EFFECTS OF GENDER ON SCHOOL BOARD PERCEPTIONS OF SUPERINTEDENTS
AND THE SUPERINTENDENT SELECTION PROCESS

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

a Major in Educational Leadership in the

Department of Graduate Education

Northwest Nazarene University

by

Laurie Dent

May 2018

Major Professor: Dr. Paula Kellerer, PhD

AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT DISSERTATION

This dissertation of Laurie Dent, submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education with a major in Educational Leadership and titled "Effects of Gender on School Board Perceptions of Superintendents and the Superintendent Selection Process" has been reviewed in final form. Permission, as indicated by the signatures and dates given below, is now granted to submit final copies.

Committee Chair   *Paula D Kellerer*   Date 4/9/18
Dr. Paula D. Kellerer

Committee
Members   *Andrée Scown Johnson*   Date 4/9/18
Dr. Andrée Scown Johnson

Donald Eismann   Date 4/9/18
Dr. Donald Eismann

Doctoral
Program Director   *Heidi Curtis*   Date 4/9/18
Dr. Heidi Curtis

College of Adult
and Graduate
Studies, Dean   *Michael G. Pitts*   Date 4/19/18
Dr. Michael Pitts

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I want to acknowledge my Sumner School District family who were invested in my success as if it were their own. Their unwavering support and encouragement allowed me to finish this program while simultaneously completing the first two years of my superintendency. I'm blessed to work with dedicated educators who put the needs of others before their own. They not only symbolize our belief in Servant Leadership, they also demonstrate our shared vision of "One Team, One Mission!" on a continual basis.

Next, I would be remiss in not acknowledging my mother who was the catalyst behind my journey into a doctoral program. Her steadfast belief in the advancement of women inspired me to pursue a doctorate. Without her enthusiasm and steadfast support, completing this program would not be possible.

Finally, I am very grateful for my dissertation committee who spent hour upon hour pouring over my writing and research. You gave of your time willingly to assist me in my pursuit of academic excellence. Thank you for believing in my topic and helping me create a study that will enhance the lives of female leaders for many years to come.

DEDICATION

My dissertation is dedicated to my late grandmother, a woman before her time and the epitome of resilience, Viola Virginia Everette. Her deep-rooted faith in Jesus Christ, reigned supreme in her life.

ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to determine if the gender of the superintendent candidate influences the school boards' choice for school superintendent. The researcher addressed this topic through a mixed method research study. Data was collected from Washington State school board members through an anonymous electronic survey. Using a mixed method approach, school board members from the Washington State who hired a superintendent within the last three years were invited to participate in an electronic survey. Out of the 647 board members in public school districts in who had recently hired a superintendent and who were invited to respond to the survey, 119 responded, 114 agreed to participate.

The results of the independent sample t-test between male and female school board members returned a significant difference on the importance of visibility in the community ($p = 0.02$). It was determined that there were 100% of male school board members who believed that the visibility of the applicant in the community is important while only 96.8% of female board members believed that it was important. All other qualifications about hiring a superintendent included in this study showed no statistically significant gender-based difference of school board members in terms of their perception of skills and qualifications in the hiring of a superintendent process.

In examining the data further, there was no significant difference in the importance of the following skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between the male and female school board members. Based on the results of the ANOVA, the gender of the applicant had a significant impact on the superintendent selection process when it comes to assessing one's qualification of developing relationships ($p < 0.001$). Although the majority (80.6%) of the school board members believe that either of the genders are effective in developing relationships,

still, the remaining 19.4% of the board perceive women to be more effective in developing

relationships as compared to men.

Qualitative data show that the overall school board members generally perceived that gender

was irrelevant in the selection of a superintendent; however, socio-cultural factors in hiring

decision, the lack of female candidates, and women's desires and interests generally impact the

hiring process.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Chapter I: Introduction

The superintendent is the top-ranking professional within a given school system; and as such, the position is conceptually comparable to the CEO of a business (Oakley, 2000). The superintendent is responsible for formulating a vision for the school district, ensuring academic achievement levels are being met, evaluating whether students are meeting their academic goals, determining standards for selecting school level administrators, and serving as a bridge between the school board and the local community (Giberson, Resick, Dickson, Mitchelson, Randall & Clark, 2009; Lemasters & Roach, 2012; Munoz, Mills, Pankake, & Whaley, 2014). Just as women are underrepresented at this level within the business world, they are also underrepresented at this level within school systems (Normore, 2006; Sperandio & Devdas, 2015).

Female superintendents and females interested in pursuing a position as superintendent are significantly underrepresented (Derrington & Sharatt, 2009; Finnan, 2016; Gammill & Vaughn, 2011; Wallace, 2015). Though females are represented well in education, a majority of females prefer teaching positions or central office administrative positions (Tallerico & Blount, 2004; Wallace, 2015). Being a classroom teacher opposed to being an administrator is more common for females and is perpetuated by the institutionalization of social roles between males and females (Derrington & Sharratt, 2009; Grogan, 2000; Tallerico & Blount, 2004).

There are historical and cultural reasons for the over representation of male leaders. Across many societies and cultures, women have generally been conceptualized as caretakers, resulting in a relatively narrow range of professions that have been deemed as acceptable for females to pursue (Graeber, 2001). The role of teacher would fit well with this traditional conceptualization, insofar the teacher is one who primarily works with children and young

people and is dedicated to fostering their growth. The role of superintendent, on the other hand, would not be congruent with that conceptualization. The superintendent is more like a business executive who must work with the financial forces of the external world and have considerable strategic ability (Normore, 2006). This picture of gender is arguably obsolete in the modern world, but it clearly still has very real effects on the career paths of women (Lemasters & Roach, 2012; Oakely, 2000; Rice & Barth, 2016).

Until the 1970's, research was designed to study and meticulously examine the prevalence of male superintendents; therefore, fewer research studies have been conducted on females in the superintendency (Grogan, 2005; Reed & Patterson, 2007). Now, researchers are beginning to conduct studies on female superintendents in an effort to better understand commonalities in demographics, internal and external stressors, lived experiences, characteristics and core values, strategies for success, advice for prospective and aspiring superintendents, leadership styles and traits, and individual motivation (Brunner, 2000; Eagly & Johansen-Schmidt, 2001; Grogan,2005; Lansford, Clements, Falzon, Aish & Rogers, 2010; Reed & Patterson, 2007; Tallerico & Blount, 2004).

Gender plays an important role in the career path of a school administrator becoming a superintendent (Kim & Brunner, 2009). Even though the percentage of women is increasing in the superintendency barriers to advancement continue to increase (McGee, 2010; Reed & Patterson, 2007; Sperandio, 2010). Norms and expectations within the education sector perpetuate gender bias and other discriminatory practices that hamper females from entering the superintendency at the same rate as males enter the superintendency (Dowell & Larwin, 2013; Skrla, Reyes, & Scheurich, 2000). Historically, superintendent positions have been dominated by males (Munoz et al., 2014). This trend has continued to have a stronghold in school districts

nationwide. Only 24.1% of superintendent positions within public school districts across the

United States are occupied by females (Munoz et al., 2014).

The superintendent has the unique position of interfacing directly between the school

board and the school district itself. Many school boards have the authority to not only select

superintendents, but to vote to suspend or end their contracts as well (Feurstein, 2009; Kleespsie,

2005; Land, 2002). Therefore, one important practice for increasing organizational success is by

examining school boards and their relationship with females achieving the superintendency.

New research will provide additional insight and information pertaining to the selection process

of females which may encourage more females to seek the superintendency.

As other researchers have suggested, the lack of females in superintendent positions may

stem from a lack of interest, a lack of suitable mentors throughout one's career, and a lack of

submitting applications for a superintendent position (could be equated with a lack of interest)

(Kelsey, Allen, Coke & Ballard, 2014; Lane-Washington & Wilson-Jones, 2010; Munoz et al.,

2014). Some researchers have noted that a lack of suitable mentors and role models for aspiring

female superintendents could have significant influence on whether those potential candidates

apply for the job at all (Lane-Washington & Wilson-Jones, 2010). In a study conducted on why

gender disparities exist among superintendents, it was discovered that less than one third of

potential female applicants had received mentoring or career progression support (Munoz et al.,

2014; Duevel, Nashman-Smith & Stern, 2015). If a person does not have the proper support to

advance in one's career and/or receive the proper training or guidance, it is likely that person will

not feel prepared to assume a role that includes a higher level of responsibility (Kelsey et al.,

2014). Even if the potential applicant is strongly qualified, if she does not feel the support of the

organization behind her, then it is more likely that she will feel that applying is not a feasible

career endeavor (Bosak & Sczesny, 2008; Skrla et al., 2000). Encouraging females to pursue the superintendency while providing adequate support, collaboration, and mentorship will help reduce barriers to access and retain female superintendents (McGee, 2010; Kachur-Recio & Wallin, 2011; Kelsey et al., 2014; Lane-Washington et al., 2010).

The lack of female representation in superintendent positions is not attributed to a lack of qualified potential female applicants. In fact, there tends to be a relatively equal amount of qualified potential male and female candidates, but qualified male candidates tend to be more likely to apply (Bosak & Sczesny, 2008; Munoz et al., 2014). The reasons both female and male candidates apply are also remarkably similar. Those reasons include the opportunity to lead, a sense of achievement, a higher salary, and career growth. Female applicants tend to have two additional reasons, which include the opportunity to mentor others and be of service (Bosak & Sczesny, 2008; Munoz et al., 2014).

For many women pursuing a career as a superintendent, motivation is one of the key challenges: women may not feel that their ambitions are being encouraged by society and culture, and that they need to develop sources of motivation that can enable them to achieve success in spite of these barriers (Williams, 2016). This would help at least partly explain why men are more likely to apply for the job than women (Munoz et al., 2014). It is as though for men, it is expected as a natural matter of course that they may eventually aspire to the role of superintendent, whereas for women it is assumed as a matter of course that they will remain content with being teachers or fulfilling other roles within schools or districts. This difference of expectation can weigh heavily on women and discourage them from applying for the job.

The position of superintendent was created in the late 1800's to provide administrative oversight and accountability to the local school board (Land, 2002). Over the years, the

superintendent's role has become increasingly more complex requiring him or her to create a comprehensive strategic plan that includes everything ranging from academics to finance (Boyland, 2013; Grogan, 2000; Kowalski & Bjork, 2005). Political pressures, insufficient funding and federal mandates play a role in the ability to retain and recruit qualified superintendents (Tekniepe, 2015). A study conducted by the American Association of School Administrators in 2010 found that, "… 51% of superintendents would not be in their positions in 2015" (Copeland & Calhoun, 2014, p. 30). This could be deeply problematic, insofar as a superintendent's tenure is positively correlated to student success (Marzano & Waters, 2008).

If there are not enough superintendents within the nation or experienced superintendents are leaving their jobs, this could create instabilities across the educational system (Wolverton, 2004). In order to address this problem, it is necessary for school board members to look at the potential pool of applicants for superintendents and what could be done in order to keep the profession of superintendent sustainable and vital. One way to maintain stability within the superintendency is through a closer focus on the underrepresented population of female superintendents and the role of the school board during the selection process.

It is estimated that inherent biases within both male and female school board members influence the selection of superintendents, not only when it comes to gender, but in terms of personalities, values, leadership styles, proposed visions, and professional backgrounds (Crites, Dickson & Lorenz, 2015; Eagly & Johannessen-Schmidt, 2001; Tallerico, 2000). Further research studies on the likely barriers to aspiring female superintendents include sexism, including stereotyping, sex discrimination, and self-imposed rather than societal imposed obligations (Sidani, Konrad & Koram, 2015). Studying the pathways to female career advancement also provides insight into societal gender-specific expectations women feel

obligated to fulfill, such as being a mother and family caretaker (Derrington & Sharratt, 2009; Sperandio, 2010).

Another potential gap in the literature that needs further investigation is whether school boards in general influence the final selection of superintendent candidates, how the gender composition of school boards can influence selection, and whether female school board members can provide adequate mentoring to potential future female superintendents (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006; Copeland & Calhoun, 2014).

Statement of the Problem

The U.S. Census Bureau has characterized the superintendency as, "…the most male-dominated executive position of any profession in the United States" (Bjork, 2000, p.8). The percentage of female superintendents has been steadily increasing from 10% in 1990 to 23% in 2012 (Wallace, 2015).

Several qualitative studies identify school boards as reluctant to hire women and fail to view women as skilled enough to lead a school district (Lopez, 2008; Montz, 2004; Ortiz, 1999; Richard & Kruse, 2008; Tallerico, 2000). If school board members are the deciding factor in the superintendent selection, are there inherent gender biases inhibiting females from obtaining the superintendency? Do school board members have a predisposition to gender bias which results in the underrepresentation of female superintendents?

A smaller number of females hold a position in superintendency due to the presence of barriers that hinder them from pursuing such a career (Derrington & Sharatt, 2009; Sperandio, 2010). Barriers to entry and contributing factors are greater for female educators than male educators (Finnan, 2016). Finnan (2016) pointed out that across America, females make up only 5% of Fortune 500 CEOs. The low percentage of female superintendents mirrors the small

population of female CEOs (Giberson et al., 2009; Lemasters & Roach, 2012). Females are not

pursuing, or not given access to, higher level leadership positions in school districts or private

enterprise (Lemasters & Roach, 2012; Skrla et al., 2000). Females account for 75% of all

educators. Men account for 25% of all educators. Looking closer, of the 75% of all educators

represented by females, only 25% are superintendents (Sharp, Malone, Walter & Supley, 2004).

In 2015-2016, only 18% of new Superintendents in were female (Hill & McDonald, 2016).

Table 1 shows that the number of female superintendents newly assigned to school districts

decreased 21% from 2012-2015, from nearly 40% in 2012, to only 18% in 2015. This shows

evidence of a clear decline in the number of new female superintendents. On the other hand, in

2012, 61% of new superintendents were male, increasing to 75% in 2015.

Table 1.
Newly Assigned Superintendents

	2015-2016		2014-2015		2013-2014		2012-2013	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Total new	55		60		40		33	
Out of state	8	15%	8	13%	3	8%	5	15%
First supt. job	20	36%	31	52%	28	70%	21	64%
Male	41	75%	44	73%	29	72%	20	61%
Female	10	18%	10	17%	11	28%	13	39%
Interim	2	4%	9	15%	4	10%	5	15%
In-district promotion	14	25%	17	28%	11	28%	13	39%
Un-filled	4	7%	6	10%	4	10%	3	9%

(Table based on incomplete data)

Females often comprise a rather small percentage of the superintendency due to varying

factors resulting from career pathways and institutional norms of gender bias and discrimination

(Derrington & Sharratt, 2009; Dowell & Larwin, 2013; Tallerico & Blount, 2004). Pathways

that lead toward the superintendency are different for males and females (Kim & Brunner, 2009).

Male superintendents generally begin their career as a vice-principalship and then a high school principalship (Kim & Brunner, 2009; Sperandido, 2015; Williams, 2016). More opportunities for advancement and promotion reside in secondary schools where there are often larger administrative teams. Male educators have greater access to promotion and acceleration which results in a higher number of male superintendents (Williams, 2016). Not surprisingly, the percentage of superintendents with secondary principal experience is in a direct relationship to access to the superintendency (Sperandido, 2015).

Opportunities are not as readily available for female elementary teachers as they are for male secondary teachers (Williams, 2016). Elementary schools are typically only staffed with a principal and predominantly staffed with female teachers. Sperandido (2015) found that the most common career path for female superintendents is central office director, assistant superintendent, and superintendent. Yonson (2004), in her study of all women superintendents in Pennsylvania, found that the most common pathway included consisted of teacher, assistant principal, principal, assistant superintendent, superintendent (11.7%). Yonson's findings are like Brunner and Grogan's (2007) In a national study conducted by Brunner and Grogan (2007), the most common path their participants had taken was teacher, principal, central office administrator, superintendent.

Moreover, though, it is also important to not confuse all roles within the school system as equally close to the superintendency. For example, 75% of elementary school teachers are women; but 75% of superintendents did not begin their careers at the elementary school level (Glass, n.d.). The prevalence of women within the educational workforce does not automatically translate into greater opportunity for achieving the superintendency, insofar as there are only certain positions within the educational system—positions such as principal or high school

department chair, which may not be heavily occupied by women—which naturally lead to the superintendency (Copeland & Calhoun, 2014; Wallace, 2015). The path from teacher, especially at elementary levels, to the superintendency would in fact seem to be a relatively uncommon.

In addition to institutionalized barriers, research studies also demonstrate the prevalence of self-imposed barriers resulting from an inability to balance a career as superintendent and family-related obligations (McGee, 2010; Derrington & Sharratt, 2009). The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) conducted a mid-decade study of the superintendency. Females accounted for 26.9% of the respondents. The study uncovered several barriers to access. First, females perceived they were held to higher standards than their male counterparts (Finnian, 2016). Second, school boards were uncomfortable hiring female superintendents. Next, 23% of respondents claimed that family responsibilities took priority over a job. Finally, 20% of female superintendents viewed themselves as having fewer professional connections and less of a network to people that support the promotion of female educators (Finnian, 2016). "Female superintendents are much more likely than their male counterparts to be single, widowed, divorced or to have commuter marriages" (Reed & Patterson, 2007, p. 91).

Superintendent data from (Table 2) shows that the number of new female superintendents decreased by 22% between 2012 and 2016 (Hill & McDonald, 2016). In 2010, 3 new female superintendents were hired in. Between 2010 and 2012, experienced a 32% increase in the number of new female superintendents. For a female to find success at this level, she must employ strategies to overcome adversity and become resilient. Resilient female leaders exhibit a greater depth and variety of leadership skills to overcome and work through barriers (Christman & McClellan, 2005; Reed & Patterson, 2007).

Table 2.
New Female Superintendents by Year

School year	# of new	% of new
2010-2011	3	8%
2011-2012	17	40%
2012-2013	16	47%
2013-2014	11	28%
2014-2015	12	20%
2015-2016	10	25%

In, not only is the number of female superintendents decreasing, Table 3 shows a large discrepancy in the size of district led by female superintendents. More female superintendents in work in small, rural school districts with fewer than 500 students, whereas the least amount of female superintendents work in school districts with over 20,000 students (Hill & McDonald, 2016).

Table 3.
Female Superintendents by District Size

Size range	2015-2016		2014-2015	
	# of females	% of females	# of females	% of females
Less than 500	30	39%	28	36%
500 – 1,000	8	10%	8	10%
1,0001-3,000	15	19%	15	19%
73,001-5,000	7	9%	8	10%
5,001-10,000	9	11%	8	10%
10,001-20,000	6	8%	7	9%
Over 20,000	4	5%	4	5%
Total	80	27%	78	26%

According to the State of Washington Office of the Superintendent, during the 2015-2016 school year, out of 248 Superintendents, 183 were male and 63 were female. These numbers tell us that a 47% discrepancy exists in the number of male superintendents compared to female, for

everyone female superintendent, there are 3 male superintendents. A lower percentage of female superintendents can also be seen in Idaho and Oregon. According to the Idaho Association of School Administrators, out of 115 superintendents, only 15 are female (2016). In 2015, the percentage of female superintendents in Oregon fell from 33% to 29% (Spegman, 2015).

Moreover, at the national level, the data indicates that the current percentage of female superintendents stands at 23% as of 2012, and that it is rising at an average rate of .7 percent a year, which would mean that that it would take an additional 34 years for female superintendents to hit the 50% mark. It would take 76 years if female superintendents were to proportionally represent the prevalence of women within educational systems more generally (Wallace, 2015).

Therefore, while it could be suggested that real progress is in fact being made, it is clearly slow going; and more than that, it cannot be taken for granted. It would seem to be necessary for women to keep pushing the boundaries if this trend is to even continue at its present rate, let alone accelerate.

This study will provide insight into the underrepresentation of female superintendents by exploring the attitudes, values and beliefs about gender of school board members and how those beliefs impact the superintendent hiring process. There is a large overarching approach to feminist framework made up of many theories, specifically social role theory and patriarch theory. This study uses the feminist theoretical framework by exploring patriarchy theory and social role theory.

Background to the Study

This section of the dissertation will outline the background context for the present study. This will include a consideration of the theoretical background of the study, the proposed

research methods for the study, and key terms that will guide the study and be important for understanding the study.

Feminist theory. Historical insight into feminist theory provides context for why examining this topic from a feminist lens is appropriate. Frederick Engels, in his collaboration with Marx in 1884, concluded that women became powerless domestic slaves, which Engels describes as the historic defeat of the female sex (Brown, 2014). As the contemporary feminist construct acknowledges as one of its foundational premises, both Marx and Engels viewed women's entry into the paid labor force as their critical first step toward liberation from oppressive male dependence.

Feminist theory also incorporates tenets from Freud. According to Voela (2016), psychoanalytic feminists attribute the roots of women's oppression to psychological structures that are reinforced by societal dynamics formed in childhood. Remediation includes the changing of deeply engrained patterns of family relations and social elements, which reinforce the Freudian notion that women are biologically, physically, psychically, and morally, inferior to men.

While accounting in part for outside influences, neuroscience-based feminism primarily embraces brain biology and chemistry as foundational catalysts to the challenges of feminism (Schmitz & Hoppner, 2014). Feminists who have accepted the basic premise must also account for the analogy that a blank, uninfluenced brain is impressionable to the outside world and does not remain static and unencumbered. The outside influence of light leaves an image. For the brain, the outside influences of social, patriarchal and religious realities, to name a few, create a state of being. Outside interaction is critical to the brain's development. Studies have sited the conclusion that an environmental stimulus affects the development, decomposition, and

alteration of synapses between neurons in the brain (Schmitz & Hoppner, 2014). While these phenomena can account for gender perceptions and other psychological, physiological, and social realities, they cannot be used as a blanket excuse for the issues of feminism.

Social role theory. Social Role Theory is most readily defined as the differences in observable behaviors of men and women as a result of their distributions into social roles (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2012). Following their primary origins to early childhood development, during which time boys are generally socialized in a different manner than girls in accordance to a patriarchal system, the consensus asserts that gender bias in favor of a male dominated social construct is self-evident. As women are incorporated into the work force, they are concentrated into different occupations, have lower wages, and are rarely at the highest levels of organization hierarchies (Burton and Weiner, 2016),

Masculine stereotypes portray the man as breadwinner assigned to higher-level job responsibilities, while the woman is assigned to tasks more domestic in nature. As individuals pursue responsibilities outside of the gender expectation, they are deemed to be incongruent to their role (Burton & Weiner, 2016). In contrast, job satisfaction for women is reported to be higher in workplaces that are dominated by women. And since women are more apt to value flexibility in the workplace, which allows them to take care of family issues, women tend to be the majority in work environments that provide flexibility (Huang & Gamble, 2015).

The consequences of social role based placement can be commonly observed. Women, who in a gender-biased structuring of roles have become associated with nurturing and warmth, will acquire skills necessary for successful performance of those roles. Likewise, men adjust to their gender roles by acquiring work skills specific to the successful performance of their role requirements (Steffens & Viladot, 2015).

Gender bias is as much a cause of social role placement as a result of it. In 2015, a group of doctoral level researchers at the University of Wisconsin Madison conducted research to determine whether or not faculty at the University could break the gender bias habit (Carnes, Divine, Manwell, Bryars-Wilson, Fine, Ford & Sheridan, 2015). Members from 92 departments were randomly placed and offered a 2.5-hour workshop on gender bias awareness. The analysis concluded that a structured intervention that facilitates intentional behavioral change can help a group break the gender bias habit and change department climate in ways that should support the career advancement of women in academic medicine, science, and engineering (Carnes, Divine, & Manwell, et al., 2015). They also concluded that gender bias, although deeply rooted into the social fabric as a result of role placement and other contributing phenomena, can be significantly altered in a relatively short period of time through activities that foster awareness and promote change.

Social Role Theory cannot account for or explain all gender differences and biases, especially in relation to some of the more emotional tenants of each. Gender differences in certain geographical locations (e.g. North America and Europe) are more pronounced (Guimond, 2008). Social role placement does contribute directly to the bias; however, it is neither an isolated factor nor a cause that is more dominant than any others.

Gender bias in workplace evaluations and hiring decisions is subtle yet pervasive (Hoyt, 2012). An incongruent nature between gender roles and social roles, specifically in the workplace, will result in gender-biased responses (Hoyt, 2012). This statement reinforces what Steffens & Viladot (2015) indicated regarding the ways in which men and women adjust to their various roles to ensure success.

To understand the effects of gender and a school board's perception of a superintendent, the research will use social role theory and patriarchal theory to frame the study. Social Role Theory says that most social activities, including occupation, are influenced by the perceived role of the individuals involved (Biddle, 2013; Powell, Butterfield & Bartol, 2008). These roles are determined by the expected duties, behaviors and rights associated with this role. Roles may be influenced by characteristics of culture, socio-economic status, and gender.

Additionally, the expectation of characteristics often results from preconceived understandings of which traits are typically associated with each role, and are not necessarily conscious decisions (Biddle, 2013; Dueval & Nasham-Smith, 2015; Powell, et al., 2008). In this way, the perception of roles is often subconsciously predetermined, and our evaluation of the individual within that role is rated based on how closely the individual aligns with our expectations for that role (Biddle, 2013). For example, the expectation for the role of a new mother is that she demonstrates nurturing behavior, which is a predetermined societal expectation of this role. If the mother is indeed nurturing, we will determine her to be fulfilling this role, while if she is not nurturing, we make the association that she is not fulfilling our expectation of this role, and is therefore a bad mother (Powell, et al., 2008).

