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CRACKING THE CONCRETE CEILING: AN INQUIRY INTO THE ASPIRATIONS, VALUES, MOTIVES AND ACTIONS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN FEMALE 1890 COOPERATIVE EXTENSION ADMINISTRATORS

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the

Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Marjorie Moore, B.S., M.Ed.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
2000

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The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the challenges African American women administrators face and what they believe contributes to their success in breaking the concrete ceiling within the 1890 Cooperative Extension System (CES). The term concrete ceiling is often known as the glass ceiling, which is defined as those artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevent qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization into management level positions.

This was a qualitative study designed to determine the perceptions of six African American women administrators in 1890 state-based Cooperative Extension System (CES). A triangulation of qualitative data collection methods and data sources was used to assess what African American women attribute to their success in breaking the concrete ceiling. The methods were unstructured and structured observations, personal interviews, biographical data survey, and two formal member checks. Data for the study were analyzed inductively.

The participants had varied work experiences and years of experience, and had prepared themselves through additional leadership trainings for their leadership role. They set records as being “the first female” administrator in the 1890 Cooperative Extension System.
Extension System at their institution. The average age was 51.2, ranging from 43 to 57. Eight broadly defined themes emerged from the data to support the common values, motives, and actions of these women administrators. The themes were barriers, leadership style, work environment, communication, conflict management, decision making, professional development, and success.

A "female organizational culture" exists within the 1890 CES. The organization's values, beliefs, and rules influenced every aspect of how things got done. Although their backgrounds varied, there were more similarities than differences among them. The women appeared to be comfortable with their own leadership styles, which encompassed a spirit for teamwork and open lines of communication.

Their success was attributed to a solid upbringing, both parents in the home during their early childhood, a strong religious foundation, and parents' strong belief in education. Since they are unique in their positions, they have "reached out" to each other resulting in the formation of an informal support group. They look to each other for problem solving and programming collaborations.
Dedicated to my father, Samuel Moore, Sr., who is the wind beneath my wings. This degree belongs to you, thank you for everything. I love you!

Also, in memory of my mother, Addie M. Moore.
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This study would not have been possible without the assistance of numerous individuals whose support enabled me to accomplish my goal. It is an honor to have these people a part of my life.

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Last but certainly not least, this study would not have been possible without the assistance of the six African American females who agreed to be interviewed. These women have set the course for future aspiring female administrators. I wish to thank Deborah Maddy whose 1992 study helped in guiding this study. This research was supported in part by the Farm Foundation.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>xii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapters:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Statement of the problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Purpose of the study</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Justification of the problem</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Objectives</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Definition of terms</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Limitations of the study</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Basic assumptions</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Review of Literature</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Origin of 1890 universities</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Perceptions of women leader</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Perceptions of African American women leaders</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Gender differences: male/female</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Barriers to advancement for women</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Barriers to advancement for African American women</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7 Ways of male leadership</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8 Ways of female leadership</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8.1 Work environment</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8.2 Leadership styles</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8.3 Conflict management</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8.4 Communication</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8.5 Decision-making</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8.6 Personal development</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9 Summary of Literature Review</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Methodology</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Research design</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Subject selection</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Instrumentation development &amp; data collection</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.1 Establishing trustworthiness</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.2 Credibility</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.3 Transferability</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.4 Dependability and confirmability</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Interview structure</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Data analysis</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Findings</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 A profile of the participants</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Women as administrators</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Barriers</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Leadership style</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Work environment</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 Communication</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7 Conflict management</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8 Decision making</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9 Professional development</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10 Success</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Summary</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.1 Characteristics of the participants</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2 Women as administrators</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Conclusions</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Recommendations</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.1 Recommendations for the Cooperative Extension System</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.2 Recommendations for aspiring African American female leaders</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.3 Recommendations for further study</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>Consent for participation in social and behavioral research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>Peer Reviewers participation letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C</td>
<td>Participation request letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix D</td>
<td>Telephone recruitment script</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix E</td>
<td>Participation confirmation letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix F</td>
<td>Participants thank you letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix G</td>
<td>Personal, open-ended interview instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix H</td>
<td>Biographical data survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix I</td>
<td>Member check 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix J</td>
<td>Panel of experts &amp; peer debriefers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References .......................................................................................................................................125
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Female administrators in 1862 and 1890 land-grant institutions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Stereotypical differences between males and females leadership styles</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>An induction process of analyzing data</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

This study investigates the plight of African American women administrators in historically black 1890 land-grant institutions. There are low numbers of African American women administrators currently employed in historically black 1890 land-grant institutions. The limited number of African American women makes it difficult for aspiring female leaders to find African American role models who have been successful in cracking the glass ceiling. For those women currently in 1890 land-grant institutions administrative positions, the level of organizational support they receive from their institutions may be inadequate.

The land-grant institution was created to provide education to all people with particular emphasis on vocations in businesses, farm, and trade. Over a period of 50 years, the concept of the land-grant institution evolved into three areas: teaching, research, and extension. In the land-grant institutions, information on farming or farm-related areas and families are provided through the Cooperative Extension Systems (CES) in non-formal settings. Extension programs in each of the land-grant institutions are carried out by CES that targets a variety of audiences (Working with Our Publics, 1988).
Under the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, the 1862 Universities of which all were predominately white were given the responsibility of initiating Extension programs. Under this same Act, Negro Extension programs were being initiated by the 1890 Universities in Southern States of which all were predominately black (Mayberry, 1990). During the early periods of Extension, there were no female administrators in 1862 or 1890 Extension Systems. Currently, there are fifty-six 1862 land-grant universities. In those institutions, 9% (5) are female directors, 7% (4) are female associate directors, and 2% (1) are female interim directors, all of whom are White, except for one African American female associate director. In the seventeen 1890 land-grant universities including Tuskegee, 24% (4) of the administrators are African American females, 12% (2) associate administrators are African American females, and 6% (1) is an acting associate administrator who is an African American female (Figure 1). Figure 1 compares the percentages of female administrators in 1862 and 1890 land-grant institutions. In comparison to 1862 land-grant universities, 1890 land-grant universities are doing a much better job in hiring African American females in administrator positions. However, the numbers of African American female administrators is still low and therefore presents a problem of not having enough role models for aspiring women to emulate in their quest to reach the top.

Some women who are trying to climb the administrative "ladder" are confronted with what is termed the "the glass ceiling." This term refers to an invisible barrier toward advancement in executive ranks. The glass ceiling is identified primarily as a women's issue; however, evidence shows that minorities are faced with insurmountable barriers as
Figure 1.1: Female Administrators in the 56 - 1862 Land-Grant Institutions and the 17 - 1890 Land-Grant Institutions
they attempt to move upward (U. S. Department of Labor, 1997). In spite of laws and policies that have opened doors for women and people of color, the invisible barrier still remains (Ayman, 1997).

Research on women's issues often refers to white heterosexual women from a privileged background. “The omission of women of color is more implicit than explicit and occurs when authors of studies of essentially white women managers generalize their findings to women” (Bell, Denton, & Nkomo, 1993, p. 106). Interestingly, the barriers for African Americans have been termed a “concrete wall” or “concrete ceiling” that not only restricts their access to top-level positions but middle management positions as well. The “concrete ceiling” is denser and not as easily shattered (Bell, Denton, & Nkomo, 1993; Catalyst Organization, 1999; U. S. Department of Labor, 1997).

Looking at workforce statistics provides a clear picture of the glass ceiling concept. The U. S. workforce is comprised of 49 million people. Of this number, women represent almost half or about 47% (Allen, 1996). Women of color make up 23% of the U.S. workforce. In the private sector, only 15% of women of color are in managerial positions (Bell, Denton, & Nkomo, 1993; Family Research Council, 1998). Overall, women are highly disadvantaged in terms of workplace harassment, job segregation, inequitable family responsibilities, and low pay. Women have made a few gains in pay but overall continue to lag behind men. They are paid on the average 26% less than men (Allen, 1996). Women of color in managerial positions are on the bottom of the pay scale (Family Research Council, 1998).

The few research studies on minority women, especially on African American
women. underscore the limited knowledge available of their experiences in organizations. The limited amount of research information on African American women further hinders us from learning more about the similarities and differences between white females and black females, their barriers to advancement, and their leadership styles.

Does the concrete ceiling exist for African American women in 1890 Cooperative Extension Programs? What does it take for African American women administrators to break through the concrete ceiling to get to the top? Do gender and family play a role in career advancement? What success strategies do African American women administrators in 1890 institutions use to maintain their current leadership status?

Authors of research on women in management tend to generalize their findings to “women,” which may or may not be representative of the needs of women of color (Bell, Denton, & Nkomo, 1993; Catalyst Organization, 1998a). While there are many similarities between white women and African American women, the challenges African American women face are unique organizational challenges. Organizations can not assume that the same solutions in place for white women are necessarily suitable for African American women (Catalyst Organization, 1998b). The major challenge faced by African American women in terms of promotion is race. Because of this, African American women have greater difficulty in forming supportive relationships and have limited mentors or in many cases, no mentors at all. Another challenge of these women is that they must adapt to both a White culture and their own African American community. Yet, when evaluated it is often done according to the standards of the White male (Allen, Jacobson, & Lomotey, 1995).
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the challenges African American women administrators face and what they believe contribute to their success in breaking the concrete ceiling within the 1890 Cooperative Extension System (CES).

Maddy's (1992) study, Women Who Shattered the Glass Ceiling: Postpositivist Inquiry into the Aspirations, Values, Motives and Actions of Women Serving as CEOs of Cooperative Extension Systems, featured female administrators in 1862 institutions. This study in part was a replication of Maddy's study, but with a focus on female administrators in 1890 institutions. The population for this study involved two African American female Administrators, two African American female Associate Administrators, and one African American female Acting Associate Administrator from 1890 Cooperative Extension Programs. Also, one African American female Administrator who was an 1890 Administrator but is now an Associate Director in the 1862 Extension System was included.

Justification of the Problem

People of color and women are entering the workforce in huge numbers, which changes the face of our nation’s corporate talent pool. As our society becomes more diverse, and if we are to become serious about having a diverse workforce, then we need to have leaders who reflect diversity not only from a racial standpoint but gender as well. "Women of color in corporate management will be able to enhance their companies’ success in overall business strategy, management of increasingly scarce resources, and
the global marketplace by virtue of their unique talents and cultural diversity - if they are able to attain key leadership positions within their companies" (Catalyst Organization, 1998a, p. 1). This would send the message that the organization understands diverse needs and offers opportunities for upward mobility for diverse groups of people, especially women of color.

Another advantage of this study is to emphasize the need for African American female administrator mentors and networking systems. Traditionally, the preparation of men for leadership positions has been through the process of mentoring and networking (Scanlon, 1997). This same process is essential for African American women as a means of career development and advancing in the organization. Lessons in leadership can be learned from African American women who have made it to the top. These women in leadership positions have an obligation to help other women advance in leadership positions (Featherman, 1997). Administrators who reflect the same background as the people in the lower level positions would be helpful in communicating the needs and aspirations of the workforce.

The theoretical framework of this study is based on the management and leadership theory. Helgesen's 1990 and 1995 studies provide a framework focused on characteristics in management and leadership roles. Chapter 2 of this study provides details of Helgesen's work.
Objectives

The objectives of this research was to:

1. Identify barriers that African American female administrators can overcome in breaking the concrete ceiling in 1890 land-grant institutions.
2. Identify the role that gender and family play in achieving a senior-level administrative position.
3. Identify success strategies used by current African American female Administrators in 1890 systems to maintain their current leadership status.
4. Describe professional development strategies for emerging African American females who aspire to senior-level administrative positions.

Definitions of Terms

For this study, the following terms were defined operationally as:

**African American/Black Women** - These terms to be used interchangeably to refer to women with dark skin who have African ancestry and who are employed as an administrator in 1890 and 1862 Land-Grant Institutions.

**Cooperative Extension Systems (CES)** - The primary organization for carrying out the extension function of each state’s land-grant institution(s). The mission of Extension is to develop people by enabling them to become self-directed individuals and to manage their resources.

**1862 Female Director** - A female in a historically white land-grant institution who has the responsibility for managing governmental departments or units in Cooperative
Extension Systems (CES).

**1890 Female Administrator** - A female in a historically black land-grant institution who has the responsibility for managing governmental departments or units in Cooperative Extension Systems (CES).

**Qualitative Research** - A type of descriptive research carried out in a naturalistic setting involving a small number of human subjects.

**Concrete Ceiling** - Often known as the glass ceiling, which is defined as "those artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevent qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization into management level positions. The concrete ceiling is denser and not easily penetrated (U. S. Department of Labor, 1991, p. 1).

**Mentor** - A teacher who possesses knowledge, utilizes good judgment and is dependable in helping to guide the career path of an aspiring person.

**Limitations of the Study**

Limitations of this study were:

1. Since this is a census study, the findings are limited to the five senior level African American female administrators in 1890 and one senior level African American female administrator in 1862 Land-Grant Institutions participating in this study.
2. In qualitative research, the findings reflect the participants’ perceived reality.

**Basic Assumptions**

The central assumptions of this study were:

1. Participants were best qualified to provide insight on their career development.
2. The way in which women talked about their lives and making meaning of their career paths would be significant because it would reveal the world as they saw and acted in it.

3. Participants are knowledgeable of context and answered honestly the questions posed to them within the study.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the challenges African American women administrators face and what they believe contributes to their success in breaking the concrete ceiling within the 1890 Cooperative Extension System (CES).

To achieve this purpose, several concepts in the literature were addressed in this study, including: (a) perceptions of women leaders (b) gender differences between male and female leaders, (c) barriers to advancement for women, especially African American women, and (d) differences of leadership styles between men and women. But first, it is important to provide a brief overview of the origin of 1890 land-grant universities.

Origin of 1890 Universities

In early years, education for the Negro was almost nonexistent, especially in Southern states. It was not until the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 that the Negro in Southern states had access to educational institutions. Negroes themselves, their churches, and state politicians largely supported the creation of these institutions. During this early period, the commonality the institutions had was to train colored teachers to reach more colored children (Mayberry, 1990).

However, before it was fashionable to allow education for Negroes as well as for
less fortunate whites, education was only for the wealthy. With this void of reaching
Negros and less fortunate whites, the land-grant institutions were founded for the purpose
of educating any and all people. These institutions were particularly interested in
educating individuals who had an interest in business, farming and trade (Working with
Our Publics, 1988). The Morrill Act of 1862 provided land to each state for the purpose
of establishing a land-grant institution. Many of the Southern states did not allow
Negroes to attend their institutions. Therefore, land-grant institutions were originated in
Southern states under the second Morrill Act of 1890. This act was to provide an
expansion of the efforts of the 1862 institutions (Mayberry, 1990). The first Morrill Act
was intended for equal distribution between white and black colleges, but funding
primarily supported colleges for white students (Seevers, Graham, Gamon, & Conklin.
1997).

Over a period of 50 years, the concept of the land-grant institution evolved into
three areas: teaching, research, and extension. Extension programs in each of the land-
grant institutions are carried out by the Cooperative Extension System (Working With
Our Publics, 1988). Under the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, the 1862 Universities, which all
are predominately white, initiated Extension programs. Under this same Act, Negro
Extension programs were being initiated by the 1890 Universities in Southern states, which all are predominately black (Mayberry, 1990).

The second Morrill Act of 1890 originated when Senator Morrill sought funding
to support new colleges and to further endow 1862 institutions. Rather than combine the
1862 and 1890 institutions in Southern states, new colleges or existing colleges for
Negroes were designated as 1890 land-grant institutions. College preparatory courses were offered for black students helping them to develop training in teaching (Mayberry, 1990; Seevers, Graham, Gamon, & Conklin, 1997).

