The women superintendents of Iowa: A 1990's analysis

Joen M. Rottler

University of Northern Iowa

Copyright ©1996 Joen M. Rottler

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.uni.edu/etd

Part of the Elementary and Middle and Secondary Education Administration Commons

Let us know how access to this document benefits you

Recommended Citation


https://scholarworks.uni.edu/etd/788

This Open Access Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Work at UNI ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations and Theses @ UNI by an authorized administrator of UNI ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@uni.edu.
INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

UMI
A Bell & Howell Information Company
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor MI 48106-1346 USA
313/761-4700  800/521-0600

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
THE WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS OF IOWA:  
A 1990'S ANALYSIS

A Dissertation
Submitted
In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Approved:

[Signatures]

Dr. Patricia Krystinsky
Dr. Phyllis Baker
Dr. David Else
Dr. Mark Grey
Dr. Florence Guido-DiBrito
Dr. Joane McKay

Joen M. Rottler
University of Northern Iowa
May 1996
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I greatly appreciate the contributions of many, which made this study and my dissertation possible. I have learned that the beauty of research comes from working with others. To all who helped, I wish to express my gratitude.

A special thank you goes to Dr. Patricia Krysinski for serving as the chair of my committee. An additional thank you goes to my committee members: Dr. Phyllis Baker, Dr. David Else, Dr. Mark Grey, Dr. Florence Guido-DiBrito, and Dr. Joane Mckay. I also need to thank Sherry Nuss for transforming my manuscript into the proper form, and thanks goes to my daughter, Jenna Blanchfield, and also to Janice Hofer for their hours of transcription. Lastly, I must thank the women superintendents of Iowa for their courage to let me enter their worlds.

In conclusion, I will be forever grateful to my dear husband, Gary, for his encouragement, guidance, and love. He made all the difference.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Orientation of the Study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods and Analysis</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of the Report</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to the Review of the Literature</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The History of Women in the Superintendency in Iowa</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Era of Women Entering Education Profession</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Era of the County Superintendent and the City Superintendent</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Era of Reorganization</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers that Prevent Women from Becoming Superintendents</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Models of Barriers</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Suggested Barriers</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics of Women Superintendents</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic Characteristics</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality Characteristics</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's Career Development</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage Theories of the Career Development of Women</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theories Structured with Elements of the Career Development of Women.</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theories of Access and Entry into the Superintendency.</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress in the Superintendency.</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coping.</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolation.</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demands of the Superintendency.</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's Leadership and Power.</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender-Related Leadership Style.</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept of Social Control.</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making.</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Structure.</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary.</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. METHODS.</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Field work</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epistemological Basis.</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Design.</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Subjects Provision</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection Methods.</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews.</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Sources of Data.</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure and Timeline</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter

Early Knowledge of a Male World. ............ 87
Being Independent. ......................... 90
Achievement Motivation ..................... 95
Strong Work Ethic Early in Life. .......... 101
Early Leadership During Adolescence. .... 105
Summary. .................................. 110
Access and Entry. ......................... 111
Barriers to Access and Entry ......... 116

The Experience of Being a Woman Superintendent ........ 119

Sex Discrimination in Expectations for Job Performance. .... 119
Sexual Harassment/Harsh Treatment. ....... 120
Family Stress. ................................ 125
Isolation. ................................ 131
Summary. .................................. 134

Coping with Being a Woman Superintendent ..... 134

Using Coping Skills ....................... 135
Summary. .................................. 137

The Leadership of Women Superintendents. .... 138

Leadership Style of Women Superintendents. ... 138

Using Expertise. .......................... 143
Decision Making. .......................... 146
Moral Reasoning. .......................... 147
Women's Way of Knowing .................... 149
Organizational Structure .................... 153

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Summary</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. CONCLUSIONS, SUMMARY, AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Are the Professional Demographics of Women Superintendents of Iowa?</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Are the Personal Demographics of Women Superintendents of Iowa?</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Are the Childhood and Adolescent Development Characteristics of the Women Superintendents of Iowa?</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Are the Career Development Patterns of the Women Superintendents of Iowa?</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Are the Self-Reported Leadership Styles of the Women Superintendents of Iowa?</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Do the Women Superintendents of Iowa Utilize Power?</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Do the Women Superintendents of Iowa Use Gender Related Aspects of Decision Making?</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the Self-Reported Organizational Structures Used by the Women Superintendents of Iowa Represent Organizational Structures Related to Women?</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Do the Women Superintendents of Iowa Experience Being a Superintendent?</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicing Women Superintendents</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation Programs for School Administrators</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women Aspiring to the Superintendency</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa School Boards</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Research</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A: Written Consent Form</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B: Interview Questions</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C: Human Subjects Approval</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX D: Tables 1-14</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Subjects in the Study by Undergraduate Major</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Subjects in the Study by Type of Masters Degree.</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Subjects in the Study by Institution Attended for Superintendent Certification.</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Subjects in the Study by Years of Teaching Experience</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Subjects in the Study by Other Educational Experience Prior to First Superintendency.</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Subjects in the Study by Years of Experience in the Superintendency</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Subjects in the Study by Annual Salary</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Subjects in the Study by Professional Affiliation</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Subjects in the Study by School District size.</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Subjects in the Study by Career Pattern</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Subjects in the Study by Administrative Career Pattern</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Subjects in the Study by Age</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Subjects in the Study by Age at First Superintendency</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Subjects in the Study by Marital Status and Children</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE WOMEN SUPERINTENDENTS OF IOWA:  
A 1990'S ANALYSIS

An Abstract of a Dissertation
Submitted
In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Approved:

[Signature]
Faculty Advisor
Dr. Patricia Krysinski

[Signature]
Dean of the Graduate College
Dr. John W. Somervill

Joen M. Rottler
University of Northern Iowa
May 1996
ABSTRACT

Historically, Iowa has had few women superintendents of K-12 public schools. Societal changes, political changes, and legislation, such as affirmative action, have had no impact on gender balance in the superintendency in Iowa. The number of women superintendents in Iowa remains low. Of 397 superintendents in Iowa, during 1993-94, only 14 were women. This qualitative study examines the characteristics of current women superintendents of Iowa. Specifically, the following aspects of career development were examined: childhood and adolescent characteristics, personal and professional characteristics, and career path. The experience of being a woman superintendent and gender related aspects of leadership were also examined.

Career history interviews with 13 women superintendents of Iowa were conducted during the 1993-94 school year. The interviews and an historical review of women in the superintendency of Iowa were the main sources of data. The findings indicated that some of the women's characteristics and their career development reflect what is known in the career development literature about women who reach top levels of management in organizations. First, their early childhood and adolescent development was similar. The women became independent at an early age and were leaders in their adolescent activities. Their career paths differed, but they may have selected certain
certifying universities to avoid traditional tracking. Although women in Iowa seemed to aspire to the superintendency, they typically did not voice their aspirations. The women's success in accessing the superintendency was due to their skills in positioning themselves in the right place at the right time.

Second, the women in this study had both gender-related leadership characteristics and leadership characteristics that are usually attributed to males; however, their organizational structures reflected what is known in the literature about organizational structures related to women's leadership. The women's successful blend of leadership styles utilized in a nontraditional organizational structure indicated their comfort with power and with authority.

Third, the findings also indicated that the women in the superintendency of Iowa experience harassment, discrimination, abuse, isolation, and pain. The women and their families pay a price in pain and sacrifice in order for the women to occupy Iowa's top position in K-12 public school administration.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

I have been intrigued with the advancement of women in educational administration for a number of years. I served as an elementary principal for 5 years and completed a superintendent's internship with a woman superintendent. During these times I learned that of 397 superintendents in Iowa only 14 were women. I also learned that historically in Iowa women have occupied the superintendency in approximately the same percentages as they do today (State of Iowa School Report, 1872; 1880-1881; 1900-1901; Iowa Education Directory, 1900; 1911; 1920; 1931; 1940; 1950; 1960; 1970; 1980; & 1990). I also learned from my readings that barriers do exist which keep women from becoming educational administrators, and the barriers are not much different from the barriers of 1900 (Shakeshaft, 1987). I have discovered that a paucity of women superintendents exists, not only in Iowa, but also in the United States (Dominguez, 1991; Dopp & Sloan, 1986; Edson, 1988; Ginn, 1989; Goldberg, 1974; Hansot & Tyack, 1981; Shakeshaft, 1987; Woo, 1985). Given these discoveries and initial learning, I believed it was important to study women superintendents of Iowa in order to understand access, entry, and survival in the superintendency for women. The overriding purpose of my study was to understand women's
advancement to the superintendency and their experiences as women superintendents.

Research Questions

In order to understand the women superintendents of Iowa, I selected a set of research questions which guides the study.

1. What are the professional demographics of women superintendents of Iowa?
2. What are the personal demographics of women superintendents of Iowa?
3. What are the childhood and adolescent development characteristics of the women superintendents of Iowa?
4. What are the career development patterns of the women superintendents of Iowa?
5. What are the self-reported leadership styles of the women superintendents of Iowa?
6. How do the women superintendents of Iowa utilize power?
7. How do the women superintendents of Iowa use gender related aspects of decision making?
8. Do the self-reported organizational structures used by the women superintendents of Iowa represent organizational structures related to women?
9. How do the women superintendents of Iowa experience being a superintendent?
Theoretical Orientation of the Study

Demographic characteristics of women superintendents include that women superintendents are older than men when they enter their first superintendency (Radich, 1992; Schuster & Foote, 1990); that women have a higher level of education than men when competing for a superintendent's position (Natale, 1992; Radich, 1992; Schuster & Foote, 1990); and that women superintendents are single more often than men (Chase & Bell, 1994; Radich, 1992; Schuster & Foote, 1990). Men in the superintendency have more children than women superintendents (Pavan & McKee, 1988; Radich, 1992; Schuster & Foote, 1990).

Personality characteristics of top achieving women such as achievement motivation (White, Cox, & Cooper, 1992) and self-efficacy (Hackett & Betz, 1981) are strong connectors to success but are not limited to only women. Motivation is influenced by childhood socialization and opportunity (Astin, 1984). Self-efficacy in relation to careers is influenced by socialization and experiences during childhood and also during organizational life (Hackett & Betz, 1981).

Women who had a close childhood relationship with their fathers were encouraged to be independent and to believe they could do more than the traditional view of girls, thus developing a broader view of sex roles and aspirations that are not typical (White et al., 1992).
Early traumas can lead to development of survival or coping skills which lead to an early feeling of independence and self-reliance in adolescence (Cooper & Hingley, 1983). Parents of successful women were ambitious for them to achieve in school and in their careers (White et al., 1992).

Career development theories for women are based on stages (Astin, 1984; Bardwick, 1980; White et al., 1992) or elements (Gutek & Larwood, 1987; Powell & Mainiero, 1993). Career development focuses on patterns of access and entry; however, the career path to the superintendency of women is typically different from men (McDade & Drake, 1982; Ortiz, 1982; Schuster & Foote, 1990).

Gender differences are related to leadership style (Helgesen, 1990; Rosener, 1990; Weller, 1988). Women's leadership style is described as a style that is cooperative, collaborative, and intuitive (Fried, 1989; Helgesen, 1990; Loden, 1985; Shakeshaft, 1987). Women who are participative and democratic are judged positively by their subordinates (Guido-DiBrito, Carpenter, & Dibrito, 1986). Gender differences are found in patterns of leadership behaviors of educational administrators (Shakeshaft, 1987).

Social control is used by leaders to influence followers and occurs by two modes which include power and authority (Spady & Mitchell, 1977). Power develops over
time and parallels career development, forming a "path to power," which is different for men and women (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). The power comes from various sources at the organizational level, the interpersonal level, and/or the individual level. Sources of power include characteristics, relationships, and position in organization with a common source of power for women being the power of expertise (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). The power of expertise is described as authority-based leadership (Krysinski & Reed, 1994).

Aspects of decision making have been reported to be gender-based. Specifically, females tend to focus on the needs of others and on relationships during moral reasoning, whereas males tend to focus on logic and justice (Gilligan, Ward, Taylor, & Bardridge, 1988). Women's ways of knowing address the aspect of decision making of women in which women know and view reality (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986). Women in leadership roles who construct knowledge (Belenky et al., 1986) demonstrate the behaviors related to women's leadership style (Haring-Hidore, Freeman, Phelps, Spann, & Wooten, 1990).

Organizational structures in which women lead are gender-related (Billings & Alvesson, 1994; Kanter, 1977; Loden, 1985) and tend to be web-like structures (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1992; Helgesen, 1990). The web of inclusion is structured with the leader at the center of the web, with
all others within the organization radiating out from the center and connected to each other (Helgesen, 1990). It is based on the concept of interdependence and results from leadership style that is related to women (Aubidine & Naisbitt, 1992; Helgesen, 1990).

Lastly, stress has become a natural part of the experience of being a superintendent (Goldstein, 1992). Coping with the stress of the superintendency is different for male superintendents and female superintendents (Lindle, Miller, & Lagana, 1992). Women superintendents used more strategies and more coping resources related to human relations (Lindle et al., 1992). Isolation occurs for women in the superintendency due to the high salary and educational level, being the boss, and lack of peers of the same gender (Jones, 1994). The demands of the superintendency are different for women (Estler, 1987). Specifically, women superintendents are expected to use more skills and knowledge in their job performance than men superintendents.

Methods and Analysis

In order to conduct a study of women superintendents of Iowa, I selected a qualitative paradigm and utilized qualitative methods which (a) facilitated attempts to collect data that capture the multiple realities that I encountered, (b) legitimized intuitive knowledge, and
(c) used inductive analysis. Qualitative methods are "more likely to identify the multiple realities to be found in the data . . . [and] more likely to identify the mutually shaping influences that interact," for deeper understanding of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1986, p. 40).

In order to understand the phenomenon of the uniqueness of women superintendents, a case study design structured the investigation (Borg & Gall, 1989). I collected data through the case study method of career history (Borg & Gall, 1989) and exploratory or in-depth interviewing (Lincoln & Guba, 1986).

The analysis of data included five stages: (a) preparation of data, (b) preliminary analysis, (c) categorizing and ordering data, (d) assessing trustworthiness, and (e) story writing (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989). As I reviewed the data, I determined similarities among the stories, established inferences, and generalized to common themes.

Assumptions

I assumed that this study would contribute to understanding the career and power development characteristics of women superintendents. This understanding involved the career and power development characteristics of 13 women superintendents in Iowa. Secondly, I assumed that this study would provide needed data for women in Iowa who aspire to the superintendency.
However, the overriding purpose of qualitative methods, and specifically of this case study, was to provide a "fuller and more complex understanding" of the phenomenon of the uniqueness of the women superintendents of Iowa (Eisner, 1991, p. 8). Therefore, generalizability of findings from this study was not intended as a primary outcome.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is theoretical, substantive, and practical. From a theoretical perspective, knowledge about the career development and power development of women superintendents in Iowa contributes to theory construction about the development of power by top level women administrators. Substantively, the study adds to the knowledge about women superintendents. Practically, the study provides needed data for women in Iowa who aspire to the superintendency as well as for practicing women superintendents.

Organization of the Report

The chapters that follow begin with a review of the literature. I include the history of women in the superintendency in Iowa and literature on barriers to the superintendency. Literature on the characteristics of women superintendents and women's career development theories are presented, as are theories on access and entry into the superintendency, stress in the superintendency, leadership and power, and decision making and
organizational structure. Following the Review of the Literature is Chapter III where I detail the methodology utilized in the study. In Chapter IV, I report the data and provide in-depth analysis of the data in five parts: (a) demographics, (b) becoming a woman superintendent, (c) the experience of being a woman superintendent, (d) coping with being a woman superintendent, and (e) the leadership of women superintendents. Lastly, in Chapter V, presented are the conclusions, summary, and recommendations.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction to the Review of the Literature

The review the literature is presented in seven parts. First, the history of women in the superintendency in Iowa is presented. Second, in order to understand the historical development of women in the superintendency in Iowa, literature that describes the barriers that prevent women from becoming superintendents is presented. The third part reviews the literature on the personal and professional characteristics of women superintendents. This includes childhood and adolescent development related to women. Fourth, the career development theories of women are presented, which include theories of the access and entry into the superintendency by women. Fifth, literature that describes the stress of the superintendency is included. Sixth, the literature of women's leadership and power is presented. Lastly, theories of gender-related aspects of decision making is followed by organizational structures related to women's leadership.

The History of Women in the Superintendency in Iowa

In order to provide a broad picture of the organization of administrative employment in K-12 education by gender, I believe this historical review needs to include both a review of women entering the education profession and the development of the position of school
superintendent. The review follows with (a) the era of women entering teaching, (b) the era of the county superintendent and city superintendent in Iowa, and (c) the era of reorganization in Iowa.

Era of Women Entering Education Profession

The 1820s were a period in which the common school for all male children was established, which created an urgent need for formally trained teachers (Tyack & Strober, 1981). Due to the teacher shortage, Catherine Beecher, an advocate for formally educating women, stated, "... it is woman who is to come to this emergency and meet the demand ... woman whom experience and testimony have shown to be the best, as well as the cheapest guardian and teacher of childhood in a school" (cited in Simmons, 1976, p. 120). The first woman teacher in Iowa was Mrs. Rebecca Parmer, who opened her school in Ft. Madison, Lee County, in the summer of 1834 (The Iowa Normal Monthly, 1889).

The Civil War also enhanced the need for women to become teachers, due to the manpower shortage caused by the war (Tyack & Strober, 1981). During this era, one out of five white women in Massachusetts became a teacher (Bernard & Vinovskis, 1977). Davis and Samuelson (1950) contended that "without women on low salaries it would have been almost impossible to finance that great public-school system that grew up in many states prior to 1860" (p. 25). Hence, by 1888, 77% of the teachers in Iowa were women.
Era of the County Superintendent and the City Superintendent

County superintendent. From 1840-1847 the laws of the Territory of Iowa provided for township inspectors who visited the schools in each township and supervised the directors (who soon became known as supervising principals), teachers, and pupils at each school. No records are available concerning the persons occupying these positions. Moreover, the need for the township inspectors decreased with the creation of the county school fund commissioner (Aurner, 1914); thus, this upperlevel administrative position existed for a very short period of time.

Iowa was admitted to the Union in 1846. The newly admitted State of Iowa created the office of county superintendent by the General Education Act of March 12, 1858. The intent of this act was to establish supervision of teachers and curriculum by the State through this office in each county. The county superintendent was required to visit the schools of the county and submit a report to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction concerning buildings and grounds, budget, enrollment, teachers, curriculum, and other matters deemed important by the individual county superintendents (Aurner, 1914). They worked "with poor pay, without honor, with little credit"
Iowa was the first state in the Union to appoint or elect a woman to serve as county superintendent. Miss Julia C. Addington was appointed to fill a vacancy in Mitchell County in 1870 and was elected for the next full term as county superintendent (Aurner, 1914). The following year three women served as county superintendents out of 99 counties (State of Iowa School Report, 1872). However, in 1875 an Iowa circuit court ruled that Elizabeth Cook could not be the Warren County Superintendent even though she had been elected by the voters. Few women served as county superintendents during this era due to the mores of society (Shakeshaft, 1987). Moreover, Horace Mann and Henry Barnard claimed that women were designed by God to be teachers of young children. However, advocates of education for women were careful to point out that teaching should not replace motherhood; rather, teaching was the perfect preparation for young women to become better mothers (Tyack & Strober, 1981). The idea was that a young woman would progress from her parents' home to a brief teaching career and then on to her own home.

A specific example of society's treatment of married women during this era in Iowa is Carrie Lane Chapman Catt's brief career in educational administration (Charles, 1992). Carrie Lane (Chapman Catt) became the high school principal
in Mason City, Iowa, in 1881, and the school superintendent in 1883. In 1985 Lane married Leo Chapman, the editor of the Mason City Republican, and was forced to resign as school superintendent. She then made an unsuccessful bid for nomination for Cerro Gordo county school superintendent, which was a more powerful position than school superintendent. After this unsuccessful bid, her husband, Leo Chapman, was forced to sell his newspaper due to a libel case based on his angry editorials regarding Carrie's unsuccessful nomination bid.

The married woman teacher was a rarity during this era. Ninety percent of women teachers were unmarried at the turn of the century. Hansot and Tyack (1981) contended that marriage for males in education was considered to be an asset, but marriage for women in education hindered their careers. Women were generally not permitted to be teachers or superintendents after they married. However, two of seven women that served as county superintendents in Iowa during the 1880-81 school year were married women, as were two of 15 during the 1890-91 school year (State of Iowa School Report, 1880-1881, 1900-1901).

Carrie Lane Chapman (Catt) went on to organize the Iowa Woman Suffrage Association in 1887. Women teachers and women administrators were active in the support of suffrage. All-female teacher organizations, such as New York's 14,000 member Interborough Association of Women
Teachers, demanded (a) equal pay for equal work, (b) better salaries, and (c) better working conditions (Hansot & Tyack, 1981). In 1912 universal compulsory attendance was mandated. This required many more teachers for the increase in students. However, only modest gains were made in the number of women county superintendents until World War I (Shakeshaft, 1987). The number of women elected to the office of county superintendent in Iowa's 99 counties from 1900 to 1931 was (a) 14 in 1900, (b) 46 in 1911, (c) 61 in 1920, and (d) 61 in 1931 (Iowa Education Directory, 1900, 1911, 1920, 1931).

Women had made their mark in the field of education and made up 82.1% of school and college faculty in the United States by 1920 (Davis & Samuelson, 1950). Women occupied 55% of the elementary principalships, 25% of the county superintendencies, almost 8% of secondary principalships, and 1.6% of district superintendencies in 1928 in the United States (Shakeshaft, 1987). The number of women serving as county superintendent in Iowa doubled each decade and peaked during the 1930s with 67% of the counties headed by women superintendents (Iowa Education Directory, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930). However, Shakeshaft (1987) contended that these percentages are misleading because males were paid significantly more in the same positions, and because elementary principalships and county superintendencies had become (a) low status, (b) low power,
and (c) low paying positions. Therefore, temporary gains in administrative positions for women did occur as a result of the suffrage movement; but, Hansot and Tyack (1981) contended that women filled only those positions that men did not want.

City superintendent. The State of Iowa did not (a) differentiate between principals and school or district superintendents in the early editions of the Iowa Education Directory, (b) provide for statutory definitions of duties of supervisors at the school or district level, or (c) use the district population or enrollment as a classification; therefore, it is not possible to determine the actual number of women who served specifically as school superintendents or specifically as district superintendents because all were listed collectively. An exception to this lack of sorting by the State of Iowa was the position of city superintendent. By 1884 a city superintendent was defined as "the chief executive officer of the board of education" (Aurner, 1914, p. 101). School districts in towns in Iowa with populations of 1,500 or more began to include this position in their report to the State of Iowa around the turn of the century. The first woman appointed as a city superintendent in Iowa was Miss Phoebe W. Sudow of Davenport in 1874 (Aurner, 1914). Women did not occupy this office in similar percentages to the number of women who occupied county superintendencies. Less than 1% of the
city superintendents of Iowa were women between the years 1900-1920 (Iowa Education Directory, 1900, 1920). Nationwide, women represented only 2.5% of city superintendencies (Educational News and Comment, 1928). This percentage did not change during the first World War, at which time women occupied over 60% of the county superintendencies (Iowa Education Directory, 1930). The major administrative position of power during this era in the United States and in Iowa was the district/city superintendent, which was almost totally held by men (Shakeshaft, 1987).

Era of Reorganization

Due to the need for males to serve in the military during World War II, men left the education profession and women entered the education profession. The end of World War II brought about official policies that barred married women from teaching and administration. Moreover, the G.I. Bill enabled men who served in the military to become teachers and administrators by providing college financing; thus, when the war ended and the men returned home, women were dismissed from their teaching and administrative positions so that the war heroes could find jobs. Some communities specifically barred married women from teaching in order to facilitate educational employment for men (Shakeshaft, 1987). Furthermore, during this era, the State of Iowa encouraged school districts to reorganize,
which reduced the number of administrative positions. Reorganization was needed due to the existence of over 4,000 school districts, many of which were extremely small (Iowa Education Directory, 1920). For example, during this era, the Iowa Education Directory used a format that classified school districts by (a) one room school, (b) two room school, (c) graded schools, (d) city high schools, and (e) county high schools.

By 1940 the percentage of females in the educational professions had dropped to 72.1% (Davis & Samuelson, 1950). Shakeshaft (1987) noted that when men needed jobs, as they did after the war, both married and single women faced familiar barriers to educational employment. Married women were forced to give up jobs to married men who had families to support; and single women were not given promotions, especially in administration, due to the financial needs of married men (Shakeshaft, 1987). The end of the war and an emphasis from the State of Iowa to reorganize its school districts help explain the drop in women city superintendents from 18 in 1930 to five in 1940 and the drop in women county superintendents from 60 in 1930 to 44 in 1940 (Iowa Education Directory, 1930, 1940).

