HISPANIC WOMEN LEADERS IN K–12 PUBLIC EDUCATION:

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

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Scholarly research has been written on the forces behind the barriers preventing Hispanic women from reaching the top of the public school ladder. These barriers are to be recognized and addressed. This study focuses not on the barriers which hinder forward and upward career movement, but instead examines how many Hispanic American women have not allowed these barriers to prevent them from achieving their goals of attaining the principalship. This study seeks to determine how Hispanic women principals came to grips with the challenges and barriers to promotion, and to success as K–12 school leaders.

This qualitative research study consisted of 12 Hispanic female school principals from the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area. The three districts selected were Fort Worth Independent School District, Arlington Independent School District, and Grand Prairie Independent School District. Three principals were from Grand Prairie Independent School District, two principals were from Arlington Independent School District, and seven principals were from the Fort Worth Independent School District. All of the 12 Hispanic school principals were interviewed.

From the responses to each of the questions, themes became evident. The themes expressed what individual principals had done and the strategies they used to overcome the varied barriers which they confronted. The responses to the interview questions and the themes were very insightful and displayed the women's tenacity, courage, perseverance, and determination to succeed in their aspirations to become Hispanic female principals and leaders in their school districts.

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And lastly, I thank God. I could not have made it through the doctoral program without Him. How true. How true.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Scholarly research has been conducted on the forces behind the barriers which prevent Hispanic women from reaching the top of the public school ladder. These studies underline the importance of recognizing and addressing the barriers. Among the barriers which have been cited are a lack of family support, role models, mentors, and networking; the presence of an androcentric school organization, school boards, and the "good old boys" networks; women's lack of education, administrative preparation, and socialization; and language, gender, and racial and ethnic differences. Instead of focusing on these barriers, which hinder forward and upward career movement, this qualitative study concentrates on the fact that many Hispanic women have not allowed these barriers to box them in or shut them out of achieving their goals of attaining the principalship at all levels, elementary, middle, and high school. This study proposes to examine the means by which successful Hispanic women principals overcame these institutional, racial and ethnic, language, and cultural barriers to achieve career success.

This chapter discusss the background of the study, beginning with a discussion of changes in demographics and introduce the problem statement and research questions that serve as the framework for carrying out the research. Next, the chapter presents the significance of this study and summarizes the methodology used and the limitations encountered.

Background of the Study

As leaders of their schools, principals place themselves in positions to inspire students to strive for an education so they can improve and better their lives. With the growing Hispanic student population in the nation and in the state of Texas, the need to increase the numbers of successful Hispanic women principals becomes greater.

It is vital that Hispanic students attain an education and are provided guidance and counseling toward college and university enrollment. The implications for which are an increase in the number of Hispanic high school graduates, college graduates, teachers, and principals. Results such as these affect the social and economic well-being of both individual students

and their families, for the present and future. Additionally, these results will carry over to the educational and economic well-being of each state and the nation as a whole.

The Hispanic population of the United States has increased considerably in recent years. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (USCB, 2008b), from 1990 to 2000, the U.S. Hispanic population grew from 22.4 million to 35.3 million people, reflecting a 58% increase of this population in the United States. Figure 1 shows the statistics of this growth, plus this population's projected growth through 2010.
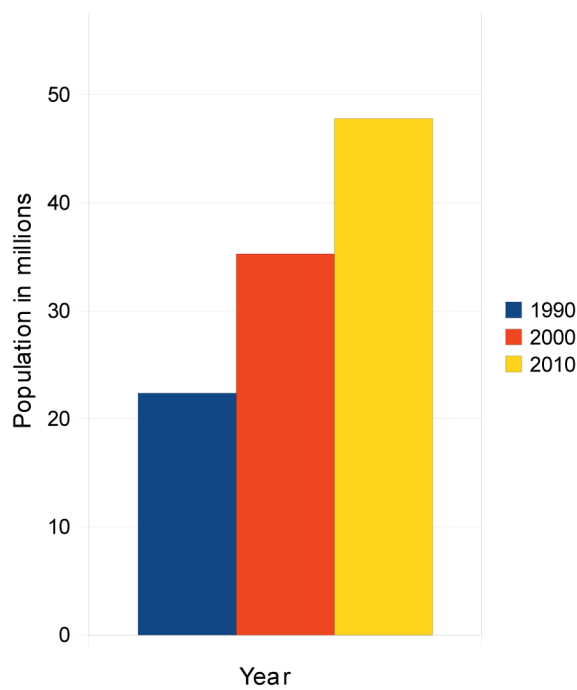
Figure 1. Hispanic population growth in the U.S., in millions. Adapted from U.S. Census Bureau report released February 2008 (USCB, 2008b).

In their report entitled, *Hispanics: A People in Motion*, the Pew Hispanic Center (2005) researchers described the general distribution of Hispanic students in public schools. They did this by grouping people within the regions of the country and the categories of states and also by grouping people by their generational description. First generation students are those whose parents were both born in a foreign country. Second generation Hispanic students are

those who have one parent born in a foreign country. Third generation and higher are Hispanic students who, along with both their parents, were born in this country.

The distribution of public school students reflects the large growth and spread of the Hispanic population across the nation. The Pew Hispanic Center reports that the Hispanic population, rather than being localized into one or two areas or regions, instead resides in many parts of the United States. The Pew Hispanic Center assigns states with Hispanic populations into categories. States which historically have had large Hispanic populations are referred to as established states, and include Texas, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey.

There are newer states where Hispanic populations have increased, and these states are referred to by the Pew Hispanic Center as new Hispanic states. These states are Florida, North Carolina, Nevada, Oregon, Georgia, Virginia, Massachusetts, and Washington. A third category of states is grouped as emerging states, and consists of Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, and Wisconsin.

The last category consists of states that do not have a significant number of Hispanic students. This category of states is referred to as nonmagnet. These states are Alaska, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Massachusetts, North Dakota, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

The number of Hispanic people in the United States continues to grow. This growth is also reflected in school enrollment. Table 1 presents the statistics indicating the growth in Hispanic enrollment at public schools in the United States. As a response to this population growth of Hispanic students, more Hispanic principals, in particular women principals, need to be hired. In particular, women principals are necessary because they can be more nurturing and caring. Additionally, Hispanic women principals can especially identify with teenage girls, because they can relate to them in regard to their own parental upbringing; and they are well familiar with these parents' values, and the often protective nature that Hispanic parents feel

toward their daughters. With the increase in the Hispanic student population comes an increase in the number of students with limited English speaking ability, indicating a need for principals and teachers who speak Spanish.

Table 1

U.S. Public School Enrollment, 1990–2008 (Numbers in thousands)

	1990	2000	2008	Change, 1990–2008	% Change, 1990–2008
Total Student Enrollment	41,862	46,981	48,136	6,274	15.0
Non-Hispanic Students	36,966	39,186	37,710	744	2.0
Hispanic Students	4,896	7,795	10,426	5,530	112.9
% Hispanic	11.7	16.6	21.7		

Note. Adapted from Table A–4-1, "Number and percentage distribution of the race/ethnicity of public school students enrolled in K–12 October 1988 through October 2008" from *The Condition of Education 2010* report by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2010), retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/2010/section1/table-1er-1.asp

The Pew Hispanic Center researchers also describe the English language abilities of Hispanic students, and these data are displayed in Figure 2 (Fry & Gonzales, 2008). They noted that seven out of 10 students speak a language other than English at home. As the Hispanic student population progresses from first to second and third-plus generations, Spanish spoken in the home decreases. Of the nearly 6.9 million Hispanic students in the nation, the Pew Hispanic Center finds that approximately 1.8 million have difficulty speaking English. With 7 out of 10 students speaking a language other than English, the inherent lack of English language dominance and resulting inability to understand and communicate with peers, teachers, and school administrators affect the successful educational outcomes of Hispanic students. These data are displayed in Figure 2.

Speaks English with difficulty

Linguistically isolated

All Hispanics — 18 / 22

Hispanics by generation

First generation — 44 / 46

Second generation — 20 / 28

Third and higher generation — 5 / 3
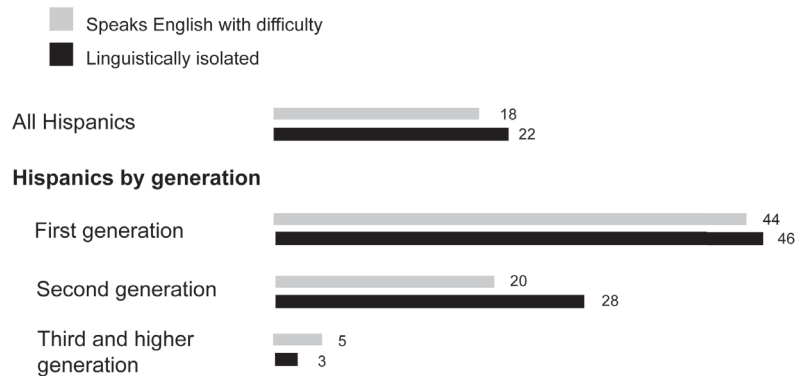
Figure 2. English language abilities of Hispanic students, by generation (%). A student is defined as speaking English with difficulty if the student speaks a language other than English at home and speaks English less than "very well." Adapted from the Pew Hispanic Center tabulations of the 2006 ACS (IPUMS 1% sample) (Fry & Gonzales, 2008).

Hispanic students deal with issues of language, ethnicity, culture, and poverty. There is a great need to provide these students with role models and mentors with whom they can identify. Providing these students with Hispanic role models and mentors in the form of teachers, principals, and other administrative leaders who have an understanding of the Hispanic culture and language can fulfill this requirement.

Another essential part of the education process is the involvement of parents. By increasing the number of Hispanic teachers and principals who speak the parents' language and understand the Hispanic culture, the school will be in a better position to make the parents an integral partner in their children's education. Speaking a language other than English should not be a deterrent for parental involvement in a child's education. The school environment should be a place where parents are able to communicate in their native language with teachers and principals. Through school–parental partnership, parents can know what the school expects their child to be learning and accomplishing. A partnership with Hispanic parents needs to be created as with any other parent who has a child enrolled in school.

The information presented to this point shows the extensive population growth of Hispanics and Hispanic students in this country. However, statistics show that the same growth is not reflected in Hispanic principals. The data in Table 2 show the distribution of Hispanic

principals and students in U.S. public schools. In the Schools and Staffing Survey from the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics for 2003–2004 (NCES, 2004) for all public schools, 5.3% of the principals were Hispanic. This report also noted that 17.6% of students in all public schools were Hispanic. From the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics and Staffing Survey (SASS) Public School Principal Questionnaire and Private School Principal Questionnaire 1993–1994, 1999–2000, and 2003–2004, the Digest of Education Statistics cited that in 1993–1994, there were 3,270 Hispanic principals. Ten years later, in 2003–2004, there were 4,680 Hispanic principals. The statistics indicate that there is a shortage of Hispanic principals in comparison to the surging number of Hispanic students, as presented in Table 2 (NCES, 2004). Hence there is a dire need for more Hispanic principals to meet and address the unique needs of this Hispanic student population, both immigrant and native-born.

Table 2

Hispanic Principals and Hispanic Students in U.S. Public Schools

	2003-2004	2007-2008	
Hispanic principals	5.30%	6.40%	
Hispanic Students	17.60%	20.90%	

	1993-1994	2003-2004	2007-2008	% Change
Hispanic principals	3270	4680	5790	77.10%
Hispanic Students	5314	8952	10154	91.10%

Note. Adapted from SASS "Table 27: Percentage distribution of school principals by race/ethnicity, percentage minority, school type, and selected school characteristics: 2003–2004" (NCES, 2004), and *The Condition of Education 2010* report by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2010).

Statistics for the Hispanic student population and principal count for the state of Texas, as in Table 3, also illustrate this discrepancy between the number of students enrolled and the number of principals of like race. As the Hispanic population in Texas has increased dramatically, the student population has also increased; however, the number of Hispanic principals in elementary, middle, and high schools in Texas has not reflected this change. Table 3 also

compares the number of Hispanic public school principals in Texas as reported by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), with the number of Hispanic public school principals nationwide.

Table 3

Ethnic Student and Principal Population in Texas Public Schools, U.S. Principals

Texas Principals			Texas Students		U.S. Principals (%)
Ethnicity	2009–2010	%	2008–2009	%	2007–2008
African American	887	11.2	671,871	14.1	10.6
Hispanic	1,637	20.8	2,275,098	47.9	6.5
White	5,363	68.0	1,616,115	34.0	80.9

Note. Adapted from TEA "Enrollment in Texas Public Schools 2008–2009" (TEA, 2009), TEA (2010), and *The Condition of Education 2010* report by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2010).

Espinoza-Herold (2003) conducted an open-ended questionnaire in order to research Hispanic issues as they affect students. The questionnaire was given to teachers and administrators. One of the questions was: What qualities/kinds of person are needed to address these issues? The prevailing response suggested that there was a need for more Hispanic teachers and administrators to serve as role models and mentors for the students. Another response implied that students would be able to relate to teachers and administrators who looked like them and could understand their language and their culture.

The Hispanic student population in Texas during the 2008–2009 school year was approximately 47.9% of the total student population. The number of Hispanic principals, male and female, represented only 20.8%. The breakdown of male and female principals versus the student populations for the state of Texas is displayed in Table 4.

Increasing the number of Hispanic principals, and female principals especially, in response to the number of Hispanic students, is crucial. Table 4 shows that only 13.2% of Texas principals are Hispanic females. Principals of Hispanic heritage can understand the culture and background of the students and their families, conquer any language barriers that might still exist with parents, and function as both role models and mentors for the Hispanic student

body. While these relationships may be integral to the complete education of Hispanic students, the Hispanic females may face barriers and setbacks in trying to obtain these important administrative positions.

Table 4

Gender of Principals, and Student Population, by Ethnicity, Texas

ethnicity	gender	gender of principals 2009-2010	%	student ethnic population 2008-2009	%
Hispanic	F	1,048	13.2		
Hispanic	M	589	7.4	2,275,098	47.9
African American	F	596	7.5		
African American	M	291	3.7	671,871	14.1
Asian	F	23	0.3		
Asian	M	10	0.1	169,774	3.6
Native American	F	19	0.2		
Native American	M	18	0.2	16,713	0.4
White	F	3,086	38.8		
White	M	2,277	28.6	1,616,115	34.0

Note. Adapted from "Enrollment in Texas Public Schools 2008–2009" (TEA, 2009) and TEA (2010).

Before looking into how some Hispanic women achieved success in obtaining administrative leadership positions, there exists a need to understand how the barriers have come about, and in many instances how the barriers continue to present difficulties for Hispanic women in their pursuit of administrative recognition and promotion.

Problem Statement

The purpose of this study is to determine how Hispanic female school leaders overcame the barriers to their success and to gain insight into the lessons and strategies aspiring Hispanic female school leaders can learn from the experiences of these successful women. This study examined the following specific research questions:

1. What factors have contributed to the success of Hispanic female school leaders?

2. What institutional challenges did Hispanic female school leaders encounter?

3. What family challenges did Hispanic female school leaders encounter?

4. What personal challenges did Hispanic female school leaders encounter?

5. What strategies did Hispanic female school leaders employ to overcome the various barriers to success?

6. What advice do Hispanic female school leaders have for Hispanic females aspiring to leadership positions in K–12 schools?

Professional Significance of the Study

Very little has been written addressing the myriad of challenges and barriers that Hispanic women have had to overcome in obtaining the administrative position of principal at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. In studying the successes of Hispanic women reaching their goal to be principals, other Hispanic women, and women as a group, can benefit by knowing how these women, as minorities, overcame and continue to overcome barriers to becoming successful administrators.

Overview of Methodology

This phenomenological study was limited to information obtained from one-hour recorded personal interviews with 12 Hispanic female elementary, middle, and high school principals currently serving in public K–12 schools in school districts within the Dallas/Fort Worth area. I identified participants for the study by searching the Web sites of neighboring school districts between Fort Worth and Dallas and from Fort Worth south to Alvarado to see if there were other school districts with Hispanic female principals and there were not. Information was also sought from the Texas Education Agency.

Three school districts, Arlington Independent School District, Grand Prairie Independent School District, and Fort Worth Independent School District had a sufficient number of Hispanic females for this study. Of the total number of Hispanic female principals in these three school districts, a minimum of 25% or until redundancy was reached, were interviewed. "Patton suggests that the ideal sampling is to keep selecting cases until one reaches the point of

redundancy, that is, until no new information is forthcoming" (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003, p. 181). In Arlington Independent School District there were three Hispanic female principals and all three were interviewed. In Grand Prairie there were two Hispanic female principals and both were interviewed. In Fort Worth Independent School District there were 22 Hispanic female school principals and 7 were interviewed.

Permission to conduct the study was sought and obtained from assigned central administration personnel of each of the school districts. Contact was made by email to each principal seeking her participation in the research study. Once permission was granted, an invitation letter (Appendix A) and an informed consent form (Appendix C) were sent to each of the Hispanic female principals. This researcher acted as the primary researcher to collect data through open-ended interview questions (Appendix B). Each interview was recorded and transcribed. Throughout the entire research process, efforts were made to protect the anonymity of the participants and their school districts. Names of the participants were replaced with codes. Moreover, the transcripts were carefully handled and kept under lock and key with the researcher's university. Further in-depth information in the use of the interviews is discussed in Chapter 3.

The methodology used for this study was phenomenology, which is the study of the world as it appears to individuals when they place themselves in a state of consciousness that reflects an effort to be free of everyday biases and beliefs. As such, phenomenology shares the goal of other qualitative research traditions to understand how individuals construct, and are constructed by, social reality (Gall et al., 2003).

Delimitations or Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to information contained in the success stories of 12 elementary, middle, and high school Hispanic female principals serving within three schools located in the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area. The focus was on their lived experiences and the strategies each utilized to obtain and maintain their professional roles successfully. The limitations of the study come from having an interview pool of only 12 Hispanic female principals. Only the

principals who agreed to participate were selected to be interviewed. In Arlington ISD, there were only three Hispanic female principals and all three agreed to be interviewed. In Grand Prairie ISD there were only two Hispanic female principals and both agreed to be interviewed. In Fort Worth ISD there were 22 Hispanic female principals and 7 agreed to be interviewed. Because the sample is small, the findings cannot be generalized to all Hispanic females serving in these roles. This interview pool was compiled from the respondents list of principals from three school districts in the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area, that of Fort Worth ISD, Arlington ISD, and Grand Prairie ISD.

Summary

Studies and census records show that the Hispanic population has been on the rise in the United States, increasing by more than half between 1990–2000 alone (USCB, 2008b). This in turn is leading to greater Hispanic student populations throughout the United States and in Texas, as reported by the National Center for Educational Statistics (2010). Because school principals are looked upon as leaders of their schools and because there is also a need for them to serve as mentors and role models for their students, the necessary response to the Hispanic's growth in population is to increase the numbers of successful Hispanic women principals.

The needs of Hispanic students are varied as these students must face issues of language, ethnicity, culture, and poverty. Providing these students with Hispanic role models and mentors who understand and are personally familiar with the Hispanic culture and language can alleviate the disparity brought about by these issues and may help these students attain a more satisfactory education with better opportunities.