**Perceptions of Women Leaders**

The greatest hurdle for women who seek career advancement is the traditional attitudes held by both males and females toward sex-specific roles. Managers and leaders are described using masculine terminology, such as being aggressive, competitive, and rational. Boys grow up with the concept of an effective manager as being tough, unemotional, aggressive, and competitive. Girls grow up thinking of a career as a contingency plan and are socialized to be more oriented toward people, to be other-directed, and dependent. Females are stereotyped in terms of traits such as dependency, passivity, and emotionality (Bands, 1992).

These stereotypes give our society certain images of women especially when depicted through the media.

Jamison (1997) states that the images of women as portrayed in the media, and specifically in advertisements, can undermine women's self-confidence. How can men and women be expected to free themselves from stereotypical images of a woman's role when they are bombarded day and night with sexist images of women as objects or, at best, subservient members of the workforce (p. 12)?

The media highlights women's sexuality more than their intelligence or other abilities. These stereotypes are often degrading, which creates a perception of incompetence.
untrustworthiness, or weakness of women that are obstacles to the promotion of women as leaders (Jamison, 1997).

The portrayal of women by the media also has shown them as self-reliant, honest, and intelligent. Although media portrayal of women is mixed, they have been portrayed also as a subordinate and less likely to be shown wearing business attire (About Women & Marketing, 1997a).

Because of the negative images of women depicted through the media, it is important for women to occupy a wide range of positions of authority in sufficient numbers to give aspiring women a reasonable number of role models and to make it ordinary for women to occupy such positions. It is only then that gender can become immaterial when a candidate is being chosen for a job (Jamison, 1997). By understanding the history of male dominance, this will shed light on possibly why the media portray women in the manner that they do.

In earlier years, male dominance has had long, deep roots into the past among mankind. Women were in the private sector while their husbands worked outside the home (public sector) to earn money for the family maintenance. Women stayed home to care for the family and took care of domestic chores. As nonparticipants in the public sector, women were not as skilled in profitable trades. Women did not have a role as a wage earner or a policy or decision maker in the community, nor did they have powerful positions in business or politics. Because women were not traditionally in these positions, they did not have role models to emulate or mentors to help in directing their career (Blau & Ferber, 1995; Jamison, 1997; Marks, 1994).
As a result, support structures for women's participation in the public sphere have never been fully developed. Access to information is often limited to women and people of color. The so-called "old boys network" or "mentors" or "sponsors" are not there to help inform, promote, or advise a new generation of women and people of color in public life. Men had the advantage of building alliances and networking for circulation of best positions and wages among male counterparts and giving advice to younger men. There is no such system in place for women, especially those needing assistance at the beginning of their careers (Allan, 1993; Jamison, 1997; Wemick, 1994).

Jamison (1997) and Mercells (1993) assert that there should be a more balanced participation of men and women in leading positions. It is especially important that more women be represented in positions of higher authority. Jamison (1997) argues that just to have an equal number of women in total does not substitute for attaining equal access to all levels of decision making. Individuals in senior level positions, whether society, economy, or politics, should actively promote women so young aspiring women could envision themselves as prominent leaders.

For many, the expectation is that women should still perform traditional responsibilities of the household, taking care of the children, preparing the meals, and being a good spouse. Although women can now put on their suits, carry their briefcases and portable computers, they are still expected to strap on the baby-backpack and shuttle the kids to and from school. Women are working the 'double shift' of putting in eight plus hours on the job and doing household work. Stress and possibly stress-related illnesses are created from the 'double shift' syndrome. That's not all, as part of the
private sphere, women have the primary responsibility to maintain contact with extended family and friends as well as the elderly (Jamison, 1997; Jones, 1996).

Once women are successful in attaining top-level management positions, they are frequently perceived as being a token. As tokens, women’s opportunities for successful performance and promotion are hampered (Frankforter, 1996). Women’s success is further hampered when they choose their family over having a career. They are often assumed to be less serious than their male counterparts, and those who stay at home are described as “economically unproductive” (Jamison, 1997).

**Perceptions of African American Women Leaders**

Bell, Denton, & Nkomo (1993) looked at two studies conducted in 1983 and 1986. In Jones’ 1986 study of black managers in corporations, it was argued that, “if personal comfort levels are a main criterion for advancement, black women are less threatening and therefore more acceptable to white male executives and will advance faster and farther than black men” (p. 91). It was concluded in Adams’ 1983 study of biracial groups that within a social context, black females are more readily accepted in roles of influence than black males.

Research further suggests that black women have often been depicted as victims of what is called “double jeopardy or double whammy” (Aguilar & Williams, 1993; Bell, Denton, & Nkomo, 1993). “While sexism is injurious to black women, racism further intensifies the negative experience. In another study on gender of the upwardly mobile black women, it was found that because of her race and sex, the upwardly mobile black
woman occupies an acutely marginal position in society, thereby increasing her chances of isolation” (Bell, Denton, & Nkomo, 1993, p. 112).

Other studies cast doubt on the validity of the double advantage hypothesis for black women managers. In a study of race and gender discrimination in the evaluation of job applicants, Hitt, Zikmund, & Pickens (1982) found that being a black female did not increase the number of positive responses compared with other race and gender groups.

**Gender Differences (Male/Female)**

Other than the reproductive organs of men and women, there are no significant physical differences (Hubbard, 1995; Schreiber, 1995). Women's biology can be viewed as a social construct, i.e. their height and weight are not inborn capacity but rather the result of social conditioning. As little girls, they are taught to fit in a socially constructed model that dictates how active they are, what clothes to wear, what games to play, what and how much to eat, what kind of schools they should go to, and the work they do (Hubbard, 1995). It has been alleged that the male brain is superior in the areas of the sciences and areas such as mathematics and problem solving. However, it is the parental attitude, teachers' behavior and encouragement, social roles, and career choices that need to be accounted for in explaining the differences of male and female math achievement. Sorting people by sex is a political exercise rather than a biological one (Schreiber, 1995).

Laying (1995) and Tavris (1995) looked at the matter under the sociobiology point of view, drawing conclusions from observations of primates and other animal's behavior. Laying (1995) stated that even if inborn factors influenced male and female sexual human behavior, the extent to which they do so is clearly limited and subordinated
to learning and conditioning. Tavris (1995) affirmed that male dominance and female nurturance and chastity are not traits that can be justified by sociobiology, but rather may have been a result of scientific prejudice, or scientists proneness to observe only what fit into their male-centered biases toward human behavior.

Harriman (1996) expanded these studies to investigate the ways in which women have been portrayed throughout history. According to Harriman, Eve was the source of evil in biblical history and early Greek mythology blamed Pandora. During the Roman Empire, women were blamed for the Empire’s moral decadence because they not only could enjoy education and have properties, but could also divorce their husbands, therefore “ruining” families and its values. Women are assigned a gender status at birth with roles attached such as being dainty, sweet, passive, dependent, and nurturing. On the other hand, men are ascribed the opposite roles of being strong, hefty, active, and self-reliant. Sex roles are learned through the process of role-taking, observation, and control within the family environment and later at school. A role is the expected and actual behaviors or characteristics that are associated with a particular status.

In other perceived roles of women, they are not taught to express themselves strongly or emphatically, but rather they are taught to suggest triviality or uncertainty about the subject in their conversation. Women tend to be more person and feelings-centered, thus making them be more polite and indirect, using more adjectives, adverbs, and hesitancy to soften their speech, making it more powerless. These traits are not considered desirable in leadership and managerial roles. On the other hand, traditional male speech emphasizes expressiveness as a tool to maintain power, controlling
communication by denying dialogue and reviewing only strategic portions of oneself or one's resources. Male speech is more factual, literal, and direct as opposed to showing personal concern (Harriman, 1996).

**Barriers to Advancement for Women**

Although nontraditional managers are more represented in the workforce and have made improvement toward gender equity in the U. S. workplace (Morrison, Schreiber, & Price, 1995), "they still have a long way to go in breaking through the last layer of the glass ceiling" (American Management Association, 1998, p. 8). A nontraditional manager is anyone other than a white male, that is, white women and people of color.

"The glass ceiling is an artificial barrier based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevents qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization into management level positions" (U. S. Department of Labor, 1991, p.1). It is not enough to have a commitment to breaking the glass ceiling for nontraditional managers; CEOs must have a clear understanding of the covert and overt barriers that women are confronted with in order for change to occur.

White male decision makers are often reluctant to assign nontraditional managers to the challenging, high profile jobs that have rich learning potential and add credibility to a manager's track record. The working environment for many nontraditional managers is lonely, unfriendly, and pressure packed. At the higher levels they are still dramatically outnumbered by white men, many of whom (deliberately or not) regularly treat them differently from the way they treat their white male colleagues. Nontraditional managers are often a curiosity to their colleagues, who watch them closely and sometimes scrutinize
their work and behavior for possible error. People of color and white women are often said to lack organizational savvy. They fail to advance because they do not know "how to play the game" of getting along and getting ahead in business. Nontraditional managers do not seem to pay adequate attention to organizational politics and the agendas of their colleagues and bosses, and they do not seem to be strategic about their own career development. One problem area is that nontraditional managers have an inability to assert themselves and their views. Some members feel that their upbringing makes it more difficult for them to behave competitively in many business settings (Morrison, Schreiber, & Price, 1995).

Gender difference and leadership style barriers have been with us for decades, while others are relatively new and unfamiliar. The most significant barriers today are policies and practices that systematically restrict opportunities and rewards available to females and people of color. When prejudice operates at a point of difference, people of color and white women are systematically screened out as candidates for more senior management posts. Poor career planning was associated with the lack of opportunities for white women and people of color to get a series of varied work experiences that would qualify them for senior management posts (Morrison, Schreiber, & Price, 1995).

A 1991 report on the Glass Ceiling Initiative and a 1992 Pipelines of Progress follow-up report further concluded that attitudinal and organizational barriers have far greater impact on the advancement of women of all races than do qualifications and career choices. Consequently, this issue is significant despite the upward mobility of women in top-level management positions: they are still underrepresented (The Center

The Center for Research on Women (1996) cited a report from the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women indicating that women represent no more than 2% of senior executive-level officers among Fortune 1000 companies and only 3% of CEOs (Bell, Denton, & Nkomo, 1993). In a survey conducted by Black Enterprise in 1988 among the top 25 black managers in corporate America, there was not one black woman in the group (Bell, Denton, & Nkomo, 1993).

Maddy's 1992 study cited these barriers as hindrances towards women's advancement: (a) the manner in which new job openings are advertised or lack thereof. (b) the use of executive search firms which often do not include women in those recommended. (c) the lack of access to training and development programs, including foreign assignments, special projects and so-called line duty—experiences to enhance academic and work-related credentials, and (d) a lack of knowledge at the top levels of organizations regarding equal employment opportunity responsibilities and evaluation.

Bands' (1992) barriers towards women's career advancement included deeply ingrained stereotypes and preconceptions of women, lack of psychological and social preparation for career commitment, and limited exposure to specialized education (e.g., training in managerial and administrative skills).

In Morrison, Schreiber, & Price's (1995) study of non-traditional managers, 21 distinct barriers were identified and further categorized into thirteen types. There was a
remarkable consensus among 196 managers in the study representing industries, sectors, level and function, sex, and ethnic backgrounds. The six most critical barriers were: (1) prejudice: treating differences as weaknesses; (2) poor career planning; (3) a lonely, hostile, unsupportive working environment for nontraditional managers; (4) lack of organizational savvy on the part of nontraditional managers; (5) greater comfort in dealing with one's own kind; and, (6) difficulty in balancing career and family.

Schein (1995) noted immovable attitudinal barriers that may hinder the number of females in powerful positions necessary to bring about vital changes. Even though sex roles have little stereotypical basis in reality, they can alter our opinion of others. During the '70's, Schein's study found that male and female managers both identified the attributes of a successful manager as more likely to be held by a man than a woman. Because of this attitude it hinders female's opportunities for entry into and promotion within managerial ranks.

Schein (1995) replicated the same study in the '80's and found that this perception continued to be true among male managers. Males in higher managerial positions were more likely to want to see a man, rather than a woman, as next in line for an executive position. While today's female managers no longer share the "think manager- think male" view, they see characteristics necessary for success as just as likely to be held by a woman as by a man. Women, unlike their male counterparts, are more likely to be gender-blind in their promotional decision making and would foster more equal access to the race for the top as well as equalize the hurdles for male and female competitors.
Consciously and unconsciously, managers tend to feel more comfortable around people who are like themselves. As a result, they often choose to associate with those who are like them rather than with those who are different (Morrison, Schreiber, & Price, 1995).

The struggle to reconcile home and work is still largely a woman's problem. Women often have to make the decision to postpone their careers. This precludes them from advancement into senior management. It has been found that bearing and rearing children conflicts with a full-time dedication to a career. Historically, organizations have provided little support for women who confront the dilemma of meeting both their career and their family needs, and there is still a reluctance to address the issue (Morrison, Schreiber, & Price, 1995).

According to the U. S. Department of Labor Report (1997), continuing barriers include the lack of inclusion of EEO directors in the hiring process, lack of continual usage of traditional networks to fill top level positions, and lack of usage of informal systems such as identifying employees early in their careers for mentoring and assignment to high visible positions. This impedes the advancement of minorities and women of all races.

Equal pay for equal work, or work of equal value, is a principle enshrined in many legal systems; however, even in those systems, pay differences continue to persist. This situation is the result of many factors, including the segregation of occupations typically pursued by men and by women and an unconscious undervaluing of women's traditional work (Jamison, 1997).
The Catalyst Organization (1996) surveyed 1,251 women at the VP level and above in Fortune 1000 companies about their career experiences. The survey yielded 461 responses. Women in Corporate Leadership also compared some of their responses with those of Fortune 1000 CEOs in a parallel study yielding 325 responses. This study was a comprehensive look at the career experiences of the first generation of working women to dismantle the glass ceiling. But it also offered a dual perspective to illuminate what is holding women back and what works to accelerate their progress. Women executives in the survey often cited male stereotyping and preconceptions of women and exclusion from informal networks of communication. On the other hand, lack of general management/line experience and not in the pipeline long enough were two principal obstacles to women’s advancement cited by men.

Although nontraditional managers have made some strides in breaking the glass ceiling, barriers continue to exist to their career advancement. Attitudinal and organizational barriers have a far greater impact on women of all races than qualifications and career choices. A clear understanding is needed from CEOs of the covert and overt barriers that women are confronted with in order for change to occur.

**Barriers to Advancement for African American Women**

While similar barriers toward advancement exist among white women and African American women, the challenges African American women face are unique organizational challenges. Organizations can not assume that the same solutions in place for white women are necessarily suitable for African American women (Catalyst
Black women are faced with insurmountable odds, but in spite of these odds they are pioneers.

African American women say that the ceiling barring them from advancing to the top is not glass but “concrete.” The concrete ceiling is more difficult to penetrate and doesn’t even give one the ability to see through it. The greatest gains in reaching the top have been among white females rather than women of color (Davies-Netzley, 1998). The challenges faced by African American women are social barriers. Fulbright’s study in 1985 found that “the barriers to occupational mobility in a sample of black women managers found that black female managers lacked early exposure to a general business environment and lacked corporate sponsors, unlike their white counterparts” (Bell, Denton, & Nkomo, 1993, p. 112).

