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Navigating the Labyrinth of Leadership: The Experience of Female Presidents in Arkansas Community Colleges

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Navigating the Labyrinth of Leadership: The Experience of Female Presidents in

Arkansas Community Colleges

by

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Navigating the Labyrinth of Leadership: The Experience of Female Presidents in

Arkansas Community Colleges

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The purpose of this study was to understand the lived experiences of female

presidents in Arkansas community colleges. This was accomplished by collecting data

through one-on-one interviews to examine how these women have navigated the

labyrinth of leadership to reach the presidency of a community college. Using the

conceptual framework of the labyrinth, as purported by Eagly and Carli (2007), this study

focused on these lived experiences of these women and examined the life choices made,

career paths, educational background, and obstacles these women have faced in

navigating the labyrinth of leadership to reach the presidency. Through an inductive and

deductive analysis of the data collected, the researcher was able to determine that the

labyrinth concept is overwhelmingly applicable to the female community college

president experience. The balance of family and employment was central to the journey

of these women. Reoccurring instances of building social capital and blending agency

with communion were also present in the journeys of these women. However, despite a

close adherence to the labyrinth, the women in this study did not overwhelmingly face

prejudices and resistance, a central idea of the labyrinth concept.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my daughter, Charlotte. You were the spark that lit the fire to finish this work. You inspire me every day to be a better mother, wife, professional, and woman. You are what makes my life worth living and what makes everything worth working for. My hope is to serve as an example to you of what it means to be a strong, hard working woman dedicated to leaving this world a little better than when she arrived. I love you more than anything in this world and will love you forever.

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This work would not have been possible without the love and support of so many people in my life. I have an amazingly supportive family who made this possible. First and foremost, I must thank my husband Benjamin, who encouraged me, provided for me, and always made sure I had what I needed to complete this study. Without his love and ever generous support, this study may have never come to fruition. When the women in the study spoke of having supportive partners, his face always flooded my mind. I know I am one of the lucky few who have a partner who supports my dreams, no matter what. I must next thank my mother, Barbara, for her unyielding support and love. Thank you for the babysitting so I could write, for listening to the crying phone calls, for telling me I could do it, for driving with me to interview the participants when I was so largely pregnant, and for serving as my first example of a strong woman who works for and believes in the power of higher education. I must next thank my father, Tim. My father always blindly believes in me and believes that I can move mountains. His pride in my accomplishments pushes me in unimaginable ways. Thank you, Dad, for always believing in me, even when I don't believe in myself. This belief has always pushed me to be better. I am eternally grateful to have had such wonderful parents who always made me feel loved and capable of anything. My mother-in-law, Patty, also deserves many thanks. Without the support of this wonderful woman, the final chapters may have never been written. A new baby at home made it difficult to finish writing. Thank you, Patty, for being such a wonderful caregiver to my daughter and for providing me with much needed time to write. You helped make this a reality, and I am so grateful.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

During the past 25 years there has been a substantial increase in the number of women participating in postsecondary education and undergraduate enrollment is now majority female. According to the US Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences (IES), female enrollment in higher education increased 52% since 1990, in comparison to a 43% increase in male enrollment (2014, May). The IES report shows that in fall 2012, there were 10 million female undergraduate students versus 7.7 million male undergraduate students. Future enrollment estimates indicate that gender disparity will increase as female undergraduate enrollment is projected to increase by 18% through 2023, while male undergraduate enrollment is projected to increase by only 8%. Within community colleges, female students have made up more than half of the total student body since 1985 (AACC, 2015b). The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) reports in 2015 that women currently stand at 57% of the total community college population, showing the steady and increasing enrollment of women over the last 30 years (2015a).

There also has been a substantial increase in the number of women faculty members in the community college. Townsend (2009) found that women made up about 36% of the full- and part-time faculty in higher education as a whole and when the data was disaggregated, women comprised between 48 and 52% of the total community college faculty in the United States (p. 734). Previous research indicates that women community college administrators make up over 50% of the Chief Academic Officer

positions and over 60% of the Senior Student Affairs Officer positions (Amey &

VanDerLinden, 2002, p. 4). A 2013 report released by the AACC indicates that females

hold more than the majority (56%) of leadership roles in community colleges when

executive, administrative, and managerial positions are combined (AACC, 2013).

Although increases in representation among the faculty and administration are

documented, female representation in the community college presidency has not

increased substantially. However, greater numbers of females hold the community

college presidency in comparison to other institutional types. Moltz (2011) reported that

only 23% of all college presidencies in the United States were held by females.

Obviously, the number of female presidents in US colleges is disproportionate to the

number of female college students. Moltz's data shows that more females hold the

presidency in community colleges in comparison to all other types of postsecondary

institutions, with 29% of public community colleges reporting a woman holding the

highest executive position. As the institutional type with the greatest number of females

in student, faculty, administrative and leadership roles, community colleges emerge as an

important institutional setting to study females in the presidential leadership position.

Although community colleges have greater numbers of females in leadership

positions, representation is not equal across the United States. In the state of Arkansas,

the percentage of women holding the presidency in public community colleges is similar

to the national average of 29% (Moltz, 2011). When this study commenced in June of

2015, women made up 27% (6 out or 22) of the community college presidential positions

within the state. Since submitting approval for the study, women now make up 32% as

one more woman has been appointed to the presidency at an Arkansas community college making a total of 7 colleges out of 22 community colleges. The purpose of this study is to understand the lived experiences of female presidents in Arkansas community colleges to examine how these how these women have navigated the labyrinth of leadership to reach the presidency. This study is focused on these lived experiences of these women and examine the life choices made, career paths, educational background, and obstacles these women have faced in navigating the labyrinth of leadership to reach the presidency.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is drawn from the work of A.H. Eagly and L.L. Carli (2007). In their book, *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth about How Women Become Leaders*, Eagly and Carli broadly examine the leadership roles of women in a variety of workplace settings, including business, industry, and government. Their work first examined the idea of the glass ceiling and point out that this concept is no longer valid. Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986) first introduced the concept of the glass ceiling in their 1986 article in the *Wall Street Journal* and stated that women who were able to rise through the ranks would inevitably hit an invisible barrier that kept executive roles outside of their reach. Eagly and Carli (2007) showed that the concept gives the impression that the glass ceiling is impossible to permeate by women who strive to become leaders. As women are becoming leaders in various sectors, this image no longer accurately describes the experience of women (p. 1). The glass ceiling "fails to recognize the diverse strategies that women devise to become leaders . . . precludes the possibility

that women can overcome barriers and become leaders" and "fails to suggest that thoughtful problem solving can facilitate women's path to leadership" (p. 7). Women have broken through the barrier, and Eagly and Carli introduce the idea of the labyrinth. This metaphor is more appropriate to describe the experiences of women as it implies that although women can reach leadership levels, the path is not direct. According to Eagly and Carli, this image "captures the varied challenges confronting women as they travel, often on indirect paths, sometime through alien territory, on their way to leadership" (p. 1). The concept of a labyrinth suggests a maze that women must navigate through, but recognizes that an individual can find a way through that enables the realization of her aspirations. Women do eventually reach high executive levels within organizations but must navigate through their career advancement in a more meticulous and often tedious manner than do their male counterparts. The metaphor infers that women can indeed reach high levels within organizations, but only by working their way through labyrinth type maze instead of taking a more direct path. Eagly and Carli discussed in depth how some manage to navigate the labyrinth and name a number of principles that women who have navigated the labyrinth have followed. These principles include blending agency with communion, building social capital, and balancing employment and family (pp. 163-175). Blending agency with communion is a phrase used by Eagly and Carli in the discussion of the principles of how women successfully navigate the labyrinth. This phrase is defined as women's ability to "direct others while also being verbally supportive and expressing warmth nonverbally" (p. 165). It also encapsulates establishing oneself as competent, especially in male-dominated settings, while also

learning to negotiate effectively amongst subordinate groups (pp. 167-169). This can further be defined as showing oneself capable and assertive enough to make difficult decisions and manage difficult circumstances while still working to create a harmonious environment within their organization and amongst their subordinates. Building social capital is also one of the principles discussed by Eagly and Carli use this phrase in the discussion of the principles of how women successfully navigate the labyrinth. This involves creating good relationships with colleagues, joining and participating in networks, and establishing mentor relationships (p. 173). This can further be defined as fostering relationships with others for the benefit of oneself or their organization. This can be accomplished by working with others within and outside the organization collectively, by serving as a mentor or by seeking out opportunities to mentor. This can also be accomplished by joining professional organizations and using these resources for organizational improvement, career advancement, etc. Mastering these principles in addition to learning to balance family and employment are key in understanding how to navigate the labyrinth of leadership, this maze that women must master in order to reach executive roles. For purposes of this study, it is hypothesized that the lived experiences of women in community college presidential roles show navigation of the labyrinth by mastering and demonstrating these principles in order to reach this role.

This framework of the labyrinth provides a new metaphor showing that women can ascend to senior level positions and focuses on the strategies women employ to reach these levels. The labyrinth as a framework has been applied to studies of female leaders in business and industry as well as female leaders in P-12 and higher education settings.

In the P-12 setting, researchers have examined the labyrinth in the journey of female superintendents in the Southwestern United States (Hanson, 2011). Within higher education, the labyrinth concept has been utilized in studies of female leaders in primarily four-year universities and in one instance of a community college setting. Several researchers have applied this framework in the four year setting, including a study by Cselenszky (2012) who examined women in vice presidential, dean, director, and provost roles within four year universities. Additionally, Byford (2011) utilized the labyrinth framework when examining female executive administrators at land grant doctoral institutions. The labyrinth concept has also been used when researching women within Christian education. Lafreniere (2008) applied this idea by examining the perceptions of leadership traits by various faculty and administrative leaders within Christian higher education institutions. Starzyk (2013) used the labyrinth concept to explore mid-career student affairs administrators within Catholic higher education. This conceptual framework was also applied by Byerly (2014) in a study of female vice presidents within four year institutions. In the sole study found on community colleges and the labyrinth, Ligeikis (2010) used the labyrinth in an examination of female vice presidents in New York state community colleges. Despite the many studies relying on the labyrinth concept, a review of the available literature did not reveal any studies of female community college presidents. In this study, the concept of the labyrinth is used to examine the lived experiences of female presidents in community colleges. The principles of successfully navigating the labyrinth and the degree to which each participant in the study exhibits these principles are likewise examined.

Research Questions

The guiding question for this study is: how have females navigated the labyrinth to the presidency in community colleges? The lived experiences of female public community college presidents in the state of Arkansas were examined. Sub questions guiding the study were based on the principles Eagly and Carli identified as key factors in successfully navigating the labyrinth. These sub questions include:

- How do these women describe their educational attainment and career path?

- How do female presidents or chancellors at public community colleges build agency and blend communion?

- How do female presidents or chancellors at public community colleges build social capital?

- Do these women feel they encountered any prejudice as a female leader or resistance to the idea of their leadership?

- How do these women describe the process of successfully obtaining an appointment as president at their community college?

- What obstacles were perceived in navigating the labyrinth? How did these women overcome obstacles in their career path?

Data Gathering Methodology

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) explore the concept of qualitative research, stating that "qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (p. 3). Creswell (2007) further defines qualitative research stating that "qualitative research begins with

assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning the individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (p. 37). Merriam (2009) states that "qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (p. 5). This study took place in the participants' natural setting of their campus and attempted to discover how these women interpret their journey navigating the labyrinth to reach the role of president or chancellor their respective community college.

Phenomenology is defined as "a study of people's conscious experience of their life-world" (Merriam, 2009, p. 25) and that it "describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon" (Creswell, 2007, p. 57). This study is a phenomenological study in which the researcher examined the lived experiences of female community college presidents. The researcher recognizes that nationally, women are in the minority as presidents of community colleges as the current national average is 29% for female community college presidents within the United States (Moltz, 2011). Using the theoretical lens of the labyrinth of leadership, the researcher will operate under the assumption that females no longer face a glass ceiling, but instead an indirect path, or the labyrinth, to reach leadership roles within their respective careers. The researcher attempted to find meaning, commonalities, and differences in the lived experiences of participants in Arkansas as they navigated this labyrinth.

Creswell (2007) stated that qualitative research is often needed because a problem or an issue needs to be explored or silenced voices need to be heard (pp. 39-40). In terms of the national average of female community college presidents, Arkansas is statically similar and in fact higher than the national average. However, female presidents are still in the minority in comparison to other higher education institutions. This form of research allows the minority voice of women in these roles to be heard and shared with the broader educational community. The experiences Arkansas female community college presidents may also be relevant to the experiences of other female community college presidents in other states and offer a chance for reflection and exploration for career growth.

Assumptions

This study assumes that the participants surveyed are:

1. on career paths and have experiences that apply directly to navigating the labyrinth of leadership in public community colleges only.

2. truthful and have experiences to share about navigating the labyrinth of leadership.

3. accurate in their recollections about their lived experiences.

Delimitations/Limitations

The following delimitations apply to this study:

1. This study examines female community college presidents in Arkansas in order to identify aspects of the labyrinth found in the journeys of female community college presidents in each state.

2. The study does not encapsulate the experiences of other female administrators on a community college campus besides those in presidential/chancellor positions. There may be other aspects of the labyrinth not shown at a community college.

3. At the onset of the study, there were six female community college presidents serving in Arkansas and there has since been another female assume the role of community college president in the state, making the total seven. The data comes only from the experiences of the original six females identified women in Arkansas at the onset of the study.

The following limitations apply to this study:

1. The experiences of female community college presidents may vary and may have elicited very different responses and not be applicable to the female community college presidential experience as a whole.

2. Through qualitative research, the researcher relied exclusively on the beliefs and recollections of the participants to answer the research questions and sub-questions. As there are other valid ways to answer the same research questions, this method of research provided a limitation.

Definitions

The following concepts and definitions are relevant to understanding the context of this study:

Blend agency with communion – Eagly and Carli (2007) use this phrase in the discussion of the principles of how women successfully navigate the labyrinth. This is

defined as women's ability to "direct others while also being verbally supportive and expressing warmth nonverbally" (p. 165). It also encapsulates establishing oneself as competent, especially in male-dominated settings, while also learning to negotiate effectively amongst subordinate groups (pp. 167-169). This can further be defined as showing oneself capable and assertive enough to make difficult decisions and manage difficult circumstances while still working to create a harmonious environment within their organization and amongst their subordinates.

Build Social Capital - Eagly and Carli (2007) use this phrase in the discussion of the principles of how women successfully navigate the labyrinth. This involves creating good relationships with colleagues, joining and participating in networks, and establishing mentor relationships (p. 173). This can further be defined as fostering relationships with others for the benefit of oneself or their organization. This can be accomplished by working with others within and outside the organization collectively, by serving as a mentor or by seeking out opportunities to mentor. This can also be accomplished by joining professional organizations and using these resources for organizational improvement, career advancement, etc.

Community college – Cohen and Brawer (2008) defined a community college "as any institution regionally accredited to award the associate in arts or the associate in science as its highest degree" (p. 5). This includes the comprehensive community college and many technical institutes (p. 5).

Labyrinth – Eagly and Carli (2007) define this as a metaphor "that captures the varied challenges confronting women as they travel, often on indirect paths, sometime through alien territory, on their way to leadership" (p. 1).

President – This term is interchangeable with chancellor and is defined as the official with overall responsibility for the district, college, or campus. This person on campus may also have the title of provost (Amey & VanDerLinden, 2002, p. 5).

Significance/Summary

The results of this study are significant for scholars and practitioners on several levels. Researchers who examine the skills and abilities that lead to senior level administrative appointments within higher education will find significance in the experiences of the participants of the study. Similarly, individuals who aspire to the community college presidency will find significance in the career paths of the participants. The results are of interest to scholars interested in the study of female leaders and in gender equity in leadership. Researchers studying the concept of navigating the labyrinth, including those who are familiar with the work of Eagly and Carli (2007), will find significance in this study. Women currently in the leadership pipeline within Arkansas community colleges will find significance in the experiences of these women successfully navigating the labyrinth in their state.

As Eagly and Carli (2007) demonstrated, the labyrinth metaphor shows that executive roles for women are possible. The higher rates of female presidents within community colleges as opposed to four year institutions, as shown in Moltz's article (2011), proves that community colleges may be the best place within higher education for

women to successfully navigate the labyrinth. The results of the study provide a greater understanding of how women are successfully navigating the labyrinth, at least within one state. As the concept of the labyrinth has not been applied to studies of female community college presidents, the findings will provide information on success strategies for women from the leadership pipeline in this region of the United States.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

The purpose of this study is to understand the lived experiences of female

presidents in Arkansas community colleges to examine how these women have navigated

the labyrinth of leadership to reach the presidency. The current research on female

presidents within community colleges and their experiences provides a backdrop for this

selected study. Literature on female presidents within higher education is explored and

includes information on female presidents serving in the many levels of four year

institutions (doctoral granting, masters granting, baccalaureate granting, etc.). After a

brief introduction into the state of female presidents within higher education as a whole, a

more extensive discussion is provided on women's experiences in becoming president at

a community college. This literature includes information on the basic career pathways

of these women and an extensive discussion on the role of faculty as a main leadership

pipeline for the presidential role. Additionally, a discussion is given on the barriers that

women experience on their career path and other general strategies that have been noted

for women who have successfully risen to the administrative ranks of the community

college. The inclusion of this literature provides a foundation for what has been

discussed thus far on women in presidential roles within community colleges and an

understanding of what has been previously studied before this study took place. The

literature on community colleges also includes parallels with the work of Eagly and Carli

(2007) and how much of literature reflects their work, although not explicitly referenced.

Finally, a section is included on how Eagly and Carli's concept of the labyrinth has been

already applied in literature and research. This section includes application of the

concept in corporate settings and political settings before examining how it has been applied to higher education leadership as a whole. The literature review shows how women in higher education have been studied and specifically how community college female presidents have been studied previously. These sections along with the sections on the application of the labyrinth provide a foundation for the study in order to frame its purpose.

Women's Representation as Presidents in Higher Education

As a whole, women in leadership roles in higher education are in the minority and have much lower percentages than men in the same roles. Corcoran (2008) reported that women hold only 20% of all university presidencies within four year institutions in the United States. In a report created for the American Council on Education, King and Gomez (2008) stated that in doctorate-granting institutions, only 14% of presidential roles are held by women (p. 17). Bucklin (2010) concurred with Corcoran that, as of 2010, women made up 20% of all presidents in both public and private doctoral granting universities (p. 3). King and Gomez (2008) discussed masters and baccalaureate institutions, and while not sharing specific percentages, stated that the numbers of women in presidential and administrative roles increased slightly in these institutions. King and Gomez reflected Moltz (2011) and others in finding women holding the presidential roles in community colleges are higher than any other higher education institution. Lapovsky (2014) reported that women is presidential roles have increased by about 1% point every two years and that continuing at that rate, it will take almost another 50 years for women to make up half of the presidents within higher education. Cook (2012) provides a more

significant breakdown of women within each type of four year higher education institution, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Women Presidents by School Type

	2006	2011
Doctoral	13.8%	22.3%
Master's	21.5%	22.8%
Bachelor's	23.2%	22.9%
Associate	28.8%	33.0%
Special Focus	16.6%	20.5%
Public (all levels)	26.6%	29.4%
Private (all levels)	18.7%	21.9%

Source: Cook (2012)

As the table shows, the numbers of women in university presidential roles are increasing. Women are at the highest levels in schools that offer less advanced degrees and are at the highest levels in public institutions.