The literature review for this study revealed that very little research has been done in regard to the barriers Hispanic women have overcome in their career aspirations for the principalship at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. This research proposes to learn the means and strategies employed by successful Hispanic women in overcoming the obstacles and challenges that have prevented so many other Hispanic women from obtaining the same

administrative goal. This research seeks to impart the means these successful Hispanic principals used to overcome the barriers to success.

Definition of Terms

- Barriers as defined by Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (June 15, 2010), is something immaterial that impedes or separates.

- Distant role model is defined my Mendez-Morse (2004) as someone who the participants knew of but with whom they did not interact directly.

- Emerging Hispanic states as defined by the Pew Hispanic Center, are those that have had growth of greater than 200% among Hispanics but had a population increase of less than 200,000 Hispanics.

- Established Hispanic states as defined by the Pew Hispanic Center, are those that have had growth of less than 200% among Hispanics but had a population increase of more than 200,000 Hispanics from 1980 to 2000.

- First generation students as defined by the Pew Hispanic Center, were born outside the United States, its territories, or possessions. These can include naturalized U.S. citizens, legal residents, or undocumented immigrants. This is also referred to as "foreign born" and "immigrants."

- Hispanic is defined by Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (2010) as being of or pertaining to Spain or Spanish-speaking countries.

- Latina as defined by Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (June 15, 2010), is the feminine form of Latino, thus referring to a woman or girl.

- Latino as defined by Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (June 15, 2010), is a shortened form of Latino Americano, Latin American. The term refers to a (male) native or inhabitant of Latin America, or to a person (male) of Latin-American origin living in the United States.

- Mentor is defined by Mendez-Morse (2004) as someone who actively helps, supports, or teaches someone else how to do a job so she will succeed.

- New Hispanic states as defined by the Pew Hispanic Center, are those that have had growth of more than 200% among Hispanics and an increase of 200,000 or more Hispanic residents over 1980–2000.

- Nonmagnet Hispanic states as defined by the Pew Hispanic Center, have had a growth of less than 200% and less than 200,000 or more Hispanic residents over 1980–2000.

- Phenomenology as defined by Gall, Gall, & Borg's *Educational Research: An Introduction* (2003), is the study of the world as it appears to individuals when they place themselves in a state of consciousness that reflects an effort to be free of everyday biases and beliefs. As such, phenomenology shares the goal of other qualitative research traditions to understand how individuals construct, and are constructed by, social reality.

    Phenomenological researchers generally conduct at least one long interview with each participant in order to obtain a comprehensive description of their experience of the phenomenon being studied. The interview process is relatively unstructured, but focused on eliciting all aspects of the experience.

- Role model is defined by Mendez-Morse (2004) as someone whose characteristics or traits another person would want to emulate.

- Second generation students as defined by the Pew Hispanic Center, are born in the United States with at least one foreign-born parent; U.S. citizens by birth; included in "native-born" students.

- Third and higher generation students as defined by the Pew Hispanic Center, are born in the United States with both parents also born in the United States; U.S. citizens by birth; included in "native-born" students.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Chapter 2 consists of a review of literature that serves as a foundation for this study. Since the body of literature on Hispanic female school leaders is limited, this literature review also includes a more general approach to women's advancement to upper level management positions in government, politics, and business. The first section focuses on the glass ceiling in the workplace throughout government, political, and corporate jobs and women's efforts to break through. The second section specifically identifies the challenges of women in pre-K through 12 school administrative positions including the principalship and the superintendency. The third and final section addresses the strategies these women used to overcome the barriers they faced in the advancement of their careers.

Historical Barriers to Women's Success

The phenomenon known as the glass ceiling is generally used in reference to women seeking advancement into higher level executive positions in areas such as government, politics, and business. The first reference to the connotation of glass ceiling appeared in 1986, the *Wall Street Journal*'s Corporate Woman column. The column referred to an invisible barrier keeping women from attaining the top executive positions in business. Using that article as a springboard, the Department of Labor then began to look at its own practices and gave the following definition for the term:

> The glass ceiling is defined by the Department of Labor as those artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevent qualified minority men, and women of all races from advancing in their organization into executive level positions. These artificial barriers may exist in the selection criteria used for hiring, or in the selection criteria used for advancement and professional development opportunities, or be unspoken in the culture of the corporation. (U.S. Department of Labor [USDL], 1997, p. 4)

In 1987, the Department of Labor published the report entitled *Workforce, 2000*, which illustrated the fact that minority men and women of all races were being sparsely represented in executive positions. The reference of glass ceiling as a governmental perspective for looking

at discrimination in the workplace came from this report. Thus the glass ceiling came to be a description of artificial and attitudinal barriers for men and women of all races (USDL, 1997). The barriers discovered centered on "Inadequate recruitment practices…, lack of opportunity to contribute and participate in corporate development experiences…, and general lack of corporate ownership of equal employment opportunity principle" (p. 9).

The Glass Ceiling Commission of 1991 supported the premise that a glass ceiling did exist. This commission reported that the number of minority men and women of all races in top level positions reflected a disparity in comparison to the number of minority men and all women in the workforce at that time (USDL, 1997). The description of this situation in the corporate world came to be recognized as the "glass ceiling."

Reid, Miller, and Kerr (2004) found that women were underrepresented in the upper echelons of state distributive and regulatory agencies and in salary earned. They surmised from their research that the barriers for women in state-level public agencies derived from institutions that have bureaucratic practices tied to its organizational mission and to those individuals who already hold the higher level positions.

In Reid et al.'s (2004) study, salary data were used to determine the extent of a glass ceiling as a means for ranking administrative levels and professional positions held by women in distributive, regulatory, and redistributive state agencies. The researchers found that only in the redistributive agencies were women better represented. Redistributive agencies concern themselves with such areas as public welfare programs, mental health and retardation programs, programs for the aged, and operation of homes for the needy and disabled. The researchers concluded that discrimination continues to exist toward women and ethnic minorities. They also found that the cronyism, or the "good old boys" network, was still strongly present in many state agencies, thus hampering women in their attainment of positions at the highest levels within state agencies (Reid et al., 2004).

Another area in which women face the glass ceiling is politics. There are few elected women in Congress. Women have found that they have far greater chances for success in the

competitions for the open seats in their districts, which often times are created through death, retirement, or some unforeseen event (Palmer & Simon, 2001).

In corporate America, women are also coming up against the glass ceiling and the glass wall. In their study, Morrison, White, Van Velsor, and the Center for Creative Leadership stated that when a woman is successful enough to break the glass ceiling, she finds that there is another barrier, the glass wall (Morrison et al., 1992). The glass wall is made up of corporate traditions and the accompanying stereotypes associated with women. They also determined three levels of pressure which women face in their ascent up to general management positions and, if fortunate enough to allow them, executive positions within the corporation. These three levels of pressure are first, learning how to manage the job; second, the significance of themselves as women and for other women in their pursuit to attain an upper level management or executive position; and third, personal management of their own marriage and family (1992).

To determine whether women were rising to the top in corporate America, Swiss (1996) surveyed 325 working women nationwide. She learned that there still existed a salary gap between women and men. Men continued to be compensated substantially more than women with the same amount of experience and roles in the company. On average, women earned 28% less than their male counterparts. As women age, the pay disparity was found to increase. Approximately 60% of the women surveyed believed that gender made a difference in who was to receive the special assignments. Swiss also found that the individuals who were mentored at the lower levels were also racial or gender reflections of those at the upper levels of management.

Clark, Cafarella, and Ingram (1999) conducted a qualitative study on 103 women in mid-management positions and the inherent boundaries of the glass ceiling. The study centered on viewing three areas: career progression, work and personal lives, and the role of gender. Unexpectedly, the researchers found that most of the women in the study had been able to follow a linear progression rather than nonlinear. Those who followed the linear model were

either single or had supportive husbands. The women in the study found it a challenge to maintain equilibrium between their work life and their personal lives. The women expressed that they felt the need to work harder and work longer hours than their male counterparts. The women spoke of incidents in which their gender was a source of discrimination. Overall, the women did not feel gender had been an obstacle in their career advancement, even though several had encountered gender discrimination in the workplace.

Women continue to encounter the glass ceiling and also glass walls in many of today's workplaces (Clark et al., 1999; Morrison et al., 1987; Palmer & Simon, 2001; Reid et al., 2004; Swiss, 1996). As Meyerson and Fletcher (2000) have stated, elements of discrimination toward women have not gone away. They contend that it is organizational structures that hinder women from moving ahead. According to Meyerson and Fletcher, it is not limited to glass ceilings and glass walls, but to everything that is inherent within an organization's structure. Before equality for women can become a reality, these inherent barriers will need to be addressed.

In research by Dana and Bourisaw (2006) for women to break though society's established norms, values, and culture, for women there exists a form of deception for attaining equity in opportunities in their organization and worksites. Regardless of the laws and incentives promoted by the Department of Labor for equality for women of all races and minority men, many workplaces retain their barriers. This is seen in promotions and pay disparity. Much of the discrimination women experience is a product of embedded workplace traditions, culture, and promotion of individuals whose likeness resembles those at the upper managerial and executive levels, who most often are white males.

Public school administration is another workplace where the glass ceiling is in place. The next section examines studies that look specifically at women who are principals and superintendents for K through 12 schools. These studies endeavor both to identify the specific obstacles that women in these positions face and the determining factors for their existence.

Professional and Personal Challenges of Women in School Leadership

As noted within business, politics, and government workplaces, the reluctance for hiring women is also prevalent in school administration. Women in school leadership face professional and personal challenges in obtaining and maintaining their positions. Byrd's dissertation (1999) investigated the obstacles which were faced by African American, Hispanic, and Anglo women. A survey which included a part for narrative responses was sent to 260 female administrators. Responses were received from 104 elementary principals, 14 middle school principals, 15 directors, three high school principals, 3 assistant superintendents, 1 deputy superintendent, and 16 non-school site administrators. The number of respondents was closely proportioned in number of African American, Hispanic, and Anglo women.

Some of the obstacles which African American administrators identified were a lack of networking and being left out of social structures. The barriers that Hispanic women administrators encountered dealt with balancing career and family life; many of the Hispanic women administrators had postponed their careers in lieu of family responsibilities. The Anglo women administrators encountered barriers that differed from the other minority groups in that they related to relationships with individuals in positions of making higher level decisions (Byrd, 1999).

Professional Networking

An obstacle identified previously in this section by Jacobs (2002) and in Byrd's (1999) study is the lack of an informal social group, in which female administrators can come together to share their feelings and their concerns. When such networking is unavailable, as we see within these studies, it can lead to women's feelings of exclusion and estrangement in their work environment. Not only are women expected to forge ahead in spite of these challenges, but they are also expected to do so without the benefits of established social supports, such as mentoring, role modeling, and networking. The lack of such networking can lead to women's feelings of exclusion and estrangement in their work environment.

Jacobs (2002) studied female principals and found that in a particular school district, the male superintendent had informal social groups open to all principals both male and female, but which, by their nature, leaned toward male interests. Thus the women felt excluded, even if they were allowed to participate. While the superintendent's informal social group settings provided the male principals with an avenue for sharing, the females' needs were overlooked. As a result, the women principals formed their own informal network group in which they were able to share whatever problems and concerns they had.

The female principals in Jacobs's (2002) study chose not to confront their feelings of exclusion with the superintendent and their fellow male principals. They chose not to confront the issue which could possibly lead to further exclusion and estrangement from their peers.

Low Representation

Gardiner, Enomoto, and Grogan (2000) contended that educational administration is androcentric. Shakeshaft (1999) found that even though females in large numbers are in the teaching profession and are enrolled in graduate programs of educational administration, they find career advancement into higher administrative positions difficult in public school systems. To determine the obstacles behind the low representation of women serving in administrative positions, Noel-Batiste (2009) surveyed 208 women who were members of the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals. With the large preponderance of women in education employed in the field of teaching, the expected number of women employed as principals and superintendents does not coincide: White males continue to have the hold on the administrative positions of principals and superintendents.

The responses of the participants in Noel-Batiste's study identified one of the barriers as lack of mobility to move where the administrative positions were. When the respondents replied to the survey question of whether the "good old boys" system was still in place, 80% of the respondents answered that they strongly agreed. When the respondents were asked whether career women were torn between family and work responsibilities, the response was closely divided; 48% of the women answered that they agreed, while 42% remained undecided.

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When asked about the most important career-related barrier, 30% responded with career advancement, and 27% responded with balancing family life with career (2009).

The female participants gave several primary reasons for the low number of administrators. These were the stereotyping of female and male roles, as well as the lack of female role models, female mentors, and opportunities to network (Noel-Batiste, 2009).

It is apparent from these studies that low representation among women in educational administrative roles is an unfortunate yet prevailing situation (Gardiner et al., 2000; Witmer, 2006). Further, it serves to present an atmosphere of exclusion and detachment for women who struggle to find their way past these challenges.

Gender and Racial Bias in the Workplace

Women's awareness and perception of race and gender issues affect the climate that exists in their career path. Though many women in leadership positions are often silent or in denial of racial and gender issues, these issues are real. Bloom and Erlandson (2003) conducted qualitative research to study the effects of race and gender on three African American principals, who were interviewed and observed at their schools. One of the principals experienced gender as more of an issue when working and directing male teachers. For the other two principals, gender was a problem, more so than race.

Balancing Family and Career

There are many factors, both individual and combined, that women must deal with when entering into educational administration. These obstacles typically consist of having to balance career with family life, to meet the strenuous time demands of the job, to overcome the feelings of exclusion, to contend with being seen as young and inexperienced, and to navigate the political climate.

Gardiner, Grogan, and Enomoto (1999) conducted interviews with 10 protégés and 6 mentors (14 women and 2 men) of various races from Washington State. Participants in the study voiced their challenges and struggles with their administrative positions, family life, and gender. One of the concerns was the difficulty of finding equilibrium between work and family

life. Several felt that they needed to prove themselves by working harder and longer hours. Women in the study expressed a desire to climb up the administrative ladder, but held back due to family considerations and their own personal needs. The women appreciated support from their spouses, particularly when their spouse would help with caring for the children and household chores.

Interested in noting the barriers to a woman's successful career in educational administration, Williamson and Hudson (2003) conducted a longitudinal study of 25 female students who went through a university master's in school administration program in North Carolina. The study was conducted through the use of interviews, surveys, reflective journals, and focus-group discussions, and it surveyed a breadth of participants, from students entering the administration program to those who had completed the program up to four years previously. The researchers attempted to determine some of the reasons why women decide, after desiring to pursue an administrative career in education and completing a master's program in school administration, to choose to leave it instead.

Some students within a short time of graduating from the program received administrative positions in the form of assistant principals, principals, or central office staff. In some cases participants had chosen to retire from their career in education without securing an administrative position, having decided instead to abandon their search. The participants shared with the researchers the different problems and challenges they encountered once they had achieved their goal or had experienced before leaving the profession. The challenges were uniquely individual and different. Many of the women chose not to have an administrative career because they found a profound challenge in developing a harmonious and workable equilibrium between the demands of their administrative work and their family life. Others found challenges in being outsiders in schools with long established faculties. Still others found challenges relating to age: at some schools, being young and seen as inexperienced on a campus worked as a disadvantage. For others the exorbitant amount of time demanded of the position

to do the job effectively had not been anticipated. Additionally, others had difficulty dealing with campus or district politics in its various forms (Williamson & Hudson, 2003).

Brunner and Peyton-Caire (2000) conducted a narrative study comparing an African American superintendent and an African American graduate student. The purpose of the study was to learn, through narrative data, authentic literary research from the responses of an African American superintendent to the questions asked by an African American graduate student with an interest in the superintendency. Three barriers were found that affect African American women. First, administrative programs are centered on the leadership of White males. Secondly, administrative programs and research tend to avoid issues such as gender, race, and ethnicity. Thirdly, there is insufficient research conducted on African American to guide leadership development.

Smulyan (2000) reported case studies about three elementary school principals. The case studies relate how three principals in their roles as school leaders searched to maintain a level of equilibrium from the administrative demands of both their school campus and central/district administration and their own individual lives away from the educational setting.

Each of the principals worked in school settings different from the others. Their personal backgrounds were different. How they administratively managed their schools were different. Each principal, at the time of the study, had been a principal at least five years. The author observed the principals in light of their personal lives, the community encompassing the parents and teachers, the institutions where authority resided, district policies governing principals and the ways in which these principals responded (Smulyan, 2000).

In the first case study, the principal was in a middle- to upper-middle–class white community. The principal was Africa American. Prior to being the principal, she had been a teacher at the school for 20 years. In applying for the position, being a woman and African American enhanced her opportunity. When serving as a principal, some parents and teachers expressed that she lacked strong authority, and other parents questioned her authority. Seeing

central administration as male dominated, she responded to their dictates within the confines of male governance while maintaining her woman's form of leadership.

She had not sought the position of principal, but others encouraged her to apply. She was aware of her attributes as a black female woman. Those were attributes which at the time the superintendent saw favorably in a public way. There were parents and teachers who questioned the superintendent's motives for being favorable to the hiring of a principal who was a teacher at the school, female, and African American. Over the years, she developed her administrative skills and used her attributes as an experienced teacher, female qualities of leadership, and positives of her racial cultural experiences in her role as principal.

The second case study was a principal of a private school, which was predominantly white and upper-middle class. This principal had not sought to become a principal, but was encouraged by her principal and the superintendent to apply when an administrative position became available. She began her teaching career at the age of 40 and taught for 14 years, then, at the age of 54, became a principal, even without having completed her administrative certification. Her ambition had been to be a doctor. Even though she did well on the medical school entrance exams, she was told by the medical school personnel that because she was a female she would be found wanting and would be dismissed in the first year of medical school. Gender made a difference in her career choices.

Her first administrative positions were in Illinois, and American overseas schools. Because of her effectiveness in running a school, she was recruited as an administrator for a private school in the United States. In her last assignment as principal of the lower school during her fourth year there, she encountered interpersonal problems with the new headmaster assigned to oversee both the lower and upper schools. Her leadership style and his were not complementary to one another. Her relationship with the new headmaster was not a harmonious one and there was much discord. During her evaluation, the headmaster had written that she should retire. By the end of her sixth year as principal of the lower school, she submitted her letter of resignation. She left with 14 years of teaching experience and 15 years

experience as an administrator in an international school, an American overseas school, and her last assignment in the United States.

The third case study centered on a principal in her eighth year at a public school. The school was in a lower-class working community. This school community differed from her own family background. She was from a middle-class suburban neighborhood. Her religion also differed as she was Jewish. In her early administrative years, her leadership style leaned toward authoritarianism. Her leadership style incorporated both male and female traits. Ridgeway (2006) describes traits commonly associated with men and women. The common stereotype given to men is that they are ambitious, skillful, and able. Women are stereotypically described as being effective communicators and caregivers. Even as a strong school leader, voicing for change and making tough decisions for the betterment of her teachers and students did not come easily in her encounters with an administrative male hierarchy. Over the years, she changed somewhat and became more democratic in her leadership style. Religion for her became an issue. She preferred less attention to be given to different religious celebrations during the month of December. She and the other female administrators played down issues with gender as much as possible, even participating in the male jokes at meetings at the women administrators' expense. Even when such comments were insensitive to women's gender, the women administrators attempted to overlook them.