Patriarchy theory. Patriarchy theory evaluates power structures in relation to gender, specifically regarding gender expectations of given roles (Sidani et al., 2015; Witz, 2013). As with social role theory, these expectations may or may not be consciously realized, yet they still influence behaviors and decision-making processes (Witz, 2013). Patriarchy theory argues that this results in unjust social systems that are ultimately oppressive to both genders, although much of patriarchy theory identifies male dominance over women (Kramarae & Spender, 2000; Sidani et al., 2015; Witz, 2013;). Because of the disparity between the number of male and female

superintendents, the current research seeks to evaluate whether school board members may be biased toward hiring more male superintendents than female superintendents as a result of their gender expectations.

The fact of the matter is that the same personality trait can be widely perceived as positive when associated with a man but negative when associated with a woman (Crites et al., 2015). For example, a recent news story has traced how historically, it has been a slur to call a woman "ambitious," with ambition in a woman often being associated with ugliness, poor mental health, and a general lack of femininity (Onion, 2016). On the other hand, ambition has generally been seen as a very good thing for a man, a sign of attractiveness, good health, and masculinity. Such perceptions, if they are dominant in the culture, could lead members of a school board to subconsciously distrust a woman who was ambitious enough to pursue a position of superintendent. This conclusion would be congruent with the ideas discussed above.

Research Questions

Understanding how school board members perceive the superintendent role, regarding expectations of culture, behavior and gender, will provide insight on the decision-making process when hiring a new superintendent. An overarching key hypothesis pertaining to this research will be that gender does in fact have a significant effect on school board perception during the superintendent selection process and therefore contributes to the underrepresentation of female superintendents. The following research questions and hypotheses were developed to adequately address the underlying issues that serve as a contributing factor to the low rate of female superintendency:

RQ1:   Is there a significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between male and female school board members?

H$_0$1:   There is no significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between male and female school board members.

H$_a$1:   There is a significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between male and female school board members.

RQ2:   What impact does the gender of an applicant have on the superintendent selection process?

H$_0$2:   Gender of an applicant does not have a statistically significant impact on the superintendent selection process.

H$_a$2:   Gender of an applicant has a statistically significant impact on the superintendent selection process.

RQ3:   How do the beliefs about leadership style impact a school board's decision when hiring a superintendent?

RQ4:   During the superintendent selection process, do school board members perceive male applicants or female applicants as stronger leaders of organizational culture?

Description of Terms

Before proceeding further, for the sake of clarity, it is important to define certain key terms that will be essential for understanding the context of the dissertation.

ANOVA: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) predicts the relationship between variable groups towards the dependent variable based on properties of the independent variable. An ANOVA method can be performed on each group and determines whether there are differences between them (Kim, 2014).

Feminist theory: Using the lived experiences of women, feminist researchers seek the opportunity to study topics that were previously considered unimportant, too personal, or nonacademic in education.   Feminist research pays attention to the voices of women and attempts to provide a deeper understanding using the female perspective (Skrla et al., 2000).

Gender role: Specific cultural roles designated to females and males (Dulin, 2007).

Gender: Meanings that people in society assign to female and male categories. Unlike biology, gender is more than identifying a person as male or female. Gender is the meaning assigned to female and male categories (Dulin, 2007).

Gender stereotype: Characteristics or traits people believe to be true about males and females (Dulin, 2007).

Leadership style: Leadership style is the inherent enthusiasm for and support of others to help them achieve organizational goals using strategies that inspire growth and personal development (Fry 2003).

Leadership: Leadership is the inherent ability and skill to motivate, empower and influence others to perform to their maximum potential (Hunter, 2004).

Organizational trust: The belief from employees in the integrity, character and ability of a leader (Alizadeh & Panhi, 2013).

Organizational culture: Organizational culture examines the people, quality and

style of an organization by examining the language and customs of an organization, the mission and values, customs and symbols. Organizational culture is commonly thought of as the way organizations conduct business (Alizadeh & Panahi, 2013).

Patriarchal theory: Patriarchy theory evaluates power structures in relation to gender, specifically in regard to gender expectations of given roles (Witz, 2013).

Phenomenological research: Research that studies the lived experiences of a particular person or group of people (Simon & Goes, 2011).

Qualitative research: Exploratory research used to understand opinions, reasons and motivations about a central phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

Questionnaire: A data collection method and tool used in qualitative research to gather information. A questionnaire asks a participant specific questions related to the research study (Creswell, 2013).

School board: A local board or authority responsible for the provision and maintenance of schools.

Social role theory: People assume responsibilities and divide labor based on the traditional role of their gender (Eagly & Kite, 1987).

Superintendent: The superintendent is the chief administrator responsible for overseeing, leading and managing a PreK-12 school district.

t-**test:** Evaluates the difference between the means of two independent or unrelated groups (Creswell, 2013.)

Significance of the Study

The superintendency has undergone radical changes since the establishment of state and local superintendents in public schools and continues to evolve over time. Now the expectation

is that the superintendent be skilled not only in business management but also in educational leadership (Andero, 2000). Early in its inception, the superintendent was viewed as a political authority, and educational aspects were not as important. Now, the superintendent is responsible for all aspects of the organization and must possess effective leadership skills needed to ensure optimal student success within a given school district. (Andero, 2000).

From a historical context, school districts have defined a need for superintendents; however, discriminatory practices during varying timeframes influenced the gender bias prevalent within superintendent positions among males and females (Land, 2002; Tallerico, 2000). The work of reforming the role of the superintendent began in the early 1980s and the relationship between the superintendent and student achievement became the focus of most research. This new shift in focus made females educators interested in pursuing the position. However, women were absent from the superintendent position because superintendents were not encouraged to prioritize family needs first (Grogan, 2000). Even though the number of female superintendents has increased over time, there remains a large discrepancy in the percentage of female superintendents compared to male superintendents.

While females have experienced an increase in superintendent positions; a majority of superintendent position are still filled by males (Tallerico, 2000; Wallace, 2015). Societal norms deeply rooted in prescribed social roles prohibit the advancement of females to the role of superintendents. For example, females find it rather cumbersome to balance their family and a career in superintendency due to self-imposed barriers (Copeland & Calhoun, 2014; McGee, 2010). Females will postpone pursuing a leadership position to raise a family. External barriers also exist that contribute to females not pursuing the position; school boards, the governing body responsible for selecting the superintendent, are reluctant to hire female superintendents (Sharp et

al., 2004). To understand the low percentage of female superintendents, further research needs to be done to examine how gender effects the superintendent selection process used by school boards and ultimately, its relationship to the underrepresentation of female superintendents.

This mixed methods research studies beliefs about gender and leadership when selecting a superintendent.   Research started by selecting school districts in who hired a new superintendent in the last 3 years. To obtain the largest sample possible, every school board member was invited to participate in the survey. Survey questions were answered on a Likert scale and contained open-ended questions to further understand the board members' belief about the impact of gender on the superintendent selection process. This study explored how attitudes, values and beliefs about gender and leadership from School Board Members impacted the superintendent hiring process.

Overview of Research Methods

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to examine the impact of gender on school board member perceptions during the superintendent selection process. Quantitative and qualitative data collected during this study allowed the researcher to answer four research questions regarding beliefs about gender, the impact of gender during the selection process, beliefs about leadership style and organizational culture.

Data were collected through an on-line electronic survey. The survey instrument was originally designed for a similar study conducted by Erin Webb (2013). Several questions from the instrument were included in the present study. The remaining questions were developed by the researcher. Prior to administering the full-scale survey, the survey was validated and piloted using content experts from the state of Idaho and Washington.

Participants for the study included school board members from who recently hired a superintendent within the past three years were invited to participate in the anonymous study.

Out of 647 school board members invited to participate, 114 completed the survey.

The survey included both Likert-scale questions and open-ended response questions. To evaluate the qualitative data, the researcher used two methods. First, the researcher used a computer program NViVo to identify themes. The computer program identifies reoccurring nodes and themes based on the word and phrase frequency found in the response. Second, to verify the themes discovered in NVivo, the researcher used thematic coding to identify emerging patterns and themes. The researcher read every response and hand coded words and phrases according to frequency and topic.

The researcher used SPSS to analyze the quantitative data. A t-test and ANOVA were used to determine the statistical significance of research questions one and two. The t-test analyzed to determine if there were significant differences in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent by the two gender groups of school board members. The ANOVA analyzed if there was a significant difference between male and female school board member beliefs about hiring s superintendent.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Introduction

Superintendents can be the defining element in a school districts' performance (McFarlane, 2010; Thompson, 2014). Their work is critical in ensuring the mission and vision of a school district moves forward (Hilliard & Newsome, 2013; Keedy, Bjork, Winter, Rinehart, & Ricciardi, 2007; Thompson, 2014). Not only are they expected to be an instructional leader, they are the keeper of the culture and a conduit between the school and the community.

With the increase in demands and expectations, studies show that the average tenure of a superintendent is on the decline. Grover Russ Whitehurst, Director of the Brown Center on Education Policy at the Brookings Institution in Washington D.C, indicated that turnover is a rampant problem with the profession of superintendent (Freedburg, 2014). According to Madeline Hill (2014), the average superintendent in an urban school district serves for 3.2 years. Frequent change in leadership creates a feeling of instability within the district and the community (Tekniepe, 2015).

To address these issues, this literature review will synthesize the following topics into several distinct areas: historical context of the superintendency, current information regarding the history of the superintendent, the female superintendent, the role of the school board in selecting superintendents, gender as it relates to organizational culture, and the current need for female superintendents.

History of the superintendency. The superintendency has gone through varying changes since its emergence. From a historical perspective, the responsibilities of superintendents have changed to accommodate new regulations, legislations, and educational practices (Andero, 2000). An amendment to the Education Law (Article 14) led to what is commonly referred to as

the district superintendent (History of the District Superintendency, 2009). The term was coined as such due to the nature of the superintendents and their responsibility to the entire school district. However, now district superintendents are simply referred to as superintendents as it is implied that they work within a designated district.

The historical context of the superintendency is generally subdivided into three distinct periods of time: from the 1800s to the beginning of the 20th century, from the beginning of the 20th century to the 1960s, and from the 1960s to the present (Houston, 2001). At the initial establishment of public schools, superintendents did not exist. Schools were initially run by state boards. Before the position of superintendent was established, many of the tasks associated with school administration were completed by school board members, minimizing the need for a superintendent.

At the very beginning, local lay boards were in charge of running public schools (Houston, 2001; Land, 2002). In fact, superintendents did not assume a prominent position in the education sector until 1831, 10 years after the establishment of public schools in 1821 (Houston, 2001).

The need for a superintendent became evident in the 1830's; student enrollment was increasing and school districts were growing from one room school houses to multiple buildings and separate grade levels. School boards began appointing superintendents to manage the school district. Two east coast cities, Buffalo and New York, were the first to appoint a superintendent in 1838, with Louisville, Kentucky, following that same year. Larger cities with greater student populations presented the highest administrative needs and as such were the first to appoint superintendents. Hiring a superintendent became a more common practice especially as schools consolidated into school districts.

During the early 20th century, legislatures for each state established a supervisory system within the school district. Supervisory districts located throughout the state warranted both the management and supervision of all public schools located within the district. Since 1948, three specific federal statutes regarding the authority, roles, and responsibilities of the superintendent have remained constant; however, the functioning roles of the superintendent continue to change (History of the District Superintendency, 2009). The statutes include (1) fulfilling administrative and managerial events with school districts; (2) acting as executive officer of the Board of Directors; and (3) performing duties which are assigned by the Commissioner of Education (History of the District Superintendency, 2009). These statues are in direct alignment with the roles and responsibilities of the superintendent.

Before school districts adopted the position of superintendent, a state superintendent managed school districts across the state. Many of the responsibilities of state superintendents entailed collection, management, and dissemination of state funding for education. As the population of individuals continued to rise and expand westward, several small local school systems began to form (Houston, 2001; Carter & Cunningham, 1997). However, the state superintendent was unable to oversee the growing number of schools needed to accommodate the increase in student population. An individual state superintendent appointed to each respective state was unable to visit and inspect all schools within the state. This sparked a need for change and led to the establishment of county superintendents before the Civil War (Houston, 2001).

To assist with the oversight of public education in local communities, state legislatures provided assistance for public education. They allocated small amounts of funding to help with basic education needs. As the legislatures allocated funding, they needed a system to ensure

funding was being spent appropriately. Therefore, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, lawmakers established an accounting system for these funds and appointed volunteer committees to over-see the use of state funds. These committees eventually led to the formulation of state and local boards of education to carry out this function. In fact, Massachusetts, which is considered the home of public education because of the work of the educator Horace Mann, still calls its school boards "school committees."

As state legislatures began to allocate funding for the educational needs of students within the community, a need for an accounting system surfaced. Committees volunteered to provide oversight of the utilization of state funding, which later transcended into the need for local and state boards of education (Houston, 2001; Land, 2002). More and more communities began to receive funding thereby making it burdensome for local committees to handle. A state office was later employed to handle the management of state funds for education.

As time passed, more and more communities continued to receive state funds. As the number of communities increased, so did the time required to account for the money. The accounting became burdensome and needed additional oversight. A paid state officer was designated to handle the accounting activities of state education funds as well as an increasing number of other responsibilities (Carter & Cunningham, 1997). This led to a full-time job and New York is credited with appointing the first state superintendent in 1812. Other states soon planned for similar positions (Carter & Cunningham, 1997).

Shortly thereafter, a new initiative led to the development of the local superintendency. During this time, local superintendents within some regions were deemed responsible for overseeing and supervising only one school district; however, other local superintendents supervised several public schools. Local superintendents were first appointed in Buffalo,

Kentucky, Louisville, and New York in 1837 (Houston, 2001). However, the purpose and need

for local superintendents did not spread rapidly across other cities in the United States. A few

decades later, in 1865, a Superintendent's Division was created by the National Education

Association but became the American Association of School Administrators during the 21st

century (Houston, 2001).

In the 21st century, local boards created a position, the superintendency, without any

statutory authority (Houston, 2001). On a national scale, well over 35,000 individuals held

positions as superintendents by the 1960s (Houston, 2001). As the position gained popularity,

more public-school districts soon began to hire superintendents. Superintendency emerged as a

central position in education and was responsible for making most of the decisions that would

essentially affect the school district. Not only did superintendents hold the most power, they

also became highly visible local community members (Houston, 2001).

Role of the superintendent. Alsbury and Whitaker (2007) contend that the role of the

Superintendent is drastically evolving from a more managerial role to the role of instructional

leader. Continual educational reform continues to play a major part in defining the role of the

superintendent. Accountability is at an all-time high; forcing superintendents to lead differently

than in the past. In the past more, emphasis was placed on the role of the principal and teacher,

less on the Superintendent. Currently, the reversal is happening and superintendents are in the

spotlight. Up until recently the instructional leadership role of a superintendent had been

minimized with greater focus paid upon principals as instructional leaders (Alsbury & Whitaker,

2007).

This can be understood within the context of a broader cultural shift in leadership

paradigms in general. Historically, for example, a leader in any organization or firm may have

been expected to work in a primarily managerial way; but now, this paradigm, sometimes associated with transactional leadership, has given way to other paradigms, such as transformational leadership and servant leadership (Maher, 1997). The literature on transformational leadership consistently discusses the ways in which it is superior to the simple managerial mode, from producing a greater level of organizational trust to developing intrinsic (as opposed to extrinsic) motivation among employees (Goodwin, Whittington, Murray, & Nichols, 2012; Barbuto, 2005; Maher 1997). Likewise, servant leadership, in which the leader works toward instructing and empowering employees, has been associated with similar outcomes and has also been hailed as an especially appropriate paradigm within professions such as social work and education (Dierendonck, 2011; Hunter, 2004).

It is worth pointing out that this change in the conceptualization of leadership as it pertains to the role of superintendent may bode well for women seeking the position. While the managerial role has been typically associated with men, transformational leadership and related paradigms have a more nurturing aspect to them, and research has indicated that men and women who work within such paradigms tend to exhibit the same leadership behaviors (Cuadrado, Morales, & Recio, 2008; Kent, Blair, & Rudd, 2010). This could potentially help break down some of the cultural barriers to women becoming superintendents.

In accordance with Wright and Harris (2010), a superintendent's innate role aids in enhancing the success of students within the school district. Due to increased cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity among students, superintendents today must focus on developing and enhancing cultural competence and cultural proficiency. Increased levels of cultural proficiency among superintendents will help to minimize the achievement gap present in small yet culturally diverse school districts (Wright & Harris, 2010). Today, superintendents focus on reducing the

achievement gap, while working proactively with other education stakeholders to keep students in school and help them succeed (Grogan, 2005; Brunner & Kim, 2010).

Superintendents play a major role in several key areas. First, superintendents make decisions regarding curriculum policies. Hence, superintendents must actively engage and collaborate with other educational professionals and institutions as they set an agenda for student achievement (Andero, 2000). Superintendents serve the crucial role of liaison between two key educational stakeholders, the state leaders in education and the board of education (Andero 2000; Wright & Harris, 2010). When decisions are made at the state and federal level that will impact student achievement, the superintendent's job is to communicate both to the board and the district staff and plan accordingly. They have the ultimate task of developing, implementing, and sustaining an academic program that meets the needs of all students within the district while paying close attention to state and federal mandates. An additional layer to this work is the school board. Superintendents have the responsibility to work with the school board to write policy that supports curricular programs. The success of a given curriculum policy is therefore measured based on the number of students who become successful, respectable citizens in school, within the community, and later in life (Andero, 2000). Superintendents are required to find the most cost-effective approaches that do not compromise the quality of the educational curriculum and programs implemented throughout the district (History of the District Superintendency, 2009).

Prior to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, a significant amount of attention failed to highlight curriculum development and testing (Grogan, 2005). However, after its passage, increased attention focused on the need to address such issues thereby influencing the role of the superintendency. The new role of the superintendent is concentrated on instructional practices

(Hilliard & Newsome, 2013). Grogan (2005) proclaims that the increase in the number of women involved in the superintendency accounts for the new profound "emphasis on learning and creating communities of learners" (p. 25). This is representative of the fact that women tend to spend a much longer time in the classroom prior to pursuing a career as a superintendent. Women typically enjoy teaching so once they become superintendents, women tend to foster and develop an environment conducive to learning (Grogan, 2005; Superville, 2016).

As Superintendents continue to become the instructional visionary for the district, they also employ a variety of skills to maintain momentum and forward progress. Waters and Marzano (2006) articulated six common leadership practices for superintendents. The authors studied whether these six practices applied to superintendents of rural school districts given that they face different challenges than a non-rural superintendent. Rural district superintendents face increased poverty and economic loss are overburdened with a wider range of responsibilities, and serve a more public role (Waters & Marzano, 2006). The study revealed similarities in leadership priorities and practices across rural superintendents: academic success, quality teachers, and creating resources were all common priorities. Additionally, six common leadership practices emerged from the study: establish goals and expectations for reform, intervene with struggling students, removal of low-performing staff, create a close working relationship with principals, be active in union negotiation, and have a financial commitment to district initiatives. While there was a solid connection to the Marzano and Walters (2006) study, one practice from the study could not be supported, formal goal setting (Forner, Bierlein-Palmer, & Reeves, 2012). Formal goal setting is not a common practice in rural school districts, possibly due to a desire to remain open to contingencies as they emerge.

Turnover. There are many reasons for superintendent turnover. One reason is called the push and pull effect. This effect is involved in high superintendent turnover specifically in rural districts but can be applied to other settings (Tekniepe, 2015). Push factors are pressures that force leaders to leave their job (Tekniepe, 2015). Superintendents are in essence "pushed" away from their position due to things such as negative school boards relationships, community discontent or negative perceptions of the superintendent. Pull factors are the complete opposite; superintendents can be "pulled" away from their positions because of incentives or opportunities for advancement.

Examining the factors that contribute to superintendent turnover clarifies ways to mitigate potential contributions. The four broad areas that contribute to turnover in rural districts are political conflict, internal pressure, external pressure and fiscal stress (Tekniepe, 2015). Results of Tekniepe's research show that the chances are greater for rural superintendents to experience a push departure if political conflict exists. For example, school boards that micro-manage or lose trust in the superintendent are both factors that create a push departure (Tekniepe, 2015). Strong employment contracts reduce the probability of a superintendent leaving unexpectedly. Internal pressures are a definite link to involuntary departure while external pressures are interconnected. An internal pressure for a rural superintendent would be found within the district. Staff might be resistant to change in district procedures. External pressure comes from the community or stressors outside the district. The community could have an agenda that is in conflict with the incoming superintendent. Finally, fiscal stress and the ultimate responsibility to keep the district solvent and compliant has an impact on superintendent turnover.

When looking at this reviewed literature as a whole, two main points can be synthesized from the individual findings. First, the role of the superintendent has evolved substantially over time. Second, superintendent turnover is a serious issue, both because of the changing nature of the role and the changing circumstances of school systems themselves. This implies a need to develop a fresh pool of candidates for superintendents and to ensure that all qualified applicants, including all qualified women, are thoroughly considered for the job.

History of females in the superintendency. The 20th century was marked by patterns of male homogeneity in superintendency (Kowalaski & Brunner, 2011; Tallerico & Blount, 2004). The position of school superintendent was influenced by divisions which segregated individuals and prospective candidates. Overrepresentation of males in superintendency was attributed to social stereotypes, socialization of norms among students, and the bureaucratization that fosters and perpetuates differentiated sex roles (Kowalaski & Brunner, 2011; Tallerico & Blount, 2004). Women held teaching positions while men held leadership roles in education.

Through institutionalization, superintendency was defined as work for men which continued to perpetuate sex-based discrimination. Data collected from 1910 to 1930 showed an increase in the percentage of women superintendents from approximately 9% to 11% (Tallerico & Blount, 2004). This increase is strongly correlated with women's suffrage in 1920. Campaigning by suffrage activists who fought for women to become superintendents also contributed to the surge in the number of women fulfilling a superintendent position. There was a decline in women superintendents from 1930 to 1970 (11% to 3%) partly due to changes in state legislation (Tallerico & Blount, 2004). States enacted new requirements in which superintendents were obligated to possess specific credentials and undergo specialized training that drastically differed from teaching requirements (Tallerico & Blount, 2004). The formation of

these barriers created additional obstacles for women seeking a position in superintendency.

When World War II ended, the enactment of the GI Bill created new incentives for male veterans to acquire education, degrees, and training in varying disciplines inclusive of school leadership (Superville, 2016; Tallerico & Blount, 2004). School district consolidation in the 1950s led to a steep decline in the number of women superintendents. State policies required an integration of a minimum of two school districts into a rather large district. With more men entering the field of education, this consolidative policy provided men with greater opportunity to pursue the position of superintendent (Tallerico & Blount, 2004).

Representation of women in superintendency encountered a surge from 1970 to 1998, from 3% to 10% ((Tallerico & Blount, 2004; Copeland & Calhoun, 2014; Kowalaski & Brunner, 2011; McGee, 2010). This is marked by the presence of the modern women's feminist movement in which female activism created additional career opportunities for women interested in school administration, particularly superintendency (Bendal & Schmidt, 2012; Chisamya, DeJaeghere, Kendall, & Khan, 2012). An increased number of female superintendents is correlated with increased federal funding through the Women's Educational Equity Act of 1974 allocated to minimize and possibly eradicate inequities in sex in the education sector (Chisamya et al., 2012; Tallerico & Blount, 2004). According to the State Department of Education:

"The Women's Educational Equity Act (WEEA) program was enacted in 1974 to promote educational equity for girls and women, including those who suffer multiple discrimination based on gender and on race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, or age, and to provide funds to help education agencies and institutions meet the requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (US State Department of Education, n.d.)."

Gender bias, a lack of mentorship and deeply rooted societal norms are only a few of the barriers females continue to experience as they pursue the superintendency (Dowell & Larwin, 2013; Kachur-Reico & Wallin, 2011; Kelsey et al., 2014; Kowalski & Stouder, 1999; Lane-

Washington & Wilson-Jones, 2010). Women are still underrepresented despite the 1972

legislation eliminating discrimination based on sex (Tallerico & Blount, 2004). Strong biases

against female leaders exist and women continue to fight gender stereotypes in leadership

positions (Stoker, VanderVelde & Lammers, 2012).

While female educators dominate classroom teaching positions, a significant disparity

exists in the number of females compared to males in educational leadership positions, especially

the superintendency (Derrington & Sharatt, 2009; Kachur-Recio & Wallin, 2011; Kelsey et al.,

2014; Kowalski & Stouder, 1999; Munoz et al., 2014; Reed & Patterson, 2007). As has been

indicated in the previous section of this dissertation, at the current rate of increase, it would take

almost 76 years for women to achieve proportional representation within this profession

(Wallace, 2015). Additionally, there is a salary discrepancy between male and females.

> A 2013-2014 report from the American Association of Superintendents revealed the "…median base maximum pay for superintendents in districts with 300 to 2,499 students was $258,734 for men and $246, 048 for women. Districts with 2,500 to 9,000 students show a similar disparity, where median base maximum pay was $288,000 for men and $268,766 for women (Meyers, 2014, para. 2).