Different patterns of educational employment evolved in the 1940s in the United States and in Iowa. The one-room school began to decline as the organization of school districts began to change. School consolidation
occurred, which forced many female administrators out of administration (Shakeshaft, 1987). High schools grew as a high school education became more important in the world of work. Urban schools and schools in the suburbs grew at a rapid rate. In spite of what appeared to be increased opportunities for women for educational employment as teachers and administrators in (a) high schools, (b) urban schools, and (c) suburban schools, advances for women were not made in the 1940s and 1950s. Shakeshaft (1987) suggested that females increasingly remained at home or remained in the classroom rather than move into administration. The married woman teacher became the perfect professional role for women.

Reich (1974) gave an example of the reason one woman chose teaching as a profession during this era:

My mother was always telling me: "Teaching is a good profession for a woman" or "Teachers have such good hours" or "It's a good job to go back to." She wanted me to get married, and she thought teaching would combine well with marriage—you get home early enough to cook dinner for your husband; you can take five or ten years off to raise your kids; and when they are ready for school, you too can go back to school, and be home in time to take care of them. It never sounded like such a great deal to me. I thought that there had to be more to life than spending it in school. But I never did find any other decent options. The hardest part was doing what my mother wanted me to do. (p. 338)

Reich (1974) described additional reasons that women entered teaching. The reasons were (a) guidance counselors, (b) teachers, (c) lack of other options,
(d) social concern, (e) a desire to work with people, (f) feelings of academic inadequacy, (g) a BA degree, and (h) no typing skills. The married woman teacher would also be less committed to her work and therefore less of a threat to men in competition for administrative jobs (Shakeshaft, 1987). The social mores of this era encouraged women to stay home with their families rather than pursue administration.

In Iowa less than 1% of district/city superintendents and 20% of county superintendents were women by 1950 (Iowa Education Directory, 1950). Women superintendents were becoming few in number. By 1967 in the United States, women represented only 25% of elementary principals, 4% of junior high principals, and 10% of high school principals (Reich, 1974). Only a "handful" of female superintendents were left; however, women teachers made up 85% of the teaching population (Shakeshaft, 1987).

The reason for the decline of female administrators is described by Ward (1961). In 1958, 78% of female single teachers said that they would leave teaching when they married; furthermore, only 9% were interested in educational administration. Another study reported that 46% of male elementary teachers were interested in becoming an educational administrator, and female elementary teachers aspiring to educational administration represented only 7.8% (Van Meir, 1979). Shakeshaft (1987) described an
additional reason for the decline. She suggested that a protest was staged. The concern was the feminizing effect of women teachers on the future of society/male students during the 50s and revolved around the notion that women teachers could not handle discipline. Added to this belief was the fear that grew during the Cold War of the 50s that women teachers would feminize male students. Hence, this belief added fuel to the fire that our country would not be intellectually prepared and would lose the Cold War (Sexton, 1974). Shakeshaft (1987) stated "In response to the deep chord rung anew by Sexton, many educators and the general public joined the chorus of voices raised in opposition to the woman teacher and woman administrator" (p. 50). This may help explain why women headed only two of Iowa's 614 school districts in 1960 (Iowa Education Directory, 1960).

By 1971, women represented less than 1% of superintendents nation wide, 3% of high school principals, 4% of middle school and junior high principals, and 21% of elementary principals (Dopp & Sloan, 1986). By 1981 those percentages had not changed (Dopp & Sloan, 1986). In Iowa during the 1970-1971 school year, two women served as superintendents within 453 community, consolidated, or independent school districts. Also during the 1970-1971 year, two women served as superintendents out of 58 county school districts (Iowa Education Directory, 1970). By
1980, the era of the county superintendent in Iowa had ended, and any remaining county school districts were not sorted from other types of school districts in the *Iowa Education Directory* (1980). The number of women superintendents continued to dwindle with two women listed as superintendents out of 445 school districts (*Iowa Education Directory*, 1980). Edson (1988) described reasons why women were not hired as school administrators in the early 80s: (a) few women applied for administrative positions, (b) the selection committees were mostly male, and (c) school board members preferred male candidates. Gender bias was the reason most often cited.

By 1990 a small increase in the number of women superintendents in Iowa is noted with 8 of 431 school districts headed by women (*Iowa Education Directory*, 1990). The 1993-1994 school year may have marked a peak for women superintendents in Iowa with 14 women occupying the position of superintendent of 397 school districts or 3.5%. However, Iowa continued to rank in the lowest quartile in the United States in women superintendents (Montenegro, 1993). Although 18 women were listed as city superintendents in the 1930 *Iowa Education Directory*, the total number of superintendent positions is difficult to determine. Reorganization efforts were in progress throughout the state, changing the configuration of many
school districts, so the 1930 Iowa Education Directory listed all superintendents collectively.

**Barriers that Prevent Women from Becoming Superintendents**

Shakeshaft (1987) contended that the barriers that kept women from becoming educational administrators in 1900 are not much different from the barriers that prevent women from entering school administration today. These barriers have been described in the literature as impacting on the organization of educational employment by gender (Shakeshaft, 1987). I continue the review of the literature with these models of barriers and other suggested barriers found in the literature.

**Models of Barriers**

Shakeshaft (1987) suggested three models to describe the origin of barriers to women's advancement in educational administration. The models are the Woman's Place Model, the Discrimination Model, and the Meritocracy Model. In her definition the Woman's Place Model "assumes women's nonparticipation in administrative careers as based solely on social norms" (p. 82). The Discrimination Model was a model that is based on the efforts of one group to exclude another group which results in a pattern of practices. The Meritocracy Model is described as assumptions based on the belief that the most competent person will be hired or promoted, therefore suggesting that women are not as competent as men (Shakeshaft, 1987).
Hansot and Tyack (1981) also described three models to explain the origin of barriers to women's advancement in educational administration. The first model centered on the individual female. Sex stereotyping, socialization, and internal barriers were described as the forces that guided and limited female behavior. In other words, aspiring women school administrators created their own dilemma and were the key to the solution of the problem. The second model focused on male hegemony within a structural/organizational level: "Women behave in self-limiting ways not because they were socialized as females but because they are locked into low-power, low-visibility, dead-end jobs" (p. 7). Lastly, a model is described in which males defined and operated the world. Shakeshaft (1987) considered this form of hegemony as the most satisfactory explanation for the limitations on women's advancement to positions of power and prestige. Shakeshaft cited researchers from the worlds of anthropology, psychology, sociology, biology, and political science who provided similar explanations for male dominance.

In the realities of the current work world, the more blatant barrier of bias against women evolved into more subtle forms of sex discrimination (Edson, 1988). Subtle forms of sex discrimination are (a) gender issue questions that are unrelated to work and asked during interviews,
(b) tokenism, (c) limited advertising of vacancies, 
(d) demanding experience before employment, and 
(e) informal rather than traditional "old boys" networks.

Another subtle form of sex discrimination is called 
the "glass ceiling." The term "glass ceiling" means the 
current, invisible barriers which prevent women and 
minorities from advancing to top managerial positions. The 
U.S. Department of Labor recently began an investigation of 
this issue and identified several barriers (Dominguez, 
1991). The barriers identified were:

1. A level existed beyond which women and minorities 
ever advanced.

2. A lack of corporate strategies for equal 
opportunity practices.

3. A lack of monitoring systems.

4. Women and minorities are found in staff, not line, 
positions.

5. Women and minorities did not have access to 
development practices.

6. Internal and external recruitment practices 
prevented consideration of qualified women and minorities. 
As Shakeshaft (1987) contended, these barriers are almost 
identical to the barriers aspiring women in educational 
administration faced in the United States at the turn of 
the century.
The most common barrier to prevent women from entering administration was found to be resistance from other persons in the community (Dopp & Sloan, 1986). They suggested that this would be obvious in situations where school boards hire superintendents and community executives are involved in hiring school administrators. Incorrect perceptions by hiring parties created barriers for aspiring female administrators. Accordingly, incorrect perceptions of aspiring female administrators by hiring parties include women's lack of mobility, a lack of qualified women, and that women with families will not devote the time needed in school administration (Edson, 1988).

Another barrier revolves around the notion that women are their own worst enemies. Woo (1985) observed that the women's movement created psychological and emotional turmoil in many American women. Her study of 450 school administrators in North Carolina concerned the myths and realities of their personal and professional lives. The following are her findings:

1. Affirmative action and flexible working hours had no effect on their career progress.
2. Assertiveness training and career guidance had little effect on their career advancement.
3. Mentors have not played a significant role in their career progress.
4. They did not fear success.
5. Not one woman was waiting to be rescued and withdraw from the workplace to become a full-time homemaker.

6. Being a wife and a mother did not affect their career progress.

7. They did not need additional social or political skills to advance.

8. They did not view a lack of support from their bosses as a negative influence in their careers.

Woo (1985) found two factors that limited the women administrators' careers to be lack of opportunities to advance and lack of ambition to continue to advance after securing an administrative position, which was attributed to the women's feelings of discomfort when vying for power and when achieving power. Woo contended that many women in educational administration feel psychologically isolated from other women.

Other Suggested Barriers

Several authors have stated that women are their own worst enemies (Ginn, 1989; Goldberg, 1974; Woo, 1985). Women teachers often will not accept a female administrator; furthermore, women who have a traditional approach to life are openly negative to a female administrator (Ginn, 1989). Goldberg (1974) stated:

Clearly, there is a tendency among women to down-grade the work of professionals of their own sex. But the hypothesis that this tendency would decrease as the
"femaleness" of the professional field increased was not supported. Even in traditionally female fields, anti-feminism holds sway. (p. 41)

Non-working women also place pressures on women administrators. The pressures include grandparents who want women administrators to quit working when their grandchildren are born and psychological separation/alienation from women administrators. Lastly, women administrators lack leisure time to pursue personal friendships (Woo, 1985). In the spirit of hegemony, even well-meaning family and women friends unconsciously sabotage the aspirations of women administrators.

Gender assumptions and expectations that are embedded within the family and in society, as well as cultural ideas that women may not be regarded as suitable managers, is a combination of barriers described by Billings and Alvesson (1994) in a review of British studies. "Therefore, it is natural to assume that socialization, gender roles, general notions as regards management, etc. make it somewhat easier for men to be accepted as managers" (p. 25).

Characteristics of Women Superintendents

To provide a broad understanding of women superintendents, both demographic and other personality characteristics are presented. First, the demographic characteristics of women superintendents such as age, education, and marital status that are reported in the literature are given. Second, personality and motivation
characteristics of women executives such as achievement motivation and self-efficacy are explained.

Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics that are typically reported in studies of women superintendents are (a) age, (b) education, and (c) marital status. This part of the review will begin with age.

**Age.** Age is not significant in the career path of women in large organizations. Larwood and Gattiker (1987) found that women move up less predictably than men. Older women and younger women (a) were given similar promotions regardless of their age, (b) attained similar levels regardless of their age, and (c) both lagged behind older men. However, women superintendents are older than men superintendents.

Women superintendents are typically between the ages of 40 to 59 (McDade & Drake, 1982). In a study done by Maienza (1986) the average age of women superintendents was 53.2, whereas the average age for men in the superintendency was 50.1. In Iowa the average age of superintendents is 50.3 (Iowa Department of Education, 1994). Moreover, women superintendents are older than men when they enter their first superintendency (Radich, 1992; Schuster & Foote, 1990).

**Education.** Study after study indicated that women are expected to have a higher level of education than men when
competing for a superintendent's position (Natale, 1992; Radich, 1992; Schuster & Foote, 1990). Furthermore, women superintendents fulfill this expectation by holding more doctorates and rating their academic performance in college higher than men superintendents (Radich, 1992; Schuster & Foote, 1990).

Marital status. Most females in management positions are single and do not have children, but male managers typically are married and have children (Billings & Alvesson, 1994). Women in the superintendency are single more often than men (Chase & Bell, 1994; Radich, 1992; Schuster & Foote, 1990). Maienza (1986) found that 60% of women superintendents and 90% of men superintendents are married to their first spouse. Furthermore, a relationship exists between marital status and the size of the district in which the subjects occupied the superintendency. Although male superintendents in large districts are usually married, women superintendents in large districts are more likely to be (a) single, (b) divorced, or (c) divorced and remarried. Conversely, male superintendents in rural districts are likely to be (a) single, (b) divorced, or (c) divorced and remarried, although women superintendents in rural districts are likely to be married to their first spouse.

Female executives make a decision which "a number of savvy insiders consider to be a milestone in their
successful careers," to put their careers first and consider the decision not to have children necessary to demonstrate their commitment to the corporation (Morrison, 1992, p. 114). In the specific case of the superintendency, men superintendents have more children than women superintendents (Pavan & McKee, 1988; Radich, 1992; Schuster & Foote, 1990). Moreover, 92% of the children of males in the superintendency are between the ages of 5 and 19, whereas 44% of the children of females in the superintendency are 18 or older (Radich, 1992).

**Personality Characteristics**

The personality and motivation characteristics that are commonly considered in studies of women executives are achievement motivation and self-efficacy (White et al., 1992). This section begins with a brief review of the literature concerning achievement motivation and will continue with information on self-efficacy.

**Achievement motivation.** Women's motivations are similar to men's motivations and are influenced by childhood socialization and opportunity (Astin, 1984). Factors that contribute to achievement motivation are aspiration, mastery motivation, and career centrality (Farmer, 1985). Aspiration for women is influenced by support, and mastery motivation is established early in life. Farmer (1985) also found that career centrality, which is the belief that a career is central to one's life,
is established early in life; but career centrality is more vulnerable to competing role priorities for women than aspiration and mastery motivation.

A study of top level women managers by White et al. (1992) showed that women who have a close relationship with their fathers are encouraged to be independent and to believe they can do more than the traditional view of girls, thus developing a broader view of sex roles and aspirations that are not typical. Furthermore, early traumas can lead to development of survival or coping skills which lead to an early feeling of independence and self-reliance (White et al., 1992). Additionally, women who achieve high status positions usually have a cool relationship with one or both parents which encouraged them to become independent early (White et al., 1992). Lastly, White et al. (1992) found that the women in their study placed their career more centrally in their lives as they resolved sex role conflicts.

Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is different for men and women in relation to careers and is influenced by socialization experiences during childhood and also during organizational life (Hackett & Betz, 1981). Four sources of self-efficacy from childhood and organizational life are (a) performance accomplishments, (b) vicarious experience, (c) verbal persuasion, and (d) emotional arousal. White et al. (1992) found that the successful women in their study
were influenced by three sources of self-efficacy, beginning with their parents who were ambitious for them to achieve in school and in their careers or with a challenging experience which made them prove their capabilities. Role models during childhood and mentoring in the work place were reported by the successful women in this study. Lastly, Hackett and Betz (1981) contended that higher levels of anxiety about careers are felt by women who have traditional feminine views of sex roles and, accordingly, have limited self-efficacy in relation to careers.

Women's Career Development

Next, I will review the literature on women's career development. I will begin with stage theories of the career development of women followed by theories of women's career development that are structured with elements and theories of access and entry to the superintendency.

Stage Theories of the Career Development of Women

Theories of women's career development evolved from career development stage theories that focused on adult career development with additional considerations for women based on gender stereotypes (Powell & Mainiero, 1993). An example of this type of career development theory was proposed by Super (1957). Super contended that people pass through four career development stages which are
exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline.

Four career patterns resulted for men which were stable, conventional, unstable, and multiple-trial. Seven career patterns resulted for women which are (a) stable homemaking; (b) conventional, meaning marriage and homemaking ends the typical male progression; (c) stable working; (d) double-track, meaning continuing to work after marriage; (e) interrupted, meaning a sequence of working, then homemaking, then working; (f) unstable, meaning irregular switching between working and homemaking; and (g) multiple-trial. Super (1957) contended that attitudes remain stable towards careers across all stages and regardless of gender.

Other more recent career development theories are not gender stereotyped; however, gender bias is evident due to the fact that much of the research is done only on men (Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, & McKee, 1978; Schein, 1978). Some career development theories that focus specifically on women's career development are based on commonly accepted models for males, but instead utilize female samples. For example, Bardwick (1980) reexamined the model of Levinson et al. (1978) of male adult development with a female sample. Levinson et al. identified (a) early adult-entering adult world, age 30 transition-settling down; (b) middle adult-midlife transition, age 50 transition-culmination of middle
adulthood; and (c) late adulthood. However, women regarded relationships and career development as equally important, which offset the stages and the developmental tasks Levinson et al. used to define each stage. Women decide on career goals and focus on adult commitments during the early adult transition stage. The settling down stage for women is tempered with their childbearing status, although men, according to Levinson et al., are "becoming their own man." Middle adulthood is the time for women to "become their own woman."

Gilligan (1979) contended that theories of the life cycle place women as "nurturer, caretaker, and helpmate" (p. 440). She argued that women's experience has been left out as psychological theorists have used "the male life as the norm, they have tried to fashion women out of a masculine cloth" (p. 432). However, other more recent women's career development theories are unique to women's experience and do not attempt to explain the missing female side of male models of adult career development. Astin (1984) proposed a model based on the different socialization experiences for males and females coupled with workplace opportunities that influence career choices. Thus, women consider a limited set of career choices and opportunities, whereas men are not constrained and experience a much broader range of choices and opportunities.
A study of top women executives and female senior members of high status professions in Great Britain resulted in a model of stage career development of successful women (White et al., 1992). The stages combine career and family issues. The stages are similar to the stage theory of Levinson et al. (1978):

1. Early adult transition (17-25)
2. Entering the adult world and rejection of housewife role (mid-20s)
3. Establishment (25-33)
4. Early 30s transition and decision whether to have children (33-35)
5. Settling down with minimum maternity leave if motherhood is chosen (35)
6. Late-30s transition marked by regret of lack of children or awareness of career-family conflict and response to glass ceiling by changing jobs (38-40)
7. Achievement (40-50)
8. Maintenance with continued growth and success (50s on)

Theories Structured with Elements of the Career Development of Women

Due to the unique differences in men's and women's lives, Gutek and Larwood (1987) proposed that women's career development theory should include the following elements: (a) career preparation, (b) opportunities
available, (c) marriage, (d) pregnancy and children, and (e) timing. These elements are needed to more fully explain women's career development because women and men continue to select and prepare for occupations based on gender appropriateness expectations. Furthermore, husbands and wives accommodate each other's careers in different ways, and parenting roles require unequal time. Lastly, women's advancement is constrained compared to men's advancement. The various combinations of the elements produce different outcomes. However, Gutek and Larwood concluded that more research is needed.

Powell and Mainiero (1993) proposed a theory of women's career development that does not include life or career stages at certain points in time, rather elements structure the theory which are career versus relationships, success in career, success in relationships, and time. Powell and Mainiero contended that women place themselves on a continuum of career versus relationships and experience differing levels of success in both at any point in time. The two concerns act as "crosscurrents in the river of time" (p. 199). Several factors influenced career development. First, personal factors involve family in the form of career interruptions, dual-career demands, and parenting demands. The other personal factors include work motivation and career choices. Second, organizational factors influence women's careers which are (a) work
schedules and family supports, (b) initial staffing
decisions, (c) career path and promotional decisions, and
(d) mentoring, networking, and feedback practices. Last,
societal factors may undergird other factors. Societal
factors that have assisted women are legal requirements and
government programs. Societal factors also cause barriers
in the form of sex role expectations and sex
discrimination. Powell and Mainiero (1993) contended

The time is right for a new perspective on the study
of careers. The "river of time" approach provides a
framework for thinking about the inherent complexities
of the topic. Traditional models are too narrowly
focused to do an adequate job of conceptualizing the
richness of people's career decisions over time. (p. 219)

Theories of Access and Entry into the Superintendency

Patterns of access and entry into the superintendency
indicate common predictors of access and entry for both men
and women which include availability, mobility,
sponsorship, family influence, opportunity, competence,
aspiration, career paths, and work orientation (Radich,
1992). I present the literature concerning each predictor
below.

Availability. Specific statistics on the availability
of women candidates and women applicants for
superintendencies are not available nationally or for Iowa.
A study based on interviews with two superintendent search
consultants in Iowa found that out of a pool of 20 to 60
candidates for a superintendency in Iowa, only 1 to 5 are
women. Both consultants had conducted searches in which a woman had been interviewed; however, none were hired (Rottler, 1993).

Women are seeking doctorates in educational administration at increasing rates but do not use the degree to pursue the superintendency (Ortiz & Marshall, 1988). However, when they do, the percentage of superintendencies filled by women is the same as the percentage of women applying (Radich, 1992).

Mobility. Mobility is considered to be very important if one wants to move up the school administration career ladder to a superintendency (McDade & Drake, 1982; Natale, 1992). Women superintendents are more willing to relocate than male superintendents (Radich, 1992) and do relocate more than male superintendents (Pavan, 1990). Women are more willing to establish two households if needed in order to obtain a superintendency (Pavan, 1990). However, men and women aspirants average the same number of moves to obtain a first superintendency (Pavan, 1990).

Sponsorship. Sponsorship in gaining access to the superintendency takes three forms which are university professors, coalitions of professionals at the state level, and consultants hired by school districts for superintendent searches (Maienza, 1986). A study done by Maienza (1986) found that professional consultants sponsored women more often than did university professors.
However, fear of "setting up a woman for failure" was the reason given by consultants for their failure to promote women in an Iowa based study (Rottler, 1993, p. 8).

**Family influence.** Almquist and Angrist (1970) found that parents who accept and encourage their daughters to develop traits, behaviors, and career goals that are not stereotypical will have daughters who exhibit these traits, behaviors, and career goals. Furthermore, such parents tend to provide opportunities for their daughters to explore these characteristics in nontraditional areas (Hirshfield, 1982).

A review of the literature on sex typing by Huston (1983) indicated that sex-typed activities influence learning in the area of dependence or independence. Furthermore, fathers who have a close relationship with their daughters encourage the development of stereotypically male characteristics of achievement, task orientation, love of competition, and risk taking (Henning & Hackman, 1964). Conversely, White et al. (1992) found women in their study who described a strong relationship with their mother as being instrumental in their desire for achievement to be similar to the percentage of women who described a strong relationship with their father as being instrumental in their desire for achievement. Both groups of women developed a broad range of acceptable sex roles. Women superintendents describe parental influence in order
from most to least influence as father being of most influence, then mother, followed by both mother and father being of equal influence (McDade & Drake, 1982).

Another family influence such as escaping an impoverished background can be motivational. White et al. (1992) studied women considered highflyers, such as top level managers, and found that overcoming a hardship during childhood or a childhood deprivation experience was significantly motivational for those women. However, women superintendents tend to come from higher socio-economic backgrounds than male superintendents (Radich, 1992).

Lastly, the influence of place within the family, or birth order, is considered a personality predictor. The firstborn is considered to be the high achiever in the family (White et al., 1992). A similar percentage of both male and female superintendents are first born and come from average-sized families (Radich, 1992); however, other studies (Maienza, 1986; Schuster & Foote, 1990) found women superintendents to be first born more often than male superintendents.

Opportunities, competence, aspiration. Opportunities, competence, and aspiration are critical dimensions of obtaining a job in educational administration (Carlson & Schmuck, 1981). Radich (1992) found that women are confident in their skills to be a superintendent earlier than men, held their aspirations for the superintendency
longer than men, and were more qualified than men. Although women may aspire to the superintendency longer than men, Goldberg (1991) suggested that the low number of women superintendents in the United States may be due to women administrators' lack of career aspiration. Her study, done in New York State, found 15.8% of the male respondents aspired to the superintendency, although 5.5% of the female respondents aspired to the superintendency.

**Career path.** The career path or the sequence of positions held for those who advance within the school bureaucracy is different for men and women (Ortiz, 1982). Two typical career paths to the superintendency are specialist in instruction, to administrator of instruction, to assistant superintendent, to superintendent and secondary assistant principal, to high school principal, to superintendent (Gaertner, 1981). More women than men follow "path a," whereas more men than women follow "path b" (Schuster & Foote, 1990). Furthermore, Schuster & Foote (1990) found that 57% of male superintendents have been coaches compared to 13% of women superintendents.

Moreover, six career paths describe women's entry into the superintendency (McDade & Drake, 1982). The six career paths are:

1. Noninterrupted/line was the career path selected by women superintendents who had moved directly from teaching or counseling to line positions such as assistant principal, principal, director of elementary
or secondary education, assistant superintendent, and superintendent.

2. Noninterrupted/specialization was the career path selected by women superintendents who had moved through one or more specialized positions as well as one or more line positions in arriving at the superintendency.

3. Interrupted/family/line was the career path selected by women superintendents who had had one or more interruptions in a direct line to the superintendency because of family responsibilities.

4. Interrupted/family/specialization was the career path selected by women superintendents who had interrupted a career path for family responsibilities; otherwise the path was specialization.

5. Interrupted/other/line was the career path selected by women superintendents who had interrupted a direct line to the superintendency because of reasons other than family.

6. Interrupted/line/specialization was the career path selected by women superintendents who had interrupted the career path for reasons other than that of family responsibilities. Specialization was the primary reason for the interruption. (p. 214)

A more simplistic model is suggested by Maienza (1986) that focuses on a type of extraordinary activity that provided recognition for women educators both as a teacher and later as a lower or middle administrator. The model described career profiles which were the innovator, trouble shooter, and an ability to build upon opportunities.