In a survey of 1,700 women in 57 focus groups and 82 in-depth interviews, one finding was that women of color perceived that corporations have not yet adequately addressed formidable barriers to advancement. It was found that a quarter of African-American women managers did not intend to remain with their companies due to the corporate environment. At the top of the list of hurdles for these women were not having influential mentors (Perspective, 1998).

Traditionally, men have been prepared for leadership positions through a mentoring process. Several researchers have examined the mentoring process as a way to socialize women who aspire to become leaders. “Mentoring may be a powerful resource for breaking through the invisible barriers preventing the advancement of capable women” (Scanlon, 1997, p. 2).
A mentor has been described as an individual occupying a powerful position at a higher level that advises and establishes a relationship with a protégé. Mentoring is important for African American women aspiring to administrative positions (Johnson, 1998; Scanlon, 1997). “African American women administrators can be effective mentors because they bring to their jobs a unique and diverse perspective as both women and minorities” (Johnson, 1998, p. 49).

Ways of Male Leadership

Traditionally, a leader has been defined as an individual in a position of power or dominance over his “subordinates.” Historically, more often than not, leaders were men. The leadership of the future, however, is partly a reaction against the old management philosophies of the past.

An international study by Rosener in 1990 of 355 members of the International Women’s Forum and 101 males, matched for position, type and size of organization in a wide range of industries and sectors of employment, found significant differences in reported leadership style. Men were likely to adopt a ‘transactional’ leadership style, that is exchanging rewards or punishment for performance. Also, men were more likely to use power that comes from their organizational position and formal authority (Shackleton, 1995). Also, in Rosener’s study, men appeared strong, competitive, decisive, in control, independent, aggressive, assertive, courageous, rational, confident, objective, ambitious, act as a leader, dominant, and unemotional (Park, 1996; Northouse, 1997).
Men are viewed as having a top-down management style (Figure 2.1) and have been looked at as being more masculine. This style of management mirrors the authoritarian approach as it relates to structure and decision making (Northouse, 1997).

**Ways of Female Leadership**

As women continue to enter the job market in upper-level management positions, questions have been raised as to whether they have the same leadership styles as men. Women who have achieved the status of manager have been viewed as successful imitators of the characteristics generally believed to be in the male domain, that is, toughness and aggressiveness. Not only did women tend to imitate men through their behaviors, it was obvious through their dress their attempt to emulate the masculine model of leadership. The “severe” blue suit and white blouse with a floppy necktie was the dress for success for masculine identity (Stanford, Oates, & Flores, 1995).

Women possess qualities that exclude them from powerful leadership positions. These same qualities also prepare them to be the new leaders of the 21st century. Women have traditionally been seen, and continue to be seen by some, as belonging primarily to the private sphere. Women raised the children and provided a center for the family and took care of the home while men pursued activities in the public sphere. Being in the home, women learned flexibility, adept in managing multiple demands simultaneously, the necessity of adapting to changes, and the ability to motivate family members to perform certain responsibilities (Alpern, 1993; Jamison, 1997).

27
Helgesen’s (1990) study of successful women’s lives and management styles found that successful females tend to reconcile both feminine and masculine traits, combining efficiency and humanity in the workplace, valuing inclusion and connection. Helgesen observed that women bring certain values to the organization, such as: (a) they think on how an action will affect other people; (b) they are concerned for the wider needs of the community; (c) they have the disposition to draw on personal, private sphere experience when dealing in the public realm; (d) they appreciate diversity; and (e) they usually have no patience with rituals and symbols that divide people and reinforce hierarchies. Valuing more interdependency and mutuality in negotiations, women tend to be collaborative in decision-making and conflict management, encouraging and nurturing co-workers to promote human growth. “Women tend to possess a critical advantage in social relationships and communication skills” (Feuer, 1988, p. 24).

Today’s organizations have started to value the different styles women bring to leadership. Strategies such as inclusion, webbing, cooperation, and quality control at lower levels of organizations have become popular, even among male leaders (Schmitt, 1995).

In Helgesen’s (1995) study of females from different organizations, whether it was a construction firm, a nonprofit enterprise, or a radio station, emphasis was on nurturing relationships and open lines of communication. According to Helgesen, women put themselves at the center of their organization. By doing so, females are more accessible to their employees, providing an atmosphere of equality. Females were more
apt to include people in the decision-making process. The structures devised by some women managers were deliberately circular as opposed to being top-down (Figure 2.1).

Helgesen began to refer to women's "webs of inclusion" since there was no recognized name or category for what women were doing in structuring their organization. Because of this style, men have felt alienated and critical of the top-down approach. Men have grown disillusioned with traditional chain-of-command leadership. "The blurring of lines between what were formally men's and women's exclusive domains has made some men more open to learning things from women" (Helgesen, 1995, pp. 11-12). Based upon the above authors, Figure 2.1 summarizes the differences in leadership style between male and female leaders.

Work Environment

Denmark's (1993) meta-analysis found that female leaders were evaluated slightly more negatively than were male leaders. The overall differences were small; however, bias against female leaders was greater under specific circumstances. When leaders chose typically masculine styles, such as being autocratic and nonparticipative, female leaders were evaluated more negatively than were their male counterparts. This finding is consistent with Eagly and Johnson's earlier analysis in which women in real-world leadership positions adopted more democratic and participative styles. Women were also more devalued when they occupied typically male positions and when their evaluators were primarily men. To compensate for such negative evaluations, female leaders may feel compelled to work harder to gain acceptance and to gain advantages, such as pay raises and promotions. Although small but consistent differences in the evaluations of
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Figure 2.1: Stereotypical Differences Between Males and Females Leadership Styles
female and male leaders were found, caution must be used in generalizing from such experimental studies to what is found in the organizational work setting.

**Leadership Styles**

Northouse (1997) cited a 1990 study by Rosener, which found that females tend to lead differently because of their career paths and how they were socialized. In the study, females, whether being a mother, wife, nurse, volunteer, or teacher, were to be gentle, supportive, cooperative, and understanding; whereas, men were to appear strong, competitive, decisive, and in control. Rosener suggested that their leadership style came to them naturally. Certain feminist leadership characteristics identified by Northouse (1997) were that women use consensus decision making, view power as shared, encourage resolution of conflicts, cater to a supportive environment, and were more open to diversity. This style of leadership is viewed more as transformational.

Harriman (1996) argues that studies of leadership style have two dimensions of leadership behavior -- task orientation and people orientation. Task-oriented leaders give more directives to their subordinates, they plan, coordinate, use problem solving techniques, criticize poor work, and pressure their subordinates to perform better; whereas, the people-oriented leader is friendly, considerate, supportive, open to communicate with their subordinates, and recognizes their subordinates' contributions.

Shackleton (1995) and Davidson (1997) allude to Rosener's (1990) study that female leaders are more of a transformational leader and that their success is because of their 'feminine' characteristics. They are more likely to use personal characteristics such as interpersonal skills and charisma. A very important concluding point of this study
was that it would be a mistake to directly link transformational style of leadership to females. It was suggested that many females have adopted transformational leadership. Shackelton (1995) further suggests that females no longer have to adopt the male leader image but they should draw upon their own skills and attitudes they have developed from their experience as a woman.

Women are more likely to use ‘transformational’ leadership than ‘transactional’ leadership. Transformational leadership motivates others by transforming their self-interest into goals of the group and uses an ‘interactive leadership’ style by encouraging participation, sharing power and information and enhancing people’s self worth (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1994). Women are also much more likely than men to ascribe their power to personal characteristics such as charisma, interpersonal skills, or personal contacts rather than to organizational stature (Rosener, 1990). Women in leadership roles believe that people perform better when they feel good about themselves and their work. Women attempt to create a situation that promotes that feeling (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1994).

Thorp & Townsend (1997) suggest that women have certain strengths that have become more valued as a more relational model is called for. Women’s leadership style tends to be more participatory and democratic. Women tend to lead by building relationships, they are more communicative, and they develop an environment to include everyone. Some authors would argue that it is women’s traits that they have versus a leadership style.

Thorp & Townsend’s (1997) discussion on females as leaders found several studies alluding to the traits associated with women. In their review, they found that in
Eagly & Johnson's (1990) meta-analysis of leadership style, women were more
democratic and participatory, while Helgensen's study involved inclusion, building
relationships, and open communication.

Harriman (1996) concluded that in terms of leadership style, men and women did
not differ. Women did not adopt a more people-oriented style nor are they more effective
when they use a task-oriented style; however, women are more likely than men to use a
democratic or a participative style.

Conflict Management

Conflict management skills are an integral part of leadership effectiveness.
Research in the area of male and female gender differences on conflict management
styles seems to be inconsistent (Sorenson & Sorenson, 1995; Womack, 1987). The
patterns of conflict behavior for males and females are not clearly delineated (Baxter &
(1989) suggest that there are significant differences and on the other hand, Conrad (1991)
suggests there are no differences in conflict management styles of males and females.
"One potential explanation for contradictory conclusions is that conflict preferences may
be mediated by psychological type" (Sorenson & Hawkins, 1995, p. 115).

According to Berryman-Fink & Brunner (1989), women tend to compromise and
men tend to compete. In a study of project managers' personnel, they found females'
tendencies were of a "feeler" while males were of a "thinkers." In conflict situations,
males were more likely to compete while females were more likely to compromise
(Sorenson & Hawkins, 1995).
Moore (1999) indicates that conflict provides an avenue for creativity. Conflict is something women have not felt comfortable with. Rather than engage in conflict, women tend to be more receptive to others and their feelings. They are taught to make relationships their primary focus while men view themselves as the universe. Women give up their personal power when they focus on relationships versus the issues.

In a study of 196 MBA students enrolled in a graduate management class, gender differences in conflict management and its relationship to effective leadership were examined. Among experienced managers, there were no gender differences in self-reported conflict management styles but among managers without managerial experience, women identified themselves as more integrating, obliging, and compromising than the men (Korabik, Baril & Watson, 1993).

**Communication**

One action that requires the majority of any leader's time is communication. Shepard (1998) recommends that “women need to be aware of the gender differences in communication. By addressing these gender differences, women can overcome the perception that they lack the self-confidence to perform in a leadership role in either the private or public sector” (p. 45).

Some authors argue that it is females' traits that they have versus a leadership style. Females possess characteristics that are relational in nature and are welcomed by many in the workplace. Females tend to lead by building relationships, they are more communicative, friendly, attentive and they develop an environment to include everyone (McDowell & McDowell, 1998; Thorp & Townsend, 1997). Case (1994) asserts that
women pay more attention to the relationship level that involves feelings and the 
relationship of the communicators. “Women tend to possess a critical advantage in social 
relationship and communication skills” (Feuer, 1988, p. 24).

Although females have an advantage in social relationships and communication 
skills, they are not taught to express themselves strongly or emphatically, but rather are 
taught to use insignificant or unimportant language in their conversations. There is much 
expressed uncertainty about the subject in their conversation. Their speech is more polite 
and indirect, more person and feelings-centered. They are likely to use more qualifiers, 
and hesitancy to soften their speech, making it more powerless (Davidson, 1997; 
Harriman, 1996; Shepard, 1998). Those traits are not considered desirable in leadership 
and managerial roles (Harriman, 1996).

Page (1996) argues that good communication is an art of leadership and that it 
commands a respect for individuals. “In an age of growing respect for individuals, we 
can accept that ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ traits are cultural stereotypes and that, truly, 
most people are a mix of both” (p. 4).

Decision-Making

Decision-making is another action that requires a great deal of a leader’s time and 
it is at the core of the organization. How we make decisions have been described in terms 
of “thinkers” and “feelers.” The “thinkers” (T) make decisions with their head using 
sound reasoning, while the “feelers” (F) use their hearts. “Feelers” are more concerned 
about the feelings of others (Fisher & Nelson, 1996; Heim & Golant, 1993). Both styles 
use different approaches to making judgments. The T types involve logic that tries to
employ fairness and objectivity. The F types are more involved on a personal level and use more subjective emotional values (Smith, 1999). According to the Jungian decision making model, females are more likely to favor the F type decision making style while men favor the T type style (Fisher & Nelson, 1996).

Collingwood (1995) alludes to a study conducted by the Lawrence A. Pfaff and Associates whereas females rated themselves, by their superiors and their subordinates. The study found women managers were better at the “softer” skills such as providing feedback, communicating and empowering others, rather than being more decisive.

Fox & Schuhman (1999) study among women and men public officials corroborates the fact that women managers, more than men managers, attempts to facilitate communication between an employee and the city council. The study also revealed that women were more concerned about financial constraints and the concern for public opinion. Women preferred greater involvement of citizens in the decision making process. Surprisingly, however, this study found that men weighed the input of their staff as more important as compared to women (Fox & Schuhmann, 1999).

Although there is an abundance of literature on leadership decision making, there is a paucity of literature that focuses on gender and gender differences (Mertz & McNeely, 1997). The authors’ further state that the findings are inconclusive as it relates to gender leadership decision making. A study of female and male school administrators conducted by these authors in 1993 did not find any correlation between gender and decision making. The study found that role correlated more than gender.
Personal Development

Few women have been included in studies on birth order; however, studies in this area have shown that leaders were more likely to have been born first in the family. A study of 66 women who held a leadership role as town supervisor was surveyed to determine whether birth order had an effect on their political leadership. The women were compared to 57 male town supervisors. Both genders were found to more likely be born first in the family (Newman, Pettinger, & Evan, 1995).

Freeman (1990) indicated that "it is common knowledge that a family's environment contributes significantly to the shape of an individual's future" (p. 124). At times, when people discuss their careers they tend to refer to their family since identities are patterned from family and profession. Family plays an intricate role on identity formation and life directions. Studies have shown that women who becomes a manager was often the firstborn or only child and identified more with their father's career (Davidson, 1997; Freeman, 1990). In the study, The Managerial Woman, women who became executives identified more with their father's attributes for career aspirations. This same study found that there was an association with high achievement orientation and birth order and parents referred to as being the influential ones (Freeman, 1990).

In the socialization and aspirations of college black females' study, which included 219 Black females, parent-child relations were analyzed. Three of the six variables in the study were frequency of time spent doing things with parents, their relations during childhood, and the adequacy of parents' teaching of offsprings. Evidence reflected a greater percentage of daughters growing up with both parents spent more time
doing things with their fathers. Daughters growing up with one parent spent a greater percentage of time doing things with their mothers. The more educated both parents were, the more time they spent doing things with their daughters. Data also reflected that "young women who grew up with both parents in the home had a 'considerably close' relationship with their fathers as compared to those who did not grow up with both parents" (Rutledge, 1990, p. 372). Parents with an education of nine or more years also tended to have a closer relationship with their children. Study participants felt those mothers with an education of nine or more years suggested that their parents taught them skills and how to do things very well. It is interesting to note that whether fathers had nine or more years of education or one to eight years of education, participants felt that their parents did very well teaching them skills and how to do things. What is more, a greater percentage of participants reported their parents did very well in teaching them skills and how to do things even though their father's education was lower than when their mother's education was lower (Rutledge, 1990).

Davidson (1997) suggested that parents' expectations of their children's education were important and were seen as a means of being successful. For young people who were a person of color, they were more likely to continue with their education with the encouragement of parents and greater motivation.

Summary

History reveals that schools for colored children were non-existent in the early years. The second Morrill Act provided funding to support colleges in the training of colored teachers to reach colored children. Perceptions of women leaders may have its'
foundation in stereotypes which portrays women with the "softer" skills such as dainty, sweet, passive, dependent, and nurturing while men are perceived to be unemotional, aggressive, and competitive. The literature is inclusive on females' ways of leading and the attributes that they bring to the workplace. Therefore, it becomes imperative for organizations to appreciate those qualities of both genders. Studies have found that there is a "double whammy" for African American women in the workplace. It is critical for organizations to understand that race and gender issues are still with us and that sensitivity trainings should be implemented. Organizations must face the reality that more and more women are slowly but surely moving up the ladder.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the challenges African American women administrators face and what they believe contributes to their success in breaking the concrete ceiling within the 1890 Cooperative Extension System (CES). To accomplish this goal, the procedure used in the study was a qualitative research design.