Female superintendents continue to be underrepresented and underpaid in the role of

superintendent (Wallace, 2015; Skrla et al., 2000). Unlike their counterparts, most female

superintendents do not apply for multiple positions. In fact, Kowalski and Stouder (1999)

report that females tend to serve as superintendents in districts where they have years of

experience. The authors found that compared to men, women in high-visibility leadership

roles prove themselves worthy of the position by working their way up through the

organization (Kowlaksi & Stouder, 1999).

There are three main reasons females enter into the superintendency (Wallace, 2015).

Female superintendents are committed to education, want to impact student achievement

and have a desire to serve the community (Kachur-Reico & Wallin, 2011; Wallace, 2015).

Females found that in order to obtain and be considered for a position, they had to act

stronger and more decisive than their male colleagues (Derrington & Sharatt, 2009; Wallace

2015).   Therefore, to pursue the superintendency, overcome adversity and endure the

scrutiny of public office, female educators must have grit and determination (Kirby &

Klocko, 2014).

Underrepresentation remains common for women in the superintendency (Oakley,

2000; Superville, 2016; Wallace, 2015). Despite the inherent increase in the number of

females assuming the role of superintendent, this remains a significant challenge due to the

inequity of placements in larger districts. An estimated 82% of men who hold positions as

superintendents, serve primarily in larger school districts (Grogan, 2005). Although males in

the position of superintendent far outnumber females in the same field, women in

superintendency have recently grown over the last few years (Derrington & Sharratt, 2009;

Superville, 2016). Data collected from research studies conducted on a nationwide scale

shows that the proportion of female school superintendents increased from about 12%

during the latter most part of the 1990s to approximately 22% in 2006 (Derrington &

Sharratt, 2009).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 75% of educators are female

(Brunner & Kim, 2010; Derrington & Sharratt, 2009; Ingersoll, Merrill & Stuckey, 2014).

Of the approximately 75% of women employed in the educational sector, almost 52% of

those women serve as school administrators. Of the 52% of females that serve as school

administrators, only 33% served as area/associate/assistant/deputy superintendents (Grogan,

2005; Ingersoll, Merrill & Stuckey, 2014). Since superintendents generally arise from

professionals with a background and experience in the field of education, theoretically, more females should fulfill superintendent positions. The discrepancy between the number of women holding the position of superintendent does not match, and is not representative of, the number of females qualified for the position (Derrington & Sharatt, 2009; Duwe, 2010). The data represents this misalignment in the number of female teachers and the number of female superintendents.

Barriers that hinder females from holding a position as school superintendent have been present for decades (Derrington & Sharatt, 2009; McGee, 2010; Kachur-Recio & Wallin, 2011; Kelsey et al., 2014; Lane-Washington & Wilson-Jones, 2010; Oakley, 2000). A comparison study performed among female superintendents and females aspiring to the position of superintendent in 1993 and 2007 reveal interesting findings (Derrington & Sharratt, 2009). Though most of the same barriers existed over the course of 14 years, the ranking of each barrier shifted. Research findings from initial study in 1993 showed that the barriers that hampered female superintendents during this time were based on institutionalization and discrimination. Discriminatory practices toward females and stereotyping of sex roles were prominent (Derrington & Sharratt, 2009).

However, more than a decade later these barriers shifted in ranking. In the 2007 study, self-imposed barriers have the highest ranking (Derrington & Sharratt, 2009). This demonstrates that female superintendents and females seeking to pursue a career in superintendency are limited by their own individual beliefs, thought, and notions. Family responsibilities and relocating are two barriers self-imposed by women to avoid pursuing the superintendency (Derrington & Sharratt, 2009; McGee, 2010). Women superintendents are therefore influenced by family obligations, demonstrating that females are significantly less

likely to relocate for a position in superintendency due to family and spouse-related obligations (Derrington & Sharratt, 2009; McGee, 2010; Superville, 2016). Females tend to also struggle with the challenges associated with balancing a career as superintendent and a family. Further examination revealed that the increased presence and importance of self-imposed barriers are not limited to female superintendents and females seeking a role as superintendent in, and they are common among female superintendents and females interested in superintendency in the United States (Derrington & Sharratt, 2009; McGee, 2010).

The state of Washington is considered to be more liberal than conservative (Bonk, 2014). One would expect cultural barriers to be weaker in liberal states than in more conservative states (Reingold, 2012). However, McGee (2010) indicated that women working within the education systems in Florida experience similar self-imposed barriers and that there is a long history of women in society in general experiencing such barriers. Florida is considered by most political outlets as a "purple state" ("Swing state," n.d.). A purple state is commonly known as a swing state whereby either political candidate has a viable chance at winning the electoral votes. For example, during the 2016 Presidential election, Donald Trump won the state of Florida with a total of 29 electoral votes ("United States presidential election in Florida, 2016," n.d.) On the contrary, in 2012, President Barack Obama won the state of Florida during the 2012 Presidential election ("United States presidential election in Florida, 2012," n.d.). It is thus safe to conclude that the phenomenon is not limited to the state of Washington.

In light of the complex demands of being a superintendent, very little research exists to help school board members understand if the gender make-up of a board contributes to the

underrepresentation of female superintendents. While several researchers have recommendations on how to meet these problems, existing literature does not show what specific leadership responsibilities are needed to be successful in overcoming these difficulties (Anthony, 2012; Christensen, et al., 2011; Horm, 2015; Sheppard & Brown, 2012; Topper & Lancaster, 2013).

Moreover, insofar as the gender disparity is due to some kind of implicit sexism within the superintendent selection process, the gender composition of school boards may not necessarily be a very important factor in determining outcomes. Female school board members can often carry the same dominant cultural attitudes about gender that male school board members carry (Bearman, Korobov, & Thorne, 2009). This is sometimes called the phenomenon of internalized sexism, whereby women think and act in accordance with the very logic that keeps them oppressed in the first place (Bearman et al., 2009).

History and function of school boards. While school districts are also managed by a superintendent and other administrative staff such as a Chief Financial Officer or Chief Academic Officer, school boards are typically elected bodies that represent the community and make sure the voices of all stakeholders are heard (Thompson, 2014). As such, they oversee the standards for public education, are involved in funding and setting broad organizational goals and are instrumental in assuring positive student academic achievement by ensuring the student needs perceived by families and the larger community are addressed (Land, 2002). School boards originated to oversee the standards for public education, without necessarily requiring specific professional backgrounds from the school board members (Land, 2002). However, they exert considerable control over school functioning and staffing, particularly in the selection and role of the superintendent as leader of the local school system (Dervarics & O'Brien, 2016). This literature review will focus on the history and function of school boards in public institutions,

exploring the role of school boards in selecting superintendents and the evolution of the superintendent role in larger school districts as they relate to school board governance.

Prior to the formation of school boards, local government officials oversaw the public education system. As Land (2002) explains, Massachusetts was the first state to form an official school board that operated separately from the local government. New laws were put into place in 1891 to grant both managerial and financial control to each separate school district in Massachusetts. The state's groundbreaking efforts to place control at a local level became the standard for public education throughout the United States (Land, 2002). This model of local school boards, elected by local citizens, to oversee the control of separate school districts in separate communities is what primarily exists in public education today (Thompson, 2014). In recent decades, the increased complexity of school functioning has led to the evolution of this basic model to shift day-to-day managerial oversight from the school boards to a paid, non-elected superintendent (Dervarics & O'Brien, 2016). Modern school boards now focus on the broad vision of the district, and with policies that influence student academic achievement levels, and relationships between the school districts and the local communities (Land, 2002). Because of this role shift, the qualifications for superintendent positions became focused on professional managerial experience, education/instructional experience, and formalized training in educational leadership (Land, 2002).

In recent years, school boards have become smaller and more exclusive, with a greater number of professionals holding graduate and advanced degrees, executive level managerial positions, and self-employed business owners (Gronberg, Jansen, Karakaplan, & Taylor, 2015). This has been attributed to numerous factors, including time constraints due to economic downturn and more dual-income families and single parents, the rising cost of running for

political office, and the financial implications of school quality, which impacts housing values and other economic concerns to the local community (Feuerstein, 2009). This has also slowed the evolution of the school board from predominately Caucasian males to a body more representative of the population (Feuerstein, 2009).

School board members serve as a way to improve their community and promote business interests that are impacted by school decisions and quality (Land, 2002: Feuerstein, 2009). Finances and taxation for school funding are a significant part of this equation, and not surprisingly, a large part of the consolidation or centralization of school districts and school boards have stemmed from a desire to increase cost efficiency (Gronberg et al., 2015).

Local boards additionally face greater financial constraints due to increasing regulation from state and federal government groups, which now dictate educational standards, overall curriculum guidance such as the Common Core, desegregation mandates, and minimum teacher qualifications (Feuerstein, 2009).

School boards also face financial constraints due to increased numbers of children in school and diversion of funds from public education to private schools (Gronberg et al., 2015). Overcrowding has stretched the resources of many communities, where housing developments and increased population have resulted in pressure on boards to approve expensive capital projects to house increased numbers of students (Dervarics & O'Brien, 2016). In other communities, growth in charter schools has helped alleviate the burden. Many of these charter schools fall under the umbrella of public school district funding (Land, 2002). The student populations of charter sites often impact the amount of funding school districts receive from federal and state governments (Land, 2002). In addition, some public school districts are responsible for providing services to charter schools in their geographical area, such as

delivering school lunches and meals to charter sites at the same time they are receiving less funding as per-pupil funds are given to charter operators (Gronberg et al., 2015).

Currently, the most common functions of school boards are obtaining funding, deciding how to allocate that funding to various programs and departments, and setting standards for the recruitment and retention of staff members (Thompson, 2014). School board members have also recently been charged with maintaining or even repairing the community image of public school districts and public education in general (Land, 2002). As communities become more diverse and schools become vulnerable to threats of violence, board members must find ways to implement curriculum programs to address a variety of student needs. Some of these needs include special education, non-native English speakers, and students from households who live at or below federal poverty standards (Munoz et al., 2014). School boards must also serve as a liaison between federal and state curriculum and testing standards, particularly when it comes to the implementation of these standards at each school site (Thompson, 2014). Teachers and school level administrators are primarily responsible for the implementation of curriculum and testing, but school board members need to ensure those standards are being communicated and implemented properly (Dervarics & O'Brien, 2016).

Leadership Styles

Leadership in any organization is an important component of efficiency and effectiveness. A leadership style directly influences organizational change, commitment, and effectiveness (Crites et al., 2015; Cuadrado, Morales & Recio, 2008; Forner, et al., 2012; Lee, 2013). Each one compliments the other through a causal relationship. For example: organizational commitment positively affects organizational effectiveness and organizational change positively affects organizational effectiveness.

Leadership styles common among superintendents include autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire, servant, situational, and transformational (Crites et al., 2015; Cuadrado et al., 2008). Autocratic leaders are in control and make decisions based on their own individual beliefs and judgements, while democratic leaders tend to include others in decisions (Bird & Wang, 2013; Cinebell, Skudiene, Trijonyte & Reardon, 2013; Onorato, 2013). Superintendents with a democratic leadership style will collaborate with administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, and staff members prior to developing goals and objectives or making any decisions. Laissez-faire leadership grants group members and others the ability to make decisions. Leaders that exhibit a servant leadership style are focused on serving and meeting the other inherent needs of others (Hunter, 2004). Situational leaders practice varying leadership practices based on the current situation. During emergencies, situational leaders are more direct; however, under other circumstances situational leaders tend to include other individuals in the decision-making process (Bird & Wang, 2013; Cinebell et al., 2013; Stewart-Banks & Hakim, 2013). Transformational leadership highlights organizational improvement and achievements through meaningful change (Bird & Wang, 2013; Loughlin, Arnold & Crawford, 2012; Maher, 1997; Onorato, 2013).

According to a self-report of leadership style, a majority of superintendents in the following states: Tennessee, South Carolina, Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Arkansas say that transformational leadership is their preferred style (Bird & Wang, 2013). Approximately 32.23% of superintendents describe themselves as transformational leaders, 25.25% of superintendents prefer a situational style of leadership, while about 23.92% of superintendents are servant leaders (Bird & Wang, 2013). Additional research

findings reveal that superintendents embody several leadership styles such as democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire. (Bird & Wang, 2013).

Despite the specific type of leadership style, all superintendents and prospective superintendents must focus on authenticity to ensure effectiveness (Bird & Wang, 2013; Onorato, 2013). & Sardarzahi, 2016). To achieve an authentic presence an effective superintendent must have the ability to communicate, problem solve, organize, collaborate, model, make decisions, listen, understand, and relate to other people. (Boyland, 2013; Chia-Lin, Hsieh &Shen, 1998; Mehdinezhad & Sardarzahi, 2016).

Transformational vs. transactional leaders. In 1978, political historian and researcher James McGregor Burns, introduced in his book *Leadership*, the concept of transformational leadership (Burns, 1978). First used to describe politicians, now the term is used in all organizations. Transformational leadership is defined as a style of leadership where the leader works with his/her subordinates to accomplish a vision and implement changes (Transformational Leadership, n. d.). Transformational leaders work to empower their followers. Transformational leaders are a role model for their followers. Research shows that transformational leaders produces higher levels of employee motivation and performance.

The term Transactional leadership, also introduced by Burns, is a style of leadership where the leader manages his or her staff through rewards and punishments. The transactional leader believes in the hierarchy of the organization and likes a clear chain of command. The transactional leader uses fear and discipline as well as incentives to accomplish their goals. The transactional leader is not concerned with the strategic goals of the organization, rather they are more concerned with meeting the demands of the day to day business. Burns thought that the transactional leader and the transformational leader were different.

Transactional leadership is also considered managerial leadership. The leader expects the followers to do what they are told to do or else there will be consequences. This type of leader is not trying to change the employee, or the culture; they want things to stay the same. This type of leader may prefer repetitive, structured projects. Some common traits of the transactional leader are: they are extrinsically motivated, they are practical, they are resistant to change, they discourage independent thinking, they reward performance, they rely on the corporate structure, and they may be passive and directive.

"Transformational and transactional leadership are polar opposites when it comes to the underlying theories of management and motivation" (Ingram, n. d., para. 1). Both management theories have a relationship between the leader and the follower. However, transformational leaders want to get buy in from all of the stakeholders and motivate all of the employees to get the job done. Whereas the transactional leader wants the power and authority all to himself or herself. The transactional leader is task and outcome oriented, whereas the transformational leader wants to transform the employee, the culture, and the overall organization to look at the big picture.

Transactional leaders do not try to change organizational culture. They work within the culture that currently exists. Whereas transformational leader strives to change both the organizational culture as well as the followers. The transformational leader strives to guide the followers with team building and collaboration. The transformational leader provides both professional and personal growth for the employees (Ingram, n. d.). The transformational leader appears to be a softer management style whereas the transactional leader seems to want results or the employee is punished.

Burns' research was further developed by Bernard M. Bass. In 1985, Bass wrote
Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations. Bass has stated that a leader can have both
transformational and transactional traits. Bass' theory states that transformational leaders change
their followers by having them focus on the goals of the department or organization rather than
the goals of the individual. Also, transformational leaders have traits based on moral qualities
and naturally care about their subordinates. Bass believes that leaders can be taught the
techniques and the characteristics of transformational leaders (Bass, 1990).

There are major differences between the two types of leadership styles such as problem
solving. Because the transformational leader is looking at the overall big picture, they tend to
mitigate any risks well in advance. While the transactional leader will deal with problems as
they arise. The transformational leader does not work through rewards and incentives, they try
to find other ways to motivate employees and bring out higher level thinking and better
performance in their employees. Transformational leaders strive to appeal to the larger interests
of the entire group rather than individualized attention. Transactional leaders are often
considered managers whereas transformational leaders are thought of as leaders (Boundless,
2016).

"According to Bass, there are four behavioral components that make up transformational
leadership: charisma; inspiration; intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration"
(Owen, 2004, para. 5). These behaviors are mostly associated with creating relationships
between the leader and the followers. The leaders are more concerned with the entire
organization succeeding rather than just having power and authority.

Women in leadership positions are a much smaller group of leaders than men in
leadership positions (Mason, 2015). Although women in leadership positions are growing in

percentage, women represent a very small amount of today's leaders. "In 2012, women who

held CEO positions made up almost 4 percent" (Bally, 2014, para. 1). Due to the low number of

women in leadership positions, it is thought that for a woman to ascend to the ranks of

management, they must be exceptional and work twice as hard as their male counterparts to

enter, or stay in, management.

Gender stereotyping created the belief that a woman's role was perceived to be

nurturing, helpful, and warm (Skelly & Johnson, 2011). Since people assume women embody

these characteristics, they assume women leaders are transformational. Transformational leaders

are also known for being highly relational and focused on that they were more likely to use

characteristics of a transformational leader (Martin, 2015). According to Mason, women leaders

are perceived to be more effective than their male counterparts (2015).

Bernard Bass (1985) created a way to measure transformational leadership. Through his

research, it was discovered that people preferred to work for women because they felt women

leaders cared more about their employees' overall well-being (Eagly, et. al., 2003). Although

there have been many studies on the differences between transactional and transformational

leadership, there have been no significant findings of one gender being better than the other.

This could be because men are taking on more transformational qualities or women are taking on

more transactional qualities (Owen, 2004). According to research by Dr. Eagly, women are

effective with transactional leadership qualities such as motivating with positive rewards rather

than using threats like more men do (Mason, 2015).

In the traditional masculine organization, transformational leadership characteristics are

less likely to be utilized over the transactional leadership qualities. Also, in the corporate

environment, it may be difficult to get true statistics from evaluations. When leaders rate

themselves, they may rate themselves very highly. However, when leaders are rated by their peers, and their superiors, women may be rated higher than their male counterparts. The level of supervisor may also make a difference as to if women are rated more effective leaders than men (Eagly et al., 2003).

Gender Bias in District Leadership Selection

Even though women make up roughly half of the population, the glass ceiling exists in the upper echelons of school district leadership (Bon Reis, Young & Jury, 1999; Dana & Bourisaw, 2006; Oakely, 2000; Bon Reis et al., 1999). The existence of such a "glass ceiling" is verified in the fact that, after the passage of the 1991 Civil Rights Act, the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission was established to study and make recommendations on (1) artificial barriers preventing the advancement of minorities and women, increasing opportunities for women and minorities, and encouraging the advancement of women and minorities to management and decision-making positions in business (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006).

Dana and Bourisaw (2006), two women who served as superintendents for many years are blunt in their assessment: "Educational professionals who are or have been public school superintendents will confirm that there are barriers to accessing and entering the position of school superintendent and, for women, they are likely to be ever present" (p. 13). They note that the obstacles that women experience achieving the position of superintendent are not unlike the obstacles that women face in leadership positions through all kinds of public service organizations throughout the United States (Coder & Spillre, 2013; Dana & Bourisaw, 2006; Stoker & Van der Velde, Lammers, 2012).

Within the business world, women are still underrepresented in a very significant way when it comes to top positions within firms and organizations (Cuadrado et al., 2008; Oakley,

2000; Pinsker, 2014).   The glass ceiling refers to the way in which women are often locked out

of the higher managerial echelons of their workplaces. Fewer female superintendents than males

could be understood as reflective of the broader phenomenon known as the glass ceiling (Oakely,

2000; Bon Reis et al., 2001).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, hopes were high that women, who make up

most the teachers in most school districts, would eventually ascend to their rightful place leading

educational organizations from the position of superintendent. Ella Flagg Young, the first

woman superintendent of Chicago schools declared:

> Women are destined to rule the schools of every city. I look for a large majority of the
> big cities to follow the lead of Chicago in choosing a woman for superintendent. In the
> near future, we will have more women than men in executive charge of the vast
> educational system. […] As the first woman to be placed in the control of schools of a big
> city, it will be my aim to prove that no mistake has been made and to show cities and
> friends alike that a woman is better qualified for this work than a man. (Blount, 1998, p.
> 1).

Even though this was the sentiment that Flagg expressed in 1908, the proportion of women in the

superintendency was around nine percent, and appeared to be heading higher (Blount, 1998).

However, from the end of World War II to the 1970s, women in the superintendent's position

dropped from nine to three percent and rose substantially to a current 24 % of females in the

superintendent position.

As Blount (1998) points out, the seed that started the division between men and women at

the highest levels of district leadership found roots in 1880, when Charles Francis Adams

encouraged a meeting of the National Education Association to consider that graduates of

"normal schools" of education would be ill suited for the leadership roles required of

superintendents that required a higher educational level, and encouraged would-be

superintendents to enroll in university programs to advance their education – nearly all of which

barred or seriously limited female attendance. Within two decades, legions of men enrolled in

such programs, developed networks of support, and developed a strong network in school administration (Blount, 1998, p. 40).

Even though women got the vote and were able to start electing female district officials, they soon found out that women were held to different standards than men when in such offices (Blount, 1998). Truthfully, few superintendents in rural counties managed to visit each school annually – male or female – but a male candidate used this failure to his advantage against a female, painting her female frailty as the cause of the shortcoming, even though once elected, he visited far fewer schools than she had – a failing for which he was not criticized. This coincides with an observation by Shakeshaft, Nowell, and Perry (2007) who noted that the evaluation process does not favor women but does favor equally skilled men. An equal stratification in educational leadership was observed by Banks (2007) who noted that in order for a school board to give initial consideration to a female candidate, she had to have possessed exceptional skills superior to that of a man. In the end, even if the female candidate demonstrated superior skills, school boards still hired more men than women (Banks, 2007).

Gender myths still seem to be firmly entrenched in the higher levels of education. Hutchinson (2002) reports on a survey of female superintendents in the state of Missouri, in which 58.3% of the respondents were treated like women were too emotionally weak to handle the superintendency, 37.5% were treated like women could not handle finances as well as men, and 33.3% were treated like women were emotional to be superintendents.

A clear career pathway to the superintendency also impacts women of color (Beard, 2012; Brown, 2014). Women of color make up 2.2% of the entire superintendent population (Brown, 2014). Women of color are less likely to seek such positions as superintendent because it is still seen as a position for the white male (Banks, 2007; Brown 2014). While race is a

factor, African American woman experience barriers from race and gender (Beard, 2012; Brown, 2014).

Multiple reasons explain the lack of females in the position of superintendent (Derrington & Sharratt, 2009; Lane-Washington & Wilson-Jones, 2010; McGee, 2010; Oakley, 2000). Female administrators aspire to higher levels of leadership but lack a clear career pathway and opportunities afforded to men (Banks, 2007). The tides of female superintendents may be changing for the better, however. A 2006 study conducted by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) Center for System Leadership found that anywhere from 19.6% to 27.1% of superintendents were female, depending on the size of the district (Glass & Franceschini ,2007) . They report that the majority of female superintendents appear to be clustered in smaller school districts. This level of leadership at the highest level parallels the leadership in the corporate world, where Katz, McIntosh, and Wachtell, Litpon (2016) note that 17.9% of Fortune 1000 company directors, 19.7% of Fortune 500 directors, and 22.3% of Fortune 100 company directors are female.

Gender Divisions in School Boards

According to a 2001 survey by the National School Board Association, nearly 40% of board members were female (Glass and Franceschini, 2007). Sparks (2014) confirms that the 40% number still holds in 2014, however she notes that female board members tend not to comment or endorse motions as much as male members of the board, unless females hold a supermajority on the board.

The percentage and participation of females on the school board may be an issue, because in many cases, appointment to the position of superintendent is reliant upon local school boards. A school board member who denied a female applicant the position was quoted: "We're just not

ready for a woman around here" (Blount, 1998, p. 155). He could feel secure in making that statement against a gender discrimination suit because he knew that if she brought suit regarding it, she would never receive another administrative position again. The fact that men are largely in charge of the decision led to a statement documented by Brunner & Grogan (2007) where one female superintendent noted "the good old boy network is alive and well and must be managed" (p. 92). They also note the disparity in the composition of school boards, explaining that only 47% of school boards had more than two women on their board (Brunner & Grogan, 2007).

Impact of the Superintendent Selection on Organizational Culture

When a school board hires a superintendent to lead and manage a school district, how that superintendent establishes organizational trust and builds culture is vital to the overall achievement of the organization (Land, 2002; Peterson & Short, 2001; Thompson, 2014). School boards that fail to consider the needs of the district and which rely solely on their beliefs about leadership and gender stereotypes run the risk of selecting the wrong leader for the district. If gender plays a role in the superintendent selection process and school board members perceive that staff will respond differently to female leadership than male leadership, female leaders will continue to have limited access to the superintendency and the district could lose out on an opportunity to hire a powerful leader.

School boards play an essential role in shaping the culture of a school district. Who they choose as a superintendent will further the beliefs and values of the district. Allowing gender to cloud the judgement of the selection is a disservice to the organization. Whether male or female, superintendents who are new to their school district have the unusual challenge of trying to understand the existing cultural norms that govern the deepest levels of leadership and performance (Alizadeh & Panahi, 2013). Their first, and most important job is to learn those

cultural norms while trying to understand what is sacred or fair game for change (Giberson, et al., 2009). Failing to understand either could result in crucial repercussions.

All aspects of the organization, including culture are affected by the actions of managers and employees (Nikcevic, 2016). When entering a new district and assuming the responsibility of leadership, culture is often what enables or prevents the organization from achieving its goals. Superintendents who ignore or underestimate the culture of a school district run the risk of isolating themselves from the staff and community, who may see the new superintendent as an outsider. Employees who do not embrace the values and behaviors of the organization are either asked to leave or choose to leave voluntarily (Love & Singh,2011).