**Work orientation.** A nontraditional work orientation with experience in school finance and building construction provided the abilities needed by the school districts that hired women superintendents in a study by Radich (1992). Although the traditional view of women administrators is to
identify instructional leadership as their priority (Pitner, 1981; Wheatley, 1981), 71% of the men superintendents and only 28% of the women superintendents mentioned this as a priority in Radich's study.

**Stress in the Superintendency**

As I reviewed the literature on the superintendency, it was clear that stress has become a natural part of the superintendency (Goldstein, 1992). The literature on stress in the superintendency included studies on coping, isolation, and the demands of the superintendency.

**Coping**

Coping with the stress of the superintendency was found to be different for male superintendents and female superintendents (Lindle et al., 1992). Women superintendents used more strategies and more coping resources related to human relations and to micropolitics. Women also used more networking and mentoring relationships. However, Lindle et al. (1992) found that most men superintendents included their families in their jobs and found that strategy to be an effective coping skill. Conversely, women tended to separate their family life from their professional life in an attempt to shield their families from the public. Regardless of inclusion or separation, the children of both men and women superintendents suffer (Blumberg & Blumberg, 1985).
Isolation

Isolation in the superintendency takes several forms (Jones, 1994). June Gabler described forms of isolation that she experienced in superintendencies in Ohio, Michigan, and Iowa which were (a) being set apart by salary and educational level, (b) being the boss, and (c) the lack of peers of the same gender (Jones, 1994). Typically, Gabler was one of the highest paid and highest educated professionals in a community. Being the boss tended to cause people to fear Gabler. Lastly, she said, "Who is there to reach out to? You may have to go across the country, way across the country" (p. 30).

Cohen (1994) also found that a form of isolation results for women who occupied top positions and had mostly male peers. Such women tended to "internalize criticism or resistance to our ideas as being based on gender" (p. 74). Cohen suggested that feelings of isolation resulted. A strategy to overcome feelings of isolation was to broaden the picture so attributions of criticism or resistance would not focus on gender (Cohen, 1994).

Demands of the Superintendency

The demands of the superintendency that caused stress for many superintendents included a changing climate, financial factors, and an impatient public (Goldstein, 1992). Large urban districts and small rural districts tend to be stressful. Also districts that must cut
spending and/or experience a drop in educational quality are stressful places. However, Goldstein (1992) stated, "How much strain a superintendent perceives—and whether it becomes debilitating—hinges on personality traits and ability to cope, as well as the nature of the job" (p. 10).

The demands of the superintendency differed by gender in regard to expectations in a study by Estler (1987). Women superintendents were expected to be more competent than men superintendents. The expectation was found to be both external, meaning from others, and internal, meaning from the individual woman superintendent. Specifically, the study found that women superintendents were expected to use more skills and knowledge in their job performance.

**Women's Leadership and Power**

Literature on women's leadership typically refers to gender-related leadership style (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1992; Helgesen, 1990; Shakeshaft, 1987). I will present both studies that support gender-related leadership style and studies that do not lend support to gender-related leadership style. Power is a mode of leadership (Spady & Mitchell, 1977); hence, I will describe the literature of power next. The literature on the concept of power includes (a) power and authority as means of social control (Spady & Mitchell, 1977), (b) a developmental approach to power based on power resources (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989), and (c) perceived power (Dubno, 1985).
Gender-Related Leadership Style

Leadership style is defined as traits such as initiating structure and consideration (Halpin & Winer, 1952). Also it is defined as behaviors displayed in leadership positions such as autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire (Hoferek, 1986). Lastly, leadership style is related to contingencies, in that patterns of leader personality and behavior are effective under certain conditions (Stogdill, 1974). Leadership style is also described as gender-related (Morgan, 1986). The trait of interpersonally oriented behaviors such as showing consideration toward subordinates and concern for their satisfaction is attributed to a feminine leadership style (Cann & Siegfried, 1990).

Support of gender differences in leadership style. Helgesen (1990) studied women leaders and compared her findings to Mintzberg's (cited in Helgesen, 1990) study of male managers. She found differences which she calls "feminine principles." These feminine principles are described by Roddick (cited in Helgesen, 1990):

Principles of caring, making intuitive decisions, not getting hung up on hierarchy or all those dreadfully boring business-school management ideas; having a sense of work as being part of your life, not separate from it; putting your labor where your love is; being responsible to the world in how you use your profits; recognizing the bottom line should stay there—at the bottom. (p. 39)
Helgesen contended that these feminine principles provided women "unique opportunities to assist in the continuing transformation of the workplace . . . " (p. 40).

Women's leadership style is also described as an "emerging" style that is: cooperative, collaborative, and intuitive (Loden, 1985). The development of this style is described as:

an approach to leading that is linked to gender differences, early socialization, and the unique set of life experiences from early childhood on, which shape women's values, interests, and behavior as adults. (p. 61)

Fried (1989) contended that women "thrive on their personal involvement with employees" (p. 20). The management style common to women is a "people-oriented one, which requires skills that come more naturally to women than men" (p. 20). Other findings were: (a) motivation was accomplished by empowerment and team building, (b) open communication was the norm, and (c) relationships were taken seriously.

Shakeshaft (1987) described gender differences in patterns of behaviors of educational administrators. She contended that both men and women use a variety of behaviors in leadership activities, but the patterns of use are different. Three patterns of behaviors for women in educational leadership activities are relationships are central in regard to actions, teaching and learning are the
major focus, and community building is central to leadership style.

Lastly, Guido-DiBrito et al. (1986) reviewed the literature on gender differences in leadership styles and concluded that women who are participative and democratic are judged positively by their subordinates. Women leaders who are autocratic are judged negatively by their subordinates. This stereotyping is viewed as limiting women's options for leadership behavior.

**Nonsupport of gender differences in leadership style.** I believe in the importance of reporting negative evidence, so I have also included literature on gender differences in leadership that does not support gender differences. Research done in Greece does not support gender differences in leadership style. Bourantas and Papalexandris (1990) conducted a study in Greece which investigated gender differences in leadership styles. Their study focused on subordinates' satisfaction with supervision and leadership styles. The findings indicated that neither leadership style nor subordinate satisfaction differ with the gender of the supervisor.

Decker (1991) also found that leadership styles did not vary with gender and concluded that both males and females are successful using task-oriented leadership style and people-oriented leadership style. He noted that different situations suggest different styles.
Lastly, Bolman and Deal (1992) studied leadership in four categories described as "frames" which are structural, human resource, political, and symbolic. They found that females and males in comparable jobs are not very different from each other in leadership frames; in fact, males and females in comparable positions are more alike than different.

**Concept of Social Control**

Spady and Mitchell (1977) contended that social control is used by leaders to influence followers. Social control occurs by two modes which include power and authority.

**Power.** Power is viewed as a property of (a) an individual (Weber, 1947), (b) interpersonal relationships (Pfeffer, 1981), or (c) the organization (Mechanic, 1962). The property of power is further defined by Ragins and Sundstrom (1989) as a person's influence over others based on organizational position, interpersonal relationships, or individual characteristics.

Power involves resources. The recognition of power by someone who is controlled is due to that person's orientation or expectation. The four power resources are moral, psychological, contractual, and technical. First, moral resources are similar to social norms or tradition. Second, psychological power resources are based on attractiveness or charisma. Third, contractual resources
are similar to moral power resources but involve legal ramifications. Last, technical resources relate to expertise.

**Developmental view of power.** The concept of power in career development is based on a developmental view. Ragins and Sundstrom (1989) reviewed the literature concerning gender and power in organizations and concluded that power develops over time and parallels career development, forming a path to power. The power comes from various sources at three levels: (a) organizational level, (b) interpersonal level, and (c) individual level. The sources of power at the individual level include traits, skills, and other characteristics. At the interpersonal level, the sources of power are peer networks, mentors, autonomy, and supportive subordinates. Lastly, at the organizational level position and control over organizational assets are sources of power.

Ragins and Sundstrom (1989) also contended that "power begets power" (p. 81). In other words a synergy of power results as power develops during a career and can move forward or backward. Furthermore, the path to power was found to be different for men and women. "For women, the path to power contains many impediments and barriers and can best be characterized as an obstacle course" (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989, p. 81). The authors suggested that powerful women who are successful in organizations may be
different from male populations and most female populations. Lastly, the authors suggested that a common avenue to power for women is to develop expertise.

Perceived power. Gender-based stereotypes associate power with men, but not with women; therefore, women may face the possibility of diminished perceptions of their power due to the incompatibility of stereotypes for women and power (Dubno, 1985). Successful female executives tend to rely heavily on expert power to compensate for their diminished power due to stereotypes (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1985).

Successful female executives rely mostly on the power of expertise and the individual power of self confidence (Kane, Parsons, & Associates, Inc., 1982). Ragins and Sundstrom (1989) suggested that women have less position power than men and use the power of expertise to gain top positions, hence they are usually better qualified than men. Rosener (1990) also contended that men were more likely to use power that came from their organizational position and formal authority, to view their job as an exchange of rewards for services, and to view their job as an exchange of punishment for inadequate performance, but women were found to characterize themselves as:

- getting subordinates to transform their own self-interest into the interest of the group through concern for a broader goal. Moreover, they ascribe their power to characteristics like charisma,
interpersonal skills, hard work, or personal contacts rather than to organizational stature. (p. 120)

Authority. Authority is social control that relies on charisma, legalities, expertise, and tradition, rather than relying on rewards or sanctions (Spady & Mitchell, 1977). Krysinski and Reed (1994) found authority-based leadership leads to "authentic and satisfying relationships between followers and leaders" (p. 69). Furthermore, authority-based relationships are "necessary for trust, sharing, and working together" (p. 70).

Decision Making

Aspects of decision making such as moral reasoning (Gilligan, 1982) and "ways of knowing" (Belenky et al., 1986) are gender-related. Additionally, the organizational structure known as the "web of inclusion" is gender-related (Helgesen, 1990).

Aspects of decision making have been reported in the literature to be gender-based. Specifically, Gilligan et al.'s (1988) research on moral reasoning and the research by Belenky et al. (1986) on women's ways of knowing will be reviewed.

Moral reasoning oftentimes differs for most males and most females (Gilligan et al., 1988), and accordingly, is gender-based. Females tend to focus on the needs of others and on relationships during decision making, but males tend to focus on logic and justice (Gilligan et al., 1988).
Flanagan and Jackson (1993) described Gilligan's gender-based moral reasoning research:

Gilligan describes a moral universe in which men, more often than women, conceive of morality as substantively constituted by obligations and impartiality, while women, more often than men, see moral requirements as emerging from the particular needs of others in the context of particular relationships. (p. 70)

Moral reasoning based on gender orientation is described by Gilligan (1982) as an ethic. The ethic of justice is considered to be a mostly male ethic, and an "ethic of care and response" (p. 174) is a mostly female ethic. The ethic of care is based on relatedness and responsibility rather than on separation and individuation. In other words, women tend to work through decisions based on relationships and the needs of those involved. Men tend to base decisions on logic. These gender differences in decision making were conceptualized by Forbes (1992) as the basis of gender-related leadership.

However, Belenky et al. (1986) described another aspect of decision making that is gender-related which is women's ways of knowing. Four stages describe the way that women know and view reality: (a) silence exists when women have literally no control over their lives and do not voice their views, (b) received knowledge is knowledge which comes strictly from all knowing authorities, (c) subjective knowledge taps into intuition for private and personal knowledge, and (d) constructed knowledge is contextual in
nature and is developed through objective and subjective strategies. Women in leadership roles who construct knowledge have a participative, cooperative, and collaborative style of leadership, gather information from many sources before decision making, try mediation strategies, care about their subordinates, and are aware of the effects of their decisions (Haring-Hidore et al., 1990). The decision making of these women is based on relatedness and care as described by Gilligan (1982).

**Organizational Structure**

Gender images are used in the literature of organizational structure in the form of metaphors (Billings & Alvesson, 1994; Helgesen, 1990; Kanter, 1977; Loden, 1985). The use of such metaphors is explained by Billings and Alvesson (1994):

> Few could deny that most contemporary organizations, and especially those that are the economically and politically most significant, historically and at present, have men as their architects and heads. This certainly expresses something that is not gender neutral. (p. 230)

Furthermore, Aburdene and Naisbitt (1992) contended, "If empowerment is the first attribute of women's leadership, creating an organizational structure to foster it is second" (p. 95). Aburdene and Naisbitt (1992) cited Rosener (1990) and Helgesen (1990) in their contention that a new approach in management replaces the traditional hierarchical pyramid with networks. "Web managing" or
networking work well in large organizations and is women's primary organizational structure (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1992).

The organizational structure that is described as a web of inclusion is related to women's leadership (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1992; Helgesen, 1990). This web of inclusion is structured with the leader at the center of the web, with all others within the organization radiating out from the center and connected to each other. It is based on the concept of interdependence and results from a democratic leadership style (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1992; Helgesen, 1990). It is very different from the "warrior system," which is an organizational structure that is related to men's leadership. Male leadership "needs for autonomy, competition, and control have been built into the very structure of those organizations that have served our culture in the public realm" (Helgesen, 1990, p. 235).

Summary

An historical review described the development of the Iowa school superintendency and provided a broad view of the consistently low percentage of women in the Iowa school superintendency. In order to understand the historical development of women in the superintendency in Iowa, literature that describes the barriers that prevent women from becoming superintendents was presented. Shakeshaft (1987) contended that the barriers that kept women from
becoming educational administrators in 1900 are not much
different from the barriers that prevent women from
entering school administration today. Furthermore,
barriers have been described in the literature as being
impactful on the organization of education employment by
gender (Shakeshaft, 1987).

The characteristics of women superintendents include
demographic characteristics and personality
characteristics. Demographic characteristics of women
superintendents include that women superintendents are
older than men when they enter their first superintendency
(Radich, 1992; Schuster & Foote, 1990); that women have a
higher level of education than men when competing for a
superintendent's position (Natale, 1992; Radich, 1992;
Schuster & Foote, 1990); and that women superintendents are
single more often than men (Chase & Bell, 1994; Radich,
1992; Schuster & Foote, 1990). Lastly, men in the
superintendency have more children than women
superintendents (Pavan & McKee, 1988; Radich, 1992;

Personality characteristics of top achieving women
such as achievement motivation (White et al., 1992) and
self-efficacy (Hackett & Betz, 1981) are strong connectors
to success but are not limited only to women. Motivation
is influenced by childhood socialization and opportunity
(Astin, 1984). Self-efficacy in relation to careers is
influenced by socialization experiences during childhood and also during organizational life (Hackett & Betz, 1981).

The childhood and adolescent development of women is related to careers. Women who had a close childhood relationship with their fathers were encouraged to be independent and to believe they could do more than the traditional view of girls, thus developing a broader view of sex roles and aspirations that are not typical (White et al., 1992). Early traumas can lead to development of survival or coping skills which lead to an early feeling of independence and self-reliance in adolescence (Cooper & Hingley, 1983). Parents of successful women were ambitious for them to achieve in school and in their careers (White et al., 1992). Specific career development theories for women are based on stages (Astin, 1984; Bardwick, 1980; White et al., 1992) or elements (Gutek & Larwood, 1987; Powell & Mainiero, 1993). Career development focuses on patterns of access and entry; however, the career path to the superintendency for women is typically different from men (McDade & Drake, 1982; Ortiz, 1982; Schuster & Foote, 1990).

Gender differences are related to leadership style (Helgesen, 1990; Rosener, 1990; Weller, 1988). Women’s leadership style is described as a style that is cooperative, collaborative, and intuitive (Fried, 1989; Helgesen, 1990; Loden, 1985; Shakeshaft, 1987). Women who
are participative and democratic are judged positively by their subordinates (Guido-Dibrito et al. 1986). Gender differences are found in patterns of leadership behaviors of educational administrators (Shakeshaft, 1987).

Social control is used by leaders to influence followers and occurs by two modes which include power and authority (Spady & Mitchell, 1977). Power develops over time and parallels career development, forming a "path to power," which is different for men and women (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). The power comes from various sources at the organizational level, the interpersonal level, and/or the individual level. Sources of power include characteristics, relationships, and position in organization with a common source of power for women being the power of expertise (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). The power of expertise is described as authority-based leadership (Krysinski & Reed, 1994).

Aspects of decision making are gender-based. Specifically, females tend to focus on the needs of others and on relationships during moral reasoning, whereas males tend to focus on logic and justice (Gilligan et al., 1988). Women's ways of knowing address the aspect of decision making of women in which women know and view reality (Belenky et al., 1986). Women in leadership roles who construct knowledge (Belenky et al., 1986) demonstrate the
behaviors related to women's leadership style (Haring-Hidore et al., 1990).

Organizational structures in which women lead are also gender-related (Billings & Alvesson, 1994; Kanter, 1977; Loden, 1985) and tend to be web-like structures (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1992; Helgesen, 1990). The web of inclusion is based on the concept of interdependence and results from leadership style that is related to women (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1992; Helgesen, 1990).

Lastly, stress has become a natural part of the experience of being a superintendent (Goldstein, 1992). Coping with the stress of the superintendency is different for male superintendents and female superintendents (Lindle et al., 1992). Women superintendents used more strategies and more coping resources related to human relations (Lindle et al., 1992). Isolation occurs for women in the superintendency due to the high salary and educational level, to being the boss, and to the lack of peers of the same gender (Jones, 1994). The demands of the superintendency are different for women (Estler, 1987). Specifically, women superintendents are expected to use more skills and knowledge in their job performance than men superintendents.
CHAPTER III

METHODS

Because I chose a qualitative approach for this study, it is important to begin with a statement of my point of view (Peshkin, 1986). The methods section will follow with (a) pre-field work, (b) epistemological basis, (c) research design, (d) participants, (e) human subjects provision, (f) data collection methods, (g) other sources of data, (h) analysis, (i) procedure and time line, and (j) limitations of the study.

Pre-Field Work

My values, interests, background, and experiences enhanced my motivation to pursue this research. I came to this study with a background in school administration—5 years of experience as an elementary school principal and 1 year of experience as a superintendent intern. I felt that it was my great fortune to work with a woman superintendent during most of the internship. Both experiences greatly influenced my beliefs about women in leadership positions.

As I reflected on my leadership as a principal, I recalled my leadership style to be very similar to the styles described for women. I focused on (a) relationships, (b) teaching and learning, and (c) community building, which parallels the findings of Shakeshaft (1987). However, as I reflected on my experience as a superintendent intern and the leadership of
the woman superintendent who was my supervisor, I recalled her leadership style as fluctuating between a relationship focus and a focus of fairness with the objective of being impartial.

Upon further reflection on my years as a principal, the organizational structure that I used revolved around me. I always put myself in the middle of everything. The woman superintendent that supervised my internship did the same. She consistently placed herself at the center of the organization of the school district. Regardless of whether the group included custodians, teachers, or principals, she was always right there in the middle.

My experience as a superintendent intern also exposed me to the isolation of the superintendency. As I worked on school board policy revisions, negotiations exhibits, or documents required by the Iowa Department of Education, I felt the very singular existence of the superintendency. I worked in a secluded quiet area of the central office alone.

The above sketch of my experience provides a glimpse of the bias that is evident in my research. I am aware that this bias perhaps clouded my view of the data I collected. However, Eisner (1991) stated "... measurement is always biased because it is always partial. Bias occurs because of omission as well as commission, and since there is no form of representation that includes
everything, in this particular sense, all forms of representation are biased" (p. 239-240).

I expected to find the women superintendents of this study to be much like the woman superintendent I worked with as an intern. I anticipated that they would have similar leadership styles, have similar ways of knowing, and use similar gender related aspects of decision making. Furthermore, I anticipated that they would have very similar career paths and utilize the same power resources.

**Epistemological Basis**

I proposed a research style that is described as "operational naturalistic inquiry" (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). This inquiry is based on the constructivist paradigm and utilized qualitative methods which I believe facilitated my attempt to collect data that captured the multiple realities that I encountered. I collected data through this approach that could not be collected by a typical questionnaire due to my ability to perceive and evaluate the interactions between the women and me. Also, this type of inquiry legitimizes intuitive knowledge which I felt was vital for deeper understanding of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Furthermore, inductive analysis is "more likely to identify the multiple realities to be found in those data . . . is more likely to identify the mutually shaping influences that interact" (Lincoln & Guba, 1986, p. 40).
Given my status as investigator, I knew that I never experienced what these women were really like or really experienced their reality; however, a naturalistic inquiry shortened the distance between their experiences and my understanding. Eisner (1991) contended, "The idea that truth exceeds belief is itself a belief in the possibility of an ontological objectivity. Yet all that we can ever know is the product of an active mind in commerce with a world" (p. 51). Furthermore, an inquiry of this type directly contributes to the women superintendents' active self-understanding and "collective self-formation."

**Research Design**

The women superintendents of Iowa represent a unique group of superintendents because they broke into a system that is male dominated (Shakeshaft, 1987). To understand the phenomenon of the uniqueness of these women, a case study design structured this investigation of the women superintendents of Iowa (Borg & Gall, 1989). Traditionally, case study refers to a single site; however, McMillan and Schumacher (1989) stated that:

Case study design refers to the one phenomenon the researcher selects to understand in-depth regardless of the number of settings, social scenes, or participants in the study. The "case" relates to the research foci and influences what the researcher can state empirically upon completion of the study. (p. 392)

Therefore, the "case" is the group of women superintendents that represent 3.4% of the K-12 public school
superintendents of Iowa. Specifically, career interview was the type of data collection strategy used to understand the phenomenon of the uniqueness of these women (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989). Career interviews were conducted with a focus on in-depth interviewing (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). This specific design was used to obtain data in the form of a narrative that provided a reflective description of each woman superintendent's career history (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989).

Lastly, this study is about the group of women serving as superintendents of K-12 public schools in Iowa. This is not to say that men serving as K-12 superintendents do not experience the same or similar things in the superintendency in Iowa. In other words, this analysis of the women superintendents of Iowa during the 1993-94 school year is exclusively about women rather than a comparison of women to men.

**Participants**

The study included practicing women superintendents of K-12 public schools from Iowa during the 1993-94 school year. The selection of the participants was based on the purposeful sampling strategy of comprehensive selection (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989) due to the manageability of the size of the group (14). Thirteen of the 14 women superintendents volunteered to participate. The list of K-12 public school districts in Iowa that employed a woman
superintendent during the 1993-1994 school year was obtained from the Iowa Department of Education's Iowa Education Directory (1993-1994). The identity of each woman and the school district with which she is associated were held in confidence.

Human Subjects Provision

An informed consent form (Appendix A) and the interview questions (Appendix B) were submitted with the required forms to the Human Subjects Committee at the University of Northern Iowa. Approval of the research project was granted on May 10, 1994 (Appendix C). The informed consent form and the interview questions were used to obtain consent from the women superintendents to participate in the study and to form the basis of the interviews.

Data Collection Methods

The data collection methods were based on a "dialogue" (Comstock, 1982). The interview process was used with the women superintendents in order to provide for their active participation in the construction of their realities (Comstock, 1982). The other methods used to collect data were (a) informal observations, (b) an historical review of the women superintendents of Iowa, and (c) other sources of data such as documents, memos, and agendas of meetings.
Interviews

I conducted in-depth career interviews with each woman superintendent using the interview questions as the foci (Appendix B). The questions focused on the following areas: (a) background, (b) self-description, (c) educational background and career path, (d) gender, (e) decision making, (f) way of knowing, and (g) leadership. Additional interviews with each woman superintendent occurred by telephone as needed or upon request after the initial interviews. The telephone interviews provided an opportunity for the superintendent to reflect on the formal interview.

Each interview was audiotaped and later transcribed by me or by a typist who was committed to confidentiality. Transcripts were typed with initials for names, and in final form, the interview and observation materials used pseudonyms (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989). Audio tapes were destroyed following completed transcription of interview material. One audio tape was unusable which required the process of member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1986) after which I wrote the account of the specific woman superintendent's story. This woman superintendent reviewed her story and made corrections and additions. Member checking of this nature also was used for two interviews which were not audiotaped. In both cases, after I wrote the account of each woman superintendent’s story, the woman
was offered the opportunity to review her story and to make corrections and additions.

Observations

Observations were made of each superintendent and field notes were taken in informal settings such as lunch or other informal activities with the superintendents. Observations were brief because few informal activities occurred; however, field notes were made after informal observations to describe the setting of the interview, the interactions between the superintendent and me, and the activities of the superintendents (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989).

Other Sources of Data

I collected other sources of data such as documents, memos, copies of speeches, and agendas of meetings (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989). Consistent with the processes of the case study, an historical review was conducted (Borg & Gall, 1989). The historical review of the organization of administrative employment by gender in Iowa was conducted beginning with Iowa's first woman superintendent, who also was the first woman superintendent in the United States.