There are many aspects that impact the journey to the university presidency. Darden (2006) discussed the experiences of women presidents in research universities and their journey to the role of president at their respective universities. Although the dissertation focuses mostly on the success of the women once they reach the presidential role, the study does offer some insights into how they reached the role. The participants reported that one of the most influential parts of their journey was having early leadership

experiences (p. 51). These leadership roles began early for these women, including in both elementary school, high school, and within their families at young ages (pp. 52-53) and served as precursors for their roles in universities. Additionally, these women in presidential roles reported next that life experiences impacted their journey to the presidential role. Many reported that travel played a significant role and exposed the women to different cultures and ways of thinking that impacted their ability to lead a diverse group of people (p. 53). Darden discovered that women in presidential roles in research universities were strongly influenced by those surrounding them. These people who influence female presidents in universities include close family members and non-family members, specifically mentors, colleagues, professors, and school teachers (p. 55).

Cook (2012) provided an in depth breakdown of career paths for women university presidents stating that "Women's career paths to president are distinctly different from men's." Women are more likely than male presidents to hold a doctorate, mostly in education. Chavez (2011) concurred, stating that "obtaining a doctorate allows a candidate the experience in the academic rigor of research and in-depth inquiry and making sense of it for real-world applications" (p. 1). Cahalan (2007) also discussed the need for a doctorate for presidential candidates as well as identifies the best way for a president to reach this role is to enter through academia in higher education (p. 155). Lederman (2012) reported specifically on the career paths of women in university presidential roles stating that the vast majority of those who eventually serve as president of a university initially serve as the chief academic officer with 34% of all presidents

serving in this role prior to the presidency. Cook (2012) added, "For example, nearly

one-fifth of the presidents moved into their current position from another presidency and

over a third from provost or chief academic officer (CAO)." Before being selected to

serve as president of a university, prior experiences as a president or other senior level

academic leader are important. In terms of previous positions, Cook's breakdown can be

seen in Table 2 by gender.

Table 2

Presidents' Previous Position by Gender

Previous Position	Women	Men
President/CEO	16.0%	20.8%
CAO/Provost	51.9%	42.1%
Other campus senior official	10.1%	12.5%
Outside higher education	8.5%	12.4%

Source: Cook (2012)

Lederman (2012) explored another interesting aspect of the career paths of some

female university presidents, as shown in the bottom figure of Table 2.

> While the chief academic officer's job remains the most common path to the
> presidency – with 34% of presidents having served as provost in their previous
> position – one in five presidents in 2011 moved into their jobs from outside
> academe, up from 13% in 2006 and 15% in 2001. (Lederman, 2012)

This implies that although many presidents rise through the professor ranks to provost

and eventually to president, some take a different route. Lederman further stated that

some universities seem to be searching for presidents from nontraditional roles.

According to Bowman (2011), about 17% of all university presidents come from realms outside of academia (p. 2). The backgrounds of these individuals can include military, politics, and the business sector, among others.

Navigating the Labyrinth to the Presidency in Community Colleges

The community college has been known as a place that provides open access to education for many populations, including women, minorities, and working populations. In addition to providing access for students, community colleges also provide access to employment for a diverse group of higher education professionals. Women function in a rich and diverse environment at the community college in their many roles as students, employees, and leaders. Much of the research available on female administrators in community colleges focuses on the disparity between the numbers of male administrators versus female administrators in community colleges. Ebbers, Gallisath, Rockel, and Coyan (2000) stated that at the time of their study, women comprised approximately 17% of community college chief executive officers (p. 376). Drake (2008) projected a significant increase stating that by the 21st century, women may hold one-third of community college presidencies and noted that "the number of administrative posts held by males at two-year colleges decreased 4% from 1991 to 1995." Drake pointed out that, at the time the study was published, women did hold leadership positions, just not at the level of senior administrator. "Women were significantly less likely to hold titles of president, vice president, or dean. Yet, 63% of women responding to a study of 300 community college administrators held the title of director or coordinator" (p. 766). There are some barriers that keep women from reaching the top levels of administration

though their positions as directors and coordinators show their interest in administration. Townsend (2009) echoed these statistics in her study showing there has "been significant growth in the percentage of female presidents in both the four-year and two-year college sector" over the past two decades with nearly 27% of community college presidents being female (p. 736), which is close the number reflected by Moltz (2011). Townsend (2009) also noted in her study that despite increases of women in administrative roles, it is "not proportionate to their presence as students in the classroom or in the community college faculty ranks" (p. 736). This shows that women, who make up the majority of the student body, are still not seeing a large amount of strong female leaders who can serve as mentors for them during the course of their study. However, as the numbers of these women are growing, the community college environment is creating opportunities for women.

Amey and VanDerLinden (2002) reported on career progressions that eventually lead to a presidential role within a community college. They focused in on immediate past positions of community college presidents, as can be seen in Table 3.

These career paths mirror those of university presidents. Furthermore, Ballenger and Ballenger (2010) point out that, "Women presidents are more likely than their male counterparts to have earned a doctorate" (p. 2). Some successful female leaders are more educated than their male counterparts, which show that some men are somehow able to reach this role without the educational attainment of their female counterparts.

Table 3

Immediate Past Positions of Presidents

Previous Position	Percentage
Faculty	2
Community College System Administrators	2
Public School Administrators	2
Dean or Director of Continuing Education	3
Other Administrative Position	12
Senior Academic Affairs or Instruction Officer	15
President at Another Community College	25
Provosts or other Chief Academic Officers	37

Source: Amy and VanDerLinden (2002)

Community College Presidential Leadership Pipeline: Faculty as the Beginning

As Amey and VanDerLinden (2002) showed, the leadership pipeline for

presidents of community colleges often begins with faculty. Drake (2008), Gillett-Karam

(2010), and Townsend and Twombly (2007) pointed out that many female faculty in

community colleges are the main candidates for leadership roles in these institutions.

Drake (2008) stated that it is "imperative to recognize the important role of faculty within

the leadership pipeline" and that women who serve as the majority of faculty at

community colleges will likely be the pool from which leaders will come (p. 774).

Gillett-Karam (2010) shared her own history as a college professor and its impact on her

role as a college president.

Townsend (1998) reported the environment for female faculty in community colleges that may impact their decisions in pursing leadership roles. She noted that community colleges have more women administrators in all levels of administration in comparison to four-year schools. As many leaders come from the faculty ranks, female faculty members who aspire to become leaders in the institutions "have frequent role models and mentors of their own gender" (p. 655). The presence of so many women help to create a more empowering and supportive environment for growing leaders.

In 2009, Townsend reported that women made up about 36% of the full- and part-time faculty in higher education as a whole. Townsend noted that when the data were disaggregated, the percent of female faculty in community colleges was much higher than it was in a four-year institution. Women make up anywhere from 48% to 52% of the total community college faculty in the United States (p. 734). However, Townsend also noted that in any higher education institution, whether a two- or four-year school, female full-time faculty typically earned less than their male counterparts. She provided some startling statistics about pay, stating that in 1999, "male faculty earned an average of $61,700 compared with an average of $48,400 for female faculty" (p. 735). For women in the two-year colleges, the pay inequities were much less severe in community colleges than in four year institutions. Townsend reported, "In 2001–2002, the average salary for full-time female faculty in public two-year schools was $49,276, as compared to $52,340 for male faculty" (p. 735).

Despite the fact that the differential is less, statistics show that when Townsend (2009) released her study, men statistically earned more than women in all areas of

higher education. This creates an already uneven playing field for women and may impact the decisions to pursue leadership positions if women feel they are less valuable than their male counterparts. However, as the environment is better for women in community colleges in terms of pay equity, women would be more likely to pursue leadership roles in community colleges as opposed to four-year university settings, which is reflected in the literature.

In her work on the career development of female community college presidents, Vanhook-Morrissey (2003) explored the idea of female role models. She concluded that having female role models as mentors was an important aspect of the success of women who have obtained a presidential role in a community college. Having mentors available is part of Eagly and Carli's (2007) idea of building social capital, which they deem as vital in navigating the labyrinth of leadership, which will be discussed more in depth (p. 173).

Community College Presidential Leadership Pipeline: Female Administrators

Some research available on female administrators gives first hand feedback from female presidents themselves. This research creates a clear picture of the challenges female administrators face at community colleges and in some cases, solutions for overcoming these challenges and barriers. Green (2008), a female community college president, provided some real world commentary on the challenges of being a woman and a senior level administrator at a community college. Green chronicled her rise through ranks, beginning as faculty and eventually taking on the role of a president after gaining administrative experience in other capacities. She noted that she chose to keep her

faculty position over an administrative one when first asked because she wished to preserve her family life. She cited the open access nature of a community college as the cause of her decision to postpone an administrative role. According to Green, "Administrators are required to work year round, days, evenings, and weekends to cope with the ever-changing challenges" (p. 816). She stated that because of this ever-open environment that female administrators operate in at community colleges, these administrators are forced to strike a delicate balance between work and personal life (p. 816). This kind of balance is often difficult for women with children, as women are often the primary caregiver of children. If a woman has any further challenges at home, such a special needs child or multiple children, the balance can be even more difficult to maintain. Balancing employment and family life is an important part of women being able to navigate the labyrinth of leadership (Eagly & Carli, 2007, p. 174). For some, this may not be possible.

Eddy and Cox (2008) discussed the idea that female community college presidents face expectations that are preset by their predecessors and may struggle to overcome those expectations. For example, President Maria Smith followed a woman into the presidency role. The female president prior to President Smith had used the position as a stepping stone to another position. When President Smith entered the position, the faculty and staff of the college believed she too would leave the position. Her dedication to the institution was questioned because of the decisions of another female who served in the position before her. Eddy and Cox discuss the pressure a female president may face as a result of the actions of other women. The fact that the

women were judged by the actions of the women before them set up a dilemma: not only were they judged by the male norms of organizations, they were measured against what other women prior to them did in the position. This made it difficult to be authentic in their leadership (p. 75). Eddy and Cox painted a clear picture of how women may be judged before stepping into presidential positions. Unfair and often unrealistic expectations exist. Potential leaders are expected to perform better than their predecessors, whether men or women. The ceilings of accomplishment and job performance continue to rise for a woman to prove herself as a capable leader; expectations are hurdles that some women may not wish to attempt to jump over. These barriers discussed by Eddy and Cox reflect ideas discussed by Eagly and Carli (2007), in which women who navigate the labyrinth successfully must accurately blend agency and communion. Women must often prove their agency in order to show themselves as capable leaders to navigate the labyrinth successfully (p. 163).

Research on female leaders in community colleges explained the ways in which women have become successful presidents in both university and the community college settings. Valdata, Mendoza, Lum, Hawkins, and Pember (2008) interviewed nine women appointed to presidencies in universities and community colleges. One interviewee, Dr. Andrea Lewis Miller of SOWELA Technical Community College in Lake Charles, Louisiana, was asked to share strategies she might offer young female scholars who strive to be college chancellors or presidents. Miller advocated understanding the skills needed to become a president and what it means to be an exemplary leader. When asked to elaborate on this set of skills, Lewis Miller stated, "I think it is important that leader build

trust. . . . We have to inspire a shared vision and inspire that vision in others about where we want to take the college" (p. 21). In addition, Lewis Miller stated that leaders have to be able enable others to fulfill the college's mission by empowering them to make decisions. She reported that good leaders should have a "passion for continuous learning and a passion for creating and understanding the culture of evidence" (p. 21). This is reflective of Eagly and Carli's (2007) assertion that women successfully navigating the labyrinth blend agency and communion and are able to be able to unite individuals by negotiating effectively (p. 169).

Eddy (2008) explored several strategies, or lack thereof, in how women become successful community college leaders. She sought information from six women presidents, and Eddy discovered several strategies these women employed to become successful. Interestingly, a major finding was that some women become presidents unintentionally, at least in the beginning stages. Unsolicited opportunities were presented to potential female future presidents. Apart from having opportunities presented to them and being encouraged by others to pursue leadership roles, Eddy identified strategies of successful women. First, interviewees develop "self-determination to pursue a presidency" (p. 49). This includes learning the male models of leadership that exist and learning to adapt them as a female leader. In addition, Eddy's research identified a strategy of planning one's career sequencing around one's family (p. 58). As Green (2008) discussed, women often delay seeking career advancement opportunities due to family responsibilities. In this article, Eddy also identified this as a strategy for success. Eddy stated that for the women in the study "a stable home front provided a sense of

foundation for these women" when seeking career advancement (p. 59). Eddy conceded that although a stable family life helps increase success for female leaders, it offered some constraints for these women in making decisions for career advancement. This research is again reflective of learning to balance employment and family life (Eagly & Carli, 2007, p. 174).

Although not specifically citing Eagly and Carli as an influence, some literature on female community college presidents reflects concepts of their work. Ballenger and Ballenger (2010) stated, "men are more likely to make moral choices on the basis of impersonal rules of fairness and rights" (p. 5). However, female leaders "are more likely to make decisions out of concern for specific individuals and within the context of the situation. Women, therefore value connectedness and relationships" (p. 5) Ballenger and Ballenger reported that

> women have been conditioned to listen and to be responsive to the concerns of others . . . women tend to have strong group skills that enable them to turn to group problem solving, consensus building, and democratic ways of managing operations. (p. 5)

The authors concluded that "an invisible ceiling for women's ascension to upper leadership positions in higher education administration may be stereotypes associated with these perceived differences in men and women" (p. 5) These observations align with Eagly and Carli's principles of navigating the labyrinth successfully, including the aspects of blending agency with communion.

Gill (2013) explored the experiences of female community college leaders in West Texas and identified the success strategies of women of this region. Gill explored traits of leadership and referring to previous research, exerts that to become a successful

leader, one must exhibit assertive, decisive, and authoritative traits. These traits are

typically considered to be more masculine than feminine traits, which Eagly and Carli

(2007) state as necessary for women to exhibit in order to successfully navigate the

labyrinth of leadership (p. 167). It is noted in Gill's work that many do not feel

comfortable with these traits coming from a woman, but the women surveyed state they

have exhibited these traits as leaders at their community college. They feel these skills

are needed as a leader, and not specifically as a male leader (p. 60). The experiences of

these women imply that having certain traits is necessary to become a successful leader in

a community college, which are reflective of Eagly and Carli's principles for successfully

navigating the labyrinth.

Gill (2013) also explored the idea of mentorship as an important part of the career

path of successful female leaders in community colleges (pp. 62-63), which is reflective

of Eagly and Carli's idea of building social capital. In Gill's study, all of the women

disclosed that they had a mentor who helped guide them on their path to becoming a

successful leader in their respective community college. Gill showed seeking out a

mentor as a key strategy for helping successful female leaders. When able to find another

female to serve as their mentor, it can help the potential leader to identify ways to find a

balance in their personal and professional lives (p. 62), which can be important in the

decision these women make when navigating the labyrinth. Although the women studied

were primarily mentored by males, all of the women attributed mentorship to their career

success. Eagly and Carli (2007) reflected this idea of finding mentors, including males,

as advancing women can "benefit from both the coaching and the personal support that mentoring provides" (p. 174).

The literature reviewed displays much for females to successfully reach the presidential role within a community college. The literature does show the community college environment as a place that allows women to be successful as faculty members, the foundational position for leader to rise from. Although some variations exist, it seems the most ideal place for a president to reach before taking on the presidential role is as the provost, which is most likely reached through extensive experience as faculty. As Green (2008) attested, it is vital that presidential candidates learn the many functions of the campus, gain experience in valued committee work, and learn to balance the work and family in order to reach the role of president of a community college, which all reflect the work of Eagly and Carli (2007). Despite the nurturing environment of the community college, there are still many barriers facing women in community colleges. There is the pressure to balance work life with personal life and to meet or excel the expectations set by previous administrators. However, community colleges may serve as the ideal environment for creating and developing female leadership in higher education as the highest rates of female leadership is found in this setting. Eagly and Carli's work in navigating the labyrinth provides a framework for how women are successfully obtaining the presidential role, but no studies exist that apply this framework to women in this role in a community college.

The Labyrinth

The labyrinth is a new concept developed by Eagly and Carli in their 2007 book, *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth about How Women Become Leaders*. The concept developed as the third type of barrier that women have encountered in their journey of advancement. Eagly and Carli (2007) described the three barriers as the concrete wall, the glass ceiling, and the labyrinth (p. 2). Prior to the 1970s, women were unable to make any headway in career growth due to several reasons. Women did not have protections by law for many years and organizations were allowed to practice gender discrimination. This kept women from being involved in many aspects of life, including education, politics, and of course, career advancement. Because of the lack of protections for women, Eagly and Carli named the first barrier as the concrete wall (2007, pp. 3-4). This first barrier made societal and career advancement impossible for women. It would take extensive law and societal changes, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, to provide protection for women in the United States and provide a guarantee of rights for education and job prospects.

The next barrier that Eagly and Carli (2007) discussed is the glass ceiling, a concept that has become well known in gender and feminist discussions (p. 4). The idea of the glass ceiling came to prominence by Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986) who stated that women are able to rise through the ranks but would inevitably hit an invisible barrier that kept executive roles outside of their reach. This terminology caught on quickly and has become one of the more well-known concepts in discussions about women's career advancement. The glass ceiling implied that an absolute barrier existed to women's

career advancement. Although women could work their way up the rungs of leadership, they were unable to reach executive levels. However, they could view the positions before them, but were unable to break through this barrier to reach those levels. This concept was so polarizing that the United States Congress formed a commission to examine this barrier to women's advancement. According to this commission, reasons for the glass ceiling were many, but most often, the focus was on the family life of a female applicant. Organizations felt women did not have the follow through necessary to be successful as executives due to their family responsibilities or desire to have children. Another disturbing finding of the commission was that organizations felt their clients and employees would not want to work with women. These findings showed that the glass ceiling was a tangible barrier to women's advancement that made it improbable that women would reach upper echelons of leadership within their respective organizations (Eagly & Carli, 2007, pp. 3-4).

Although Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986) brought the concept of the glass ceiling to prominence in the United States, it originated in other settings. This term first surfaced in a 1984 in two instances of print media, as reported by the Catherwood Library Reference Librarians (2005). This concept appeared in an *Adweek* article, where author Gay Bryant used the term to describe her experiences within the corporate setting. Bryant stated that women were stuck at middle management and could progress no further. The glass ceiling also appeared in a 1984 book *The Working Woman Report, Succeeding in Business in the 80s*, in a chapter authored by Bryant and in another chapter authored by Basia Hellwig. Their contributions reflected the idea of women hitting a

barrier where top management corporate positions were within reach, but could not be obtained by women. This idea was cemented in 1991 by the Department of Labor in their confirmation of the existence of the glass ceiling in a report titled *The Glass Ceiling Initiative* (Department of Labor, 1991). This ground breaking study looked at corporate America and concluded that "the vast majority of available research information points to artificial barriers as a significant cause for why minorities and women have not advanced further in corporate American" (p. 18). This government report in conjunction with other studies showed that the glass ceiling was tangible and did function as a common barrier to women's career advancement, specifically within the business industry (McCarthy, 2001; Porter, 2003; Washington, 1996). The glass ceiling was further confirmed in numerous studies in numerous settings, including in the military (Goodman, 1991) and American public service (Meistrich, 2007; O'Brien, 2013; Parham, 2002).