While different strategies can be used over the short term, culture is the key for achieving long-term success. In an interview by Dick Clark of Merck, Peter Drucker is reported as saying, "Culture eats strategy for breakfast" (Freed, 2015). People are not loyal to a policy or strategic plan, but the underlying culture and spirit of a school district usually drives the organizational focus (Nikcevic, 2016). District employees and community members are loyal to the core values and mission with which they identify. Moreover, when culture and strategy collide, culture always wins (Tye, 2013). Drucker has also commented that, "Company cultures are like country cultures. Never try to change one. Try, instead, to work with what you've got" (Meier, 2009). When a new superintendent denies himself or herself the time to understand the culture and its history, the culture can backfire in the future.

Culture is a merging of the vision and values of the staff and community (Alizadeh & Panahi, 2013; Giberson et al., 2009; Nikcevic, 2016). You can hear it in the language and see it in the interpersonal settings. Over time, culture can develop either a collective or an individual

voice. If the culture of the organization is neglected, disrespected or taken for granted, the risk increases for creating a disconnected, chaotic organization (Goodwin et al., 2012).

Without paying proper attention, leaders may rely more on their positional power or competency to run a district, rather than investing the time for establishing cultural credibility and authority (Feldman, 1985). As a result, they fail to embrace and understand what makes the district culture unique and special. Unfortunately, when this happens, the culture of the district tends to be neglected, and if the superintendent is seen as an outsider, trusted staff may leave the district and the district culture can deteriorate.

Whether an organization develops culture occurs intentionally or accidentally, leaders must manage and plan for their district's culture and assume it is an important role (Bilbrey & Jones, 2009). Top leadership approaches for a school district include building and sustaining a viable culture according to a number of factors. For instance, when creating a strong culture, leaders must acknowledge the past and understand the shared values that are in play. During a personal interview with the owner of Teamwork's International, Dennis Cheesbrow, Owner of Teamwork's International, (personal communication, 2015) he explained, "Without a strong culture of collaboration, respect and positive relationships, leaders find it difficult to focus on what we care about most – our students." The critical work lies in defining and demonstrating shared values. District staff will learn to trust the superintendent if shared values are consistently demonstrated in his or her work.

During a personal interview with Dennis Cheesebrow (2015), he commented that superintendents are often eager to make change, improve structures and processes, and work towards higher levels of student achievement. They may be driven by broad mandates or a moral conviction to help students find their pathways to success. He continued to say, "By taking time

to understand the cultural norms that shape a district, the leadership can provide a new superintendent with insight about what should stay and what should be overhauled." Ultimately, Dennis Cheesebrow reiterated that making drastic changes without having a deep understanding of the norms and values could be a recipe for failure.

When a district brings in a new superintendent, leadership and culture enter into a delicate intersection (Alizadeh & Panahi, 2013; Cheesebrow, 2012; Nikcevic, 2016). The key is to clearly understand the core values that shape the district, as they are already firmly rooted in the culture and have historical significance and power (McFarlane, 2010). The superintendent's job is to understand if the espoused values are hindering or hurting the district's performance. For example, if the culture has allowed behavior that undermines the mission and focus of the work, the organization will not prosper to its fullest potential. If the superintendent turns a blind eye, the district will likely continue working with minimal effectiveness (Goodwin et al., 2010). If the superintendent acts in haste without first earning trust and building relationships, he or she runs the risk of being perceived as someone who is not working for the district, but for their own interest.

The way in which a superintendent approaches change will make or break the district's forward movement (McFarlane, 2010; Waters & Marzano, 2006). Ultimately, it begins with a feeling of trust and integrity about the new superintendent. Foster (2015) stated that building trust and rapport are essential ingredients when starting to build a culture of success. New superintendents can challenge the status quo if they have taken the time to establish cultural credibility and earn the trust of their constituents (Boyland, 2013). Without this element, tenure will likely be short lived.

Trust in today's organizations, particularly in the public sector, "is at an all-time low (Wilson, 2009). A lack of trust has serious implications for the overall organization. Wilson (2009) found that morale and turnover are two significant factors related to organizational distrust. After the Solomon Brothers trading scandal in 1991, Warren Buffet stated, "Trust is like the air we breathe. When it is present, nobody notices. When it isn't, everybody notices." Wilson identified two elements leaders can employ to build trust. First, a leader must establish connections and a relationship with staff. Second, a leader builds trust when others observe the leader acting consistently in a trustworthy way.

New superintendents act with great organizational authority because they often lack the cultural authority to make immediate significant change (Feldman, 1985; Peterson, 2002). Superintendents can invest their time in building relationships and diagnosing the culture, and regardless of the approach, when the organization is healthy, success is often a by-product of the culture (Goodwin et al., 2012; Koter, 2012; Lunenberg, 2011). Creating a culture of trust and rapport allows everyone to feel that they are part of the success (Kotter, 2012). In contrast, when the staff feels marginalized or disrespected by gun-slinging changes and whiplash decisions, the culture can quickly erode, leading to tension and inefficiencies (Bogler 2001; Harris, 2002). When change is needed, the superintendent's role is to illuminate the core values and assist in making the shift, without making drastic changes all at once.

Core values guide our actions and the way in which we work for the benefit of the district (Davis & Leon, 2014). A new superintendent would likely see benefits by clearly defining the core values to create common meaning. Core values are embedded when the superintendent creates a path which allows stakeholders to feel honored and valued for their contribution (Davis & Leon, 2014). When a superintendent starts a new job, the core values are not those of the

leader, but they are the values of the district. The leader clarifies, adjusts, and illuminates the core values for others, and when matched adequately to the culture, the supervisor will have a better chance of success (Davis & Leon, 2014; Dierendonck, 2011; Kowlaski & Brunner, 2011).

Ultimately, when superintendents shoulder the challenges of a complex organization, enlisting the support of the team by honoring their work, listening to their stories, and understanding the culture, they will be able to move the mission forward. Trust and credibility are at stake if the superintendent makes too many changes too fast (Goodwin et al., 2012; Naranjo-Valencia, Jiménez-Jiménez; Sanz-Valle, 2011). One approach is to take time to know the community, learn the culture, and seek clarification about any pressing issues. Before trying to re-write everything about the district's culture, superintendents should listen to the story of its past.

Organizational culture is pervasive and can hinder or help the mission of the organization (Bellou, 2010; Davis & Leon, 2014; Kotter, 2012; Naranjo-Valencia et al.; Zheng, Yang & McClean, 2010). Organizational culture impacts employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment and performance (Bellou, 2010; Tsai, 2011). Failure to recognize the importance of this aspect can potentially have a negative impact on efficiency and productivity (Bellou, 2010; Kingsland, 2013). Workers who positively identify with the leadership style of their managers are encouraged to fulfill the mission of the organization (Tsai, 2011).

A paramount duty of the school board is to select the right leader to build and sustain a strong organizational culture. Looking at culture through an unbiased lens and recognizing the importance culture plays in employee satisfaction will help the superintendent achieve better results and manage more effectively (Brown, 1992).

Theoretical Framework

Within the context of the present research proposal, social role theory will help explain the research questions regarding the role of the superintendent as such: it will help elaborate the qualities that members of school boards in general want superintendents to embody. Patriarchy theory, though, will help explain the ways in which the hiring process for superintendents may be biased against women, and the ways in which the same qualities that would be seen as good in a male superintendent may be perceived as liabilities in a female superintendent.

Social role theory, as its name indicates, suggests that society is made up of people who fill roles and are expected to deliver performances associated with them (Biddle, 2013). For example, a waiter is expected to be polite and courteous to his customers; a wife is expected to be understanding and caring toward her husband; a preacher is supposed to conduct himself with the right kind of decorum; and so on. It is as though all of society was a giant theater, and every person is responsible for fulfilling their own particular characters within that show, where the characters themselves are defined by parameters drawn from pre-existing roles (Iyer, 2016).

The sociologist Erving Goffman (1959) has also explicated his own form of social role theory with his notion of dramaturgy. Goffman, though, also focuses considerable attention on the dark side of social role theory: namely, that if one fails to fulfill one's roles in a way that is deemed adequate by the dominant society and culture, one stands at risk of being marginalized or ostracized as a result. For example, if a waiter were to not be polite to his customers but rather pour a pitcher of water on their heads, he would be fired.

Likewise, if a woman were not nurturing toward her child, then she would at least from some quarters earn the social stigma of being a bad mother. This analysis could be expanded to apply to the role of woman, namely, certain kinds of traits—such as ambition—which women as

are expected by society and culture to not exhibit in too gross of a way, whereas it would be more than acceptable for men to exhibit such traits, since this would be congruent with the dominant conceptualization of their role (Onion, 2016).

This dovetails into patriarchy theory, which could be said to consist of a kind of meta-critique of the roles of man and woman themselves, and the way that these roles have been constructed within society and culture (Sidani et al., 2015). Patriarchy theory suggests that all of society and culture is structured in such a way that men find themselves at a systematic advantage over women (Witz, 2013). According to patriarchy theory, it is not necessary for individual men or women to consciously be aware of any kind of disparity between the sexes. Rather, the idea is that as a result of the influences of society and culture, these influences and biases are subconscious and affect the thoughts, actions, and decisions of both men and women, whether they are consciously aware of this or not. Although patriarchy theory focuses on the oppression of women by men, a result is that this oppression degrades men as well (Witz, 2013).

Patriarchy theory is closely related to feminist theory, and Beauvoir (2011) is one of the earliest and most formidable of feminist theorists. One of Beauvoir's main ideas is that women have historically defined themselves in terms of male preferred characteristics, and of what men have insisted that women should be. This implies that women have a passive, receptive, and reactive quality to them—qualities, of course, which would seem antithetical to most ideas of strong leadership. When women themselves accept this definition of being female, it tends to reinforce patriarchy and produce a kind of internalized sexism (Bearman et al., 2009; Sidani et al., 2015)). This affects both how women perceive themselves and how they are treated by others, both men and women.

The insights of patriarchy theory may have epistemological implications for the kind of methodology that would need to use for the study proposed within the present dissertation. This is because according to some theorists, the kind of abstracting, quantifying rationality that characterizes much of scientific research may itself contribute to patriarchy, insofar as this is method that has primarily been developed by men and tends to devalue the significance of lived experience (Papadopoulous, Stephenson, & Tsianos, 2008). The implication is that the present project would likely need to include a qualitative aspect, through which subjects are given an opportunity to speak about their own experiences and perceptions, in their own language. This would be logically necessary for subverting dominant biases and developing space within which new experiences and perceptions can grow.

Conclusion

In summary, this review of literature supports researching the impact of gender on school board perceptions during the superintendent selection process. While the role of superintendent has developed over time, women continue to remain the marginalized gender represented in this role. Barriers to access, societal norms and expectations, as well as limited opportunities, translate into problems of equal access for female educators. School boards have the potential to act as a barrier for females wanting to become superintendents. Combining social role theory and patriarchy theory under the guise of a feminist framework support this research by examining issues of gender biases, gender stereotypes, and power over women.

Chapter III: Design and Methodology

Women outnumber men in every position on the K-12 career ladder except the superintendent's office (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). Females represent 75% of all educators. Of that 75% only 24% are superintendents. Men, however, represent 25% of all educators, and from that 25%, 75% are superintendents. These statistics clearly show that females are grossly underrepresented as superintendents in public education (Finnan, 2016). The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of gender on school board perceptions during the superintendent selection process.

The researcher used a feminist lens to explore school board members perceptions and beliefs about gender as they pertain to the superintendent selection process. Feminism explains patterns of injustice that manifest through gender in differentiated ways (Ackerly & True, 2010). In terms of public education and the office of superintendent, over the years, research has shown that there are multiple barriers for women aspiring to become a superintendnet (Derrington & Sharatt, 2009; Sperandio, 2010). These barriers are specifically related to gender and continue to contribute to the underrepresentation of female superintendents.

Feminist theory is an extension of feminism that seeks to understand the nature of gender inequality (Allen & Jaramillo-Sierra, 2015). There are many types of feminist theory and research such as gender theory, black feminist theory, queer theory, and patriarchy theory. Feminist research, therefore, may incorporate multiple theoretical perspectives (Allen & Jaramillo-Sierra, 2015). A feminist perspective provided a lens that allowed the researcher to capture and uncover potential bias toward women, based solely on their gender, as they seek to obtain the position of superintendent in public education.

When studying the effect of gender on school board member perceptions during the

superintendent selection process, the researcher chose to frame the study using two theories that fit within a feminist theoretical framework. Two theories, social role theory, and patriarchy theory shaped the survey instrument development, data collection, generalizations and data analysis (Yin, 2009). Combining both theories served as an outline for the possible reasoning on how and why females are underrepresented in the superintendency and if the beliefs about gender from school board members contributes to that phenomenon. Social role theory and patriarchy theory allowed the researcher to examine the role of power and alleged social roles as they relate to the perceptions of school board members during the superintendent selection process.

Patriarchy theory places special emphasis on the role of power, oppression, and dominance over women in the workforce. School boards are responsible for hiring a superintendent. Approximately 64% of all School Board Members are male (Sparks, 2014) and 75% of superintendents are male. The study seeks to explore a possible connection between the underrepresentation of female superintendent to patriarchal behavior from school boards that are predominantly made up of men.

Social role theory allowed the researcher to examine the construct of prescribed and predetermined roles that society gives to men and women based on gender. This theory provided insight on how the expectations for men and women are based upon sex-differences that regulate behavior in an adult's work life (Eagly & Wood, 1991). The researcher used social role theory to determine if there were gender biases based on societal norms and beliefs about male and female behavior that lead school board members to select a male superintendent over a female superintendent.

A total of 647 board members in public school districts in who had recently hired a superintendent were invited to respond to a survey. Data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Data for the quantitative analysis was analyzed using ANOVA and t-tests. Data for the qualitative analysis was analyzed using a thematic analysis with a constant comparative approach. This chapter will describe the methodology and procedures used to conduct this study. The topics included in this section are research design, participants, sampling, data collection, analytical methods, delimitations and limitations, and the role of the researcher.

Research Design

This research design was a mixed methods design that consisted of Likert scale survey results and open-ended questions. School board members who hired a superintendent within the last three years were contacted electronically to participate in an online anonymous survey. The survey was administered to measure the beliefs of school board members about their perceptions of gender during the superintendent selection process. The open-ended questions at the end of the survey focused on attitudes towards gender stereotypes, leadership abilities and qualifications, and organizational culture. The research explored the following questions:

RQ1: Is there a significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between male and female school board members?

$H_0 1$: There is no significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between male and female school board members.

H_a1:   There is a significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most

important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between

male and female school board members.

RQ2:   What impact does the gender of an applicant have on the superintendent selection

process?

$H_0 2$:   Gender of an applicant does not have a statistically significant impact on

the superintendent selection process.

$H_a 2$:   Gender of an applicant has a statistically significant impact on the

superintendent selection process.

RQ3:   How do the beliefs about leadership style impact a school board's decision when

hiring a superintendent?

RQ4:   During the superintendent selection process, do school board members perceive

male applicants or female applicants as stronger leaders of organizational culture?

Quantitative and qualitative results were generated in this mixed method study. Different

types of Likert scales survey produced quantitative data. Quantitative surveys allow researchers

to gather information from a large number of participants, are inexpensive and are usually

generalizable to larger populations (Creswell, 2013). Additionally, survey data usually gives

results that can be analyzed for statistical significance as opposed to other forms of research,

where statistical differences are not as easy to discover (Wright, 2005). Qualitative data is

evaluated to interpret behavioral patterns and decision making. The qualitative data addressed

beliefs related to what leadership styles impact the selection process and the perception of school

board members regarding whether a male or female candidate is stronger in leading

organizational culture. Both questions reveal insight into the impact of gender during the

superintendent selection process and the underrepresentation of females in the position of school superintendent.

Participants. The researcher requested a list of School Board Directors from the School Board Directors Association (WSSDA). WSSDA honored the public records request filed by the researcher and provided the researcher with the names and email addresses of current school board directors. Participants were selected from the list of School Board Directors who hired a superintendent from 2013-2016.

Sampling. To narrow the scope of the study, public school districts in were identified for the sample. Within this range, school districts who hired a new superintendent in the last three years were identified for the study. After obtaining the list of school districts who recently hired a new superintendent, school board members in those districts were contacted via email to participate in an electronic survey that lasted approximately fifteen minutes. School board members were also invited to answer open-ended questions to comment on their experience in the selection process along with their beliefs about leadership and gender. A total of 647 school board members were selected to participate in the study.

A listing provided by the WSSDA served as the resource to identify suitable participants. The researcher obtained a list of Superintendents hired in the last three years by the Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA). The researcher cross referenced the list of superintendents hired between 2013 and 2016 to the list of school board members to correctly identify which school boards would be eligible to participate in the study. Once school districts that had hired a superintendent within the last three years were identified, email invitations were sent to the school board members. A follow-up email was sent one week later.

Conveninence sampling is a non-probablity sampling technique that involves identifying participants in close promixity to the researcher and are selected because of their convenient accessibility. This specific list of WSSDA School Board Members was used simply because this was the list to which the present researcher had relatively easy access (Farahman, 2012). Eligible respondants were given two weeks to provide the data, which was then analyzed and interpreted by the researcher.

Dataa collection. The data collection process began as the researcher determined which school districts hired a new superintendent between 2013-2016. Once the school districts were identified, school board members were invited to participate in a research study. The researcher explained the data collection procedures, and individual rights in a research study, which include the option not to participate, or to stop participating once the survey was started (Appendix A). The researcher also explained that responses would be anonymous. After receiving consent, school board members were invited to complete an electronic survey.

Qualtrics was the electronic software used to collect data from the electronic survey. The survey instrument used for this study was developed by the researcher and inspired by an instrument used in a prior similar study (Appendix B). Using a study by Webb (2013) from the Western Kentucky University, the researcher drew upon similar questions found in that study. The instrument developed by Webb (2013) was validated using both pilot testing and field testing and the final instrument included 22 question items. The researcher was granted permission by Erin Webb on July 12, 2017 to replicate a few of the questions used in her research study (Appendix B).

For this study, the researcher developed the initial instrument which was validated using content experts. Participants were asked to provide feedback on the relevancy of each question as it pertained to the study.   Using the content validity index (CVI) of 80%, questions were analyzed

for relevancy (Zamanzadeh, Ghahramanian, Rassouli, Abbaszadeh, Alavi-Majd & Nikanfar, 2015).

Upon analyzing the data from the validation survey, the researcher determined whether questions were highly irrelevant to the present study and needed to be removed from the questionnaire. Certain questions considered irrelevant by participants were left in the questionnaire because they were replicated from the previous study conducted by Erin Webb (Appendix C) and were validated during her study.

The researcher then conducted a pilot test and invited 16 board members to participate in the study. Five out of the sixteen board members invited to participate in the pilot test provided responses. Once changes were made to the instrument, it contained a total of seventeen questions measuring attitudes toward the fairness of men and women. Therefore, both field testing and pilot testing were implemented to aid in the validity of the survey instrument (Appendix D).

At the end of the survey, the participants were provided with four open-ended questions. Each question gave participants the opportunity to expand on their beliefs about gender and the selection of a superintendent. The online survey software utilized Qualtrics which offered SSL encryption to increase privacy and protection against any data being intercepted during transmission.

The voluntary, anonymous responses to four open-ended questions was the second source of data. All four questions invited board members to answer questions about their perceptions of gender and gender roles, and beliefs about leadership. Those questions are:

1. In your opinion as a school board member, what factors contribute to the underrepresentation of female superintendents?

2. What leadership characteristics do you look for when hiring a superintendent?

3. When considering the culture of your district, how does the gender of an applicant for superintendent, influence your decision?

4. How does the gender of an applicant impact the superintendent selection process?

In addition to the survey open-ended questions, before participants took the survey they were asked to provide demographic information such as the enrollment size of their district, length of time served as a school board member, the gender of the board member, the gender of their superintendent, their current occupation and whether they had participated in a superintendent selection process.

Analytical methods. The research design selected for this study was mixed methods; therefore, data from the study were analyzed in both a quantitative and qualitative fashion. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS. Qualitative data was analyzed using a software program, NVivo as well as thematic coding done by manually by the researcher.

Quantitative analysis. Data from the administered survey were downloaded into a .csv file, and then uploaded into IBM SPSS for analysis. Data was analyzed for missing data and any missing data was appropriately coded. Data were then compiled and categorized using a frequency table, which determined the number of participants who responded in a particular way to a survey question. In order to determine if there was a significant difference between male and female school board member beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications hiring a superintendent (question 1), independent sample *t*-test was used for analysis. This method of analysis was selected in order to determine whether there are significant differences in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent by the two gender groups of the school board members.

RQ1: Is there a significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between male and female school board members?

$H_0 1$: There is no significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between male and female school board members.

$H_a 1$: There is a significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between male and female school board members.

In order to determine if there was a significant difference between male and female school board member beliefs about hiring a superintendent (question 1), analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used for analysis. This method of analysis was selected in order to identify perceptions of gender and gender roles during the selection process.

RQ2: What impact does the gender of an applicant have on the superintendent selection process?

$H_0 2$: Gender of an applicant does not have a statistically significant impact on the superintendent selection process.

$H_a 2$: Gender of an applicant has a statistically significant impact on the superintendent selection process.

First, data were compiled and categorized using a frequency table. A *t*-test for two independent samples and ANOVA were conducted to determine significant differences in mean ratings. For this ANOVA analysis, the gender of the respondent constituted the factor independent variable and perceptions of gender roles constituted the continuous independent

variable in this analysis (Taylor, 2014). Qualifications were identified primarily in regard to which leadership practices school board members thought were most valuable in regard to the superintendent position, as well as their perception of gender and gender roles during the selection process. The assumptions that must be met in order to conduct the ANCOVA were independence of the covariate and treatment effect and the homogeneity of regression slopes (Field, 2013).

Qualitative analysis. Information obtained from four open-ended questions on the survey allowed the researcher to gather data for research questions three and four:

RQ3:   How do the beliefs about leadership style impact a school board's decision when hiring a superintendent?

RQ4:   During the superintendent selection process, do school board members perceive male applicants or female applicants as stronger leaders of organizational culture?

The researcher analyzed data using a thematic analysis, as outlined by Percy, Kostere, and Kostere (2015). Percy et al. (2015) identified generic qualitative inquiry as a method of inquiry appropriate for mixed method studies and is used when data could be reconstructed as quantitative data. This method of inquiry is useful when conducting survey research that includes opportunities for qualitative comments. The current study employs a mixed methods methodology and consists of survey research; therefore, it was deemed appropriate to utilize the thematic analysis described by Percy et al. (2015) for generic qualitative inquiry for this study.

The qualitative data gathered for this study was analyzed using thematic analysis with constant comparison. In this type of analysis, data is analyzed as it is gathered and constantly analyzed and compared to the previously gathered and analyzed data. As the researcher conducts the analysis, the data is coded and organized into patterns. The patterns and themes

that emerge evolve as more data is collected and additional analysis is conducted (Percy et al., 2015). Themes and patterns were categorized by frequency of response for further analysis.

The researcher specifically focused on sentences and phrases pertaining to leadership traits and practices, overall qualities of school board members, and societal norms and highlighted these. Next, the researcher determined if the highlighted data was relevant to the stated research questions. Any data deemed irrelevant was removed from the analysis as unrelated data and stored for possible future use. The data was grouped and coded so that the data could be clustered in themes to show relevance and connection.

During this process, direct quotes were identified that illustrated patterns in the data. These patterns were then analyzed to identify themes. The prevalence of different themes was analyzed according to their frequency. Themes that occurred more frequently were given more weight than others.

The implication of this analysis is that higher frequency themes have a more impactful weight on the decision-making process than themes with a lower frequency of responses (Merriam, 2009). Once the themes were revealed, they were arranged with their corresponding patterns as support, along with supporting quotes. Finally, the data was synthesized by the research to formulate a response to the stated research questions (Percy et al, 2015).

Delimitations and Limitations

Some important assumptions were made in this mixed methods research study. This study assumed honesty, anonymity of responses and accurate electronic communications. The participants were assumed to have participated in the hiring process for a school superintendent. Participants were assumed to have adequate time to participate.

Several limitations of this study could have impacted the results. Gender stereotyping based on personal experiences in their life could impact a respondent's opinion. Some school board members may be afraid to give their opinions for fear of public exposure. The relatively small area of the country surveyed could misrepresent the opinions of the school board members in other parts of the country. Responses illustrating bias may not apply to the hiring decision made for the school superintendent. The chairperson or other board members may influence each other's responses to the survey. Moreover, answers may involve some form of bias based on the actual experiences that transpired in the life of each individual board member.

Generalizability is limited as only school board members in one state were studied. Despite reasonable limitations in generalization, findings gathered from this research study will allow females interested in fulfilling a position in superintendency the opportunity to recognize how and if school boards act as a barrier or hindrance (De Beaufort & Summers, 2014).

Finally, because social role theory and patriarchy theory may influence the decision-making process at a subconscious or unconscious level, there is the potential that responses in the interview do not accurately reflect any inherent presuppositions or biases regarding the role of superintendent.

The research study was limited to Washington State, which may skew the results more than if a cross-section of the country was sampled. In addition, time was a factor in this research study. Participants were given a short turnaround time and expected to complete their survey results within a two-week time frame. Even though participation was voluntary, a board chairperson might influence participation. Since the surveys are anonymous, the chairman or president of the board might have discouraged or encouraged participation.