Procedure and Timeline

In-depth interviews were conducted with the women superintendents in person during fall of 1994 and winter of 1995. Contact was made by telephone prior to the interview
to explain my study, gain consent, and arrange an appointment for the interview. I offered an introductory interview to answer any questions; however, none were requested. Interviews were conducted within the woman superintendent's school district or at a site selected by the superintendent. Due to the length of the interview and the need for me to accommodate the time restraints of the superintendent's schedule, the interviews were all conducted in one visit. Each of the interviews was based on the interview questions. An informal follow up contact by telephone was made whenever necessary to revisit the interview data. Informal observations were made during the visit. Field notes were made after the interview; however, the interviews formed the basis of the data gathering. The data collection was completed by March of 1995.

Analysis

The analysis of the data included five stages: (a) preparation of data for analysis, (b) preliminary analysis, (c) categorizing and ordering data, (d) assessing trustworthiness of data, and (e) story writing (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989).

Preparation of Data

All pages of data including field notes and transcripts were numbered sequentially. Three copies of the data were made. One copy was retained as a permanent copy.
Preliminary Analysis

This stage of analysis began with the first interview and observation. I continuously scanned the data for categories and topics, followed by identification of patterns, emerging themes, and other ideas. Memos were written to summarize my findings after each scan. I also kept a journal in order to keep a running account of my initial thoughts.

I then reviewed the literature concerning (a) history of women superintendents in Iowa, (b) barriers to women in educational administration, (c) demographic and personal characteristics of women superintendents, (d) childhood, adolescent development, and career development of women, (e) leadership style, (f) social control, (g) decision making, (h) organizational structure, and (i) stress in the superintendency.

The data were hand coded, based on the conceptual framework and the emerging topics. After coding, the data were then categorized and ordered into topic files by hand. Categorizing and Ordering Data

Data were categorized, sorted, and ordered into topic files. Categories were named, with preference given to actual terms used by the women superintendents. The categories were then ordered. I formally identified patterns and themes and anomalies. I attempted to further refine patterns and themes.
Assessing Trustworthiness of Data

Next, I used two methods to assure the trustworthiness of the data: member checking and peer review (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). Member checking was done with one of the women superintendents in the study and with one of my committee members who had experience as a superintendent. Both volunteered to read the stories and/or my manuscript. Peer review was done by a colleague at Upper Iowa University who also volunteered to read the stories and my manuscript. Both the peer review and the member checking process included candid discussions between each volunteer and me. Furthermore, I also looked for negative evidence and reported it (McMillan & Schumacher, 1989).

Writing the Stories

Stories were written to explain the lives of women superintendents in Iowa. These stories contained the information garnered from interviews, observations, and other sources of data. All stories were offered to the women superintendents for their review, critique, and editing; however, only two volunteered to participate in this process. Furthermore, I wrote the story of my encounters with the women superintendents of Iowa. The stories provided an additional means of analyzing the data.

Problems Encountered

I encountered several problems as I gathered the data for this study. First, scheduling was extremely difficult
due to the time demands of the superintendency described by the women superintendents of Iowa. I typically had an exact time frame of when the interview could begin and when it needed to end. The women were very protective of their weekend time; therefore, I needed to schedule the interviews during the work week. Return visits were never encouraged.

Lastly, member checking proved to be unwanted by the women, again due to the demands on their time. I soon learned that a quick phone call to verify the data was the best I could do for member checking.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited in three ways. First, the participants are highly visible in the state of Iowa simply due to their low number. Second, the interview process was restricted because of limited access. I often needed to (a) introduce myself to the woman, (b) build rapport with her, and (c) complete the interview within a time frame determined by the woman superintendent. Lastly, the response effect may have impacted the data.

Conspicuous Status of Participants

The conspicuous status of the participants in this study was a major limitation. The identity of the women superintendents of Iowa and the school district with which each was associated were held in a confidential manner. However, although confidentiality was guaranteed, due to
the low number in this sample and the high profile of the K-12 public school superintendent (Natale, 1992), anonymity could not be guaranteed. This, in turn, may have impacted the data (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

**Time Limitation for Building Relationships**

The second limitation involved the logistics of the interviews and limited access to the women superintendents. For the most part, I met a woman superintendent the same day that I conducted the interview; therefore, I had very little time to build rapport with the woman superintendent. The process of building a relationship is vital to gaining access to their world (Measor, 1985). In a life/career history case study, Catani contended that life history methodology "is above all the product of an encounter. The story recounts the development of an intense affective relationship whose exchange exists on a purely oral basis" (cited in Bertaux, 1981, p. 212). This lack of relationship development time may have impacted the data as well.

**Response Effect**

The third limitation of this study was the response effect. The response effect is inaccurate and/or incorrect responses to questions due to a variety of reasons such as (a) shame, (b) distrust, (c) wanting to impress, and (d) forgotten information (Borg & Gall, 1989; Lincoln & Guba, 1986).
Summary

I utilized qualitative methods which I believe facilitated my attempt to collect data that captured the multiple realities of the women superintendents of Iowa. I was able to perceive and evaluate the interactions between the women and me through personal interviews. Also, I utilized intuitive knowledge and inductive analysis to discover the themes. Lastly, methods were used to establish trustworthiness of the data.
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

In Iowa: Cornfields, Soybeans, and Leadership

I drove down a winding black-topped road as I approached a small Iowa town for my first interview with a woman who was the K-12 public school superintendent. This small town could be any small town in Iowa. It was surrounded by corn and soy bean fields, full of tree-lined streets and two story turn-of-the-century family homes with front porches. A nondescript water tower and a grain elevator jutted above the tree line. The main street had turn-of-the-century brick storefronts that house a florist, a post office, a furniture store, a feed business, a lumber store, and a drug store. Someone that I didn't even know waved at me. The brick school was visible at the end of one of the tree-lined streets and appeared to be the biggest building in town. I turned on that street and did not meet any cars as I drove to the school which housed her office. I noticed laundry hanging from a clothesline and petunias in full bloom, as I drove down the street. Her school was across from a Caseys convenience store and next to the football field.

I parked my car by two cars in the deserted parking lot that needed to be resurfaced. An elderly man was mowing the school lawn with a large mower attached to an old John Deere tractor that blew grass over my car. The
door to the building was propped open with a student desk, so I walked into a dark hallway that was cool and lined with more student desks--due to summer maintenance--and I headed toward the only light shining from an open door. A pleasant middle-aged woman sat behind a counter, looked up at me, and smiled. She then asked me to wait and motioned to a red, plastic upholstered chair. Three unopened boxes from Scott Foresman were stacked next to my chair. She turned and went right back to her typing on a Macintosh computer after promising me that the superintendent would be with me shortly.

I listened to the country music playing in the office area and noticed that the office looked like most superintendent offices that I had seen in Iowa schools. The room was painted aqua blue, had a gray tiled floor and had fluorescent lights attached to the off-white ceiling tile. Four offices surrounded this crowded reception area. A wire basket sat on the counter by the secretary and a large school clock with a connected intercom system was on the wall at the end of the counter. Behind me was a large bulletin board that was covered with the district's school board minutes. The music and typing were all that I heard.

The Women Superintendents of Iowa

Due to the low number of women in the superintendency in Iowa, I am aware that the women are a very conspicuous group. Moreover, given their high profile in Iowa, I find
it impossible to describe them as individuals without revealing their identities. As I gained access to these women, most of them expressed concern that their identities might be revealed which, in turn, could cause them great discomfort. Therefore, because the purpose of this study is to describe their characteristics, I have chosen to introduce them by some of their characteristics, using a collage-like technique to disguise their true identities. Pseudonyms are used as an additional attempt to conceal the women superintendents' identities. Given, this approach reduces the participants to mere silhouettes; however, I cannot reveal distinguishing characteristics of the individual women. Accordingly, the women superintendents of Iowa are grouped for their introduction as (a) the Rookies, (b) the Part-Timers, (c) the Rooted, (d) the Veterans, and (e) the Wise.

The Rookies: If I Knew Then What I Know Now

Jo and Sylvia were newcomers to the superintendency, but not to school administration. Both women had experience as principals and experience as teachers. Although one woman was seven years older than the other, they had similar years of experience due to one's lateness in entering the teaching profession. Their salaries were $44,000 and $56,000 for districts of 480 students and 634 students, which were in remote areas of Iowa. One woman was married, and the other was single. Neither had
children at home. Their offices were warm, inviting places with mauve or teal area rugs, green plants, and decorator lamps. I noticed that nothing was out of place on their walnut-tone desks which were well-polished.

I was impressed with their high energy levels and found them to be warm, friendly people. They looked and dressed very differently. One wore diamond earrings and a designer dress, and the other wore dangling, colored earrings that coordinated with her dressy shorts. Both were very active in professional associations and in their respective area education associations (AEAs). One loved the job, and one was leaving the superintendency in Iowa.

The Part-Timers: Burning the Candle at Both Ends

Teresa and Mary were part-time superintendents who were shared with other districts as principalCOORDINATOR. Both women were in their middle 40s, were married, had older children at home, and had marital problems. They were similar in appearance, dressed much like their female teachers, had tightly permed chin-length hair, and had perfect, ready smiles. One district had 400 students and the other had 190 students. Their salaries were $42,000 and $56,000 for two to three years of experience. Both had had a variety of staff administrative experiences and had been teachers for 14 or more years.

Although Mary and Teresa were polite, friendly, open women, they were very tired women and seemed pulled in
several directions. Their stress showed in premature wrinkles on their faces. In spite of their fatigue, I found them to be quite focused and well organized, using Franklin Planners on their cluttered desks. Posters were tacked to their walls, and boxes served as file cabinets. Both were dissatisfied with their dual roles and wished for positions with a single administrative role as a superintendent.

The Rooted: Life Is a Bowl of Cherries

Barbara and Debra were experienced superintendents with two years under their belts. One woman was single, and the other was married with an elementary-aged child at home. Their salaries were $51,000 in a 410 student district and $63,000 in a 926 student district. Both had many years of experience as teachers, principals, and assistant superintendents. One woman was in her middle 40s, and the other was in her late 50s. One wore a tailored suit. The other was comfortable in a school mascot sweatshirt and denim skirt. Their offices had trendy wallpaper, matching carpet, and soft, cushiony furniture.

Both Debra and Barbara loved the superintendency and had numerous professional affiliations. They were self proclaimed "people persons." One called me "Hon," and the other touched my hand often to make a point. I found them to be very likable, articulate, and savvy women who seemed
to relish, as one said, "being in the hot seat of the superintendency."

The Veterans: Been There, Done That

The Veterans were the storytellers of the group. Laura, Marie, Karen, Jackie, and Joyce seemed to have weathered just about everything that happens in the superintendency in Iowa. All had been superintendents in two or more districts. They had districts that range in size from 610 students to 9,600 students and made $53,000 to $96,000. Three of the women were in their mid-to-late 40s and two just turned 50. Four had experience that included teaching and the principalship. One moved into the superintendency from graduate school.

One was single, one was divorced with a child at home, two were married with children at home, and one was a widow. All loved to garden yet hated to cook. Laura, Marie, and Karen were athletic and in great physical condition. They were self-proclaimed "sports nuts" and loved to go to school athletic events. Jackie and Joyce reeked of class from their expensive suits and sheik hair cuts to the oil paintings in their offices. They loved to talk about their travels and shopping excursions.

Confident, competent, and charismatic quickly came to mind to describe these women. Each was extremely talented in areas such as theater, sky diving, equestrian, etc., but had little time for it. I also found each to be very
articulate, witty, and quite philosophical about the superintendency. Furthermore, these women were quick to share the price each had paid to be a superintendent. Moreover, two were tired of paying the price and will be leaving the superintendency in Iowa.

The Wise: Take This Job and Shove It

Ruth and Ellen were in their late 50s and early 60s and were taking early retirement. Their current salaries were $61,000 and $75,000 for districts of 1,200 students and 5,600 students. One had 12 years of experience in the superintendency, and the other had 4 years of experience. They were married and had grown children. Both had a grandmotherly look about them, but only one had grandchildren. Both were comfortable wearing golf shirts and shorts to the office in the summer, pants and sweaters in the winter, and no make up. Their offices were no nonsense, tidy areas with metal desks and notebook/binders on shelves, rather than file cabinets. Their experience included teaching, the principalship, and other line and staff administrative positions.

Both Ellen and Ruth were quiet, reserved women who appeared to be somewhat shy—perhaps just tired. They were reflective about their careers and negative about their years in the superintendency. Neither would be superintendents again if they had it to do all over again.
I found them also to be quick to share the prices they had paid to be superintendents.

Demographics

Fourteen women served as superintendents of Iowa public K-12 schools during the period of 1993-1994. Thirteen volunteered to participate in the study. Five of the 14 women left the superintendency in Iowa at the end of the 1993-94 school year. The demographic description of the 13 women superintendents of Iowa includes the following professional demographic data: (a) education, (b) years of experience, (c) salary, (d) professional affiliations, (e) district size, and (f) career pattern. The personal demographic data follow with (a) age and (b) marital status and family.

Professional Demographics

Education. All of the women superintendents in the study were certified to be superintendents in the State of Iowa. However, I found the educational background of the women superintendents to vary. All of the women superintendents had masters degrees, but the degrees were in a variety of areas such as educational administration, curriculum and technology, counseling, and special education. All of the women had some sort of post-masters graduate work. Two of the women had doctorates. Table 1 (Appendix D) reports the undergraduate major of the women superintendents.
Table 2 (Appendix D) reports the types of masters degrees of the women superintendents of Iowa. The post masters degree work or doctorate work for the certification for the superintendency was done by the women superintendents at various institutions both in Iowa and outside of Iowa. Approximately half of the women superintendents of Iowa attended institutions outside of the State of Iowa for their certification for the superintendency. Table 3 (Appendix D) reports the institutions attended by the women superintendents for the certification required for the superintendency.

Years of experience. All of the women superintendents in this study had teaching experience. The range was from 1 year to 23 years of teaching experience. Table 4 (Appendix D) reports the numbers of years of teaching experience of the women superintendents of Iowa. I found other experience varied. One woman superintendent had no other experience in education prior to her first superintendency, but others have had a variety of administrative experiences prior to the first superintendency. Table 5 (Appendix D) reports other experiences of the women superintendents of Iowa.

Lastly, the years of experience in the superintendency for the women superintendents of Iowa ranged from 1 year to 14 years. Three of the women were in their first year of
the superintendency. Table 6 (Appendix D) reports the years of experience in the superintendency for the women.

**Salary.** The women superintendents in this study earned annual salaries between $42,000 to $93,000. The typical benefits were (a) individual/family medical insurance, (b) life insurance from $10,000 to $35,000, (c) travel allowance, (d) professional association dues, and (e) national convention. No woman superintendent received a car as part of her benefit package; however, one woman superintendent did receive a car allowance. Table 7 (Appendix D) reports the annual salaries of the women superintendents of Iowa.

**Professional affiliations.** The women superintendents of Iowa reported to me that they maintain a variety of professional memberships, some of which were provided as part of a benefit package. All were members of the School Administrators of Iowa. Table 8 (Appendix D) reports the professional affiliations of the women superintendents in this study.

**District size.** The women superintendents of Iowa represented all district sizes found in the State of Iowa. Two of the women were administrators that were shared between two districts and had other administrative roles such as elementary principal or director/coordinator in addition to the superintendency in one of the districts. The school districts ranged in size from 197 students to
9,700 students. Table 9 (Appendix D) reports the school district size of the women superintendents of Iowa.

Career pattern. The career patterns of the women superintendents of Iowa to their first superintendency occurred both within a single school district and not within a single school district. I found only two career patterns were followed by more than one woman. The various paths to the first superintendency are reported in Table 10 (Appendix D).

However, when I considered only the career pattern after entering administration, more of the women superintendents of Iowa fell into the within district category. Only one career pattern after entering administration was followed by more than one woman. The career pattern after entering administration is reported in Table 11 (Appendix D).

Personal Demographics

Age. The women superintendents of Iowa ranged in age from 39 to 62. Table 12 (Appendix D) reports the women superintendents by age. The women superintendents of Iowa entered the superintendency between the ages of 34-56. Table 13 (Appendix D) reports the age of first superintendency for the women in this study.

Marital status and family. The marital status of the women superintendents of Iowa included (a) single and never married, (b) married, (c) divorced, (d) divorced and
remarried, and (e) widowed. One woman in the study was married but lived away from her husband during the work week and commuted home on the weekends. Some of the women had children. Four of the women superintendents of Iowa had grown children. Table 14 (Appendix D) reports the marital status and children of the women superintendents of Iowa.

**Becoming a Woman Superintendent**

The similarity in the early development of these women was striking to me, as were the experiences they related to me about their adolescence and young adulthood. I felt that these developmental experiences played a major role in who these women were and provided for analysis of power resources on the individual level. Marie said,

> What hangs with me [from growing up years] is that I was raised to be independent, and to take responsibility for my own actions. And I got the message from my parents and my grandfather before he died that you can pretty much do whatever you want, but you need to kind of like what you do.

Women's characteristics of (a) early knowledge of a male world, (b) being independent, (c) strong work ethic, (d) early leadership, and (e) achievement emerged during their childhood or adolescence and continued into young adulthood. The experiences of the women in their families of origin, at school, and outside of school illustrate the context of the development of these characteristics and provide analysis on the individual level. The women's
experiences of access and entry into the superintendency provide analysis of power resources on the organizational level.

**Early Knowledge of a Male World**

A study of top level women managers by White et al. (1992) found that women who have a close relationship with their fathers are encouraged to be independent and to believe they can do more than the traditional view of girls, thus developing a broader view of sex roles and aspirations that are not typical of most females. Most of the women superintendents in the study described a special childhood relationship with a father, grandfather, or brother that broadened the women's view of the male world from an early age.

**Special relationship with father/grandfather.** Fathers had a tremendous influence on the sex role development of some of the women in this study. Jackie described her father's influence on her and indicated that his influence continued in her life. She said,

> My grandparents lived nearby, but my father had the greatest influence on me. He was bright and found solutions to problems. He was an inspiration to me by being very positive. He was a reserved man. He looked at the total picture. I spent equal time with both parents, but my father had the most influence on me. . . . I am like my dad.

The influence of Jackie's father was similar to Marie's grandfather's influence.
Grandfathers also had an impact on the early development of women superintendents. Marie described her special relationship with her grandfather which she interpreted as providing her with a broader view of the world. She said,

My grandparents lived on the top floor of my parents' house. I was my grandpa's favorite. So I got to do, I think, some things that would be unfeminine. We used to have shot glasses that my parents kept toothpicks in and called them toothpick glasses. He was suffering from cancer, but he loved his beer. I'd say, "I want a toothpick glass full of beer, and he'd give it to me and he'd say, "But don't tell your mother." I was about three at the time. He also took me with him on trips to see his old cronies, and I'd get to go to the car garages and sit on the desk while they talked. So I think that I was exposed to a different kind of environment than most kids.

Fathers and grandfathers were not the only males of influence, however.

**Special relationship with brother/brother-like relative.** Likewise, growing up with older brothers and being the only girl in her family impacted the early development of Teresa which she indicated as exposing her to behaviors that are typically male. She said,

I grew up in a small Iowa town. I have one brother that is one year older than me and one brother that is two years older than me. I'm the baby . . . and I was probably a tomboy. I wanted to do what the boys did. . . . And when their friends came over, we played baseball and football and sports things. They were good to take me along, not always cheerfully, "Oh, come on, I'll take you." They were never pressured by my parents; it was always me being fairly insistent that I wanted to go.
Other significant males for some of the women in this study influenced their development. A male cousin the same age as Ellen was her closest friend growing up. She said,

One of my cousins is, uhm, he is the same age as I am, and we were in class together all of our lives, and we have a closeness that is as close as a brother and sister have.

Ellen's cousin provided a male influence in her life.

Special relationship with mother/father and mother. Conversely, White et al. (1992) found a similar percentage of women in their study who described a strong relationship with their mother as being instrumental in their desire for achievement to the percentage of women in their study who described a strong relationship with their father as being instrumental in their desire for achievement. Both groups of women developed a broad range of acceptable sex roles. Only one woman superintendent in Iowa described a strong relationship with her mother; the other women described strong relationships with fathers, grandparents, or other male family members.

Another study of women superintendents described parental influence, in order from most to least influential, as father being most influential, then mother, followed by both mother and father being of equal influence (McDade & Drake, 1982). Only one woman superintendent in this study, Debra, described a strong relationship with her mother. Debra said,
I remember my mom being able to survive some pretty traumatic things better than my dad. My dad had a couple of nervous breakdowns. . . . I saw my mom as being sort of a stabilizing. Sort of, you know, the mainstay.

Lastly, Laura described her mother and father as being of equal influence. She said,

I think they were hard working parents. They didn't have much time. . . . But they did know that education was really important. Neither of them graduated from high school. . . . I went to school with lots of encouragement from them, but in lots of ways I had to create my own opportunities.

Laura's parents encouraged her equally.

Almquist and Angrist (1970) found that parents who accept and encourage their daughters to develop traits, behaviors, and career goals that are not stereotypical will have daughters who exhibit these traits, behaviors, and career goals. Furthermore, such parents tend to provide opportunities for their daughters to explore these characteristics in nontraditional areas. Some of the women superintendents in this study were further evidence of this idea. Lastly, White et al. (1992) found that the women placed their career more centrally in their lives as they resolved sex role conflicts. Sex-typed activities influenced learning in areas of dependence or independence (Huston, 1983).

Being Independent

Each of the women superintendents in this study described their personality as a child and/or adolescent
with the personality characteristic of "independent." The personality characteristic of being independent developed in four ways which were (a) being responsible, (b) being rebellious, (c) having a "cool" relationship with one or both parents, and (d) early traumas.

**Independence as being responsible.** The characteristic of being independent described by some of the women superintendents developed as a result of accepting responsibility early on. Independent was the word used to describe the characteristic of being responsible by some of the women in this study. Mary said,

> I was very independent. . . . I was dedicated to twirling. I entered contests; I had students; I was very responsible. Carried on full time responsibilities [twirling responsibilities] all through high school.

Independence was also described as accepting the responsibility of taking care of oneself. Debra described herself as an adolescent as being self-responsible. She said, "Being self-sufficient, being able to take care of yourself." The characteristic of being independent was also described as being rebellious.

**Independence as being rebellious.** The characteristic of being independent also developed as a result of rebellious behavior. Women in the study referred to their characteristic of being independent by describing rebellious behavior during childhood or adolescence. Laura said,
I was just pretty independent. I've always been independent, from early on. . . . I think I was pretty rebellious, but I wasn't really rebellious against my parents. We had a very good relationship. . . . I was rebellious at that time over what I felt were injustices in the country. I was very political from a very early age, wanting to be involved.

Marie also described rebellious behavior, which she, too, labeled as independent. She said,

I think I took pride in being independent at times. Uhm . . . I went to a Catholic grade school; as I look back, I was in trouble quite a bit. I was a leader, but I was in trouble. And I think some of that was brought on myself, because I liked a challenge, I liked to challenge the nuns. I got a big kick out of it. . . . I think that was kind of good for me, because I had to kind of learn how to work to get along with the nuns.

Rebellion was part of Laura's and Marie's behavior.

Cool relationship with parents. Additionally, women who achieve high status positions usually have a cool relationship with one or both parents which encouraged them to become independent early (White et al., 1992). Only one woman superintendent mentioned a strong relationship with her mother. Most of the other women did not mention their mothers. They casually mentioned their mothers or parents, or alluded to a cool relationship with their parents. Mary said, "Oh, I had parents. . . . We spent a lot of time with our grandparents." Jo described the cool relationship with her parents developing as a result of a strict upbringing and low expectations from her parents. Jo said,

I can't really say there was anybody [in family] that had a great influence on me. . . . I was raised in the Reformed Church and it was pretty strict. . . .
My dad was under the belief that you only go to college to get a man. You know the old Dutch, you know, just "You can go to work like everybody else."

The attitude of Jo's father contributed to a cool relationship.

Two of the women in this study attributed the death of a parent as the cause of a cool relationship with the remaining parent. After the death of her mother, Sylvia described the absence of a relationship with her father. She said,

I kind of got to go from family to family, always in the same town so I could go to the same school. In the summer time my mom's sister lived in Clear Lake, so I spent a lot of my whole summers in Clear Lake with her.

A similar description after the death of her father was given by Ellen.

My father died when I was very young. I grew up with grandparents. . . . My mother died when I was in college, so I was basically an older orphan from that point on. . . . My mother was working, and when you think about how many years ago that was, that was kind of unusual, but she needed to do that for us. So I spent most of my time, a lot of it was significant, with my grandmother.

The death of one parent was the cause of a cool relationship with the remaining parent for Sylvia and Ellen.

In addition to the effect of a cool relationship with the remaining parent in the development of an independent personality, the loss of one or both parents was also evidence of early trauma in the development of these women.
Early traumas were also related to the development of the characteristic of being independent and may be a component of self-efficacy (White et al., 1992).

Early traumas. Cooper and Hingley (1983) reported in their study of changemakers that early traumas can lead to the development of survival or coping skills which lead to an early feeling of independence and self-reliance. Obviously, the death of Sylvia's mother and her moves from one family to another were traumatic for her; however, her description of her father's remarriage more illustrated the development of survival skills, early independence, and self-reliance.