Lincoln & Guba (1982) assert the growing interest in naturalistic inquiry among researchers in areas related to evaluation. Qualitative research involves a holistic approach by the investigation of the quality of relationships or situations. Some references suggest that the terms naturalistic and qualitative research are used interchangeably. Isaac & Michael (1995) suggest that while these terms have some commonalties, each has its own distinguishing characteristics.

Naturalistic methodology relies on multiple realities arising from natural differences of human perceptions. The determining factor of this type of research is that it is done in a natural setting without manipulation or artificial controls. The foundation of qualitative research is based in the “real world”. Qualitative methodology relates to
the generation of data through the observation of human subjects by an observer, in this case the researcher. As a result of this process, common themes or ideas are sought (Isaac & Michael. 1995). The terms naturalistic and qualitative research were used interchangeably in this study.

The specific approach to this qualitative study was the usage of triangulation. Triangulation employs several methods in solving a particular problem (Patton. 1989). "No single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival causal factors . . . Because each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality, multiple methods of observations must be employed” (Patton, 1989, p. 109). Patton (1990) identified four types of triangulation: methods, investigation, source, and theory. For this study, source triangulation was used which included observational data, open-ended questions, biographical data, and member checks. These data were cross-referenced to determine the reliability of emerging themes.

To carry out the triangulation method, a case study approach was used to reveal the thoughts of participants. Patton (1987) affirms the idea of case studies for one to understand a particular problem or situation more in depth. Sturman (1997) indicates that a case study is an investigation of an individual. The researcher conducting a case study believes that “to understand a case, to explain why things happen as they do, and to generalize or predict from a single example requires an in-depth investigation of the interdependencies of parts and of the patterns that emerge” (Sturman, 1997, p. 61).

To begin the induction process, participants were interviewed about their success using an instrument that included opened-ended questions. For example, what does it
take for an African American woman to achieve a top leadership position within 1890 Cooperative Extension Systems? Many of the questions had follow-up probes to get more in-depth information. Analysis of the study consisted of qualitative measures and content analysis.

Biographical or demographic data helps in the understanding of and the identification of individuals being interviewed (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993; Patton, 1987). This data consisted of the respondent’s age, education, past and/or current position(s), residence, family, and so forth.

Member checks are imperative to verify the realities of the participants individually and collectively (Erlandson et al., 1993). The report is given to participants for scrutiny and can be amended and/or corrected (Guba & Lincoln, 1997).

Data for this study were analyzed inductively. Inductive data analysis was compared to content analysis which is a process aimed at uncovering embedded information and making it explicit. Halcolm’s law of induction reveals that if there is no new experiences there is no new insight (Patton, 1989).

**Subject Selection**

Sample size in qualitative study has no set rules. Within qualitative research, more information richness is sought which can be obtained more easily from a smaller number (Patton, 1990). Therefore, in this study, a purposeful sample using smaller numbers of subjects were used to capture the depth and richness of information. A census of all African American women in Extension administration from the seventeen 1890 land-grant institutions was used, with the addition of one African American woman.
who had served as an 1890 administrator and currently is an administrator in the 1862 land-grant institution. The sample comprised of three (3) African American female administrators and two (2) African American female associate administrators employed at five of the 1890 land-grant institutions and one (1) associate director from the 1862 land-grant institution. Since there were only three African American female administrators in 1890 land-grant institutions and one associate director in 1862 land-grant institution, two associate administrators in 1890 land-grant institutions were added to help strengthen this study.

To identify the study participants, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) directory of State Extension Directors and Administrators was obtained from the Ohio State University (OSU) Extension administrative office. To verify the number of African American female administrators, the researcher reviewed the list of 1890 land-grant institutions as well as verified from the OSU Extension Associate Director to determine if there were any African American female administrators at 1862 land-grant institutions. The researcher further contacted all of the 1890 land-grant institutions through e-mail. There were only a few responding to the researcher's e-mail request. Telephone calls were made to those institutions who had female administrators listed. Later, telephone calls were made to the remaining institutions to verify potential subjects. Also, the researcher verified with the USDA Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) office the number of African American females administrators. As names and titles were verified, a list of participants was developed.
A formal letter was created and sent to subjects requesting their assistance with this research project. The letter included the purpose of the research, the need to observe participants in their natural environment, the need for participants to block at least three hours of their time at the end of the observation period to administer the personal interview, a request for follow-up contact after the initial visit, and an assurance of confidentiality of participants (see Appendix C). After sending the formal letter, a telephone call was made to each participant to secure their approval and schedule a time period for their participation in the study (see Appendix D).

**Instrumentation Development & Data Collection**

**Establishing Trustworthiness**

A major issue addressed in a qualitative study is whether the data are trustworthy, which is similar to its validity and reliability in a quantitative study. To establish trustworthiness, a triangulation of qualitative data collection methods and data sources were used to assess to what African American women attribute their success in breaking the concrete ceiling. Four approaches used in this study were unstructured and structured observations, personal interviews, biographical data survey, and member checks.

Erlandson et al. (1993) note that observations range from unstructured to very focused or structured. The authors state that it is best to have a less structured observation at the initial stages of the observation period to determine the most salient points. Careful observation helps one to capture in-depth data that can be useful along with the interview to reinforce and clarify the total picture. Observation allows the researcher to see what is happening as well as to feel what it is like to be part of the
program. For this study, the researcher observed the participants for five consecutive days in their environment. Initially for each interview the researcher's observations were not structured. On the first day, the researcher began the observation period by explaining the research project and answering any questions that the interviewees had.

Also on the first day, the researcher and the participant provided each other with a brief background of themselves. Each participant provided the researcher with information on the organizational structure of her program. Also at the beginning of the observation period, participants were given the biographical data survey, which they completed and returned to the researcher at the end of the week. At the end of the observation period, a three-hour personal interview was conducted.

In Maddy's (1992) study, a personal interview questionnaire was developed for 1862 female Corporate Executive Officers (CEOs) in Cooperative Extension. The CEOs in Maddy's study were all white female administrators who represented the same level in the organization's hierarchy as the African American females in this study. Maddy's interview questionnaire was revised to fit this study to determine how African American female administrators can overcome barriers, identify role and gender issues, and describe possible professional development strategies. Maddy's (1992) biographical data survey was also revised and used to determine the participants' age, marital status, family status, and educational history. Two member checks were completed to determine face validity. A member check is where the researcher takes the written report of the case study back to the participants for scrutiny. In other words, participants are asked if the written report accurately reflect what was communicated in the interviews. The final member check
was accompanied by the response sheet, which was developed by Maddy. The response sheet was designed to allow participants to react to the description and interpretation of the data collected of senior-level administrators for state-based 1890 Cooperative Extension Systems. To establish trustworthiness these four characteristics were identified: (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability and (d) confirmability (Isaac & Michael, 1995).

Credibility

Guba & Lincoln (1985) define credibility as the extent to which findings are consistent with participants' views of constructed reality, while acknowledging that reality is multidimensional. Credibility raises the question of whether the findings were believable. Four techniques were used to determine credibility.

First, the instruments were reviewed by a group of six females consisting of a mix of women from 1862 Land-Grant Institutions who hold titles of Director, Associate Director, and State and District Specialists. One individual was selected from the USDA EEO office. Three of the women were African American. These individuals were chosen to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the questions adapted from Maddy's (1992) study. Essentially, the researcher needed to receive feedback on the clarity and appropriateness of the questions to ensure that they identified issues faced by African American women in administration. Questions were mailed to each person for their feedback along with a plan of how the study was being conducted. A self-addressed stamped envelope was included for returning their feedback. After receiving all comments, the researcher incorporated their suggestions into the final instruments.
Although the questions used in this study were adapted from Maddy's (1992) study, a literature review of what African American women revealed that they faced similar obstacles as Caucasian women with the exception of race. Questions were framed to fit this study that looked at the participants' background, gender, relationships, leadership, success, professional development, and mentoring.

A practice interview session on the interview questions and the biographical data was conducted with an African American State Specialist in an 1862 land-grant institution. The purpose of this interview session was to test the questions and length of time of the interview. This interview session was tape recorded and analyzed for concerns. The researcher solicited feedback from the State Specialist for final editing and revisions.

Second, prolonged and persistent observation was needed to establish credibility for the purpose of learning the culture of the environment. Persistent observation distinguished what was real versus what was not real. Since the researcher did not know any of the participants prior to the observations, the researcher sent them a biographical sketch of herself. This was a step toward building trust between the participant and the researcher. The biographical sketch included information about the researcher's schooling; her past, present, and future career goals; and professional and community activities. To overcome biases and misinformation in this study, prolonged engagement with subjects was held. As a result of observing the subjects for a period of five days, trust was built. This process was important to bring out the most salient points (Guba & Lincoln. 1997). In keeping with qualitative methods, prolonged observations of the
subjects were conducted for a period of five consecutive days. The researcher observed
the six participants in their natural environment and took notes in the form of a daily
diary. "A primary purpose of observational description is to take the reader of the
evaluation report into the program setting that was observed" (Patton, 1987, p. 12).

Observations involved everything from incoming mail to how personnel issues
were handled. A daily diary was kept to capture the essence of the participants’ work
environment. Throughout the day notes were made and at the end of each day’s session
notes were summarized.

Third, a peer debriefing involved a colleague not exposed to the intention of the
study. The peer debriefer was selected to probe the researcher’s biases, explore
meanings, clarify interpretations, and to play the ‘devil’s advocate’ role (Isaac & Michael.
1995). The questionnaire and biographical data form was given to a peer debriefer for
editing and to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the questions.

Fourth, member checks allowed the data, interpretations, and conclusions to be
tested with the original group from which the data were collected and helped in avoiding
researcher bias (Guba & Lincoln, 1997; Isaac & Michael. 1995). This approach is most
critical to establishing credibility. Two formal member checks were completed. First,
based on the researcher’s perceptions from the transcripts and observations, a combined
report was sent to participants to determine emerged themes. Reactions from participants
were solicited. A telephone conference was scheduled with each participant for further
discussion. After combining the responses from each participant, a second member check
was sent for their reactions. The researcher slightly revised and utilized Maddy’s questions on the response sheet for the final member check.

Transferability

Transferability is linked to generalizing the results. It is not intended to represent all members of a certain population, but that the data will be wide enough in depth to be valuable information to other researchers (Isaac & Michael, 1995). However, Guba & Lincoln (1985) refer to the depth of information valuable to others as “thick description.” “The description must specify everything that a reader may need to know in order to understand the findings” (p. 125). To capture the “thick description,” the researcher kept a daily diary of all activities.

Dependability and Confirmability

Dependability and confirmability assures that the data, interpretations, and outcomes are grounded in context. Dependability asks the question of whether the process is adaptable to an outside party. Keeping good documents and records are a source of dependability. They are stable information accurately reflecting the occurrence of events (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). A personal interview questionnaire, diary studies, unstructured and structured observations, biographical data survey, and member checks were used. Lincoln and Guba suggest that when information overlaps it includes deriving information from different angles such as triangulation (Isaac & Michael, 1995).

At the initial stages of this study, two Ohio State University female administrators reviewed the proposed study and provided feedback on strengthening it. A recruitment letter was mailed to prospective participants identifying the two female
administrators as references (see Appendix C). One and half weeks after the recruitment letters were mailed, the researcher contacted participants by telephone to answer any questions and to confirm their participation in the study. A telephone script was used to be consistent with each participant (see Appendix D). Upon their agreement to participate in the study, dates were scheduled for the researcher to interview them. A letter was sent to each participant confirming the dates, arrival time, and housing arrangement of the researcher while visiting with the participant (see Appendix E).

A daily diary was kept on all participants' activities (i.e., number and length of phone calls, access to e-mail, conferences, meetings, etc.). Brief notes were taken throughout the day but at the end of each day notes were summarized. Five working days were spent with each participant. On the last day, a three-hour time period was set aside to interview participants and to collect the biographical data forms.

**Interview Structure**

The researcher began the interviews by explaining what would take place during the three-hour interview and that the session would be tape-recorded to use the language that represented the reality of the participant (see Appendix G). Approvals from the participants were given to the researcher for tape recording. Each interview was structured around several questions and statements. As the individuals shared their stories, the researcher occasionally wrote down key words and phrases.

**Data Analysis**

"The purpose of the data analysis is to organize the interviews to present a narrative that explains what happened or provide a description of the norms and values
that underlie cultural behavior” (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 42). This study used the inductive data analysis procedure. By using this procedure, it helps to ‘make sense’ of the field data (Guba & Lincoln, 1997). The sources of data used in this study were prolonged observations, interviews, biographical data survey, and member checks.

Maddy (1992) refers to two methods Guba and Lincoln (1985) use with inductive analysis. Those methods are unitizing and categorizing. Unitizing involves a process of coding raw data that is orderly transformed and consolidated into units. This permits accurate reporting of appropriate content information. Categorizing is sorting the units into temporary categories - information coded.

A computerized program entitled “NUD*IST” was used in this study which is a way of unitizing and categorizing raw data. The acronym “NUD*IST” stands for Non-numerical, Unstructured, Data, Indexing, Searching, and Theorizing. This process is based on principles of Glaser and Strauss’ (1967) grounded theory, but is flexible to accommodate other frameworks. The data consists of two hyperlinked systems, document and index. The document system manages data documents by storing them along with data about them. An index system is created, managed, and explored from ideas and categories by using “NODES.” A node is like a folder for data or could be described as a parking space.

The three types of codes used in this study were descriptive, analytic, and demographic. Descriptive codes used the language of speaker. Analytic codes used were themes, and the demographic codes were data about the case. The data were coded in text segments referring to a node.
Participants were informed that their participation in the study would be held strictly confidential. Their names, job titles, and states were concealed. Fictitious first names were assigned to the research participants to protect confidentiality. Nodes were determined from the data by the researcher without input from participants. These nodes were then coded. After coding the nodes, the NUD*IST software program allowed the researcher to select all narratives that were in common.

The researcher identified several broad-based categories from the structured and unstructured observations and transcripts. These were shared with two of the peer debriefers who made suggestions and consolidated some of the categories. Each participant was then sent the initial data analysis and was asked to review and make notes where they agreed or disagreed with the data. They were also asked to mark ideas and concepts that needed clarification and to add comments that reflected their reality. E-mail messages were sent and follow-up phone calls were made to participants to schedule an appointment to discuss the initial data analysis. The researcher contacted each participant at the appointed time for review of the data and their viewpoint. After receiving feedback from all participants, the data were clarified.

To follow-up on the initial data analysis discussion, the researcher reviewed the data and the original analysis, refined the categories, and developed an analytical reading. The monograph was sent to the participants with an open-ended questionnaire for recording their reactions to the monograph (see Appendix I). A cover letter accompanied the questionnaire. Participants' comments on the monograph guided the writing of the
final analysis and conclusions. Figure 3.1 graphically depicts the analysis process used in this study.
Figure 3.1: An Induction Process of Analyzing Data
* Adapted from Maddy’s (1992) Process of Analyzing Data
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the challenges African American women administrators face and what they believe attribute to their success in breaking the concrete ceiling within the 1890 Cooperative Extension System (CES). It is hoped that this study will generate discussion and evaluation by current administration and African American women who meet the qualifications and aspire to administrative positions.