At the outset, none of the three principals had career goals of becoming a principal. Each of them taught many years longer than men in general would before becoming a principal. The principals in the case studies sought out ways to work within the male-dominated central administrative structures. Two of the three in the public school settings were more successful in working with central administration, while the principal in the private school setting found it difficult to work with the new young male headmaster. She was told in her evaluation that he wanted her to retire within two years, and she relinquished her position at the end of her sixth year.

Enriquez-Damian (2009) wrote her qualitative dissertation as a narrative using Heuristic Inquiry to share the events and obstacles encountered by four Latina women, herself included, as they made their way toward leadership positions in education.

In her own narrative account she described the struggles she encountered since the time her parents divorced when she was around nine years old. Her father had been a significant person in her life, and from an early age, he had told her she was special. As a result of the divorce, she, her mother, and her three siblings traveled from Linares, Nuevo Leon, Mexico until they reached Reynosa, Tamaulipas. They took refuge with a club-footed beggar, whom her parents had once befriended. Her mother had her work at a small grocery store to earn money, and later she worked as a domestic. Before the age of nine, she was assigned to care and provide for the needs of an ailing woman who resided in a hotel.

Their living conditions in Mexico and the United States were similarly poor. They lived in a shack with no restroom, and her mother went to work for a tortilla factory. On one occasion she had to speak to her mother at work. One of the men was rude and would not let her see her mother. Her mother took her daughter's side and was fired, leaving her without work or transportation.

Their religious faith was a stronghold for the family. Her church gave Enriquez-Damian many leadership positions, such as Sunday school attendance clerk, later church secretary, and then Sunday school leader.

When her mother lost her job, Enriquez-Damian had to attend another school which did not allow her to speak the only language she knew well, Spanish. In her desire to learn English, she carried a notebook to write down new English words and their meanings. In the fourth grade she studied English, and later she wrote about the indigenous ancestry of the Mexican people as an assignment for sixth grade. At the end of the assignment she was proud of her heritage.

At the age of 12 her mother sent her to the employment office to obtain work. After receiving her social security card she was given work as a domestic. At the age of 15 she wanted to attend the co-ed Baptist Seminary in Harlingen, Texas, which her mother opposed.

In September of that year, a friend invited her to a wedding at which was a young man from California. By December of that year they were married; she was 15 and had dropped out of high school. Her husband was employed as a migrant worker picking grapes.

When Enriquez-Damian and her husband filed their income tax at H & R Block, she was offered a job and took it. In 1968, while shopping at a baby store, Enriquez-Damian and the owner of the store met and talked. The owner offered her a loan to go to school to learn clerical skills. She went to Central California Commercial College and, since she didn't have a high school diploma, attended the college during the day while going to high school at night. She finished both in the summer of 1970.

Her husband got a job as a floater assembler and they were able to buy a home, meanwhile the family continued their work as migrant workers. When Enriquez-Damian's sister encouraged her to continue her education, she enrolled at Reedley Community College in 1987. While she attended school, her husband obtained a full-time permanent position as a school custodian. She transferred to Fresno Pacific College and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Bilingual Education and a second major in Spanish Language and Culture in 1991. She then decided she wanted a master's degree. She moved to Arizona and taught school, then received her master's in curriculum and instruction in 1998. She was not ready to end her educational pursuits and sought her doctoral degree, which she received from Arizona State University in May 2009.

Enriquez-Damian interviewed four other Hispanic female administrators. Her first interview was with Elsa. Elsa was born in Mexico and the oldest of five children, three brothers and one sister. Since her parents spoke no English, Elsa as the oldest child was expected to help as translator, and in health matters, financial matters, and legal mattters beginning at the age of seven. She believed that her leadership qualities began at the age of five when as a kindergartner, her parents made her their English translator in all required circumstances. She continued into adulthood, professional life, and marriage to take care of most of her parents needs.

Elsa excelled in school and upon graduation from high school received scholarships to attend UCLA and the University of California at Berkley. Her father, following cultural traditions, refused to let her go and said, "Tu no vas a ir, tu vas a tener miedo alla." (You are not going to go; you are going to be afraid over there.) (cited in Enriquez-Damian, 2009, p. 56). Elsa obeyed her father and did not go to either university. Living in a traditional Mexican household, Elsa lived a very sheltered life. She never lived on her own in an apartment or dorm. Elsa did not hold resentment toward her parents, but instead held on to one day going to college.

She was allowed to attend a community college and received an Associate of Arts Degree, and later at the university level received a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis on Language Arts Reading. She was the first in her immediate and extended family to go to a community college and a university.

> Along the journey of educational preparation, she encountered many hurdles. However, she saw them as obstacles to deal with. She does not remember ever having mentors who gave her advice outside of her parents....When she became a mentor to other teachers, people in the educational environment began to see her as a leader. Her family had faith in her that she was a leader and that she was ready to tackle even higher leaderships....One day she thought about it, she said to herself, "Elsa, you are a leader. Yes, you are one. You are able to do this and you can do that. You are a leader." With this realization, she changed her academic direction and pursued administrative leadership. (Enriquez-Damian, 2009, 57–58.)

The next person that Enriquez-Damian interviewed was Idalia, who was Mexican American. Her parents were from Mexico. She had one brother and three sisters. She and her parents are first generation in the United States. As she and her siblings were growing up in Kansas City, Missouri, one of the things that her parents insisted upon was that all of the children participate in music lessons, and she and her siblings took music lessons through high school. Both her parents had strong beliefs that education would provide their children with opportunities in their lives.

At the age of 10 Idalia was involved in her Catholic church playing the organ, and then becoming the church choir director. Her second piano teacher was an African American woman. It was uncommon for an African American woman to be in a Hispanic home, but this was

enlightening for Idalia as she would learn the customs and culture of another race. This piano teacher played a major role in Idalia's life.

When Idalia registered at her high school, she heard that the music teacher was looking for a pianist. At the interview for the position, the music teacher opened the score of the Broadway musical *Lil Abner,* which Idalia was able to play. At the age of 15 he asked her to go home and memorize the 300-page score by the next day. Her music teacher asked her to play the piano for the high school choir and the high school play. Upon graduation, her parents not having the money to send her to a university, she enrolled at a junior college. She majored in music and later switched for a degree in teaching. By agreeing to play the piano for the junior college, she was able to receive some scholarships. She later became the junior college's choir director.

After completion of her studies at the junior college she enrolled at the University of Missouri and registered for the School of Music. Her African American piano teacher accompanied her and introduced her to her own music instructor at the university. The university's music staff helped Idalia obtain scholarships in return for her directing different choirs. In the School of Music Idalia found herself among the minority as the only Latina alongside two African American students, the other three students being Anglo. Even though a minority in the Midwest versus the Southwest, she did not feel like, nor was she treated as, a minority. Her greatest struggles in obtaining her education were financial. She commented:

> Unfortunately, many times, minority children are afraid and intimidated, and they do not know where to look for scholarships and parents do not know where to look for scholarships and parents do not know how to direct them. You are pretty much as far as where to look to find help or even what questions to ask. (Idalia, cited in Enriquez-Damian, 2009, p. 66)

In her senior year she was asked by the Music Department to assist an inner-city school of African American children. She ended up developing a music program for the elementary school district. When her studies were completed she was hired as a music teacher for a high school, and after five years of teaching she became the department chair. She later moved to Arizona and worked several years as a music teacher. She later became an assistant principal and

lastly a principal. One of her strengths was knowing that she could not lead alone. She learned to delegate, and built a leadership team of 10 people to carry on with the school's programs should something happen to her and she could not be around. At the time of the interview Idalia had invested 35 years in education.

The third Hispanic female leader that Enriquez-Damian interviewed was Maria Louisa. Maria Louisa was born in Sonora, Nogales and was a first generation immigrant to the United States. Her formal education through the sixth grade was in Nogales, Sonora. She and her parents immigrated to Nogales, Arizona.

Maria Louisa was the oldest of five children. She had three brothers and one sister. When the parents were settled they sent Maria Louisa to a private Catholic middle school. The school was segregated with those who spoke Spanish and those who didn't, and Maria Louisa was assigned to bilingual teachers. She remembers one of the bilingual teachers who never spoke Spanish to the students. This teacher berated the Mexican, Spanish-speaking students and called them lazy. Maria Louisa did not want to be known as lazy, so she made great efforts to learn English quickly. Maria Louisa did well and from the first semester to the last at the middle school, she was on the honor roll. She graduated number one in her class and gave a valedictorian speech.

At the age of 15, she enrolled in the Tucson College of Business in Tucson, Arizona. By the age of 16, Maria Louisa was living independently in an apartment with a cousin. Her father believed in education and told her, "That is the only thing I will be able to leave with you" (cited in Enriquez-Damian, 2009, p. 76). After completing her studies at Tucson College of Business, she was offered a certificate rather than a diploma because she had not finished high school. Maria Louisa completed a GED and the Tucson College of Business then gave her a diploma.

Maria Louisa enrolled at Pima Community College to pursue studies in becoming a teacher. While at Pima Community College, she met her husband. He was a business major at the University of Arizona. Her husband graduated from the University of Arizona. Maria Louisa was unable to graduate from Pima Community College because during the last week of classes,

she was giving birth to her first chiild. As soon as she was able, she enrolled in the College of Education at the University of Arizona. While at the University of Arizona, fellow classmates made fun of her heavy Spanish accent and said that she would be unhirable because of her accent. They made rude remarks that she was only accepted into the College of Education because she was Mexican and bilingual. What they didn't know was that even though entrance was competitive, Maria Louisa was applying with a 3.6 or 3.7 GPA. Fortunately, she did have professors who saw her in a favorable light and encouraged her to get her master's degree in educational supervision, even a doctoral degree.

At the end of her senior year, the school where she did her student teaching hired her as a bilingual kindergarten teacher. After a year of teaching, her husband got a job in Phoenix, Arizona and they moved. She applied for teaching positions in Phoenix and was abruptly addressed by a human resources staff person that she was not welcome in the north side of Phoenix. In another district in the north central part of Phoenix she was hired to teach a bilingual kindergarten class. She felt that the curriculum was not meeting the needs of her students and made changes. There were teachers who mocked her, but she was recognized as a fine teacher and was visited twice by First Lady Laura Bush and Mr. Eddie Basha. Her school district assigned her to be a dual language teacher. In this position she was able to travel to see dual language programs in Washington, D.C.; El Paso and San Antonio, Texas; and Tucson and Phoenix, Arizona. Maria Louisa was placed in charge of the dual language program in her school.

Maria Louisa saw the need for mentors and was asked by the district to mentor to new teachers. Many teachers held prejudices toward the Hispanic children and Maria Louisa made an effort to change those ideas and to help them recognize that the Hispanic children had much to offer from their own personal experiences. One prior student told Maria Louisa that she wanted to be just like her. Maria Louisa advised the student to be more than a principal, and suggested for her the role of superintendent.

The last interviewee by Enriquez-Damian was Selene. Selene was born in Juarez, Chihuahua in Mexico, the third of five children. She completed her primary and intermediate

grades in Juarez. Growing up Selene had a very close relationship with her father. Whenever her parents had need of a babysitter, Selene was the one asked. Her father played basketball before marrying, and Selene shared that interest. As she grew she played basketball for the city leagues and traveled out of town to play.

Selene also enjoyed a business sense. She set up a candy and snowcone stand in her home. One day she ran out of ice and because her brother refused to take her to the ice plant, her father told her to take the keys and drive herself to the ice plant, which she did. She was 12 at the time. This event enhanced her self-esteem and gave her confidence that she could do whatever she had a mind to do.

Selene's father passed away of leukemia when she was 13. She had always wanted to make him proud of her. After he died her mother allowed her to go to the United States to live with her cousin. She registered at the high school where there were many African Americans and few Anglos. While living with her cousin, she had to babysit, clean house, and wash clothes and the dishes. On one occasion while here female cousin was out, her male cousin had tried to rape her. Her other cousin would not believe Selene, and could not believe that her brother do such a thing.

Selene moved out and went to live with a neighbor until she graduated from high school. At the high school she continued playing basketball and was made captain and basketball head. In her junior year she began to be recruited by different colleges. She was offered a scholarship to UCLA and was asked to join the basketball team. Selene later married an African American man with marketing skills. He was able to promote Selene as an American basketball player. She was invited to play in Istanbul, Turkey, and in Greece. While in Greece, a difficult situation transpired with another player and she was forced to return home, having been unable to earn points and hence income from her profession.

Returning to Chicago, Selene got a job as a bilingual teacher, but to reach the school Selene had to walk past dangerous ghettos. They then moved to Arizona, where Selene taught kindergarten. She was not comfortable with small children, preferring high schoolers

instead. She was able to teach at a charter high school, and was both the ESL teacher and the department head. At the school she was offered the position of night school principal. She and the day school principal did not agree on the school's curriculum. After a time feeling that student needs were not being met, she resigned. Thereafter she was teaching high school in Phoenix.

The studies just reviewed demonstrate the difficulty many women and minority women face in balancing the many facets of their lives and their careers, due to the many obstacles which are inherently found in the current system. The next section looks for reasons that these obstacles are present.

Reasons the Challenges Occur

A woman who is attempting to achieve both familial and career success may develop a lack of desire to attain a leadership position because of sexism and society's views of women's roles; because of women's obligations to their family; because of the presence of the "good old boys" networks and the male-dominated system; because of racism and misconceptions leading to limited placement of qualified leadership; and because of the nonexistence of adequate social supports in the form of networking, mentoring, and role modeling. As we have seen in these studies which seek to identify the several specific obstacles faced by minority women, many barriers appear to be deep seated in established societal norms. They seem to stem from society's misconceptions about women's versus men's abilities in performing the tasks required in higher level positions, and from the fact that these presumptions arise from white-male– dominated leadership framework already in place.

Assigning minority principals to schools of like minority population hampers the minority principal in developing the socialization skills which go beyond their ethnicity or race. The minority principals need to develop their socialization skills by meeting, interacting, and engaging with non-minority administrators in educational dialog and activities outside their ethnicity or race.

Trujillo-Ball's (2003) research discerned that Mexican American women were being assigned almost exclusively to schools with a preponderance of Mexican American children, and that these assignments cast the Mexican American woman as only being able to be effective with one group of the population, Mexican American children. Trujillo-Ball (2003) considered that placement in schools with high populations of Mexican American children is a form of discrimination by denying Mexican American women's qualifications as administrative leaders.

Finding that there was a lack of information on women's identity and their ascribed traits or characteristics for school administration, Trujillo-Ball's (2003) research sought to answer the following questions:

> (1) How does the identity of successful women and minorities affect educational administration and how does educational administration affect them? (2) What is the impact of the lack of successful female and minorities in educational administrative positions? and (3) What are the individual role and identities of women and minorities in education? (Trujillo-Ball, 2003, pp. 6–7).

As a result, Trujillo-Ball discovered that another obstacle in the path of Mexican American women is that all women, and all minority women, were being clumped together as having the same traits and characteristics. She stated that, instead, women should be seen as unique individuals who bring with them their own experiences, culture, and environmental factors which, when taken together, make them uniquely different persons from each other. To overcome the barrier, so as to be able to fit into the administrative status quo, women and minorities have denied their individuality or have assumed what is considered the assigned characteristics of the status quo. By doing so, they have increased their opportunity for an administrative position. Mexican American women have been attributed with a general stereotype developed over time associated with particular traits and characteristics, which results in the form of a barrier from which they must overcome in order to seek an administrative position (2003).

According to Dana and Bourisaw (2006), gender is seen as an obstruction for women in their ascending to administrative positions. Regardless of the large numbers of women in education, men hold most of the administrative positions. Their study emphasized gender as the

problem facing women in leadership in their upward climb to the positions of principal, assistant principal, school district assistant, associate, deputy superintendent, and superintendent. Dana and Bourisaw contended that sexism contributes to women's problems with the issue of gender. Sexism depicts stereotypical roles for women, placing preconceived attitudes and limits on how women perform and respond in various administrative roles.

Dana and Bourisaw (2006) believe that society's culture is a great contributor in assigning the sex-role attitudes in the formation of the attributes associated with gender. Women often delay entry into administration because they are viewed as the family caregivers and are thus responsible for home and family matters associated with the day to day function of the family. In areas of school leadership, women's interviews should be concerned with their competencies, skills, knowledge, training, and experience for the job, instead of whether or not she has children, is married, and whether or not the husband can join her in her move. Additionally and disadvantageously for women, college and university preparation programs and textbooks for principal and superintendent administration often incorporate the white-male gender model (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006).

In order to study gender-related issues and gender interactions in educational settings, Rusch and Marshall (2006) developed what they called gender filters, which they defined as "lenses used by individuals to actually navigate gender-related issues or gender dynamics in educational settings" (p. 229). Their study supported the existence of institutionalized gender inequity and found further evidence that administrative positions are held primarily by white males. Without addressing the traditional institutionalized modes of behavior based on male dominance, inequity in educational administration for women will continue (2006).

Dealing with the inevitability of race- and gender-related obstacles on their paths to career advancement, women have had to make use of their interpersonal skills, often relying on their own strength of character and other contributors to their self worth, such as their value of hard work, their personal spirituality, and their love and commitment for their families and communities. As the next section demonstrates, it is also essential for minority women to obtain

training and practice for their interpersonal skills through the use of mentoring, role modeling, and networking.

Holtkamp (2002) set out to investigate the characteristics and attributes of women serving in the role of principal. Her study was focused around the interviews of nine women in the position of public school principals, who were a composite of different racial and ethnic groups, different cultures, years of experience, and age. Several recurring themes emerged in the data of this study.

Among the themes were the values of working hard to excel in their roles of principals. Another theme had to do with their personal spiritual faith, in that they seemed to have a close relationship with God and sought his help with their jobs and in troublesome or adverse situations. The women principals also found networking to be noteworthy and beneficial for them. Through networking in different administrator organizations, they could share their experiences with other women and have the opportunity to exchange ideas and develop as administrators. Finally, another characteristic common to the principals in Holtkamp's study was the desire of the women to do their jobs effectively. The women expressed that they held the importance of caring about their schools, the individuals that made up their faculties, the children, families, and the community in high estimation.

Women's strong community connections are additional examples of the resources which participants utilized in Bloom and Erlandson's (2003) research. The minority women interviewed connected their leadership abilities and self-worth to strong experiences with family, church, and community.

Mentoring

Investigations have revealed that many women in educational administration have used facets of their personality that allowed them to demonstrate strong leadership characteristics. They also pulled from their spirituality and their family and community supports. The following research identifies the additional benefits of enhanced interpersonal skills, specifically

mentoring. Mentoring, as with role modeling, involves a close connection with a more experienced professional who is willing to guide and nurture the protégé's career.

Magdaleno (2006) saw the importance of developing a mentoring program for Latinos and Latinas. He had noticed a great discrepancy between the number of students enrolled in California schools (47%) and the number of Latina and Latino administrators (15.4%) in that state. As an outcome of his study, the California Association of Latino Superintendents and Administrators (CALSA) was formed. The aspiring future Latina and Latino administrators were paired with Latinos or Latinas currently holding administrative positions, as well as with successful retired Latino or Latina administrators. This mentoring program paired Latinos with Latinos, which allowed the protégés to be exposed to experiences and difficulties overcome by career administrators. Among the difficulties to be overcome were racial and gender prejudices. Another benefit from having a Latino or Latina administrator as a mentor was that the mentor could identify with the protégé's culture, value of family connectedness, experiences, and language.