My mom passed away in January of my fifth grade year and in February of my sixth grade year my father had been remarried, I think he was just really lonely, you know? My father remarried a lady who had five kids all her own—all younger than me. So you learned to be flexible extremely quickly. You can really understand a lot of things, when you have these experiences to go on, you can understand a lot of things, with those kids and people.

Debra described a series of traumatic events in her young life also.

My dad had a couple of nervous breakdowns when I was growing up, and we had some tragedies in my family. When I was about 12, my mother had a car accident and broke her neck and basically was in a body cast for eight months, so I basically sort of managed the house. That really devastated my dad. Then my brother was hit by a car. Yeah, he was just standing in the middle of the road and this lady sort of hit him. And it was pretty weird, because he lost a kidney and that troubled my dad. Then our house burned down.

Traumatic events affected lives.
The personality characteristics described by the women superintendents as independent may have resulted from early traumas and/or a cool relationship with parents. This also may indicate self-efficacy (White et al., 1992). Furthermore, the development of the independent characteristic was described as becoming responsible, self-sufficient, or rebellious as a child or adolescent.

**Achievement Motivation**

Parents and/or role models influenced the motivation for achievement which was described by the women superintendents in this study. An additional motivation for achievement, which was described by some of the women superintendents in this study, concerned the desire to improve one's perceived socio-economic status.

**Parental expectations.** Most of the women superintendents described the parental expectation to excel in school. White et al. (1992) found that the successful women were influenced by their parents, who were ambitious for them to achieve in school and in their careers or with a challenging experience which made them prove their capabilities. This expectation from parents to achieve in school was stated directly to the women early in their development or was an expectation that was felt by the women early on. Laura said,

I think that I was a good learner. From early on I think my parents also felt that and keep encouraging, and you could tell that they were pleased, and as a
child, I just wanted to please them more. But it also
did something for me.

Teresa also described the expectation from her parents to
go to college. Teresa said,

We were expected to go to college. I mean, our
parents expected us to go to college; we were going to
college; there wasn't any question about it!

Similarly, Joyce described her parental expectations. She
said,

Uhm my father was a professor at UNI. So when I was
in the fourth grade, we went out for two summers and a
school year . . . where he was getting his doctorate.
So even at that age, I saw what my father was doing.
Education was always very important to me . . . so I
think that we were just being brought up in a family
where we were educated, you know, I never considered
not going to college, not being in education.

Parental expectations were important to achievement.

Fathers that had a close relationship to their
daughters encouraged development of stereotypical male
characteristics of achievement—task orientation, love of
competition, and risk taking (Henning & Hackman, 1964).

Sylvia described her father's influence on her sex role
expectations after her mother's death:

My father raised me under the concept that you are
just as good as a man and you can do any job that a
man can do, maybe with some physical limitations, and
I've always operated under that concept.

Again, Almquist and Angrist (1970) found that parents
who accept and encourage their daughters to develop traits,
behaviors, and career goals that are not stereotypical will
have daughters who exhibit these traits, behaviors, and
career goals. Debra described this form of encouragement from her parents to excel in school and to develop a nontraditional career. She said,

... the opportunity and the expectation that I had going to school was you can do anything you wanted to do. And that came, frankly, more from my parents and friends and family. ... I remember having lots and lots of expectations that you would go to college.

Joyce further described the educational expectations from her parents that included support to pursue a nontraditional career. She said,

They were very supportive. Never really, well, see, I went into math at the undergraduate level. And you know, a lot of girls, their parents discouraged them from being in math. My parents never discouraged me from that. When I was considering that year of being a doctor, never discouraged me that way, you know.

Nonstereotypical expectations from her parents influenced Joyce's achievement.

However, Jo described a different experience that illustrated a traditional, stereotypical expectation from her father. Jo said,

Things came easy for me in school. I never had to study. You know, going on to college, setting goals for yourself, nothing of that was ever discussed at home. My dad was under the belief that you only go to college to get a man.

In addition to parental expectations to achieve in school, some of the women in this study felt the same expectation from members of their extended family, which was influential in developing characteristics of achievement early in their lives.
Ellen described her grandmother's expectation that she excel in school and go on to college. She said,

My grandmother had never had the opportunity for an education, but that was extremely important to her, and so she did a lot of things for me, in terms of, I read before I went to school. And it was always understood that I was going to go on to school in some way. She was going to find a way for me to do that. . . . Education was extremely important, and I was given lots of encouragement to continue to pursue that.

Family expectations to achieve in the area of education and nontraditional careers encouraged the development of their need for achievement. Likewise, other adults in the early lives of these women served as role models and further influenced their development.

Role model's expectations. Role models were described by some of the women superintendents in the study as being a source of their motivation to achieve. Role models also were described by some women superintendents in the study as a source of inspiration and, in turn, influenced their career development and personality development. Both male and female role models were evident in the early lives of the women superintendents. All of the women superintendents of Iowa recalled a person who was a significant influence on their development. Teachers and family members oftentimes were the role models in the lives of the women in this study.

Teachers were described as role models for some of the women. Laura said,
I had a teacher that very much influenced my thinking at that time and what she did--she didn't exert any pressure--but she took a group of us to just really know the city. I went to the prisons. I went to the orphanages. I went to the slums. It was seeing the city in completely different lenses. Then I ended up tutoring, teaching reading in the slums.

Both male and female teachers acted as role models for the women. A male teacher described by Ruth had influence on her decision to become a teacher. She said, "I had a male teacher who had me take over teaching the class when I was sixteen."

Family members who were educators also were role models for some of the women. Teresa described a teacher, who also happened to be her aunt, as being a role model for her, "My Aunt H. was a typing teacher, so I knew I always wanted to be a teacher."

In addition, other family members served as role models for many of the women superintendents in this study and were influential in their personality development. A bed-ridden grandmother who lived with Mary's family during Mary's childhood was inspirational.

And so she was bedridden for 14 years. And she was a spiritual uplift for all of us . . . courage, uh, spiritual, she was so uplifting to the rest of us. She was so helpless . . . but she had a sense of humor and to see someone so helpless, and so, um, able to give up, but she never did. Great person.

Debra described her mother as modeling a nontraditional sex role. She said.

I remember my mom being able to survive some pretty traumatic things better than my dad. . . . I saw my
100

mom being sort of a stabilizer. Well, you know, the woman has to kind of be the mainstay. And that's what I saw my mom doing . . . the survival, being self-sufficient, being able to take care of yourself, that kind of thing. I think I probably learned that from her.

Grandmothers and mothers served as role models for Mary and Debra.

Jackie compared herself to her father, thus indicating his influence on her as a role model. She said, "I am like my dad. I like to have everyone around me in a contributing role."

Role models were described by the women superintendents of Iowa as a source of motivation to achieve. Role models also were a source of inspiration; they, in turn, influenced career development and personality development of women superintendents of Iowa.

Socio-economic status. Another family influence such as escaping an impoverished background can be motivational. White et al. (1992) found that women considered highflyers, such as top level managers, and found that overcoming a hardship during childhood or a childhood deprivation experience was significantly motivational for those women. The perceived socio-economic status of the family of one of the women superintendents of Iowa motivated her to achieve. Marie said,

I came from a big family. We didn't have a lot of money. I think there were times when I felt that we were looked down upon. If there had been a wrong side of the tracks in my hometown, I might have perceived
that I was on the wrong side of the tracks. Maybe that's one reason I chose to excel in so many things. To prove that, you know, I could do these things to improve my status.

Another superintendent in the study perceived her status as low during her early development. The self-description of Jo indicated her dissatisfaction with her perceived socio-economic status of her family. She said,

Growing up I was very awkward, had very few social skills. We just didn't go out a lot, didn't, you know, can never remember eating in a restaurant. . . . I just didn't have the opportunity to learn. So lots of those social skills, I had to learn as an adult. . . . I had to learn as an adult the polishing . . .

Jo's socio-economic status motivated her to achieve.

The women superintendents described parents, grandparents, and teachers as role models who influenced their motivation for achievement and influenced their personality development. An additional motivation described by some of the women superintendents concerned a desire to improve one's perceived socio-economic status based on the women's perception of their family's low status.

Strong Work Ethic Early in Life

Each of the women superintendents of Iowa described development of a strong work ethic early in her life. Some of the women worked in a family business as a child, worked outside of the family to earn money while in junior high and high school, or started their own businesses. Many of
the women described the continuation of the development of their strong work ethic during their college years or young adulthood. Lastly, one woman described businesses that she created as a young adult during times that she left teaching.

**Active in family business.** Ruth and Jackie were active in their family's businesses as children and felt the experience to be an important influence in their development. Ruth described her role in her family business as a child. She said,

> My father was a fisherman and trapper. My mother helped him but worked at home. I took orders for fish and went door to door in the summer and checked trap lines in the winter. I learned to listen early. I learned to be polite early because I had to take fish orders and knew that I could not sass. Because of that experience I also learned to read people and read personalities.

Jackie also described her role in her family's business during her childhood. She said,

> They (parents) owned a meat packing business and both worked there. I worked for our family business. I ground meat, etc. from fifth grade on. I developed a strong work ethic.

The roles Ruth and Jackie played in their family business planted the seeds of their work ethic.

**Worked outside of the family.** Working during junior high and high school was a common experience for the women superintendents in this study. Most of the women who grew up in Iowa described agricultural-related jobs. Marie said,
I had two jobs. I always did what I called "slave labor" in the cornfields. Uh, then, when I got old enough, I conducted a story hour at the local library from 9 A.M. to noon, and then I lifeguarded from 12:30 P.M. to 9:30 P.M. at night. I have always been a high energy person.

Furthermore, Debra described the impact working during adolescence had on her motivation to be educated and escape from such work. She said,

Everyone should detassel corn. . . . Because then they will realize [importance of education]. . . . Sorting corn in the winter and working in the office part-time in the fall. . . . I did all that in high school, and it was awful.

Debra's work ethic was based on her will to escape manual labor.

Working during college years and as a young adult was impactful to some of the women in this study, both illustrating a strong work ethic and providing the motivation to escape manual labor. Teresa described her work during college. She said,

Got a job on the Hill, the Burger King. It wasn't the national Burger King. . . . I worked there on Friday nights. I had to push onion rings. They would come with these big crates of sliced onions, and that was our goal, to push out all the onions for the onion rings. . . . Oh, God! Then you smelled like onions. You know, your hands would still smell like onions until Monday. It was terrible. And then I worked in the geography department for 15 hours a week . . . and babysat on weekends.

Along the same lines, Jo, a self-described "late bloomer," established a strong work ethic in nontraditional jobs before going to college. She said,
My first job, I worked on a horse farm, broke horses, cleaned stalls, things like that. It was a great job. . . . Then I got a job driving a school bus. And that was good. And I didn't know that. I woke up one morning and said, "I'm going to college in the fall." Period.

Jo's nontraditional jobs enhanced her work ethic.

Created own business. Mary and Karen created their own businesses, which evidenced their strong work ethic. Mary, who started her own business in junior high and continued operating it throughout her college years and her first years of teaching, said,

I worked from the time I was in eighth grade. Very focused on my, um, work, and at that time I was dedicated to twirling. . . . I had it [business] in the home. But you, when people come and depend on you to be there at a certain time and do certain things, it becomes, you know, very much a part of your life. And I found that to be. And then I had a scholarship at USD and I opened up a studio [baton twirling] at the same time. So I was teaching on Friday nights, all day Saturday and all day Sunday.

Three businesses were created by Karen during her young adulthood, as a result of an inability to find a full-time teaching job. Karen said,

I started a business in C.C. called. . . . A business that's still going very successfully, and probably one of the better businesses in C.C. And that I look at as good an experience to the superintendency as anything I've ever done. Really fun. Still have one that came out of that, selling . . . and then my daughter and I started a clothing store in R . . . and lost quite a bit of money on that, but again a very, very, good experience.

The women superintendents of Iowa described the development of a strong work ethic early in their lives. Some of the women worked in family businesses as children,
some worked to earn money while in junior high and high school, and others started their own businesses. Many of the women described the continuation of the development of their strong work ethic during their college years and young adulthood and made the connection between the work experiences and their enhanced need to achieve, based on their wish to escape from such work. Furthermore, the women attributed their successes in the superintendency to the experiences that facilitated early development of a strong work ethic.

**Early Leadership During Adolescence**

The development of early leadership skills gave evidence to adolescent development of the women superintendents of Iowa. All the women described leadership roles in high school. The descriptions included the lack of aspiration and an early understanding of the politics of leadership. The self-descriptions tended to illustrate the social aspects of adolescent development as well. Lastly, the characteristic of "goal oriented" was described by the women as an important dimension of their adolescent development.

**Leadership roles.** A variety of leadership roles during adolescence were described by the women in this study, although some did not view the experiences as examples of early leadership. The roles most often described included leadership roles in school
organizations, church organizations, and other typical adolescent experiences. Marie said, "I was real active in school and did a lot of drama things. I went to Hawkeye Girl's State and got a big state office." Jackie's description reflected similar leadership roles and the enjoyment that resulted from it for her. She said, "I was really active in lots of things...cheerleaders, student council, choir, band, speech--had a good time." Likewise, Karen's description was a typical adolescent leadership experience. She said, "I was a camp counselor from the time I was a sophomore to a senior. I went to a ranch camp. I loved horses. Horses were my life."

Debra and Laura did not seek early leadership experiences. Moreover, some of the women superintendents were puzzled at their lack of aspiration. Teresa's description of her early leadership experiences echoed the descriptions presented above; however, she did not perceive her activities in high school to reflect any desire for leadership experiences. She said,

I'm not sure that I ever wanted to be the leader, to have that responsibility. In fact, I always did really well at state speech contest, but when it came to the class play, I didn't want to try out for it...I don't know why, but I didn't seek out those top positions.

Debra's description of her lack of aspiration for her early leadership roles included her perception of how she
attained the leadership roles. It also hinted at her early understanding of the politics of leadership. She said,

Like I remember being president of the FFA. And I was Rainbow Advisor. And it was like, I didn't plan to do these things, it's just that I'd set myself up for them, and then it was kind of like I didn't have any choice. But I had to do them, and then it got to be. I remember thinking, "There sure are a lot of people watching me."

Furthermore, Laura's account of her high school activities not only indicated leadership experiences, but her account also indicated her early understanding of the politics of leadership. She said,

I was very political from a very early age, wanting to be involved. I organized a national association of high school students. It was like a union, a student union at the national level, and we had our first congress in L., and we had students from all over the country, students we didn't know. I organized it with this other boy; it was the two of us. It was incredible. As I look back, I think it was a big deal. . . . I was the president of the student council and was in charge of bringing speakers into our school.

The descriptions of the social activities of the women superintendents in this study also indicated their early leadership experiences. Laura went on to describe the events of her high school graduation. She said,

At graduation time, everyone has a prom. So a friend and I decided that we probably shouldn't have a prom. So we posed that to the class—that rather than have a prom, why not have a class trip or something like that. We lost that one. Some people had already bought their dresses.

Early leadership was evident in the adolescent years of the women.
Social life. The social life of Jackie, Marie, Debra, and Teresa during their teen years seemed to reflect the typical experiences of teenagers anywhere. Their friends were groups of girls who socialized together at school functions or attended activities in nearby towns. It seemed important to some of the women in this study during their adolescence to stay out of trouble. Jackie provided the typical description of her social life. Jackie said, "In high school, I ran around in groups of six to eight, but talked and liked everyone." The account given by Marie more or less reflected Jackie's experience, but included her status in high school. Marie said,

We had a group of about 10 girls who kind of hung around together. And within that group, there were some who were better friends than others, and some were more on the periphery of that friendship. . . . We were the pack. You know, we were the Homecoming queen attendants and we were the cheerleaders.

Debra also described a "pack" of girl friends and went on to say that they tested their limits but described her behavior as within an acceptable range. She said,

We did a lot of activities as girls, groups of the five or six of us, and I think we had a reputation of being kind of wild, but we never, I mean, people looked at us cross-eyed we were hovering in the car, you know headed home . . . they were a year older. . . . I was probably the leader, I probably got them organized. If we were going to do something, I always made sure everyone knew what we were going to do.

. . .

Including a description of her behavior as well within the acceptable range, Teresa said,
Probably more social than my mother would have liked, but I was a cheerleader; I was into things. Never quite the Homecoming queen, always the runner up. I was probably a goody two shoe. When I look back. We didn't run around and drink.

An active social life was described by most of the women.

Ruth and Ellen, slightly older than the others in the study, did not describe an active social life during adolescence. They described shy, introverted behavior that resulted from a strict upbringing. Ruth said, "I was shy and didn't know how to dance. You know that song, 'I Can't Dance and I Can't Sing'? That was me." A similar description was provided by Ellen, who said,

[I was] shy and studious. I did very, very well in school. I don't know if shy is a good word, but more quiet. My grandmother was also, and that was part of my upbringing, she had a strong religious background. Oh, for example, she did not drink or any of those things. It was long time after I left and went to college before I felt comfortable with that kind of thing.

The social life of the women superintendents of Iowa during their adolescence indicated their leadership within their groups of friends. Their social life also reflected strong expectations to stay out of trouble.

**Goal orientation.** These women set goals. Some began setting goals early through experiences in competition, and some developed goals based on early political views.

Competition provided an excellent opportunity for Mary to develop a strong belief in the use of goals. Mary said,

At that time I had about three girls working for me. And we also had teams, twirling teams, and we had
competed and won national, so we were very focused. I believe in competition. I believe in setting goals and achieving goals.

Goals were especially important to Mary. Likewise, early exposure to poverty by visiting the slums of the city was the impetus for Laura’s somewhat radical political views and provided Laura with her first career goal. She said,

[When I was sixteen] I was going to save the world. I'm a little less ambitious now. If I could save some children, I could be happy... when I was a young adult, I mean, you are very idealistic. I thought that I could change [the world].

The development of early leadership skills was evident in the adolescent development of the women superintendents of Iowa. The descriptions included lack of aspirations in early leadership roles and the early understanding of the politics of leadership. The self-descriptions also illustrated the social aspects of adolescent development. Lastly, the characteristic of being goal oriented was an important dimension of adolescent development.

Summary

The characteristic of being independent was a self-descriptor of all of the women superintendents in the study. This characteristic seemed to result from early knowledge of the male world and seemed to be the impetus for the women's early leadership, strong work ethic, and achievement. Being independent at an early age is critical to early career development of women who become superintendents in Iowa and is a vital power resource.
Access and Entry

Most of the women superintendents of K-12 public schools of Iowa described barriers that made their entry into educational administration difficult. However, a few did not; they were recruited for the superintendency. Experiences of the women superintendents as they made their entry into the superintendency provide an analysis of power resources at the organizational level. Specifically, recruitment to and barriers to the superintendency are readily addressed.

Recruitment. Recruitment was described by Joyce and Karen as the process that first caused them to consider the superintendency. Recruitment took three forms. First, Joyce, Karen, and Barbara experienced recruitment from (a) a family member, (b) a friend, or (c) an acquaintance. Second, Teresa and Marie each were recruited from someone within the district where she was a principal. Third, some women in the study experienced recruitment from someone outside of the district after attaining a first superintendency. Sponsorship was mentioned by a few of the women superintendents of Iowa.

Recruitment by family member or friend. The husbands of two of the women superintendents of Iowa played key roles in helping them attain their first superintendency. The form of recruitment Joyce described included her
husband, as she was being recruited by a friend of both her
and her spouse. She said,

I never thought of being a superintendent. But I did
have my doctorate. . . . A friend of ours who was a
board member of a school district, one of the smallest
in the state, was having difficulty finding a
superintendent and came and asked if I was interested.
. . . And I had two young boys and in fact, my
husband had been married before, so we had his three
children, too. . . . So I thought, ah, I don't know
if I want to do this or not. But again, with my
philosophy, you know, when you're given the
opportunity, you can always try it and if you don't
like it, change your mind later. I told him I would
be willing to do it; but I only wanted to have office
hours in the morning. And so, they hired me for
$12,000 in 1981.

Similarly, Karen's husband was a key player in the
attainment of her first superintendency. Karen said,

I desperately wanted to be a superintendent. . . .
And so I applied. My husband had been [employed] in
H. for about 10 years. He had gone to church in H
. . . he had some very good friends in H. and he
called the board secretary to see what the deal was,
and anyway, through the grapevine, "Ya, go ahead and
apply." I did apply, and it went very well.

Joyce and Karen's recruitment came from family.

The recruitment of Barbara involved classmates at a
college class reunion. She also indicated that purchasing
property in the district may have been a condition for
employment. She said,

I was in town for a college class reunion and had just
purchased an antique store there. At the reunion,
some local classmates told me about the
superintendent's vacancy in town and that I should
apply. I did, and about that time my property
purchase was listed in the local paper, and here I am.
Furthermore, Teresa was also recruited, but with a slightly different scenario. She was a part-time principal in one district but was recruited for a part-time superintendency in another district. Teresa said,

I sort of think that was fate or luck or being in the right place at the right time. . . . A whole grade sharing arrangement left a neighboring district without a superintendent. . . . The elementary principal knew that I was finishing my superintendent's endorsement. They notified our board and asked for a joint meeting. . . . I knew the elementary principal quite well, her husband is related to my husband.

Again, family was important in Teresa's recruitment.

Recruitment from within the district. Another type of recruitment described by Marie, Ruth, Mary, and Debra was recruitment within the district that the women held principalships. Marie described her experience. She said,

That was kind of strange. I was high school principal, and I think I was very well thought of. . . . And when the superintendency came open, my former superintendent, who had the courage to hire me as a high school principal, called and told me about it and asked if I would be interested, and I immediately said, "No." And I called him back in the morning and said . . . "Maybe I would be." . . . I had no intentions of being a superintendent, and I really liked working with high school kids. . . . I just happened to be in the right place at the right time. I really did. So the timing was right on that one. . . . I ended up taking that superintendency.

Ruth's story of recruitment was almost identical to Marie's story, but involved the elementary principalship. Ruth differed from most of the women superintendents in Iowa who participated in this study because she voiced her goal of becoming a superintendent. She said,
My goal was to be a superintendent. When my superintendent left, I let the board know that I was interested. They interviewed several candidates but came to my house after the last interview. I was in the tub, so I ended up having the two male board members offer me the job while I had a towel wrapped around my head.

Mary described recruitment that involved her shared position between two districts and a part-time superintendency in her district. She said,

I started off in curriculum and staff development, and at that time the district was K-12. And then the district moved to being whole grade shared with two other districts. And at that time the superintendent that was here moved into one of those two districts and that left a vacancy here. And I was asked to consider that position, and I said, "Yes, I would." . . . they chose me to be superintendent, but I was still in a shared position.

The story of recruitment described by Debra also included a shared position but a slightly different configuration of part-time administrative positions. She said,

My first five years in the district, I served as assistant superintendent in this district, and in the other district I was also their elementary principal, and for two years I was also their superintendent . . . the superintendent that left there had not particularly been well liked. I was [liked], and I was in an awkward position.

Recruitment from within a district can be uncomfortable.

Recruitment from outside the district. Recruitment also was described by Ruth and Marie after attaining a superintendency and before considering moving from one superintendency to another superintendency. Ruth described her next move as simply, "The job at M. came from a head hunter. I was not looking for a job at the time."
However, the description of Marie's move to another superintendency was more complex. She said,

I was elementary principal/superintendent and although I liked what I was doing, I was continually telling my board that I didn't feel comfortable—that I wasn't doing a good job. . . . So I finally resigned, and I was going to go back to school to work on my doctorate . . . and I got a call from a gentleman who had been superintendent at S. . . . And said that they had been searching for a superintendent since February. . . . I said, "This is goofy, I just resigned a couple of months ago." . . . And he said, "Would you talk to these people?" And so the board president [of S] called me. . . . Then they spent the whole day in my district. I was in the right place at the right time. But I had to take a job that some other people didn't want.

Goldberg (1991) suggested that the low number of women superintendents in the United States may be due to women administrators' lack of career aspiration. Only two women indicated that they aspired to the superintendency. The other women superintendents in the study were recruited from various administrative positions to their first superintendency by school board members and other school administrators. Most of the women in this study who did not aspire to the superintendency used a common phrase to describe their access and entry into their first superintendency. "Being in the right place at the right time" was the common phrase that echoed throughout the interviews.

This is contrary to the findings of Dopp and Sloan (1986), who described a study in 1982 by the American Association of School Administrators in which the most
common barrier to prevent women from entering administration was found to be resistance from other persons in the community. They suggested that this would be obvious in situations where school boards hire superintendents and community executives are involved in hiring school administrators.

Sponsorship in gaining access to the superintendency takes three forms which are (a) university professors, (b) coalitions of professionals at the state level, and (c) consultants hired by school districts for superintendent searches (Maienza, 1986). Only Debra, Sylvia, and Joyce described the assistance that she received as coming from sponsorship. Debra's story is typical of encouragement from professors. She said,

I've always been able, you know . . . I used to say, in the right place at the right time. I had a professor in college once when I was working on my specialist degree. All I really wanted was to get a principal's endorsement, and, uh, he said, "No, you need to get your superintendency." And I said, 'Right, I don't want to be a superintendent, I'm not going to do that." And he goes, "Don't limit your options." . . . Well, it was the greatest advice I have ever had.