The critical aspect of this study was the use of triangulation. As the study began to unfold, information was validated against another source to determine its credibility and to guard against the researcher's bias. The data collection used was five working days of structured and unstructured observations, an open-ended questionnaire, a biographical data survey and two member checks. The final member check was accompanied by open-ended questions to make sure that the researcher captured the reality of the participants.

A Profile of the Participants

The common bond of these women was that they held a senior-level administrative position and they were all African Americans in 1890 institution or have
served as an administrator in an 1890 Cooperative Extension System (CES). They came from a variety of backgrounds, yet there are similarities they have for leading a complex, diverse organization. All of these women have set records as being “the first female” administrator in the 1890 Cooperative Extension System at their institution. How do we characterize these exceptional women?

They are highly educated and use their educational training to the fullest. Five of the six women have terminal degrees. The average age was 51.2, ranging from 43 to 57 years. All but one became an administrator during her early to mid-forties, with the average age being 43.6. The youngest participant was 39 and the oldest was 49 when assuming her first role as administrator for the 1890 state-based Cooperative Extension System. The average number of years in administration was eight. One person had 17 years experience as an administrator and another person had only been an administrator for one year. Five of the women have never held an administrative position in 1862 state-based Cooperative Extension System and these same five stated that they did not desire an administrative position in an 1862 state-based CES. However, two of the six females have worked as an Extension agent in 1862 state-based CES program. One participant who is currently serving as an administrator did not work as an Extension agent in 1862 state-based CES program but came from an academic setting. When participants were asked if they would be interested in serving as an 1862 administrator, they responded:

As a product of the 1890 education system, I felt that it was my responsibility to give back to the system in any way possible that I could.

Sharon

56
I am too close to retirement and I do not feel that I would be allowed to take “all of me” into the position or organization, as I know it today.

Mary

My commitment is to the 1890 system. I believe that my philosophy and professional goals are more consistent with the mission of 1890 land grant universities.

Lisa

Four of the six females are married, one divorced and one never married. The average age when they first married was 21. It is interesting to note that the two youngest administrators are not married. Of the four who are married, two had children still living at home both of whom were either in high school or college. The one participant who is divorced has one child living at home who is in middle school. Of the five who are married or divorced, the average number of children was 1.8. This is interesting since four of the women came from families with four or more siblings. The number of siblings ranged from two to eight.

All of the women were average to tall in height and appeared to be in good physical condition. They all had a tremendous amount of energy to cope with the diverse roles of their position. All were impeccably dressed in coordinating business casual to business suits. Dress depended on their activity of that day. Overall, their total appearance was kept very professional. Four of the six females’ hair was cut very short and the reason for this was because it is low maintenance. Because of their positions, one would think that they are not approachable but they are very much so.

A “female organizational culture” exists within the 1890 CES. Their organization’s values, beliefs, and rules influence every aspect of how things get done.
These women put the organization and people within the organization before edifying themselves. In other words, the women gave credit to others in their organizations, promoted the work of their employees and served as mentors. Four of the six sites are confronted with small staffs and because of the smaller staffs, they face challenges that hinder them from getting some things done. If there were more funding, they would be able to reach more people and do more programs. Expenditures of every dollar must be carefully considered due to the size of the appropriations. Although funding is restricted, these women make big impacts with the programs being offered. Also, part of the organizational culture is their mindfulness to include others in the decision-making process and give credit to staff where it's due. They empower other people to do and to be their best.

The paucity of literature on African American females does not provide much in the way of family backgrounds; however, the little information published supports the findings of these women who come from exceptionally strong families. Family was important to them for the support, nurturing and togetherness. Their parents have always been there for them. Four of the women's parent(s) continue to provide loving support. For the four married women, their husbands were an additional support base. They all come from strong segregated communities with different professionals living in the neighborhood. In these neighborhoods were teachers, preachers, professional ball players, funeral directors, blue-collar workers, and so forth. Their communities had a really strong sense of family. As Lisa alluded …

Everybody looked out for everybody else's children.
These segregated communities seemed to have played an integral role in their upbringing. Three of the women were the second oldest child and the oldest girl. One was the oldest child and the oldest girl. The two youngest women were “the baby” in the family. The two youngest women also had siblings who had graduated from high school before they entered elementary school. Regardless of their gender or birth order, they all come from very loving, traditional, close knit families with both parents in the home.

I grew up the second child in a family of six siblings. We were very close. One thing that I remember, that came home to me after I got married, is that our family always supported and protected each other. We didn’t talk negatively about each other outside of the home. That’s what our parents taught, what goes on in this house stays in this house. Anything that you did outside of the family was to make the family look good. We were very protective of each other.

Cynthia

My sisters and I grew up very close. My mother and father were always there and we did things together. My mother has always been the one who taught us how family sticks together and how important it was to have a family to talk to, to turn to through struggles and to be there to enjoy each other. We still do these things today as a family.

Mary

The parents of these women served as role models and stressed the importance of not waiting on things to happen or others to make things happen that they must do it themselves. Throughout their early childhood, there was a strong presence of the father in the home. In five cases, the fathers were viewed as being the dominant one as well as outgoing. All of the women felt that it was their fathers who stressed education the most and to be all that one could be. Only one of the women’s father’s dictated the career path for her to pursue and that path was Home Economics. It was difficult to fully interpret what the relationship was with their fathers since they seemed to be very independent.
growing up. It appeared that their fathers were very protective of them. When referring to their mothers, they consistently stated that they were more nurturing, sweet, easy going, caring, and influencing things from behind the scenes and the glue to the family. For the most part, the parents had various ways of fostering development that ranged from specific expectations to general support. It appeared that much of the drive they have came from their fathers rather than their mothers.

My dad made all of the decisions out in the open. If we wanted anything, we would tell mother and she would do the little undercover things to get things for us. I learned a lot about give and take, interacting and letting the man appear to be the man, yet getting what you want.

Julia

We always supported each other. I think the one thing in my life that I can say with a strong degree of certainty is that my family unconditionally loves me. That knowledge gives me the courage to deal with a lot of situations because I’ve always known that I had this real strong support base at home to go to.

Lisa

All of the women’s parents had high expectations for their children to succeed. Among these African American families, education was a critical element to their success. Only two of the women’s parents received a bachelor’s degree and the same two women father received a master’s degree. All parents wanted their children to have opportunities that they lacked. All of the women were either the first or second generation to receive a college degree.

I feel that our parents had expectations of us that we knew we could not let them down. It was never from a negative standpoint but it was pushing us to be our best. I think our parents conditioned us to feel that we could be successful. It was never a question in my family whether I would go to college or not. It was never a question in my mind if I was going to go to graduate school. It was kind of an understanding that this is what you are going to do. My father is one of the first
black people to get his master's from the University of ____.

Lisa

During their earlier childhood, all of the participants were raised through the church. so to speak. Religion played and continues to play a major role in the lives of these women both personally and professionally. Although their church attendance varied, they were still grounded in their religious belief. One participant’s father was a minister. Another participant keeps a copy of the Bible in her bookrack on her desk. At least two of the women participate in an early morning meditation before arriving to work.

The one relationship that has always been important to me is my relationship with God. There are others but I have not always had the best relationship with God. That’s the most important one.

Gwendolyn

My upbringings were very, very religious. The church was probably the center of our social life in ____. My parents were very active in the church and I was active in the church.

Lisa

Five of the women stated that both parents worked outside the home while they were growing up.

Women as Administrators

The six female participants have varied work experiences and years of experience. and have prepared themselves through additional leadership trainings for their leadership roles. When you meet these dynamic women, they all present a presence of knowing who they are and what their mission is. There is much strength they exude in the presence of others. Although their backgrounds varied, there were more similarities than
differences among them. Emerging from the data were eight broadly defined themes to support the common values, motives, and actions of these women administrators. The themes were barriers, leadership style, work environment, communication, conflict management, decision making, professional development, and success.

Barriers

Literature supports the following barriers that these African American women were confronted with: gender, race, and a perception of inability to think or incompetence issues. Being at an all-black university, the focus on race was usually not an issue at 1890 institutions, but gender was an issue. However, the women felt that in 1862 institutions both race and gender are issues. As far as gender was concerned, all of the participants are women of immense strength, caring attitudes, self-motivated, adaptable, possess a unique culture that is appreciated and valued by many, as well as knowing who they are and what they are about. All women knew where they were headed, how high they could climb, and how respected their gender and ethnicity were accepted out in the broader society. They value the strength that they have within. Five of the participants believed that every failure they have is a failure for other black women.

Being an African American woman means being strong, self-motivated, willing to step up to the plate and do what needs to be done. And, not being afraid to do these things when it comes to working to accomplish any given task.

Gwendolyn

I see African American women as women of strength, integrity, as load bearing people who can stand the pressure and not break down under the load and stress. I think statistics might show that we are survivors. When I was with the 1890 program, we operated with a budget much smaller than the 1862 system: however,
we made big impacts with the budget we had. That was our way of doing things. We had the innate ability to accomplish big things with fewer resources. I think that is just part of the nature of African American women. I also see them as being sympathetic and acting upon that sympathy for people with limited resources, no matter if they are black or white. When I see a very poor Mexican person, I think that I have a real desire to reach that person and help him better his lifestyle. I think we can just identify with people’s needs very strongly.

Cynthia

Five of the participants believed there is a chauvinistic behavior and dominance by some African American men toward African American women. Five of the participants suggested that there is a barrier of resentment because society defers to men. They suggested that African American women have to overcome a male dominated environment. In this type of environment, there may be a strong resistance to change. These women believe that men are valued more in the hierarchy of gender and ethnicity. Females do not make as much money as men do, and their opportunities for advancement into administrative positions are limited. Although, Julia believes that it is easier for an African American woman to achieve top leadership positions within CES than for African American men:

I don’t want to make a judgmental statement but I really believe that African American men are made to feel less valued. I don’t know if the majority believes that it is easier to handle an African American woman more so than a man but I do believe that it is easier for an African American woman especially in the majority community. African American men are much more likely to be perceived as criminals of the criminal element, participants of drug trafficking and sexual deviants.

Julia

Four of the participants felt that there is a perception that African American females are fickle, weak minded, and can’t speak and write. This perception usually
exists when an African American woman is strong in her opinions or tends to be more assertive that she is looked at as being difficult to get along with. Five of the six women felt they always have to prove excellence and to prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that they are capable.

I am in such a visible leadership role because I have so many men that I supervise. A number of instances occurred that I believe decisions that I make are being analyzed. “Well that’s the way women are. Women are more like this or that.”

Lisa

The women believed they come from an ancestry of strong female role models to follow as well as coming from a unique culture that they appreciate and value. In some instances race and gender might mean two strikes against them, the “double whammy or double jeopardy.”

Five of the six women stated that the barriers for Caucasian women wishing to achieve top leadership positions are less for that ethnic group than for African American women.

When comparing the number of female Extension Directors across the nation, there is a similar trend for both black and white. There is only a small percentage of white female directors; however, they were able to break the glass ceiling before we were. There were several white female directors before there were black female administrators.

Cynthia

They don’t have to fight the race prejudice. But I think in terms of the gender issues. I think the gender issues are the same.

Julia

When you look at it in the context of an 1890 institution, I would say that there is not a lot difference. But, if you were talking about an African American woman seeking a top-level position at an 1862 institution, I would think yes that the barriers would be different. You would then have the barriers of race and gender. But if you look at it in the context of an 1890 institution where the majority of the
individuals are African Americans, then I would say in that context I don’t think there would be a whole lot of difference. When you move it out of the state and institutional level and move it up to a national level, say an African American woman versus a Caucasian woman seeking a position as a Deputy Administrator with CES in Washington or a national program in Washington, then I think yes. Some of those barriers vary differently than if you would have the race issue to overcome. But, as you can see, we have two black Deputy Administrators with CES right now and I think both of them are doing an outstanding job. I think both of them have significant race issues that they are faced with on a regular basis.

Lisa

Yes, I think they are different. In this country, it’s the difference of valuing and respecting individuals based on racial identity. In other words, the ceiling that’s there for women period is low but even lower for African American women. For African American women as a whole, it’s much more difficult to get the ceiling raised higher. We can’t get it as high as Caucasian being on an equal setting.

Mary

Leadership Style

Helgesen (1990) suggested that women put themselves at the center of their organization. It was obvious these women were at the center of their organization. The structure of their organization is circular as opposed to being top down or hierarchical. The women make a concerted effort to involve and support everyone. Opinions of their staff are readily sought and there is an open line of communication. There is a genuine respect for their staff as well as sensitivity to the staff members’ needs. Their leadership style is basically transformational but they use a variety of leadership styles. Leading by example and bringing others along in the process is a strong belief. They also believe in explaining the benefits of what is being done and the impact and the benefit it will have for that person.
These female administrators have all been perfectionists at one time or another. Three of the women are learning to be more patient because they realize that there are many different ways to do things as long as the work is accomplished in a timely manner. The administrators provided an environment in which their faculty felt supported, leading to high levels of creativity and productivity. All of the women use a team approach of shared leadership, but when tough decisions had to be made they were not afraid to make them. The women are sincere, committed to a vision, and risk takers, yet have a thick skin. They are accessible to their employees, providing an atmosphere of equality. Staffs are included in the decision-making process. They present a course of action in such a manner to get staff buy in.

I lead by allowing others the opportunity to achieve in their own way. I'm very much concerned about human resource kinds of interactions with people. I try to get people to do things they enjoy and to feel good about what they have been involved in.

Mary

I think my leadership style is more transformational. I believe in leading by example and bringing others along through the educational process, showing them how to do things. I believe in explaining the benefits of what's being done the impact and the benefit it will have for the person. I am constantly reading about leadership development. I have taken the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and found that I am a sensitive feeling kind of person. I find myself being more inclusive.

Sharon

Certain events that stand out in the lives of these women have caused them to make lasting changes in the way they lead. The most repeated statements were they try not to emulate poor leadership that they have observed, especially from previous administrators.

Having interacted with some previous administrators, their leadership style was a
dictatorship. They dictated which resulted in not accomplishing tasks. In this type of leadership style, one tends to cooperate with the dictator out of fear only. Individuals fear the consequences of their actions.

Gwendolyn

Five of the women stated that one adaptation their organizations have made, as a result of their leadership style, is one of more structured office policies and procedures. The staffs are more open to trying to understand and learn new techniques for addressing issues. All of their leadership styles are natural. It is who they are.

Work Environment

The geographic locations of these women were mainly in Southern states except for one who is located in the Northeast region. In five of the six states, the economic situations of the states were about the same. One state had been instrumental in acquiring a large sum of state matching funds and planned on sharing her success with the other states. Funding for 1890 land-grant universities has always been limited, thus affecting the size of the staff and the ability of the staff to accomplish more. But these women are quick to tell you that with the limited funding they have done excellent programs.

Within the last ten years, additional federal dollars were allocated to these institutions for building facilities. The new facilities have allowed some states to house their entire state faculty in one building whereas before they occupied several buildings.

According to the traditional model, 1890 CES is housed and operated in the land-grant university's college of agriculture. The college of agriculture has been a male's domain. Who these senior-level administrators report to within the college varied. Three of the women report directly to the Administrator for Extension, one reports directly to
the College Dean, one reports directly to the Director of Extension, and one reports
directly to the Vice Provost.

The educational backgrounds of all these women were related to Family and
Consumer Sciences. One had received her Master's degree in Guidance and Counseling
and another one received her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction. All but one has a
terminal degree. None of the participants set becoming an administrator for a state-based
1890 CES as a professional goal. For most of them it sort of evolved. So, why did these
women become administrators? As part of who these women are, there is a desire to
"help" others to be all they can be. It gives them a feeling of accomplishment in the
process of helping others.