Language in the survey was carefully chosen so as not to result in gender bias. The primary question – how do the beliefs about leadership style impact a school board's decision when hiring a superintendent – utilized no words that might evoke bias on the part of the respondent. The desire was for respondents to speak freely here without considering the gender of the candidate.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher within the present study was to both conduct the survey and analyze the data. This admittedly produces a risk of bias that may need to be more adequately addressed in future research. This is especially the case given that the researcher lived the experience and is employed as a female superintendent. This opens up the risk that the researcher merely paid attention to the parts of the data that stood out in terms of those categories, as opposed to giving the data itself a chance to speak for itself. If the researcher consciously looked for certain patterns, then the researcher would probably be more likely to find them; but this would not necessarily imply that those patterns correspond with data.

In this context, the response data that was transcribed by the researcher from the open-ended survey proved to be valuable. The researcher used the qualitative data to check against erroneous interpretations of the data and enable other researchers to confirm or refute the validity of the conclusions drawn (Golafshani, 2003). Again, the present study is driven by a feminist theoretical framework that explores social role theory and patriarchy theory (Biddle, 2013; Witz, 2013). While it was necessary for the researcher to bracket personal bias when analyzing the data, it was also important to note the biases inherent in the theoretical framework are a crucial driver of the study as a whole.

Not only was care taken to limit personal bias, but the researcher separated survey results by gender as well. Failure to consider gender bias in survey participants could result in faulty information, and this could skew research findings (Jelic, 2017, p. 1). By choosing a method of research utilizing anonymous surveys, the researcher hoped that participants would answer more freely than if identities were tied to the survey. Another issue, even from the researcher's point of view, was ensuring that there was little gender bias in the surveys. Studies show that bias on the part of either gender is a "manifestation of subtler prejudices internalized for societal stereotypes" (Yurkiewicz, 2012, p. 1). It is for this reason that the researcher separated results and looked for patterns in survey answers.

Other methods were available for conducting research such as case studies or interviews. Case studies do present a great deal of evidence considering a lack of female superintendents across the nation. However, the researcher was unable to guarantee a lack of bias. The focus of the anonymous survey was to get honest answers from school board members regarding qualifications of a candidate for superintendent regardless of gender. Question Two of the survey provided this information. The researcher also wanted to present a realistic view of participant opinions. The researcher believed that more accurate and less biased information would be more readily available by collecting survey data. The researcher also believed that secondary analysis would not provide the accurate information necessary to the project. Upon weighing these options along with the survey option, the researcher chose the survey option due to the benefits of more candid answers provided during a confidential survey.

The researcher also chose to perform both qualitative and quantitative research in an effort to truly determine if personal feelings – i.e., personal bias – was present in the hiring practices of various school boards throughout the state of Washington. Respondent answers were

analyzed for statistical purposes, then the qualitative responses were also studied to determine

personal gender bias on the part of school board members. The researcher also utilized

qualitative research to form more reliable data on the hiring of female superintendents.

Chapter IV: Results

This chapter reports the overall results of the data analysis. After the results have been reported, conclusions and recommendations will be made in Chapter V. This chapter aims to verify that the research questions have been answered and thoroughly addressed. Data collected were analyzed according to theoretical constructs, and theoretical perspectives are stated explicitly.

This study aimed to determine if the gender of the superintendent candidate influences the school boards' choice for school superintendent, and the following are the guiding research questions.

RQ1: Is there a significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between male and female school board members?

H_01: There is no significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between male and female school board members.

H_a1: There is a significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between male and female school board members.

RQ2: What impact does the gender of an applicant have on the superintendent selection process?

H_02: Gender of an applicant does not have a statistically significant impact on the superintendent selection process.

H_a2:   Gender of an applicant has a statistically significant impact on the superintendent selection process.

RQ3:   How do the beliefs about leadership style impact a school board's decision when hiring a superintendent?

RQ4:   During the superintendent selection process, do school board members perceive male applicants or female applicants as stronger leaders of organizational culture?

Chapter IV includes the overall results of the study. The setting of the study and the demographics are described in this chapter. A brief summary of the data collection process and the data analysis process of both quantitative and qualitative data are also provided. The presentation of quantitative findings includes charts, graphs, and tables, while the presentation of qualitative findings includes themes and excerpts from the responses in the open-ended questions in the survey. A synthesis of the quantitative and qualitative findings is provided to summarize the chapter.

Setting of the Study

The setting of the study was public school districts in a state in the Northwest United States. Within this setting, the target population was board members of school districts who were reported to have hired a new superintendent within the last three years. Six hundred forty-seven board members were identified to have met these criteria, and were contacted via email to participate in the study. The data identifying eligible school board members was supplied by the School Directors Association.

Demographics

Out of the 647 board members in public school districts in a state in the Northwest who recently hired a superintendent and who were invited to respond to the survey, 115 agreed to

participate in the survey, four disagreed to participate. Of the 115 who agreed to take the survey,

only 114 successfully participated. Of the 114 total respondents, 56.6% of the sample were male

school board members (Table 4). One participant in the survey did not identify their gender.

Table 5 shows that the majority of the respondents were aged 46-55 (32.5%) or 56-65 (32.5%).

There were 22.8% were over 65 years old, 9.7% were 36-45 years old, 1.8% was aged 31-35

years old, and only about 0.9% or only one among the respondents was under 30 years of age.

Table 4.
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Board Members by Gender

Gender	N	%
Male	64	56.6%
Female	49	43.4%
Total	**113**	**100.0%**

Table 5.
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Board Members by Age

Age	N	%
Under 30	1	0.9%
31-35	2	1.8%
36-45	11	9.7%
46-55	37	32.5%
56-65	37	32.5%
Over 65	26	22.8%
Total	**114**	**100.0%**

For highest educational attainment, most respondents had bachelor's degree or higher

(master's degree or doctoral degree) which comprised 63.1% of the total sample (Table 6). Data

showed that 29.8% of the board members had a bachelor's degree, 22.8% had master's degrees,

and 10.5% had doctoral degrees. On the other hand, 21.9% of them had attended some colleges,

6.1% had associate degree, 4.4% had technical certification, and only 1.8% held only a high

school diploma or GED.

Table 6.
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Board Members by Highest Educational Attainment

Education	N	%
None	0	0.0%
High School/GED	2	1.8%
Some College	25	21.9%
Associates Degree	7	6.1%
Technical Certification	5	4.4%
Bachelor's Degree	34	29.8%
Master's Degree	26	22.8%
Doctoral Degree	12	10.5%
Other	3	2.6%
Total	**114**	**100.0%**

Most of the participants (93.9%) had participated in a superintendent selection process

(Table 7). Given that the sample of this study examined school boards who hired a

superintendent within the last three years, the 6.1% who responded that they had not participated

in a superintendent selection process might have been newly elected members.

Table 7.
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Board Members by Their Participation in the Superintendent Selection Process

Participation	*N*	%
Participated	107	93.9%
Not participated	7	6.1%
Total	**114**	**100.0%**

There were 34.2% of the respondents were in service as board members for at most 5 years and 28.1% were in service 6 to 10 years (Table 8). There were 22.8% and 14.9% were in service as board members for 11-15 years and more than 15 years, respectively.

Table 8.
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Board Members by Their Years in Service

Years	N	%
0-5 years	39	34.2%
6-10 years	32	28.1%
11-15 years	26	22.8%
More than 15 years	17	14.9%
Total	**114**	**100.0%**

In terms of the school's size, the highest frequencies of the board members were from districts with 1,001 to 5,000 students (Table 9). Specifically, 29% of the sampled board members were from schools with 1,001 to 5,000 enrollment size and 27.2% were from schools of less than 500 enrollments. There were 18.4% and 15.8% have school enrollment size of 501-1,000 and 5,001-10,000, respectively.

Table 9.
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Board Members by Their School's Enrollment Size

Student enrollment size	N	%
500 or less	31	27.2%
501-1000	21	18.4%
1001-5000	33	29.0%
5001-10,000	18	15.8%
10,001-15,000	2	1.8%
15,001-20,000	4	3.5%
More than 20,000	5	4.4%
Total	**114**	**100.0%**

The participants in this study mirrored similar characteristics to school board members nationwide. On a national level, the typical school board member is college educated and serves in a school district with an enrollment size of 1000-5000 students and serves between a three and five-year term ("School Boards - Selection and Education of Members," n.d.).

Table 10.
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Board Members by the Industry They are Currently In

Industry	N	%
Agriculture	9	7.9%
Construction	1	0.9%
Manufacturing	4	3.5%
Transportation	3	2.6%
Information technology	1	0.9%
Finance	4	3.5%
Education	16	14.0%
Health care	5	4.4%
Food service	0	0.0%
Entertainment	0	0.0%
Government	12	10.5%
Defense/military	1	0.9%
Retired	26	22.8%
Unemployed	0	0.0%
Self-employed	10	8.8%
Other	22	19.3%
Total	**114**	**100.0%**

The board members who participated in the study were from a variety of industry (Table 10). The majority of the participants were already retired. Other categories of employment were 14% in the academe (education industry), 10.5% were in government, 8.8% were self-employed, and 7.9% were in the agriculture industry. The remaining board members were from other

industries such as, construction (.9%), military (.9%), transportation (2.6%), finance (3.5%), and manufacturing (3.5%).

Board members who participated in the survey were asked to identify if their current superintendent was a male or female. Table 11 shows that 80.7% of the participants identified a male as their current superintendent. From a state-wide view, approximately 23% of superintendents are female (Table 1). Therefore, the overall number of female superintendents represented in this study is slightly less than the state-wide representation.

Table 11.
Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Board Members by the Gender of Their Current Superintendent

Current superintendent	N	%
Male	92	80.7%
Female	22	19.3%
Total	**114**	**100.0%**

Data Collection

Quantitative data were collected through an online five-point Likert scale survey questionnaire, while qualitative data were collected through four open-ended survey questions also delivered online. The questionnaire was self-developed by the researcher drawing and replicating questions from Webb (2013) (Appendix C), and was content validated by field experts.

Survey validation. Content experts were used to validate the questionnaire. The researcher contacted retired school board members from Idaho on August 18, 2017 via Qualtrics asking for their assistance in validating the survey. The researcher also included several local

school board members who were not eligible and could not be included in the pilot study. The researcher contacted a total of 15 participants. Six participants started the survey while only four participants completed the survey.   The researcher discovered that it was very difficult to find people eligible and willing to participate in the validation portion of this research.

The researcher asked content experts to determine whether the interview questions were relevant enough to address the research questions. Respondents were asked to examine each question of the interview questionnaire and then evaluate it based on the overall comprehension, clarity, ambiguity, and potential difficulty in responding. Comments received from participants were used to improve the interview questions.

After contents experts provided feedback on the relevancy of each question, the researcher examined the results to determine whether questions and question items should remain in the study.

Questions that were deemed relevant and included in the survey are detailed below.

Question #13: "When hiring a superintendent, which skill and qualification do you feel are most important, important, not important?" This question asked participants to answer fourteen sub-statements of skills and qualifications. All sub-statements met the validation requirement and remained in the study.

Question #14: "When considering an applicant for superintendent, who do you perceive is more effective at the following, a male or female superintendent?" Similar to question thirteen, question fourteen asked participants to rate the relevancy of five leadership traits. All five leadership traits received a validity index of 80% and remained in the study.

Questions considered highly irrelevant were eliminated from the survey. Question items detailed below were removed if they did not meet the content validity index of 80% and had not

already been previously validated in the study conducted by Erin Webb (2013).   In the detailed

analysis, the researcher identifies which questions were used in the original survey by Erin Webb

(2013).

       The following adjustments were made to the survey after examining and reviewing the

results:

       *Question #9***:** This question asked board members if they preferred hiring a male or

female superintendent. This question was adapted from the original survey developed by Webb.

A word in the question was changed by the researcher from "supervisor" to "superintendent."

The question was removed due to 83.3% of respondents considering the question not relevant to

the study.

       *Question #10***:** Question number 10 came from a survey developed and validated by Erin

Webb (2013). The statement in question #10 (3) read, "Men generally know what they are going

to say before they speak, but a woman may just begin talking and gradually discover what she

wants to say." The question contained eight statements. The researcher determined to remove

Question #10 (3) from the validation survey due to 83.3% of respondents claiming that it was

irrelevant.   That statement was, "Men generally know what they are going to say before they

speak but a woman may just begin talking and gradually discover what she wants to say."

       There were other sub-statements in question ten that did not meet the 80% threshold but

were included in the current survey due to the prior validation from Erin Webb.   Table 12

identifies the validation percentage, number of respondents, and if the question was left in the

survey.

Table 12.

Question Number 10 on the Validation Survey with Results for Each Statement Listed in That Question

Sub-question	Validation %	# of respondents	Left in survey
1	100%	6/6	Yes
2*	83.34%	5/6	Yes
3*	16.67%	1/6	No
4	50%	3/6	Yes
5*	100%	6/6	Yes
6*	66.67%	4/6	Yes
7*	33.34%	5/6	Yes
8	66.67%	4/6	Yes

*Represent original questions developed by Erin Webb (2013)

Question #11. Question #11, sub-question #18 was developed by the researcher and received less than an 80% validation rating. Of the six participants responding, 50% felt that the question was not relevant. Question #11, sub-question 18 asked participants to identify leadership traits in terms of most important, important, and not important. Question 11, sub-question 18, asked board members to rate the trait "Values process over product". Even though question #11 sub-question 18 did not meet the expectation for content validity, it remained in for the pilot study and removed upon further review.

Question #12: "Of the male and female picture below, who looks the most professional?" Of the six respondents, 66.67% (4 out of 6) felt that this question was relevant, one felt that it was irrelevant and one was undecided. This question remained in the survey due to prior validation from the Webb (2013) study.

Question #15: "In your opinion, what factors contribute to the underrepresentation of female superintendents?" Seventy-five percent of respondents (3/4) felt that this question was relevant to the study. Even though this open-ended question did not meet validation standards,

the question was left in the study. Participants might have marked the question irrelevant because they answered the question from their perspective, not necessarily the perspective of the study.

Question #17: "When considering the culture of your district, how does the gender of an applicant for superintendent influence your decision?" Two respondents found the question relevant, two found the question irrelevant. Respondents might have relied on their personal bias when answering this question. Some board members might not understand the concept and importance of building organizational culture. The question remained in the study.

Question #18: "How does the gender of an applicant impact the superintendent selection process?" Much like question seventeen, question eighteen, 50% (2 out of 4) respondents felt that this question was relevant to the study while 50% did not. As elected officials, answering a question that calls out the impact of gender when hiring might be uncomfortable. This question is directly related to the research study and therefore, remained in the study.

While certain items on the validation survey did not meet the CVI of 80%, the sample size was relatively smaller in this study than the Webb (2013) where the item was previously validated using a much larger sample. In addition, a 2015 study proposed that on new instruments, a test item with a CVI of 79% or higher will be appropriate for the study. If the CVI of a particular item is between 70 and 79 percent, the researcher should consider revising the item. Finally, if the item is less than 70% it should be eliminated (Zamanzadeh, V., Ghahramanian, A., Rassouli, M., Abbaszadeh, A., Alavi-Majd, H., & Nikanfar, A.-R., 2015).

Pilot study. After the researcher examined the content validity, and adjusted the survey, the questionnaire was used in a pilot test with local school board members who were excluded from this study. On September 9th, the researcher used Qualtrics to email 15 local school board members inviting them to participate in the pilot study.

The researcher explained the nature and purpose of the study, as well as the participants' rights and confidentiality measures involved in the study. The participants were then provided with an informed consent email (Appendix A). Entry was given to the participant once he or she agreed to participate. The electronic survey was distributed using the software Qualtrics. Of the 15 participants contacted, 3 completed the survey. Zero emails bounced back to the researcher.

After learning that the email sent from the researcher was delivered to participant spam folders, the researcher resent the email on September 19th from Qualtrics to 16 local school board members eligible for the survey. The researcher added one more participant to the survey after learning about their status as a board member. The three participants who completed the survey were asked not to take the survey again. A total of five school board members took the survey. Four out of the five participants that completed the survey had a female superintendent.

Upon reviewing the results from the pilot, the researcher encountered problems with distribution and learned that Qualtrics was not the best vehicle to deliver the survey. Based upon experience and feedback from participants, email addresses were not recognized and sent to spam folders. The researcher used Gmail as an alternative distribution method for the final survey (Appendix D).

Data Analysis Procedures

Quantitative data were analyzed using the software IBM SPSS. Data collected from Qualtrics were downloaded and saved into a .csv file. The file was uploaded to IBM SPSS. Data were then compiled and categorized using a frequency table, and t-test for two independent samples and ANOVA were conducted to determine significant differences in mean ratings.

Assumptions for t-test and ANOVA. Before conducting the statistical analyses of t-test and ANOVA, six assumptions are required prior to conducting both tests. The first assumption

investigates potential outliers in the data set. If located, this outlier was removed from the data set before conducting the data analysis. Outliers were detected using Z-scores investigation. Any z-scores greater than 3 or less than -3 is considered to be an outlier. ("Independent t-test in SPSS Statistics - Procedure, output and interpretation of the output using a relevant example | Laerd Statistics," n.d.).

The second assumption of a t-test or ANOVA is the normality of residuals ("One-way ANOVA in Stata - Procedure, output and interpretation of the output using a relevant example.," n.d.). The researcher conducted a test of normality using skewness and kurtosis statistics. To determine whether the data follows normal distribution, skewness statistics greater than three indicate strong non-normality and kurtosis statistics between 10 and 20 also indicate non-normality (Kline, 2005).

Homogeneity of variances using Levene's test is the third assumption (Creswell, 2013). The p-value of the Levene's statistic should be greater than the level of significance of 0.05 to show homogeneity of variances.

For the fourth assumption of the t-test or ANOVA, the dependent variable must be measured at an interval level (Independent t-test in SPSS Statistics - Procedure, output and interpretation of the output using a relevant example | Laerd Statistics," n.d.). The independent sample t-test was conducted to determine whether there were significant differences in the ratings of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between two gender groups (male versus female) of the school board members.

The fifth assumption when conducting a t-test and ANOVA, rests with the independent variable must have two categorial groups (Creswell, 2013). In this study, the independent-samples t-test compare the means between two unrelated groups on the same continuous,

dependent variable. Mean comparison is conducted if there are significant differences observed at a level of significance of 0.05. There is a significant difference if the p-value is less than or equal to the level of significance value (Creswell, 2013).

Finally, the last assumption when using a t-test or ANOVA is the need for independent observations (Creswell, 2013). Within the male and female groups, no participant was in more than one group. Female participants were in the female group as men were in the male group. No one person was in two different groups.

ANOVA was conducted to determine whether gender of an applicant has a significant impact on the superintendent selection process. ANOVA is conducted to determine whether there are any statistically significant differences between the means of more than two or more independent groups for gender (male, female, or either). Gender has a significant impact if the p-value is less than or equal to the level of significance value of 0.05 (Creswell, 2013).

Qualitative data were analyzed two ways. First, the researcher analyzed data by hand to identify themes and patterns. The researcher used a color coding method to identify similar terms and ideas found in the data. Next, the researcher used the qualitative analysis software (QDAS) NVivo. Data collected from Qualtrics were uploaded to NVivo in which thematic analysis with constant comparison outlined by Percy, Kostere, and Kostere (2015) was conducted. Both types of analysis allowed the researcher to verify and cross-check results.

To begin qualitative data analysis, the researcher read the responses of each participant, and coded key words/phrases related to leadership traits and practices, overall qualities of school board members, and societal norms. After analyzing the data by hand, the researcher identified themes that would later be compared to nodes identified in the software program NVivo.

Using the NVivo program, data from Qualtrics was uploaded from a csv. file. The program identified codes by analyzing data to identify major topic areas (QSR International, 2015). Codes were then assigned into nodes, a feature in NVivo used to label a unit of analysis (QSR International, 2015). Organizing data into nodes allowed for more detailed coding.

After coding, the researcher determined whether the codes were relevant to research questions 3 and 4. Irrelevant data were stored in a separate folder for possible future references. Then, direct quotes in the codes were analyzed for patterns among the data to generate themes. The final overarching themes were determined through frequency, in which more frequently occurring themes were given more weight than others (Merriam, 2009). The final themes identified by NVivo were: (1) leadership qualities influencing the school board's hiring decision, (2) cultural factors in hiring decision, (3) lack of female superintendent candidates, (4) women's desires and interests, and (5) selection process based on applicants' qualifications. When comparing thematic analysis from NVivo to the researchers hand coded data, the researcher identified similar themes as the software. The themes will be presented in detail in the following sections.

Quantitative Analysis Results

The researcher asked four questions in this study to determine the impact of gender on school board perceptions during the superintendent selection process. A quick summary of what questions were used and what method employed to help examine each question is below (Table 13).

Table 13.

Research Question, Survey Question, and Data Collection Summary

Research question	Survey question	Data collection
Demographic data	Q 1-8	Electronic survey
Q1	Q 11	t-test
Q2	Q 12	Anova
Q3	Q 13-15	Qualitative
Q4	Q 16	Qualitative

Research Question 1. In order to determine if there was a significant difference between male and female school board member beliefs about hiring a superintendent (question 1), independent sample *t*-test was used for analysis. This method of analysis was selected in order to determine whether there are significant differences in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent by the two gender groups of the school board members.

A level of significance of 0.05 or 5% was used in the independent sample *t*-test. The results of the independent sample *t*-test between male and female school board members returned a significant difference only on the importance of visibility in the community ($p = 0.02$). There was significant difference since this was the only p-value less than the level of significance of 0.05. It was determined that there were 100% of male school board members who believed that the visibility of the applicant in the community is important while only 96.8% of female board members believed that it was important. One out of thirteen qualifications about hiring a superintendent showed no statistically significant gender-based difference of school board members in terms of their perception of skills and qualifications in the hiring of a superintendent process.

It is important to note that while self-reflective and prior building experience as a building administrator did not meet the .05 level of significance, these two traits came very close to meeting the borderline of significance. Candidates who are self-reflective ($p = 0.06$) and who had prior experience as a building administrator ($p = 0.13$) show that these two traits are important skills and qualifications school board members consider when hiring a superintendent.

In examining the data further, it is important to note that there was no significant difference based on gender in the importance of the following skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between the male and female school board members. They included: Good sense of humor ($p = 0.85$), Strong Communicator ($p = 0.73$), Sound fiscal practice ($p = 0.29$), Experience with union and employee groups ($p = 0.95$), Ability to delegate authority ($p = 0.40$), Understands how to prioritize ($p = 0.89$), Visible in schools ($p = 0.51$), Self-Reflective ($p = 0.06$), Prior experience as a building administrator ($p = 0.13$), Honest ($p = 0.50$), Visionary ($p = 0.52$), Team Builder ($p = 0.82$), and Relational ($p = 0.83$). There were no significant differences since the p-values were greater than the level of significance of 0.05.

With this result, the null hypothesis for research question one that "There is no significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent by gender between male and female school board members" was rejected. The alternative hypothesis that "There is a significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent by gender between male and female school board members" was supported by the results of the independent sample t-test for this one area.

Table 14.

Summary of the Independent Sample t-Test Results of Difference of Beliefs About the Most Important Skills and Qualifications When Hiring a Superintendent by the Two Gender Groups

Qualifications	P-Value	Implication
Good sense of humor	0.85	No significant gender-based difference
Strong communicator	0.73	No significant gender-based difference
Sound fiscal practice	0.29	No significant gender-based difference
Experience with union and employee groups	0.95	No significant gender-based difference
Ability to delegate authority	0.40	No significant gender-based difference
Understands how to prioritize	0.89	No significant gender-based difference
Visible in the community	0.02	*Has significant gender-based difference
Visible in schools	0.51	No significant gender-based difference
Self-reflective	0.06	No significant gender-based difference
Prior experience as a building administrator	0.13	No significant gender-based difference
Honest	0.50	No significant gender-based difference
Visionary	0.52	No significant gender-based difference
Team builder	0.82	No significant gender-based difference
Relational	0.83	No significant gender-based difference

Research Question 2. Research question two wanted to address whether the gender of an applicant has a significant impact on the superintendent selection process. For this ANOVA analysis, the gender of the applicant constituted the factor independent variable and perceptions of gender roles constituted the continuous independent variable in this analysis (Taylor, 2014). Qualifications were identified primarily regarding which leadership practices school board members thought were most valuable in regard to the superintendent position, as well as their perception of gender and gender roles during the selection process.

Table 15.

Frequency Table of the School Board Member's Perception on Who is More Effective Between Males and Females

Qualification	Male		Female		Either	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Involving everyone in productive change	2	1.9%	10	9.3%	96	88.9%
Developing a culture of innovation	5	4.6%	2	1.9%	101	93.5%
Developing relationships	0	0.0%	21	19.4%	87	80.6%
Developing quality and success	1	0.9%	3	2.8%	104	96.3%
Creating meaning for everyone	0	0.0%	12	11.1%	96	88.9%

Based on the school board member's responses in Table 15, at least 80% believed that either male or female can be effective in all the qualifications presented. The qualifications include involving everyone in productive change (88.9%), developing a culture of innovation (93.5%), developing relationships (80.6%), developing quality and success (96.3%), and creating meaning for everyone (88.9%).

Based on the results of the ANOVA performed in Table 16, it is implied that the gender of the applicant only had a statistically significant impact on the superintendent selection process when it comes to assessing one's qualification of developing relationships ($p < 0.001$). All other leadership traits showed no statistical impact due to a p-value of significant being greater than .05.