The glass ceiling was accepted as a barrier to women's career advancement, including in educational administrative roles (Bain & Cummings, 2000; Kimmich, 2013; Myers, 2010). However, the educational sector proved to be a place where females were able to break through the glass ceiling (Aceves. 2013; Dolan. 2006; Jarmon, 2014; Nabasny, 2011; Perry, 1997; Smarr. 2011; Stewart. 2011; Zachry, 2009). Studies completed within the P12 setting found that women rose easily through the ranks, as opposed to other sectors, to become principals and superintendents. Although the women studied had to have certain experiences and credentials to become administrators in P12 settings, it was possible for women to break the glass ceiling and obtain senior administrative roles in the P12 setting (Aceves, 2013; Perry, 1997; Zachry, 2009).

Within higher education, studies exist that again prove that the glass ceiling can be shattered within this setting. Stewart (2011) examined female administrators specifically within higher education athletics and found that women were able to be successful in gaining administrative roles. Smarr (2011) focused her study on one female president who served as the first female president of any public four year university in the United States. Smarr's study showed that a glass ceiling did exist in higher education and that this setting provided a place that women could begin to shatter it. Nabasny (2011) concurred that the glass ceiling existed at one time in higher education, but is no longer in existence. Nabasny found that female presidents in four year universities were capable of breaking the ceiling if they seized important career opportunities, gained academic credibility through obtaining a doctorate, and had a supportive network. Jarmon (2014) likewise found that women are able to break the glass ceiling within higher education and reach senior level administrative roles with proper guidance, support, and planning. Dolan (2006) reported that community colleges create an environment where women are more likely to shatter the glass ceiling than in any other type of higher education institution. Bortz (2014) confirmed this idea of breaking through the glass ceiling in community colleges by highlighting women's ability to obtain administrative roles in this setting. Although many of these researchers use the language of the glass ceiling, the path described aligns more closely with Eagly and Carli's labyrinth concept, which is next discussed.

The final barrier and concept developed by Eagly and Carli (2007) is the idea of the labyrinth. As women are becoming leaders in various sectors, the image of the glass

ceiling is not appropriate anymore to describe the experience of women (p. 1). The glass

ceiling "fails to recognize the diverse strategies that women devise to become leaders . . .

precludes the possibility that women can overcome barriers and become leaders" and

"fails to suggest that thoughtful problem solving can facilitate women's path to

leadership" (p. 7). As women began to break through this second barrier, Eagly and Carli

introduced the idea of the labyrinth. This metaphor is more appropriate to describe the

experiences of women as it implies that although women can reach leadership levels, the

path is not direct. The labyrinth implies more of a maze that women can navigate

through, but that they can eventually reach the end. Women can eventually reach high

executive levels within their organization, but must navigate through their career

advancement in a more meticulous manner to reach executive levels. According to Eagly

and Carli, this image "captures the varied challenges confronting women as they travel,

often on indirect paths, sometime through alien territory, on their way to leadership"

(p. 1).

Eagly and Carli (2007) explored how some women found their way through the

labyrinth and offered distinct principles for how some women can reach senior level

positions in any setting (pp. 163-182). The principles Eagly and Carli discussed are

blending agency with communion, building social capital, and thirdly, balancing

employment with family (pp. 163-174). Achieving each of these principals can be a

complex journey. Blending agency with communion includes proving oneself capable in

many ways, such blending masculine and feminine traits, taking credit for one's

accomplishments, and negotiating effectively (Eagly & Carli, 2007, pp. 167-173).

Building social capital can be accomplished in many ways, such as networking with both

men and women and finding mentors (Eagly & Carli, 2007, pp. 173-174). Additionally,

Eagly and Carli stated that some women face prejudice and discrimination, in addition to

facing resistance to their leadership and organizational barriers.

Application of the Labyrinth Concept Outside of Education

The concept of the labyrinth has been applied to women in several different

settings in previous literature, including corporate, politics, and educational settings.

Harris (2013) applied the labyrinth theory to women in corporate settings and their ability

to navigate the labyrinth. She pulled participants specifically from corporations in

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, which Harris identified as a male dominated arena (p. 18).

Harris's participants served in executive management roles and she obtained information

about these women's experience with the labyrinth through face to face interviews

(p. 39). Harris found that Pittsburgh corporations often had an atmosphere of hostility

towards women on their way to or when reaching executive management positions

(p. 81). As Eagly and Carli (2007) discussed in their work, women often face resistance

to their leadership roles. Harris stated in her study that her female participants reported

such resistance and that often, especially with male employees, their subordinates did not

perform under their leadership. Additionally, women were excluded from key meetings

and faced other forms of tangible tension as part of this resistance (pp. 81-83). Harris

discovered more organizational barriers and challenges for female leaders. "During the

interviews, participants discussed enduring experiences of dismissal by their male

colleagues, lack of acknowledgment, validation, and being invisible in meetings" (p. 85).

These women often felt they encountered other forms of resistance, such as finding acceptance by male colleagues and of their leadership role (p. 85). Women in these roles also reported feeling the need to take on masculine tendencies in order to be successful (p. 98). This runs parallel to Eagly and Carli's (2007) idea that women have to exhibit some masculine traits in order to be successful (p. 167). Finally, Harris (2013) shared in her research that women often faced the same obstacles, including resistance when returning from maternity leave or other family obligations. If women had to take leave for the purpose of being a caregiver, they often faced eventual demotions or lower performance ratings (pp. 98-100). This is another direct idea discussed by Eagly and Carli (2007), who state that women who navigate the labyrinth successfully must find ways to balance employment and family (pp. 174-175). Harris's applied the labyrinth and showed it to be a very real and applicable concept to women in corporate settings.

Stewart (2012) employed the labyrinth concept to African American women in middle management and attempts "to identify, describe, and compare the barriers that African American middle management women perceive in negotiating through the labyrinth to corporate-level positions in business and education" (p. 91). Stewart (2012) used a case study methodology for studying 20 African American female principals in California and 20 African American females serving as a director within the residential and business sales division of a California telecommunication company (p. 77). An applicable finding in Stewart's study was that the women in middle management found mentorship to be vital to their success, which parallels the idea of building social capital by Eagly and Carli (2007). Stewart also found that African American women reported

feeling a great difficulty in reaching the corporate levels due to racial prejudice (p. 100).

This again parallels the work of Eagly and Carli (2007) who repeatedly discuss issues

with racial prejudice as a barrier to women's career advancement. As is discussed by

Eagly and Carli (pp. 174-175), Stewart (2012) reported that African American women in

mid-level management positions feel that others believe they have an inability to balance

employment and family life. This perception is credited with keeping them from

advancing their careers (pp. 103-104). A final barrier Stewart discussed, reminiscent of

Eagly and Carli, is that African American women feel a challenge in developing social

capital. The participants reported that race and gender prejudices kept them from

developing external relationships, which they felt could have made them more successful

in their middle management positions and in career advancement (p. 105).

     The concept of the labyrinth is employed by Schopp to both the educational and

political settings (2008). Schopp applied the concept to three participants located in

South Dakota who began their career in education and eventually reached the political

sector. Of the three participants, one began as a seventh grade teacher before advancing

to become a principal and was eventually elected to the South Dakota legislature. This

participant ended up on the South Dakota Board of Education. Schopp's second

participant worked as an 8th grade teacher and eventually worked her way up to become

the president of South Dakota Board of Education. The final participant served as a

university faculty member before eventually becoming the Secretary of Education for the

state of South Dakota. Schopp drew the conclusion that none of the career paths for these

women were direct, thus implying that they did indeed navigate the labyrinth to become

leaders in South Dakota. One of the central ideas found in the stories of each participant

is the impact of the time period on their journey. This implies that the labyrinth only

became possible after the glass ceiling disappeared. For example, one participant

mentioned that her pregnancy stopped her from continuing as a faculty member in the

1960s, before women had certain legal rights, such as the Family and Medical Leave Act

of 1993 (p. 60). Although these women eventually became able to reach their leadership

roles, it was not until the glass ceiling was shattered in the latter part of the 20th century.

Application of the Labyrinth Concept within Education

As the labyrinth has been applied to female leaders within the corporate and

government sector, the concept has also been applied to the educational setting. The

labyrinth has been utilized in a study on female superintendents within the Southwestern

United States (Hanson, 2011). In her study, Hanson identified several themes after

interviewing three female superintendents. The participants in her study recognized the

importance of building social capital throughout their career, one of the principles Eagly

and Carli (2007) identity as necessary to navigate the labyrinth. One superintendent

stated that building relationships helped in making connections that positively influenced

her career path. Another concurred that building relationships was vital to her success.

This common theme showed in all interviews and proved to be part of what aided in each

of these women obtaining a superintendent role within the K12 setting (pp. 60-61).

Hanson found that the women interviewed also found mentors in the life, which added to

their social capital, and helped in creating the path to the superintendent position (p. 86).

Another theme Hanson found was the need for superintendents to build credibility, which

can be seen also as establishing agency of the superintendents' ability to lead. This theme also surfaced within all of the interviews (p. 73). Although Hanson's study revealed other conclusions, overall, her study did show a less direct path for the female superintendents as opposed to men, and that their journey included the need to build social capital and prove agency.

The labyrinth has been applied to female leaders in primarily four-year universities and in one instance of a community college setting. Cselenszky (2012) examined women in vice presidential, dean, director, and provost roles within four year public and private universities from across the United States. Through face-to-face interviews, Cselenszky collected information on how women in these roles navigated the labyrinth of leadership successfully to obtain their positions as administrators on their respective campus. When identifying the stumbling blocks of these women, Cselenszky (2012) identified some barriers that are explicitly discussed by Eagly and Carli (2007). Some of the participants described issues with balancing employment and family as well as have resistance to their leadership (p. 127). Cselenszky identified other ways of overcoming barriers, which also correlate with the principles Eagly and Carli present for navigating the labyrinth. Cselenszky stated that the participants employed several strategies for becoming successful, including building connections or relationships, acquiring skills, and "following the golden rule" (p. 131). These three strategies fit into Eagly and Carli's (2007) concepts of building social capital and blending agency and communion by proving oneself as an adequate leader and learning to negotiate effectively. In relation to building social capital, the participants interviewed in

Cselenszky's study also identified mentoring as vital to their success but recognized a lack of formal mentoring throughout their journey (p. 138). Although Cselenszky's work does not implicitly apply Eagly and Carli's labyrinth as a theoretical framework, there is mention of the labyrinth and some of the basic principles of their work are displayed.

In another study on four year institutions, Byford (2011) utilized the labyrinth concept in relation to female executive administrators at land grant doctoral institutions. Byford examined the experiences of three participants, a dean, a vice president, and a president, in reaching their executive role. When applying the concept of the labyrinth, Byford found that the journeys of these three women greatly aligned with Eagly and Carli's work. For example, as Eagly and Carli discuss, women who successfully navigate the labyrinth often have indirect paths to reaching their career goals. Byford found in the final conclusions that all participants did have a direct path to their position, but instead encountered "a circuitous navigation of a labyrinth" (p.169). Based on her research, Byford concluded that it is necessary for women to occasionally accept roles they are not prepared for or expecting and use them as a stepping stone in career advancement. Byford also concluded that women who successfully reach executive roles in this setting must learn to use negotiation skills (p. 170). This reflects the principle negotiating effectively in order to blend agency and communion (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Byford made the final conclusion that having mentors assisted in the success of the women in her study, which aligns with Eagly and Carli's principle of building social capital to successfully navigate the labyrinth (2011, p. 171). Byford found the work of Eagly and

Carli and their concept of the labyrinth to be correct in terms of women successfully

reaching executive leadership roles in land-grant doctoral institutions.

Lafreniere (2008) applied the labyrinth in a different way by examining the

perceptions of leadership traits of various faculty and administrative leaders within

Christian higher education institutions. This study did not examine specific leaders, but

instead focused on the perceptions of faculty and staff members at eight institutions who

are members of the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities. The conclusion of this

study was different from other studies on navigating the labyrinth of leadership.

Lafreinere's research indicated that within the member institutions that participated, there

are few disparities shown in the perceived differences between men and women as

leaders. This implication may show a conflict with the labyrinth concept created by

Eagly and Carli (2007). This concept may not be applicable to these evangelical

Christian institutions. Although Lafreniere (2008) primarily used a different theory, role

congruity theory, as part of the theoretical framework, the same conclusion can be

applied.

Starzyk (2013) also applied the labyrinth concept to Christian higher education,

but focused on women in Catholic higher education mid-career student affairs roles.

Starzyk studied 15 participants who were employees of a Catholic Jesuit institution. The

participants included employees from student activities, residence life, multicultural

affairs, and assistants to/assistant vice presidents/assistant deans (p. 67). In terms of the

labyrinth, Starzyk found that women must continue to navigate the labyrinth within

Catholic Jesuit institutions. Along with the other studies that apply this concept, Starzyk

found several correlations between the experiences of the women studied and Eagly and

Carli's labyrinth. Most of the participants identified that geography was a problem for

their career advancement. As most were married with families and lived locally, the

ability to job search in other geographical areas was an issue (pp.79-80). Eagly and Carli

(2007) addressed this in their work and stated that women who navigated successfully

had the ability to relocate as needed for job purposes (p. 140). The ability to balance

family and employment also was recurring issue with the participants in this study

(pp. 83-84), which Eagly and Carli address in their work. These women often felt they

were unable to sacrifice family life for the benefit of their careers, which as Eagly and

Carli discuss as an important part of the navigating the labyrinth. Eagly and Carli

discussed building social capital and as part of that, being able to fit in with the

organizational culture (p. 146). Starzyk reported that sexism found within each

institution made it difficult to fit in with and navigate the organizational culture

(pp. 91-92). Starzyk overall described the journey of these participants as a labyrinth to

be navigated, and while not impossible to reach leadership roles in Catholic institutions,

the path is indeed indirect and filled with obstacles.

A final application of the labyrinth within leadership in higher education in four

year institutions includes the work of Byerly (2014), who applied this conceptual

framework to female vice presidents. Participants for this study included five executive

level administrators from four-year public institutions within the western United States

(p. 51). In the experiences of these women, Byerly concluded that the labyrinth concept

is applicable. According to Byerly, "The overwhelming results of the current study

illustrated that women did not have a straightforward path to their position" (p. 124), which is a basic premise of Eagly and Carli's definition of the labyrinth. None of the women that Byerly studied had a straightforward path to their position and reported obstacles to their success. One area where Byerly disagreed with the findings of Eagly and Carli was the issue of family responsibilities. Byerly reported the participants found no issue in balancing family responsibilities with their employment. Byerly did also report that all of the participants married later in life or acknowledged having supportive husbands who bear the load of the family responsibilities (pp. 125-126). This may not show Eagly and Carli's principle of balancing employment and family life as invalid, but shows that these women can balance family life due to their decision to marry later or having a partner to share the load of caregiving for the family. This can still be construed as balancing family life, but can also be seen as a sacrifice by the women for the benefit of their career advancement.

In a sole study found on community colleges and the labyrinth, Ligeikis (2010) used the labyrinth in an examination of female leaders in community colleges, but focused the study on the obstacles of female vice presidents in New York state community colleges. The participants included 37 vice presidents from New York state community colleges. Ligeikis used interviews to collect information from these women about their perspectives as vice-presidents. Ligeikis's work showed that Eagly and Carli's work is a valid concept in the community college setting and in navigating the labyrinth to become a vice-president in a community college. Ligeikis found women have to prove agency by obtaining a terminal degree and proving themselves in the

classroom first before pursuing a vice-president role (pp. 147-148). This reflects Eagly and Carli's concept of proving oneself a competent leader while navigating the labyrinth. Although the study focused on vice-presidents, Ligeikis also shared the view from the vice-presidents that it's necessary to prove agency to become a president by first serving in a vice-president role (p. 148). One area of contention that Ligeikis reports in regards to Eagly and Carli's work is in the perception of gender discrimination and prejudice by the participants. Some of the participants did not feel they encountered gender discrimination in their career advancement (p. 154). This is a concept that Eagly and Carli report that women often experience as a barrier when navigating the labyrinth. Although some participants did report gender prejudices, this finding may be indicative that gender discrimination is less visible in the community college setting. Participants in Ligeikis's study also discussed the idea of masculine and feminine traits, a part of navigating the labyrinth. The participants contended that it is necessary to have both traits in order to be a successful leader. A final concept of Eagly and Carli that surfaced in Ligeikis's work is the balance of employment and family. Ligeikis reported that many of the participants felt the need to sacrifice family in order to reach a presidential role, which served a key factor in deciding to not pursue the presidential role (pp. 159-160). This barrier in the labyrinth is one that seemingly impacts these women's desire to advance further. Overwhelmingly, the concept of the labyrinth applies in vice-presidential roles in a community college. Ligeikis's study showed that the further down the labyrinth women go, the harder it is the reach the end.

Literature Summary

As the studies have shown, women are becoming the majority in terms of student body and faculty in both four-year and two-year institutions. Although not the majority in terms of presidential roles, the numbers of women are slowly rising in the administrative ranks in all higher education institutions. Women make up a significant part of the community college environment, and if the numbers continue to rise, will continue to make up a significant part of the presidential leadership of community colleges. After examining various studies that address female leadership in community colleges, some items become abundantly clear. The first is that the community college in general provides opportunities for women that a university does not. Because of their very nature, the community college provides a more stable ground for garnering success of female students, faculty, and eventually its leaders. Although female leaders are still underrepresented in community colleges, there are more women in administrative roles and in presidential roles than in four-year institutions. This shows the community college to be an ideal place to study women leaders and their ability to navigate the labyrinth of leadership.

The literature shows the labyrinth concept used repeatedly in a number of settings. When applying the concept to multiple settings, it is shown that the labyrinth is a very real concept that must be navigated for women to successfully reach high leadership roles. There are some instances of outliers, such as in the evangelical Christian universities studied by Lafreniere (2008), but overwhelmingly, the concept applies at least partially. Within Ligeikis's work, the labyrinth concept applies and

indicates that community colleges are not immune to this phenomenon. However, the higher numbers of women as presidents within community colleges indicates that the labyrinth may be more navigable. Despite the many studies using the labyrinth in higher education settings, there have not been studies completed on female community college presidents. This idea of the labyrinth is used to examine the experiences of Arkansas female presidents in community colleges and is tested in order to determine its applicability to women in presidential roles.

Chapter 3

Research Methods

According to a report released by the American Association of Community

Colleges in 2013, females are the majority in terms of leadership in community colleges

with 56% of all community college leadership positions held by women. This number

does include the total of executive, administrative, and managerial positions (AACC,

2013). Moltz (2011) reported that of all female presidents, community colleges hold the

highest number of any category, with 29% of females from public community colleges.