Moreover, the sponsorship described as coming from professional consultants was cited by only three women and was in regard to obtaining another superintendency.

**Barriers to Access and Entry**

Shakeshaft (1987) contended that the barriers that kept women from becoming educational administrators in 1900
are not much different from the barriers that prevent women from entering school administration today. Obviously, the women in this study have overcome many barriers in their path to the superintendency; however, Debra, Marie, and Teresa described experiences that got in their way from time to time. The "barriers" that were described by the women superintendents in this study focused on sex discrimination.

Sex discrimination. Discrimination in hiring practices was cited by some of the women superintendents in their attempts to first enter school administration. Debra described her frustration with the resistance that she faced in attaining a principalship after investing a year as an intern in the district. She said,

I was devastated, because I had done my internship for a year there, and was convinced although I should have realized the superintendent wasn't going to hire a female principal, and he never did. He retired before he ever had to do that. . . . And he told me then, you know when I left the district, he said, "You realize I never would have hired you." It was neither here nor there, and those are the kinds of things you just let roll, because you know you can't do anything about them. You have to make your decision that you're just going to be mad.

Some of the women in this study encountered a great deal of discrimination in hiring and became very frustrated when applying for administrative jobs like the high school principalship. Marie described similar frustration. She said,
I knew I either had to do it now [apply for a principalship], or go back to school, or get back into the classroom. And so I sent letters, I bet I could paper a house interior with the rejections I got, and went to numerous interviews because people didn't want to be called on being discriminatory for not interviewing a female. So I had lots of interviews that, now as I look back, I know many of them were not forthright. . . . I would guess I sent out well over a hundred applications and I had over twenty interviews for high school principals throughout Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri.

Sex discrimination in hiring happened to Debra and Marie.

Incorrect perceptions of aspiring female administrators by hiring parties are: (a) women's lack of mobility, (b) lack of qualified women, and (c) women with families will not devote the time needed in school administration (Edson, 1988). Joyce offered an explanation, based on her experience, of the incorrect perceptions of a typical school board which probably described the situation for any woman applying for a superintendency. She said,

Anytime there's a woman, there are red flags that come up. I mean, "What does her husband do?" Well, of course, he was coming with me! But you know, and they don't know how that would work. So that's sort of a quandary, you know, that they have to get past.

Discrimination in hiring is not the only area described by the women in this study in which they have felt sex discrimination. Salary was cited by Teresa who said, "And I think that I, probably in this district, have been discriminated against financially."
Summary. The women superintendents of Iowa described their access and entry to the superintendency as "being in the right place at the right time." Most of the women did not voice their aspirations, but rather completed administrative certification or doctorates and positioned themselves in their organization or community for entry into the superintendency. They then allowed themselves to be recruited for the superintendency. Being in the right place at the right time was a vital power resource for the women superintendents of Iowa at the organizational level of analysis. Although most of the women superintendents in Iowa were in the right place at the right time to enter the superintendency, many encountered sex discrimination in hiring practices and in salary.

The Experience of Being a Woman Superintendent

Although the women superintendents said they enjoyed the challenges and autonomy of the superintendency, they paid a price for their success. Most of the women described their experiences of being a superintendent in less than positive terms. The women described sex discrimination in expectations for job performance, sexual harassment/harsh treatment, family stress, and isolation.

Sex Discrimination in Expectations for Job Performance

Sex discrimination in expectations for job performance was described by Laura and Joyce. They contended that they are expected to do more than a male superintendent to be
considered competent. Laura described her approach. She said,

I think that I am a strong superintendent. Everything that I do, I do with intensity and passion. Sometimes that scares people. ... I know that everything that I've done, I've always had to do so much more than a male counterpart. ... You have superintendent A, who does certain things and that's OK; and you have superintendent B, who does the same things and gets massacred. Now we have superintendent C, who's going to follow me, who has said publicly that he's going to continue all the good things I've done, and people are so happy!

Joyce felt the same way. She said,

I think the first few years you're really trying to prove yourself---but you know, that you're prepared. And men probably feel the same way, but I think there's more pressure on women in those positions, because you're so open to criticism. You know...there have been a number of women superintendents who came in from other states into Iowa, and for one reason or another they weren't as successful as they thought...and they got a lot of notoriety. And that really hurts everybody. It really hurts women because there are so few of us, there are just as many men who have difficulties in their positions...but it's not made into a big gender issue. So that hurts... ... I don't think that you're allowed the mistakes that a male can make. A male would be able to have some mistakes because he was new to the position, inexperience. I don't think a woman would be given that. Maybe I'm wrong.

Expectations seemed to be different for women in the superintendency. Women superintendents are expected to have more skills and knowledge than men in the superintendency (Estler, 1987).

Sexual Harassment/Harsh Treatment

Sexual harassment by school board members was described by Sylvia, Marie, and Teresa. They also
described rude or other unexcusable treatment by the communities in which the districts were located. Sylvia said,

My board president called me on the phone one day and he called me "Babe." January came and he and I finally chatted about that. At a meeting afterwards, whether they changed the definition of the good conduct policy, he sent me a whole bouquet of flowers and my question is, would he have done that to a man?

Marie also described sexual harassment. She said,

I've been quite fortunate in that I don't perceive that any board member who I've worked with over a period of time, that we've had a problem. There have been some board members who initially I felt there was a problem. And there's one instance in the past which I won't go into specifically, where I thought I was actually harassed by a board member. But nothing that you can't handle.

Sexual harassment was not a major problem for Marie.

Communities that had not had a female superintendent and individuals within communities that had not had a female superintendent made life miserable for the woman who was the trail blazer. Sylvia described the inexcusable treatment she received when she moved into a district as their first woman superintendent. She said,

I couldn't find a house to buy or rent. I owned a mobile home. . . . So we moved it, and when we moved it, and don't ask me why, they put me on a lot that was not mobile home ready. It had a sewer, but it did not have the water veins in the ground, and it did not have the electricity. I lived from August 11th to November 1st getting my water from a rubber garden hose that was attached onto a water pump, screwed up underneath my house and I got my electricity from an extension cord that ran across the ground that was wired into a meter outside, wired up in under my home. I asked my board if they could help me, and I asked the mayor of this fair city if they could help me, I
asked the chamber of commerce if they could help me and after I asked the chamber of commerce, it got back to me, "All she could do was talk about her water and sewer, or her water and electricity." That meeting was in October. I lived this way from August 11th to November 1st. I had frozen water a couple of times obviously.

Dopp and Sloan (1986) contended that resistance from persons in the community prevent women from entering and/or staying in administration. Laura's story was yet another example of the harsh treatment she received from the community. She said,

There was a lot of pain. And I think a lot of it was because I was a woman. You know, uhm, that the community at large had that reaction. I read not too long ago . . . a former female superintendent said, "Well, you don't know what to do. If you're really aggressive, and you want to make yourself felt, then you are a bitch. And if you go and are just really nice, then you're weak. Females never win."

Rude treatment of the women superintendents of Iowa was not limited to the community in which they held superintendencies. Teresa also described rude treatment, but by her colleagues who were the other area superintendents.

There's a committee . . . I would say it's OK now. They kind of like me. And I'm still that little cute thing, you know . . . but the first year, a superintendent in a neighboring district, it took him four months to get my name right. Um, and he didn't speak to me unless I was with A. at the meeting. I still get a lot of that. . . . I wish that there were more, that there was more support. . . . I'm not sure SAI is terribly supportive of women superintendents. . . . I feel that there are a lot of good old boys out there.

Teresa described rude treatment by her peers.
Joyce was somewhat philosophical as she described a barrier to success in the superintendency for women that was based on sexism. She said,

I think that you really have to do a good job. Because if you don't, they're going to blame it on the fact you're a woman. I jokingly tell people that when superintendents that are male have difficulty, no one ever says that it's because he's a man. But the first time a female superintendent has difficulty, "Oh it's because she's a woman." So we've got that to overcome. That's a barrier.

On the other hand, Jo and Jackie did not feel sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment had been a part of their careers. Jo said,

I've never felt that gender has been a factor at all, ever, in any of my career. . . you know, I just worked right along with men. I can swear just as well as any of them. Uh, I'd rather sit down and have coffee with a man than a woman. I'm very comfortable with men, have always worked with them. And I've never experienced any gender-types of things.

Jackie concurred with Jo. Although she hinted to me that expectations for superintendents may be based on gender, she was adamant about the fact that she had never been discriminated against. She said,

I have never been discriminated against. But it's harder for women to gain respect. I needed to turn around the budget when I came here. I admit, people were skeptical of me and resented the cuts I made until we began operating in the black. Women need to be able to produce something and get it done. . . . I have never had any lewd remarks made to me.

However, in her next breath, Jackie openly described her view of women teachers' attitudes toward her. She said,

It is an elementary building of mostly women. Women don't want to take suggestions from a woman. It is
easier to work with men than it is to work with women. Women are so petty about so many things.

Jackie indicated that sex discrimination is also done by women.

Women teachers often do not accept a female administrator; furthermore, women who have a traditional approach to life are openly negative to a female administrator (Ginn, 1989). Goldberg (1974) stated:

Clearly, there is a tendency among women to down-grade the work of professionals of their own sex. But the hypothesis that this tendency would decrease as the "femaleness" of the professional field increased was not supported. Even in traditionally female fields, anti-feminism holds sway. (p. 41)

Marie described a similar feeling and her insight into the problem. She said,

Now the people I seem to have the most trouble with, to be honest, have been the cooks, and I don't even like to cook. . . . I think there's a lot of resentment there that they're females working very hard in, often, a very hot and arduous setting, and I'm a female sitting behind a very pleasant desk, and I'm making substantially more than they are.

The description of the difficulty in working with women given by Ruth left nothing to the imagination. She said,

I hate with a passion working with women. Don't ever take the word of a woman. They are jealous of women who are successful. One actually said to me, "You are a second class citizen; why do you deserve a first class job?" Business men aren't like that. That's part of the reason that I retired. I had a bitch of a board. Two women on the board would not stop harassing me. My mother was dying last fall and so I often needed to leave late in the afternoon to go see her. On top of that, my husband was diagnosed with cancer and was in the hospital for an extended period of time. But did those women show compassion? No! Every Saturday morning when I would work in my office
to catch up, they would follow me in and scream at me. They were sneaky and seemed to be intent on undercutting me. After my mother's funeral, they again followed me into the office on the following Saturday. The male board members never harassed me.

Sexual harassment and harsh treatment after attaining a superintendency were described by Sylvia, Marie, Teresa, and Laura. Resistance to women in the superintendency also was evident from women teachers and other women in the community who have a traditional approach to life and may be openly negative to a female superintendent. In addition to these gender-based problems, the women superintendents of Iowa also described problematic situations from their personal lives.

Family Stress

Maintaining a marriage/relationship and being a good parent were described by some of the women superintendents of Iowa as difficult. Divorce, commuter marriage, and strained marriages were common to these women. Furthermore, the single women in this study with significant relationships also indicated concerns. The women superintendents in this study who were parents described the problems of the "superintendent's kid" and of finding time for their children. Lastly, some of the women superintendents indicated marital concerns as well as family concerns.

Marriage. Needing to reside in the district in which one occupies a superintendency caused most of the problems
that haunt the often failed marriages of some of the women superintendents in this study. Jackie said,

I am divorced, but my ex is one of my good friends. We have an unusual relationship. . . . He did not handle my need to grow professionally. So when I needed to move for my superintendency, he did not move with me.

Mary described the strain on her marriage caused by moving and heightened due to the growing differences in their careers. Mary said,

Because our jobs are so different, we don't find there's much of a common interest, in other words, I have my circle of friends that are in the field of education, and he has his circle of friends that are more along the lines of his work. . . . I would have to say that . . . you find that when one seeks out opportunities for advancement, it isn't always the best for the other party. It certainly was a gain in my career pursuits. It has not been for him. He has struggled.

Jo and Karen commuted to home on weekends, but commuting was not the answer either. Jo worked in a district that was 2 to 3 hours from her husband and commuted home on weekends. Although she had had the opportunity to take positions closer to her husband, she and her husband believed that a good board for Jo to work with was more important than living at home right now. Jo said,

There were two districts open close to where my husband lives . . . the one where my husband lives, I turned it down there, and the other I did not finish the application, even though they called me after they closed and wanted me to go through the process. . . . So I talked it over with my husband, and he said, "They [present district] were good enough to give you
a two year contract, they really had a lot of faith in you." I said, "Yeah, I'd better stay." So I did. . . . We were having some personal problems with the marriage, and it was, uh, it was close. But we got that worked out. If it doesn't work out, why there's not much you can do about it, I guess.

Commuting home was not satisfactory to Jo.

Added to the upheaval in family life due to a move required for a superintendency were the time demands of the job. The time demands could also be problematic for a marital relationship. Debra said, "He's been real supportive, although there are times when it's real troublesome because of the hours and the pace of this particular job, but he's been real supportive."

Single women superintendents were not immune to problems with their significant relationships. Again, the time demands were most troublesome for the single women superintendents in this study. Sylvia described to me the difficulty she had maintaining a relationship due to the time demands of the superintendency.

I wondered this year what I would do if I were married. I have someone special in my life, that doesn't mean I see him, I forget to call him when I'm supposed to. He has called me and said, "Where have you been? I have been trying to get a hold of you for weeks." We try to make a pact not to call each other at work—he owns a business, I do this; we each have our own thing. I didn't understand, I have been seeing him for four or five years. When I was a teacher, how he could forget to call me, or how he could forget what day it was, ya know. But I understand that totally after this year. I understand how you can just forget a day; it all just goes together because this job never quits. It never quits even at home; it never quits. If you're lucky enough
to get to your house to do something, it never quits, because people call you at home.

Concerns about a new relationship conflicting with the time demands of the superintendency were described by Marie also. She said,

And I think being involved in a relationship has changed my intensity level, you know, because some of the emotions have been channeled in other directions. So I have to try to find some kind of happy mesh for that right now. Which I think will be difficult for me.

Both married and single women had difficulty in relationships while serving as superintendents.

Children. Children presented an additional dimension of strain and stress to the women superintendents in this study who were mothers. Some of the women superintendents in this study anguished over the fact that their children probably suffer due to being the "superintendent's kid," teachers' and others' attempts to manipulate the women superintendents by using their children, and the limited time available to spend with their children. The children of superintendents suffer from having a parent who is in the public spotlight (Blumberg & Blumberg, 1985).

Joyce described the problems of having children who were also students in her district. She also described her insight into how she was manipulated by others through her children. Joyce said,

I feel sorry for my children, more than anything. It's been hard on them having a mother who's a superintendent. . . . I was telling my secretary
today, "You know, now, in six years, I can come to work and sit in my office, and when a teacher comes through the door, I don't have to be worried what he's going to say about this kid or this kid. It won't be one of my own! He or she won't be coming with bad news about what one of my kids has done." . . . And people know that they can really get to you that way. Because they know you really care about your own children, so they know that's a button they can push. . . . Too bad my kids aren't model students, then there wouldn't be any problem. But it doesn't seem like they are. They are just like everybody else's.

Debra described the adjustment difficulties her child had as a student in her district and being labeled the superintendent's kid. She said,

It hasn't been easy for him. I didn't even comprehend what it's like to be the superintendent's kid. And a kid that had grown up in essentially an urban setting, uh, and this is still very much a rural setting . . . the kids here are different and he really sticks out. . . . He's had his share of struggles.

Finding the time for family, especially children, was difficult for some of the women superintendents in this study. Most women superintendents tend to separate their family life from their work life (Lindle et al., 1992).

Mary described her need to curtail her social life to find time for her children. Mary said,

I would say that social activities are very limited at this time, and the reason for that, of course, is my limited time. Any time that I have, I spend with my family. I feel that my girls, at their age, pursuing their needs is by far my most sincere commitment.

Lastly, Jackie explained to me her decision to leave the superintendency, which was based on providing stability for her daughter during her last years of school. She said,
My decision is for personal reasons. My daughter is going into junior high school, and I don't want to move her during her high school years. The tenure of the average superintendent is about 3 years so I don't want to take that chance, even though everything is great here. I want to retire into the elementary principalship—I don't want to move every 3 to 4 years. This is really hard for me. I really love it here.

Children presented an additional stress to women superintendents.

No children. Oftentimes female executives make a decision which "a number of savvy insiders consider to be a milestone in their successful careers," to put their careers first and consider the decision not to have children necessary to demonstrate their commitment to the corporation (Morrison, 1992, p. 114). Sylvia, Marie, and Barbara were no different. Sylvia said,

I have never been married, to the career probably, but you know I have never been married, have no kids, um, that is it. This is my life, that has been a matter of fact . . . there was no time for me, no time at all. Monday night I had a board meeting, and I don't go home between the board meeting, so I'm here from 8:00 until 10:00, 12:00, 1:00 in the morning. Tuesday night I had the mentoring meeting, and I got done with that at 7:00. Last night I had another meeting, so I left here at quarter after 4, went home and changed clothes, went to it and got home at 10:00. Tonight I have another meeting, and it doesn't give up. It just doesn't give up.

There was no time for children in Sylvia's life.

Furthermore, Karen, Jo, Ellen, and Ruth had college-aged children who did not live at home or grown children, which also provided them the opportunity to place their careers as superintendent first. White et al. (1992)
found that women placed their career more centrally in their lives as they resolved sex role conflicts. Some of the women superintendents in the study entered the superintendency after their children were grown or made the decision not to have children.

Maintaining a marriage or a significant relationship was described by some of the women superintendents of Iowa as difficult. Problems based on the nature of the demands of the superintendency strained the marriages of some of these women. Furthermore, the single women in this study with significant relationships also described problems and concerns. The "superintendent's kid" syndrome, manipulation of the women superintendents by using their children, and finding time for their children were the concerns of the women superintendents of Iowa that were parents. Lastly, some of the women superintendents of Iowa were no different from women in other professions who decided not to have children based on the demands of top level jobs.

Isolation

The isolation of the superintendency was described by the women superintendents in this study. Sylvia, Jo, Teresa, Debra, and Mark felt isolated in some facet of their lives since assuming the superintendency. Feelings of isolation resulted from the nature of the work, the
status of the position, low percentage of females, and the role model requirements.

Sylvia described to me the personal and social isolation of the superintendency resulting from the nature of the work of a superintendent. She said,

Oh, the superintendent position is such a lonely job. That is another factor. It is so lonely sometimes. I don't have a husband that I can talk to, and I don't have a cat or a dog. There is just no one to talk to, no one to talk to. So, I did a lot of talking to my mentor who understands, and to her [another female superintendent] because she experiences the same thing. She will even tell you that she hasn't experienced this, ok? And then I also call my friend, but he isn't always home. So yeah, it is very, very isolated. I am kind of a people person. I don't like all of the isolation, and if you were to ask my support staff, they would tell you that I wasn't given a chance. If you ask the teachers, they will tell you that I wasn't given a chance.

Jo also described the isolation of the superintendency due to the low percentage of women, which was especially bothersome to her when she travels. She said,

Well, it's lonely. When you go to convention, I've got one coming up next week...so I'm thinking, well now, who am I going to have supper with? That's a big concern to me. And that shouldn't bother me because if I'm shopping, I eat alone anyway. And so, you know, like I went to California and ran into B [another woman superintendent]. And she was saying how lonely it was, and I could appreciate that... You know, guys can stand there, and it's no big deal. I don't know, I feel uncomfortable [being one of a few women].

Isolation during traveling was difficult for Jo. Feelings of isolation are common to women superintendents due to their low numbers (Jones, 1994).
Being labeled "the boss" in social circles in a rural community can limit the social life for a woman superintendent if the community is traditional in nature and not particularly friendly to newcomers (Jones, 1994). Still, being the boss was described by Teresa as being isolated. She said,

Part of that [isolation], again, I think moving to this area hurt me more [than the superintendency]. . . . I didn't feel comfortable in their church. And that was the social organization in town. Of course I work and had kids, so by Friday night I was tired. And so that was harder for me than this . . . you know you're still the boss. I think you are still seen in that position. You are still the boss.

Women with traditional backgrounds who accept traditional sex roles may not accept women as superintendents. Non-working women placed pressures on women administrators, which included psychological separation and alienation from women who work. The working woman's lack of leisure time to pursue personal friendships may also enhance feelings of isolation (Woo, 1985).

Debra alluded to feelings of isolation as she described her need to be liked. She said,

That's probably what's the hardest part of this job, is that I like to have people like me, and I think I have great ideas, and that's one of the hardest things about being an administrator. Not everybody thinks your ideas are all that great. And that was a struggle that first couple of years.

Moreover, some of the women superintendents in the study had learned to present a self that was not the real self. Marie described her personality trait to which she

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
attributed feelings of isolation in the superintendency. She said,

> What people see is not what I am . . . and the descriptions that people give me, that they think are pretty objective, are the surface descriptions that I want them to give. But really, very few people know what I'm really like inside. And that can be lonely.

The isolation of the superintendency takes many forms and is common to the superintendency (Jones, 1994). Isolation is also common to women in top positions (Cohen, 1994).

**Summary**

The isolation of the superintendency in some facet of their lives is clearly part of the superintendency. Most of the women felt isolated since assuming the superintendency. The demands of the superintendency and resistance to nontraditional sex roles by teachers, board members, and community members in the form of sexual harassment/harsh treatment facilitated the feeling of isolation for most of the women superintendents in Iowa. Family stress in the form of marital problems and/or problems with children added to the costs of the superintendency for most of the women superintendents of Iowa.

**Coping with Being a Woman Superintendent**

The women superintendents of Iowa described several coping skills which they utilized during troublesome situations. The coping skills involved (a) minimizing,
(b) avoidance of stressful situations, and (c) humor. The coping skills of the women provided data for analysis of their power resources on the interpersonal level.

**Using Coping Skills**

A frequently mentioned coping skill described by the women superintendents in this study concerned dealing with sexual harassment. Jackie described her nonconfrontive approach which focused on minimizing. She said,

Male colleagues have made playful remarks such as "who gets to stay in Jackie's room at conventions," for example. But I'm not real aggressive in handling those remarks. I do it in a quiet manner. I classify myself as a nondirective person.

Jo chose to view sexual harassment as partly a woman's responsibility and described her approach in this way. She said,

If you deal with men in a, I don't get in those situations too much because I think you can control situations. . . . I think it has a lot to do with how you handle yourself. And you know, I don't flirt with anybody. I don't make cutesy comments. The body language—you know, I'm, very attuned into body language. So, you know, the feminine wiles, because I'm aware of what they do, and I don't do them because I'm not interested in—you know, but those things, yeah, have come up, but I laugh them off: "Oh right, yeah sure, in your dreams," something like that. And we're friends, we're equals, and that's how they treat me.

An approach described by Marie also used humor. She said,

I try to handle it with a sense of humor and, uh, try to deflate the whole thing with humor. And you can get by with that. Some people are not very persistent, and if you continue to react as though it's [real]. I had one instance with—who would be considered my boss, where there was more difficulty, but in most instances I think, just with humor. . . .
I think that 90% of the time you can take care of things. . . . You know this may be that I choose not to see it.

Marie went on to explain how she dealt with stress in general. Her approach was to handle one thing at a time. She said,

I used to call it my "Scarlett O'Hara technique." Then I read some management literature about 8 years ago, and they called it bracketing, where you just have a number of things impinging on you throughout the day, and at some point, I had to say to myself, "Well that is a big concern, but I don't have to worry about it today, I have something that takes priority, so I'll worry about that tomorrow." And you can only take so many things on in your mind in one day. And I'm pretty good at just putting it aside, and then I go home and usually don't worry about it. And then the next day I'll attack it.

Another general approach used to cope with stress was described by Laura, who seemed to be saying that she reframed situations to minimize her fear. Laura said,

The unknown does not bother me. You know, it's OK not to know. In fact, it probably makes it more appealing, in lots of ways. Uhm, just that I guess. I get scared, but not scared enough to immobilize me. I don't want to tell you that I have never experienced fear, or anything like that. I have experienced fear, but it hasn't immobilized me. I mean, in fact, it has probably helped me to take more risks in lots of ways.

Ruth described her strategy of coping that involved looking at the worst possible scenario before she took a risk, therefore avoiding as much stress as possible.

You can't take a risk unless you are ready to lose and know what to do if you lose. I have already worked through this. I could not run for the board until I know what I would do if I lost. If I lose the election, I will be OK.
A variety of coping skills helped the women deal with stress. Goldstein (1992) stated, "How much strain a superintendent perceives—and whether it becomes debilitating—hinges on personality traits and ability to cope, as well as the nature of the job" (p. 10).

Lastly, Laura offered the following advice for those times when coping skills were not enough to remedy a problem. She said,

There are some times when women have to, uhm, go through formal complaints and litigation to get things done. And I think that has to be an option, but not a first option. But I want to say that I went through one of those. . . . I did file a complaint with the human rights commission in B., and years later they found in my favor. And I didn't want money; it was the principle.

Laura suggested legal processes when all else fails.