On the other hand, developing relationships showed a significant impact since the p-value was less than the level of significance value of 0.05. Looking back on Table 15, although the majority (80.6%) of the school board members believe that either of the genders are effective in

developing relationships, still, the remaining 19.4% of the board perceive women to be more

effective in developing relationships as compared to men.

With this result, the null hypothesis for research question two that "Gender of an

applicant does not have a statistically significant impact on the superintendent selection process"

was rejected. The alternative hypothesis that "Gender of an applicant has a statistically

significant impact on the superintendent selection process" was supported by the results of the

ANOVA.

Table 16.
Summary of the ANOVA Results on the Impact of Gender on Superintendent Selection Process

Qualification	P-value	Implication
Involving everyone in productive change	0.18	No significant impact
Developing a culture of innovation	0.32	No significant impact
Developing relationships	0.001	*Has significant impact
Developing quality and success	0.26	No significant impact
Creating meaning for everyone	0.63	No significant impact

Qualitative Analysis Results

Using a thematic analysis, the open-ended questions were analyzed to generate the

themes in order to address research questions 3 and 4. The final themes were: (1) leadership

qualities influencing the school board's hiring decision, (2) cultural factors in hiring decision, (3)

lack of female superintendent candidates, (4) women's desires and interests, and (5) selection

process based on applicants' qualifications.

Table 17 below shows the weight of each themes based on the frequency of the

qualitative responses. The frequency of qualitative responses were generated from NVivo. As

each key word or phrase was assigned to a node to be coded, NVivo automatically provided a

count for the number of references coded into the node. Through this, the researcher was able to

gauge the weight of the developed theme through the counts in the nodes. Thus, to develop the

themes, more frequently occurring themes were given more weight than others (Merriam, 2009).

Table 17.
Overarching Themes

Theme	Freq. of response
Leadership qualities influencing school board's hiring decision	256
Cultural factors in hiring decision	234
Lack of female superintendent candidates	117
Women's desires and interests	117
Selection process based on applicants' qualifications	144

In addressing the third research question on how the beliefs about leadership style impact

a school board's decision when hiring a superintendent, the school board members were asked

what leadership characteristics they look for when hiring a superintendent. Their answers could

be summarized in the first theme, leadership qualities influencing the school board's hiring

decision. Leadership qualities involved traits such as good communicator and listener, strong

leadership, visionary, team-builder, honesty, and compassion, among others.

Conversely, when asked if the school board members perceive male applicants or female

applicants as stronger leaders of organizational culture during the superintendent selection

process, which addressed the last research question of this study, most of the school board

members, if not all of them, answered that gender was really never a consideration. Rather, they

focused mostly on the skills and capability of the applicant, as shown in themes 2 to 5.

Theme 1: Leadership qualities influencing the school board's hiring decision. While

in some states, superintendents reported to prefer transformational leadership style (Bird &

Wang, 2013), the school board members in this study generally preferred a superintendent with

servant leader qualities such as good listening skills, compassion, awareness of their

environment, being a visionary, and building and committing to the community (Dierendonck,

2011). Based on the frequency of qualitative responses, both male and female participants perceived that the ability to lead and inspire was the most essential quality the school board was looking for in a superintendent candidate, an "instructional leader that can inspire staff," as claimed by one participant. The participants generally felt that a good leader could work and delegate work among a diverse community through inspiring new ideas while maintaining the culture of the community. One participant highlighted, a good leader has the "ability to inspire" and has "proven ability to follow process and procedures." Several participants also emphasized the ability of a good leader to be aware of the culture, and as one participant reiterated, "24/7 school analytic skills--see big picture & know the meaning of details & how to address them."

Furthermore, the majority of the participants also believed that a superintendent's qualities included good communication and listening skills. The ability to listen was often related to the awareness of the community, and the ability to communicate was linked to the ability to inspire. In addition, good communication skills were believed to help vocalize goals in order to keep the staff and the community in the same page. One participant articulated, "An ability to clearly articulate a district's mission, goals, and challenges to different constituencies (community, teachers, board, press)." Good communication skills also allowed the superintendent to be "visible to all the stakeholders in the community," and to "be able to wear many hats but keep the focus clear, set the tone and charts the course for the district, be able to work closely with school board members, respond to demands of all other constituencies in the district." Nonetheless, the participants also perceived that good communication skills reflected transparency, in which honesty was valued as another quality of a superintendent.

In relation to the school district's goals, the participants also preferred a superintendent to be visionary. The participants generally gave significance to student success, which was

perceived to be achieved through the planning and goal-setting of the superintendent. One participant claimed that "objectivity" and the "ability to compartmentalize in order to persevere" were qualities of a visionary superintendent. A superintendent was also observed to be a team builder. The school board generally searched for a leader who could "unify the school" and collaborate with the surrounding community, as one participant claimed, "no one person can do the job alone." Lastly, some participants perceived that a superintendent was decisive yet compassionate. As superintendents were expected to work with a diverse population, the participants generally preferred a leader who has the ability to understand and work with different personalities in order to put the efforts of all stakeholders on student success. A few participants mentioned the significance of administrative experience in hiring a superintendent, while one participant mentioned having a sense of humor.

Theme 2: Cultural factors in hiring decision. Generally, the school board looked into qualifications and experiences when hiring a superintendent. Gender was claimed to be an irrelevant hiring criterion; however, some participants perceived that cultural factors, which may include gender biases, may affect the hiring decision of the school board. Some participants claimed that with the majority of the school board being White males, a "good old boy network" perspective affected the hiring decision. In the experience of one participant, this perspective "hurt [the chances of] a female superintendent." Nonetheless, the participant also claimed that "the culture has changed since then." Another participant claimed that, "Sexism is certainly a factor, as is the fact that the majority of board members are male. The 'old boys' network' is still alive and helps White men find jobs for each other." Some participants stated that sexism or gender bias existed in the school board when hiring a superintendent. One participant stated that, "There's a slight bias towards men in our district." Some participants blamed history as the root

of gender bias in the hiring decision. Some school board member retained the perspective of the "traditional stereotypes of male leadership," and that the position of superintendent "would be hard on any marriage/children," and left little time for personal life. One participant noted, "There is a cultural bias wherein men should lead organizations…and (women) are responsible for child rearing and household tasks." A participant recognized this issue to be "adherence to the status quo." A "historic underrepresentation in other leadership levels" was claimed to exist, and one participant provided an analogy that sexism also existed in the government with 97% of the Congress consisting of White males. In terms of leadership, interestingly, several participants shared that female teachers were threatened by female authority. One participant shared,

> "I have hired a very good female superintendent in the past. The biggest problems she had was with female teachers. They didn't seem to respect her as much as they do male superintendents. She was in my opinion one of the best superintendents that I have worked with."

Theme 3: Lack of female superintendent candidates. The majority of the participants expressed a desire to provide equal hiring opportunities for male and female superintendent candidates; however, males were generally hired more than females due to the lack of female candidates. The majority of the participants claimed that there was a smaller talent pool for female superintendents. Gender generally did not play a role in the hiring decision; however, women generally have less chances of being hired due to having fewer female applicants, "nothing more," as one participant claimed. Another participant noted that, "In my personal experience, we have fewer women applying for principal positions and fewer getting superintendent credentials."

The participants stated that there was either a lower number of female applicants, or that the female applicants had less experience than the male applicants. One participant experienced

hiring a male superintendent over a female superintendent, not because of gender, but because of job fit. The participant stated,

> "I don't know for a fact, but I would say there is less women working in administrative roles at most school districts. In our last selection for a superintendent for our district we did have a woman applicant. She was remarkable and I felt she would have done a good job, but ultimately we chose to hire from within our district because we wanted to stay focused on our current goals and direction the district was going."

Some participants explained that fewer females moved into administrative roles, and preferred to teach in a classroom, as will be presented in the next theme.

Theme 4: Women's desires and interests. In general, the participants perceived that women lacked the interest for administrative roles, including the position of superintendent. Few women applied to be school principals, which in turn led to fewer women receiving credentials for superintendency. The participants perceived that women intentionally refused administrative roles. Women were believed to enter the field of education to teach children in the classroom. One participant articulated, "Female teachers may choose to remain in the classroom where they feel they can have the biggest impact on children." Some participants perceived that women did not prefer to be burdened with the leadership responsibility due to family commitment. Several participants perceived that women were not keen on "the incredible stress of the job while trying to raise a family," and "females being less likely to choose career that forces them to sacrifice quality of life." Some participants also perceived that women prioritized duties and responsibilities at home, and did not prefer to spend long hours away from the family.

Lastly, some participants perceived that women lacked the confidence to pursue superintendency. A participant said, "Females not believing they can do the job. There seems to be a perception that females are not strong leaders." In addition, another participant claimed that when women doubted themselves, they also limit themselves. In the experience of one

participant, the school board decided against hiring a female applicant due to her appearing

hesitant. The participant shared, "Gender was not a factor as we had five semifinalists: four men

and one woman. It was the woman's first interview and she was nervous and somewhat hesitant.

She was hired by a neighboring district and is now very dynamic." Overall, the participants

perceived that gender did not play a role in the school board's hiring decision; however, women

they consistently believed to forgo administrative roles in order to prioritize quality of life and

family life.

Theme 5: Selection process based on applicants' qualifications. The majority of the

participants reiterated that gender was an irrelevant criterion when hiring a superintendent.

Gender was claimed to "not affect the [hiring] process at all," and equal processes were provided

to male and female applicants. A participant wrote,

> "I don't think it makes a difference in gender but they need to know and have a vision of
> where the district needs to go and how to get there. When we looked at our selection
> process it made no difference. One of our final three applicants was female and rated very
> good. Only experience won out."

The majority of the participants shared the similar perception. However, a participant

claimed that gender may be an issue "only if an applicant makes it an issue by attempting to

leverage and call attention to their gender." Sometimes male superintendents were hired due to

being more "open to the long commute or moving into teacher housing." The participants looked

into the job fit of the applicant when hiring a superintendent. A participant noted, "We looked at

our applicants with consideration of their experience. Of the four finalists we brought to the

community, one was female. She came in third, largely due to her lack of experience with unions

and bargaining." Overall, while the participants generally considered qualifications over gender,

some participants claimed that the hiring decision lay in the verdict of the entire school board. In

some ways, such as in theme 2, cultural, institutional and gender bias may affect the hiring

decision, but in some cases, the diversity in the school board may diminish the biases. One participant said, "Our process uses a number of groups from staff, parents, board, etc. to vet candidates down to the top three that are put through another formal interview process with similar groups. These groups are diverse in gender, education roles, and culture. I think that this diversity would diminish a bias in the hiring decision." To address the fourth research question, the participants perceived that male and female applicants may be equally strong leaders of an organization; however, factors such as culture and the women's personal and career choices may affect the hiring decision.

Summary

The objective of this study was to determine if the gender of the job candidate influences the school boards' choice for school superintendent and was addressed by implementing a mixed method and collecting data from school board members through a survey. Quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed accordingly. Based on the results, the majority of the quantitative analysis from the t-test and ANOVA implied that the gender of the candidate does not have a statistically significant effect on the school boards' choice during the superintendent selection process. The only two areas where analysis showed a statistically significant difference were: visibility in the community and developing relationships.

For the first research question, the results of the independent sample *t*-test showed that there is a significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent by gender between male and female school board members in one area on the survey. Of the thirteen skills and qualifications listed, there was only one that demonstrated a significant difference in the importance of visibility in the community when hiring a superintendent between male and female school board members.

For the second research question, the results of the ANOVA showed that gender of an applicant has a statistically significant impact on the superintendent selection process in one area. Specifically, gender of the applicant only had a significant impact on the superintendent selection process when it comes to assessing one's qualification of developing relationships.

Qualitative themes suggested that the selection process of a superintendent was based on applicants' qualifications rather than gender. Comments did reflect, however, that cultural factors in the selection, the lack of female candidates, and women's desires and interests generally impact the hiring process. Following this presentation of findings, the discussion of the results will be provided in the next chapter.

Chapter V: Discussion

Representation of females in superintendency is an alarming issue in light of gender biases in the workplace (Derrington & Sharatt, 2009; Finnan, 2016; Gammill & Vaughn, 2011; Wallace, 2015). In the education sector, it is more common for females to take on the teacher role, which can be attributed to the institutionalization of social roles of females (Derrington & Sharratt, 2009; Grogan, 2000; Tallerico & Blount, 2004). Thus, the purpose of the present study was to determine the attitudes, beliefs, and values about gender of school board members and how these beliefs affect the superintendent hiring process. A total of 114 school board members participated in the study. A mixed method research design was employed to analyze the significant relationships of gender and hiring process of superintendents, and to identify key patterns and themes.

The following research questions and hypotheses were used to guide the study:

RQ1:   Is there a significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between male and female school board members?

    $H_0 1$:   There is no significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between male and female school board members.

    $H_a 1$:   There is a significant difference in terms of beliefs about the most important skills and qualifications when hiring a superintendent between male and female school board members.

RQ2:   What impact does the gender of an applicant have on the superintendent selection process?

$H_0 2$:   Gender of an applicant does not have a statistically significant impact on the superintendent selection process.

$H_a 2$:   Gender of an applicant has a statistically significant impact on the superintendent selection process.

RQ3:   How do the beliefs about leadership style impact a school board's decision when hiring a superintendent?

RQ4:   During the superintendent selection process, do school board members perceive male applicants or female applicants as stronger leaders of organizational culture?

Results of the study showed that there was a statistically significant difference in school board members' gender beliefs when hiring a superintendent for their districts. In particular, it was found that perceptions on the visibility in the community of the candidate has a statistically significant difference between male and female school board members. Findings also showed that the gender of a candidate has a statistically significant impact on the superintendent selection process, specifically when it comes to assessing one's qualification of developing relationships.

Qualitative analysis revealed five key patterns and themes, which included: (a) leadership qualities influencing the school board's hiring decision, (b) cultural factors in hiring decision, (c) lack of female superintendent candidates, (d) women's desires and interests, and (e) selection process based on applications qualifications. These themes reflect the perceptions on gender that perpetuate biases with regards to the superintendent and managerial roles in an educational institution. It is still apparent that, despite the progress in terms of job equality, gender bias is still prevalent in this context. In the next subsections, the results are discussed in light of the current literature on the representation of females in the superintendency role and the underlying gender roles, biases, and norms that impose upon the perceptions of school board members.

Interpretation of the Findings

The perceptions of school boards on the superintendent role is vital in defining the hiring process and delineating the superintendent's task and obligations to the school and the community. Thus, it is critical to obtain insights on how school board members understand their role in the entire selection process. Building upon the notion that gender roles still permeate the education sector (Dowell & Larwin, 2013; Skrla, Reyes, & Scheurich, 2000), the main hypothesis was that gender would have a statistically significant effect on the perception of school board members during the superintendent selection process. The discussion of the results is based on the research questions.

Gender roles and the superintendency. Research question one focused more on the difference between the male and female school board member beliefs with regards to hiring superintendents. Research question two emphasized the influence of the gender of the applicant on the superintendent selection process. For both research questions, it was hypothesized that there would be a statistically significant difference in perception based on gender.

Findings suggest that male and female school board members tend to have different perceptions on gender and the superintendent hiring process. It is also interesting to note that visibility to the community yielded a statistically significant outcome, which supports the notion that visibility in leadership roles also includes a discussion on gender roles (Kowlaksi & Stouder, 1999).

Another notable result is that there was a statistically significant difference on the gender of an applicant in terms of assessing the applicant's qualification of developing relationship. These results reflect the widespread belief that there are still gender biases in the education sector (Lemasters & Roach, 2012; Oakely, 2000; Rice & Barth, 2016). Both developing

relationships and visibility in the community as qualifications for superintendency are related to establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships within the community. Forming strong relationships between leaders, communities, and their constituents (Bass, 1985) is especially important now that a strong focus of the superintendency is on developing and adopting policies to influence student academic achievement (Land, 2002). This suggests that the gender of the candidate has an important impact in determining whether the board views the candidate as having the specific skill set needed to meet the standards of the school board members.

Even though superintendents are expected to build meaningful relationships with the community to achieve the overall goals of the district, a significant portion, and perception, of the position continues to hinge on managerial tasks found within the position. Management in the education sector also entails underlying gender roles that might influence the perceptions of the stakeholders and community. This could explain why the overrepresentation of males in superintendency is attributed to social stereotypes, socialization of norms among students, and the bureaucratization that fosters and perpetuates differentiated sex roles (Kowalaski & Brunner, 2011; Tallerico & Blount, 2004). Women held teaching positions while men held leadership roles in education. This picture of gender is arguably obsolete in the modern world, but it clearly still has very real effects on the career paths of women (Lemasters & Roach, 2012; Oakely, 2000; Rice & Barth, 2016). The statistically significant result based on the gender difference implies that gender could influence the selection of a candidate.

The unique position and influence of the superintendent shows how important it is to determine the underlying reasons behind the underrepresentation of females (Kelsey et al., 2014; Lane-Washington & Wilson-Jones, 2010; Munoz et al., 2014). These findings presented through quantitative data confirm the notion that the issue of superintendency can be a gendered issue.

This fact demonstrates how, historically, women's roles have been focused on the care aspect, which resulted in a narrow range of professions (Graeber, 2001). While the role of the teacher would fit well with this conceptualization of gender roles, this is also to say that the role of superintendent tends to be dominated by male candidates (Munoz et al., 2014; Normore, 2006).

To summarize, the results of the quantitative section of the study confirmed that there are at least two areas where gender could play an important role in the career path of a school administrator becoming a superintendent (Kim & Brunner, 2009). Visibility to the community and developing relationships are two gendered factors that could potentially influence a candidate's selection as a superintendent. The fact that male and female school board members tend to have different perceptions based on these two factors suggests that gender stereotypes still exist, despite the progress in terms of job equality. Thus, it is vital for future studies to consider this discrepancy and continue to research why women are still underrepresented in the superintendency role. Another critical aspect of this discussion are the qualities that school board members look for in a superintendent. Thus, for the next subsection, the key themes regarding the school board perceptions on the superintendent role are discussed within the wider discourse of gender biases and social norms.

School board perception on gender and superintendent role. Research questions three and four focused on the perception of school board members and the leadership styles of superintendent candidates. Qualitative data was gathered using open ended questions at the end of the quantitative survey to understand how gender influences school board perceptions with regards to the superintendent selection and hiring process. After coding and analyzing data, key patterns and themes were identified. Findings revealed the emerging categories that reflect how gender and other factors relate to the perceptions of the school board members. The key themes

that emerged are: (a) leadership qualities influencing the school board's hiring decision, (b) cultural factors in hiring decision, (c) lack of female superintendent candidates, (d) women's desires and interests, and (e) selection process based on applications qualifications.

The theme of *leadership qualities influencing superintendent candidates* emphasized the required skills that the candidates are expected to have. Communication and listening skills, visibility to the community, and ability to adapt to different situations especially relating to the community emerged as the main foci. This is also in tandem with the results on the quantitative analysis, which highlight the significance of visibility and developing relationships within the school community. However, overall, the school board participants reported that gender does not influence their perceptions of leadership qualities in choosing superintendent candidates. School board members continue to value and focus on the main requirements of being a superintendent, and that their work is critical in ensuring the mission and vision of a school district moving forward (Hilliard & Newsome, 2013; Keedy et al., 2007; Thompson, 2014).

Although the theme of *leadership qualities influencing superintendent candidates* does not explore the gender aspect of leadership, the other themes still demonstrate how norms and expectations within the education sector perpetuate gender bias and other discriminatory practices that hamper females from entering the superintendency at the same rate as males enter the superintendency (Dowell & Larwin, 2013; Skrla et al., 2000). The second theme, *cultural factors in hiring decision*, is embedded with socio-cultural norms on gender that intersect with gender and race. In this theme, the respondents noted that there is a "good old boy network", that "White men find jobs for each other", and that superintendent roles can be hard on "any marriage or children". These comments speak volumes of the dominant discourse on underlying biases that still perpetuate our society.

Statements reported by school board members that include race and gender, also reflect the history of women in the labor force, one that is filled with biases and discrimination against the female gender (Graeber, 2001). Although it may not be salient in the hiring process, the school board members are still aware of the ongoing favoritism of "good old boys" and "White men", which is certainly congruent to the notion that the role of superintendent, is more like a business executive who must work with the financial forces of the external world and have considerable strategic ability (Normore, 2006).

Gender biases still have real effects on the career development and roles of women in the education sector (Lemasters & Roach, 2012; Oakely, 2000; Rice & Barth, 2016). A significant disparity exists in the number of females compared to males in educational leadership positions, especially the superintendency (Kachur-Recio & Wallin, 2011; Kelsey et al., 2014). Overrepresentation of males in superintendency was attributed to social stereotypes, socialization of norms among students, and the bureaucratization that fosters and perpetuates differentiated sex roles (Kowalaski & Brunner, 2011; Tallerico & Blount, 2004).

Female school board members can often carry the same dominant cultural attitudes about gender that male school board members carry (Bearman, et al., 2009). This is sometimes called the phenomenon of internalized sexism, whereby women think and act in accordance with the very logic that keeps them oppressed in the first place (Bearman et al., 2009). Women held teaching positions while men held leadership roles in education. Thus, the fact that the school board members are still aware of these biases show that the selection process is not inclusive enough to completely erase the norms that hurt the advancement of women in their chosen careers.

In relation to the second theme, the third and fourth themes, *lack of female superintendent candidates* and *women's desires and interests*, respectively, also show how underlying biases can be detrimental to the representation of females in the superintendent role. Barriers that hinder females from holding a position as school superintendent have been present for decades (McGee, 2010; Kachur-Recio & Wallin, 2011; Kelsey et al., 2014; Lane-Washington & Wilson-Jones, 2010). This suggests how a lack of suitable mentors and role models for aspiring female superintendents could have significant influence on whether those potential candidates apply for the job at all (Lane-Washington & Wilson-Jones, 2010). Encouraging females to pursue the superintendency while providing adequate support, collaboration, and mentorship will help reduce barriers and provide greater access to hire and retain female superintendents (McGee, 2010; Kachur-Recio & Wallin, 2011; Kelsey et al., 2014; Lane-Washington et al., 2010).

Additionally, the respondents also noted a perceived lack of interest for administrative roles with female applicants. These themes confirm the fact that for many women pursuing a career as a superintendent, motivation is one of the key challenges: women may not feel that their ambitions are being encouraged by society and culture, and that they need to develop sources of motivation that can enable them to achieve success despite these barriers (Williams, 2016). Furthermore, this also shows how the historical context of superintendency limits female candidates to be teachers, due to the role having a much bigger impact on the student development (Lemasters & Roach, 2012; Oakely, 2000; Rice & Barth, 2016).

One respondent reported that female candidates tend to show a lack of confidence in being a good leader to the community. This comment supports the argument that women are not seen as a strong leader (Lopez, 2008; Montz, 2004; Ortiz, 1999; Richard & Kruse, 2008; Tallerico, 2000). As stated in the literature review, and confirmed by this study, barriers to entry

and contributing factors for the continued underrepresentation of female superintendents are greater for female educators than male educators (Finnan, 2016).

The final theme, *selection process based on applicants' qualifications*, focuses on the school board perceptions of capability of the superintendent candidates. Despite the reiteration that gender is not a basis for qualification, the respondents noted that it would be an issue only if the participant attempts to use their gender as a leverage. This is quite interesting as this account seems to overturn gender as a disadvantage in the selection process for superintendency. Future research could possibly show how candidates affect the perception of school board members by using their gender as an advantage amidst the socio-cultural biases against gender roles and perceptions.

To summarize, the findings revealed that gender plays a role on the perceptions of school board members regarding the selection process of the superintendent role. The emerging themes demonstrated how gender biases and social norms still affect board member perceptions and perhaps the representation of females in superintendency. Despite the attempt to be more diverse in terms of the pool of candidates, there are still gender biases that favor men over women for the superintendency role. However, it should be noted that one actually favored women over men. In the next subsection, the limitations of the study are discussed based on the results.

Limitations of the Study

Despite the statistically significant results and insights from the study, it is still important to discuss the findings considering the limitations of the present study. The major limitation for the study relates to the methodology, which is a mixed methods approach. Regardless of the key patterns that emerged from the analysis, and how much it can contribute to the literature, the current results are still limited because of the survey method.

There are several interesting points in the discussion that could have been fleshed out if the qualitative approach of the study employed an interview method. The researcher was advised to refrain from conducting interviews with school board members for fear that it could detrimentally affect her career trajectory. This request and advice was confirmation that bias still exists toward female superintendents. As such, this limitation boils down to the conceptual fit of the methodology. Future research could use an interview method so that emerging themes could be more thoroughly explained and newer insights may be used to consolidate the gaps in research on the gender norms that perpetuate in the superintendent hiring process.

The study may have also been limited by the lack of validated instrumentation tools to quantify the correlations of the underrepresentation of female superintendents. There are currently no tools that directly talk about females in the superintendency. Available tools primarily talk about gender roles. This can be traced to the fact the there is a scarcity in research the focuses on the representation of females in the superintendency role, which also entails that there is a lack of tool development to measure such relationships. This limited the analysis of the research with regards to the results of the quantitative section of the study. Further studies should consider developing instrumentation tools for validity and reliability purposes.