Besides the glass ceiling, Magdaleno found that Latinos and Latinas faced the career glass ceiling in their career advancement and in maintaining their administrative positions once obtained. With the low number of Latino and Latina administrators in California, there were few mentors and role models for students to emulate. The goal of CALSA was to support and retain the present Latino and Latina administrators and to prepare and encourage future Latino and Latina administrators in their pursuit of careers in administration.

Magdalano (2004) believed a mentoring program should enhance Latinas and Latinos in their roles as administrators or aspiring administrators. As a principal, he himself had a cohort of three administrator friends who met once a week before work at Starbucks. They became a support group and mentors for each other. He became aware of the benefits he was receiving weekly from his friends and considered that young aspiring Latinas and Latinos, those new to their administrative roles, and even those with years in administration, could benefit from a mentoring program designed exclusively for Latinas and Latinos.

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Gonzalez-Figueroa and Young (2005) conducted a study of the effects of mentoring Latina women from the perspective of gender, ethnic identity, and career achievement. All of the 103 participants were Latinas from Mexico, Cuba, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. The study revealed that, even through acculturation with the dominant society, Latinas maintained a strong ethnic identity. The results of the study revealed that Latina women preferred to be mentored by educators of the same or like ethnicity as themselves.

There are many barriers that Latinas and Latinos face while they serve in a white-male–dominated education arena. Among the barriers that Latinas and Latinos face are isolation, exclusion, stereotyping of male and female roles, language discrimination, and lack of understanding of the attributes and characteristics which form the Latina and Latino culture. Mentoring provides the benefits of support and encouragement for administrators to continue in their position and provides protégés an interior look at the politics and pitfalls of being a Latina or Latino administrator in the white-male–dominated arena. Additionally, there is indirectly an incredible outcome for Latina and Latino students: There are more role models to look up to, aspire to, and emulate.

Gardiner, Grogan, and Enomoto (1999) conducted a study on mentoring women in public school educational leadership. The original study consisted of 55 mentors and protégés from the states of Washington, Maryland, and Virginia. The sample, which focused on participants from Washington State, consisted of six mentors and 10 protégés. For this sample, the researchers interviewed 14 women and two men. Of the women, nine were white, four were Hispanic, and one was African American.

While the researchers found the need for women to serve as mentors and role models, they discovered that there were not enough women in educational administration to serve other women as mentors and role models (Gardiner et al., 1999). It is even more difficult to find successful women of color in education to mentor other women of color. When women of color were mentored by white women or white men, the typical relationship was kept at the

professional level and not a personal level. Some women of color felt strongly that mentors and protégés' pairings should be of the same ethnic group and same gender.

Hutchinson (2002) conducted a quantitative and qualitative leadership study of women superintendents in the state of Missouri, using a survey and a questionnaire. Of the 116 women who had finished the District-Level Assessment Center from 1990–2000 to whom she had sent the survey, 56.9% responded. The interviewees consisted of 24 administrators who held the Missouri superintendent's certification. Eight superintendents were interviewed from different areas of the state. She also interviewed six assistant superintendents, two directors, four elementary principals, one assistant principal, one teacher who had been a director, a former elementary principal working at the university level, and a retired assistant superintendent working in the private sector.

Four primary areas for women administrators became evident from the interviews. The areas were support groups, gender issues, career goals, and women's views. The study led to the need for universities to offer, at the graduate level, preparation programs providing a clear picture of the job expectations, time demands, and family concerns associated with leadership at the superintendent level. At the superintendent level and the principal level, there were benefits for women to network with each other, have a mentor, and have family support. Gender issues still remain for some school districts in the state of Missouri. The study found strong leadership characteristics for women which, though different in some aspects from men, were as viable as those associated with men (Hutchison, 2002).

An investigative study by Bush (2000) endeavored to determine what obstacles women superintendents had faced in their upward climb to the position of superintendent. In doing her dissertation research, the survey and interviews revealed that gender and race/ethnicity had not had a major impact on their attainment of the position of superintendent. Bush, an African American woman, began her qualitative study with 11 women superintendents in the Council of Great City Schools. The study was narrowed to 10 superintendents completing a survey and

eight superintendents completing both the survey and interviews. There were eight African American and two Hispanic superintendents in the study.

Through the survey and interviews, Bush (2000) found that all of the women superintendents had had a mentor to encourage them and promote them. For the most part, the women superintendents' mentors had been white males. The superintendents shared the helpfulness and importance for aspiring minority women administrators to have mentors and role models. The superintendents shared that they saw themselves as role models for other women and the importance of working to promote women who expressed an interest in becoming superintendents.

Villani (2008) referred to the importance for aspiring and new principals to have a mentor. Mentors can be friends, colleagues, fellow administrators, teachers, and even parents. Mentors give sustaining support; it may be support of short duration for the particular circumstances or in other cases long lasting career support.

Joining a professional association can be a place to develop mentorships. Villani (2008) stated that she developed mentorships through joining the professional organization of the Northeast Coalition of Education Leaders. Through her professional association, she found mentors and role models. The mentors served as sounding boards, people who could give encouragement, leaders who were willing to share their wisdom and experiences, and caring people who could be confided in (Villani, 2008).

The development of preparation programs which make use of mentoring, role modeling, and networking for women administrators' successes was supported by Hackney and Hogard's (1999) research. According to the researchers, women must be aware of the signals they are conveying about themselves as they try to become a part of the male-oriented social establishment. Women need to look at the social context and the already established norms and tenets of the administrative environment whose ranks they plan to join.

Hackney and Hogard (1999) further state that there is a need for structured educational administration preparation programs in order to help women make smoother transitions into

leadership positions. Such programs would include training sessions conducted by women in leadership positions who recognize and build upon the administrative skills and qualities often characterized by women leaders. These preparation programs are springboards of information for women desiring to enter into administrative positions. In these training sessions, future women school administrators could gain knowledge and insight. These women seeking to move up the career ladder could also see feminine administrative role models from whom they can learn and adopt administrative skills and competencies for themselves. The benefits for training forums conducted by women leaders is for future women leaders to see the feminine side of leadership with its advantages in comparison to the traditional approach of the white-male–dominated administrations. Women entering the administrative fields need to feel validated for the attributed feminine skills and qualities of collaboration, consensus seeking, participatory decision making, working with others, sense of priority for student success and well-being, and sensitivity for others' feelings.

One of the aspects of mentoring as described in a study by Grady, Krumm, and Peery (1998) involves the pairing of an experienced educational administrator and a woman aspiring to be an administrator in the field of education. The role of the experienced educational administrator would include the sharing of insights into how the particular organization is run, critiquing the aspiring leader, enhancing opportunities for upward mobility in educational administration, and, ideally, continuing their support throughout the mentee's career. Women choosing to advance their careers can find mentoring to be a passageway.

Hale's (1998) research on women as educational administrators revealed that even though there are many women in education, there are few who hold educational administrative positions, such as superintendents, central office personnel, and principals. One of Hale's suggestions to upward-bound women choosing to follow an administrative career path in education was to seek out mentoring. She suggested that mentoring should be ongoing and that both mentor and mentee share their talents and skills with each other, therefore creating opportunities for both the mentor and mentee to develop in their personal careers

and individuality. Hale did caution that since there are few women in administrative positions, the mentor may need to be a male until such time that there are more women in educational leadership positions.

Gardiner, Enomoto, and Grogan (2000) also studied mentoring relationships. Their study included 4 Hispanic women and 14 African American women. One of the outcomes of their research was that administrative protégés had a preference for mentors who resembled them in gender and ethnicity. Both the Hispanic and African American women stated that there would be an easier kinship with their mentors for conversing, role modeling, and cultural backgrounds. For aspiring Hispanic women, it was more difficult to find Hispanic women in leadership positions to serve as mentors.

Peery (1998) conducted a case study of six Hispanic women. She found that none of the six had had mentors that were Hispanic or women. Three of the women had white males for mentors. Even though the white men gave encouragement, none of them remained as long term mentors.

These studies make it clear that mentoring provides many benefits to the aspiring woman administrator. Byrd's (1999) study recommended that mentors are important for women administrators. However, the difficulty in achieving the best mentor-protégé fit with a person of similar gender and ethnicity was also revealed (Bush, 2000; Gardiner et al., 1999, 2000; Gonzalez-Figueroa & Young, 2005; Hale, 1998; Hutchinson, 2002; Magdaleno, 2004, 2006; Peery, 1998). While mentoring may as yet be unable to provide consistent quality support between women of similar ethnicity and background, other social strategies may offer additional fulfillment.

Networking

Another important area which studies have revealed for women in educational leadership positions is their need for networking. The need for a mentor, one who takes on an aspiring mentee or protégé by the hand in the role of an administrative guide, counselor, and confidant, cannot be diminished. But women are also finding it necessary to surround

themselves on an expanded scale with other women who have similar interests, goals, drives, aspirations, and experiences with whom they can share, learn, and grow. Positive benefits have been found when women are able to network with other women. Networking provides them with a broader perspective in order to build a knowledge base and be able to develop a vision with clearer expectations of what an educational organization, school district, or school campus would require.

Byrd's (1999) study recommended that networking groups are important for women administrators. As men have had informal networking groups, women would benefit from developing their own women's networking groups. Jacobs (2002) suggested that the ideal outcome would be for administrators, both male and female, to have mutual exchanges in informal social networking settings. Through these informal networking settings, both male and female administrators could develop and grow in their profession.

Dana and Bourisaw (2006) also noted the benefits of networking, stating, "They must search for opportunities to network with folks for purposes of (1) exploring 'how to' address leadership needs, (2) responding to case studies for enlightenment and learning, and (3) problem solving around gender issues" (p. 196).

For women who desire to move up the career ladder in educational administration, Carr (1998) found that networking is indispensable. She stated that networking can be found through professional organizations, professional luncheons, conferences, and book clubs. Networking associations and organizations provide for the aspiring administrator a safe dimension for informally seeking information, questioning organizational structures, and receiving guidance and support.

According to Gardiner, Enomoto, and Grogan (2000), an important and overlooked facet of networking is providing visibility for aspiring administrators. Networking provides opportunities for the aspiring administrator to become familiarized with the ins and outs, the politics, of the school and school district settings. Mentors through their network systems are valuable in being able to include the aspiring candidate with their own connections and

in so doing expose them to the right people. Making the right connections, knowing the right

people, knowing who can and should be called on when particular information is needed or

action required is valuable to the aspiring administrative candidate. It is an asset for aspiring

administrators through networking to be able to surround themselves with successful

and experienced administrators who can lend much support and encouragement to the

administrative candidates.

There is much research attesting to the value and benefits of networking for women in

educational administration. One of these benefits is that it provides a springboard for sharing

ideas and information helpful to both the novice and experienced administrator. Through

networking, an administrator is not working in a vacuum, but can call upon the expertise and

insight of other women administrators. Networking collegially provides a venue for enhanced

success for the female administrator.

For minority groups, primarily Hispanic woman, networking is essential. Networking

offers opportunities to associate with other women administrators and, perhaps, other minority

Hispanic women administrators.

Role Models

Besides the importance for women to network with one another through organizations

and associations, at conferences and conventions both formally and informally, women also

realize the benefits of having female role models. Since educational administration has been

dominated by men and their own established networks, men aspiring to become administrators

have had easy access to role models. Historically, they have had resources to turn to for support

and guidance for learning the insights of educational systems and settings. Aspiring men have

had role models and the means for networking within their reach. Often, this has not been the

case for women aspiring to become educational administrators.

Witmer (2006) reiterates what other researchers have found—that there are not

enough women to serve as role models for aspiring women administrators. This, she indicated,

is not the case for aspiring men. Aspiring men can more readily find male administrator role

models. Women are left to create role models through the literature they read and from chance meetings of women in leadership positions.

In a study looking at both the aspects of mentoring and role modeling, Mendez-Morse (2004) noted the significance of a role model on a woman's attitude in achieving her own success. This research was a qualitative study of six Mexican American women who were in school administrative positions. In the customary sense, none of these women had a mentor to guide them in ways to become administrative leaders. Rather, all of the women in the study credited their mothers as their mentors and role models, even though some of their mothers had inadequate, mediocre educations. Conversely, as a whole, the women had had negative experiences when seeking advice from their high school counselors; of the six women, only one received counseling information on colleges and universities, which had come begrudgingly from the counselor.

Another type of role model given by Mendez-Morse (2004) is what was referred to as a distant role model. Distant role models could be a relative or a friend of a relative who was attending college, and who were Hispanic like themselves. They did not necessarily interact with these individuals. These distant role models were present at a time when the student was having thoughts of going to college or a university to continue education beyond high school.

Other types of mentors noted in the study were remote and semi-traditional. Remote mentoring was evident when, as teachers, their principals assigned them a task to complete or they initiated a task, or were permitted to lead a group or committee without any clear directions from the principal. In the semi-traditional mentoring, some of the leaders received guidance in preparing a school budget. The older and veteran administrative leaders did not receive traditional mentors in their careers, whereas the younger ones to administration were assigned mentors (Mendez-Morse, 2004).

A concluding consideration from the study is that when a Hispanic woman does not have a mentor, then the next best thing is for her to create her own mentor. The mentor created

would be based on positive professional leadership qualities and attributes (Mendez-Morse, 2004).

In order for women to have a successful career in educational administration, adequate support from peers and guidance in their professional development is necessary. These studies have shown that role modeling is another source that results in these added benefits.

In addition to implementing necessary supports for women and minorities in the school workplace, more can be done earlier to help women become aware of the challenges that will face them and to develop the skills necessary to combat them. Williamson and Hudson (2003) recognized the need to address these issues early, when education students are encountering them. University administrative programs need to address the difficulties faced by women, so as to retain women as administrative leaders. Noel-Batiste's (2009) respondents indicated that in order to increase the number of women in administrative positions, more mentoring, networking, and providing women as role models were needed. The author states these skills could be developed and attained at the university and division levels of a university.

For the benefit of women as future principals and superintendents, women's gender issues should be included as well as internship programs. Being able to assign women administrative leaders as mentors is also beneficial. Women need mentors and venues for informal networking, as compared to men who network on the golf course (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006).

In discussing the leadership characteristics of successful women in education administrative positions, it becomes apparent that additional skills and strategies are needed. Early and continued practice of strategies, such as mentoring, networking, and role modeling, can supplement a minority woman's personality traits that have already made her a candidate for the role of a leader in the school system.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

The barriers present on minority women's career paths may be the result of deeply embedded culture in our society, but, as much research reviewed in this chapter has

shown, identification of the specific barriers that occur can lead to the development and implementation of programs and strategies for overcoming them. Acknowledgement and discussion of the obstacles along with direct peer contact and support has been shown to provide many additional benefits to women in leadership positions.

White women and minority women have historically experienced varying forms and degrees of discrimination resulting from their gender, race, or ethnicity. In spite of any real or presumed barriers, women have much to offer through their preparation, leadership training, and acquired skills for the betterment of the field of education. For these reasons, women need to continue in their goals and desires to attain leadership positions at all levels of education. The research studies reviewed in this section can become a guide for universities in developing administrative programs for women working within the white-male–administration school model. The different program components of the white-male–education model can lead to adaptations for female students and changes in hiring practices, dealing with gender issues and stereotypes, culture differences, and administrative preparation.

The purpose of this chapter has been to present research in regard to the needs and strategies that minority women in particular are confronted with in their career development. There is little literature available, however, that actually has focused specifically on Hispanic women. The intentions of this study, in light of the increasing population of that minority sector, are to fill the need for additional research in order to promote continued and consistent support for aspiring Hispanic women in the field of education. The next chapter provides an overview of the methodology used for this study of Hispanic female school principals.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to determine how Hispanic female school leaders overcame the barriers to their success and to gain insight into the lessons and strategies aspiring Hispanic female school leaders can learn from the experiences of these successful women. This is a qualitative study.

General Perspective

The foundation of this study is more exploratory and understanding oriented than deductive and explanation oriented (Creswell, 2002). Therefore, qualitative research methodology was deemed more appropriate. A definition for qualitative research is as follows:

> Qualitative research shares these characteristics, and additionally seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspectives of the local population it involves. Qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social context of particular populations. (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005, p. 1)

The open-ended design of the study permitted me to preserve the participants' voices and success stories for the benefit of future Hispanic women school leaders.

Research Context

The participants for this study are Hispanic female principals from the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area. The population of the Dallas/Fort Worth area according to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (USCB, 2008a) was 6,303,407. The race/ethnic composition percentages from these data are displayed in Table 5 and reveal that the Hispanic population is the second largest racial population (USCB, 2008a).

Table 5

Dallas/Fort Worth Metropolitan Population by Racial/Ethnic Composition

Race/Ethnic Composition	Percent
White	71.4
Hispanic	26.9
Black/African American	14.6
Asian	14.6
Other or more races	9.5

Note. Adapted from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2008 (USCB, 2008a).

Texas Education Agency data for 2009–2010 include Texas public school districts and charter schools with full time equivalent (FTE) counts. Demographic information which identifies the number and ethnicity of principals in the state of Texas, and served as a basis for this study, is presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Texas Principals by Ethnicity and Gender, 2009–2010

Ethnicity	2009-2010	%	Females	%	Males	%
Hispanic	1637	20.6	1,048	13.2	589	7.4
White	5363	67.4	3,086	38.8	2,277	28.6

Note. Adapted from TEA, 2010.

The public schools that comprise the greater Dallas/Fort Worth area are represented by the Texas Education Agency's Education Service Centers 10 and 11. Education Service Center 10 includes the eastern geographical area of the metropolitan area and describes the population in the counties of Collin, Dallas, Ellis, Fannin, Grayson, Hunt, Kaufman, Rockwall, and portions of Van Zandt. The school district of Grand Prairie ISD, which is represented in this research, is part of Region 10. Figure 3 presents a map which illustrates the counties represented by Region 10.
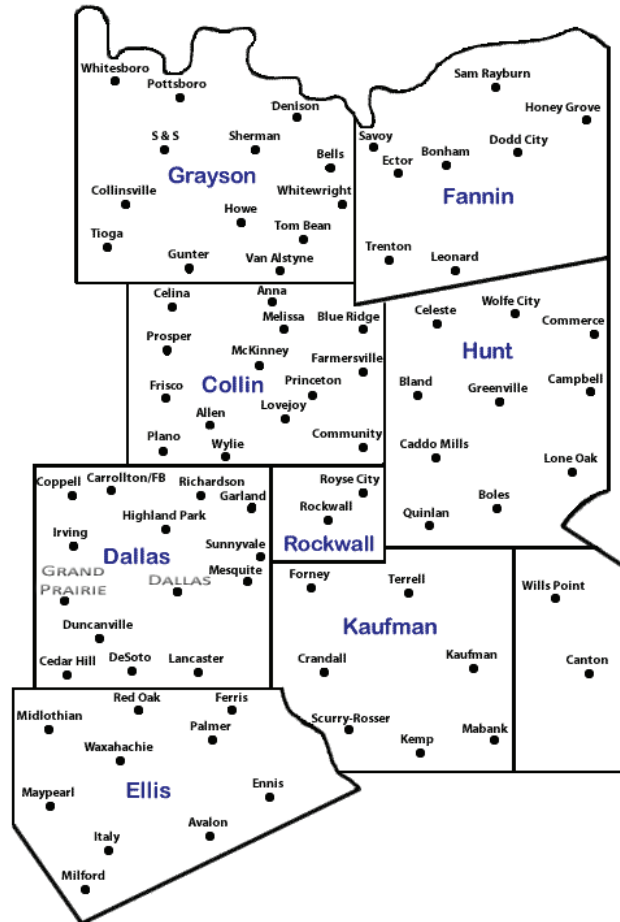
Figure 3. Texas Education Service Center 10. Retrieved June 15, 2010 from http://www.region10.org/about_r10_districts_map.html

Education Service Center 11 includes the western geographical area of the metropolitan area and describes the population in the counties of Cooke, Wise, Denton, Palo Pinto, Parker, Tarrant, Hood, Johnson, Somervell, and Erath. The school districts of Fort Worth ISD and Arlington ISD, which are represented in this research, are part of Region 11. The map of this region is illustrated in Figure 4.