Summary

The women superintendents of Iowa described coping skills used to deal with stressful experiences associated with the superintendency. Common to most of the women superintendents were coping skills that focused on (a) minimizing, (b) avoidance of stressful situation, and (c) humor. One woman superintendent in this study recommended formal processes for resolving stressful situations that cannot be resolved in any other way. Coping skill is a power resource at the individual level.
The Leadership of Women Superintendents

The leadership of the women superintendents of Iowa provided analysis of power resources at the interpersonal level and the societal level.

Leadership Style of Women Superintendents

Studies of the leadership style of women usually include the following (a) participative, cooperative, and collaborative style, (b) operating through mutual interest, (c) motivation by empowerment and team building, and (d) care about people (Fried, 1989; Haring-Hidore et al., 1990; Helgesen, 1990; Loden, 1985; Weller, 1988).

Furthermore, Shakeshaft (1987) described gender differences in patterns of behaviors of educational administrators. Three patterns of behaviors for women in educational leadership activities were (a) relationships were central in regard to actions, (b) teaching and learning was the major focus, and (c) community building was central to leadership style. Most of the women superintendents in Iowa described a leadership style that reflected many of the findings of the above studies.

All of the women superintendents were articulate in describing their leadership style and used many of the popular terms found in current management and leadership literature. Moreover, Jo, Sylvia, Joyce, Marie, Jackie, Karen, and Teresa seemed adept in using a variety of
leadership styles. Teresa used an authoritarian approach which she attributed to her time demands.

Gender-related leadership style. Jo described her preferred style and the adaptations that she had made. She said,

My leadership style is collaborative. It's been difficult, since I don't have collaborative principals. You know, they have, in past years, been asked for input, but most of the time, it's been a courtesy, if that and never used. So you know how it is. You get shot down a couple of times. . . . So here comes Jo with her collaborative style, and they're all kind of going, "Well, we don't quite know what to do with this." . . . One is still struggling. I don't think he'll change, so I've just found ways to adapt to him . . . the AEA director told me that I was the most honest and direct person he's ever met. So I guess that's part of my style, too.

Jo went on to describe other attempts she had made to use collaboration that included her teachers and staff.

The vertical team, uh, they didn't quite know what to do with me at first, either . . . and so I [had a meeting] and it was just very informal after school, and you could lay anything on the table, and we talked about it . . . so it started to work out pretty well. Then I had monthly coffees after school, in the different buildings. And, uh, whoever could stop in, and we had coffee and rolls and chitchat, and they were welcome to talk about anything they wanted.

Upon reflecting on her leadership, Jo concluded that she used a variety of leadership styles which could confuse some people. She said,

To describe my leadership, I use terms like collaborative, team, um, I can be, I guess a dictator, or an authoritarian, when I have to be, but it's not very comfortable. I use collaborative and team, all kinds of—we have team meetings twice a month in the district. And we talk, and the principals are free to bounce ideas. And maybe it's the size of the
district, I am a lot more involved. I try to stay out of the day to day operations of the district. . . . So in terms of leadership, I'm not afraid to make decisions, although I prefer to, you know, work through the process. . . . I don't want to have to go back and supervise. . . . And that's a criticism sometimes. Because I've had people say, "Who's in charge?"

Sylvia described her style in working with her principals. She indicated that she liked to delegate but realized that sometimes individuals need to be educated before given decision making responsibilities. She said,

I believe that there is accountability in each person, and if not, then you should be evaluated to show that accountability. If you can't show that accountability, then you shouldn't be a part of that school system and evaluation should show it. Well, when I came here I had two principals who didn't have a clue about budget. Never seen a budget until I got here, no clue. Didn't know how to code a budget. They will tell you, the high school principal will tell you he's really happy that I took the time to train them on how to do a budget and how to run it and how to code it, ok? It makes them feel better, they have an idea about what is going on, ok? I've had my elementary principal come in and ask me if his teachers could go on field trips, and I have gotten the budget out and said, "Let's talk about this. First of all do you think that field trip is an educationally sound field trip? Yes. Let's look at the budget to see if there is money. . . ." So I said, "Now you decide if they are going to go on a field trip." He didn't have a clue how to do it.

The description of Joyce's leadership style concerning her approach with her principals was much like Sylvia's style. Also, Joyce echoed Jo's concern that people were oftentimes confused as to where the power really lies. Joyce said,

When I hire my principals, I tell them, "I want you to be in charge of your own school. You run the school.
I'm here for support. If you have questions, if you have concerns, if you want help, I'm here. But you run the school." . . . some people think, "Who's running the school?" Well, first of all . . . we all work together. But I'm sure there have been people who think, "Who's in control?"

A similar leadership style was described by Ruth. She said,

I prefer for decisions to be made from the ground up or in teams. If a team cannot come to an agreement, then I will make the decision, but I am not a dictatorial administrator. My administrative team operates by dividing up the administrative work. Either the principals or I would then lead depending on the matter. I believe that teachers should be involved in hiring staff.

Marie took her description of her leadership style a step further than most of the other women superintendents in the study, and became somewhat philosophical about the underlying beliefs that fuel her leadership style. Operating through mutual interest was evident in Marie's leadership style. She said,

I think trying to make them understand that we're pretty much alike. That my life and their lives are really pretty similar, and I was probably raised very much like they were raised. And then when you have common ground with people, it seems easier for them to give me a break, even though I'm a woman. . . . All kids, even the ones that make me so mad, deserve to be treated with respect—everyone deserves respect. They don't deserve special treatment always, but they deserve to be listened to and responded to.

**Leadership style combinations.** Although Jo, Sylvia, Joyce, Marie, Jackie, Karen, and Teresa considered their leadership style to be comparable to what is known as women's leadership style, gender-based leadership is not a complete description for the leadership style described by
most of the women superintendents in this study. Jackie and Karen indicated that they can be authoritarian if needed, but that it is not their preference. Jackie's description included leadership that indicated a gender basis; however, Jackie also reserved some decisions for herself, which indicated an abrupt switch in style. She said,

I use a team approach based on an advisory model. With the administrative team, the agenda is set, and the site of the meeting is rotated. I use a team approach for goal setting. The decisions that I make in isolation are finance, I set up my own plan and decide how much money will be left, and I make the legal decisions.

Jackie used a blend of leadership styles.

Karen's philosophy of leadership seemed to indicate a blend of leadership styles. She also described a situation that was illustrative of her blend of leadership styles.

Karen said,

I guess my basic philosophy is . . . try to help people be fulfilled. Try to see where everyone's interests are, and then let them blossom. . . . We're trying to build a new school. And I'm really taking hits on that. Because I've told the people that I am going to recommend a tax raise equal to the bond issue, whether the bond issue passes or not. And if the bond issue does not pass, then your taxes are going to be just as high. . . . And so, I've got some people really angry with me now.

Karen went on to describe her leadership style in decision making which was further evidence of her ability to use several leadership styles. She said,

I thought that I would not make a good superintendent because I do include everyone in my decisions. And as
it turned out, that's the way you are supposed to do it now. . . . The big controversy last year was over all day kindergarten. . . . We had a study group, and I sat in on it. . . . And this one lady who was terribly negative, and she would practically throw darts at me at the beginning of the year for even thinking of this said [at the conclusion], "You've done the impossible. You've made us all happy."

Karen's blend of leadership styles worked well for her. Additionally, the women superintendents of Iowa used their expertise to deal with troublesome situations. Expertise was (a) special knowledge, (b) doctorate, or (c) other special training to influence people.

Using Expertise

All of the women superintendents influenced board members, employees, and others with their expertise. The characteristic of expertise was evident in specialized knowledge or skill, an earned doctorate, or other specialized training by the women superintendents. Expertise in a critical area provided Marie with a strategy to avoid losing power with a board member and to avoid sexual harassment by an employee. Marie described her special knowledge of school buses:

I'm probably one of the most expert females in the state on school buses and transportation issues. I just had a person working for me who didn't think that I knew beans about that. So now I'm on the state School Bus Committee. . . . I know a lot about school buses, and I can write bus spec. So I tend to try to defuse it [harassment] by showing those guys, and they're usually guys, but not always, that, you know, I know my stuff. And it seems to work ok.
Jackie provided a description that indicated her expertise in school finance. She said,

I am a better listener than a man, more child oriented, am trustworthy, have expertise in law and finance, and pay attention to detail. People call me a lot for information. I am a terrible workaholic.

Symbols and stories were used by Laura to influence people. She was an expert storyteller and was a popular speaker. She explained how they work,

I'm also a leader who likes symbols, the use of metaphor. . . . I think it just tells the story better. I love stories. . . . I think it is through symbols that people connect. When I was in B., we had three symbols, the starfish, the conch, and the kaleidoscope. And they all had different meanings. And in a way it didn't matter, but it just, I mean, people think of those and associate them with a vision of the district. You know, it's how these symbols have been explained or presented to them. So I'm very much into symbols.

Joyce used her doctorate to influence board members during times that she needed to re-establish her power. She said, "Whenever a board member hesitates to accept my decision, I simply remind them that I didn't spend all those years earning my doctorate for nothing."

Specialized training as a pilot provided Karen with a unique attention getter in conversations, which in turn helped her land a job as superintendent. Karen said,

Anyway, the interview, the supper, was very awkward. There was one woman and four men on the board. They didn't know what to talk to me about, household stuff? So it was kind of awkward, until they found out I had my pilot's license. Whoa! Then they had something to talk about.
Jo used her expertise in shared decision making to retrain the administrators and teachers who had been previously trained to work in teams but had not used the process. She said,

This team was trained 2 or 3 years ago to do this. And then after their training, the superintendent wouldn't do it. And so, uh, when I brought them back in, they were kind of like, well, they . . . were wary of me. So I did that [training], and it was very informal after school, and you could lay everything out on the table, and we talked about it. . . . So, you know, it started to work pretty well.

Sylvia also taught her staff development classes and recognized the influence that she gained over staff. The story she shared happened just after staff reduction had taken place in the district and just before she left for a different position. She said,

I just got done teaching a class in TESA for our teachers. We had eight people take it, two of them were high school teachers, and six of them were elementary teachers. The elementary teachers, the last day, kind of hung around, and finally, they said, "We're really sorry to see you go; we wish we would have gotten to know you better. You are a neat person."

Authoritarian leadership style. Conversely, a more authoritarian style was described by Teresa, who attributed it to a lack of time. She said,

Well, I think it, what it boils down to, is probably me. . . . I think in some of those things it was real obvious to me that we needed to do something right away. . . . I have a tendency to make decisions and then just let them know. And that isn't how I want it to be. And I don't think that I've been very good at that. First of all, it saves a lot of time when you do that, when you don't have to go out and reach consensus with people.
Laura's reflection on the change in her leadership style from participative to more of an authoritarian style was also based on time. She said,

There comes a point in which it's going to be a very difficult decision. And people give their ideas, but won't take stands either. And it's sometimes where I have to make decisions. . . . And I have changed over the years. I am very task-oriented. Now I'll give consideration, too. But I have seen so many instances where, in the name of process, nothing gets done; I don't want to end up that way. So I'll make a decision. I won't shy away from that. I want as much input as possible, but I work better under a timeline.

Time was an important consideration concerning leadership style selection.

Although the women in this study used a variety of leadership behaviors, the behaviors associated with women's leadership style were central to their reported preferred leadership style. The women superintendents' descriptions of their leadership style indicated to me that most of the women were comfortable with both power and authority.

The characteristic of using expertise was evident in specialized knowledge or skill, an earned doctorate, or other specialized training by the women superintendents. I feel that expertise was used by the women superintendents of Iowa to influence others and is a key power resource at the interpersonal level of analysis.

**Decision Making**

Decision making was mentioned repeatedly by the women superintendents in this study as the activity they used in
describing their leadership styles and their organizational structures. Hence, it is important to consider the processes utilized by these women as they make decisions. Two aspects of decision making seemed to be gender-based. Specifically, moral reasoning (Gilligan et al., 1988) and way of knowing described as women's way of knowing (Belenky et al., 1986).

**Moral Reasoning**

Moral reasoning is usually gender based. Females tend to focus on the needs of others and on relationships during decision making, but males tend to focus on logic and justice (Gilligan et al., 1988). The women superintendents in this study described situations in which they faced decisions that could be considered dilemmas.

Sylvia described a tough decision and her struggle to accept her logical decision after her realization that the relationships she had formed in her district were very important to her. She said,

My resignation, that still tugs at me. Yesterday, the last day of school, now I resigned March 13, made the decision at the end of February, beginning of March and had to wait until the next Board meeting to officially resign. I wavered back and forth, do I or don't I, ya know? I made all kinds of force field analysis, and that is what it kept coming down to. This fit my goals? . . . I started thinking about what I was giving up by being my own boss, the coming and going as I wanted . . . the last day of school we have a potluck, and it was for all of the people at school who were leaving, and one retirement and I got up to talk to the people, and I got really choked up and couldn't talk very well. My staff is wonderful with the exception of one or two idiots, and you have
those everywhere. . . . Monday I was packing files and about 4:00 I got really, really blue and tears started rolling down my face. I am a person that normally—I don’t make stupid decisions. . . . So then yesterday when we had lunch, they bought my lunch, which was very nice, but the custodial staff, the secretary staff, and one teacher took me out to lunch and bought me the most beautiful swag arrangement to put up. It matches both my bedroom and my living room perfectly, and I got tears.

The decision to leave a district posed a dilemma for many of the women superintendents in this study. Laura's conflict during her decision making to leave was based on loyalty issues. She said,

I felt that there were so many people in this community who had jumped because I had asked them to, and now I was going to leave them. . . . And there were relationships I would just as soon forget. But it is like, I am such an easy target for the religious right, which is starting to flourish here.

Likewise leaving a district was also a dilemma for Marie. She said,

I was real happy at S., and one day out of the blue a search consultant called . . . and was pretty persuasive . . . and I came down for an interview, and as I was told later, was the first choice of the teachers who interviewed me, the administrative team, and the board . . . and they offered me the position. And I purposely negotiated a higher salary than I thought the market would bear, because that would have made my decision. The decision was a very hard one for me. . . . And they said, "No problem." So then I had a quandary, a dilemma. I had 48 hours. I loved where I was; I liked the people I worked with. This was a good move, financially, district size-wise, but relationship wise, and my heart was in the other district. . . . Sometimes you have to weigh, if you make a decision with your heart, what price do you pay for that? And you can only guess. And so, some that are truly core values of my heart, I might make them anyway.
Jackie described a dilemma she experienced in decision making. She said,

> It involved the master contract. An elementary teacher adopted a child and wanted six weeks leave. Our attorney said it was OK but without pay. The teachers sent around petitions, but my recommendation was legal, and it isn't that strange to deny leave in the case of an adoption. The logical choice or compassion for a woman's inability to conceive? The morale of the teachers really suffered.

Jackie's conflict revolved around needing to be logical and just or compassionate.

The decisions involving moral reasoning for the women superintendents in Iowa tended to be based on a logic or justice orientation. Relationships were important to the women and caused much anguish for the women; however, their final decisions were not based on relationships. Again, this was an indication to me of the women's comfort with power.

**Women's Way of Knowing**

The women superintendents in this study described their "way of knowing" during decision making which seems to fall into gender-related definitions. Belenky et al. (1986) described an aspect of decision making that is gender-related—"women's way of knowing." Four stages describe the way that women know and view reality:

(a) silence exists when women have literally no control over their lives and do not voice their views, (b) received knowledge is knowledge which comes strictly from all-
knowing authorities, (c) subjective knowledge taps into intuition for private and personal knowledge, and (d) constructed knowledge is contextual in nature and developed through objective and subjective strategies.

Some of the women superintendents in this study "know" by received knowledge. Ruth's description is typical. She knew by utilizing the experts, therefore illustrating received knowledge. She said, "I read all I can or call an expert. In fact, for all my big decisions, I have called in the experts. If all else fails, I usually take a decision to the community to decide."

The way of knowing for Jackie was similar. She said, "I use strategic planning. I am a concrete sequential and rely on experts. If they disagree I talk about our kids, etc. For instance the curriculum outcomes were set by the teachers."

Debra, Ruth, and Laura described experiences in which they took risks or described risk taking as one of their decision making characteristics. This risk taking actually represents constructed knowledge for some of the women. Debra told a story from her college days that illustrated her risk-taking ability and, in turn, how she constructed knowledge, which she related to risk taking in the superintendency. She said,
I was kind of worried about consequences on the one hand, but I took some incredible risks. I went to New York when I was in college for spring break, and this other girl and I, I mean, geez, we left the group and didn't tell anyone where we were going. . . . We got on a bus and went to Chinatown. In New York! And we got there, and we got scared, because it was at night, with the fireworks and the firecrackers. . . . So I was a real risk taker. . . . I think about them a lot [consequences]. I, you know, I weigh the alternatives. But I do take risks. I don't think that you can do this job if you didn't, because it's not comfortable, this is not comfortable.

Ruth described her risk taking and indicated that she may have a reputation for risk taking. She said,

I have started a lot of new programs and taken some risks. An AEA administrator described the changes that I have made by saying, "Ruth you have done some things that I would not have dared to do."

She went on to become philosophical about risk taking and revealed how she constructed knowledge. She said, "You can't take a risk unless you are ready to lose and know what to do if you lose. I have already worked through this."

Laura thought that some experiences that had tested her physically had facilitated her risk-taking ability which, again, may represent constructed knowledge. She said,

I have experienced fear, but it hasn't immobilized me. In fact it has probably helped me to take more risks in lots of ways. One thing I can give you an example of. . . . I went on an Outward Bound trip about three years ago or so now, and part of it was white-water canoeing on the Rio Grande. And I mean, it took me awhile to get a handle on the canoe, and all of that, and some of those rapids were a little hard, but still that was not fear. I was not scared. . . . But we did some rock climbing, and some rapelling, and all of
the sudden we were on top, and we had to rappel down. It was that sensation that you put your first step, and you go this way to rappel, and I said, "I can't do this. I'm going up again." . . . And I was really scared. And then, I kind of basically came down again, and kind of got the hang of it, and then it was exhilarating.

The way of knowing for Marie was also a process of constructed knowledge; however, she relied heavily on her intuition. She said,

Some people write down all the pros and cons. I seem to be better able to go through it in my head and turn it around. And this sounds kind of awful, but when I often get my best, the best solutions to problems we're experiencing on the job, is when I'm driving the car. It's always been that way for me. . . . Almost intuitive, yeah. Because when I try to figure it out rationally, I seem to spin my wheels and go around in the same circle, the same circle.

Similarly, Teresa also described her process for knowing. She said,

. . . Right, because I'm not an expert. . . . This company thinks, this, this, this, and this thinks they can do this, this, this . . . and that was what I wanted to hear. It just seems right, yeah, I don't know. I can't explain it.

Teresa seemed to construct knowledge.

The way of knowing for the women superintendents of Iowa included received knowledge and constructed knowledge. All of the women relied heavily on expert information. The following descriptions of their organizational structures illustrate that most of these women demonstrated the behaviors that they described as their leadership style and decision making process.
Organizational Structure

Aburdene and Naisbitt (1992) contended, "If empowerment is the first attribute of women's leadership, creating an organizational structure to foster it is second" (p. 95). The structure of most of the women superintendents' organizations was described as quite different from the traditional top-down organization.

Marie said,

I often think of it as, like, a chorus. And my choruses, when I was directing high school choirs. . . . At first I'd beat the rhythm and sing the parts with them. And eventually, I could just walk away and go and get coffee and come back . . . and you have to beat out the rhythms occasionally, and you have to, every now and then, throw a little bit of an emotional scene . . . but after awhile they learn it, and it sounds so neat, and it feels so good . . . and they take responsibility for their own problems . . . and I was in the middle of the circle. But gee, I could have dropped out for days and probably no one would have noticed. Really. I don't think they would have missed a beat.

Marie placed herself in the middle of her organizational structure.

The organizational structure that Debra described was also different from the traditional hierarchy. She said,

A traditional line-staff chart doesn't fit my style of organization at all. It kind of looks like--sort of--I was going to say a spiral, but I don't think that's exactly what I mean, either. Uh, maybe springs that are bouncing, because it depends on the issue, who the actual person is who would be in making the decision on that. And maybe that's schizophrenic, especially if it's bouncing too much . . . but I want teachers to be leaders, and I want them to rise to the top and be willing to assume some roles. . . . It's really challenging to work with people that you are suppose to supervise.
Laura referred to her leadership as the reason for the atypical organizational structure in her district. She said,

Everyone would tell you that I'm a very, very different kind of administrator. They've probably never seen anyone like me. That can be good or bad. . . . Well, I'm not hierarchical, and that bothers some people. The people who were on the bottom love it, but the people who were kind of near the top, "Well, are we losing ground?" . . . It looks to me more like a web, in terms of power relationships . . . me sort of being in the middle so that people can access me, and the information is not going to filter.

Some of the women superintendents in this study described an organizational structure that is similar to the web of inclusion. The web of inclusion is related to women's leadership and is structured with the leader at the center of the web, with all others within the organization radiating out from the center and connected to each other. It is based on the concept of interdependence and results from a democratic leadership style (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1992; Helgesen, 1990).

The women superintendents of Iowa described their organizational structures. Most of the women superintendents structured their organizations without hierarchy, yet they reserved much of the power for themselves, which is different from the literature. I feel that this indicates their comfort with power and authority.
Summary

The self-reported characteristics of women superintendents of Iowa focused on the following areas: (a) leadership style, (b) decision making and (c) organizational structure; each provides analysis of power resources at the interpersonal, organizational, and societal level. Most of the women superintendents in Iowa described a leadership style that included most behaviors that are reflected in the literature as gender-related leadership style. Moreover, the women superintendents seemed adept in using a variety of leadership styles. However, the organizational structure that resulted from their leadership style was gender-related for most of the women superintendents in Iowa. All of the women superintendents in Iowa described their way of knowing as received knowledge or constructed knowledge and based decisions on logical or justifiable facts.

In conclusion, the use of a variety of leadership styles and a gender-related organizational structure that reserves power for the superintendent, indicates that comfort with power is a vital power resource of the women superintendents of Iowa on the societal level of analysis. Additionally, these women rely heavily on expert information due to their reliance on the power of expertise at the interpersonal and organizational level of power resource analysis.
Chapter Summary

A brief introduction to the women superintendents of Iowa provided a look at the women superintendents of Iowa. The section on demographics presented both personal and professional demographic data that indicate the women were between the ages of 39 and 62, most were or have been married, and most have children. The professional demographics indicate that all of the women have post-masters work, but only half of the women attended universities in Iowa. The range in years of experience was from 1 year to 14 years; in salary the range was from $42,000 to $93,000; and the district size ranged from 197 students to 9,700 students.

The section on becoming a woman superintendent included a detailed description of the women's career development and their varied career paths. Their childhood and adolescent development resulted in (a) early knowledge of a male world, (b) being independent, (c) a strong work ethic, and (d) early leadership and achievement motivation.

The section on the experience of being a woman superintendent presented data about the harassment the women experience and the isolation of the superintendency. The next section on coping with being a woman superintendent described the coping strategies utilized by the women.
Lastly, the section on the leadership of women superintendents presented descriptions of the women's self-reported blend of leadership styles and their use of expertise. Their decision making processes included constructed knowledge as the most common way of knowing and moral reasoning based on an orientation toward logic and justice. The organizational structures used by all but one of the women superintendents was the web of inclusion.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSIONS, SUMMARY, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Historically, Iowa has had few women superintendents of K-12 public schools. The percentage of women superintendents has remained basically the same since the turn of the century. Societal changes, political changes, and legislation, such as affirmative action, appear to have had no impact on gender balance in the superintendency in Iowa. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to understand women's advancement to the superintendency and their experiences as women superintendents.

As I conducted this study, I was driven by the following questions, which, in turn, suggested the conceptual frame for analyzing the data from my interviews with the women serving as superintendents of Iowa K-12 public schools:

1. What are the professional demographics of women superintendents of Iowa?
2. What are the personal demographics of women superintendents of Iowa?
3. What are the childhood and adolescent development characteristics of the women superintendents of Iowa?
4. What are the career development patterns of the women superintendents of Iowa?
5. What are the self-reported leadership styles of the women superintendents of Iowa?

6. How do the women superintendents of Iowa utilize power?

7. How do the women superintendents of Iowa use gender related aspects of decision making?

8. Do the self-reported organizational structures used by the women superintendents of Iowa represent organizational structures related to women?

9. How do the women superintendents of Iowa experience being a superintendent?

Furthermore, the concept of power and gender paired with women's career development and leadership enhanced the meaning of the findings of this study and provided part of a conceptual framework for understanding the data. A multi-faceted perspective of power resource development that relates to career development (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989) is vital to understanding the women superintendents of Iowa and their success in accessing the superintendency, as well as in understanding their success in extracting power at each level. Additionally, the childhood and adolescent development of women (Maienza, 1986; Radich, 1992; White et al., 1992), the characteristics and career path of women superintendents (Gaertner, 1981; McDade & Drake, 1982), and the demands of the superintendency
(Estler, 1987) provided insight into understanding the women superintendents of Iowa.