These senior-level administrators all lead very hectic or active lifestyles. Their
schedules are such that there is a feeling of not having enough time during the day to get
things done. Much of their time is spent in meetings, responding to telephone messages,
and accessing e-mail correspondence, among many other things. There is an enormous
amount of work-related travel both in state and out of state. Travel involves a lot of
meetings and conferences. There is little time in the office for them to read their
correspondence and respond to it, so work is taken home to complete and/or taken with
them to work on when traveling. They take along their lap top computers when traveling
to access e-mail and to draft correspondences. Each of them has very efficient assistants
or staff to assist with their work.

Very, very busy. A great deal of travel is involved and constant demands that I'm
trying to respond to. I do feel that we are in our third year of our strategic plan.
The first couple of years were a bit difficult in getting settled making sure
everybody understood their roles and expectations. Now, I’m feeling a bit more comfortable that the program is really at a point where I don’t need to be as attentive on a day-to-day basis. I have delegated a lot of the responsibilities to the associate administrators so that I can go about seeking funds and resources to support the program which I feel are a major requirement of my job.

Lisa

Hectic and feeling sorry for myself. Things that have to be done and you know they have to be done yet there are not enough hours in the day. So, you begin to steal a little time from this project in order to complete that one. Knowing that this decision has to be made to pull it off to come to the point where it is staring you right in your face. You have to be quick on your feet to do that. If I can describe it in one word, hectic.

Gwendolyn

I spend quite a bit of time traveling. I wish that I could cut back on my traveling but on my level, my presence is required in so many places across the state and I don’t use an airplane.

Cynthia

It depends on the time of the year. There is a USDA system that has a lot of structured meetings during certain times of the year. February, July, and October are terrible months. During those months, I’m traveling three of the four weeks out of the month, like now. For February, I’m going to be out three of the four weeks. On an average month, I probably travel maybe once a month. Normally, when I’m in the office I spend about 50% of time in meetings and probably another two hours on the telephone. That 50% of my time in meetings is usually meeting with outside groups and personal groups. I would say that I spend a couple hours a day in conferences with faculty or staff. I have very little time at the office to read correspondences and write letters. I do most of that at home. Usually I will pull down all the e-mail and print it off. My administrative management specialist goes through the mail, organizes it and puts it in the basket according to what need to be taken care of now. She goes through it, organizes the mail and says this has to be taken care of or whatever. She exercises real good judgment. Things that come from the academic side from the vice-chancellor that are routine items and if it is something that needs to be sent deans ahead, she’ll go ahead and send it out. She would then put a copy in the folder to let me know that she took care of it. Those actions help a lot. Many evenings I spend going through correspondence and writing letters. When I’m away, I fax items that need to be taken care of. I spend time on the airplane and time in the airport drafting letters or jotting down thoughts. I don’t spend time on the weekends in the office because I pick up my parents on Saturdays and on Sundays I go to church.

Julia
Time is allowed to meet with staff when not traveling. Most of the women have an open door policy for their staff. All of the administrators are confronted with the challenge of managing people and dealing with the different types of personalities. It is difficult at times motivating some staff to get the job done.

When I am in the office, I spend a lot of time just working with day-to-day procedures such as signing forms. Usually there are stacks of forms that I have to sign off on. There are usually people who have been waiting to see me for conferences. I do conferences with different program people that I supervise. Sometimes that takes place in my office, sometimes I meet with the person at the coffee bin as I did this morning. Sometimes it is impromptu, sometimes it is planned and on schedule, but lots of conferencing. Probably the third largest segment of my time in just a regular office day is answering my e-mail, voice mail and snail mail. Reading and responding to those immediately because I don’t like a back log. I usually respond to my e-mail right after I read it. If it something that I need to pass on, I just print a hard copy. I do most of my filing on computer.

Cynthia

My staff is small. Some of my staff actually wants to do a superior job. Because of what is required of both of us in Cooperative Extension, with such a small staff and you see the need out there and you really can’t address it. The greatest challenge is the small staff and the inability to do what you know you should be able to do. One of the big things is someone addressing the issue they are stressed and you can’t give any effort to attack or addressed it.

Sharon

The women arrived at their offices an average of fifteen to thirty minutes early and usually stayed an average of thirty minutes to an hour after the office closed. Much of the timing depended on their activity for that day. Most of them have stayed as late as eight or nine o’clock in the evening and work some weekends.

Their activities varied when it came time to escape from their hectic schedules. They all enjoy reading and special time with their families. All but one loves to shop. Only two participate regularly in an exercise program at least three times a week. The
administrator with the youngest child spends quality time with her daughter by preparing
evening meals and playing games.

Communication

All of the women have their own unique style of communicating. Some of the
literature suggests that as a group women are labeled as soft spoken. Five of the women
indicated that to communicate their style better, one must be more assertive and at times
even aggressive. They are all active listeners and provide constructive feedback to their
staffs. It is apparent that these women address situations in a manner to get buy-in from
the staff. Thorp & Townsend (1997) and McDowell & McDowell (1998) suggest that
females tend to lead by building relationships, they are more communicative, friendly,
and attentive, and they develop an environment to include everyone. There is continual
communication with their staffs. The environment is friendly and includes everyone.
Not only do they share information with their staffs, they share program ideas and
strategies with each other. This is critical since there are so few in their positions.
Collaborating with internal and external groups have proven to be successful.

Conflict Management

Conflict management skills are an integral part of leadership effectiveness. All
women agreed that conflict is not always bad because change can occur from conflict.
Two of the six women acknowledged how they deal with conflict. One individual writes
down her frustrations in a letter and has her assistant to draft a letter to the individual.
The draft letter is then returned to her. This gives her time to sit back, think, and reflect
on her final decision. Another administrator could not remember having had a major
conflict but was involved in mediating between two faculty members. The administrator’s strategy was to bring out the positives of what each faculty member had said about the other person. To resolve conflict in one case the administrator resorted to reassigning a staff’s position. It turned out the staff person was better suited for the newer position. In another case, one administrator had a conflict with her boss so she handled the situation by showing respect for the position rather than the person. Five of the six participants are learning to be less combative and not deal with conflict head on.

The conflict was created by design by another individual. It included lies, deliberate misrepresentations and other forms of deceit. The situation reinforced my conviction that the moral person always takes the high road.

Julia

To deal with conflict the women attempt to create a more positive environment. They try not to be like that person and know that there are better ways of getting people to cooperate. There is a realization that no matter what the situation is there is always two sides to a situation and that each side should be given an opportunity to expand upon it.

Decision Making

Making decisions is an intricate part of these women’s roles. Their leadership style is democratic and participatory, seeking input on most decisions at the same time understanding that staff’s decisions may not be made without their input. They make decisions from the simplest (e.g., approving leave) to the most complex (e.g., terminating a staff member) of tasks. Decisions are thought through before decided upon. They prioritize to make sure that important issues are addressed but makes sure that all issues are followed up on. They do not waver on decisions once they are made. In many
situations, they do not like to make decisions in isolation without the staff understanding their rationale or why the decision was made. There is a need for staff to buy in from the organization.

Their decisions are based on ethical and moral implications. Werhane (1999) refers to moral reasoning and moral imagination as providing solid managerial decision making skills with which to avoid questionable activities and prevent unseemly consequences. It enables a leader to create decision patterns that will contribute positively to the well being of the organization. These executive women “knowingly and creatively exhibit moral imagination. an imagination disciplined by respect for the real” (p. 14).

One of the things I started doing is laying out the situation with the staff and withholding my opinion about it. Then asking for their input before I tell them what my opinion is. This is what I would do with my program and administrative team and say okay, we have these options what do you suggest we do. Ninety-nine point nine percent of the time, they, after discussion, they come to the same conclusion that I decided on in the first place on what the best course of action should be. But, if I say up front this is the decision and this is what I think we need to do, then you get a lot of rebellion and resistance. People would say things just because they feel like this is because you want to do it and that’s why it won’t work. If you allow people to come to analyze the facts and come to that conclusion own their own, generally most people are rational, they are clear thinkers and they want the best for the organization, then I don’t have any investment in it alone. Because once you lay your position out there you are kind of compelled to justify and force people because you have a personal stake in it. But when you let people come to it on their own then I think the end results are always positive. I haven’t always been that way. It’s a learned something and I’ve had to make a conscientious effort.

Lisa

If I have to make the decision, I make the decision. I may canvas the staff to get their input as much as possible. I don’t like to modify the decision. But because of time constraints and depending on the way the request comes down, my administrator may want just my input, then I don’t canvas. But if it is a team
effort, the approach I like best is to seek input. I’ve had one administrator that I’ve worked for and when he sought input it was just that: seeking. I seek input because I can sit and ponder and contemplate the situation. But let’s just face it, two heads always accomplish more. If it is two heads that are on the same wavelength or if there are two heads not on the same wavelength, sometimes the agitator causes you to think of something that you may not have thought of. When I seek input and if it is a controversial issue, I want to know truly what that person thinks. Okay, it’s what you say to me that agitates me or go against what I believe in or goes against the grain can also help the finish product or help me in making the final decision.

Gwendolyn

There are times that you, the administrator, have to make the decision. There are other times when it is important that people buy in, where it does not make a difference from a legal (my criteria), moral, or ethical standpoint and time allows. I prefer the shared decision making. I don’t relinquish everything that has to be done to other people because sometimes you have to make a decision.

Julia

Professional Development

The typical motivations for these women seeking a new and different position were accepting a new challenge, being a life long learner, upward mobility, and inner desire. Cynthia goes on to say that many people would not admit this but a higher salary is also a motivation.

Money. I get paid more (laughter). Most people might not admit it but I do look at this position as paying more. That’s why I went back to school and got another degree. Not because I thought I was going to do the same thing just because I loved my job. That’s good too, but if I can get a promotion and get a higher position that pays more, that’s better. I like what I do. It’s rewarding for me to help improve people’s lives. If it’s people that I’m supervising, its rewarding also to change the work atmosphere so that it is positive, creative, and productive.

These senior-level women remain current and prepared for their executive role by being avid readers, attending professional meetings, and networking with other professionals both internal and external to the organization. They read a variety of books

74
but for their role as a leader they stay abreast on current issues related to leadership. One person buys leadership tapes since she has a twenty-minute drive into work. All agreed that leadership and management skills are essential. Two individuals reiterated a need for training on managing budgets and resource acquisitions. One individual spoke of the importance of communicating with legislators, other stakeholders, and individuals who are able to influence their finances. Also important is having knowledge and staying abreast of technology.

Extension has a two-year leadership program for Extension professionals called National Extension Leadership Development program (NELD). There is a shorter version of this program for Extension administrators. A few of the women have taken part of the NELD leadership program for Extension administrators and one has participated in the two-year program, which she said has paid off for her in terms of her career success. She also had the privilege of participating in another leadership program that was offered by her state.

The professional development activity that has paid off for five of the six women was receiving their terminal degree. Although one has not received a terminal degree, hard work, dedication, and years of experience paid off for her. Cynthia made an interesting point about women as it related to being more assertive.

I think it is important that we have training in being assertive. As a group, women are soft spoken and humble, which I see as a great quality. However, these attributes do not work at a high administrative level the same way as aggressiveness and assertiveness. We are so refined and we do things in such a nice way, and then all of a sudden we find ourselves in a position where we need a little roughness that would work for us. Some classes or a workshop on being assertive and being able to articulate well helps. Then put that aggressiveness into
action by speaking up. Don't sit in meetings and be silent. Don't be afraid! Really, just put yourself forward and let people hear you. A very good attribute for moving forward is to be heard!

The women described the person who taught them the most as being caring and giving of time, and in one case, money. One administrator described how her former Home Economics Department head taught her many things including what to do, as well as what not to do, and the need of being committed to students. Another female described her current administrator involving her in all the operational processes to run the program.

Most of the women did not consciously think of themselves as role models but realized they are leaders and that others may view them in that light. Five of the women considered themselves as a mentor, while Julia said...

I don't do as much mentoring as I would like to do. One reason is because I do not have a lot of sub administrators. Instead of having sub administrators, I made the decision to put resources in programs. The size of the state appropriations is very small. I would love to have a person as deputy__, someone who need to understand the system. Since my tenure as ____, we've only gotten level funding.

Cynthia said the personal benefit from being a mentor is that...

the reward of knowing that I may have helped someone to develop career wise and achieve their goals.

All agreed there should be a formal networking system. One state has a person in place that is setting up a mentoring system. Sharon's view on a mentoring system is...

doing formal mentoring is important. But, it's just as important to have informal networking. From a personal experience, I have received greater gain from informal networking: for example, if I start talking to someone and they say, "oh yes, I know of someone." I called that person and the support and sponsorship comes as a result of that. I am enhanced as well as other people seeking my involvement are enhanced. This is especially true when that person is in a
respected position. This is one reason today why I’m being selected for various boards. I’ve been asked to be on more boards than I can handle. I’ve had to turn one down because there was a conflict with the Fair Housing Board and Housing Coalition which meets the same time.

One woman had a male mentor within the organization who trained her one year before he retired from his administrative position. Another woman also had a male mentor who has given her more administrative responsibilities for the budget.

Advice the women would give to future generations of African American women who aspire to CES leadership roles are:

First, you must believe you can become or do anything you want to do. Second, begin as early as possible to prepare for whatever you believe you are going to become. Third, plan. Fourth, don’t let anyone take you from your plan and from reaching your goal. I always tell young people that your goal may change but change your plan and keep working. Just don’t let anyone throw you off track.

Mary

Learn everything that you can. Be a keen observer of all that is around you and make each situation and interaction a learning experience. Use every opportunity to soak up the world around you. Keep your eyes and ears opened. Always look at situations from a pragmatic point of view, what’s turning people on and what’s tuning people off. Be observant and evaluative. Learn from mistakes of others. Finally, in this business you have to love people and be connected to them mentally and emotionally.

Julia

Go for it! But make sure that they know what the rules of the game are for aspiring leadership roles. By that I mean you have the credentials, you have the experience, you have the confidence and you are prepared in the sense that you have constantly prepared yourself for that role.

Sharon

Success

Success as defined by these senior-level administrators is achieving and surpassing your goals; being happy with one’s family life, being happy with one’s chosen
profession, and having reached a happy median between the two: and doing what you
love to do with a high level of contentment and peace of mind.

Being satisfied with who you are, where you are, and what you are doing. I also
think that the person who is successful appreciates spiritual influences. They have
some kind of relationship with a higher being. Things don’t make you satisfied. I
think success is pulling all of this together and realizing that your relationship
with God is important and that’s where your goals are as opposed to a big car, a
big paycheck, and a big house. Being able to live with yourself. Not having to
worry that your actions being printed in the newspaper and that you are behaving
within the frame of beliefs that you set for yourself and they are based on
Christian values and principles.

Julia

These women attribute their success to a solid upbringing, both parents in the
home during their early childhood, a strong religious foundation, and parents’ strong
belief in education and directing them in a way that has proven successful. There was no
doubt that they would go on to college. Two of the women spoke of the limited
education their parents had and why their parents felt that education was important.

Success is attributed to the three D’s -- Determination, Determination,
Determination with a little dedication. This comes from your parents early on in
life.