Sivells Bend   Walnut Bend   Callisburg

COOKE

Muenster   Gainesville
Lindsay   Gainesville
           State School

Era   Valley View

Alvord   Sanger   Pilot Point
        Slidell
Chico   **DENTON**
        Decatur   Krum   Aubrey
Bridgeport   Denton
                                Little Elm
        WISE   Ponder
Paradise   Argyle   Lake Dallas
                                Lewisville
        Boyd   Northwest

Poolville   Keller   Carrol
           Springtown   Axle
Graford   Eagle Mt. Saginaw Grapevine
                                Colleyville
Mineral Wells Peaster   Lake Worth ESC 11 Birdville
                                Hurst-Euless-
Palo Pinto   Garner   **PARKER** White Settlement Bedford
PALO PINTO Millsap   Castleberry
                     Weatherford FORT WORTH **TARRANT**
        Santo   ● ARLINGTON ●
Strawn   Brock   Aledo   Everman   Kennedale
                               Crowley   Mansfield
Gordon
                Lipan   Granbury   Burleson
                                  Joshua
Morgan Hill   Godley **JOHNSON** Venus
                  HOOD   Keene
Huckabay   Cleburne Alvarado
        Bluff Dale   Tolar
                        Glen Rose
                               Rio Vista   Grandview
Lingleville Three Way **SOMERVELL**
        Stephenville
        ERATH
Dublin

Figure 4. Texas Education Service Center 11. Retrieved June 15, 2010 from http://www.esc11.net/8231035143244630/site/default.asp

Data presented in Table 7 show the composition of students and principals for the greater Dallas/Forth Worth area including Education Service Center Regions 10 and 11. These data reveal that while Hispanics make up a significant portion of the total student population, there is a disparate number of Hispanic principals in these regions.

Table 7

Student and Principal Demographics by Ethnicity for Dallas/Fort Worth Regions

	Ethnicity	Student Count	% of Population	Principal Count	% of Principals
Region 10	African American	147,431	20.0	208	18.2
	Asian	42,035	5.7	6	0.5
	Hispanic	294,539	40.0	126	11.0
	Native American	3,644	14.4	11	1.0
	White	249,390	33.8	791	69.3
totals		**737,039**		**1,142**	
Region 11	African American	77,799	14.6	93	11.2
	Asian	25,263	4.8	4	0.5
	Hispanic	166,322	31.3	63	7.6
	Native American	3,389	0.6	7	0.8
	White	258,531	48.7	667	80.0
totals		**531,304**		**834**	
Combined 10 & 11	African American	225,230	17.8	301	15.2
	Asian	67,298	5.3	10	0.7
	Hispanic	460,861	36.3	189	9.6
	Native American	7,033	0.6	18	0.9
	White	507,921	40.0	1,458	73.8
totals		**1,268,343**		**1,976**	

Note. Adapted from TEA, 2010.

Demographics data from the Texas Education Agency's 2009–2010 reports for the Dallas, Fort Worth, Arlington, and Grand Prairie Independent School Districts also reflect the disparity between the Hispanic student population and the corresponding principal count. The data for these urban-area schools are presented in Table 8 (TEA, 2010).

Table 8

Student and Principal Demographics by Ethnicity for Texas School Districts

	Ethnicity	Student Count	% of Population	Principal Count	% of Principals
Dallas ISD	African American	40,510	25.8	102	46.2
	Asian	1,601	1.0	0	0.0
	Hispanic	106,296	67.7	69	31.2
	Native American	697	0.4	1	0.5
	White	7,083	4.5	49	22.2
	Pacific Islands	152	0.1	0	0.0
	Two or more races	759	0.5	0	0.0
totals		**157,098**		**221**	
Ft Worth ISD	African American	18,999	24.0	43	33.6
	Asian	1,293	1.6	2	1.6
	Hispanic	46,522	58.7	34	26.6
	Native American	257	0.3	0	0.0
	White	12,164	15.3	49	38.3
	Pacific Islands	50	0.1	0	0.0
	Two or more races	919	1.2	0	0.0
totals		**79,285**		**128**	
Arlington ISD	African American	14493	22.8	7	9.5
	Asian	4421	7.0	0	0.0
	Hispanic	26102	41.1	10	13.5
	Native American	207	0.3	3	4.1
	White	17339	27.3	53	71.6
	Pacific Islands	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Two or more races	925	1.5	1	1.4
totals		**63487**		**74**	
Grand Prairie ISD	African American	4476	17.0	5	13.9
	Asian	826	3.1	1	2.8
	Hispanic	16347	61.9	6	16.7
	Native American	366	1.4	0	0.0
	White	4014	15.2	22	61.1
	Pacific Islands	31	0.1	0	0.0
	Two or more races	335	1.3	2	5.6
totals		**26395**		**36**	

Note. Continued on next page. Adapted from TEA, 2010.

Table 8, continued

Student and Principal Demographics by Ethnicity for Texas School Districts

Combined	African American	78,478	24.0	157	34.2
	Asian	8,141	2.5	3	0.7
	Hispanic	195,267	59.7	119	25.9
	Native American	1,527	0.5	4	0.9
	White	40,600	12.4	173	37.7
	Pacific Islands	233	0.1	0	0.0
	Two or more races	2,938	0.9	3	0.7
totals		**327,184**		**459**	

Note. Continued from previous page. Adapted from TEA, 2010.

Participants

A list of Hispanic K–12 principals was requested from the Texas Education Agency. The intent was to utilize as participants of this study 25% of Hispanic females who are principals in areas within and surrounding Dallas and Fort Worth. An examination of the list revealed that some of the surrounding school districts had very few or no Hispanic female principals. Therefore, the percentage of 25 did not generate feasible numbers. As a result, only three school districts were used. In the largest school district that was utilized in this study, Fort Worth, there was the potential of 22 participants for this study. However, only 7 agreed to be interviewed. In Arlington Independent School District, three Hispanic female principals agreed to be interviewed and in Grand Prairie Independent School District, two agreed to be interviewed. This resulted in 12 participants for this study.

Table 9

Fictitious Names and Initials of Participants

Name of Participant	Initials	Positions
1. Bertha	BD	Elementary
2. Ruth	RS	Elementary
3. Dora	DR	Elementary
4. Felicia	FF	Elementary
5. Natasha	NC	Elementary
6. Gloria	GF	High School
7. Hilaria	HT	Elementary
8. Jacqueline	JB	Elementary
9. Ester	EL	High School
10. Flora	FG	Elementary
11. Roberta	RM	Middle School
12. Ofelia	OE	Elementary

Data Collection

A letter of invitation (Appendix A) was sent to each Hispanic female principal that was identified in the Fort Worth Independent School Disctrict, the Arlington Independent School District, and the Grand Prairie Independent School District requesting their participation. The letter included the list of questions that each was asked in the formal interview (Appendix B). Each principal was also emailed an Internal Review Board (IRB) consent form (Appendix C) to sign and return, or to sign at the interview session. All of the principals were assured of confidentiality and anonymity in the use of digital voice recordings and transcriptions through the use of color coding.

An agreeable time and location was determined between the principals and myself. The time set aside for each interview was approximately one hour. Some interviews lasted longer due to the responses of the participants. The interviews occurred over a span of four months: June, July, August, and September. Overall, one interview was scheduled per week. In one particular week, three interviews were scheduled and in one other week, two interviews were scheduled. The participants were asked a common set of six open-ended questions; at the time of the interview, each participant possessed a hard copy of the interview questions (Appendix B). I asked each question in the order provided. A digital voice recorder was utilized to capture the participants' stories. Transcriptions of the recordings were created and maintained by the researcher. The six interview questions asked are as follows:

1. What factors have contributed to the success of Hispanic female school leaders?

2. What institutional challenges did Hispanic female school leaders encounter?

3. What family challenges did Hispanic female school leaders encounter?

4. What personal challenges did Hispanic female school leaders encounter?

5. What strategies did Hispanic female school leaders employ to overcome the various barriers to success?

6. What advice can Hispanic female school leaders offer for aspiring Hispanic females desiring leadership positions in K–12 schools?

Data Analysis

The data analysis began with the transcription of each of the digitally recorded interviews. Each interview was numbered in the order that the principal was interviewed. Alongside the interview number were the initials of the principal interviewed and the identifying code of the principal's school district. The researcher then reviewed each of the transcripts from the interviews of the 12 principals. Beginning with the first question and continuing with each of the 6 succeeding questions, I used all 12 responses to each question in order to identify the common themes.

As the themes were identified, I color coded the interview texts. The themes were refined through successive readings and color coding of text. The themes for each question were then prioritized by their frequency and subsequently listed under the corresponding questions. Selected narrative text from the interviews were used to illustrate the identified theme. As the principals responded to the questions and themes were manifested, they revealed the strategies and skills employed by the successful Hispanic female principals in overcoming personal, institutional, family, and other barriers in their ascendancy to the principalship.

Summary

The qualitative research for this study centered on the interviews of 12 Hispanic female principals from the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area. The principals represent all levels of public schools: elementary, middle, and high schools. The Hispanic female principals were selected from information obtained from the Texas Education Agency and through inquiries within the school districts' human resource departments or its directors.

The principals who participated in this study are from Grand Prairie Independent School District, Arlington Independent School District, and Fort Worth Independent School District. The principals had been sent the Institutional Review Board informed consent form and an email letter of recruitment as a participant prior to being interviewed. Upon each principal's agreement to participate, she was provided in advance with a list of the six open-ended questions that would be asked in the formal interview. The principals were allowed to select the day, time, and location for the interview to take place. The duration of interview was approximately one hour. During the interview, the principals' statements were digitally recorded.

I later transcribed each interview. I studied the transcribed responses to each question for the purpose of establishing recurring themes. The emergent themes were color coded, prioritized, listed under the corresponding question, and placed into six charts which represented each of the six questions. The primary themes revealed the successful strategies and skills used by the Hispanic female principals to overcome the various barriers encountered on their journey in reaching their goal of principal.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Research studies on Hispanic female principals, as leaders, have described and given causes for barriers which Hispanic women have faced in their efforts to rise to administrative positions in education, primarily the principalship. This research study seeks to ascertain how, in spite of the various barriers faced by Hispanic females, there are those who successfully find strategies to overcome the various barriers and are able to climb the ascendant ladder to the principalship.

This study consists of 12 Hispanic female principals at elementary, middle, and high school positions from the Fort Worth Independent School District, the Arlington Independent School District, and the Grand Prairie Independent School District. Each of the principals was interviewed with a given set of six questions. The questions are as follows:

- What factors have contributed to the success of Hispanic female school leaders?

- What institutional challenges did Hispanic female school leaders encounter?

- What family challenges did Hispanic female school leaders encounter?

- What personal challenges did Hispanic female school leaders encounter?

- What strategies did Hispanic female school leaders employ to overcome the various barriers to success?

- What advice do Hispanic female school leaders have to offer for aspiring Hispanic females desiring leadership positions in K–12 schools?

The analysis of the data did not reveal a consistent pattern of repetitive ideas or themes for each question. Therefore, the results of this study are reported by interviewee responses to each question. Representative participant responses to each question are provided.

What Factors Have Contributed to the Success of Hispanic Female School Leaders?

Interviewees indicated that the encouragement of various educators, their intrinsic determination to succeed, support from family members, and the motivation to be a positive influence for students, parents, and the community contributed to their success.

Encouragement by Various Educators

Six of the twelve interviewees, Ofelia, Gloria, Dora, Felicia, Hilaria, and Roberta stated that teachers, principals, assistant principals, and other administrative leaders strongly and persistently encouraged them to pursue a career as a school administrator.

> My opinion of what has contributed to the success of Hispanic female school leaders is having Hispanic female role models precede us. They have opened the doorway for us to move forward. Whereas, any institution might have been a male-oriented institution. Now we see Hispanic females coming to the forefront and at the same time have become role models and have become mentors for other Hispanic females to move forward. It has been a process. Also, just the determination of Hispanic females to be seen as a positive influence not only in school, but also within their community that has also been forthcoming. Also in my opinion of Hispanic female school leaders, not limited to, but part of the culture, a sense of family and community brings in our innate or cultural necessity of nurturing and growing and moving forward. That has a lot to do with it as well. (Felicia)

> I had a really strong principal and he is the one who influenced me in going back to school. He saw the leadership qualities in me, before I saw them myself. He was a Hispanic principal…He pushed me into school, he gave me some responsibilities that would make me aware of school business and he let me sit in on interviews, he allowed me to compile reports, and he allowed me to work with teachers…. (Ofelia)

> To my success I would say specifically the support that I had as a teacher. My principal, he came to me and he strongly encouraged me to continue with my education…he really encouraged me and pushed me to be a mentor teacher, team leader, and to further my education and he kept telling me that I would be a successful administrator. So I think I owe a lot of that to him I think and his recruiting of me and definitely lots of mentoring. (Dora)

> But I had a principal who my second year of teaching, a Hispanic male would not leave me alone and kept telling me, you need to be an administrator, you need to take classes, you got to start graduate classes and started putting these papers in my box and I ignored and ignored, until finally I gave in…I actually called him a few years ago and thanked him because if it had not been for him…. (Gloria)

> But the one person who is Hispanic called because he was here in HR at that time: "You know I've asked you so many times to go into administration and this is the last time I am going to ask you and I will never call you again." I'm like ok, I'll do it. (Roberta)

> I would have to say I have had mentors along the way. I have had other female Hispanic mentors that mentored to me with and without them knowing. There is a person who didn't know she was a mentor. She was my teacher. She inspired me….The relationship

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that she built with me and because of her I realized the dream of becoming a teacher...at the end of the year when I told her I was going to be a teacher, I told her it was because of you. You've been my mentor, my role model, my everything this year.... (Hilaria)

Intrinsic Determination to Reach Goal and to Succeed

Two of the twelve interviewees, Ruth and Bertha, found their inspiration within

themselves, with qualities of strong determination and perseverance to make a difference.

I would say my perseverance. I work very hard. I have very high expectations for myself. I don't give up. I never give up. I believe that if I want to do something, then I can do something, no matter what it takes. I try to explain that to everyone who is around me, students, teachers, and parents. If I can do it, anybody can do it. (Bertha)

The second was just a determination and a need to be useful and I feel that in education there was so much need...and of course a determination that I have within me to want to help. (Ruth)

Family Members Who Provided Encouragement, Which Included
Parents, Fathers, Mothers, and Husbands

Ruth, Gloria, and Ofelia's parents encouraged their daughters to obtain an education.

They believed that education was a key to getting ahead in life.

I would say the things that helped me the most were actually having strong parents, that although they were not educated...although my father was born here he only went to second grade so they were not educated. They had this strong belief that education was a way out of poverty. They really pushed us and guided us. (Ruth)

I know for me having parents who had a different attitude towards being Hispanic and being a female and their expectations were that I needed to make sure that I got a good education or received a good education, so that I could support myself financially no matter what my situation might be. (Gloria)

Mother struggled, but she was very lucky to have a steady job as a bookkeeper...She had wanted to be an English teacher and a coach, but my grandfather because of the culture wasn't going to let his daughter go to college....But she never really let us believe we would have a choice when we grew up and graduated from high school. There was no choice for us to make whether or not we were going to go to college. We were just going and like she always said you're going and I don't know how you are going to do it, because I can't afford it...and we knew we were going so my brother, sister and I, all, we are all college graduates. (Ofelia)

Motivation to be a Positive Influence for Students, Parents, and the Community

Natasha and Ofelia expressed strong feelings to make a difference for their students and the community.

> This is my fifth year here, I've actually had five parents go back to school because one of our booths we opened up is from TCC adult education. So parents tell them it is not too late, because if your kids can see you going back to school and that school is important and doing homework that's a good thing. It is not too late. A lot of the parents I serve here are young parents, 20s and 30s. It's not too late and there are so many programs and so many financial aid programs and help for them, but if they don't know, they don't have access to it. We make them aware of it and there are people here who will actually recruit them. We have had parents for the last three years, who came back and they were guest speakers and talked about going back to school and back to College Night and how they are almost through with their schooling. So we are reaching the community. (Natasha)

> Little did I know that I was going back home to see a part of my community that I never knew existed. I got there and I asked for the most challenging elementary campus and they were able to put me there and three years later, I was a fourth grade teacher and three years later they opened another one in a poverty stricken area and I asked to go there….But those years, I have to say they enriched my experience, my journey, because of the students I had to serve. (Ofelia)

What Institutional Challenges Did Hispanic Female School Leaders Encounter?

Interviewees indicated that the lack of support from counselors and advisors, bilingual program displacing regular teachers, parental prejudices tword a Mexican teacher teaching her child, teacher discrimination toward teaching Hispanic children, and prejudices toward assignment of a Hispanic female principal in a predominant White Anglo community.

Lack of Support from Counselors and Advisors

Gloria and Hilaria best summed up their disappointments and those of others for the lack of guidance from where it would be most expected from within the ranks of counselors and advisors.

> I was one of the top ten in my class and yet not one single counselor or administrator came to me. Again this was in the middle 70s and I think about that now, but no one came to me and said, "Hey, have you applied for college, have you thought about college, nothing." It wasn't until I went to him and said how do you fill this out. No one ever came to talk to me. Once I got there, yea, he assisted me, but if it had not been for me initiating, that help would not have come. (Gloria)

I had to find a way to go to college and because my advisors didn't advise me on getting grants. How do I get grants? How do I get scholarships? If I have to go to college, my parents can't pay. I have to do it on my own. So then, of course, I also had to face the challenge that nobody had ever gone to college on any side—on my mom's or dad's side. (Hilaria)

Bilingual Program Displacing Regular Teachers

Roberta had to experience hostility and discomfort from teachers for having to displace a regular teacher. The displacement was the result of the state-mandated Bilingual Program.

Well, I think being a bilingual teacher at that time was a challenge for every school district. When I came in the changes were being made because of the bilingual classrooms that had to be by the state. So I know that coming into —Elementary a teacher had to be moved to make room for a bilingual teacher. So that you could feel the tension of the staff at the time. "Well our friend is gone, because we had to have a bilingual teacher." (Roberta)

Parental Prejudices Toward a Mexican Teacher Teaching Her Child

Besides experiencing hostility for having to replace a regular teacher, Roberta also experienced that hostility from parents. One parent in particular openly voiced her resentment of her daughter receiving an education from a Mexican teacher.