Another part of the conceptual frame includes gender differences evident in leadership style (Helgesen, 1990; Rosener, 1990; Weller, 1988) and aspects of decision making reported to be gender-based. Specifically, Gilligan et al.'s (1988) research on moral reasoning and the research by Belenky et al. (1986) on women's ways of knowing addressed the decision making tendencies of women. Organizational structures also are gender-related (Billings & Alvesson, 1994; Helgesen, 1990; Kanter, 1977; Loden, 1985). Lastly, stress in the superintendency includes coping (Lindle et al., 1992) and the isolation of the superintendency (Jones, 1994). Each of these concepts was vital in understanding the women superintendents of Iowa and their success in the superintendency.

This concluding chapter is presented in three parts. The first part details the major findings of the study and the models of power that are evident. The second part presents a review of the major points of the study and includes the theoretical, substantive, and practical significance of this study. Lastly, the practical significance of the study is more fully developed in the form of recommendations in the third part.
What Are the Professional Demographics of Women Superintendents of Iowa?

A profile can be created from the professional characteristics of the women superintendents. The Iowa woman superintendent entered the superintendency in her early 40s and had 3 years of experience. She had been an elementary teacher for 15 years before becoming an elementary principal. She had a masters degree in educational administration, had completed her superintendent certification at the University of Iowa, and was working on a doctorate at the University of Iowa. She was known for her expertise in curriculum and instruction. She made $60,000 a year in a southern Iowa school district of less than 1,000 students and belonged to the School Administrators of Iowa (SAI), the Iowa Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (IASC), and Phi Delta Kappa (PDK).

What Are the Personal Demographics of Women Superintendents of Iowa?

A profile can be created from the personal characteristics of the women superintendents. The Iowa woman superintendent tended to be in her late 40s, was married, and had children which is different from the literature (Maienza, 1986; McDade & Drake, 1982; Radich, 1992). Problems based on the demands of the superintendency strained her marriage. Her children
suffered from being the superintendent's kids, and she had difficulty finding time for them. She had been single or single by divorce at some point during her experience as a superintendent and had felt personal and social isolation since becoming a superintendent. Yet, she had learned to cope. She had a sense of humor and utilized stress reducing coping skills. She endured.

What Are the Childhood and Adolescent Development Characteristics of the Women Superintendents of Iowa?

The early development characteristics reported to me by the women superintendents of Iowa reflect what is known in the literature about the career development of women who reach top levels of management in organizations (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989; White et al., 1992).

Independent and early leadership. The women superintendents of Iowa became independent at an early age. This characteristic of being independent resulted from (a) being responsible, (b) being rebellious, (c) having a cool relationship with one or both parents, and (d) exposure to early traumas which is similar to the literature (White et al., 1992). With the development of their characteristic of being independent, typically during childhood, the women participated in traditional adolescent activities; however, many were the leaders of these activities. The development of their independent nature and early leadership capabilities was enhanced by the
additional development of a strong work ethic and an achievement focus.

**Sex role.** The encouragement of a broad range of acceptable sex roles was also evident in the early lives of the women superintendents in this study. This broad-based sex role identity resulted from a special childhood relationship with a father, grandfather, or brother that broadened the women's view of the male world from an early age or from parents who accepted and encouraged their daughters to develop traits, behaviors, and career goals not stereotypical of girls; however, the women enjoyed traditional social lives during their teen aged years that included many male and female friends. This is similar to the literature (White et al., 1992).

Thus, the women in this study accumulated power resources early—they grew to be (a) independent, hard working young women at the individual level of power, (b) leaders among their friends at the interpersonal level of power, and (c) comfortable with a broad range of sex roles at the societal level of power. Furthermore, the women in this study were very bright women, which also partly answers the next question.

**What Are the Career Development Patterns of the Women Superintendents of Iowa?**

I believe the career path and the education of the women superintendents of Iowa provided the most
satisfactory answer to this question. Also, the implications at the organizational level and societal level were indicated in answering this question.

**Career path.** The career path to the superintendency varied for most women in the study. Only one career path was followed by two women. Half of the women had administrative career paths within one district. Only one career path position, the principalship, was held by most of the women superintendents in Iowa. Line administrative experience was as common as staff administrative experience for the women superintendents of Iowa. Most of the women had been principals, with elementary principal experience outweighing secondary principal experience. Moreover, experience as a curriculum director or an AEA consultant was almost as common an experience as being a principal. This varied from indications in the literature reviewed (Gaertner, 1981; McDade & Drake, 1982).

Perhaps the low number of assistant superintendency positions held can be attributed to the low number of school districts in Iowa which actually have such a position. The low number of assistant superintendency positions held may also be attributed to the women's lack of aspiration to the superintendency (Goldberg, 1991).

**Education.** All of the women superintendents in Iowa had the required certification to be superintendents which indicated their educational accomplishments. Post masters
degree work or doctoral work was done by the women superintendents at various institutions both within Iowa and outside of Iowa. Approximately half of the women superintendents of Iowa attended institutions outside of the state of Iowa for their certification for the superintendency. Of the women superintendents who attended Iowa universities, four attended the University of Iowa and one from each of the following: (a) Drake, (b) Iowa State University, and (c) University of Northern Iowa. This may indicate that these latter three universities need to address why the women that they certify for the superintendency are not occupying superintendencies in Iowa at a higher rate.

Thus, the women superintendents of Iowa became well educated on the individual level. Furthermore, they may have selected certain universities in order to avoid traditional tracking at the organizational level (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989).

Lack of aspiration. Only two of the women superintendents in Iowa told me that they aspired to the superintendency which is similar to the literature (Goldberg, 1991). Most of the women said that they did not aspire to the superintendency and used the same phrase—that they were "in the right place at the right time" to indicate their access and entry into the superintendency; however, the phrase did not indicate a lack of aspiration.
It may simply indicate the women's lack of confidence in their ability to obtain a superintendency. The apparent lack of aspiration and lack of career planning was evident in most of the women superintendents' stories; however, the women simply were not voicing their aspiration. For example, some of the women quietly prepared for the superintendency by completing superintendent certification or a doctorate, then just happened to be "in the right place at the right time" to land their first superintendency.

The women superintendents in this study did not voice their aspirations for the superintendency in order to (a) remain comfortable and connected to other women, (b) conform to social pressure to hide masculine characteristics such as ambition and desire for power, and (c) be trusted by their peers, which is similar to the literature (Woo, 1985). Accordingly, this may illustrate the political savvy of the women superintendents of Iowa on the interpersonal level and on the societal level (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989).

Furthermore, two of the women in the study obtained superintendencies in Iowa by utilizing what is commonly called the "good old boys" system--through the connections of family and friends. The women superintendents' self-reported characteristics of being independent and of having early knowledge of the male world contributed to the
development of good old boy strategies utilized by the women superintendents of Iowa and may be unique power resources to these women on the individual level and interpersonal level (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989; White et al., 1992). Moreover, they learned ways of positioning themselves at strategically correct moments on the organizational level while maintaining the more socially acceptable stature of the "good girl" on the societal level. This compares to the literature on top achieving women (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989).

What Are the Self-Reported Leadership Styles of the Women Superintendents of Iowa?

The women superintendents' descriptions of their leadership behavior reflected much of what is known as gender-related leadership style (Helgesen, 1990; Rosener, 1990; Weller, 1988). Hence, these women displayed the leadership characteristics that have been described in the literature as being unique to women. Yet these women also described their additional knowledge about leadership that is gender-related, but typically to men. Most blended leadership styles; however, behaviors associated with women's leadership style were central to their reported preferred leadership style. Accordingly, the women superintendents of Iowa recognized the effectiveness of blending various leadership styles, which may indicate their comfort with both power and authority.
How Do the Women Superintendents of Iowa Utilize Power?

The women superintendents of Iowa began collecting power resources early in their development and continued to collect power resources during their career development. The following power resources were evident in the lives of these women during their childhood and adolescent development, career development, and as a superintendent.

Childhood and adolescent development. The women in this study accumulated power resources early— they grew to be (a) independent, hard working, and achievement oriented young women at the individual level of power, (b) leaders among their friends at the interpersonal level of power, and (c) comfortable with a broad range of sex roles at the societal level of power.

Career development. Expertise in school law, finance, curriculum and assessment, and/or special education was described by each of the women superintendents of Iowa. Expertise was also evident when a woman superintendent had earned a doctorate. Furthermore, the women superintendents of Iowa knew how to use their expertise to influence others, which illustrates power at the interpersonal level, organizational level, and societal level.

Most of the women told me that they did not aspire to the superintendency and used the same phrase— that they were "in the right place at the right time" to indicate their access and entry into the superintendency; however,
the phrase did not indicate a lack of aspiration. The women learned ways of positioning themselves at strategically correct moments on the organizational level. This may illustrate the political savvy of the women superintendents of Iowa, which, in turn, illustrates power at the interpersonal level, organizational level, and societal level.

Superintendency. The women superintendents of Iowa know how to operate in the male world of the superintendent of K-12 public schools in Iowa. Moreover, this knowledge assisted them in coping with the position. The women superintendents of Iowa may be unique in knowing that which has traditionally been a part of the male world of the superintendency in Iowa, hence, illustrating their political power at the societal level. Drawing from all levels to access the superintendency is unusual for women trying to access the top level of management in any organization. "Women who have succeeded in achieving powerful positions may differ from other populations, both male and female" (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989, p. 81).

Synergy of power. Furthermore, a "synergy of power" occurs as the accumulation of a power resource leads to additional accumulation of power resources (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). A synergy of power may be evident in the aspects of the women superintendent's leadership that
reflect additional power resources that are an outgrowth of the women's path to power.

**How Do the Women Superintendents of Iowa Use Gender Related Aspects of Decision Making?**

The women superintendents' descriptions of aspects of their decision making reflected what is known as women's ways of knowing (Belenky et al., 1986), and moral reasoning (Gilligan et al., 1988). The way of knowing for the women superintendents of Iowa included received knowledge and constructed knowledge. All of the women relied heavily on expert information. The decisions involving moral reasoning for most of the women superintendents in Iowa tended to be based on a logic or justice orientation. Relationships were important to the women and caused them much anguish; however, their final decisions were not based on relationships. Again, this is an indication of the women's comfort with power (Woo, 1985).

**Do the Self-Reported Organizational Structures Used by the Women Superintendents of Iowa Represent Organizational Structures Related to Women?**

Most of the women superintendents' descriptions of their organizational structures reflected what is known as feminine organizational structure or the web of inclusion (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1992; Helgesen, 1990). Most of the women created an organizational structure that placed them at the center which represented their utilization of power.
resources at the interpersonal level and organizational level (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989).

I believe the use of a variety of leadership styles related to women and related to men by the women superintendents indicated their use of both power and authority (Krysinski & Reed, 1994). This may be due to their knowledge of both the male world and the female world and was a vital power resource of the women superintendents of Iowa on the interpersonal and organizational level of analysis (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989).

Additionally, the ways of knowing for the women superintendents of Iowa included received knowledge and constructed knowledge. The decisions involving moral reasoning for the women superintendents in Iowa tended to be based on a logic or justice orientation. Moreover, these women relied heavily on expert information which may be due to their reliance on the influence of expertise at the interpersonal and organizational level of power resource analysis (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). The women's early knowledge of the male world and their own experience with their expertise may provide an explanation of aspects of their decision making.

Lastly, the use of a gender-related organizational structure for women that ultimately reserves power for the woman superintendent may indicate the women's use of both power and authority. The use of the web was a power
resource of the women superintendents of Iowa at the interpersonal level and organizational level of analysis. The use of such a structure may be based on the women's belief of being in the right place at the right time.

How Do the Women Superintendents of Iowa Experience Being a Superintendent?

Breaking the barriers to the superintendency in Iowa does not come without a price. Some of the women superintendents of Iowa paid a price for their success in the form of (a) harassment, (b) discrimination, (c) abuse, (d) isolation, and (e) pain. Some of the women in the superintendency in Iowa and those close to them experienced pain and sacrifice after they cracked the glass ceiling of school administration to occupy the top position as superintendent of schools. They and their families were oftentimes treated badly, and most felt isolation. Hence, the pain and sacrifice associated with the job may be a major reason that women are not staying in the superintendency in a higher percentage (Dopp & Sloan, 1986; Woo, 1985). Conversely, the pain and sacrifice experienced by the women superintendents illustrate their individual power by the way the women cope with the pain and sacrifice and endure (Goldstein, 1992; White et al., 1992).

Summary

The characteristics of the women superintendents of Iowa suggest the path to power for the women
superintendents of Iowa and also may suggest a synergistic model of power utilization by the women. Due to Iowa's rank in the lowest quartile in the United States in women superintendents (Montenegro, 1993), the barriers to the superintendency for women may be more easily penetrated than previously thought. The women superintendents of Iowa found a way to break through the barriers that block other women from the superintendency in Iowa.

Women aspiring to the superintendency in Iowa need insight into the development of the power resources, which in turn may facilitate the elimination of some barriers to the superintendency at (a) the individual level, (b) the interpersonal level, (c) the organizational level, and (d) the societal level. As Shakeshaft (1989) said:

> To eliminate the barriers, one must change the androcentric nature of the culture in which they flourish. To do this, behavioral changes in men and women, structural and legal changes in school and society, and attitudinal changes in everyone must be achieved. (p. 126)

The women superintendents of Iowa have tapped into power to eliminate some of the barriers.

**Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study is theoretical, substantive, and practical. From a theoretical perspective, knowledge about the power development of women superintendents in Iowa contributes to theory construction about the development of power of top level women.
administrators. Substantively, the study adds to the knowledge about women superintendents, specifically, their (a) personal and professional characteristics, (b) career development, (c) access and entry into the superintendency, (d) leadership style, (e) decision making, and (f) organizational structure. Practically, the study provides needed data for women in Iowa who aspire to the superintendency as well as for practicing women superintendents. Recommendations are given below.

Recommendations

The findings of the study of the women superintendents of Iowa indicate recommendations for (a) practicing women superintendents, (b) preparation programs for school administrators, (c) women aspiring to the superintendency, (d) Iowa school boards, and (e) further research.

Practicing Women Superintendents

First, practicing women superintendents need to actively seek sources of personal support to avoid the isolation reported by the women superintendents in this study. Other sources of support also are indicated. Iowa AEAs and the School Administrators of Iowa are in an excellent position to provide networks and special workshops designed to meet the needs of women. Typically, AEAs provide mentors for beginning superintendents, but continuing support is indicated. Moreover, typically, professional organizations are ever ready with lists of
attorneys, but rarely with lists of counselors or therapists (Tallerico, Burstyn, & Poole, 1993).

Second, Iowa universities are in key positions to provide support to women superintendents. Professional development opportunities already exist at some universities in Iowa, which could easily include a strand based on the needs specific to women superintendents. Universities are in the logical position to obtain grants or other monies to support an initiative to provide supports for practicing women superintendents (Tallerico et al., 1993). Projects similar to I-LEAD in years past need to be revived.

Last, Iowa universities are also in an excellent position to track their graduates who enter the superintendency in Iowa. Routinely assessing the needs of the Iowa superintendent alumni, with sensitivity to women superintendents' needs, is recommended.

Preparation Programs for School Administrators

Preparation programs in Iowa for school administrators need to expand their program curriculum to include (a) gender-related leadership research and theory, (b) gender-related issues concerning entry and access to the superintendency, and (c) the power resources from this study. Furthermore, administrator assessment centers need to consider the phenomena of women's lack of aspiration to be a lack of confidence to voice their aspirations. Skills
for the superintendency should be assessed as well. Additionally, women preparing for school administration should continually be encouraged by their advisors to pursue the superintendency.

**Women Aspiring to the Superintendency**

The power resources from this study may provide a framework for assessing the characteristics of women who aspire to the superintendency. Such an assessment could possibly result in an individual education plan to assist a woman aspiring to the superintendency to achieve power at each level as well as competency in a variety of leadership styles.

**Iowa School Boards**

First, because most women do not voice their aspirations for the superintendency, Iowa school boards need to be advised to understand this phenomena and actively recruit qualified women. Accordingly, the professional consultants that work with Iowa school boards also need this information.

Second, Iowa school boards need to be trained to understand different styles of leadership and to understand that some women leaders exhibit behaviors that are not typically feminine. This understanding is also needed by faculty and staff. Iowa school boards need to take a leadership role in providing such inservicing. Along the same lines, training is needed on a continuing basis for
continuous improvement of the board-superintendent relationship.

Last, Iowa school boards need to recognize the benefits of schools providing early leadership opportunities and providing early opportunities to develop a strong work ethic to both girls and boys.

Further Research

Further research is needed to fully understand the realities of the women who serve as superintendents. I wonder if women who aspire to the superintendency can learn to use both power and authority and is the development of power to access the superintendency the same for men? Furthermore, is the isolation, marital strain, and family strain the same for male superintendents in Iowa? Lastly, what are the causes of women leaving the superintendency, and are the reasons the same for men?

I feel that further research is needed to answer these questions and provide additional needed knowledge to help women access the traditionally male world of the superintendency in Iowa and change it into a world shared by leaders who are not defined by gender. Geraldine Ferraro (cited in DeFrancisco & Jensen, 1994) addressed such a need for women to be included in the leadership role:

It will happen, in time. I'm sure of it. But I'm also sure that it is not just a matter of time. It's a matter of work, and faith, and confidence—of
commitment to the idea that some leaders are born women. (p. 155)
REFERENCES


Written Consent Form

To participants in this study:

I am a graduate student at the University of Northern Iowa. The subject of my doctoral research is "The Leadership Style of Women Superintendents in Iowa." I am interviewing women who currently serve or have served as superintendents of public school districts in Iowa. I am also observing these women at school board meetings within their respective districts.

As part of this study you are being asked to participate in an in-depth interview and a follow up interview. The in-depth interview will focus on your background, leadership, and decision making. The follow up interview will take place by telephone to provide an opportunity for you to reflect on the in-depth interview. As the interviews proceed, I may ask you an occasional question for clarification or for further understanding; however, my purpose will be to listen to you describe your decision making and reflect on your experiences in leadership.

My goal is to analyze the materials from your interviews in order to understand your leadership and that of other women who serve as superintendents in Iowa. As part of my dissertation I may compose the materials of your interviews and observation as a "profile" in your own words. I may wish to use some of the materials for journal articles or presentations to interested groups, or for instructional purposes in my teaching. I may wish to write a book based on my dissertation.

In all written materials and oral presentations in which I might use materials from your interviews or observation, I will not use your name, names of people close to you, or the name of your school district. Transcripts and field notes will be typed with initials for names and in final form the interview and observation materials will use pseudonyms.

You may at any time withdraw from the interview and observation process. You may withdraw your consent to have specific excerpts used, if you notify me at the end of your interview and observation sequence. If I were to use any of the materials in a way not consistent with what is stated above, I would ask for your additional written consent. You may contact the Human Subjects Coordinator at the University of Northern Iowa, (319) 273-2748, if you have questions about the research or wish to know the rights of research subjects.

I am fully aware of the nature and extent of my participation in this project as stated above and the possible risks arising from it. I hereby agree to participate in this project. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent statement.

Signature of participant Date

Printed name of participant

Signature of investigator

Joen Rottler, (515) 823-5608, 18968 140th, Greene IA 50636 or Educational Administration & Counseling Department (319) 273-2605 University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls IA 50614

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Interview Questions

Background

1. How would you describe yourself as a child? Adolescent? Young adult?
2. How would you describe your parents?
3. How would you describe your family of origin?
4. What did you care about as an adolescent? Young adult?
5. What stays with you?
6. What stands out for you in the past few years? (Belenky et al., 1986, p. 231)

Self-Descriptions

1. What is your age?
2. What is your marital status? If married, what is your spouse's occupation? Family structure?
3. What is your socio-economic status and social group?
4. What are your hobbies?
5. How do you describe yourself to others?
6. Is the way you see yourself now different from the way you saw yourself 10 years ago?

Educational Background/Career Path

1. What is your educational background?
2. What is your employment history?
3. How did you decide to become an administrator?
4. How did you become a superintendent? Why?
5. Did you have a role model? Has it changed?
6. Do you have a mentor?
7. If so, what influence does either or both have on you?

8. What is it like to be a superintendent?

**Gender**

1. What does being a woman mean to you?

2. Does being a woman affect your performance as superintendent?

3. If so, how does it affect your performance?

4. If not, how do you avoid this?

5. Are there important differences between men and women?

6. Is your sense of being a woman changing? From what to what?

**Decision Making/Moral Dilemma (Gilligan)**

1. Tell me how you make your decisions.

2. Has there been a time when you faced a dilemma in decision making?

3. What was the situation?

4. What was the conflict?

5. What did you consider as you worked through the conflict?

6. How did you decide what to do?

7. What feelings did you have as a result of your decision?

**Way of Knowing (Belenky et al., 1986)**

1. How do you come to know about something?

2. Do you rely on experts?

3. If not, who or what do you rely on?

4. If so, what do you do when experts disagree?
5. How do you know someone is an expert?

6. If experts disagree on something today, do you think that someday they will be able to come to some agreement?

7. How do you know something is right/true?

Leadership

1. Tell me about your leadership.

2. What kind of a leader are you?

3. Has your leadership ever changed?

4. What is it about you that makes you effective as a superintendent?

5. How do you feel about this?

6. What is your relationship to your school board? What should it be?

7. What are the activities you use with your school board during decision-making?

8. What is the purpose of these activities?

9. What might be an underlying purpose of these activities?

10. How would the teachers in this district describe your leadership?

11. How would community members describe your leadership?

Conclusion

1. What will your life be like in 15 years?

2. What should I have asked you that I have not asked?

3. Do you any additional comments?
APPENDIX C

HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL
May 10, 1994

Joen Rottler
18968 140th
Greene, IA 50636

Dear Joen Rottler:

Your project, "The Leadership of Women Superintendents", which you submitted for human subjects review on April 25, 1994 has been determined to be exempt from further review under the guidelines stated in the UNI Human Subjects Handbook. You may commence participation of human research subjects in your project.

Your project need not be submitted for continuing review unless you alter it in a way that increases the risk to the participants. If you make any such changes in your project, you should notify the Graduate College Office.

If you decide to seek federal funds for this project, it would be wise not to claim exemption from human subjects review on your application. Should the agency to which you submit the application decide that your project is not exempt from review, you might not be able to submit the project for review by the UNI Institutional Review Board within the federal agency's time limit (30 days after application). As a precaution against applicants' being caught in such a time bind, the Board will review any projects for which federal funds are sought. If you do seek federal funds for this project, please submit the project for human subjects review no later than the time you submit your funding application.

If you have any further questions about the Human Subjects Review System, please contact me. Best wishes for your project.

Sincerely,

Norris H. Durham, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board

cc: Dr. David A. Walker, Associate Dean
Dr. Pat Krysinski
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Education</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-12 Music</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-12 Special Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Foreign Language</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Math</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary PE and Health</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2

Participants in the Study by Type of Masters Degree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Degree</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational Administration</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum and/or Technology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor Education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3

Participants in the Study by Institution Attended for Superintendent Certification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drake University</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa State University</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast Missouri State</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Iowa</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Northern Iowa</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of South Dakota</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Illinois University</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other out of state</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4

Participants in the Study by Years of Teaching Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-16</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17+</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 5

**Participants in the Study by Other Educational Experience Prior to First Superintendency**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Educational Experiences</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AEA Special Education Consultant</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Principal</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Secondary Principal</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Superintendent</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Director</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Principal</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance Counselor</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Teacher Supervisor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6

Participants in the Study by Years of Experience in the Superintendency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7

Participants in the Study by Annual Salary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annual Salary</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42,000-45,000</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46,000-50,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51,000-55,000</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56,000-60,000</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61,000-65,000</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66,000-70,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71,000-75,000</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76,000-80,000</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81,000+</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Organization</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Association of School Administrators</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa Women in Educational Leadership</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phi Delta Kappa</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrators of Iowa</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9

Participants in the Study by School District Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School District Size</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 200</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201-500</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501-750</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>756-1,000</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,001-2,000</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,001-10,000</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10

Participants in the Study by Career Pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Pattern</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within district</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-elem. principal-secondary principal-asst. superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-counselor-elem. principal-asst. superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Not within district</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-elem. principal-secondary principal-superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-secondary principal-superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-AEA consultant-elem. principal-superintendent</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-coordinator/director-elem. principal-sec. principal-superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-curriculum coordinator/director/ asst. secondary principal-superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-curriculum coordinator/director/ asst. superintendent</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-counselor-asst. secondary principal-superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11

Participants in the Study by Administrative Career Pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative Career Pattern</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within district</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elem. principal-superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS principal-superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum coordinator/director/asst. superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum coordinator/elem. principal-superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elem. principal-asst. superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Not within district</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No experience-superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AEA consultant-elem. principal-superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asst. secondary principal-superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum coordinator/director/asst. HS principal-superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum coordinator/director/asst. superintendent-superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elem. principal-secondary principal-superintendent</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elem. principal-secondary supt.-superintendent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 12

Participants in the Study by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39-41</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42-44</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-47</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48-50</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-53</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54-56</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57-59</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34-37</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38-40</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-43</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44-47</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48-50</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-53</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54-57</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 14

Participants in the Study by Marital Status and Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>With Children</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single, never married</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced and remarried</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced, remarried, widowed</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Without Children</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single, never married</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced and remarried</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced, remarried, widowed</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>