In terms of analysis, it is difficult to contextualize the results as there was a narrow focus and lack of similar studies. The results of the present study, then, could not be generalized since the focus is on how gender impact a school board members perception during the superintendent selection process. However, with that said, it still could be used to understand the social and structural constraints that permeate in the lived experiences of aspiring female teachers for the superintendent role. Future researchers should consider gathering more evidence on the social and gender biases that impose upon the motivations of females in the education sector.

In summary, the limitations mainly focus on the methodological approach of the study, with interview method being highlighted as critical to further flesh out the emerging themes that were revealed in this study. Future researchers are encouraged to employ a much more comprehensive qualitative analysis to provide more evidence on the role of gender on the selection process of superintendency. Further discussion on recommendations for future research is next.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings and limitations of the study, further studies on the superintendent selection process necessitate a closer analysis of the social structures that limit the advancement of women in the education sector. This can be achieved by leaning towards qualitative approaches that allow for the in-depth understanding of the socio-psychological processes that occur within this profession. In addition, it is important to understand the meaning-making processes not only of the school board members, but also of the aspiring individuals for the superintendent role. This way, contributions to the literature are ensured through insightful accounts from the individuals involved.

It is also necessary to identify the explicit relationships of the variables that affect the superintendency selection process. Thus, it is critical to use quantitative methods to determine which factors and variables have significant influences on the hiring process, and which factors mediate such results. Future researchers are encouraged to study the salient relationships so that understanding about the different variables and their relations to one another can be solidified and used to consolidate the emerging themes from the qualitative studies.

The perceptions of teachers and other stakeholders are also critical to determine the effectiveness and relevance of the requirements of the superintendent selection process.

Understanding teachers' lived experiences requires examination of their perceptions on their role as stakeholders, on the role of superintendents, and the role of social structures that perpetuate norms and biases not only regarding gender, but other sociodemographic variables such as race and ethnicity as well. This means gathering and focusing on the co-teachers, faculty, parents, and students in the community.

Superintendent search consultants are responsible for recruiting, screening, and presenting candidates to school boards for consideration. As a gatekeeper for the school board, consultants can block female candidates from accessing the superintendency. Studying the practices and routines of search consultants would show if systems and procedures are in place that offer an impartial process, or if one gender is selected to move on at a greater rate than another. Gaining greater insight into their perceptions of gender could help determine if search consultants act as a barrier to female educators and contribute to the underrepresentation of female superintendents.

To summarize, it is important for future researchers to further the discussion on the social norms that perpetuate bias in the selection of superintendents by employing either qualitative and quantitative in their research process. This will ensure in-depth analysis of the salient and underlying socio-psychological processes and how social structures permeated our meaning-making processes. In addition, it is vital to understand the perceptions of other stakeholders in the community to improve the selection process because they influence the process. By doing so, researchers will have a holistic and comprehensive understanding of how the perceptions affect others and how these can influence the hiring process and responsibilities of a superintendent. The next section discusses the implications of the study.

Implications for Professional Practice

The present study revealed the emerging themes and patterns that help us understand the perceptions of school board members with regards to the existing social structures on gender norms in the superintendency selection process. Gender bias, a lack of mentorship and deeply rooted societal norms are only a few of the barriers females continue to experience as they pursue the superintendency (Dowell & Larwin, 2013; Kachur-Reico & Wallin, 2011; Kelsey et al., 2014). Women are still underrepresented in the superintendency despite the 1972 legislation eliminating discrimination based on sex (Tallerico & Blount, 2004). Strong biases against female leaders exist and women continue to fight gender stereotypes in leadership positions (Stoker, VanderVelde & Lammers, 2012). Studies must be done to understand how these social structures affect not only the female leaders, but also the other marginalized individuals in the process. This study helped contribute by delineating how gender influenced the perceptions of school board members during the selection process.

The present study offered a foundation of the salient and implicit relationships of variables that influence the selection process of superintendent role. This is especially important in developing models and programs that could help researchers understand how gender biases, and other social structures, affect the lived experiences of the board members and the candidates themselves. This way, prescriptive research can be done to address the variables that can potentially perpetuate biases and possibly limit individuals in their career advancement. It is particularly critical for future researchers to gain insights on how these norms are still heavily ingrained in our day-to-day perceptions, and identify ways on how to possibly address them. In addition, practitioners can use the insights from this study to develop strategies and programs that could help candidates cope better with the pressures and stress from the intensive hiring

process for superintendents.

Positive Social Change

Findings from this study can be used to further positive social change by not only recognizing that gender biases still exist within the education sector, but also by identifying how gender roles can hurt the representation of marginalized groups in leadership roles. Stakeholders, such as the school board members and the community, can use knowledge acquired in this study by pushing for policies that promote diversity within the education sector. Positive social change within education requires institutionalization of beliefs that are free of bias and that encourage all genders to advance their career without having to worry about the social norms that could potentially limit their reach. Thus, the results call for changes in educational policies for positive social change not only within the school community, but hopefully within the education sector in general.

Conclusion

Representation of female candidates in the superintendency role is vital to ensure equality in superintendent job opportunities for all genders. The purpose of this study provided insight into the underrepresentation of female superintendents by exploring the attitudes, values and beliefs about gender of school board members and how those beliefs influenced the superintendent hiring process. Results showed that gender has a statistically significant impact on the superintendent selection process in two areas: visibility to the community and developing relationships. The emerging themes from the qualitative analysis also reflect how gender and other social norms still permeate the selection process, despite the reports that gender is not an issue for many school board members. This demonstrates how gender stereotypes and social norms are still present in our daily vernacular. Future researchers should look at variables that

affect and mediate the hiring process of the superintendency role to further understand how gender and other sociodemographic variables influence career development of women in the education sector.

REFERENCES

Ackerly, B., & True, J. (2010). Back to the future: Feminist theory, activism, and doing feminist research in an age of globalization. *Women's Studies International Forum*, *33*(5), 464–472. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2010.06.004

Alizadeh, S., & Panahi, F. (2013). Organizational culture constructs in the development of organizational trust. *International Journal of Management Research and Review, 3*(8), 3238-3244.

Allen, K. R., & Jaramillo-sierra, A. L. (2015). Feminist Theory and Research on Family Relationships: Pluralism and Complexity. *Sex Roles; New York*, *73*(3–4), 93–99. http://dx.doi.org.nnu.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/s11199-015-0527-4

Alsbury, T. L., & Whitaker, K. S. (2007). Superintendent perspectives and practice of accountability, democratic voice and social justice. *Journal of Educational Administration, 45*(2), 154. http://dx.doi.org.nnu.idm.oclc.org/10.1108/ 09578230710732943

Andero, A. (2000). The changing role of school superintendent with regard to curriculum policy and decision making. *Education, 121*(2), 276. Retrieved from EBSCO Database.

Bally, S. (2014, July 23). Who makes a better leader: A man or a woman? Retrieved from: https://www.forbes.com/sites/sebastianbailey/2014/07/23/who-makes-a-better-leader-a-man-or-a-woman/#787b042c1260

Banks, C. A. M. (2007). Gender and race as factors in educational leadership and administration. In *The Jossey-Bass Reader on Educational Leadership* (pp. 299–338). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Barbuto, J. E., Jr. (2005). Motivation and transactional, charismatic, and transformational leadership. *DigitalCommons@UniversityofNebraska–Lincoln*. Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1038&context=aglecfacpub

Bass, B. M. (1985). Leadership and performance beyond expectations. New York: Free Press.

Bass, B. (1990). From Transactional to Transformational leadership: Learning to Share the Vision. Retrieved from: http://discoverthought.com/Leadership/References_ files/Bass%20leadership%201990.pdf

Beard, K. S. (2012). Making the case for the outlier: Researcher reflections of an African-American female deputy superintendent who decided to close the achievement gap. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 25*(1), 59-71. doi:10. 1080/09518398.2011.647724

Bearman, S, Korobov, N., & Thorne, A. (2009). The fabric of internalized sexism. *Journal of Integrated Social Sciences, 1*(1), 10-47.

Beauvoir, S. (2011). *The second sex.* New York: Vintage.

Bellou, V. (2010). Organizational culture as a predictor of job satisfaction: The role of gender and age. *Career Development International, 15*(1), 4-19.

Bendal, R., & Schmidt, A. (2012). Revisiting feminist activism at managerial universities. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal, 31*(5/6), 484-505. doi: http://dx.doi.org.nnu.idm.oclc.org/10.1108/02610151211235488

Biddle, B. J. (2013). *Role theory: Expectations, identities, and behaviors.* Academic Press.

Bilbrey, P., & Jones, B. (2009). *Ordinary greatness: It's where you least expect it—everywhere*. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley.

Bird, J. J., & Wang, C. (2013). Superintendents describe their leadership styles: Implications for practice. *Management in Education, 27*(1), 14-18. doi: 10.1177/ 0892020612459287

Bjork, L. (2000). Introduction: Women in the superintendency--advances in research and theory. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 36*(1), 5-15.

Blount, J. M. (1998). *Destined to rule the schools: Women and the superintendency, 1873-1995*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Bogler, R. (2001). The influence of leadership style on teacher job satisfaction. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 37*(5), 662-683

Bon Reis, S., Young, I. P., & Jury, J. C. (1999). Female administrators: A crack in the glass ceiling. *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education, 13*(1), 71-82.

Bonk, L. (2014). The top 10 conservative and liberal states. Retrieved from http://ijr.com/ 2015/02/250771-states-self-identify-conservative-rather-liberal/

Boundless. (2016, May 26). "Transactional Versus Transformational Leaders." *Boundless Management* Boundless. Retrieved from https://www.boundless.com/management/textb ooks/boundless-management-textbook/leadership-9/types-of-leaders-72/transactional-versus-transformational-leaders-355-3466/

Boyland, L. (2013). Principals' perceptions of the superintendency: A five-state study. *Planning and Changing, 44*(1/2), 87-110.

Bosak, J., & Sczesny, S. (2008). Am I the right candidate? Self-ascribed fit of women and men to a leadership position. *Sex Roles, 58*(9-10), 682-688. doi: http://dx.doi.org. nnu.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/s11199-007-9380-4

Brown, A. (1992). Organizational culture: The key to effective leadership. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 13*(2), 3. Retrieved from https://login.nnu.idm. oclc.org? url=http://search.proquest.com

Brown, A. R. (2014). The recruitment and retention of African American women as public-school superintendents. *Journal of Black Studies, 45*(6), 573-593. doi:10.1177/ 0021934714542157

Brown, H. (1992) Marx on gender and the family: A summary. *Monthly Review, 66*(2), 48-57.

Brunner, C. C. (2000). Power, gender, and Superintendent selection. In C. C. Brunner (Ed.), *Sacred dreams: Women and the Superintendency*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Brunner, C. C., & Grogan, M. (2007). Women leading school systems: Uncommon roads to fulfillment. *Rowman & Littlefield Education.*

Brunner, C. C., & Kim, Y. (2010). Are women prepared to be school superintendents? An essay on the myths and misunderstandings. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education, 5*(8), 276-309. doi:10.1177/194277511000500801

Buffet, W. (n.d.) AZQuotes.com. Retrieved November 27, 2016 from AZQuotes.com. Retrieved from http://azquotes.com/quote/850396

Burns, J. (1978). *Leadership*. New York, Harper & Row.

Burton, L. J., & Weiner, J. M. (2016). "They were really looking for a male leader for the building:" Gender, identity and leadership development in a principal preparation program. *Frontiers in Psychology, 7*

Carnes, M., Devine, P. G., Manwell, L. B., Byars-Winston, A., Fine, E., Ford, C. E., Sheridan, J. (2015). The Effect of an Intervention to Break the Gender Bias Habit for Faculty at One Institution. *Academic Medicine,90*(2), 221-230. doi:10.1097/ acm.0000000000000552

Carter, G. R., & Cunningham, W. G. (1997). *The American school superintendent: Leading in an age of pressure.* The Jossey-Bass education series. ERIC.

Cheesebrow, D. (2012). *Partnership Redefined: Leadership and the power of &*. Centerville, MN: Bogman.

Chia-Lin, Hsieh, & Shen, J. (1998). Teachers', principals' and superintendents' conceptions of leadership. *School Leadership & Management, 18*(1), 107-121. Retrieved from https://login.nnu.idm.oclc.org?url=http://search.proquest.com.

Chisamya, G., DeJaeghere, J., Kendall, N., & Khan, M. A. (2012). Gender and education for all: Progress and problems in achieving gender equity. *International Journal of Educational Development, 32*(6), 743-755.

Christman, D. & McClellan, R. (2005, April). Living on barbed wire: Resilient women administrators in educational leadership programs. Paper presented at the Annual American Educational Research Association conference, Montreal, Canada.

Clinebell, S., Skudiene, V., Trijonyte, R., & Reardon, J. (2013). Impact of leadership styles on employee organizational commitment. *Journal of Service Science (Online), 6*(1), 139.

Coder, L., & Spiller, M. S. (2013). Leadership education and gender roles: Think manager, think? *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal, 17*(3), 21-51. The Condition of Education 2016. (2016). National Center for Education Statistics.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications.

Crites, S. N., Dickson, K. E., & Lorenz, A. (2015). Nurturing gender stereotypes in the face of experience: A study of leader gender, leadership style, and satisfaction. *Journal of Organizational Culture, Communication and Conflict, 19*(1), 1-23.

Copeland, S. M., & Calhoun, D. W. (2014). Perceptions of mentoring: Examining the experiences of women superintendents. *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation, 9*, 2.

Cuadrado, I., Morales, J. F., & Recio, P. (2008). Women's access to managerial positions: An experimental study of leadership styles and gender. *The Spanish Journal of Psychology, 11*(1), 55-65.

Dana, J. A., & Bourisaw, D. M. (2006). *Women in the superintedency: Discarded leadership*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education.

Davis, S. H., & Leon, R. J. (2014). Developing a leadership brand: The heart of effective school leadership in turbulent times. *Planning and Changing, 45*(1/2), 3-18

De Beaufort, V., & Summers, L. (2014). Women on boards: Sharing a rigorous vision of the functioning of boards, demanding a new model of corporate governance. *Journal of Research in Gender Studies, 4*(1), 101-140.

Derrington, M. L., & Sharratt, G. (2009). Female superintendents: Breaking barriers and challenging life styles. *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin, 75*(2), 8-12. Retrieved from the EBSCO Database.

Dervarics, C., & O'Brien, E. (2016). Characteristics of effective school boards. *The Education Digest, 81*(7), 39-42.

Dierendonck, D. van. (2011). Servant leadership: A review and synthesis. *Journal of Management, 38*, 1167-1230.

Dowell, M. L., & Larwin, K. H. (2013). Gender equity in educational administration: Investigating compensation and promotion. *Journal of Research in Gender Studies, 3*(1), 53-77.

Duevel, L., Nashman-Smith, M., & Stern, E. (2015). Moving from 'womanless history' to women stepping up into school leadership roles. *International Schools Journal, 35*(1), 34-45.

Dulin, A. M. (2007). A lesson on social role theory: An example of human behavior in the social environment theory. *Advances in Social Work, 8*(1), 104-112.

Duwe, K. (2010). *Aspirations and experiences of west Texas superintendent certified women.* (Unpublished Doctor of Education). Texas Tech University, Texas.

Eagly, A. H., & Johansen-Schmidt, M. C. (2001). The leadership styles of men and women. *Journal of Social Issues, 57*(4), 781-797.

Eagly, A. H., Johannesen-Schmidt, M. C., van Engen, M. L. (Jul 2003). Transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles: A meta-analysis comparing women and men. *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol 129(4), 569-591. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.129.4.569

Eagly, A. H., & Kite, M. E. (1987). Are stereotypes of nationalities applied to both women and men? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 53*(3), 451.

Eagly, A. H., & Wood, W. (1991). Explaining sex differences in social behavior: A meta-analytic perspective. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *17*, 306–315. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.11779/0146167291173011

Eagly, A. H., Wood, W., & Diekman, A. B. (2000). Social role theory of sex differences and similarities: A current appraisal. *The Developmental Social Psychology of Gender*, 123-174. Retrieved from ProQuest Ebrary

Farahman, F. (2012). Rethinking convenience sampling: Defining quality criteria. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 2.4 (2012): 784-792.

Feuerstein, A. (2009). School board ethics and effectiveness. *Planning and Changing, 40*(1), 3-34.

Feldman, R. S. (1985). *Social psychology.* New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Fincham, J. E. (2008). Response Rates and Responsiveness for Surveys, Standards, and the Journal. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, *72*(2). Retrieved from https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2384218/

Finnan, L. (2016, April 30). *Women in the Superintendency - A National Perspective*. Lecture presented at WASA Pre-Conference in Chelan, Washington.

Forner, M., Bierlein-Palmer, L., & Reeves, P. (2012). Leadership practices of effective rural superintendents: Connections to Waters and Marzano's leadership correlates. *Journal of Research in Rural Education (Online), 27*(8), 1-13. Retrieved from https://login.nnu.idm.oclc.org?url=http://search.proquest.com

Foster, D. (2015, October 1). Planning for a successful transition. *School Administrator*, 28-31.

Freed, J. (2015, August 18). Culture eats strategy for breakfast! Retrieved December 12, 2015, from http://www.jannfreed.com/2015/08/culture-eats-strategy-for-breakfast.html

Freedburg, L. (2014). High Turnover in District Leadership. Retrieved from https://edsource.org/2014/high-turnover-in-school-district-leadership/71154

Fry, L. W. (2003). Toward a theory of spiritual leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly, 14*(6), 693-727.

Gammill, S., & Vaughn, C. (2011). Lessons for a rural female superintendent: Gender, leadership, and politics. *Advancing Women in Leadership, 31*(1), 113-123.

Giberson, T. R., Resick, C. J., Dickson, M. W., Mitchelson, J. K., Randall, K. R., & Clark, M. A. (2009). Leadership and organizational culture: Linking CEO characteristics to cultural values. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 24*(2), 123-137.

Glass, T. Where are all the female superintendents? Retrieved from http://aasa.org/SchoolAdministratorArticle.aspx?id=14492

Glass, T. E. (2000, June 01). Where are all the women superintendents? Retrieved April 09, 2016, from http://aasa.org/SchoolAdministratorArticle.aspx?id=14492

Glass, T. E., & Franceschini, L. A. (2007). *The state of the American school superintendency: A mid-decade study*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life.* New York: Anchor.

Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, *8*(4), 597-607.

Goodwin, V. L., Whittington, J. L., Murray, B., & Nichols, T. (2011). Moderator or mediator? Examining the role of trust in the transformational leadership paradigm. *Journal of Managerial Issues, 23*(4), 409-425.

Graeber, D. (2001). *Toward an anthropological theory of value.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gronberg, T. J., Jansen, D. W., Karakaplan, M. U., & Taylor, L. L. (2015). School district consolidation: Market concentration and the scale-efficiency tradeoff. *Southern Economic Journal*, *82*(2), 580-597. doi:10.1002/soej.12029

Grogan, M. (2000). Laying the groundwork for a reconception of the superintendency from feminist postmodern perspectives. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 36*(1), 117-142.

Grogan, M. (2005). Echoing their ancestors, women lead school districts in the United States. *International Studies in Educational Administration, 33*(2), 21-30.

Grogan, M., & Brunner, C. C. (2005). Women leading systems: What the latest facts and figures say about women in the superintendency today. *School Administrator, 62*(2), 46.

Guimond, S. (2008), Psychological similarities and differences between women and men across cultures. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2: 494–510. doi:10.1111/j.1751-9004.2007. 00036.x

Harris, A. (2002). Effective leadership in schools facing challenging contexts. *School Leadership & Management, 22*(1), 15-26.

Hill, G., & McDonald, T. (2016, April 30). *The Educational Leadership Pipeline: Are Women Leaning in or Backing Out?* Lecture presented at WASA Pre-Conference in Washington, Chelan.

Hilliard, A. T., & Newsome, E. (2013). Effective communication and creating professional learning communities is A valuable practice for superintendents. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research (Online), 6*(4), 353.

History of the district superintendency. (2009). *NYSED*. Retrieved from http://www.p12. nysed.gov/ds/hisotry.html

Houston, P. D. (2001). Superintendents for the twenty-first century: It's not just a job, it's a calling. *Phi Delta Kappan, 82*(6), 428-433.

Hoyt, C. L. (2012). Gender bias in employment contexts: A closer examination of the role incongruity principle. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 48*(1), 86-96.

Hutchinson, S. (2002). Women in school leadership: Taking steps to help them make the leap. In G. Perreault & F. C. Lunenburg (Eds.), *The changing world of school administration* (pp. 363–275). Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc.

Huang, Q., & Gamble, J. (2015). Social expectations, gender and job satisfaction: Front-line employees in china's retail sector. *Human Resource Management Journal, 25*(3), 331-347.

Hunter, J. C. (2004). *The world's most powerful leadership principle: How to become a servant leader* Crown Business.

Independent t-test in SPSS Statistics - Procedure, output and interpretation of the output using a relevant example | Laerd Statistics. (n.d.). Retrieved January 20, 2018, from https://statistics.laerd.com/spss-tutorials/independent-t-test-using-spss-statistics.php

Ingram, D. (n. d.). Transformational Leadership Vs. Transactional Leadership Definition. Retrieved from http://smallbusiness.chron.com/transformational-leadership-vs-transactional-leadership-definition-13834.html

Ingersoll, R., Merrill, L., & Stuckey, D. (2014). Seven trends: The transformation of the teaching force.

Independent t-test in SPSS Statistics - Procedure, output and interpretation of the output using a relevant example | Laerd Statistics. (n.d.). Retrieved January 20, 2018, from https://statistics.laerd.com/spss-tutorials/independent-t-test-using-spss-statistics.php

Iyer, S. A. (2016). *Testament: An invitation to lucid romance.* Austin, TX: CreateSpace.

Jelic, N. (2017). Bias in conducting research: Guidelines for young researchers regarding gender differences. *JEPS*. Retrieved September 25, 2017 from blog.efpsa.org/2013/11/30/bias-in-conducting-research-regarding-gender-differences/.

Kachur-Reico, C., & C Wallin, D. (2011). The career paths of female superintendents in Canada in 2010: Changing times or reinforcing old news? *EAF Journal, 22*(1), 1-I.

Katz, D. A., McIntosh, L. A., & Wachtell, Litpon, R. & K. (2016). Gender Diversity on Boards: The Future Is Almost Here. Retrieved from https://corpgov.law.harvard. edu/2016/03/25/gender-diversity-on-boards-the-future-is-almost-here

Keedy, J. L., Björk, L.G., Winter, P. A., Rinehart, J. S., & Ricciardi, P. D. (2007). Is there a crisis in the superintendency? the case of kentucky. *Research in the Schools, 14*(2), 49-63.

Kent, T. W., Blair, C. A., & Rudd, H. F. (2010). Gender Differences and Transformational Leadership Behavior: Do Both German Men and Women Lead in the Same Way? *Internal Journal of Leadership Studies*, *6*, 52–66.

Kelsey, C., Allen, K., Coke, K., & Ballard, G. (2014). Lean in and lift up: Female superintendents share their career path choices. *Journal of Case Studies in Education, 7.* Retrieved from http://www.aabri.com/manuscripts/142015.pdf

Kim, H.-Y. (2014). Analysis of variance (ANOVA) comparing means of more than two groups. *Restorative Dentistry & Endodontics*, *39*(1), 74–77.

Kim, Y., & Brunner, C. (2009). School administrator's career mobility to the superintendent gender differences in career development. *Journal of Educational Administration, 47*(1), 75.

Kingsland, N. (2013). The recovery school district model. *Pathway to Success for Milwaukee Schools.* Wisconsin Policy Research Institute, 40-49

Kirby, E. A., & Klocko, B. A. (2014). Resiliency: Essential for superintendents and communities during challenging economic times. *Journal of Social Sciences Research,* 58

Kleespie, A. (2005). Pennsylvania supreme court has expanded the implied horizons of school boards: burger v. board of school directors. *Widener Law Journal*, *14*(2), 667-677.

Kline, R. B. (2005). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Guilford.

Kotter, J. (2012). How the most innovative companies capitalize on today's rapid-fire strategic challenges-and still make their numbers. *Harvard Business Review, 90*(11), 43-58.

Kowalski, T. J., & Björk, L. G. (2005). Role expectations of the district superintendent: Implications for deregulating preparation and licensing. *Journal of Thought, 40*(2), 73-96.

Kowalski, T. J., & Brunner, C. C. (2011). The school superintendent: Roles, challenges, and issues. *Sage Handbook of Educational Leadership: Advances in Theory, Research, and Practice.*

Kowalski, T. J., & Stouder, J. G. (1999). Female experiences related to becoming a superintendent. *Contemporary Education, 70*(4), 32-40. Retrieved April 9, 2016.

Kramarae. C., & Spender, D. (2000). Routledge international encyclopedia of women: Global women's issue and knowledge. *Patriarchy: Feminist theory* (pp. 1493-1497)

Laerd Statistics. (2013). Cronbach's Alpha (α) using SPSS Statistics. Retrieved from https://statistics.laerd.com/spss-tutorials/cronbachs-alpha-using-spss-statistics.php

Land, D. (2002). Local School Boards Under Review: Their role and effectiveness in relation to students' academic achievement. *Review of Educational Research, 72*(2), 229-278.

Lane-Washington, L., & Wilson-Jones, L. (2010). Women superintendents: Challenges, barriers and experiences as senior level leaders. *National Forum of Educational Administration & Supervision Journal, 27*(4), 1-6.