The first day of school, a challenge and from the community as well. I had a mixed classroom. I was the only bilingual teacher in the building. So a parent comes up to the door and I still remember, "Oh no, my child is not going to be in that Mexican's room."…. And I didn't know what to say. It just so happens the principal was right there and he stopped and said, "Stop a minute, Mrs.— is qualified to teach any student." But I didn't realize that my tears were just flowing…and after that he said, "We can move the child because the mother doesn't want her in our room," and I said, "You do whatever you want. If you don't want to leave her here, that is all right."….But her comment was just so prejudicial and those are some of the challenges that I faced at the very beginning. (Roberta)

Encountering Teacher Discrimination Toward Hispanic Children

Opposition to teacher displacement and instruction by a Mexican teacher did not end there. Unfortunately, there were teachers who expressed that resentment toward Hispanic children.

I had a teacher who would call them my NCH kids. And then I found out it meant, No Chance in Hell. (Natasha)

I had this one teacher tell me one year, this teacher is no longer here. She said, "I'm so tired of these kids. They are just so broken and they are so needy." So, I didn't like that word broken. I thought about that word in my reflection. It's hurtful to say they are broken...then I had a faculty meeting. Well, we are all broken, all of us, but we had one teacher who was a WOW teacher. And then I told them what made the difference. Then I introduced the book, Working on the Work...our work is to work to motivate, to inspire students every day. That's our work, right? We inspire them, and those of us who are always working on that, we have the WOW factor. Always working on the work. You know you have good teachers and you have WOW teachers. And some of the WOW teachers changed you when you were broken. That's true. Broken I said stands for Being Radically Optimistic Keeping Education Non-Negotiable. I did a whole training on this, and I told them that's what made you be successful. It was some WOW teacher that stayed broken for you. They believed in you, even when you didn't deserve to be believed in. (Natasha)

Prejudices Toward Assignment of a Hispanic in a Predominantly White Anglo Community

There were were other forms of strong opposition to Hispanic teachers and students. For Dora it occurred when her school district assigned her to an affluent, Anglo community. Dora being a Hispanic female principal was perceived in a negative light.

She said, "the community at this school did not want a minority female principal."...She told me that they did not want me here when they first found out, when I was named principal. She told me that they got lots of phone calls and emails and had lots of the neighborhood parents here go to central before I had even started...so when she told me all that my heart was just like, what?...and then she went on to say that since I had been here they had gotten to know me as a person and as a leader....Now we are getting those same people coming back and saying. "Oh, we were so wrong." (Dora)

What Family Challenges Did Hispanic Female School Leaders Encounter?

Interviewees indicated that difficulty for parents to let their daughters leave home for college, choosing between marriage/family and attending college, balancing work and family, and life challenges.

Difficulty for Parents to Let Their Daughters Leave Home for College

Two of the twelve experienced difficulty leaving home to attend college.

I am one of eight. My father was 50 when I was born. I don't think I was expected, nevertheless I was very well received and loved. That is one of the riches of our heritage is that as Hispanics we are really family oriented. Love kids and look at kids like they are a gift, regardless if you have them at fifty...but I didn't have the same opportunities as my siblings did because they grew up in pairs and they went off together and my parents were reluctant to let me out or let me leave because I was the last one, the bread

winner...you know I got a full scholarship to —University for getting a Citizen award for being a good citizen. My parents refused to let me go, because that would mean they would be alone and they didn't speak English. They didn't speak or write and being the youngest I think that also has a lot of our beliefs maybe that the kids are supposed to take care of us. So I share those fears with these parents...I wasn't resentful because I understood very much that you do have to take care of your parents and prioritize...I could have been really devastated that my parents did not allow me to go away to college on a full scholarship and they said, "No. It's too far away." My parents, who will take care of us? I could become very bitter....I knew I was going to school, just not when I wanted....You know my parents, even if they had put seven other kids through college, that didn't change the effect that now they were old and I was the last one. And there were all these fears and anxieties in them. So we have to be able to identify that. We are Hispanic. We have to understand our culture. We have to realize really what is going on in the family unit and try to maintain its integrity as a unit and you do that not by trying to change something or impose something on them, but by trying to give them ways to still be successful by preserving their family unity, because after all that is all they have. My mother is 85 now...and I always feel she has done more with her life than I have. I am educated and what I have done with my life and yet she has done so much in her life without having an education. I taught my mother how to write,...I give her homework every day, because she lives with me....We were still supporting my parents. We supported them all through our married life....two years ago she moved in with us.... Actually, we moved into another house after our house was already paid for and we had no plans to move...but she is with us....And like I said before she has no income, no anything, she would be homeless, if it weren't for family....But she prefers to stay with us....I just always have to be mindful to get out of here by five, because I have to go home and make supper for her, because she can't cook and she has oxygen all of the time and stuff. Because I leave her, I never rarely stay here after five, because I know she is waiting to be fed. Now, I can't afford to stay here very late. I really feel blessed to have her. (Natasha)

My parents being the traditional, protective, and strict Hispanic parents that they were, I could never say I'm going to go to Austin, so I'm not going to apply to UTA, to Rice, or College Station, or wherever, even if I had the grades for it. That was not an option for me. Wherever I went, it had to be close to home so that I could commute. It all lies again on the attitudes and the values that the Hispanic parents have for their daughters and what they are allowed and not allowed to do. (Gloria)

Marriage and Family Versus Attending College

Hilaria's aspirations for a better life has been met with misunderstanding from her

parents and siblings. For her family it was more important to marry, have a home, children,

and fulfill the role of the Hispanic woman as they knew it. Roberta's family also wanted her to

marry and fulfill the traditional role of the Hispanic woman. Fortunately, on her mother's side

her relatives living in Mexico were always attending school to better themselves. Those female

relatives became her role models.

> I told you about my parents and I don't judge them or siblings either, but there is a rift
> between me and my family. It's a big rift, but it's something that I had to accept, because
> this is what I believe was what my life was to be, but they don't accept the fact that I am
> educated. It's like the old "*se crea muy, muy*," and it's not that I think I am better than
> them and it's like I told them, "I'm not better than anybody," and I'm not. I'm different
> than your thinking process, I'm different of what I want for my life, but that doesn't make
> me better, that doesn't make me worse. I just believe in education....There are nine, there
> are four brothers and five sisters. Out of the four boys, I talk to one on a consistent basis.
> I feel that I can call him up and say anything, one calls me about every three months, and
> the others I don't talk to at all. Then on the girls' side, there are five of us, so there
> are four sisters....My sisters can all cook, they can all sew, they can all do embroidery,
> the typical Hispanic family. The girls, they can all do that and I can't, and that's what
> they don't understand....As far as siblings accepting me, I think I have one brother that
> accepts, one brother that semi-accepts thinking on education and really none of my
> sisters. (Hilaria)

> You know you are supposed to get married and have kids and when are you going to do
> that?....I think that is just part of the culture. I don't think it meant that you are going
> to be an old maid, it's just that family is important. They would always wonder what is
> she waiting for about getting better and you're still going to school. You have already
> finished high school, what's next? You should get married and start a family. Fortunately,
> my grandmother, my father's mother lived with us and she would always say, "*Hijita, tu
> haces lo que tu quieres con tu vida*." She was a strong person....My mother's side of the
> family, we would go visit in Mexico and they were always in school. They would work at
> night and go to school in the day. And they were always in school trying to get a title or
> whatever, so I'm fortunate that I could see that when we would visit in summers....And
> always when we talk and have family reunions and they say wow you've come a long way
> and I say to them, "You guys were my role models." ...On your father's side that was the
> side that was telling you get married and have children. So they had lesser expectations
> because of culture and they never went to school....Our culture says this and we are
> doing that and our culture doesn't match. (Roberta)

Balancing Work and Family

Several principals conveyed the difficulty of balancing work and family. Many were not

able to achieve that balance and their marriages ended in divorce. Dora and Ofelia shared the

difficulties of maintaining a demanding job and the counterbalance of the demanding needs of

sustaining a marriage. With the essential support of her husband and family, Flora has managed

to find that balance between the demands of two competing worlds, the principalship and her family.

> I think the same kinds of challenges that any female encounters, only because as a female, being married and having children and having a family, that is your priority and so especially I think in our culture. I mean, I think that is our role where you be sure your children are fed and nurture them and they still are, but I think the struggle of being a mother, a wife, a student, and then adding to that I was an administrator, because I was an assistant principal....I ended up divorcing my last year as an assistant principal, the spring before I became a principal. Because it was he did not agree with the amount of time that I was spending with work. It was a big part of that. It was very hard, because my time was very stressful and hard, because I felt like I was doing for our family and it was very much a challenge. I think my marriage suffered because of it. (Dora)

> I am where I am now and I tell her it is her fault. In either case, it has been very difficult to balance our family life and the needs of our campus, because of the demands put upon us as a leader. The time is very demanding whether in the building or even when you are at home you are still making phone calls, still doing paper work, because it needs to be done. Having to balance that with your children is a difficult task, but my children have always come first....Again, whether it is cultural or not we put our family above ourselves and then we come into what we are doing....I know my primary goal is my children, my family. I need to be sure that was in line. It is hard to find that balance, but what helps is the support of your family. That might not be cultural, but know in my Hispanic family you support your family. You are behind your family no matter what. I have the support of my husband and even though my family, my parents don't live in the area, there is support if I need it. (Flora)

> I became a principal in the process of getting married again. I thought he would be ok with it. I sacrificed I would say eight opportunities to become an instructional officer to make sure that he had his business going and that he would be ok and when I finally decided to get into a leadership position I wanted to make sure he would be fine with it and of course we talked about it, but as the time went by and my star kept rising, I started to feel a little resentment....Now I can look back, he was just so, you might be the principal out there, but you're not the principal here....My second marriage really did suffer as a result of the job. (Ofelia)

Life Challenges

Ruth has met with many personal challenges, including divorce, but in spite of life's challenges she now has a supportive husband and, throughout all of the difficulties encountered, was able to run a successful school.

I have had a lot. You name it, I had it. I've been divorced a couple of times, and remarried, so I've gone through divorces. You name it, I've gone through it. Now for the last 20 years, I've been married and he has been so supportive and the last few years have been the most difficult because through that I lost both my parents, I am having to raise an autistic grandson....I went through breast cancer, I had all kinds of challenges in the last few years, but he's helped, been supportive and the fact that regardless of the amount of time I had to spend at school....I was always able to count on him...(Ruth)

What Personal Challenges Did Hispanic Female School Leaders Encounter?

Interviewees indicated that acceptance as a Hispanic female principal, where are the Hispanic female principals, Hispanic female school principal career ladder ascendency misunderstood, and balancing work and family were among the personal challenges faced.

Acceptance as a Hispanic Female Principal

Hispanic female principals have experienced problems of acceptance by their school faculties. Bertha opened a new school and received teachers from other schools. These were teachers that she had not had the opportunity to acquaint herself with through interviews and in making the final selection for hiring. Hilaria followed a Hispanic female principal, but Hilaria was not the cookie-cutter mold of the principal that preceded her. The staff, accustomed to one Hispanic female principal, had to change their lenses to the different leadership style of another Hispanic female principal.

One of them is just being a Hispanic female leader by itself was a challenge. Being accepted as the leader of this school. Not in the district, but the school itself by some of the teachers, by some of the parents, by some of the people in the team and so it goes back to everything that I have done where I feel that I have to work harder than my colleagues around me to show and prove that I am the right person for the job and that I have the ability to do the job. That what you see or how I sound is not a reflection of my performance. You have to earn their respect with knowledge, to be up to date with technology, instruction with resources, with lessons and I would say that those are the challenges that I have had. But you have to be able to get rid of those barriers and obstacles that you find. Like I said, never allow any obstacles to keep you from doing the job or from being successful. (Bertha)

Let's talk about professional. It's funny because I replaced another Hispanic principal and was kind of funny ha, ha, funny sad that they all expected me to have her ways because you know we were both Hispanic. We have a Hispanic culture. And do we all adhere to that Spanish culture? Well, no. We all have our own mind. (Hilaria)

Where Are the Hispanic Female Principals?

Flora and Ofelia wonder about the low representation of Hispanic females in the
principalship and in other leadership positons. Because of the number of Hispanic students, they
feel there should be more representation in the Hispanic leadership. They question if they are
doing their part in promoting Hispanic women to become principals.

> I've seen where there aren't as many Hispanic females in the job...various school leaders.
> I see a lot more as assistant principals, not as principals. I see the numbers declining a
> little bit, so it is interesting to see why that is occurring. Whether it be just Hispanics
> or Hispanic females. They are just stopping there. They are not stepping out. It makes
> me wonder, if I am doing what I need to be doing to mentor other Hispanic females to
> move up. There are a few of us as Hispanic female principals....Take a look at what our
> district is doing as far as aspiring principals. I wonder what is the diversity of that group
> of (Hispanic) females within leadership, elementary vs. secondary. You don't find as
> many Hispanic females in secondary. It is more male dominated. There are barely any. In
> high school there are two. In the middle school, I think there are only two. There aren't
> many. You can pretty much count them on one hand. Elementary is getting close to that
> same issue when you talk about having over 80 schools. It is still a very low percentage.
> I wonder what are we doing in the Hispanic female community to bring Hispanics to be
> reflective where we are 60–70% Hispanic in our area to have our schools represented
> in leadership. So when it comes to your mind or some people say I am glad you got
> a leadership role and that you are Hispanic, I say wow that person knows something
> and I don't. And I need to respect and feel honored that I am a Hispanic female leader
> and take that to heart and understand that is an important role to have. You are the
> exception and not the rule....I don't know if it has anything to do with just not knowing
> our culture. There are still some communities and districts that are not comfortable with
> Hispanic female leaders. It is just the fear of the unknown. Kind of like discrimination, a
> bias. I don't think it is an outright discrimination. It's like a passive aggressive. We are not
> going to say it, but it's there. We are not sure you should be in that building or in that
> community. Just feeling uncomfortable when you might be speaking Spanish to a parent,
> but that's not the norm of that campus, the majority of the language is English there.
> But you try to do interaction with that parent, because it is important to interact with
> that community, want them to feel comfortable and valued. So that could be a personal
> challenge...you could be somebody's role model. Role model is very significant. You are a
> Hispanic female principal, a role model for children. I want them to see there is progress,
> not only as a Hispanic, an educated Hispanic, but as a Hispanic female. That is important.
> (Flora)

> The only thing is that I do wonder why we don't have a bigger representation. I guess
> that's going to be a personal challenge for me....I am wondering why there is such a small
> percentage of us (Hispanic principals)....My assistant principal was mentioning that a lot
> of people still consider this like a suburb. I don't see how. It is huge. But I guess the old

school mentality and I don't know if that is still part of the reason. I don't know if it is a result of White flight. I don't know, if that might have come as result of that. Arlington is changing. The demographic is unbelievable. Yeah, I wonder....I am going through my community and the bulk is Hispanic. (Ofelia)

Hispanic Female Principal's Rise to Different Levels of the Principalship Viewed as Ambition for Self

Ester supports her school district by her willingness to take any school level position offered to her. She has been an elementary, middle school, and high school principal. She feels there are those who view her as a cutthroat ambitious person. She states that they do not know that whatever position she has had has been offered to her by central administration. She says as long as the district has confidence in her leadership abilities, she will continue to accept whatever positions are offered to her.

> I think that the greatest personal challenge is sometimes being driven. It's misunderstood as cutthroat ambition. And so like earlier you were hearing me talk and you can see that the ambition doesn't appear to be ambition, it just appears to be. But every time an opportunity is given to you have to be willing to walk through the door, but you've had the opportunity to sit down and talk. The onlooker who maybe doesn't sit down and talk to you, may only be watching and so they may interpret your fast movement as ambition and ambition is so cold and so impersonal and so without regard or care for people whom you're serving and so personal now in my heart...but because you are willing to take chances, because you are willing to step into the unsure thing, because you are willing to take risks and not be going downtown and saying, oh no, no I want to go back to elementary. I don't want to go there, get me out of this crazy middle school.... But sometimes our personal drive gets mistaken as ambition, just cutthroat ambition and that's a personal thing....I will say that when I went from elementary to middle school, I didn't seek it out, I didn't go asking for it, but in all cases my bosses who have moved me throughout these years, there is one thing they will always say about me, she is always willing....If you want me to go there I'm willing, if you want me to do this, I'm willing. Whatever you give me, whoever you give me, whatever the circumstances, I'm willing. I already know full well that it is going to turn out wonderful. I already know it is going to be just fine, because I have faith you know. All I have to be is be willing. (Ester)

Balancing Work and Family

Balancing work and family seems to be a true challenge for the Hispanic female principal. Gloria has learned over time what is important for her.

> The other personal challenge that I can tell you that I had my own views and attitudes about being a good mother and being a good administrator has been a challenge,

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because I want to be there for my children. I couldn't be the mom that went on field trips, who baked the cookies and stuff, unless I predid them and sent them, which I did. The point is I had to be mom and dad, man of the house and also be a good leader with all of that and all the late hours and such. It goes back to that balancing….So in a way, yeah, that was a challenge, but I can tell you that I got over having to have a spotless house, you can go check if you want, I got over having to have a hot meal on the table. It was guys, there is cereal and milk in the fridge. You knew what you could give up… and leaving the dirty dishes, so we could at least sit down and watch a movie together. (Gloria)

What Strategies Did Hispanic Female School Leaders Employ to Overcome the Various Barriers to Success?

Interviewees indicated that staying current with what is going on in education, reaching out to the community, finding strength and guidance from God, and having determination and honesty.

Staying Current With What Is Going on in Education

Bertha, Ruth, and Ester stressed the importance of being knowledgeable in the different aspects of education. Bertha said that in order to be an effective leader, one must also be a continual learner. Ruth said that an administrator who is not knowledgeable is in turn not able to help the teachers. Ester said that a leader must always be and convey that she is striving to be the best she can be in the role of leader and principal.

Stay up to date. Stay current with what is happening. Don't stop learning. Educate yourself. Persevere, always, always, always. Be fair because you have the obstacles, you have the challenges of credibility at times and just always act with integrity. Always show that you are following policy, that you know what you are doing….Insistence on having high expectations, being fair, being knowledgeable, being personable, holding everybody accountable. (Bertha)

So know what you are doing, know your stuff, be up to date in all of the strategies in everything you are expecting your teachers to do. Be extremely knowledgeable. You cannot really help them, if you do not know what you are talking about and then be open and listen and then not settle for the mediocre, but expect them to push a little harder. There is so much that their expectations need to be high, so your expectations of them needs to be high. So utilizing those kind of strategies, I think is what has helped me the most. (Ruth)

You have to be your personal best at whatever it is you are doing. If that means you got to go make it your business to know more about something, then you go make it your

business to know more. If you need to know theory because you need to do a change model, you make it your business to know how to make that happen. If you are going to conduct effective meetings or are your meetings lemon drop meetings. Make it your business to get the tools to lead a meeting. If you have to bridge together volatile professional go ahead. You make it your business, you get the tools, then you make it your business to have conflict resolution. You really got to be at your personal best level, that praxis level. (Ester)

Reaching Out to the Community

Felicia, who does not speak Spanish fluently, took her mother door to door to introduce herself to the community. She wanted parents to be reassured that she would do everything possible for the betterment of their children. Natasha opens herself to the community by having Fridays, *"platicas con la directora"*—open talks with the principal.