These numbers show that women are typically more successful becoming senior level

administrators at community colleges. At the onset of this study, the percentage of

women holding community college presidencies in Arkansas was similar to the national

average with 27% of all community college presidents within the state being female.

Since the study research has been completed, Arkansas is now at 32% of all community

college presidents being female. Examining the experiences of the women in this role in

Arkansas has allowed the researcher to gain additional insight into how these women

navigate the labyrinth of leadership in their state and has helped to identify barriers

related to the specific state as well as women pursing community college presidential

roles as a whole.

Restatement of the Purpose

Most of the literature available on the labyrinth of leadership focuses on other

areas besides community college presidents. There are several instances of a research

applying the labyrinth concept to four-year institutions specifically. Although some

studies do exist on community college presidents, none exist on the experiences of female

community college presidents navigating the labyrinth or any studies within Arkansas

specifically. There seems to be no research into the experiences of these women in

Arkansas in how they reach these leadership positions with some level of success. The

purpose of this study is to understand the lived experiences of female presidents in

Arkansas community colleges to examine how these how these women have navigated

the labyrinth of leadership to reach the presidency.

Methodology Rationale

This study attempted to examine the lived experiences of female community

college presidents using participants in Arkansas community colleges to determine how

these women have navigated the labyrinth of leadership in order to reach the presidency.

This qualitative study examined the career paths of these women, central experiences,

and obstacles or barriers overcome to reach their position at their respective public

community colleges. Merriam (2009) states that "to get at the essence of basic

underlying structure of the meaning of an experience, the phenomenological interview is

the primary method of data collect" (p. 25). Personal one-on-one interviews are the most

efficient way to obtain data from the participants. Merriam (2009) posited that this form

of research "assumes that reality is socially constructed, that is, there is no single,

observable reality. Rather, there are multiple realities, or interpretations, of a single

event" (p. 9). The experiences of each woman interviewed offered their own reality as

they climbed the administrative ladder at their respective community colleges.

Specifically using a phenomenological method is most effective for chronicling these

different realities as it uses methods that allow participants to express their viewpoints.

Participants were also able share their lived experiences, which is valuable in reaching a

conclusion as to how women have navigated the labyrinth of leadership in community

colleges. Completing this study has helped to identify and address gaps in literature on

female community college presidents in terms of providing information about lived

experiences in navigating the labyrinth of leadership.

Research Questions

The guiding question for this study is: how have females navigated the labyrinth

to the presidency in community colleges? In order to answer this question, the

experiences of female public community college presidents in the state of Arkansas were

examined. Sub questions guiding the study are based on the principles Eagly and Carli

(2007) identified as key factors in successfully navigating the labyrinth. These sub

questions include:

- How do these women describe their educational attainment and career path?

- How do female presidents or chancellors at public community colleges build
  agency and blend communion?

- How do female presidents or chancellors at public community colleges build
  social capital?

- Do these women feel they encountered any prejudice as a female leader or
  resistance to the idea of their leadership?

- How do these women describe the process of successfully obtaining an
  appointment as president at their community college?

- What obstacles were perceived in navigating the labyrinth? How did these
  women overcome obstacles in their career path?

Role of the Researcher

As a woman working in higher education, I have become increasingly interested in becoming in a leader in this professional world, especially in community colleges. I began my work in higher education in entry level positions working in roles within student affairs and academic affairs. I am from Arkansas originally and was exposed to the cultural ideas of marrying young and having children before the age of 30. Career advancement was not something I ever witnessed being encouraged in young women, but instead, there was great encouragement to marry and begin having children. I married what most in the South would consider later in life and began the process of having a family much later than other women around me. As a result, I began the attempt to advance my career much earlier in life than most women in the region where I lived. I began to notice that women who did marry and have children earlier in life had a much more difficult time advancing the career, even in the educational sector. As I have since married a military officer, and my career must revolve around his, I have begun to witness some of the issues facing the women I observed in their career advancement. My career has changed significantly since beginning a doctoral program, and will likely continue to change as I embrace motherhood and continue in my role as a military wife. This study will offer some insight into the experiences of women leaders and help the researcher to create a more holistic picture of how women successfully obtain top roles in higher education.

Most of my professional life was spent in the state of Arkansas and working specifically within community colleges. I have recently moved to Missouri and now serve as the Director of Student Success and Retention at State Fair Community College. In my experience, Arkansas as a whole is run by older white males who embrace other white males and work to advance other white males. This method of career advancement is shown in almost every sector observed by the researcher, including higher education. In fall of 2013, I moved to Alabama where I witnessed a similar paradigm, including in higher education. Since arriving in Missouri, I am witnessing even fewer numbers of women serving as senior leaders at higher education institutions. After all of my experiences in various states, I know my own personal experiences and observations may cause bias on my part in observing the experiences of the women I am interviewing. I may see gender discrimination and barriers where neither exists and attribute any career difficulties to gender issues. I was aware of these biases as I analyzed the data collected. However, as I have completed study successfully and continued to build my career, I feel I have navigated around these biases to create sound research. My role as the researcher is to create valid research that not only I use in advancing my own career in higher education but that can be used by other women attempting to navigate the labyrinth as they embrace all female life roles. As a woman who lived in Arkansas for most of her life, I am encouraged by the rates of women serving as community college presidents within the state. This study examined the lived experiences of these women in order to understand their journey in navigating the labyrinth of leadership to reach their presidential position. In order to remove my own bias as I completed my research, a peer

reviewer has examined the data compiled and my analysis in an attempt to illuminate any bias that may be reflected in my conclusions. The peer reviewer chosen holds a Ph.D. and completed qualitative research when finishing her dissertation in 2012. The peer reviewer currently serves as a Vice President of Student Services at a community college in Oklahoma. The peer reviewer found no incidence of bias and had no questions for the researcher in regards to the validity of the data.

Additionally, respondent validation was used by providing a transcript of the interview and a second phone interview with participants to identify any needed corrections in the data collection and or representation of our interview conversation. This also helped to remove any bias by allowing the participants to provide clarification as needed.

Research Population

The target population for this phenomenological study was female community college presidents or chancellors. Participants came from public community colleges in Arkansas and hold the role of president or chancellor of their respective community college. This study examined the lived experiences, including the strategies these women have employed, the life choices made, the career paths, educational background, and obstacles of these women, in order to understand their journey navigating the labyrinth to reach their presidential position. Purposeful sampling provides a clearly defined group of study participants and was used to create a bounded sample of female community college presidents within Arkansas. These participants were identified by researching all Arkansas community college institutions' websites to identify their current president or

chancellor. During the course of the study, this group gave relevant opinions and perspectives from female community college presidents from the institutions within Arkansas.

Recruitment of Participants

The idea of navigating the labyrinth of leadership is subjective and may be difficult to measure, as some women may view successful navigation of the labyrinth differently. To some, this may be serving in faculty leader roles while others view being a successful leader as serving in a high level administrative role. For purposes of this study, navigating the labyrinth of leadership successfully within Arkansas will be defined as one who has successfully obtained the role of president or chancellor within a public community college. Participants have been identified through website research and institutional information found on the respective institutions' websites to identify female community college presidents. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education website was used to identify all public community colleges within Arkansas. From this list, the community college presidents were identified via each college's respective website. The identified participates were contacted by email to solicit participation from the identified participants in the interview study. The researcher attempted to appeal to participant's desire to grow new female leaders within community colleges and expressed the importance of gathering this research to inspire other potential female leaders to pursue these roles within their own institution. As participants were asked to participate and permission was given by all participants, an exception from the university Institutional Review Board was requested and granted.

Procedures and Data Collection

Through the use of the phenomenological interview, this study examined female community college presidents on their own college campuses in an attempt to understand the lived experiences of these women journey navigating the labyrinth of leadership within Arkansas. An examination of these experiences was completed in order to understand their ability to succeed in navigating the labyrinth of leadership within their state and respective community colleges. In order to gather data for this study, two interviews were conducted with the participants. A basic outline and timeline of the interview procedures can be found below:

- Interview Invitation: An interview invitation was sent via email June 23rd, 2015. The invitation contained information about the study and on how the results would be used. An RSVP was requested so that the interview could be completed by early October of 2015. All participants responded in a timely manner and interviews were scheduled the months of July and August.

- In Person Interview: The in person interviews were completed with each willing participant between July 30th, 2015 and August 31st, 2015.

- Electronic Communication Accuracy Check: The transcriptions of the audio recordings of the interviews were emailed to participants between August 6th, 2015 and September 2nd, 2015.

- Phone Interview: The follow up phone interview for accuracy checks and soliciting additional information were conducted with participants between August 21st, 2015 and September 23rd, 2015.

First, an in-person interview was conducted with six of the seven female presidents in the state of Arkansas. At the onset of the study, there were six female community college presidents serving in Arkansas and there has since been another female assume the role of community college president in the state, making the total seven. The participants in this study were identified through purposeful sampling to create a bounded sample. The study's participants included six female community college presidents within Arkansas. These presidents were identified through the individual community college websites. A list of community colleges and their respective websites were obtained from the Arkansas Department of Higher Education website. The researcher sent email invitations to each of the community college female presidents and requested their participation in the interview. The researcher requested that the interview take place on the campus of each president and that the researcher be allowed to visit the participant on their campus. Interview time requested from the participants was 60-90 minutes in order to work through the questions and leave time for exploration of all aspects of the labyrinth covered in the interview guide. Participants responded in a timely manner and interviews were scheduled between July 30th and August 31st, 2015. Before the first interview, the researcher requested a resume or curriculum vitae from each participant. This tool provided further information about the participants and their journey to reaching their presidential roles. The researcher also provided each participant with brief information on the labyrinth concept, which can be seen in Appendix F. The researcher met with five out of the six participants on their campus in their professional office. One of the participants was unable to meet on her

campus at the first scheduled time, and rescheduled to meet via Skype. The researcher

was able to visit the campus before meeting via Skype. During this virtual interview, the

researcher and the participant met one on one remotely and were able to follow all other

procedures.

An interview guide was followed with each participant during the in-person

interview, as is outlined in Appendix A and described more fully in the Instrumentation

section. Each interview was recorded with a voice recorder by the researcher and was

later transcribed by the researcher in order to accurately capture all data. During each

interview, notes were also taken by the researcher. To maintain consistency of all of the

interviews, the researcher was the only conductor of interviews and transcriber of audio

recordings. The transcription of the interview was then sent to each participant via email.

After the transcriptions were completed, the researcher sent the participants their

responses via electronic communication and set up a follow up phone interview to

address the accuracy of these transcripts and solicit any additional relevant information.

The researcher requested that each participant review the transcript and provide any

corrections to the transcript through a short follow up phone call interview. This second

interview allowed for respondent validation to verify information collected in the

transcript and obtain any additional relevant information. This interview was conducted

via phone with the participants and, in addition to collecting corrections to the interview

data, gave the researcher the opportunity to ask questions about the accuracy of

transcript, solicit additional thoughts, and gain advice from the women on what they

would share with other females attempting to navigate the labyrinth. An interview guide for this follow up phone interview can be found in Appendix B.

Participant Information

The participants included six community college presidents from the state of Arkansas. A description of each participant is below.

Alice. Alice is a chancellor at a community college that is part of a larger state university system. The college is located in smaller rural town with a fall 2015 enrollment of around 1,300 students. Alice has been the chancellor at this college since 2007 before previously serving as the chief academic and student affairs officer. Alice began her career in another field and is from Arkansas. She began as a faculty member before moving up to lead faculty and then eventually division chair. Alice has been working in higher education since 1987 and has only ever worked at the same institution. Alice has completed an Associate of Arts degree, a Bachelor of Science degree, a Master of Science degree and at the time of the interview, was completing her dissertation for a Doctorate of Education.

Betty. Betty is a president at an independent community college in a smaller rural town. The college had a fall enrollment of around 1,800 students. Betty has been in the presidential role at this college since 2011 and has been working in higher education since 1990. Betty has only ever worked in higher education but has worked at several other institutions in other states, including other community colleges and universities. Betty has been an adjunct faculty member, but has primarily served in student services roles. Betty has served in several administrative roles in student services, including

serving as the chief student affairs officer at a four-year university. Betty is not from Arkansas and has lived in several other states. Betty relocated to Arkansas for the presidential role. Betty holds a Bachelor of Arts degree, and Master of Arts degree, and has completed a Doctorate of Education degree.

Cathy. Cathy is a president at a larger independent community college in one of the two urban areas in Arkansas. The college had an enrollment of about 8,000 students in fall 2015. Cathy has served as president of this college since 2013 but has been a president previously at another institution. Before coming to this college, Cathy served a president at another community college from 1996 to 2013. Cathy served as a vice president at this other college before moving into the presidential role. This vice president role was not specific to academic or student affairs, but was more of a broad spectrum role to include academics and finance, amongst other areas. Prior to that, Cathy served in adult education roles before entering the community college realm. Cathy is not from Arkansas and relocated for this role. Cathy has an Associate of Arts degree, a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, a Master's in Higher and Adult Education, and Doctorate of Philosophy degree.

Dorothy. Dorothy is a chancellor at community college that is part of a larger state university system. The college is located in smaller rural town with a fall 2015 enrollment of around 2,500 students. Dorothy has been the chancellor at this community college since 2013. Prior to this role, she served as a chief academic officer and as a chief student affairs officer at other institutions. Dorothy began in another field before transitioning to higher education. Dorothy has worked in higher education since 1997

and has experience in other community colleges in another state. Dorothy is from Arkansas and returned for the chancellor position. Dorothy holds a Bachelor of Science degree, a Master's degree, and Doctorate of Education degree.

 Emily. Emily is a president at an independent community college in a smaller rural town. This college had a fall enrollment of around 1,700 students. Emily began her career in another field before transitioning to higher education. Emily took on a role as a faculty member in a community college in another state before working her way up through the ranks. Emily served as a division chair, a dean, and as an interim chief academic and student affairs officer. Emily relocated to Arkansas to become president at this college. Emily has a Bachelor of Science degree, a Master's degree, and a Doctorate degree.

 Francis. Francis is the president at an independent community college in one of the two largest urban areas in Arkansas. Francis has been in this role since 2012. This community college is the largest in state, and had a fall enrollment of over 9,000 students. Francis has worked in higher education since 2007 and had an extensive career in career and technical education prior to transitioning to higher education. Before transitioning to this presidential role, Francis served in a vice presidential role that focused on many areas, including student services, institutional planning, and curriculum. Francis worked in other states and worked in Arkansas at the beginning of her career. Francis returned to Arkansas for this presidential role. Francis has a Bachelor of Science degree, a Master of Science degree, and a Doctorate of Philosophy.

Instrumentation

This interview guide was developed based upon the principles identified by Eagly and Carli (2007) that contributed to successfully navigating the labyrinth. Merriam (2009) describes the semi structured interview as including an interview guide that "includes a mix of more and less structured questions" (p. 89). With each participant, the one-on-one interview using the instrument created was semi structured. The instrument used for the interviews included a group of questions to guide the interview with some probing questions included to help with the breadth and quality of the interview. The guide included a mix of more structured and less structured questions that was intended to encourage rich discussion and descriptions from the participant and their adherence to Eagly and Carli's (2007) principles. As Merriam (2009) outlines, the questions will assist with the natural flow of the interview but will obtain certain data from all of the participants by focusing on the list of questions in the guide (p. 89). As the interview guide shows, the one-on-one interview with each participant allowed them to explore their career paths from entry to their current position as president and reflect on their experiences throughout their journey. The researcher attempted to understand the thoughts of the participants about their lived journey to navigate the labyrinth of leadership in community colleges within their state. As Merriam (2009) further outlines, the questions were used flexibly to the natural flow of the interview but will obtain certain data from all of the participants by focusing on the list of questions in the guide (p. 89).

This study attempted to examine how female presidents or chancellors at public community colleges in Arkansas build agency and blend communion, how they build social capital, the perceived obstacles of these women in obtaining the presidency at their respective community college, either in their organization or due to a balance with family life, prejudice as a female leader or resistance to the idea of their leadership, what helped these women successfully obtain their role at their community college, and how these women feel that they overcame any perceived obstacles in their career path. The researcher examined the similarities and differences between these women in terms of educational attainment, career path, and general experiences in navigating the labyrinth. In order to obtain this information, the interview guide designed for the in-person interview was based on Eagly and Carli's (2007) work on the labyrinth with structured and semi-structured questions to assist in the breadth and depth of information. The guide was intended to encourage rich discussion and descriptions from the participant. Using interview guide, the one-on-one in-person interview with each participant allowed them to explore their career paths from entry to their current position as president and reflect on their experiences throughout and on what contributed to professional success. Table 4 shows which items on the interview guide intended to measure each item.

Context of the Study

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) explore the concept of qualitative research, stating that "qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them." In order to assist in helping to understand the lived experiences of each participant, the researcher

visited the campus of each participant and met with five of the six participants on their

campus. This helped to provide the researcher with a context for each participants

experience in their current role as president or chancellor of their respective institution.

Despite not meeting with the sixth candidate on campus during the actual interviewer, the

researcher is a former employee of this institution and is knowledgeable of the campus.

Table 4

Research Questions and Interview Questions Correlation

Research Questions	Interview Questions
How do these women describe their educational attainment and career path?	1, 2, 3, 4, 5,
How do female presidents or chancellors at public community colleges build agency and blend communion?	1, 2, 3e, 3f
How do female presidents or chancellors at public community colleges build social capital?	1, 2, 3a, 3b
Do these women feel they encountered any prejudice as a female leader or resistance to the idea of their leadership?	3g
How do these women describe the process of successfully obtaining an appointment as president at their community college?	1, 3c, 5
What obstacles were perceived in navigating the labyrinth? How did these women overcome obstacles in their career path?	1, 2, 3h, 3i, 4, 5

Data Analysis

The data analysis plan involved specifically examining the transcripts of each

interview. These transcripts were meant to be reflective of the interview that attempted

to capture the lived experiences of each participant through their responses to the

interview guide questions. In order to analyze the data, the researcher used both an

inductive and deductive process. As part of the inductive process, the researcher looked

at the raw data as shown in the transcript. This allowed the researcher to look at all of the data to find common themes in the interviews. For the deductive process of the data analysis, the researcher looked at the participants' experiences and if they represent the labyrinth in terms of the principles that Eagly and Carli (2007) describe. The researcher then looked at the participants' experiences to identify how these experiences are not represented by the labyrinth. By looking at the data for both representation and lack thereof, this provided an accurate viewing of these participants' experience and helped to identify differences in the experiences of the participants.

Validation

In order to assess the validity of my survey, a pilot study was conducted with two other female community college presidents. These participants came from the state of Missouri. These pilot study participants were contacted via email and by phone to schedule an in-person interview. The interview process was conducted in exactly the same fashion as was intended for the true participants of the study. During this pilot study interview, the researcher used the interview guide showed in Appendix A in order to solicit feedback about the interview guide and process. The researcher attempted to determine the clarity of the interview guide and solicited suggestions for improvement prior to conducting the in-person interviews with the true participants for the study. This process allowed the researcher to improve her interviewing skills by obtaining feedback about probing questions to increase the amount of information shared by the study's actual participants.