Gwendolyn

I grew up in a home where education always took a top priority. My father,
because of an experience he had in high school with a Home Economics teacher,
always wanted a daughter to be a Home Economics teacher. I was the oldest
daughter. I knew almost from the day that I was born what my professional area
would be. When I went to college. I knew what I was going to major in long
before I got there. I did just what my father wanted me to do. He saw this
person as a role model and he wanted me to be just like her. This was a major
influence on my career and my life, because he had this in mind for me. I also had
a major professor who had a great influence on me furthering my education. I
went to the same graduate school she had gone. After that, the person who
influenced me the most was my husband. He encouraged and supported me when
I said I wanted to get a Ph.D. He said, “go for it.” The whole time I was in school
he supported me mentally and every other way that I needed to get that degree. I
have to always give him credit for the strong supportive role that he played.
Cynthia

These women believe that to be successful one must be able to rise to the occasion, no matter what it is. They must refuse the fear barrier, work hard, be adequately prepared, perform at the highest level, have a willingness to take on additional tasks, balance work and family, but most importantly, have a relationship with God.

All of the women felt that for an African American woman to achieve a topleadership role the person must be prepared educationally, have years of experience, perform at a high level, and plan for it.

As identified earlier on, one needs to strategically plan for it. One needs to have it in their mind, but also they need to write down those steps that they believe will allow them to accomplish their goals. You need to network with someone in that role to see if you have logically and sequentially processed what it takes and what you believe it takes to move into that role. One must be able to think and add a little creativity to it.

Gwendolyn

Five of the women have terminal degrees. The one person who does not have her terminal degree does have a Master's degree and twenty-three years of Extension experience.

For an African American woman to be successful in Extension and to break the concrete ceiling, she must have an understanding of the mission of Extension and be able to articulate that mission. She should also have a vision for where the Extension organization needs to be going, be articulate, be able to communicate the value and benefits of the program to stakeholders, and be respected by her peers. She must have a
desire to be there and have a good support base from her family, friends, and co-workers.

Being a good team player is also important to upward mobility.

Being exceptionally prepared for the task at hand. Almost to the point of being over qualified where your credentials are such that no one will ever question your qualifications for the position. Obviously, the degree is a must and having the experience. Also, having a record of providing additional kinds of experiences for yourself and a mentor or several mentors. In my case I had several mentors. People that believed in me even before I made the decision. One of those people was the director of the NELD program. Before I had the desire to apply for an administrative position, people encouraged me and saw my abilities. For African American women, I would say mentors don’t always have to be, nor should they be, other African American women. I think male mentors can be very helpful in terms of helping you understand the system. Let’s face it, Extension administration has been a male-dominated profession. So understanding some of the things that go on and ways of responding to those things could be very helpful without damaging your career. It’s good to have someone to nudge us in the right direction.

Lisa

Based on these findings from the structured and unstructured observations, the open-ended questionnaire, and the member checks, there is a need for a systematic approach to understanding the unique experiences and qualities of these women.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the challenges African American women administrators face and what they believe contributes to their success in breaking the concrete ceiling within the 1890 Cooperative Extension System (CES).

The target population was a census of all African American women in Extension administration from the seventeen 1890 land-grant institutions and one African American woman who had served as an 1890 administrator but is currently an administrator in the 1862 land-grant institution. The sample was comprised of three (3) African American female administrators and two (2) African American female associate administrators employed at five of the 1890 land-grant institutions and one (1) associate director from an 1862 land-grant institution.

The specific approach of this qualitative study was the usage of triangulation to assess how these women were successful in breaking the concrete ceiling. Source triangulation was used which included observational data, open-ended questions, biographical data, and member checks. A set of open-ended questions was used with the final member's check. These data were cross-referenced to determine the credibility of
emerging themes. Data analysis began with an induction process whereas participants were interviewed using an instrument that included open-ended questions about their success. Many of the questions had follow-up probes to get more in-depth information. Analysis of the study consisted of qualitative measures and content analysis.

Characteristics of the Participants

All of the women have set records as being “the first female” administrator in the 1890 Cooperative Extension System at their institution. They are highly educated and use their educational training to the fullest. Five of the six have terminal degrees. The average age was 51.2, ranging from 43 to 57 years.

During the time of the interviews, four of the women were married, one divorced and one never married. Of the four women who were married, two had children still living at home both of whom were either in high school or college. The one participant who was divorced had one child living at home who was in middle school.

Women as Administrators

The six female participants have varied work experiences, and years of experience, and have prepared themselves through additional leadership trainings for their leadership role. When you meet these dynamic women, they all present a presence of knowing who they are and what their mission is. They exude much strength in the presence of others. Although their backgrounds varied, there were more similarities than differences among them. Emerging from the data were eight broadly defined themes to support the common values, motives and actions of these women administrators. The
themes were barriers, leadership style, work environment, communication, conflict management, decision making, professional development, and success.

Conclusions

Based upon the review of literature and the findings in this research study, the following conclusions have been reached:

1) This study revealed that it was the personal and professional characteristics that contributed to the African American females breaking through the concrete ceiling.

2) Though their jobs seemed to result in a hectic lifestyle, participants still found time for church and family. Extension employees across the United States voice concern about balancing their personal and professional lives. Since the administrators in this study seem to be successful in obtaining a balance, they can serve as a positive role model for other Extension employees.

3) Though all participants have an academic background in Family and Consumer Sciences, they all continue to remain current in professional development activities focused on leadership, which helps them in their administrative role.

4) The researcher came away with a feeling that each participant was committed to "the power of positive thinking." This was evident in the approaches they took when communicating, when making decisions, and in conflict management situations. Their approach to dealing with issues was more proactive as opposed to reactive.
5) These 1890 institutions are confronted with small staffs and limited budgets; however, these women administrators did not let this hinder quality programming. Though they could not provide their staffs with a lot of financial resources, they compensated for it by encouraging creativity and risk taking in program implementation and delivery. They provided support through an attitude of pitching in and helping when needed.

6) The six female administrators appeared to be comfortable with their own leadership styles, which encompassed a spirit for team work and open lines of communication.

7) During their early childhood, each of the female administrators was influenced by a high degree of spirituality that impacted their current leadership style. Their parents were a guiding force in their spiritual development. It was clear that most of the fathers were viewed more influential than the mothers in the women’s professional development and career success.

8) As the researcher, I was surprised to learn of the existence of chauvinistic behavior and dominance displayed by African American men at these 1890 institutions. However, the female administrators demonstrated profound resiliency in dealing with these behaviors.

9) Since all six female administrators were “the first females” in their administrative role, they did not have access to female Extension administrator role models. These six are now willing, and even see it as their responsibility, to serve as mentors for aspiring leaders.
10) Since these women are unique in their positions, they have "reached out" to each other resulting in the formation of an informal support group. They look to each other for problem solving and programming collaborations.

11) The current African American female administrators indicated no interest in being an administrator in an 1862 Institution. This seems to result from their strong allegiance to the historically black land-grant institutions. However, the 1862 Institutions are in need of diversifying their administration. As positions become available, current 1890 female administrators would be ideal minority candidates.

Recommendations

The review of literature, the findings of this study, and the conclusions led the researcher to recommendations for the Cooperative Extension System, aspiring African American female leaders, and for further research.

Recommendations for the Cooperative Extension System

1) It is recommended that the system identify women currently in the organization who aspire to future leadership positions.

2) It is recommended that the system put into place training programs for aspiring leaders. These programs can be in the form of a mentoring program, informal networks, leadership intern programs, and leadership programs such as NELD.
3) Since several of the current female administrators will be retiring in the next five to seven years, it is recommended that 1890 institutions offer internships for aspiring female administrators so they can learn from the current administrators' knowledge and experiences.

4) It is recommended that the system create a formal mentoring program for both current and aspiring African American female leaders.

5) It is recommended that the system provide a sensitivity training on "teams in transition." This training could be used when a new female administrator joins a team.

6) It is recommended that the 1862 system consider 1890 administrators as a viable pool of applicants when searching for new administrators.

Recommendations for Aspiring African American Female Leaders

1) It is recommended that aspiring leaders attain a terminal degree in an appropriate area of study that will prepare them for an administrative role.

2) It is recommended that aspiring leaders develop capacities and competencies for decision making, communicating, conflict resolution, leading, motivating, staffing, and planning.

3) It is recommended that aspiring leaders become part of a network of current "female or male" administrators to develop a personal mentoring relationship with a current leader.

4) It is recommended that aspiring leaders develop their own leadership philosophy and begin to demonstrate their unique leadership style.
5) It is recommended that aspiring leaders develop a dossier that reflects diverse experiences, academic achievements, professional development participation, and serving in leadership roles in professional associations.

Recommendations for Further Study

1) It is recommended that a study be conducted to determine why African American females in 1890 institutions have had more success breaking through the concrete ceiling than black or white females in 1862 institutions.

2) It is recommended that a study be conducted to probe further into the differences and similarities of the six African American females, through the use of leadership and personality assessment tools (e.g., Myers Briggs Type Indicator).

3) It is recommended that a study be conducted to determine how personnel perceive the leadership of these six females.

4) It is recommended that a longitudinal study be conducted to follow the accomplishments, activities, and career path of the current six female administrators in the 1890 institutions.

5) It is recommended that a study be conducted to compare the characteristics of these six females in the study with African American females in CES who are not in administrative positions.
APPENDIX A

Human Subjects Consent for Participation in Social and Behavioral Research
CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH

I consent to participating in research entitled: *African American Women Who Are Administrators in 1890 Cooperative Extension Services.*

Dr. Jo Jones (Principal Investigator) or Marjorie Moore (Authorized Representative) has explained the purpose of the study, the procedures to be followed, and the expected duration of my participation. Possible benefits of the study have been described, as have alternative procedures, if such procedures are applicable and available.

I acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to obtain additional information regarding the study and that any questions I have raised have been answered to my full satisfaction. Furthermore, I understand that I am free to withdraw consent at any time and to discontinue participation in the study without prejudice to me.

Finally, I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Date: ____________________________ Signed: ____________________________

Signed: ____________________________ Signed: ____________________________

(Witness: ____________________________

(Person authorized to consent for participant, if required)
APPENDIX B

Peer Reviewers Participation Letter
The presence of African American women in administrative positions in 1890 Land-Grant Institutions has increased over the years; however, the numbers are still relatively small. To make matters worse, there is a void of African American women in administrative positions in the 1862 Land-Grant Institutions. Also, there is a paucity of research information on African American women in CEO positions.

As an African American woman aspiring to become an administrator in the Cooperative Extension System, this topic was chosen for my dissertation. I am writing you to ask for your assistance in reviewing my interview guide and biographical data survey. Enclosed are copies of the instruments. Would you take a few moments to review each and make your comments directly on the forms?

I am currently a doctoral candidate at the Ohio State University. My dissertation advisors are Dr. Jo Jones and Dr. Nikki Conklin. Prior to returning to graduate school, I worked as a County Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent in Florida for 19 years. Enclosed is a copy of my prospectus, which explains the purpose of the study and briefly explains the importance of the study and the methodology.

Participants in the study will be observed for five (5) consecutive days. At the end of the observation week, I will interview participants get biographical data. After the interview period, I will be in contact with the participants to get their feedback on themes that developed from the interview. Participation in this study is voluntary and information gathered will be confidential.

Data from participants will be collected beginning in mid December through February. Your response to my request will be appreciated. Please return your comments in the self-addressed, stamp envelop no later than November 29, 1999.
If you have questions, please contact me at (352) 335-7441 or email me at moore.863@osu.edu. Also, if you desire a copy of my findings, a copy will be forwarded to you.

Sincerely.

Marjorie Moore
Graduate Student
The Ohio State University

Enclosures: Research Prospectus
Interview Guide
Biographical Data Survey
APPENDIX C

Participation Request Letter
November 11, 1999

Salutation:

The presence of African American women in administrative positions in 1890 Land-Grant Institutions has increased over the years; however, the numbers are still relatively small. To make matters worse, there is a void of African American women in administrative positions in the 1862 Land-Grant Institutions. Also, there is a paucity of research information on African American women in CEO positions.

As an African American woman aspiring to become an administrator in the Cooperative Extension System, this topic was chosen for my dissertation. I am writing you to ask for your assistance with my dissertation research.

Currently, I am a doctoral candidate at the Ohio State University. My dissertation advisors are Dr. Jo Jones and Dr. Nikki Conklin. Prior to returning to graduate school, I worked as a County Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent in Florida for 19 years. Enclosed is more information detailing my background and career. Also, enclosed is a prospectus that explains the purpose of the study and briefly explains the importance of the study and the methodology.

As a participant in this study, I would need to observe your daily routine for five (5) consecutive days. If possible, I would like to observe you from Monday through Friday. If not, we can include the weekend. As part of this process, I would like to interview you to get some biographical data to verify such things as your education, professional and community activities, family background, etc.

After the interview period, I will be in contact with you to get your feedback on themes that developed from the interview. Participation in this study is voluntary and information gathered will be confidential. Since my population consists of six individuals, it is my hopes that you will agree to participate in this study.

I will be contacting you within a few days to get your response to this request. If you agree to participate, would you block a couple of time periods during the months of December, January or early February that I can come observe you?
If you desire a copy of my findings, a copy will be forwarded to you. Also, if you have questions, please contact me at (352) 335-7441 or e-mail me at moore.863@osu.edu

Sincerely.

Marjorie Moore
Graduate Student
The Ohio State University

Enclosures: Research Prospectus
Biographical Data
APPENDIX D

Telephone Recruitment Script
Telephone Recruitment Script

Hello, Dr. ________________. This is Marjorie Moore, a Ph.D. candidate at The Ohio State University. A few days ago, I sent you a letter requesting your participation in my research study on African American women administrators in 1890 Land-Grant Institutions. Have you had an opportunity to read the letter?

If the response is yes, continue reading script. If no, read script on page 2.

I would like to take as much time as necessary to answer any questions you may have. Do you have questions related to the study or my background?

Allow as much time as needed to answer all questions thoroughly.

In my letter, I mentioned that I would be calling you to find out if you will participate in my study and if so, to schedule a meeting time. Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary and if you decide to participate, you may withdraw at anytime. Just to remind you, all observations and responses will be kept confidential. Neither your name nor the name of your state will be mentioned in the report data.

Participating in this study requires that you allow me time to observe and ask you questions for approximately five consecutive days. I will need a three-hour time period at the end of the diary studies to conduct the personal interview and for you to complete a demographic questionnaire (i.e. age, education, family background etc.)

Within three month after the last interview, you will receive a monograph describing the data collected and its interpretations. Considering additional input from all participants, the data will be refined and edited prior to publication.

Now, here's the big question. Would you be willing to participate in this study?

If the answer is yes, schedule a time with participant for my visit.

I would like to take this time to say thank you for agreeing to participate in my study. I look forward to meeting you and learning about your position. I need some idea from you of the best hotel location near your office.

Allow time for suggestions.

In a few days, you will receive a letter confirming my visit and the exact hotel in which I will be staying. If for any reasons you have questions, please do not hesitate to call me.
Let me take a few minutes to briefly summarize my proposed study. The purpose of this study is to explore and describe the challenges African American women administrators face and what they believe contribute to their success in breaking the concrete ceiling within the 1890 Cooperative Extension System (CES). This study is a replication of another study that was conducted with female administrators in 1862 CES. Five main topics of importance will be studied: 1) individualized concept of womanhood, 2) definition of success, 3) strategies for success, 4) personal experiences attributing to self concept, and 5) ways of leadership.

Four data collection methods will be used that will include diary studies, personal interviews, demographic questionnaire to verify factors such as age, birth order, family background, education, prior jobs held, and member checks.

Participating in this study requires that you allow me time to observe and ask you questions for approximately five consecutive days. I will need a three-hour time period at the end of the diary studies to conduct the personal interview and for you to complete a demographic questionnaire (i.e. age, education, family background etc.)