> I went into the neighborhoods with my mother and introduced them and told them through a translator what I wanted for their children, what their children deserved in a school and what I was going to provide for them and I did that over and over again and told them basically send your children to school every day. I don't care if they are late, just send them and we'll do the rest. We will feed them. We will provide health services for them. We will provide glasses for them. We will put shoes on their feet. I will provide Christmas for them. Whatever they need, we will take care of them, just get them to school. So that was the message I sent out there. (Felicia)

> I think I serve a beautiful community, because every Friday I have a talk to the principal, *'platicas con la directora,'* so they can show up every Friday and we walk the block and they have babies in strollers and they can tell me anything they want. The first couple of years it was like a gripe session. After that it was like how do you make tamales, other stuff. What's going on in the school and how they can help and you build relationships with that and I think that is the key—being interested in them and building a relationship with them. (Natasha)

Finding Strength and Guidance from God

Hilaria, Roberta, and Natasha look inward to their faith in God to help them with the students, staff, parents, and the community. They engage themselves in daily prayer as they begin and work through their day.

> The second strategy that no one wants to hear is these are not my kids. These are God's kids and my prayer every morning is to let me bring some joy into somebody's life, let me bring some respect into somebody's life and change their life according to you, not according to me. (Hilaria)

One strategy is that I have a strong belief in my religion and that has a lot to do with what I am and how I act. It is just a part of me. That's one big one. Just meditating in the morning, praying. Being involved in church. I'm the director of catechism for about 12 years and so I don't know, I think that has played a big part....(Roberta)

You know what? You are just doing this job. There are a million people doing this job better so you know who are brighter, smarter, and more prepared. The only reason he lets me do it is because he knows he lets me take him wherever I go. That's the only reason and people still need him whether they realize it or not. You know, He is the most contributing factor to my success....I know that I can tell myself every day, that I wasn't hired, I was called. And that's what you want. And because I was called you don't treat the job the same way. You know it is for a season. (Natasha)

Let me tell you, I love the Lord with all my heart and I make no apologies. He is the boss of me and he spoke to me about what my job is here. (Natasha)

Having Determination and Honesty

Both Ruth and Dora stress the quality of determination. Ruth also believes in honesty and doing what is right for people.

Determination. Doing what's right and always being honest with people. And I feel you have to treat people as individuals. You have to understand them. Really listen to people and not try to feel superior. (Ruth)

That's hard because, I think I just have to be myself. I think I've always been a very determined person. I've always been a very positive person. (Dora)

What Advice Do Hispanic Female School Leaders Have to Offer for Aspiring Hispanic Females Desiring Leadership Positions in K–12 Schools?

Interviewees indicated the importance to be determined, stay focused, surround yourself with positive people, be positive about yourself and others, trust your staff, develop team work, learn to delegate, and have a support system.

Be Determined and Stay Focused

Ruth and Roberta both advise the importance of staying focused. Ruth, Roberta, Flora, Ofelia, Felicia, and Ester advise the Hispanic female aspirants to be ready to teach and work with all students and communities. They also convey the responsibility they will be accepting.

My advice to them is to stay focused. If this is what they want, then as I said earlier, know it well. Know what you need and stay focused on what you need and make it a priority.

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So you have an awesome responsibility. Don't go in thinking it is just a job. It is almost a calling, that you need to push, that you need to be excited. Love what you do, so that the children will get motivated by you, seeing you. (Ruth)

They should be aware of they have to want to do it, and that is what is going to keep them focused. (Roberta)

Make sure you have your attitude in check. Make sure that you take a look to see what your beliefs are. It is not only beliefs for yourself, but for your whole community that you are going to effect. The reason I say get your attitude in check is you need to make sure that when you are looking at leadership that you are not just looking at your Hispanic community. That is who you are, but as a Hispanic and a female you need to look how you are going to impact everybody. You don't narrow yourself to one race. That way people will value you more. They are going to be able to cross all lines, all barriers, which is what we have to do as leaders anyway. We have to move forward to work with another race, another gender, and it needs to be sincere. (Flora)

First of all, we have to understand our history. Where we've been, Hispanic female history. We need to understand our history. What our role has been in the past and we need to honor our people by with success and we need to feel that we can educate any child, no matter where they put us. If they put me in a Black community, an Anglo dominant community, I will be able to go in there and do the job. (Ofelia)

So I would say to that young Hispanic woman, Be determined. Show what you are made of, show what your goals are, and be out there and communicate that by your actions. (Ruth)

I think if that's what they really want to do, they should go for it and surround yourself with positive people that will encourage you. I never heard anyone say no, except for the friends I left behind. (Roberta)

Well, you see this is what you are going to do on a paycheck or a job. This is life's work. So that is what you have to figure out. Some people say it's a calling, some I prayed and this is what I was told to do. This is your life's work. This is the book you are going to write. This work is what you can hang your hat on later. This is your contribution. (Felicia)

One of the three (principals) really had her business altogether, but the other two not so much so, but they might have success in certain areas, but the wonderful thing is that I got to take from each one of them something about leadership that was really important that contributed to me, when I became a principal. (Ester)

Be Positive About Yourself and Others

Flora advises that the Hispanic female aspirants be positive and believe in their

leadership capabilities and skills.

Be proactive when there are opportunities, go for it. Don't limit yourself that you can't do this or that doesn't work for me....Also, don't take I'm this person vs. them attitude. I am a Hispanic female, that's why I'm not getting a leadership role. Then you start limiting yourself and putting barriers. Whether you might not speak them verbally, your nonverbals can be just as loud as your verbal. There is a lot to look at, but again you want to be a representation of who you are and what you are and be proud of that. (Flora)

Trust Your Staff, Develop Teamwork, and Be Able to Delegate

Gloria and Natasha share the importance of delegating and not thinking that being

principal of a school is a one-woman show. Principals need to know your staff and build upon

their strengths.

I cannot control everyone, I cannot control everything, all I can control is myself and somewhere along the line, unless I intend to have a nervous breakdown, or go crazy, or quit after a week, I must trust in the other staff members that are there. Now, I have to know who I am going to trust, but when I find those people I have to delegate, to rely and believe in them and in God and trust in their abilities that they are going to do the right thing and do the right thing for children. So that would be my first piece of advice, that they build a strong sense of who they are and that they learn to trust and delegate. (Gloria)

Another piece of advice would be that they also realize that they can't do everything by themselves. That kind of goes back to that delegating because that too can be detrimental, not just to your professional, but to your personal life. You have to let go and you have to know that it takes an entire team, and you can't just say that we are going to work as a team, you have to actually do it. A good leader, no matter what color, no matter what gender you are, a good leader has to lead at times, make decisions, tough decisions at times, has to listen, and take other people's decisions at times, and they have to follow, they can't always be out in front and but the true beauty is knowing when to do which. Yes, that is the key. So that you learn with experience, that little piece of wisdom. (Gloria)

It is not a one man show. I am a contributor. It is not just me. It is the community of professionals who have come together, who have decided this is what they want to invest their life in and when we interview for people for new additions to our family, I always tell them, I can promise hard work, but you will always be motivated and inspired every day that you are here on this campus and when you drive home, if it is the last day on earth, you have invested your life. It is up there that it is going to pay you dividends for all eternity cause these kids need you and they need to know there is hope and they can achieve. (Natasha)

Have a Support System

Having a support system cannot be overly stressed. The support system can be your husband, your family, counselor, or an outside person such as a priest, pastor, or friend. There is a need for someone to talk to, who listens, and with whom women can share their concerns as well as their happy moments.

> I can't say find your balance, because I'm still looking for it. They are going to have to reach out to other principals, whether it's your counselor, pastor, priest, they are going to need a support system out there for them and that they can do both, if that person at home is willing to be a part of your team, the spouse, it's difficult....I mean the first time, I have actually admitted the sacrifices I did make. I had to make them and it's not characteristic of just the Hispanic female, but I think in our culture it is magnified. (Ofelia)

> If the husband is one of those that is very jealous of their time, then it is not going to work. It is just not going to work. They need to have a good talk...good long talk with their mate and say, look this is the way it needs to be or I am not going to be successful.... You have got to have some resources available. Very important. Because of your work load....Anyway you look at it, it's going to be rough. It is hard work. But it's very rewarding and it's fun and when it stops being fun, you need to think about something else. (Ruth)

Summary

The responses to the interview questions were varied. Therefore, I present the data by using interviewee responses to answer the research questions. Half of the 12 Hispanic female principals indicated that the encouragement of various educators, in particular that of their principals, had an impact on their becoming administrators themselves. For many it was their principal who saw their potential to lead a school. Following the urging of these administrators and others in different administrative positions, these Hispanic females took the route that lead them in becoming administrators.

These Hispanic females also strongly expressed their intrinsic determination to succeed. Where there were obstacles they found the strategies to overcome them. Support from family members, primarily their mothers and fathers, was an added incentive for them to continue their education in the field of administration. Among their motivations for successful

accomplishment of their goal was that of wanting to be a positive influence for students, parents and the community.

The Hispanic female principals encountered institutional challenges. They shared their disillusionment from lack of support from counselors and advisors. As Hispanic females they reflected about why they did not receive helpful guidance into college preparation, matriculation, and financial information of possible grants, scholarships, and loans.

One of the principals gave an account of what happened to her when the state-mandated bilingual program came into being. As a bilingual teacher she was placed in the position of displacing a regular teacher. For a time, this displacement of a regular teacher with a bilingual teacher caused animosity between her and the other teachers. That same Hispanic principal also came into conflict with parental prejudices toward her for being a Mexican teacher. For some parents their prejudice toward an individual being Mexican and a teacher prevented them from allowing their children to be taught by a Mexican teacher.

As a teacher their were institutional challenges, but one of the Hispanic principals told of the challenge she met as a Hispanic female principal. She was transferred from a predominantly Hispanic school to a predominantly white, and very affluent school. Unbeknownst to her, the community was upset because a Hispanic female had been assigned to their school.

Other forms of discrimination were revealed to a Hispanic female principal. She learned of teacher discrimination toward teaching Hispanic children. As a way to counter prejudicial and degrading remarks about teaching impoverished Hispanic children, the principal developed her own sensitivity awareness inservice.

Besides striving to overcome institutional challenge, these Hispanic female principals also faced family challenges. Several of the Hispanic female principals indicated the difficulty that some parents had with allowing their daughters to leave home for college. For many parents letting their daughters leave for college was difficult and some parents outrightly responded by saying no. Many of these Hispanic parents are first generation Americans and still have not acquired the survival skills of understanding and speaking fluently in English. Many Hispanic

parents unfamiliar with college life are fearful for the welfare of their daughters if allowed to attend college.

A typical expectation for some of these parents was to see their daughters married and raising a family. For some of the Hispanic female principals attending college was deferred until after they were married. For aother parent their daughter's desire to attend college was never understood. Balancing work and family and life were found to be both a family challenge and a personal challenge.

Personal challenges came in the form of finding acceptance as a Hispanic female principal. She was a new principal opening a new school where she had not had the opportunity to interview and hire her own faculty. Due to her demeanor this Hispanic female principal said that she had to work harder at her job as a new principal to convey to teachers and those around her that she had the competence and skills needed for her leadership position.

Another personal challenge for these Hispanic female principals was the absence of Hispanic female principals or Hispanic female central administration leaders to serve as mentors or role models. There were few if any Hispanic female mentors and role models in leadership positions. Generally, the mentors were their male principals.

One of the Hispanic female school principals spoke of her career ladder ascendency. She said that she believed there were individuals who saw her quick rise in administration as cold and cutthroat ambition. She explained that those individuals had not sat in on her interviews with central administration. Her response was that whenever central administration had asked her to take a school, be it elementary, middle, or high school, she always accepted. She was always willing and would make the best of any situation.

Balancing work and family remained a challenge for most of the Hispanic female principals. There were those who managed to find a balance and then there were those who were still trying to find the balance.

Among of the strategies that these successful Hispanic female principals employed was staying current with what is happening in education and being personal with the community

by reaching out to them. One of the principals found a way of reaching out to her community by having informal Friday "talks with the principal." A personal strategy for some came from finding their strength and guidance from God. Three of the principals shared that they begin their school day with prayer. One of the principals felt it was a calling from God for her to serve as a principal. Another strategy was that of having determination and honesty with people. Determination and honesty helped them to overcome the various barriers to success.

Lastly, the Hispanic female principals sought to give advice to the aspiring Hispanic females desiring to become principals. The different advice given was for them to be determined, stay focused, surround yourself with positive people, be positive about yourself and others, trust your staff, develop teamwork, learn to delegate, and have a support system.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The research found the study to be very relevant to current issues in education today. As previously stated in Chapters 1 and 2, the Hispanic student population is growing and is expected to exceed 50% in the near future. This speaks to the need for educational leaders who understand the culture, language, and issues related to educating the Hispanic student population.

The literature reveals that there is a disproportionate number of Hispanic school leaders in comparison to the number of Hispanic students populating our schools. The number of Hispanic females in school leadership are even fewer. This study sought to examine the barriers confronting Hispanic women school leaders.

This is a qualitative study using interviews as a method for collecting data. The major sections of the chapter include Statement of the Problem, Summary of the Results, and Discussion of the Results.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to ascertain how Hispanic female school leaders overcame the barriers to their success or how they gained insight into the important lessons and strategies learned from their experiences. This study examines the following specific research questions:

1. What factors have contributed to the success of Hispanic female school leaders?

2. What institutional challenges did Hispanic female school leaders encounter?

3. What family challenges did Hispanic female school leaders encounter?

4. What personal challenges did Hispanic female school leaders encounter?

5. What strategies did Hispanic female school leaders employ to overcome the various barriers to success?

6. What advice do Hispanic female school leaders have for Hispanic females aspiring to leadership positions in K–12 schools?

Review of Methodology

This study is a qualitative one which used interviews to obtain data. A total of 12 principals from the Fort Worth Independent School District, the Arlington Independent School District, and the Grand Prairie Independent School District comprise the group of participants interviewed for this study. All of the school districts are in the Dallas/Fort Worth area of north central Texas. There are seven principals from the Fort Worth Independent School District, three from the Arlington Independent School District, and two from the Grand Prairie Independent School District.

All of the principals were asked the same set of six questions. The interview time set aside was one hour, although in some cases the time lasted more than one hour. All of the interviews took place in the principal's office. Once each interview was transcribed, I analyzed the principals' responses to each question. The themes within each question were color coded.

Summary of the Results

Each of the 12 principals responded to a set of 6 questions. Each responded in a personal style. The principals credited different persons in their lives for having given them confidence and a feeling of assurance that they could overcome whatever barriers they might confront. Of importance to several of the principals was having a strong personal determination and perseverance to succeed. Other principals gave recognition first to their parents, some of whom did not have an education or financial resources, but who nonetheless knew the importance of an education and desired it for their daughters by offering support and encouragement. Others mentioned encouragement by the mentors and role models in their lives, particularly those they had encountered when they were teachers.

There were institutional challenges which for some of the Hispanic female principals took the form of a disassociation between themselves and their high school counselors and advisors. There were those who shared their unfortunate frustrations of wanting to go to college, but of lacking the knowledge for how to proceed. This included college selections, matriculation, fees, living away from home, and other aspects of college prerequisite requirements and meeting the

expectations of college life. Some of the principals received no assistance from their high school counselors or advisors for obtaining financial aid by means of grants or scholarships. The college guidance presumed to be provided by high school counselors and advisors was not forthcoming for some of the Hispanic female principals. These successful principals took the initiative on their own to seek out the assistance and guidance they needed to attend college.

The Hispanic female principals expressed appreciation for their families' support. In some situations reflecting on the Hispanic culture, there were parents who felt anxious about letting their daughters leave home for college. Embedded in the Hispanic culture is a strong sense of family. Traditionally, it has been difficult for parents to let their daughters leave home to attend a college or university in another city or state. Hispanic parents tend to be protective of their daugters' well being. In conjunction with this aspect of traditional family life is the parents' need for reciprocal well-being. Many of the parents are first and second generation immigrants to the United States and do not possess the necessary skills to financially provide for themselves, much less are they able to comunicate their needs in their new country. Some of the Hispanic female principals maintained their desire to attend college, but instead of happening at the conclusion of high school, the opportunity presented itself later in their lives. Others, through marriage and support from their husbands, were able to fulfill their goal of attending college. And others became aware of financial aid through applications for grants and scholarships thanks to older siblings or friends.

The most common personal challenge faced by the Hispanic female principals interviewed was balancing work life and family life. There were many who were not successful in doing this and their marriages ended in divorce. Other principals found ways to successfully delegate work assignments to individuals on their staff. Team building was another strategy employed by some, rather than attempting to fulfill all duties on their own. Still others conscientiously ended their work day at a prescribed time in order to place priority on their families.

Successful Hispanic female school principals indicated many success strategies that they desired to share with aspiring leaders. The strategies that were most mentioned included the following: staying focused, becoming knowledgeable, staying current, being ready to work hard, persevering, being true to oneself, being honest, seeking a balance between job and family, delegating responsibilities to entrusted associates, team building, networking with other principals, maintaining high expectations for oneself, one's staff, and the children, and lastly and perhaps most importantly, loving what you do.

Discussion of the Results

Implications of the Study

As an outcome of these interviews there are different implications for addressing the various barriers expressed by the Hispanic female principals. For some the barriers began the moment they stepped into the school building and in turn stepped into their classroom. One of the principals as a first grader was told outright by her teacher, "You will never amount to anything because English is not your native language." What a harsh thing to say to a child on her first day of school! What should have been a day of wonderment and excitement for the beginning of school was instead a crusher of self-esteem and self-worth. She was being told that she was already a failure; her teacher had no expectations or at the least held low expectations for her success in school.

Another area to be addressed is that of adequate access to high school counselors, advisors, and career resources. Students should not be unfairly denied counseling for the simple reason that they are Hispanic females. It is generally assumed that counselors and advisors counsel all students about college and the topics needed to be discussed so the student is in a position to move forward. All students should receive this information and direction despite the student's personal time line for entering college.

More than one of the principals interviewed stated that she received no information from her counselor or advisor. One of the high school counselors had told an interviewee that because she was considered pretty she would probably get married after high school instead of

attending college. Another principal shared that even though she graduated in the top 10% of her class, no counselor or administrator had approached her with the necessary information for her college preparation. It seemed that many Hispanic females were stereotyped as opting out of college for marriage and children, and that they would not have any desires or aspirations to attend college. This was certainly not the case for these two Hispanic females just described.

The Hispanic culture plays an influential role in the lives of family members. The Hispanic culture is protective and caring of their daughters' safety and well-being. Because of this caring mantle of protection, some traditional parents are hesitant about sending their daughters off to unknown places and unknown environments. For many Hispanic families it is still first- and second-generation children going away to college for the first time. Since the families are unfamiliar with college life, many are hesitant about letting their daughters go off to college. It is therefore important for high schools to have College Nights for parents and their children to attend. Bilingual college personnel in attendance would be able to address many of the issues and questions that would be of concern to Hispanic parents. Discussion with parents about their concerns would work to alleviate some of the anxiety parents feel about letting a daughter go away to college. After a daughter is permitted to attend college, then the college or university in turn would be advised to offer orientation sessions for the Hispanic parents. Once on the college campus, bilingual college personnel can reassure parents of the expectations for their daughters, the financial services available, dorm or apartment living, coursework toward a degree, and general life on campus.