The researcher used internal validity through respondent validation by utilizing a follow up phone interview which allowed for accuracy checks. For respondent validation, the interviews were recorded and the audio recordings were transcribed. After the transcriptions were completed, the transcripts were emailed to the interview participants to check for accuracy of responses. A follow up phone interview was conducted to allow the participants to respond to the transcripts and address any inaccuracies as well as share additional relevant information.

Data Reporting

The collected and analyzed data are reported in the following narrative through a textual description of the interviews of each president. The researcher has identified adherence to or departure from navigation of the labyrinth as found in all interviews. The researcher also reported on common themes found collectively in the interview as a whole as the participants have described their journey. The researcher has drawn conclusions about how the experiences of these women do or do not reflect the principles of navigation of the labyrinth as described by Eagly and Carli (2007).

Chapter 4

Results

Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the study are discussed in three main sections. The purpose of this study was to understand the lived experiences of female presidents in Arkansas community colleges to examine how these how these women have navigated the labyrinth of leadership to reach the presidency. The first section (pp. 65-66) discusses the participants and their respective college. The second section (pp. 66-88) discusses the results of the study as discovered through a deductive approach to analyzing the data. Using the deductive approach, the researcher analyzed the data by looking specifically for instances in which the lived experience of the participant matched the labyrinth concepts. The third section (pp. 88-95) discusses the results of the study using an inductive approach. With the inductive approach, the researcher identified other main themes that emerged in the majority of the participant's experiences that did not specifically reflect the principles of the labyrinth.

Participants and Their College

This study included the participation of 6 female community college presidents from Arkansas. The years on the job for each president range from 2 to 19 years. One of the participants had a total of 19 years work as a president, but completed 17 of those years in this role in another state. Two (2) of the 6 participants work for community colleges that are part of a bigger university system, while the remaining 4 work at an independent community college. The two working for a university system report to one

system president while the remaining four report to their colleges' Board of Trustees.

Five (5) of the 6 participants spent much of their professional life outside of Arkansas

and did relocate to Arkansas for the purposes of becoming a president, and often to

accept other positions as well that helped to build their resume. The colleges range

variably in size and location. Two (2) of the 4 colleges are located in the 2 largest urban

areas in Arkansas, while the remaining 4 are located in smaller, more rural communities.

Enrollment sizes as of fall 2015 range from approximately 1,300 to 8,000 students at the

participants' colleges.

Deductive Analysis: Analysis Using the Principles of the Labyrinth

In the study, the researcher used Eagly and Carli's framework of the labyrinth to

examine the lived experiences of these participants in reaching the presidential role in

their respective community college. The interview guide was developed to elicit

responses for the specific principles Eagly and Carli identified as imperative to

navigating the labyrinth. The principles the interview guide focused on included

blending agency with communion, building social capital, balancing family and

employment, and facing prejudices and resistance. The participants were provided with

overview information on the labyrinth concept prior to the interviews but were not asked

directly about their opinion on how the labyrinth generally related to their experiences.

The participants were asked about the principles of the labyrinth and as shown in the

results, the participants did identify aspects of the labyrinth in relation to their

experiences. These findings of the study as discovered in the interview process are

discussed below.

Blending agency with communion. Eagly and Carli (2007) use blending agency with communion in the discussion of the principles of how women successfully navigate the labyrinth. Blending agency with communion is defined as women's ability to "direct others while also being verbally supportive and expressing warmth nonverbally" (p. 165). It also encapsulates establishing oneself as competent, especially in male-dominated settings, while also learning to negotiate effectively amongst subordinate groups (pp. 167-169). Blending agency with communion can further be defined as showing oneself capable and assertive enough to make difficult decisions and manage difficult circumstances while still working to create a harmonious environment within their organization and amongst their subordinates.

During the course of the interviews, each participant discussed some aspect of this principle in varying degrees.

Alice. Alice discussed blending agency and communion in regards to how she has proven herself as a leader. In the interview, she mentioned she understood the importance of keeping her subordinates happy and attempts to make her employees happy with her decisions. She did recognize, however, that this is not always possible and has gained the respect of others as a leader in an attempt to keep harmony.

> I'm a hard worker. I believe in our mission. I believe in the community college mission . . . I've earned the respect, I believe, of others. And so, having people respect who you are – they don't always agree with the decisions you make, but they respect your ability to make decisions.

This quote highlights the importance of agency as Alice has worked to prove her own capability as a leader through her hard work, which has garnered the respect of others. The development of respect aids in creating communion amongst her subordinates, which

she further attributed the acceptance of her decisions. Alice discussed the idea of trusting your subordinates when discussing her management style. She described herself as the opposite of a micromanager, and stated, "I feel like I can empower you to do your job, and I don't have to be the person that stands over you and says, 'Do the job. Do that job.'" Alice also discussed the importance of conflict resolution, and how learning to navigate conflict resolution appropriately helped her to become a better leader. By dealing with conflicts directly, the participant made the connection that this helped to show her as a capable leader and allowed her to practice finding a "win-win" for those involved, which contributes to creating communion amongst her employees.

Betty. Betty discussed blending agency with communion by focusing on her development of other leaders and on the importance of collaboration. Betty offered, "I'm a big believer in developing other leaders, not collecting followers. Anybody can collect a follower." Betty spoke at length about increasing communion by assisting others with problem solving and conflict resolution, but giving her subordinates the credit for solving the problems and autonomy to do so. This shows a proof of agency by taking on a teaching role in conflict resolution and problem solving and creation of communion by empowering others to solve problems and allowing them to develop their own agency.

Betty discussed the idea of collaboration in regards to her style and the style of the male president before her. She stated the previous male president had a very command control style, where she believed much more in collaboration. Betty strongly believes that incorporating a collaborative style, in which she seeks input from her subordinates, has been a key factor in her success in becoming a president. Betty

continued the idea of collaboration in her discussion of her management style as well, which she described as "High value, high trust, high expectations." She feels she trusts her employees, has high expectations for them, and values the work they do.

Betty addressed agency as well in her interview, but with the idea of being heard as a professional. "I appear young, but I'm not. And I'm a female. So, I have and I have worked, probably made a lot of mistakes, trying to prove myself." In her experience at her college, she felt it was often hard for her to be taken seriously and heard as a professional. She relayed the story of a time she presented to a group of legislators about her college. At the end of her presentation, she asked if there were questions and the following transpired:

> And there weren't any [questions], and the chairman of the group said, "Well, I don't know about the rest of you, but if my college president looked like [Betty], I would still be in college." And I said, "Well, thank you for your time. And since there are no more questions, I'll let you get back to your meeting."

As this story highlights, Betty implied that because she is female, it is difficult to be taken seriously and have her professional voice heard. She further shared that she has become heavily involved in professional associations and commissions in order to remedy this. "I have to gather elements of credibility and academia for people to take me seriously, and that's unfortunate because it is a lot more work."

Cathy. Cathy discussed blending agency and communion in her discussion of what she felt allowed her to ascend the ranks to become a president of a community college. Cathy felt that working with different people and "being able to problem solve and negotiate solutions" are very important. She also discussed agency when asked about the importance of quality work and proving herself. She felt that showing quality work,

an element of proving agency, was necessary to prove oneself as a viable candidate for president of a community college. Cathy also discussed the need to force her voice as a way of proving agency. In her previous experience in another state, when she was the only female community college president for a period of time, she felt the need to force her voice during meetings with other males in the same position as her.

> The thing that I remember most probably is that when we had presidents and chancellors meetings, we had one big conference table, and there would be 18 or 20 of us, depending on how many of us were around the table at the meeting. If I allowed it to happen, it would just be completely male dominated. Those guys would all talk to each other and amongst themselves. And so I really had to make a conscious effort to assert myself and ask that they pay attention to what I had to say, to command that they pay attention.

As Betty highlighted, Cathy had to likewise force her voice in a more aggressive manner in an attempt to prove her own agency to the other male chancellors. As she noted, in a male dominated environment, this was necessary for her voice to be heard.

Dorothy. Dorothy discussed creating communion fairly often during her interview through a discussion of collaboration. When examining her own traits she felt she had to exhibit to become a president, Dorothy repeatedly discussed the importance of collaboration. She felt her collaborative nature directly contributed to her being hired for her current position as a president. "My strengths that I had proven I think that led to that [being hired as president] were my collaboration, my ability to listen to people and to shape things together, rather than doing things to people." Dorothy also discussed the element of trust when proving herself as a capable leader. She stated that she often would go to her subordinates when she knew little about their area to get their perspectives, which showed a trust in their knowledge and experiences.

Dorothy also discussed a concept related to agency and shared her experience in forcing her voice to be heard. She offered the following on this challenge:

> I think too women – I don't know if this is just me or other women too. I think its other women too. I feel like men sometimes, it's hard to get your voice heard . . . especially when you get two or three men in the room . . . one time, literally, I had to stop some people and say, "Wait, listen to me. I have something to say here." I've only really done that once, but men are just different. They're louder, they're bigger. My predecessor was this huge boisterous voice domineering, and I'm not that person at all. So sometimes I don't know if people look for that more. And expect that more.

As Dorothy highlighted, forcing one's voice may be a particular problem for women as leaders as there may be some expectations of a leader based on male characteristics. In order to meet these expectations, it is necessary to be more commanding of attention.

Emily. As a way of proving agency, Emily discussed the need to be tough. Again, this aligns with Eagly and Carli's ideas of showing masculine traits as a way to show agency.

> I think I had to be a little tougher than I was originally. You know, I don't know if I come across that way. I feel like I have to compassionate and understanding, but I do think you have to be a little tougher because as a president, you have to analyze whatever the request may be or whatever the situation might be and make a good decision.

This showed an attempt to present oneself as a strong while still striving for communion, with communion shown in making the best possible decision for one's campus. Emily also addressed the idea of trust when asked what traits she had to exhibit to reach her role. In her discussion of the traits she exhibited, she stated that she found it important to have "your core folks that you can trust and that are loyal to what you're doing."

Francis. Francis discussed the idea of collaboration and its importance in her experience successfully navigating the labyrinth. As with the other candidates, she

showed collaboration as an important part of creating communion amongst her

employees. Both she and Dorothy concurred that being collaborative was a trait they saw

as specific to women and one that helped them successfully ascend the ranks. Francis

offered, "I think women leaders, and I won't say college presidents, but women leaders

go about getting things done a little bit differently. They're more collaborative."

Additionally Francis echoed the idea of trusting her subordinates, as many of the other

participants discussed. In her discussion of what helped her to successfully ascend the

ranks. She felt that having trust while offering support to her subordinates helped her to

ascend the ranks successfully.

 Themes. The deductive analysis of the interviews revealed three themes related

to the labyrinth principal of blending agency with communion. These themes are

presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Themes Related to Blending Agency with Communion

Themes	Participant Who Discussed
Collaboration	Betty, Dorothy, Francis
Forcing your voice	Betty, Cathy, Dorothy
Trusting your subordinates	Alice, Betty, Dorothy, Emily, Francis

 Building social capital. Eagly and Carli (2007) use building social capital as a

phrase in the discussion of the principles of how women successfully navigate the

labyrinth. This involves creating good relationships with colleagues, joining and

participating in networks, and establishing mentor relationships (p. 173). Building social capital can further be defined as fostering relationships with others for the benefit of oneself or their organization. This can be accomplished by working with others within and outside the organization collectively, by serving as a mentor or by seeking out opportunities to mentor. Building social capital can also be accomplished by joining professional organizations and using these resources for organizational improvement, career advancement, etc.

During the course of the interviews, each participant discussed some aspects of building social capital. Much of the discussion revolved around the importance of mentoring relationships and networking through professional and community involvement.

Alice. During the course of the interview, Alice shared many examples of building social capital. Alice showed the importance of social capital in the beginning of her journey. In addition to a supportive family, Alice had the support of her employer when she decided to pursue a bachelor's degree. She attributed this early success in part to his generosity and support. It was also repeatedly mentioned that two male mentors at her institution pushed her to apply for the chief academic officer and eventually, the presidential role. As she told her story, it was implied that it took the pushing of these two mentors to convince her to apply for the positions. It took one of the mentors asking three times and providing her some reassurance about her readiness for the role and the respect she had gained in the community before Alice finally considered applying for the chancellor. She gave credit to these mentors by stating, "People believed in me . . . I had

mentors who said, 'You need to do this. You need to do this, take this, or do that.' It's

been very positive. And they've been both male and female." During the second phone

interview, Alice was asked for advice she'd offer to women who wished to follow a path

similar to hers. Alice stated that finding good mentors was important for women to reach

a role such as hers.

Alice also cited the importance of her involvement in the community in helping

her to ascend the ranks. She cited her involvement in the local school board and in the

local Chamber of Commerce and felt it helped build her reputation in the community and

made the community excited when she was named chancellor of her institution.

> So outside of my faculty role, I became involved and I think it's very important.
> The community was as excited about me being named as Chancellor as I was. The
> night, I will never will forget it, the night that [member of institution's
> administration] announced that I was going to be the new Chancellor, the
> auditorium, it was at commencement. Everyone stood up!

This anecdote showed the importance of building social capital for Alice, a principle

shown as important by Eagly and Carli (2007), and how it played a role in the

community's support for becoming chancellor. Additionally, Alice made the comment

that she felt not having civic involvement was detrimental to some women's attempt to

ascend the ranks, citing the experience of a colleague who, at the time of the interview,

had not yet been hired as a president of an institution due in part to a lack of such

involvement.

   Betty. Betty also referenced to several instances of building social capital. For

Betty, building social capital began at an early age as she was part of Upward Bound, a

Trio program designed to help low income high school students enter college and pursue

a bachelor's degree. This first instance of having social capital helped her to enter higher education and begin her journey towards a presidential role. Betty credited her early success to mentoring through this program and hearing that she was capable of obtaining a college degree. Betty also discussed her social capital in the form of networking and interconnectivity with colleagues. She cited a supervisor at her first job in a college as helping her to grow professionally by expanding her knowledge of higher education with the addition of job duties. She cited other mentors and colleagues in helping her on her journey. "I network with others for mentoring and coaching in 'How can I get better?'" She felt this happened throughout her career as she watched how other administrators handled positive and negative events on the campuses she worked at. Additionally, Betty has been heavily involved in professional development opportunities for much of her career. These professional involvements included accreditation bodies and both state and national college personnel associations. She felt these associations have helped her to grow and learn as a leader and to learn more about best practices at other institutions, which help inform her decision making at her own respective college. She felt that networking in this regard is especially important for women.

> I think we do have to work harder. And I don't know if that will ever change. Because higher ed – it's been a very male dominated profession. And you don't see a lot of female presidents out there. Or chancellors . . . I do think you have to have a strong network and interconnectivity to particular things in your profession.

As Eagly and Carli (2007) purport, Betty concurred that building social capital, especially through networking is important for a woman to navigate the labyrinth. During the second phone interview, Betty was asked for advice she'd offer to women who wished to

follow a path similar to hers. Betty stated that getting involved in professional

organizations was vital.

   Cathy. Cathy equally believed that networking had been vital to her career

success. When directly asked about the role that networking played in her career success,

Cathy stated that it had "certainly" played a role. In her description of her journey, it was

evident that this was true. Cathy had worked for an agency that worked in connection

with a local community college for a period time that allowed her to become familiar

with the college. Due to her connection to the college, she was recognized for her talents

by the college's then president and was given a position at the local community college.

This job move put her on track to eventually become the president of this college. Before

becoming the president of this college, Cathy cited the professional relationship she had

with the president as part of her success. Under this president in her roles at the college,

she learned more about how to eventually take on this role at the college both responsibly

and successfully.

   Similarly to Betty, Cathy had become heavily involved in professional

organizations, including the state and national community college associations which

helped her to eventually find a presidential role in Arkansas. Her participation in these

state and national organizations helped her make connections with individuals across the

nation. Although she had been serving as a president in a state other than Arkansas, this

involvement helped her to grow professionally and make the decision to begin searching

for presidential opportunities outside of her state.

Dorothy. The idea of building social capital was also discussed by Dorothy. As Dorothy discussed her journey, she repeatedly mentioned the intervention of others in persuading her to apply for various positions. She felt that she had particularly good role models that helped to shape her leadership skills. One pushed her to attend the Executive Leadership Institute offered by the League for Innovation in the Community College, which helped to develop her skills as well.

> I think too I worked for two exceptionally bright talented individuals, presidents, who gave me opportunity. They encouraged me. They saw things. I know my [previous institution] president wanted me to go to the President training through the League for Innovation. And I said, "Tom, I don't want to be a president." He said, "Just go to this training and see what you think." I came back and I said, "Tom, I don't want to be a president" . . . but I think that that shaped a lot of who I have become because they were such good good role models.

When discussing taking on many of her administrative roles, often a president or another colleague familiar with her work ethic and leadership style would ask her specifically to apply for a position. The network she created while working at various institutions helped her to find positions and opportunities to grow professionally. This network helped her to develop the knowledge necessary to eventually apply for and obtain a presidential role. During the second phone interview, Dorothy was asked for advice she'd offer to women who wished to follow a path similar to hers. Dorothy stated that finding a mentor was important for women to reach a role such as hers.

Emily. Emily discussed building social capital in the exploration of how networking has impacted her journey. Emily spent most of her professional life in another state outside of Arkansas. During her time in the other state, she developed a large network of colleagues and peers. This network allowed her to ascend the ranks

within the other state, and make her qualified to eventually seek out a presidential role in

Arkansas. Emily also felt that her network helped her to meet colleagues and peers who

helped her to develop her skills, which made her ultimately more qualified to become a

president. She had support from her supervisors and others who would offer advice and

provide support for her professional growth, such as support to attend the Executive

Leadership Institute offered by the League for Innovation in the Community College.

Additionally, Emily built social capital by becoming involved in professional

organizations, including the American Association of Community Colleges. This

allowed her to meet other college presidents and network in ways that allowed her to

become successful by increasing her professional knowledge. Overall, Emily felt that her

network helped her learn more and develop skills necessary to become a leader.

Ultimately, her involvement in the Executive Leadership Institute helped her to learn of

the position opening for the presidential role she now holds. During the second phone

interview, Emily was asked for advice she'd offer to women who wished to follow a path

similar to hers. Emily stated that getting involved in professional organizations was vital.

     Francis. Francis stressed the importance of mentoring in her discussion of

building social capital.

> When I say being very fortunate, I wouldn't be sitting here if I didn't have
> mentors who just gave of themselves to teach me. And, you know, the only thing
> they have ever asked in return is, "Make sure you teach somebody else." And you
> know, if I didn't have that accommodation and particularly, the mentors that I
> had, I wouldn't be sitting here.

Throughout the interview, mentoring was the most important aspect of not only building

social capital, but of what Francis stressed in creating her career success. She continually

mentioned her mentors and how without them, she would not be a college president. She

shared that the support of her mentors is what pushes her to continue to work hard and be

a success. She feels that she often works hard in her career as a payback for their support

of her and helping her reach where she is. During the second phone interview, Francis

was asked for advice she'd offer to women who wished to follow a path similar to hers.

