professor of Educational
Administration and Supervision

APPENDIX B
CAREER PATH SURVEY

CAREER PATH SURVEY

Highest level of education: _____ Master's degree
 _____ Doctorate

Current age: _____ 25-29 _____ 30-34 _____ 35-39
 _____ 40-44 _____ 45-49 _____ 49-54
 _____ 55-59 _____ 60-64 _____ over 65

Age upon attaining first superintendency: _____

Prior Employment (complete below)

1. Please list all education and non-educational position. Include military and business experience.
2. Please include teaching and administrative experience.
3. Please be very specific as to grade levels and subject areas. (Examples: High School Biology Teacher, Middle School Principal, Director of Elementary Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Finance, etc.).
4. If there are gaps in employment history for reasons such as returning to school full-time, please note this.
5. Please list most recent position first.

POSITION	DISTRICT OR ORGANIZATION	DISTRICT ENROLLMENT AT TIME OF EMPLOYMENT	DATES
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Please prioritize, highest to lowest (1-7), the positions that you feel provide the most important experience for a superintendent prior to assuming the superintendency.

- Teacher
- Assistant Principal
- Principal
- Supervisor or Consultant
- Director
- Assistant Superintendent
- Other (specify) _____

From the above areas, please list the three positions that you feel provide the most important experience. Please be as specific as possible concerning grade level, subject area, administrative area.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Please prioritize, highest to lowest (1-10), the importance of the following areas of professional development (university coursework or inservice) prior to assuming the superintendency. Please place a check mark next to any areas in which you would like your professional development to have been more extensive.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> Building operation or maintenance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership or management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Law | <input type="checkbox"/> Educational theory |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bond or building program | <input type="checkbox"/> Community or public relations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____ | |

Did you perceive any difficulties unique to your sex in attaining the superintendency? Explain.

1223 Stuart
Denton, Texas 76249
November 15, 1988

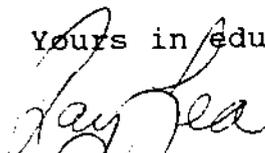
Dear Superintendent:

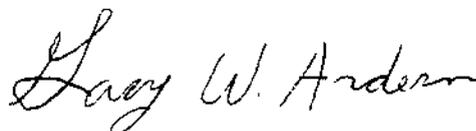
The enclosed questionnaire entitled Career Path Survey is part of doctoral dissertation being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Gary Anderson at the University of North Texas. The title of this dissertation is "The Career Paths and Perceived Success Levels of Women Superintendents in the State of Texas." All women currently serving as superintendent of public schools will be asked to respond. All responses will be confidential and anonymous. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and there will be no penalty for non-participation.

In addition, each school board member will be asked to respond to the Women Superintendents' Success Levels Survey. Would you please see that each board member receives a copy of this questionnaire.

You may receive the results of this study if you are interested. Please request the results and provide an address. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Yours in education,


Ray Lea


Dr. Gary Anderson

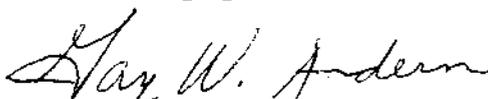
November 26, 1988

Dear School Board Member:

One of my doctoral students, Ray Lea, is conducting an important study of the career paths and success levels of women superintendents in the state of Texas. Since there is such a small number of women currently serving in this position, it is imperative that we receive your input.

I would deeply appreciate your taking a few minutes to complete his questionnaire. We are hopeful that his study will provide greater insight into how we might improve administrator preparation and assessment programs for women. Please disregard this followup if you have already responded to the survey.

Sincerely yours,



Gary Anderson
Professor of Educational
Administration and Supervision

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