Another area which Hispanic females found helpful was having a mentor. In most of the principal interviews, it was learned that their mentor was not a Hispanic female administrator. Nor was it critical for the mentor to be a Hispanic female, since for many it was the White Anglo male principal who was the strong encourager. However, those who did have a Hispanic female mentor found it helpful in being able to relate ethnically and culturally with that representative to the point of forming lasting friendships.

It is regrettable that when the aspiring Hispanic female leader looked for a Hispanic female leader to be a mentor and role model, there were very few and in some cases actually none to be found. Inability to find a Hispanic female administrator appears to be an indication that not enough Hispanic women have been promoted through in their school districts to the position of principal or positions above the principalship. This revelation was found to be true currently in the school districts researched. One of the three large school districts had only two Hispanic female principals even though that school district had a 40% Hispanic student population. With the growing Hispanic student population it is imperative that more female Hispanic leaders be placed in administrative positions in order to provide balance to the Hispanic population growth.

Aspiring Hispanic females, as well as students, are looking for their Hispanic counterpart, a role model or mentor, not only in the teaching profession, but also in administrative levels beginning with the principalship. For the future advancement of Hispanic students interacting with teachers and administrators of their own ethnicity and aspiring Hispanic female leaders, the need is great for the hiring and advancement of Hispanic women into positions of leadership. For those aspiring Hispanic females that did have a Hispanic female as a mentor, the mentor served as a role model and as an advocate of the individual's competencies, knowledge, training, talents, and skills.

Throughout the interviews principals shared their concerns for the well-being of their parents and their own nuclear family. Balancing work and family was often spoken of as a challenge as was the devoted care they wanted to provide for their parents. Taking care of elderly parents seemed to be a trait of the Hispanic culture. From the time of their children's birth to their old age, Hispanic parents form a bond of love, nurturing, and caring that persists and is reciprocated throughout the lives of each member of the family. When a parent becomes aged and seems to have nothing to offer, nor a financial means of supporting themselves, their Hispanic children intrinsically look to the care and protection of the parents. It is seen as a

natural course of events for most Hispanic children to care and look after their parents when the parents can no longer take care of themselves.

Almost half of the principals interviewed had both or at least one parent(s) living with them, or other principals intentionally bought homes in close proximity to their parents' homes. This allowed the interviewees to provide care for their parents in a sense of family as well as financially or medically, whatever the need might be, even to the extent of making certain the parents had a roof over their heads. The bond between parents and children and back again to children toward their parents appears to be quite strong in the Hispanic culture. This is notable because Hispanic female principals are not simply juggling work time and schedules with their own home life of husbands and children, but they are also making time to include and to take care of their parents.

<center>*Relationship to Key Studies*</center>

What Factors Have Contributed to the Success of Hispanic Female School Leaders?

Interviewees indicated that the encouragement of various educators, their intrinsic determination to succeed, support from family members, and the motivation to be a positive influence for students, parents and the community contributed to their success.

Correlating studies of various educators having a direct impact on the Hispanic female principals was not found during the researcher's Review of the Literature. In the study by Enriquez-Damian her personal narrative and those of the four Hispanic female leaders described their inner determination to succeed in their educational pursuits, as they overcame many personal and family obstacles. Also, in Enriquez-Damian's study she found that all of them had benefited from family support in the form of both parents or at least one of them. The nine women in Holtkamp's study expressed the importance of their administrative roles in supporting their schools, faculties, parents, and the commuity.

What Institutional Challenges Did Hispanic Female School Leaders Encounter?

Interviewees indicated that lack of support from counselors and advisors, bilingual programs that displaced regular classroom teachers, parental prejudices toward Mexican

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teachers, teacher discrimination toward teaching Hispanic children and prejudices toward the assignment of Hispanics in predominantly White communities.

I came across only one research study that corroborated with the Hispanic female principals that as a whole they did not receive guidance or information from their high school counselors and adviors for going to college. In the qualitative research study by Mendez-Morse (2004) of six Mexican American women, the participants overall expressed negative feelings towards counselors and advisors. Of the six only one received information on colleges and universities. In the Review of the Literature there were no research findings for displacement of regular teachers by bilingual teachers as a result of the state mandated Bilingual Program, parental prejudices toward Mexican teachers, or prejudices toward the assignment of a Hispanic female as principal of a predominant Anglo school.

In the study by Enriquez-Damian (2009) one of the participants was in a classroom where the teacher berated the Mexican, Spanish-speaking students by calling them lazy because they didn't speak English. In her teaching experiences the participant also related that many teachers held prejudices toward Hispanic students.

What Family Challenges Did Hispanic Female School Leaders Encounter?

Interviewees indicated that difficulty for parents to allow their daughters to leave home for college, choosing between marriage/family and attending college, balancing work and family, and life challenges were personal challenges they experienced.

In the Review of the Literature there were studies in which Hispanic parents had difficulty allowing their daughters to attend a college or university. In Enriquez-Damian's study, one of her participants, Elsa, was told by her father that she could not leave home to attend college because it would be a frightened experience for her since she would be away from her family. She was allowed to attend a community college. Later on in her life she was able to attend college and received a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction.

What Personal Challenges Did Hispanic Female School Leaders Encounter?

Interviewees indicated that acceptance as a Hispanic female principal, the absence of Hispanic female principals as mentors or role models, Hispanic female principal's rise to different levels of the principalship viewed as ambition for self, Hispanic female principal's successful rise to different levels of the principalship viewed as ambition for self, and balancing work and family were among the personal challenged faced.

The Review of the Literature did not reveal any studies on personal challenges which focused on the lack of acceptance of Hispanic females as principals or misconcepts related to seemingly overly ambitious principals.

Several studies did refer to the absence of Hispanic female principals. Magdaleno (2006) noticed a discrepancy in the number of students enrolled in schools in California and the number of Latina and Latino administrators. To offset this discrepancy he proposed a mentoring program of pairing Hispanic proteges and experienced Hispanic principals together. He believed the program would work to retain principals and other Hispanic administrators and enhance Latinas and Latinos to become administrators. Gonzalez-Figueroa and Young (2005) in a study of 103 Latina women participants revealed that Latina women preferred to be mentored by other Latinas. Gardiner, Grogan, and Enomoto (1999) conducted a study on mentoring of 55 mentors and protegés. The researchers' study revealed that there were not enough women in educational administration to serve other women as mentors and role models. They said it was even more difficult to find minority women to mentor as serve as role models for other minority women. Gardiner, Enomoto, and Grogan (2000) researched the effects of mentoring. Their study consisted of four Hispanic women and 14 African American women. Their study revealed a preference by women of color to be mentored by women of color.

Balancing work and family was a challenge for many of the Hispanic female principals. In the survey by Noel-Batiste (2009) on 208 women who were members of the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals, when asked about balancing work and family, 27% responded to its difficulty. Williamson and Hudson's (2003) longitudinal study of 25 female students barriers in

women's careers in educational administration found that even after completion of a master's program in educational administration and some serving an administrator's role chose to leave it. They learned that many of the women had found the role of an administrator as too demanding in finding equilibrium between work and family.

What Strategies Did Hispanic Female School Leaders Employ to Overcome the Various Barriers to Success?

Interviewees indicated that staying current with what is going on in education, reaching out to the community, finding strength and guidance from God, and having determination and honesty helped them to overcome the various barriers to success.

I did not find any specific studies related to staying current with what is going on in education. In the Enriquez-Daminan study the author relates that she found that the religious faith of her famly was a stronghold for her. Holtkamp (2002) in her research noted different themes related to principal success. Among them were working hard, having spiritual faith, relationship with God, and their caring about their schools, faculties, children, families, and the community. In Bloom and Erlandson's (2003) research the minority women connected their leadership abilities and self-worth to strong experiences with family, church, and the community. I did not find in my Review of the Literature research on honesty as a characteristic of a principal's leadership.

What Advice Do Hispanic Female School Leaders Have to Offer for Aspiring Hispanic Females Desiring Leadership Positions in K–12 Schools?

Interviewees indicated that it is important to be determined, to stay focused, to surround yourself with positive people, to be positive about yourself and others, to trust your staff and develop team work, to learn to delegate, and to have a support system.

In the Review of the Literature studies were not found supporting the ideas of being determined, staying focused, surrounding one self with positive people, or being positive about yourself and others. In Enriquez-Damian's study, one of the participants Idalia as a principal

related that she learned that she could not lead alone. She learned to delegate and to build a leadership team.

In Byrd's (1999) study networking is seen as a support system. When women do not feel a part of the male network system, they then develop their own network group. Dana and Bourisaw's (2006) study also saw networking as a means to have a support system. Carr also wrote of the benefits of networking as a support group for women. She gave avenues for networking through professional organizations, professional luncheons, conferences, and book clubs. Gardiner, Enomoto, and Grogan (2000) saw networking as a means for aspiring administrators to learn the politics of education, meeting the right people, being able to learn from successful administrators, and an venue for sharing ideas and information. The researchers considered networking for minority, primarily Hispanic women as essential.

Research has been conducted on barriers which have impeded Hispanic females from moving up the career ladder in education. Enriquez-Damian (2009) conducted a study of four Hispanic female principals. Besides the four principals in the study, she included herself since she too had dealt with many of the problems which Hispanic females desiring leadership positions have encountered. She shared the challenges faced by native-born Hispanic females and of those who immigrated to the United States. Enriquez-Damian's study differed from the present study in that it examined more the interviewees' life struggles than their professional struggles. Even with that said, in many of my studies similar struggles were experienced among the 12 Hispanic female principals.

In the studies by Magdaleno (2004) and Gonzalez-Figueroa and Young (2005), the benefits of mentoring for those seeking leadership positions were addressed. The current researcher found that many of the 12 Hispanic female principals expressed disappointment that they did not have Hispanic females as mentors. The 12 Hispanic female principals desired the benefits of having authentic Hispanic female administrative leaders, but only two indicated that that had been the case. In general the Hispanic female that became their mentor was their mother. In the Review of the Literature other researchers stated the outcomes and benefits of

having a mentor. Among those researchers were Gardiner, Grogan, and Enomoto (1999, 2000), Hutchinson (2002), Bush (2000), Villani (2008), Hackney and Hogard (1999), Grady, Crumb, and Peery (1998), and Peery (1998).

Another strategy employed by successful Hispanic female leaders was networking. Dana and Bourisaw (2006) stated, "They must search for opportunities to network with folks for purpose of (1) exploring 'how to' address leadership needs, (2) responding to these studies for enlightenment and learning and (3) problem solving around gender issues" (p. 196). Dana and Bourisaw's study differed from the current researcher in that it more broadly focused on women leaders as a whole and not on the specific, problematic networking issues as applicable to Hispanic female leaders. Joining in the findings of networking as a strategy were Jacobs (2002), Byrd (1999), Holtkamp (2002), Carr (1998), Gardiner, Enomoto, and Grogan (2000), Hutchinson (2002), Hackney and Hogard (1999), and Noel-Batiste (2009).

Witmer (2006) and Mendez-Morse (2004) both researched the need for role models. Mendez-Morse conducted a qualitative study on the worthiness of having a role model. In her study of six Hispanic females she found that none had had a mentor, and that for them their mothers had served as both their mentors and role models. This researcher's study, as in Witmer's and Mendez-Morse's studies, found that many of the Hispanic female principals did not have mentors or role models of their ethnicity. For these Hispanic females, as was often the case, their mothers served as role models and mentors. Other researchers supporting the need for role models were Noel-Batiste (2009), Bush (2000), Villani (2008), and Hackney and Hogard (1998).

This study centers itself on the successful strategies used by Hispanic female leaders who have attained the position of principal in K–12 public schools. There are a broad range of challenges for the Hispanic female.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study consists of 12 Hispanic female school principals from elementary school, middle school, and high school levels from three school districts in the Dallas/Fort Worth

area of north central Texas: Fort Worth Independent School District, Arlington Independent School District, and Grand Prairie Independent School District. It is recommended that other studies be conducted with a larger pool of Hispanic female school principals. Additionally, it is recommended that studies on Hispanic female principals be conducted in different regions throughout Texas and the nation. It would also be interesting to see if the younger Hispanic females are being encouraged more these days.

There currently exists a wide disparity between the number of Hispanic female principals and the number of Hispanic students. Another recommendation would be to learn the reasons more credentialed and competent Hispanic females are not being promoted to positions of the principalship and other higher levels of school administration. A final recommendation is for research that will study what programs are being developed statewide to promote mentoring, role modeling, and networking for aspiring Hispanic females.

Conclusion

As the research for this study on Hispanic female principals was conducted, the lack of research written specifically about Hispanic female principals was continuously noted. Therefore I consider this subject area to be an untapped well for research. There is room for improvement in the preparation and promotion of Hispanic females into the principalship and other administrative positions. The scant number of Hispanic female principals in each of the school districts researched in this study does not in any way abide with the large and growing number of Hispanic school children. The number of Hispanic female principals was definitely not a comparable representation of the Hispanic student body in the school districts researched.

Future Hispanic female leaders would gain many benefits from seeing and interacting with Hispanic females in leadership positions. From those leaders already in position, role models and mentors could emerge for aspiring Hispanic females to emulate; they could learn from the leaders' successes and failures. An additional benefit would be the provision of role models and mentors for Hispanic school-aged children. It is an asset to have Hispanic women in leadership positions with whom aspiring Hispanic females could identify with through ethnicity,

language, and culture. Further, in addition to revealing the barriers faced by many Hispanic

female principals, this research endeavors to identify the strategies used to overcome them and

attain success.

APPENDIX A

RECRUITMENT LETTER

Date: June 1, 2010
To: Hispanic female principal
From: Cora Falk
Subject: Recruitment as a Participant

I am currently a student at the University of North Texas working on a dissertation involving a study on the barriers which Hispanic female principals overcame in their ascendency to the principalship. The participants in this study are Hispanic female principals in the Dallas ISD and Fort Worth ISD. The title of my dissertation is: Hispanic Women Leaders in K-12 Public Education: Overcoming Barriers to Success.

This communication serves to solicit your involvement in this study. Your involvement will consist of a one-on-one interview. As a participant, you will be asked six questions. The interview will be conducted in your office or another appropriate school setting of your choice. You will receive the interview questions before our face to face interview. The interview will take approximately an hour. The interviews will be CD recorded and later transcribed.

No foreseeable risks are to be incurred. This study may not be of any direct benefit to you. The results of this study are to provide additional knowledge to current studies focusing on Hispanic female principals.

There will be no monetary compensation for your participation, nor will any costs be incurred by your participation.

Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained through coding of transcripts. No other entity will be privy to the audio-recordings or transcripts. The audio-recordings and transcripts will be maintained in a locked file on the UNT campus for three years. After the three years, the audio-recordings and transcripts will be destroyed through shredding.

Your participation is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time.

Should you have any questions, my telephone number is   . My email address is

Your participation in this study will be greatly appreciated. I look forward to hearing from you.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCRIPT

I, Cora Falk, will be asking the participants of my study six questions. They will receive the questions along with the recruitment letter in an email. In the formal interview the same six questions will be asked. The questions are as follows:

1. What factors have contributed to the success of Hispanic female school leaders?

2. What institutional challenges did Hispanic female school leaders encounter?

3. What family challenges did Hispanic female school leaders encounter?

4. What personal challenges did Hispanic female school leaders encounter?

5. What strategies did Hispanic female school leaders employ to overcome the various barriers to success?

6. What advice can Hispanic female school leaders offer for aspiring Hispanic females desiring leadership positions in K–12 schools?

APPENDIX C

IRB INFORMED CONSENT FORM

CONSENT FORMS

FACULTY/STAFF INVESTIGATOR AND ADULT SUBJECTS

University of North Texas Institutional Review Board

Informed Consent Form

Before agreeing to participate in this research study, it is important that you read and understand the following explanation of the purpose, benefits and risks of the study and how it will be conducted.

Title of Study: Hispanic Women Leaders in K-12 Public Education: Overcoming Barriers to Success

Principal Investigator: Cora Falk _____, University of North Texas (UNT) Department of _Education_____.

Purpose of the Study: You are being asked to participate in a research study which involves Hispanic female principals in Dallas ISD and Fort Worth ISD. The purpose of the study is to ascertain how Hispanic female principals have successfully overcome barriers in their ascendency to the principalship at elementary, middle and high school levels.(*describe the project in language the subject can easily understand*).

Study Procedures: You will be asked to answer six interview questions. The interviews will take approximately one hour. (*explain specifically what the subjects will be asked to do*) that will take about (*specify the total time commitment*) of your time.

Foreseeable Risks: The potential risks involved in this study are: no foreseeable risks are involved in this study. (*include any foreseeable risks or discomforts which the subject may experience or state that "No foreseeable risks are involved in this study."*).

Benefits to the Subjects or Others: We expect the project to benefit you by adding to the research knowledge that has previously been done on Hispanic female principals. The Institute of research Board studies cannot guarantee results.(*include any foreseeable benefits to the subjects or state that "This study is not expected to be of any direct benefit to you" and explain how the study may benefit others or may contribute to your field of study. IRB studies cannot guarantee results.*).

Compensation for Participants: No monetary compensation will be provided.

Procedures for Maintaining Confidentiality of Research Records: (To maintain confidentiality and anonymity signed consent forms and coded audio transcriptions will be kept separately in a locked file. The audio recordings will be kept in a locked file for three years. The audio recordings will be heard only by the investigator. After three years the audio-recordings will be destroyed through shredding. *.Describe the methods you will take to protect your subjects' confidentiality/anonymity, such as maintaining signed consent forms and coded survey results in separate locations. If you are conducting a study where the subjects will be audio- and/ or video-recorded, explain where and how long such recordings will be maintained, identify all audiences who will see/hear such recordings, specify the method of disposition of the recordings at the conclusion of the study.*) The confidentiality of your individual information will be maintained in any publications or presentations regarding this study.

Questions about the Study: If you have any questions about the study, you may contact __*Cora Falk (insert name of Principal Investigator)*_____ at telephone number _   _____.-

Review for the Protection of Participants: This research study has been reviewed and approved by the UNT Institutional Review Board (IRB). The UNT IRB can be contacted at (940) 565-3940 with any questions re-

garding the rights of research subjects.

Research Participants' Rights:

Your signature below indicates that you have read or have had read to you all of the above and that you confirm all of the following:

 (Insert name of Principal Investigator) has explained the study to you and answered all of your questions. You have been told the possible benefits and the potential risks and/or discomforts of the study.

 You understand that you do not have to take part in this study, and your refusal to participate or your decision to withdraw will involve no penalty or loss of rights or benefits. The study personnel may choose to stop your participation at any time.

 You understand why the study is being conducted and how it will be performed.

 You understand your rights as a research participant and you voluntarily consent to participate in this study.

 You have been told you will receive a copy of this form.

_____   Printed Name of Participant

_____   _____   Signature of Participant

                Date

For the Principal Investigator or Designee:

I certify that I have reviewed the contents of this form with the subject signing above. I have explained the possible benefits and the potential risks and/or discomforts of the study. It is my opinion that the participant understood the explanation.

Cora Falk_____   May 5, 2010_____

Signature of Principal Investigator or Designee   Date

Office of Research Services

University of North Texas

Last Updated: August 9, 2007

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