Francis stated that finding a mentor was important for women to reach a role such as

hers.

     Themes. The deductive analysis of the interviews revealed three themes related to

the labyrinth principal of building social capital. These themes are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Themes Related to Building Social Capital

Theme	Participant Who Discussed
Mentors pushing participant to apply for jobs	Alice, Betty, Dorothy, Francis
Civic and Professional Involvement	Alice, Betty, Cathy, Emily

     Balancing family and employment. Balancing family and employment was an

issue discussed at length with all of the participants. Each of the participants confirmed

that balancing family and employment was indeed a challenge in navigating the labyrinth

and that often, sacrifices were made, but having supportive partners made a drastic

impact in their abilities to be successful.

     Alice. Alice brought the idea of balancing family and employment often during

her interview. From the beginning of her story, Alice mentioned having the support of

her husband and family. Family support was vital in her returning to school to complete

a bachelor's degree and throughout her graduate education as well. It was also vital as

she pursued administrative opportunities at her institution. She stated she felt that her

husband's name should be included on her diplomas as he is part of what made it possible

for her finish. She mentioned that although she and her husband are different

professionally and educationally, she always felt she had great support from him. She

also attributed part of her success to her mother-in-law, whom she said often cared for her

children and made it possible for her to move forward with her educational goals.

All of the participants who have children cited time with children and family as a

sacrifice for their career. Most of the women had a story of an event that they had not

attended due to educational or work obligations. Alice relayed a story of such an event,

but then also mentioned how she did not always wish to move forward with

administrative opportunities for what she felt was the good of her family. She discussed

how at times, she had to sacrifice at work for the good of her family.

> I had to maybe sacrifice a little at work or my educational opportunities for what was best for those girls . . . I think that sometimes I juggled for so long that sometimes I have this erroneous persona that says, "Oh, you can have it all." Well, you can have a lot of things, but it comes at exchanges. There are always tradeoffs, and as a young woman, I think those are things that I would want them to understand. There are tradeoffs. You can have a lot, but there are tradeoffs that come with it.

Although not explicitly stated, Alice implied that during her journey she felt a degree of

guilt or even some regret about pursuing work or educational opportunities. This concept

of guilt is a common theme found in all interviews to some degree.

Betty. Betty discussed balancing family and employment in relation to her children. Betty discussed her success with this balance, and mentioned that one of the things that helped her balance was on-site childcare facilities.

> I think I was very very fortunate when my children were little that I had the child development center right there on campus. And then when I was at [place of employment], my two youngest went to lab school. And my office was here and their lab school was down the sidewalk.

She further said that her children were on campus often, and the ability to have her children on campus with her helped her in balancing her career with her family obligations. Betty also worked from home often so she could be home with her children while still accomplishing work goals. She also mentioned that what else helped her balance family and employment was asking for help from others. As she felt she is not a person who often asks for help, this was difficult for her. However, she also felt she had a supportive family as she mentioned having the help of a niece who assisted with child care when her children were young. She also mentioned that she set some priorities with her children and tried to place them first. She would make time for school lunches and extracurricular activities her children participated in and tried to make them a priority. Although she felt she balanced family and employment well, Betty did discuss feeling a degree of guilt. She also felt guilt for moving her children around for various job opportunities and for the few events she would have to miss with her children. She likewise felt guilt for missing work functions if she had to attend to family issues. Her anecdotes highlighted this guilt as a tangible issue for women in her position.

She said she felt she sacrificed relationships for her career, and reiterated it was important to have the support of a partner. She felt that it is difficult for some male spouses to have a wife who is more successful.

> Sometimes it's often difficult for a spouse to have a female spouse be more successful. I think that's really hard and I've had those conversations with others . . . do you have a strong husband? Is he supportive? Will he not be resentful if you become more successful?

Betty disclosed that this was an issue she had dealt with personally, and sacrificed relationships for the success of her career.

Cathy. Cathy discussed balancing family with employment during the course of her interview. Cathy felt she had to sacrifice some time with family for her career. Cathy stated that she and her husband had married young and had a family young, which created a more complicated path for her.

> My career path was one that probably, and then my educational path, was one that was probably not the smoothest path to take. And, I suppose you could call some of that "obstacles." But, my husband and I were married right after we graduated from [college attended]. So, we were still 20 years old . . . looking back on that, that sounds incredibly young. But of course at that time we thought we were very mature. . . . So, I was working on my bachelor's, my master's, and my Ph.D. while I was having to work and while I was raising two children. So, those weren't necessarily obstacles, I was still going to get those degrees. I mean nobody was going to keep me from doing that, but I did it the hard way. It would be a lot easier to be single and be able to devote your entire attention to working on a master's degree. And if you didn't have to work and if you weren't raising children that would all be so much easier. So I did it the hard way. But, I don't know if I would truly refer to any of that as obstacles. It just was a little more complicated way of getting to the same point.

Cathy had strategies though for working on her education while raising children. She mentioned working on homework together and also making sure she was an excellent

time manager. She felt learning time management was vital in helping her to achieve her goals.

As with Alice, she did relay the story of an event she had missed with one of her children because of work obligations. However, she felt she did a good job balancing family and employment overall from the time her children were young up through their adulthood.

> For the most part it was really good, and I think they were able to come with me to a lot of things. We went to conferences and stuff. Sometimes the kids and my husband would be in the pool all day, and I would be in the meeting all day. Things like that, but we could still be together for breakfast. We could be together in the evenings. So there were lots of things that were good.

Cathy also felt she had an extremely supportive husband who helped to make her education and career possible.

> He's a good guy. Anybody that knows him likes him. He's a good guy, and I have to admit he's been very supportive along the way, and that makes a difference. It makes a huge difference, and he's still very supportive of me.

Dorothy. As with Alice and Cathy, Dorothy shared that she has a supportive husband that has helped her career to be a success. For a period of time in her career, she had to commute for her job and felt her husband was supportive. Additionally, when completing her doctoral work, she felt her husband was "extremely supportive." She relayed a story in which he took on child care in order for her to finish her dissertation. One Thanksgiving when her family lived in another state but wished to return home to Arkansas for the holiday, she spent the holiday alone.

> I remember one Thanksgiving, I was working on my dissertation and told my husband, I said, "You all just got to go Arkansas without me.". . . He took them for a week and I really got a lot done, but I spent Thanksgiving by myself.

She also used this story to illustrate sacrificing time with family at times due to her career and educational goals. "Sometimes I watch people, and they want to be critical . . . they'll almost act like, 'So what, you got a degree' kind of thing. And I'll think, 'Yeah, you were home with your family every night and on the weekends.'" She also mentioned guilt more explicitly and said that her children are now adults, but she still feels guilt for working. "And now it's grandchildren. I feel guilty all the time. I miss birthdays . . . I keep thinking it's going to get better."

Emily. Emily did not feel the strong sacrifice with missing time with children. When her children were young, she worked in a job outside of higher education and then worked as a faculty member when her children were in elementary and middle school. She felt she had more flexibility in this position and was able to balance family time well. She did not enter until administration until her children were in high school and college. "I was fortunate that my kids were in college. They were busy with their college life. . . ." However, Emily explained a different family sacrifice. She accepted a job that required her to commute a long distance, and eventually, her husband commuted for a portion of her time at the job. She felt this was a sacrifice in her marriage.

> Making that decision to commute. I would go for the week and come back on the weekends. So, you almost led two different lives . . . you kind of compartmentalized your work life totally for five days and then your family life for kind of three. For those years that we commuted, we spent a lot of time on the phone at night, first thing in the morning . . . I think those are the sacrifices you make from that standpoint. And, as a president, it kind of ebbs and flows . . . it just depends on the schedule. . . . But, there's other times, different times, that things are just a lot more demanding. You're out of town or you're in Little Rock because of the legislature or this or that or the other thing. . . . I don't know that it compromises relationships, but, I have – my husband is relatively understanding.

Similar to the other participants, having support from her husband seemed important in making her career journey successful, despites some of the difficult decisions.

Francis. Francis discussed the sacrifice of time with her partner, whom she has been with for several years. Francis does not have children but noted that "probably would have changed some things." Francis is also not from Arkansas and had spent most of her professional career in a different region of the country. She moved to Arkansas when she accepted the presidential position at one of the community colleges in the state. Her partner was unable to move with her at the time she accepted the job, but the couple successfully maintained a long distance relationship.

> When I came down here, [her partner] was still in Wisconsin. So, we did the Skype. You know, we did that for two years and the commuting back and forth. And now [her partner is] here, which is great. But, we knew that going in so it wasn't like, "Okay, well, it's been a month and you know, we're still not – you're still not down in Little Rock." Well, you know, we had that planned out. Again, I think if you plan it out and you know what's ahead, it makes it easier.

Although she did successfully maintain her relationship with her partner despite the move and period of having long distance relationship, Francis did note that it was a sacrifice.

> I think the closest thing for a sacrifice is the first two years here when [her partner] was in [another state], and I was here, and we had to do long distance commute. That was a sacrifice, but we knew that going in. We knew that going in. But, you know, that's two years out of your life that you don't get to see your loved one each and every day. So that would probably be the sacrifice right there.

Themes. The deductive analysis of the interviews revealed three themes related to the labyrinth principal of balancing family with employment. These themes are presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Themes Related to Balancing Family with Employment

Theme	Participant Who Discussed
Sacrifice of time with family	Alice, Betty, Cathy, Dorothy, Emily, Francis
Having supportive partners	Alice, Cathy, Dorothy, Emily, Francis
Guilt or difficulty expressed over sacrifice of time with family	Alice, Betty, Cathy, Dorothy, Emily, Francis

Facing prejudices and resistance. Overwhelmingly, the participants did not feel they faced severe prejudices and discrimination based on their gender during their journey. However, some did relay stories related to some incidences related to this issue. Betty reported facing prejudices and resistance based on her gender more explicitly than the other participants. This was shown in the story of the legislator who commented on her physical appearance instead of her professional presentation. She also experienced an employee telling her that he did not like working for a woman. As discussed, she reiterated in her interview that higher education is a male dominated world and she felt the need to prove her credibility through participation in professional organizations and associations. She also discussed the challenges of showing emotions as a woman and the prejudices faced.

> When I was at [previous institution], we had an incident on campus and it was racial incident. And it was unfortunate. It was horrible and we took the right steps and penalized the fraternity. And our Director of Intercultural Affairs came to meet with me with one of our students and they said, "We're very upset with you." And I said, "Well, why? You know, we've managed this, we've handled this. They're on probation. They've been fined. I mean, they've been heavily sanctioned.". . . They said, "Well, we think that's fair, but we're still upset with you." And I said, "I don't understand why you're upset with me." And the [student] . . . she said, "You didn't show any emotion over this. We needed you to

say, 'This is awful and this is bad. And we're going to do something about it.'"
And I didn't . . . I've been mindful about not showing emotion. But, it also then
can be a prejudice against me if I don't emotion. I'm cold. I don't have any
feelings. But, if I show emotion, then I'm soft. And I think that's a very very
unfair prejudice, and I think all of us deal with that . . . if you don't show emotion,
you don't care. But if you show too much emotion, then you're weak. And I think
that is an unfair prejudice . . . that's why I feel like it's so much harder for a
woman.

Half of the participants reported not facing strong prejudices or resistance, but did
have some anecdotes to share. Cathy relayed the story of facing resistance during her
time as a president in another state. As previously discussed, when she was the only
female community college president for a period of time in another state, she the need to
be aggressive in order to get heard during meetings with other males in the same position
as her. Dorothy shared that when she was hired in her current role, there was a comment
made by a member of the institution's coordinating board. According to Dorothy, this
board member told the system's president, that "he was not going to recommend a female
for this position until he had talked to [her]. So, I don't know what changed his mind, but
. . . he was very adamant." Emily shared that when she applied for her position, the
comment was made to her that the "community is open to a woman president," which
indicated that at one the time, her being hired may not have been possible as a woman.

With the exception of Betty, all of the participants reported that they did not feel
strong prejudices relating to their gender. When asked if she faced prejudices or
resistance, Alice offered, "I've never felt that because I believe I have just – I think that
has never negatively affected me." Cathy stated she didn't feel she had faced prejudices
either.

I'm the kind of person where I don't even try to, even if they exist, I just try not to let them become too important in my life. You know, you can really weigh yourself down with all these perceived prejudices. Or real prejudices for that matter. But, it doesn't help you achieve your goal. It doesn't really help you get to where you're going. So if you have some focus and you know where you want to go, you just, you just kind of don't let yourself be so bothered with all of that . . . every once in a while it's probably going to give you a little smack of reality. But, you still keep your eye focused on where you want to go. You just deal with it in the moment and then just keep on going.

Dorothy shared the story of the Coordinating Board member who said he would not recommend a woman for the position until he spoke with her, but other than this experience, Dorothy did not feel she had faced strong prejudices. Emily felt similarly. "I don't think prejudices so much. Faculty member, never. Division chair, rarely . . . I've really not experienced too much as a president, personally that I can detect in the people that I work with directly." In the final interview with Francis, she reiterated these same ideas. "Prejudices and resistance. No, you know, if somebody's thinking, 'Can a girl do that?' Never had that at all." Although many of these women had some anecdotes to share about prejudice, most overwhelmingly did not feel the effects of it on their career path.

The researcher found that overwhelmingly, with the exception of facing strong prejudices and resistance, the participants did exhibit instances of adhering to the labyrinth in varying degrees. The analysis of the data supports the principles of navigating the labyrinth. The common themes found relating to each principle are outlined in the Table 8 below. As shown in the table, the most common aspect of navigating the labyrinth is balancing family and employment.

Table 8

Summary Table of Common Themes Related to Each Principle

Principle	Themes	Participant Who Discussed
Blending Agency with Communion	Collaboration	Betty, Dorothy, Francis
	Forcing your voice	Betty, Cathy, Dorothy
	Trusting your subordinates	Alice, Betty, Dorothy, Emily, Francis
Building Social Capital	Mentors pushing participant to apply for jobs	Alice, Betty, Dorothy, Francis
	Civic and Professional Involvement	Alice, Betty, Cathy, Emily
Balancing Family and Employment	Sacrifice of time with family	Alice, Betty, Cathy, Dorothy, Emily, Francis
	Having supportive partners	Alice, Cathy, Dorothy, Emily, Francis
	Guilt or difficulty expressed over sacrifice of time with family	Alice, Betty, Cathy, Dorothy, Emily, Francis

Inductive Analysis: Themes Outside of the Labyrinth Principals

Although much of the content of the participant's interviews revolved around the concepts of the labyrinth, there were some themes that surfaced that are not discussed explicitly in the labyrinth.

Being prepared when opportunity knocks. All of the participants discussed the importance of being prepared when opportunity knocks. Most of the participants mentioned the importance of being willing to take on new challenges when asked. Alice mentioned this as somewhat of a detriment, as she often put off moving forward with her career because of her family obligations. However, she did note her willingness to tackle

new opportunities in her community, which helped to make her more qualified to become a chancellor. When asked to discuss her journey, Betty said that an aspiring leader should "say yes to every opportunity that comes along." She shared her own experiences in exploring new areas professionally and accepting new responsibilities as her supervisors would allow her. Cathy also acknowledged this in her journey and said she accepted a presidential role before she was probably truly ready.

> Probably when I went from being vice president to president in [previous institution]. I would, if I could have designed all of that, I would have given myself a couple more years as vice president. I think that would have been helpful, but the timing was such that he was going to retire and if I didn't apply then, it could be 5, 6, 10 years before that position came open again. So, I went ahead and applied. So I was a little bit of a green horn president. I could have used a couple more years in a vice president's role. But, I was grateful to have the opportunity. I worked hard. I did the very best that I could do. I did have him to bounce ideas off of. I had a very good Board of Trustees. And, I was a quick learner. So I survived it. But, if I were designing it, I probably would have given myself a couple more years as a VP.

Despite feeling somewhat unprepared, this story illustrated the concept of being ready when the opportunity knocked. Dorothy and Francis likewise reiterated the idea of being prepared when opportunity knocked. In their interviews, they both mentioned feeling unready to take on certain roles. However, when they were pushed or asked to apply for jobs, they would often accept the challenge. The ability to pursue opportunities, even when they did not feel ready, helped them in ascending the ranks. Emily felt that "a positive can-do" spirit helped make her successful when becoming a president. She felt that accepting responsibilities as they came served as growing opportunities and eventually helped her to reach her position as president.

> I do presentations sometimes for leadership and I tell the folks I speak to all the time, I say, "Being that person that's willing to lead, chair the committee, or lead

the taskforce," . . . I said, "That's all leadership." And, you know, if I look back along the way, when someone asked me to do something, I did it.

As shown, each participant felt it necessary to take advantage of opportunities as they came and that these opportunities are what made them into the leaders they are today.

Problem solving as a skill. Five out of the six participants mentioned problem solving as an important skill for a leader to have. Problem solving was not mentioned as being exclusive to women as leaders, but it was repeatedly mentioned. When asked what helped them to ascend the ranks, Cathy, Emily, and Francis felt that having the ability to problem solve was important in their journey. This was one of the first skills that each participant mentioned as important. For Alice, problem solving was a skill learned in one of her first roles. Alice discussed the need to be able to problem solve in her first role as a division chair and felt this role helped her to learn this important skill. Dorothy also discussed problem solving as a strategy for dealing with upset employees. She discussed encouraging her employees to find solutions to problems and present those solutions to her for moving forward.

Unplanned to become president. Five out of the six participants stated that their journey to become president was not intentional. These five participants all started with very different plans for their career.

Alice originally intended to complete her degree and enter a profession outside of higher education. However, she began to teaching accounting and found she was a good fit in higher education. She did not seem to actively pursue leadership roles, but was often pushed towards them. Betty had a similar path. She originally believed she would end up as a classroom teacher but was pushed towards leadership. "I always seemed to

end up in leadership positions. No matter what I did, I always seemed to be ending up in

leadership positions. And I believe that sometimes people know you better than you

know yourself." Dorothy started in a different field, similarly to Alice, and was often

pushed towards leadership roles, similar to Betty. She said that she often would not think

about the next level of a job, until she had obtained a position and was ready for the next

steps. However, there was no overarching plan from the beginning.

> I ever thought about that next job. I just enjoyed – now sometimes, I would think, "I'm not going to be satisfied doing this a whole lot." I never had a job – never had a job longer than nine years . . . I probably get a little bit bored. I kind of do my thing and then I'm ready to move on to that next challenge, that next - now this one . . . I would say a lot of times I was just intrigued by the challenge with new positions.

As with Alice and Dorothy, Emily started in a field outside of education and made the

transition to teaching and eventually higher education.

> I tell my students that all the time or I talked to them at lab or talked to other students and I'd tell them, you know, "I didn't start off my life journey with being the president of a college in mind. Not at all."

Emily goes on to say that she would reach one job and then look at the next step,

similarly to Dorothy.

> I guess I would look at the next step someplace. You know, you would get into that job you were in, that position you were in, and set goals for yourself, accomplish those goals, and then you see what that next might be if you were interested. And, you know, I never looked from faculty to say, I wanted to be president one day." I looked from faculty to be "I might be a dean one day.". . . So anyways, I always looked maybe just the step above, but not beyond because, you know, you have to know that position you're going into to know if you can do it and you can do it well.