Lansford, M., Clements, V., Falzon, T., Aish, D., & Rogers, R. (2010). Essential leadership traits of female executives in the non-profit sector. *The Journal of Human Resource and Adult Learning, 6*(1), 51-62.

Lee, I. (2013). The influences of school supervisors' leadership styles upon organizational effectiveness: Using organizational commitment and organizational change as mediators. *The Journal of Human Resource and Adult Learning, 9*(2), 105-123.

Lemasters, L., & Roach, V. (2012). 3 dimensional portrait of the female CEO. *Educational Leadership Preparation, 7*, 1.

Lopez, J. (2008). Factors affecting upper mobility of women administrators to the superintendency. (Ed.D. Dissertation). Retrieved from Dissertation and Theses. (AAT 3304508).

Love, L. F., & Singh, P. (2011). Workplace branding: Leveraging human resources management practices for competitive advantage through "Best employer" surveys. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 26*(2), 175-181.

Loughlin, C., Arnold, K., & Crawford, J. (2012). Lost opportunity. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal, 31*(1), 43-64. doi: http://dx.doi.org.nnu.idm. oclc.org/10.1108/02610151211199218

Lunenburg, F. C. (2011). Organizational culture-performance relationships: Views of excellence and theory Z (Vol. 29, pp. 1–10). Presented at the National Forum of Educational Administration and Supervision Journal.

Maher, K. J. (1997). Gender-related stereotypes of transformational and transactional leadership. *Sex Roles, 37*(3-4), 209-225.

Mason, D. (2015). Women as Transformational Leaders. In *Business Magazine Gainsville.com*. Retrieved from http://businessmagazinegainesville.com/women-as-transformational-leaders/

Marzano, R. J., & Waters, T. (2008). *District leadership that works: Striking the right balance*

McFarlane, D. A. (2010). Perceived impact of district leadership practices on school climate and school improvement. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, 2*(2), 53-70. Retrieved from https://login.nnu.idm.oclc.org?url=http://search.proquest.com

McGee, J. M. (2010). To climb or not to climb: The probing of self-imposed barriers that delay or deny career aspirations to be an administrator in a public-school system. *Forum on Public Policy, 2*.

Mehdinezhad, V., & Sardarzahi, Z. (2016). Leadership behaviors and its relations with principals' management experience. *New Approaches in Educational Research, 5*, 11-16. doi:10.7821/naer.2016.1.133

Meier, J. (2009, September 21). Lessons Learned from Peter Drucker. Retrieved December 16, 2015, from http://sourcesofinsight.com/lessons-learned-from-peter-drucker/

Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*, Jossey Bass: San Francisco.

Meyers, L. (2014, February 2). THE News Update. Retrieved April 09, 2016, from https://thejournal.com/articles/2014/02/13/report-on-superintendent-salaries-reveals-disparity-between-pay-for-men-and-women.aspx

Montz, C. (2004). A case study of female superintendents from one mid-western state: Characteristics, skills, and barriers for female candidates aspiring to the superintendency.

(Ph.D. Dissertation). Dissertation Abstracts International. Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences. (ATT: MRB-WRI0316853).

Munoz, J., Mills, J., Pankake, A., & Whaley,S. (2014). Disparity in the Superintendency. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research*, *7*(4), 269-278.

Naranjo-Valencia, J. C., Jiménez-Jiménez, D., & Sanz-Valle, R. (2011). Innovation or imitation? The role of organizational culture. *Management Decision, 49*(1), 55-72.

Nikčević, G. (2016). The influence of organizational culture on leadership–case study Montenegro. *Tehnički Vjesnik, 23*(1), 191-197.

Normore, A. H. (2006). Leadership recruitment and selection in school districts: Trends and issues. *The Journal of Educational Thought, 40*(1), 41-73. NVivo qualitative data analysis software | QSR International. (n.d.). Retrieved January 21, 2018, from https://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo/home

Oakley, J. G. (2000). Gender-based barriers to senior management positions: Understanding the scarcity of female CEOs. *Journal of Business Ethics, 27*(4), 321-334.

One-way ANOVA in Stata - Procedure, output and interpretation of the output using a relevant example. (n.d.). Retrieved January 20, 2018, from https://statistics.laerd. com/stata-tutorials/one-way-anova-using-stata.php

Onion, R. (2016, September 16). America has always seen ambitious women as unhealthy. *Slate.* Retrieved from http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/ history/2016/09/hillary_clinton_is_just_the_latest_ambitious_american_woman_to_be_a ccused.html

Onorato, M. (2013). Transformational leadership style in the educational sector: An empirical study of corporate managers and educational leaders. *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal,17*(1), 33-47.

Ortiz, F. I. (1999). Seeking and selecting Hispanic female superintendents. In C. C. Brunner (Ed.), Sacred dreams: Women and the superintendency (pp. 91–101). Albany, NY: State University of Press.

Owen, H. (2004). The role of gender in transformational leadership. Retrieved from: http://www.onrec.com/news/news-archive/the-role-of-gender-in-transformational-leadership.

Papadopoulos, D., Stephenson, N. & Tsianos, V. (2008). *Escape routes: Control and subversion in the 21st century.* Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press.

Percy, W., Kostere, K., & Kostere, S. (2015). Generic qualitative research in psychology. The Qualitative Report, 20(2), 76-85. Retrieved from http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol20/iss2/7

Petersen, G. J., & Short, P. M. (2001). The school board president's perception of the district superintendent: Applying the lenses of social influence and social style. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 37*(4), 533-570.

Pinsker, J. (2014, October). How BRICs are breaking the glass ceiling. *The Atlantic.* Retrieved from http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/10/how-brics-are-breaking-the-glass-ceiling/379344/

Powell, G. N., Butterfield, D. A., & Bartol, K. M. (2008). Leader evaluations: A new female advantage? *Gender in Management, 23*(3), 156-174. doi: http://dx.doi.org.nnu.idm.oclc.org/10.1108/17542410810866926

Reed, D., & Patterson, J. (2007). Voices of resilience from successful female superintendents. *Journal of Women in Educational Leadership, 5*, 89.

Reingold, B. (2012). The uneven presence of women and minorities in American's state legislators - and why it matters. Retrieved from https://thesocietypages.org/ssn/2012/11/12/minority-representation/

Rice, L., & Barth, J. M. (2016). Hiring decisions: The effect of evaluator gender and gender stereotype characteristics on the evaluation of job applicants. *Gender Issues, 33*, 1-21. doi:10.1007/s12147-015-9143-4

Richard, J. V. & Kruse, S. D. (2008). Understanding school board members' perceptions of superintendent's leader's behaviors. Mid-Western Educational Researcher, 21(4), 9–15. Retrieved from http://www.mwera.org/index.html

Ridgeway, C. L. (2001). Gender, status and leadership. *Journal of Social Issues, 57*(4), 637-655.

Schmitz, S., & Höppner, G. (2014, July 05). Neurofeminism and feminist neurosciences: A critical review of contemporary brain research. Retrieved April 27, 2017, from http://journal.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/fnhum.2014.00546/full ("School Boards - Selection and Education of Members," n.d.)

School Boards - Selection and Education of Members. (n.d.). Retrieved March 13, 2018, from http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/2390/School-Boards-SELECTION-EDUCATION-MEMBERS.html

Sharp, W. L., Malone, B. G., Walter, J. K., & Supley, M. L. (2004). A three-state study of female superintendents. *Educational Research Quarterly, 27*(3), 22-37.

Shakeshaft, C., Nowell, I., & Perry, A. (2007). Gender and supervision. In *The Jossey-Bass Reader on Educational Leadership* (2nd Ed., pp. 339–348). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-

Bass.

Sidani, Y. M., Konrad, A., & Karam, C. M. (2015). From female leadership advantage to female leadership deficit. *Career Development International, 20*(3), 273-292.

Simon, M. K., & Goes, J. (2011). What is Phenomenological Research?

Skelly, J. J., & Johnson, J. B. (2011). Glass Ceilings and Great Expectations: Gender Stereotype Impact on Female Professionals. *Southern Law Journal; Edmond*, *21*(1), 59–70.

Skrla, L., Reyes, P., & Scheurich, J. J. (2000). Sexism, silence, and solutions: Women superintendents speak up and speak out. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 36*(1), 44-75.

Sparks, S. D. (2014, August 26). Women's voices lacking on school boards. *Education Week*.

Spegman, A. (2015). After gains, ranks of women superintendent's lag. Retrieved December 06, 2016, from http://www.bendbulletin.com/localstate/education/ 3756687-151/after-gains-ranks-of-women-superintendents-lag

Sperandio, J. (2010). Modeling cultural context for aspiring women educational leaders. *Journal of Educational Administration, 48*(6), 716-726. doi:http://dx.doi.org.nnu. idm.oclc.org/10.1108/09578231011079575

Sperandio, J. (2015). Knowing the Community: Women Planning Careers in Educational Leadership. *Planning and Changing; Normal*, *46*(3/4), 416–427.

Sperandio, J., & Devdas, L. (2015). Staying close to home: Women's life-choices and the superintendency. *Journal of Educational Admin, 53*(3), 335-353. doi:10.1108/JEA-08-2013-0088

Steffens, M., & Viladot, M. (2015). Gender at work: A social psychological perspective (language as social action) (1st ed.). Retrieved from ProQuest Ebrary.

Stewart-Banks, B., Kuofie, M., Hakim, A., & Branch, R. (2015). Education leadership styles impact on work performance and morale of staff. *Journal of Marketing and Management, 6*(2), 87-105.

Stoker, J. I., Van der Velde, M., & Lammers, J. (2012). Factors relating to managerial stereotypes: The role of gender of the employee and the manager and management gender ratio. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 27*(1), 31-42. doi:http://dx.doi. org.nnu.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/s10869-011-9210-0

Swing state. (2018, January 30). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/w/ index.php?title=Swing_state&oldid=823162164

Superville, D. R. (2017, March 10). Few women run the nation's school districts. Why? Retrieved May 24, 2017, from http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2016/11/16/few-women-run-the-nations-school-districts.html

Tallerico, M. (2000a). Accessing the superintendency: The unwritten rules. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Tallerico, M., & Blount, J. M. (2004). Women and the superintendency: Insights from theory and history. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 40*(5), 633-662. doi: 10.1177/0013161X0 4268837

Taylor, J. (2014). Statistical Soup: ANOVA, ANCOVA, MANOVA, & MANCOVA. Retrieved from http://www.statsmakemecry.com/smmctheblog/stats-soup-anova-ancova-manova-mancova

Tekniepe, R. J. (2015). Identifying the factors that contribute to involuntary departures of school superintendents in rural America. *Journal of Research in Rural Education (Online), 30*(1), 1-13. Retrieved from https://login.nnu.idm.oclc.org?url=http://search.proquest.com

Thompson, R. (2014). The superintendent and the school board relationship: Functioning as a group. *International Journal of Organizational Innovation (Online), 7*(1), 69-77.

Transformational Leadership. (n. d.). "Transformational Leadership" In *Business Dictionary.* Retrieved from: http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/ transformational-leadership.html

Tsai, Y. (2011). Relationship between organizational culture, leadership behavior and job satisfaction. *BMC Health Services Research BMC Health Serv Res, 11*(1).

Tye, J. (2013). 12 reasons culture eats strategy for lunch. Retrieved October 18, 2015.

University of Virginia Library. (2015). Using and Interpreting Cronbach's Alpha. Retrieved from http://data.library.virginia.edu/using-and-interpreting-cronbachs-alpha/

United States presidential election in Florida, 2016. (2018, February 18). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=United_States_ presidential_election_in_Florida,_2016&oldid=826351438

United States presidential election in Florida, 2012. (2018, February 18). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=United_States_ presidential_election_in_Florida, _2012&oldid=826346749

US State Department of Education. (n.d.). Archived: Women's Educational Equity. Retrieved February 19, 2018, from https://www2.ed.gov/pubs/Biennial/125.html

Voela, A. (2016). It's time: Generation and temporality in psychoanalytic feminism. *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society, 21*(3), 242-248.

Wallace, T. (2015). Increasing the proportion of female superintendents in the 21st century. *Advancing Women in Leadership, 35*, 42-47. Retrieved April 4, 2016.

Waters, T. J., & Marzano, R. J. (2006). School district leadership that works: The effect of superintendent leadership on student achievement. A working paper. *Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL),*

Webb, E. (2013). Developing, refining, and validating a survey to measure stereotypes and biases that women face in industry. *Masters Theses & Specialist Projects*. Paper 1321. Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/theses/1321

Wolverton, M. (2004). The northwest's phantom pool: Superintendent certificate holders who do not plan to apply and why. *The Rural Educator, 26*(1), 5-14.

Williams, K. A. (2016). *The African American female superintendent: Barriers and facilitators to success* (Doctoral dissertation). (1780295406).

Witz, A. (2013). *Professions and patriarchy.* London: Taylor and Francis.

Wright, K.B. (2005) Researching Internet-based populations: Advantages and disadvantages of online survey research, online questionnaire authoring software packages, and web survey services. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 10(3), 00-00.

Wright, H., & Harris, S. (2010). The role of the superintendent in closing the achievement gap in diverse small school districts. *Planning & Changing, 41*(3/4), 220-233. Retrieved from EBSCO Database.

Yurkiewicz, I. (September 23, 2012). Study shows gender bias in science is real. *ScientificAmerican.com.* Retrieved September 25, 2017 from https://blogs. scientificamerican.com/unofficial-prognosis/study-shows-gender-bias-in-Science-is-real/

Zamanzadeh, V., Ghahramanian, A., Rassouli, M., Abbaszadeh, A., Alavi-Majd, H., & Nikanfar, A.-R. (2015). Design and Implementation Content Validity Study: Development of an

instrument for measuring Patient-Centered Communication. *Journal of Caring Sciences*,

   4(2), 165–178. https://doi.org/10.15171/jcs.2015.017

Zheng, W., Yang, B., & McLean, G. N. (2010). Linking organizational culture, structure,

   strategy, and organizational effectiveness: Mediating role of knowledge management.

   Journal of Business Research, 63(7), 763-771.

APPENDIX A: Electronic Invitation to Participate

Date: Wed, 27 Sep 2017 14:34:46 -0700
Subject: Response Appreciated for a Quick Survey on the Superintendency
From: Laurie Dent <ldent@nnu.edu>
To:

Greetings!

My name is Laurie Dent and I am a doctoral student at Northwest Nazarene
University. I am conducting a research study related to the effect of
gender on school board perceptions during the superintendent selection
process. As a School Board Director, I would greatly
appreciate your assistance by taking the survey. You qualify to take this
survey because your district hired a superintendent between 2013-2016.

The survey will take between 5 and 10 minutes to complete.   Your answers
will be completely anonymous. No identifying information such as your name
or email address will be collected. Participation in the pilot survey is
voluntary. At any time during the survey, you may stop or choose not to
answer a question.

If you agree to participate in the study, please indicate so by clicking on
the link below and selecting yes.
Please complete the survey by Monday, October 9th.

If you do not wish to participate in the study, please indicate so by
clicking on the link below and selecting no.

When the study is complete, if you would like a summary of the results,
please email me at ldent@nnu.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at
ldent@nnu.edu, or my doctoral chairperson, Dr. Paula Kellerer
pkellerer@nsd131.org.

Thank you for your consideration to participate in this important research.

Sincerely,
Laurie Dent

*Follow this link to the Survey: *
                http://nnu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_emv1dWQ0unnMzHf

APPENDIX B: Permission from Erin Webb

Permission granted from Erin Webb to use the survey she developed in 2013.

Requesting permission

5 messages

Laurie Dent <ldent@nnu.edu>   Wed, Jul 12, 2017 at 2:29 PM
To: erindwebb@yahoo.com

Hi Erin!

My name is Laurie Dent. I am a doctoral student at Northwest Nazarene University studying gender bias and the underrepresentation of female school district superintendents.

Your study fits perfectly with what I'm attempting to research!   With your permission, I would love to incorporate a few portions of your survey instrument into my survey.

Would you be willing to consider allowing me to use your survey (credit would certainly be given to you in my dissertation)?

Thank you for your consideration.

Laurie Dent

Erin Webb <erindwebb@yahoo.com>   Wed, Jul 12, 2017 at 2:33 PM
To: Laurie Dent <ldent@nnu.edu>

Hi Laurie,

Yes, of course. I would love to help. All I ask is that you send me a copy of your work when you are done. I would love to read all of your hard work. Good luck!

Erin
[Quoted text hidden]

Laurie Dent <ldent@nnu.edu>   Wed, Jul 12, 2017 at 2:35 PM
To: Erin Webb <erindwebb@yahoo.com>

WOW!!! THANK YOU!!!!! AND... thank you for the quick response!!!
[Quoted text hidden]

Erin Webb <erindwebb@yahoo.com>   Wed, Jul 12, 2017 at 3:05 PM
To: Laurie Dent <ldent@nnu.edu>

No problem. I know all the hard work it takes to put together research and how important people getting back to you is.

Eri

APPENDIX C: Original survey developed by Erin Webb, 2013

1. What is your Gender?

☐ Male   ☐ Female

2. What is your age?

☐ 18 - 25

☐ 26 - 35

☐ 36 - 45

☐ 46 - 55

☐ 56+

3. What is your race?

☐ White

☐ African American Asian

☐ Hispanic Pacific

☐ Islander Middle

☐ Eastern

Other (please specify)

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

☐ None

☐ High School / GED Some

☐ College Associates Degree

☐ Undergraduate degree

☐ Graduate degree Doctoral

☐

Other (please specify)

☐

5. **In what industry are you currently employed?**

☐ Agriculture

☐ Construction

☐ Manufacturing

☐ Transportation

☐ Information

☐ Finance

☐ Education

☐ Health Care

☐ Food Service

☐ Entertainment

☐ Government

☐ Defense

☐ Technology

☐ Retired

☐ Unemployed

Other (please specify)

6. **Are you in a leadership position in your field?**

☐ Yes   ☐ No

7. **Do you prefer to have a male or female supervisor?**

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ Either

8. In your experience do male or females express these traits more often while in a leadership position. (Mark equal if you think both females and males express these traits equality.)

	Male	Equal	Female
Articulate: Communicates effectively with others	☐	☐	☐
Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful	☐	☐	☐
Self-confident: Believes in himself/herself and his/her ability	☐	☐	☐
Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference	☐	☐	☐
Determined: Takes a firm stand, acts with certainty	☐	☐	☐
Trustworthy: Is authentic and inspires confidence	☐	☐	☐
Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	☐	☐	☐
Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth	☐	☐	☐
Outgoing: Talks freely, gets along well with others	☐	☐	☐
Conscientious:	☐	☐	☐

	Male	Equal	Female
Is thorough, organized, and controlled			
Diligent: Is persistent, hard working	☐	☐	☐
Sensitive: Shows tolerance, is tactful, and sympathetic	☐	☐	☐
Empathic: understands others, identifies with others	☐	☐	☐

9. When a woman is angry in the workplace she is seen in a negative light, while a man tends to be respected more.

☐ True   ☐ False

10. Men generally know what they are going to say before they speak, but a woman may just begin talking and gradually discover what she wants to say.

☐ True   ☐ False

11. Is your current immediate supervisor a male or female?

☐ Male   ☐ Female   ☐ Neither

12. **Of these emotional needs, do males or females think they are more important?**

	Male	Both	Female
Caring	☐	☐	☐
Trust	☐	☐	☐
Understanding	☐	☐	☐
Acceptance	☐	☐	☐
Respect	☐	☐	☐
Appreciation	☐	☐	☐
Inclusion	☐	☐	☐
Admiration	☐	☐	☐
Validation	☐	☐	☐
Acknowledgment	☐	☐	☐
Reassurance	☐	☐	☐
Encouragement	☐	☐	☐

13. **A woman's challenge in the workplace is much greater that a man's.**

☐ True   ☐ False

14. **Of the Male and Female pictured above, who looks the most professional?**

□ Male □ Equal □ Female

15. **Prejudice in the workplace makes it more difficult for a woman to get ahead than a man.**

□ True □ False

16. **In your career have you ever been faced with a gender stereotype or bias?**

□ Yes □ No

17. **A woman's sense of self in the workplace is defined primarily by the quality of her work relationships.**

□ True □ False

18. **How often do you feel these attributes describe female leaders in your field?**

	Rarely	Occasionally	Sometimes	Fairly Often	Very Often
Trustworthy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Positive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Irritable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Confidence builder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Intelligent	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ruthless	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Plans ahead	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dynamic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Decisive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coordinative	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Egocentric	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Honest	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Encouraging	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Informed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Team builder	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

19. **I have enough confidence in my leader that I would defend and justify his or her decision if he or she were not present to do so.**

☐ True   ☐ False   ☐ Do not have a supervisor

20. **How would you characterize your working relationship with your supervisor?**

☐ Extremely ineffective ☐ Worse than average ☐ Average ☐ Better than average ☐ Extremely effective ☐ No Supervisor

21. **Have you ever been faced with a gender stereotype or bias? Explain your situation and how you handled it.**

22. How have stereotypes or bias affected the way you lead or what type of leader you are?

APPENDIX D: School Board Survey Final Project Final Copy

Start of Block: Informed Consent

Q17 Do you agree to participate in the study?

   ❍ Yes (1)

   ❍ No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey If Do you agree to participate in the study? = No

End of Block: Informed Consent

Start of Block: Demographics

Q1 What is your gender?

   ❍ Male (1)

   ❍ Female (2)

Q2 What is your age?

- ❍ Under 30 (1)
- ❍ 31-35 (2)
- ❍ 36-45 (3)
- ❍ 46-55 (4)
- ❍ 56-65 (5)
- ❍ Over 65 (6)

Q3 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ❍ None (1)
- ❍ High School/GED (2)
- ❍ Some College (3)
- ❍ Associates Degree (4)
- ❍ Technical Certification (5)
- ❍ Bachelor's Degree (6)
- ❍ Master's Degree (7)
- ❍ Doctoral Degree (8)
- ❍ Other (9)

Q4 How long have you served as a board member?

- ❍ 0-5 Years (1)
- ❍ 6-10 Years (2)
- ❍ 11-15 Years (3)
- ❍ More than 15 Years (4)

Q5 As a board member, have you participated in a superintendent selection process?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

Q6 The student enrollment in my district is:

- ○ 500 or less (1)
- ○ 501-1000 (2)
- ○ 1001-5000 (3)
- ○ 5001-10,000 (4)
- ○ 10,001-15,000 (5)
- ○ 15,001-20,000 (6)
- ○ More than 20,001 (7)

Q7 In what industry are you currently employed?

- ○ Agriculture (1)
- ○ Construction (2)
- ○ Manufacturing (3)
- ○ Transportation (4)
- ○ Information Technology (5)
- ○ Finance (6)
- ○ Education (7)
- ○ Health Care (8)
- ○ Food Service (9)
- ○ Entertainment (10)
- ○ Government (11)
- ○ Defense/Military (12)
- ○ Retired (13)
- ○ Unemployed (14)
- ○ Self-employed (15)
- ○ Other: (16) _____

Q8 Is the superintendent in your school district a male or female?

- ❍ Male (1)
- ❍ Female (2)

End of Block: Demographics

Start of Block: Block 1

Q9 To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree (1)	Somewhat agree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
When a woman is angry in the workplace, she is seen in a negative light, while a man tends to be more respected. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
When a man is angry in the workplace, he is seen in a negative light, while a woman tends to be more respected. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Women generally know what they are going to say before they speak, but a man may just begin talking and gradually discover what she wants to say (3)	○	○	○	○	○
A woman's challenge in the workplace is much greater than a man's. (4)	○	○	○	○	○

Prejudice in the workplace makes it more difficult for a woman to get ahead than a man. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
A woman's sense of self in the workplace is defined primarily by the quality of her relationships. (6)	○	○	○	○	○
The gender of an applicant will influence the culture of a school district. (7)	○	○	○	○	○

Q10 Of the male and female pictured below, who looks the most professional?

○ Male (1)

○ Female (2)

Q11 When hiring a superintendent, which skill and qualification do you feel are most important, important, not important?

	Most Important (1)	Important (2)	Not Important (3)
Good sense of humor (1)	○	○	○
Strong Communicator (2)	○	○	○
Sound fiscal practice (3)	○	○	○
Experience with union and employee groups (4)	○	○	○
Ability to delegate authority (5)	○	○	○
Understands how to prioritize (6)	○	○	○
Visible in the community (7)	○	○	○
Visible in schools (8)	○	○	○
Self-Reflective (9)	○	○	○
Prior experience as a building administrator (10)	○	○	○
Honest (11)	○	○	○
Visionary (12)	○	○	○
Team Builder (13)	○	○	○
Relational (14)	○	○	○

Q12 When considering an applicant for superintendent, who do you perceive is more effective at the following, a male or female superintendent?

	Male (1)	Female (2)	Either (3)
Involving everyone in productive change (1)	○	○	○
Developing a culture of innovation (2)	○	○	○
Developing relationships (3)	○	○	○
Developing quality and success (4)	○	○	○
Creating meaning for everyone (5)	○	○	○

End of Block: Block 1

Start of Block: Block 2

Q13 In your opinion, what factors contribute to the underrepresentation of female superintendents?

_____

Q14 What leadership characteristics do you look for when hiring a superintendent?

_____

Q15 When considering the culture of your district, how does the gender of an applicant for superintendent, influence your decision?

_____

Q16 How does the gender of an applicant impact the superintendent selection process?

_____