Within three month after the last interview, you will receive a monograph describing the data collected and its interpretations. Considering additional input from all participants, the data will be refined and edited prior to publication.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary and if you decide to participate, you may withdraw at anytime. Just to remind you, all observations and responses will be kept confidential. Neither your name nor the name of your state will be mentioned in the report data.

This is just a brief overview of what this study will involve. Do you have any questions and/or is there additional information you need to assist you in making a decision about your participation in this study?

Allow time to answer any questions or to add further information about the study.

Now, would you be willing to participate in the study?
If the answer is yes, schedule a time with participant for my visit.

I would like to take this time to say thank you for agreeing to participate in my study. I look forward to meeting you and learning about your position. I need some idea from you of the best hotel location near your office.

Allow time for suggestions.

In a few days, you will receive a letter confirming my visit and the exact hotel in which I will be staying. If for any reasons you have questions, please do not hesitate to call me.

If the response is no, conclude with the following statement:

Thank you for giving my proposal consideration. It was nice talking with you today. Good-bye.
APPENDIX E

Participation Confirmation Letter
December 30, 1999

Name
Title
Address

Salutation:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study of African American women serving as executive officers of state-based 1890 Cooperative Extension Programs. I will arrive in ______ on ______ at 2:17 PM on Delta airlines and depart on Friday, January 28, 2000 at 1:55 PM. However, I will not be at your office until Monday, January 24, 2000.

I will be staying at the Ramada Inn in ______ located at 2 Convention Center Plaza. Please email me the time that you normally arrive at your office as well as the directions to your office.

I would like to reiterate that my observations and your responses will be held completely confidential. No names or states will be associated with any of the reported data. Participation in the study is voluntary and will not have any effect on your employment. You may withdraw from this study at anytime.

Since this is a qualitative study, I will be using a tape recorder to record our conversations. Sometime during the end of the week, we will need about a three-hour block of time for the personal interview.

The Ohio State University Behavioral and Social Sciences Human Subjects Review Committee requires that a consent form be signed by all participants in the study. I will bring a copy of this form with me for your review and signature.

Again, my sincere thanks to you for assisting me with my research. Should you have questions prior to my arrival, please call me at home (352) 335-7441 or at work (352) 392-1868 or email me at mjm@gnv.ifas.ufl.edu. I look forward to our week together and learning your strategies of leadership.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Moore
APPENDIX F

Participants Thank You Letter
February 21, 2000

Name
Title
Address

Salutation:

Thank you for participating in my study of African American women serving as executive officers of state-based 1890 Cooperative Extension Programs. The opportunity to shadow you the week of February 14th was most enlightening and rewarding. I am most pleased with the manner in which you candidly answered the questions as well as provide other pertinent information.

I have learned a great deal about your leadership style and the manner in which your Extension program operate. The information gathered will definitely add to the context of my dissertation but more importantly, it will help me grow as a professional who aspire to become an administrator. Please convey to your staff that it was a pleasure meeting them and that they are to be commended highly on their professionalism.

After I have completed all interviews and compiled the responses, you will receive a member check to verify data collected. Then, I will contact you by phone or email for your response.

If I can ever be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Moore
Graduate Student
The Ohio State University
APPENDIX G

Personal, Open-ended Interview Instrument
PERSONAL, OPEN-ENDED INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT

Introduction

Before we start, let me first say thank you for allowing me to shadow you this Week. I have learned a great deal about your leadership attitudes, strategies and theory from observing you in action. Now, I want to explore with you your aspirations, values and motives.

During the next three hours, we will discuss your personal experiences as a woman, wife, mother, friend, sister, daughter and executive. The questions are open-ended, focusing on the constructs of self-concept, gender, relationships, leadership, success, and professional development. I will tape-record your responses in order to use your language to represent your reality. Do you mind if this interview is tape recorded? I will also make notes of key phrases or ideas that I may wish to return to for clarification or elaboration.

All your responses will be kept completely confidential. No names or states will be associated with any of the reported data. You may choose not to answer any particular question without explanation or justification. As mentioned in my letter sent to you earlier, your participation is strictly voluntary.

Following the final participant’s interview, I will be in contact with you to ask for your reaction to the first cut of data analysis, including my perception of some broadly defined themes that emerge as I code the data. A copy of the initial findings will be sent and a telephone conference scheduled with you to discuss my initial findings and your perceptions of the findings.

As a result of our discussion, I will take a second look at the data and my analysis, refine the identified themes, and develop an analytical reading. The reading will be sent to each participant with a response sheet using open-ended questions for recording your reactions to the monograph. Participants’ comments regarding the reading will guide the writing of the final analysis and conclusions.

The results of this study have the potential to be used by the organization and individuals to assist future generations of women to prepare for top management positions within Cooperative Extension Systems.

Are there questions before we start?
Interview Guide

Section A -- Background

A1. What professional experiences stand out for you over the past few years of your life?
   
   Probe 1: What kinds of experiences have been the most important?
   
   Probe 2: What experiences would you term as “milestones” or turning points in your life?

A2. Tell me something about what your work life is like right now.
   
   Probe 1: What do you value most about your work life?
   
   Probe 2: What do you fine most challenging?
   
   Probe 3: How do you spend most of your time?

A3. Is the way you see yourself now different from the way you saw yourself in the past?
   
   Probe 1: If yes, what led to the changes?
   
   Probe 2: Have there been any other turning points?
   
   Probe 3: How do you see yourself changing in the future?
   
   Probe 4: If so, how?

Section B -- Gender

B1. What does being an African American woman mean to you?
   
   Probe 1: Has your concept of yourself as an African American woman changed since becoming an administrator?
   
   If so, how?
Section C – Relationships

C1. Looking back over your life prior to your career, what relationships have been really important to you? (i.e., friends, family, etc.)

Why were they important?

C2. Who was influential in helping you shape the person you have become?

Probe 1: How do you think the other person would describe the relationship?

Probe 2: How has the relationship changed, and how do you account for the change?

C3. Tell me about your family life when you were growing up.

Probe 1: How would you describe your mother (or primary caregiver)?

Probe 2: How would you describe your father (or prominent male figure)?

Probe 3: Describe your childhood relationship with your siblings (If any).

C4. Describe your family life today?

Probe 1: Who is included in your immediate family?

Probe 2: How would you describe your relationship with each individual?

C5. What impact has your career had on your family life?

Probe 1: How has your family life been enriched by your career?

Probe 2: What kinds of personal sacrifices have you made in order to pursue your career?

Probe 3: What sacrifices has your family made for your career?

Section D – Leadership

D1: Describe your leadership style.
Probe 1: Give an example of your leadership in action and identify key points which describe your leadership style.

Probe 2: Is this your natural, preferred leadership style?

Probe 3: What adaptations have you made in your style in order to function more effectively in the organization?

Probe 4: What adaptations has the organization made as a result of your leadership style?

D2. When you think about your career, certain events or episodes probably stand out in your mind – things that led to a lasting change in you as a leader. What happened that made a difference in the way you lead now?

Probe 1: What did you learn from the experience?

D3. In your opinion, what are the traits of an effective female leader?

Probe 1: Give me some examples of individuals who you believe are successful leaders?

Section E -- Success

E1. How do you define success?

E2. What has made you successful?

E3. What does it take for an African American woman to achieve a top leadership position within the Cooperative Extension System?

Probe 1: What factors can advance an African American woman upward?

Probe 2: What barriers must an African American woman overcome?

Probe 3: In your opinion, are the factors and barriers different for African American men wishing to achieve top leadership positions within CES?

Probe 4: In your opinion, are the factors and barriers different for Caucasian women wishing to achieve top leadership positions?
Section F – Professional Development

F1. What have been your typical motivations for seeking or accepting new and different positions?

F2. What was your first administrative job?
   Probe 1: Was there anything special about it? What did you learn from it?
   Probe 2: Have you experienced a "quantum leap" in your career – movement to a job with significantly more responsibility/challenge/pressure than prior jobs?
   Probe 3: What is the biggest job challenge you have ever faced?
   Probe 4: What was your most frightening first – something you did for the first time that really had you worried.

F3. What was your darkest hour?
   Probe 1: Tell me about a time when you tried something that was important to you and failed.
   Probe 2: What was your most significant act of procrastination? By this I mean a time when you didn't face up to a situation that got steadily worse, resulting in a mess.
   Probe 3: Were you ever worn out or fed up, but managed to restart? How?

F4. What was your first important exposure to top administration? What did you learn?

F5. Was it your professional goal to become an administrator for a state-based 1890 Cooperative Extension System?
   Probe 1: If yes, when did you set this goal?
      Why?
      Why not?
   Probe 2: When did you realize that this was an opportunity that could be a reality?
F6. Sometimes people invest in developmental activities that they hope will pay off for them. Can you think of something you did specifically to help you develop that proved to be particularly valuable?

Probe 1: How about something that turned out to be a waste of time?

F7. Describe the person who taught you the most during your career. What did that person do that made him or her so special? How do you identify that person?

Probe 1: Who do you look to now for inspiration and/or guidance?

Probe 2: Do you see yourself as a role model for other African American women? In what ways?

Probe 3: Do you consider yourself a mentor? Are you currently a mentor? What personal benefit or barriers have you had from being a mentor? Should there be a formal networking system?

Probe 4: Most of us have worked for a person we simply couldn’t tolerate for one reason or another. What did you learn from such an experience?

Probe 5: What was your most significant interpersonal conflict — a situation in which dealing with another person (or persons) was very difficult for you? What did you learn from it?

F8. How do you stay current and prepared for your executive role?

F9. What advice do you have for future generations of African American women who aspire to Cooperative Extension System leadership roles?

F10. What professional development experiences/trainings do you feel are critical today for emerging African American women who aspire for administrative positions?

Section G – Conclusion

Thank you. Now before we stop, I have a couple more questions.

G1. What do you envision for yourself five years from now?

Probe 1: Ten years from now?
G2. Are there any other questions that I should have asked you that would help me better understand the issues that impact women and their opportunities to achieve leadership roles within Cooperative Extension Systems?
Instructions: Please respond to the questions in the biographical data survey. Most questions are short answers. The questionnaire should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. "Assigned Name" is included in the upper right hand corner in order to match survey responses with data collected during observations and interviews. All your responses will be kept completely confidential. No names or states will be associated with any of the reported data.
Biographical Data Survey

1. Age: _____ years
   (as of your last birthday)

2. Marital Status: (circle one)
   A) Married
   B) Divorced
   C) Separated
   D) Never Married
   E) Widowed

   If you circled either Married, Divorced, Widowed or Separated, please respond to questions 2A and 2B. If you circled NEVER MARRIED, go to question 3 and/or 4.

   A. Age when you married: ______

   B. Number of years of professional work before you married the first time: ______

   C. Number of years of professional work before you married the second time: ______

3. Total number of children: ______

   Number of children currently living at home: ______

4. Were your parents living during your entire childhood? (Those years before high school graduation). Check the appropriate response.

   Yes ______

   No ______ (If No, which parent was living?) ________________

5. Number of sisters: ______ Number of brothers: ______

   Number of siblings older than you: ______

   Number of siblings younger than you: ______
6. Educational History: (beginning with most recent degree)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Degree &amp; Date Awarded</th>
<th>Field of Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

7. Non-degree Granting Education: (examples: Kellogg Fellowship, Harvard Management Institute, etc.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Type of Study</th>
<th>Length of Study</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

8. Occupational History: (beginning with present)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Organization</th>
<th>Type of Job</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Position Held</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

9. Years in current position: ________ years

   Total years in a position of Administrator or Associate Administrator for the 1890 state-based Cooperative Extension System: ________ years (may include more than one state)

   Age when you first became Administrator or Associate Administrator for the 1890 state-based Cooperative Extension System: ________ years

   Total years in Extension: ________ years

10. Have you ever held a position as Administrator or Associate Administrator for the 1862 state-based Cooperative Extension System? ________ yes ________ no

    If no, would you like an Administrative or Associate Administrative position at the 1862 state-based Cooperative Extension System? ________ yes ________ no

    If no, why not?

11. Academic discipline you identify as your specialty:

________________________________________________________________________
12. a. What community activities are you currently involved in? (Ex. Sorority, Church, etc.)

b. What leadership positions have you held doing your involvement in these activities?

c. If you are not currently involved in a community activity, were you involved in the past? If so, what activities?

d. If you are not currently involved, why?

*************

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY.

Please Return This Questionnaire at the End of the Observation Period to:

Marjorie Moore
May 28, 2000

Name
Title
Address

Salutation:

As mentioned to you in our telephone conversation on__, I have enclosed a copy of the final draft of the monograph for your review and revisions and a response sheet. In qualitative research, conducting member checks is the most crucial technique in establishing credibility. It involves the representativeness of you, the participant, by testing the authenticity of the data, interpretations, and conclusions.

The monograph describes and interprets the data collected from my personal diary (observations), the interview, and biographical data survey. A response sheet is provided for your comments to the monograph. I will send you an attachment of the response sheet on e-mail for faster response.

Please review the monograph at your earliest convenience and return your comment sheet to me no later than June 12, 2000. I will make corrections to chapters IV and V based on your input. My goal is to graduate August 31st; therefore, as you know certain deadlines must be met. I must submit a copy of my final dissertation to the graduate school two weeks prior to my defense date which is scheduled July 13, 2000.

If you have any questions, please contact me at home (352) 335-7441 or at work (352) 392-1868. Thank you for your continued support in my research study.

Sincerely yours,

Marjorie Moore
Graduate Student
The Ohio State University
Study of African American Women
in 1890 State-Based Cooperative Extension Systems

Response Sheet

Part 1

The response sheet is designed to allow you to react to the description and interpretation of the data collected for the study of senior-level administrators for 1890 state-based Cooperative Extension Systems.

1. The monograph presents an accurate portrayal of my reality as a senior-level administrator for an 1890 state-based Cooperative Extension System.

2. The description and interpretation provides the contextual variance and richness among the participants in the identified themes emerging from the data.

3. A reading of the monograph left me feeling that data had been selected to support an a priori position.

4. The description and interpretation of data is rich, contextual narrative based on the participants' personal perspectives and experiences.

5. Patterns and themes explored in the monograph emerged out of the language of the respondents.

6. The monograph gives me "food for thought" as far as specific strategies for helping women prepare for top leadership roles within 1890 state-based Cooperative Extension Systems.

7. The researcher's own values distorted the data analysis.
Part 2

Your responses to the following questions will be used to check the credibility of Chapter V which are the conclusions, implications and recommendations.

1. Where do you find the analysis off-based?

2. Where do you find the analysis compelling?

3. What effect, if any, might this study have on the 1890 Cooperative Extension System's efforts to infuse the professional development of women with strategies for achieving top leadership roles within CES?

4. What means would you recommend for disseminating the information from this study throughout the Cooperative Extension System, especially 1890?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY!

Please respond by e-mail no later than June 12, 2000

Address all questions and concerns to:

Marjorie Moore
352/335-7441 (H)
352/3931868 (W)
e-mail: mjmoore@gnv.ifas.ufl.edu
APPENDIX J

Panel of Experts and Peer Debriefers
Panel of Experts

Dr. Sharon D. Anderson
North Dakota State University
315 Morrill Hall
PO Box 5437
Fargo, ND 58105-5437

Dr. Pat Barber
University of Delaware
127 Townsend Hall
Newark, DE 19717

Dr. Nancy Bull
University of Connecticut
Young Building, Room 216
1376 Storrs Road, U-36
Storrs, CT 06269-4036

Dr. Juanita Miller
381 Campbell Hall
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