Francis also mentioned that it was unintentional for her to become a president of a

college. She transitioned from secondary education to career technical education and

eventually to administration in a community college. She did not pursue a presidential

role until she was pushed by a mentor. As shown, the path to becoming a president for

many of the participants was unintentional.

Having confidence in yourself. The concept of having confidence in yourself is

discussed by four of the six participants. Alice discussed having confidence in herself

and the ability to balance her work and family impacted her ability to always move

forward with opportunities. For Alice, it took others pushing her forward to help her

build this confidence. "People believed in me things that I didn't see in myself." Cathy

stated that she always tried to be confident in herself and always pushed herself to the

highest levels possible in order to be successful. She feels this confidence aided her on

her journey.

Dorothy discussed having confidence in herself as an issue she had to overcome

in order to reach her role.

> I think the biggest obstacle was myself. And I'm sure you've run across a lot of
> women and confidence issues. . . . The president, I said, that wanted me to go the
> President's Academy – it's not that I didn't want to be a president. I never thought
> I could be a president. And he came to me one time and said, "How would you
> feel about being my chief operating officer?" And I was really looking for a
> change at the time, but I was afraid I'd let him down. I thought, "I don't know
> how to be a chief operating officer.". . . .I think that has been my biggest obstacle
> . . . confidence definitely. Because I truly believe I can do anything I set my mind
> to do. I don't always feel I can convince other people that I can do that. So, I think
> it's been more of a confidence issue there with convincing and knowing I didn't
> have that skills set going in there.

Francis relayed a similar story when it was first presented to her by a mentor that she

should pursue a presidential role.

> Well, first my president, who is now retired. . . . She started bugging me about
> being a president. And I said, "Oh no. No, no, no, no, no. I am the girl behind the

curtain. I do details. I will make you look good. But, I don't have – I don't like to hob knob or do anything. Or be the social butterfly. That's not me." And she said, "Oh, no. You're going to be a president."

It took a mentor's push to help Francis develop confidence in herself to apply for presidential roles. After this conversation, she began looking for these positions.

Listening skills. Three of the six participants mentioned listening skills as necessary for a leader. Listening skills were not mentioned as being exclusive to women as leaders, but it was repeatedly mentioned. Alice mentioned that she developed listening skills as a way to combat obstacles. This helped her immensely in conflict resolution in her role. She offered, "I've learned that a tool that I use immensely in this role is my listening. . . . I'm a very good listener. Because in many many circumstances, the only thing you can do is listen." Betty also mentioned having listening skills. When asked what traits she had to exhibit to become a president, Alice stated, "I think I had to conscientiously work very hard on listening skills. Listening and hearing what people were really saying and translating because I'm kind of a doer. But listening and finding out what that meaning is." Dorothy likewise concurred these participants, stating that she felt her emotional intelligence, which included having good listening skills, helped her to reach her goals.

Love of teaching. There were three participants who all mentioned a love of teaching. Although a love of teaching did not have direct links to leadership, it served as a foundation for many of these women's career in higher education. Alice started her career off in a different professional area, but became a faculty member because of her love of teaching. She eventually moved into a division chair role before exploring

administration. She had a love of teaching that started her career and got her invested in higher education. Betty also had a great love of teaching and felt she would end up as a classroom teacher. However, she always ended up in leadership roles and only served as an adjunct instructor. Without the love of teaching, she may not have continued in higher education. Emily was much like Alice. She started off in a different field, and transitioned over to higher education. She became a faculty member and eventually moved up through the administrative ranks. Although not all of the participants voiced a love of teaching, serving as a classroom teacher in a college setting was a common starting point for half of the women.

Summary

In this study of the journey of these women, several ideas surfaced. The principles that Eagly and Carli (2007) describe in their work on navigating the labyrinth surfaced in the stories of these women's journeys. Aspects of blending agency with communion as well as building social capital surfaced. A main aspect of blending agency with communion was the importance of collaboration and also the need to force your voice at times. Mentoring and involvement in civic and professional organizations surfaced as the most important parts of building social capital. Overwhelmingly, all of the women faced the challenge of balancing family and employment. Each of the women had various ways in which they attempted to strike this balance. Although all reported a mostly successful balance, a level of difficulty and guilt plagued most of the participants while trying to strike this balance.

There were other ideas that surfaced as well not specifically related to the labyrinth. A number of participants stated that their journey was unplanned and that becoming president was unintentional. It was a destination that developed as they moved their way through higher education, in some cases as faculty with a love of teaching. Many of the participants felt that having problem solving and listening skills were vital to their success as well has having confidence in themselves. Although Eagly and Carli (2007) purport that women often face prejudices and resistance to their leadership, this did not seem to be an issue these women faced in the community college world. Although some did have stories to share about prejudice, they were not significant events and the women felt unaffected.

Chapter 5

Discussion

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to understand the lived experiences of female presidents in Arkansas community colleges. This was accomplished by collecting data through one-on-one interviews to examine how these women have navigated the labyrinth of leadership to reach the presidency of a community college. Using the conceptual framework of the labyrinth, as purported by Eagly and Carli (2007), this study focused on the lived experiences of these women and examined the life choices made, career paths, educational background, and obstacles these women have faced in navigating the labyrinth of leadership to reach the presidency. During the in person interviews, the researcher used an interview guide developed to elicit responses for the specific principles Eagly and Carli identified as imperative to navigating the labyrinth. The principles the interview guide focused on included blending agency with communion, building social capital, balancing family and employment, and facing prejudices and resistance. Through an inductive and deductive analysis of the data collected, the researcher was able to draw conclusions about the experiences of these women. The researcher was also able to make some connections back to previous literature written about women in higher education and literature about the labyrinth. These conclusions and connections will be discussed in the sections to follow.

Main Findings

Through deductive analysis, the researcher found the participants did exhibit
instances of adhering to the labyrinth in varying degrees. Eagly and Carli (2007) offered
distinct principles for how some women can reach senior level positions in any setting
(pp. 163-182). The principles Eagly and Carli discussed are blending agency with
communion, building social capital, and thirdly, balancing employment with family
(pp. 163-174). Additionally, Eagly and Carli stated that some women face prejudice and
discrimination, in addition to facing resistance to their leadership and other organizational
barriers. After analyzing the data, both inductively and deductively, it was found that the
participants' journeys reflect the principles of navigating the labyrinth. Although the
labyrinth principles are included in the experiences of the participants, the principles do
not totally encompass the participants' entire experiences and other common themes
emerged in the study.

Blending agency with communion. As shown in the data analysis, all of the
women reported aspects of blending agency with communion. Eagly and Carli (2007)
use this phrase in the discussion of the principles of how women successfully navigate
the labyrinth. This is defined as women's ability to "direct others while also being
verbally supportive and expressing warmth nonverbally" (p. 165). It also encapsulates
establishing oneself as competent, especially in male-dominated settings, while also
learning to negotiate effectively amongst subordinate groups (pp. 167-169). This can
further be defined as showing oneself capable and assertive enough to make difficult
decisions and manage difficult circumstances while still working to create a harmonious

environment within their organization and amongst their subordinates. In relation to this aspect of Eagly and Carli's work, each of the women mentioned proving agency in some way. Although not discussed at length, all five of the six participants did discuss proving agency in some regard, proving this as a principle relevant to their journey. Proving agency was discussed in various ways by five of the six participants, and all focused their discussion of agency around increasing their credibility with others. The participants indicated they had proved agency in various ways, including gaining respect over time, providing quality work, engaging in professional organizations, and exhibiting male traits. Experiences of the participants in this study are reflective of the previous work of Hanson (2011) who found the need for female superintendents to build credibility when establishing themselves as leaders in their districts.

There was also a discussion of the need to exhibit masculine traits by three of the six participants. Betty, Cathy, and Dorothy both spoke of forcing their voices as females in their roles, which was shown as a method for proving agency. Forcing of one's voice is not only reflective of the work of Eagly and Carli (2007) and proving agency, but it is also reflective of the work Gill (2013) who explored the experiences of female community college leaders in West Texas. Gill exerted that to become a successful female leader, one must exhibit assertive, decisive, and authoritative traits. Gill also noted that many subordinates of female leaders do not feel comfortable with these traits coming from a woman, which is reflective of the experience of Betty. Betty discussed her struggle with being aggressive while still showing emotion expected of woman, as exhibited in her story about the handling of a discipline case involving racism.

Exhibiting masculine or aggressive traits by women in leadership roles is a typical

occurrence, whether the labyrinth concept is applied or not.

Proving agency through education was another common thread in the stories of

each of the women. Five of the six participants currently hold a doctoral degree, while

the sixth was in the process of finishing her dissertation at the time of the interview.

Previous research found that obtaining a terminal degree was necessary for women to

prove themselves capable as leaders. Ligeikis' research related to female vice presidents

in community colleges, but found women have to prove agency by obtaining a terminal

degree (pp. 147-148). Chavez (2011) and Cahalan (2007) concurred with this idea for

women. Chavez's (2011) study showed the need for a doctorate for female presidential

candidates within two- and four-year public and private institutions. Cahalan's (2007)

study showed this same need for women aspiring to lead in four year institutions.

Completion of a doctorate by most of the women showed this as relevant to their journey

and as a way of proving agency.

In terms of blending communion with agency, collaboration and trusting of one's

subordinates were the most common strategies for creating communion. Three of the

women discussed the importance of collaboration as part of what made them successful

leaders. Proving oneself as a capable leader was fairly common with these women, and as

part of this, using collaboration to build strong relationships with subordinates proved to

be an important aspect of being a leader.   Five out of the six participants discussed

trusting their subordinates, making this theme the most common within this principle.

Trusting one's subordinates is reflective of previous studies completed on women in

higher education. Valdata et al. (2008) interviewed nine women appointed to

presidencies in universities and community colleges in a previous study. Valdata et al.

did not apply the labyrinth concept in this study but found similar results. One

interviewee, Dr. Andrea Lewis Miller discussed the importance of trusting subordinates

and enabling others to fulfill the college's mission by empowering them to make

decisions. Valdata makes the connection between this trust and the success of the

participants in the study, thus showing this a previous experience identified. This trusting

of subordinates is important to blending communion with agency as it builds a

relationship with subordinates that develops support for a leader.

Building social capital. Eagly and Carli (2007) define building social capital as

creating good relationships with colleagues, joining and participating in networks, and

establishing mentor relationships (p. 173). Building social capital can further be defined

as fostering relationships with others for the benefit of oneself or their organization.

Building social capital can be accomplished by working with others within and outside

the organization collectively, by serving as a mentor or by seeking out opportunities to

mentor. Building social capital can also be accomplished by joining professional

organizations and using these resources for organizational improvement, career

advancement, etc.

To some degree, all of the participants discussed building social capital as

important to their journey. Mentorship served as common theme amongst most of the

participants and was the most common example of Eagly and Carli's (2007) principle of

building social capital. Four out of the six participants discussed mentors and specifically

mentioned mentors assisting with career advancement in various ways. Gill (2013) had a similar finding. Gill found that mentorship is an important part of the career path of successful female leaders in community colleges (pp. 62-63). In Gill's study, all of the women disclosed that they had a mentor who helped guide them on their path to becoming a successful leader in their respective community college. Gill showed seeking out a mentor as a key strategy for helping successful female leaders. Hanson (2011) also found that the female superintendents in the K12 system also found mentors in the life, which added to their social capital and helped in creating the path to the superintendent position (p. 86). The women of this study, in particular Alice, Dorothy, and Francis, continually attributed their success to mentors, making their journeys similar to those previously studied.

Gill (2013) noted that when able to find another female to serve as their mentor, it can help the potential leader to identify ways to find a balance in their personal and professional lives (p. 62). In her work on the career development of female community college presidents, Vanhook-Morrissey (2003) concluded that having female role models as mentors was an important aspect of the success of women who have obtained a presidential role in a community college. Cselenszky (2012) also found mentoring important to women aspiring to become leaders in universities, but that the participants in this study noted a lack of mentoring opportunities. The women in this study seemed to have few female mentors, with the exception of Francis. Francis mentioned two female mentors who were very influential in her life. One had a direct impact on her decision to search for presidential opportunities, and Francis indicated that the earlier female mentor

had a lasting impact on the course of her life. Two of the other participants mentioned

the need for more female mentors. Although the need for female mentors is shown as a

powerful influencer of becoming a leader, the women in this study did not have extensive

experience with female mentors. As Francis showed the lasting impact that female

mentors made on her life, it seems that finding female mentors can truly provide direction

in navigation of the labyrinth.

Civic and professional involvement was also repeatedly mentioned by the women

in this study. Four out of the six participants specifically mentioned this involvement as

key to their success. Betty made connections to this as part of developing her credibility,

but did mention repeatedly that her involvement in professional organizations was vital to

proving herself capable as a leader. Alice likewise made connections to proving her

agency but through her involvement in the community. Building relationships outside of

regular employment was vital in their leadership development and in being considered as

candidates capable of leading. Cathy and Emily both mentioned networking

professionally as what helped them to find their openings for the roles they currently

serve in. Having professional connections helped to open new doors for these two

women. The experiences of these women are reflective of the work of Hanson (2011),

who studied K12 female superintendents. One of the common themes was that building

relationships helped in making connections that positively influenced career path for the

participants. With the experiences in mentoring and networking discussed by the

community college participants in this study, and similar findings among women in K-12

leadership positions, building social capital is common to navigating the labyrinth regardless of the type the institution.

Balancing family and employment. The most common aspect of navigating the labyrinth for the participants in this study was balancing family and employment. Five of the six women discussed the importance of and having a supportive partner, which assisted in becoming the president or chancellor of their institution. Alice directly attributed her success, especially in the early years of obtaining her education, to her husband. Cathy, Dorothy, Emily, and Francis specifically mentioned having partners who were supportive of their careers and willing to sacrifice with them for their career advancement. Having the support of a partner is reflective of the work of Byerly (2014). Byerly studied female vice presidents within four-year institutions and found that the participants in this study acknowledged having supportive husbands who bear the load of the family responsibilities (pp. 125-126). As is evidenced by Byerly's study and the women in this study, having partner support is of vital importance and makes navigating the labyrinth more probable.

All of the women mentioned sacrificing time with the families while advancing their career. This sacrifice of time seems fairly common for women in leadership according to past research and is reflective of Starzyk's (2013) study. Starzyk (2013) found that women in her study, student affairs administrators within Catholic education, often felt they were unable to sacrifice family life for the benefit of their careers. Ligeikis (2010) concurred in a work studying female vice presidents in New York state community colleges. Although the women studied were vice presidents, Ligeikis found

that women in this role felt that they would have to sacrifice family in order to reach a presidential role. The women in the study had ultimately decided not to pursue the presidential role because of this (pp. 159-160). Green (2008) likewise reflected this idea. As a female community college president, Green noted that she chose to keep her faculty position over an administrative one when first asked because she wished to preserve her family life. This is reflective of the experience of at least Alice, who put off applying to become the chancellor of her college because of her family concerns.

Emily did not state she intentionally put off administrative roles until her children were older, but the timing of her career advancement came at this stage in life. This strategy of planning one's career sequencing around one's family is reflective of Eddy (2008, p. 58). Eddy stated that for the women in the study "a stable home front provided a sense of foundation for these women" when seeking career advancement (p. 59). With older children who were less in need of caregiving, it seemed that Emily had a more stable home life which allowed for career advancement. The flexibility of her family allowed her to seek out a job opportunity in which she had to commute a long distance, which may not have been possible if she had young children at home.

Although no studies were found that specifically cited the feeling of guilt in female leaders, this was a theme that surfaced with all of the participants in this study. Guilt surfaced in discussions of sacrificing family time for career or making career decisions that impacted the family. Guilt likewise showed itself in relation to different instances in the journey, including pursuing more advanced degrees or simply accepting jobs that required a move. The concept of guilt appeared in the closest form in the study

conducted by Ligeikis (2010) who examined female vice presidents in New York state community colleges. The women in this study did not wish to pursue presidential roles because felt that they would have to sacrifice family in order to reach this role (pp. 159-160). It can be inferred that perhaps they wish to not only avoid losing family time, but perhaps avoid the guilt that seems to come with the decision.

Facing prejudices and resistance. Eagly and Carli (2007) extensively discussed that female leaders often face strong prejudices and resistance to their leadership, solely based on gender. Outside of higher education, this seems common according to previous literature. Harris (2013) applied the labyrinth theory to women in corporate settings and their ability to navigate the labyrinth. Hanson found that women in this setting face strong prejudices and resistance to their leadership. Stewart (2012) reported that African American women in mid-level management positions in corporate settings feel that others believe they have an inability to balance employment and family life. This perception is credited with keeping them from advancing their careers (pp. 103-104). Within higher education, Starzyk (2013) reported that sexism is found within Catholic institutions and makes it difficult to reach leadership roles in these institutions. Cselenszky (2012) found female vice presidents, deans, directors, and provosts within four-year universities faced resistance to their leadership (p. 127). The literature makes it clear that this is common within corporate settings and even within four-year higher education institutions, secular and religious.

With the exception of one participant in this study, most found that they did not face strong prejudices or resistance to their leadership or if they did, it did not strongly

impact their journey. The participants relayed some stories about gender discrimination, but it was generally minor and not gravely impactful on the participant. Betty was the only participant who felt truly impacted by gender prejudice. Unlike the other participants, however, Betty did spend time working at a four-year university. The experiences of the other women in the study is congruent with the work Ligeikis (2010) who reported that female vice presidents in New York state community colleges did not feel they encountered gender discrimination in their career advancement (p. 154). This finding both in this study and in Ligeikis' study may be indicative that gender discrimination is less impactful in the community college setting. There could be several reasons why this is common within community college leadership. Townsend (2009) notes that women make up the majority of both the community college student body and total community college faculty in the United States. As women make up the majority in this environment, it can be inferred that gender discrimination is not as common in this setting. Although most of the principles Eagly and Carli (2007) purport are applicable to the journey of community college female leaders, it seems that facing prejudices and resistance is not common or impactful, and therefore, irrelevant to the experience of female community college presidents.

Career path. The career paths of the women studied were fairly congruent with previous literature that examined the career paths of presidents of higher education institutions. Lederman (2012) reported specifically on the career paths of women in university presidential roles stating that the vast majority of those who eventually serve as president of a university initially serve as the chief academic officer with 34% of all

presidents serving in this role prior to the presidency. Cook (2012) stated that "nearly one-fifth of the presidents moved into their current position from another presidency and over a third from provost or chief academic officer (CAO)." Amey and VanDerLinden (2002) focus their study on community college leaders and reported 37% of presidents held an immediate past position of provost or chief academic officer. Amey and VanDerLinden (2002) also reported 25% of presidents held an immediate past position of president at another institution and 12% had another administrative position. In this study, 50% of the participants held role of provost or chief academic officer before taking on the presidential role. One participant (17%) had served as a president at another institution, and one participant (17%) had served as chief student affairs officer before accepting the presidential role.

Problem solving and listening skills. The themes of problem solving and listening skills surfaced the interviews. Five of the six participants mentioned having problem solving skills and three of the six participants mentioned having listening skills as necessary for a leader. These themes are reflective of the work of Ballenger and Ballenger (2010), who reported that

> women have been conditioned to listen and to be responsive to the concerns of others . . . women tend to have strong group skills that enable them to turn to group problem solving, consensus building, and democratic ways of managing operations. (p. 5)

Although the study by Ballenger and Ballenger did not utilize the labyrinth concept but focused on women's access to higher education leadership, it shows that these skills are a necessary to develop. This finding is reflected in this study as well in the experiences of the participants.

Unplanned to become president. Five out the six participants stated that their journey to become president was not intentional and for the most part was unplanned. This is congruent with research by Byford (2011), who examined a dean, vice president, and a president of a land grant doctoral institution. Byford concluded that it is necessary for women to occasionally accept roles they are not prepared for or expecting and use them as a stepping stone in career advancement. Eddy (2008) also found that some women become presidents unintentionally, at least in the beginning stages and that unsolicited opportunities were often presented to potential female future presidents. This is true for the journeys of the most of these women. Three of the six women started in a field outside of higher education. Three of the six women were also relatively opposed to the idea of becoming a president or chancellor before being pushed by others. Emily and Dorothy mentioned only looking toward the next step once they had reached the position a step below. Five of the six explicitly said they had no intentions of reaching the presidency of a community college when they first began their careers, an idea found to be congruent with past research.

Need to relocate. With the exception of one participant, all of the participants in this study had to relocate in order to find a presidential role. Cathy even spoke to this need and stated that one often had to move to find a position. Betty likewise discussed it as a necessary part of her career journey when discussing its impact on her family. This is congruent with Starzyk's (2013) findings. The participants in Starzyk's study, women in student affairs in Catholic higher education, identified that geography was a problem for their career advancement. As most were married with families and lived locally, the

ability to job search in other geographical areas was an issue (pp.79-80). It is clear that having the ability to relocate was a necessary step for the women in this study. Alice, who had been at her institution for nearly three decades at the time of the study, was the exception.

Limitations of the Study

As with any study, there were limitations to this study of female community college presidents. This study examined female community college presidents in Arkansas in order to identify aspects of the labyrinth found in the journeys of female community college presidents in each state. The study did not encapsulate the experiences of other female administrators on a community college campus besides those in presidential/chancellor positions. Therefore, the study may not be relevant to the labyrinth journey of women in other leadership roles within community colleges. There may be other aspects of the labyrinth not shown at a community college. Additionally, this study focused only on female presidents of public community colleges, so it may or may not be representative of female leaders in other types of institutions. At the onset of the study, there were six female community college presidents serving in Arkansas and there has since been another female assume the role of community college president in the state, making the total seven. The data comes only from the experiences of the original six females identified women in Arkansas at the onset of the study. As there was a small number of participants, the experiences of the other female community college president could have changed the findings, although not significantly.

As this study was limited to women in Arkansas, the findings may not be applicable to all female community college presidents across the United States. There may be cultural differences in this region of the United States that do not exist elsewhere. Additionally, the experiences of female community college presidents varied and elicited different responses. The backgrounds and life experiences of these female community college presidents could have impacted the responses significantly, and may not be representative of the experiences of all women in these roles within the United States.

Data for this study was collected primarily through one in person interview with each candidate that lasted between 60-120 minutes. Although the researcher gathered other information, including resumes, curriculum vita, and biographical data, it is difficult to get a holistic picture of the journey of the women with such limited time spent with them. The women had careers that expanded 20 to 30 years long, making it difficult to gather all relevant information in such a short amount of time. Although extensive information was collected, more information from the participants, perhaps gathered through more time spent with them, could have yielded richer and deeper information.

Implications of the Study

There are several implications of this study based on the findings. The labyrinth concept is applicable to the journey of women seeking presidential roles in community colleges. However, the path for women in community colleges does not seem quite as indirect and riddled with obstacles as women in corporate settings or even in four-year higher education institution settings face. Previous studies pointed out women in these settings face prejudices, resistance, and sexism that created barriers to career

advancement. The majority of women in this study did not perceive they had experienced such barriers as they advanced to the presidency of a community college. This is perhaps the most surprising finding of the study. Among the concepts included in Eagly and Carli's (2007) work, prejudice, resistance, and sexism seemed mostly irrelevant to the participants of this study, even when the women had stories to share about this aspect. Community colleges have been noted as higher education institutions that are welcoming to women. An implication for practice would be to capitalize on the supportive environment through actively recruiting and developing female leaders whether through national mentoring and networking opportunities, professional development, or in house grow your own leaders programs. It can also be accomplished by examining policies to ensure their inclusiveness of the needs of women, mainly in maternity leave and caregiving policies.

An important implication of the study was the necessity to balance family and employment, which seemed more plausible for women who had a supportive partner. This labyrinth principle seemed more important than any other for women wishing to ascend the ranks in community college leadership. If a supportive partner was not present, having support from the participants' extended family seemed second most important to striking this balance. As all women mentioned this as necessary to their success, it seems clear from the findings that this principle outweighs the importance of blending agency with communion and building social capital. For women to be successful in ascending the ranks of leadership, developing a balance with family will be important and an aspect for aspiring female leaders to consider when exploring leadership

opportunities. In terms of how institutions can address this, Betty offered her own insight into what helped her strike this balance. The presence of child development centers on campus was fundamental on her journey. This helped her to serve in roles as a mother and as a professional with more ease. Having quality child care on campus could help to make the difference for some women and the difference in the development of female leaders. Additionally, having a child friendly environment on campus could assist in combatting the guilt that some women feel and offer necessary support of her family by the institution.

The importance of building social capital was the next implication found in relation to Eagly and Carli's (2007) research, after balancing family and employment. The idea of mentorship surfaced continually and proved to be an important aspect of the journey of these women. For many women in the study, they would not have explored presidential or other leadership opportunities without the pushing of a mentor. To successfully navigate the labyrinth, it can be inferred that aspiring female leaders need to seek out mentorship opportunities. Additionally and related to building social capital, networking through professional and civic organizations is also of the utmost importance according to the participants. Institutions can address this in practice by providing women with the opportunity to network through professional development opportunities with outside associations. Even if funding is not viable, providing support through time off and encouragement can allow women the ability to take part in these opportunities to grow their network, find mentors, and grow as professionals.

Although blending agency with communion was discussed by the participants, it seemed less important in the journey. However, the need to be collaborative was discussed by several of the women. Developing a collaborative style and honing listening and problem solving skills is implied as important for aspiring leaders to cultivate. The women did not speak as in depth about these issues as with balancing family and employment and building social capital, but it is important to note as an implication of the study. This development of a collaborative style can be addressed by community colleges as well. Moving towards a committee style of governance and policy change can help to foster a collaborative spirit and provide women the opportunities to develop this style by working with others on campus.

Recommendations for Future Research

After completing this study, there are several recommendations that can be made. Eagly and Carli's (2007) principle of balancing family and employment came to the forefront of this study. Additional studies are warranted to explore this balance for women in community colleges and in higher education institutions in general. One recommended study is to evaluate the importance of child development centers on the career advancement of women in leadership positions. As childcare was discussed by almost all of the participants, it seems important that for women to advance in their careers childcare is an important component to be addressed.

Secondly, more studies are justified on the environment of community colleges for women and the success of this environment in creating female leaders. As there are more numbers of women serving as leaders and faculty in community colleges, additional

studies could extract the reasoning for why women are more successful at obtaining positions in this setting. Looking at services, benefits, or other aspects of the environment could help to inform what makes a community college an easier place for women to advance their careers. These isolated factors in community colleges could be applied and help to inform practice in other settings, such as corporations or four year institutions of higher education.

Thirdly, more studies are warranted on female community college presidents or chancellors in other states. This study focused specifically on women in one state, and the lived experiences of women in other states may be drastically different. Examining experiences with gender prejudices and resistance to leadership could yield different results from women in other states. However, it may solidify the finding of this study and Ligeikis' (2010) study that women in community colleges do not face prejudice and resistance at the same level as women in other settings.

Fourthly, a common theme found in the second phone interview emerged when the participants were asked what advice they would give women wishing to eventually reach a presidential or chancellor role at a community college. Much of the advice given from the participants related to building social capital through professional organization involvement and mentoring. More studies could be completed on the impact of social capital on the career advancement of women in community colleges. Studies could look specifically at opportunities for finding mentors and establishing beneficial mentor relationships that contribute positively to career advancement. Studies could also look at the correlation between career advancement and professional organization involvement.

Finally, more comparative studies could be done on the experiences of male leaders in community colleges versus female leaders. The importance of blending agency with communion and building social capital could be different between men and women in these roles. By examining men's adherence to these principles, it could show the relevance of Eagly and Carli's (2007) work to the experiences of women and if what they suggest is exclusive to women seeking leadership roles.

Researcher Reflections

As a women working in a community college with aspirations to lead, I began this study with preconceived notions of what I would find. First, I believed strongly in prejudices against women in the higher education arena, be it community colleges or otherwise. I was surprised to find that most of the women in this study did not encounter this, or if they did, found a way to ignore it and move forward despite it. This gives me great hope for the community college world; I feel that the community college setting may be the best setting for women to navigate, or perhaps even shorten, the labyrinth of leadership. As working in community colleges is my professional passion, this finding was incredibly encouraging for me personally.

At the onset of this study, I also believed there was a secret strategy or piece of advice the participants would give that highlighted how these women reached their presidential role. I believed there indeed was way to "have it all" as so many women want to believe and that weighed heavily on me as an expectant mother when I began this process. However, at the end of the study, I found the following quote from Alice most personally impactful.

> I think that sometimes I juggled for so long that sometimes I have this erroneous persona that says, "Oh, you can have it all." Well, you can have a lot of things, but it comes at exchanges. There are always tradeoffs, and as a young woman, I think those are things that I would want them to understand. There are tradeoffs. You can have a lot, but there are tradeoffs that come with it.

Since the onset of this study, I have become a mother, not unlike many women who seek to lead. As I've entered motherhood and attempted to move my career forward at the same time, these words of Alice have never rang more true. It is my opinion that most of the women in this study would agree with her words, since many discussed sacrificing and feeling guilt over sacrificing time with family. At the end of this study, I feel the reality is it is harder for women to assume leadership roles and that balancing family and employment is what makes it the most difficult. It is my hope that this is recognized and that more can be accomplished, be it by individual institutions or by legislation, to make it easier for women to lead and advance their career. Without this support, I am unsure if it will ever be possible for the majority of women to navigate the labyrinth and create equity of women's representation in higher education leadership.

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Appendix A

Interview Guide

In-Person Interview Guide

Time of Interview:

Date:

Interviewer:

Interviewee/Institution:

1. Tell me about your formal education.

    a. What is your highest level of education?

    b. What was your field of study?

2. How did you start your career in higher education? Please walk me through your career, from entry to your current role as president of your college.

3. Tell me about your experiences on your journey to becoming a president of a community college.

    a. How would you describe your journey?

    b. What role did networking play in your journey?

    c. What do you feel was a significant experience or event in making your career successful?

     d.   What factors do you believe helped you successfully ascend the ranks at your institution?

     e.   In what ways do you feel you had to prove yourself capable for the job?

     f.   Do you feel you had to exhibit any specific traits in order to become president?

     g.   Do you feel you faced in prejudices or resistance to the idea of your leadership?

     h.   What do you feel are or were obstacles in your career path?

     i.   How did you overcome any obstacles in your career path?

4. Do you feel you had to make sacrifices for your career? If so, what were they?

5. Do you feel any of the following had an impact on your career, either positively or negatively? Why do you feel that way?

     a.   Mentoring

     b.   Timing of career opportunity

     c.   Quality of Work/Proving of oneself

    d. Balance between family and employment

    e. Prejudices/resistance

6. Do you have any additional comments or questions about this topic?

Appendix B

Phone Follow-up Interview

Phone Follow-Up Interview

Time of Interview:

Date:

Interviewer:

Interviewee/Institution:

1. Have you had an opportunity to review the transcript of our in-person interview from (MM/DD/YYYY)?

2. Do you see any corrections that need made to the transcript?

3. Do you have any other information you would like to add to the study?

4. If you were to give advice to other women who wish to reach your role, what would that advice be?

Appendix C

IRB Exemption Form

Nebraska
UNIVERSITY 1 OF
Lincoln

Research Responsibility
2200 Vine Street, 278 Whittier Research Center
Lincoln, NE 68583-0863

June 25, 2015

Dear Exempt Protocol Reviewer,

My name is Amanda Doyle Herwatic, and it is my intention to complete a dissertation study on the lived experiences of career pathways of female community college presidents within the state of Arkansas. I believe this study is exempt from a full IRB review.

My subjects have been selected from the current listings of community college presidents within the state of Arkansas. The researcher has accessed the websites of Arkansas' 22 community colleges, and of these 22 community college presidents and/or chancellors, selected the six female presidents currently appointed at these institutions to study.

The subjects of the study will have the opportunity to make their own choice regarding participation in the study. Participation in the study, which will be conduct through one in-person one-on-one interview and one phone interview with each participant, will be completely voluntary. The participants will be recruited via email to participate in the study free from coercion or undue influence. Participation will be requested, but in no way demanded by the researcher as participation is completely voluntary. Participants will be able to decline at any time without penalty from the researcher or any other party.

Participants will be adequately informed of the research through several means. The researcher will record each interview using a MP3 voice recorder and will provide an electronic transcription of the interview to each participant. The researcher will be the sole transcriber in this study and data will not be transcribed by any other individual. Upon the researcher's completion of her dissertation, the researcher will provide copy of the completed dissertation study to each participant for their viewing. All transcripts and MP3 recordings will be stored on the researcher's private home laptop computer.

The researcher will not offer any available alternatives to the study and therefore will not offer alternatives that are coercive or that are designed to unduly influence participants. There are no compensation schemes for the study and therefore will have no compensation schemes that are coercive or unduly influence participants. Participation in this study is purely voluntary on the part of the participants. Participants' privacy and the confidentiality of their data will be respected. The researcher will protect the anonymity of each participant and only the researcher and potentially the dissertation committee of the researcher will have access to any raw data collected on each participant.

As part of this request for exemption, the researcher has included the following supporting documents:
Recruitment Email
Interview Guides for in-person and phone interview
Informed Consent Letter

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me at amanda.herwatic@gmail.com or 870-219-8888 with any questions.

Thank you,

Amanda Doyle Herwatic

Appendix D

Signed Consent Document

Nebraska
Lincoln

Signed Consent Document

Title of Research:
The Female Experience Navigating the Labyrinth to the Presidency of Community Colleges

Purpose of Research:
This purpose of this study is to understand the lived experiences of females who have held the presidency in a community college.

Procedures:
Participation in this study will require approximately 75 to 120 minutes of your time. You will be asked to take part in one in-person one-on-one voice recorded interview on your campus. You will also be asked to participate in one follow up phone interview which will require approximately 15 to 30 minutes of your time. Please indicate by checking the box below if you agree to be recorded during the in-person one-on-one interview.

☐ I agree to have the in-person one-on-one interview recorded.

Risks and/or Discomforts:
There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

Benefits:
The results of this study will add to current research available on female community college presidents and will benefit potential female leaders by increasing their knowledge on career advancement in community colleges.

Confidentiality:
Your responses to this interview will be kept anonymous and confidential. The data will be reported under a pseudonym in the researcher's final dissertation report. The voice recording of the participant's interview will be transcribed by the researcher and no other transcriptionist will be utilized. Raw data may only be shared with the researcher's dissertation committee members.

Opportunity to Ask Questions:
You may ask any questions concerning this research at anytime by contacting Amanda Doyle Herwatic at amanda.herwatic@gmail.com or 870-219-8888. You may also contact Dr. Brent Cejda at bcejda2@unl.edu or 402-472-0989. If you would like to speak to someone else, please call the Research Compliance Services Office at 402-472-6965 or irb@unl.edu.

Freedom to Withdraw:
Participation in this study is voluntary. You can refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, or your institution or in any other way receive a penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Consent, Right to Receive a Copy:
You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. Your signature certifies that you have decided to participate having read and understood the information presented. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

Signature of Participant:

_____   _____
        Signature of Research Participant   Date

Name and Phone number of investigator(s) -
Amanda Doyle Herwatic – amanda.herwatic@gmail.com or 870-219-8888
Dr. Brent Cejda,- bcejda2@unl.edu or 402-472-0989

Appendix E

Recruitment Email

Recruitment Email

Dear [name]:

My name is Amanda Doyle Herwatic, and I am a doctoral student at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln seeking an Ed.D in Higher Education Administration. As an Arkansas native, I have a great interest in the experiences of Arkansas female community college presidents and hope sincerely to have you participate in my study. I am conducting a research study on the career experiences of female community college presidents within the state of Arkansas. The main areas I would like to explore in the interview are career path, educational attainment, strategies employed, and perceived obstacles in reaching the presidential role. Participation will take 60 to 90 minutes of your time. If you are interested please respond back to me via email at amanda.herwatic@gmail.com and I will schedule a time for me to visit you on your campus. There are no known risks involved in this research.

If you have any questions, please let me know. Thank you in advance for your consideration

Amanda Doyle Herwatic
amanda.herwatic@gmail.com
870-219-8888

Brent Cejda
Bcejda2@unl.edu
402-472-0929

Appendix F

Labyrinth Information Provided to Participants

Information on the Labyrinth Concept

The conceptual framework for this study is drawn from the work of A.H. Eagly and L.L. Carli (2007), *Through the Labyrinth: The Truth about How Women Become Leaders*. Eagly and Carli broadly examine the leadership roles of women in a variety of workplace settings and develop a new concept for understanding women's career advancement. Eagly and Carli introduce the idea of the labyrinth. This metaphor is used to describe the experiences of women as it implies that although women can reach leadership levels, the path is not direct. According to Eagly and Carli, this image "captures the varied challenges confronting women as they travel, often on indirect paths, sometime through alien territory, on their way to leadership" (2007, p. 1). The concept of a labyrinth suggests a maze that women must navigate through, but recognizes that an individual can find a path that enables the realization of their aspirations. Women do eventually reach high executive levels within organizations, but must navigate through their career advancement in a more meticulous manner than do their male counterparts.

Eagly and Carli explore how some women find their way through the labyrinth and offer distinct principles for how some women can find their way to senior level positions in any setting (2007, p. 163-182). The principles Eagly and Carli discuss are blending agency with communion, building social capital, and thirdly, balancing employment with family (p. 163-174). Blending agency with communion can include a proving oneself capable in many ways, including blend of masculine and feminine traits, taking credit for one's accomplishments, and negotiating effectively (Eagly & Carli, 2007, p. 167-173). Building social capital includes networking with both men and women and finding mentors (Eagly & Carli, 2007, p. 173-174). Additionally, Eagly and Carli state that some women face issue with prejudice and discrimination, in addition to facing resistance to their leadership and organizational barriers.

Eagly, A.H. & Carli, L.L. (2007). *Through the labyrinth: The truth about how women become leaders*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.