Summer 2017

Leading Ladies: A mixed-method study of the influence of gender bias on leadership styles for women who lead secondary schools

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Recommended Citation

Coaxum-Young, A. (2017). Leading ladies: A mixed-method study of the influence of gender bias on the leadership style for women who lead secondary schools (Doctoral dissertation).

LEADING LADIES: A MIXED-METHOD STUDY OF THE INFLUENCE OF GENDER

BIAS ON LEADERSHIP STYLES FOR THE WOMEN WHO LEAD SECONDARY

SCHOOLS

by

ANGELA COAXUM YOUNG

(Under the Direction of Meca Williams-Johnson)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this mixed method study is to determine if women who lead secondary schools have gender bias experiences that might influence their leadership styles. The study focused on the accounts of five women who lead secondary schools, their gender bias experiences, their perceived leadership style and whether or not they believed the experience influences how they lead. Through in-depth interviews and survey completion, the data from both sources revealed the common leadership styles and gender bias experiences among the research participants. When examining the shared experiences three salient themes emerged: (a) A belief that gender bias still exists in educational leadership, (b) The influence the experience had on the leaders, and (c) Why the participants chose transformational leadership as the leadership style they subscribe to identify within their leadership work. Each participant held different experiences but shared both common leadership styles and common rationales for their leadership style adoption.

INDEX WORDS: Gender bias, Educational Leadership, Principal, Secondary schools, Critical Feminist Theory, Social Learning Theory

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of Georgia Southern University

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

STATESBORO, GEORGIA

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Electronic Version Approved:
July 2017

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to Alexander and Ruth Whyms. Words would never be able to express my gratitude to both of you. Here's hoping you are both looking down from heaven with smiles on your faces. You two were true examples of God's leadership and most importantly God's love.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Completing my dissertation was one of the most consuming yet rewarding processes I've ever endured. My strength rested in my belief that my Heavenly Father would not place on me more than I could bare. Thank you God for giving me the grace to bear it.

Giving a heartfelt expression of gratitude to my husband (My King) Travis Young, whom currently serves as a Sergeant First Class in the United States Army. He is the most courageous and committed leader I've ever encountered. I like to think that this degree was birthed through the most supreme of sacrifices…his life and for that I am thankful.

This degree also serves as evidence to my children (TJ, Jordan, Josh and Jake), my parents (Jjovanna, Juanita, Angelo and Charles) and my family at large, that we can do **ALL** things. Our history is built on the strength of a fearless people, we've learned to stick together and rely on each other through some very difficult moments. This degree, though supported through the love of my husband, parents, cousin (Voncell), siblings and friends, is worth more than any success it may garner. It is my declaration to the world that I am prepared to lead at-risk students with a spirit of excellence.

I also thank my dissertation chairperson(s) Dr. Toby Jenkins and Dr. Meca Williams. You answered every email, provided continuous support and held my hand until the end. To Dr. McBrayer, thank you for editing, suggesting and validating my thoughts with your support. Also, a special thank you goes to Dr. Pamela Wells, for willingly sitting in on my committee in the final hours. Finally to the dynamic participants that lead their schools everyday with boldness, I am grateful for your help with this research. You ladies are amazing!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In a world where the dreams of little girls are rapidly changing from teaching in a school to leading all of the teachers in a school, the topic of women in educational leadership has become a common discussion. The field of education is dominated by women holding the majority of the teaching and associated support positions. Despite that fact, the percentage of female leaders at the secondary public school level is still not proportionate to the amount of women occupying subordinate roles in education. A report from the United States (US) Department of Education (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013) revealed that the percentage of public school principals who were female was 52 percent overall, 64 percent in primary schools, 42 percent in middle schools, 30 percent in high schools, and 40 percent in combined schools. The same year, the NCES reported in 2013 that overall, schools had a larger percentage of female teachers (76 percent) than male teachers (24 percent). The data suggest that while there is a dominant female presence in education employed as teachers, there remains room for growth in educational leadership. Are these statistics consistent with the growing pursuits of women, or are they dictated through gender bias? Is there a systematic response that might limit incidences of gender bias in educational leadership?

Many argue that the growing challenge is not simply securing the position of principal at the secondary school level, but sustaining that position effectively. Female principals often encounter compounding issues relative to their gender when serving in their roles as leaders. The biased situations a woman principal must face may force her to adjust her position and adapt her

leadership style. In this study, I will examine the leadership styles of the research participants to determine whether or not their gender bias experiences influences their leadership approach.

A growing area of interest among researchers is better understanding the persistent and pernicious gender leadership gap in education (Nichols & Nichols, 2014). Previous literature suggests that despite a need to investigate issues of diversity and school leadership more broadly, (including the intersection of race, sexuality, and gender), gender itself is both a valid way to consider leadership and one which requires additional study (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011). Though evidence suggests that the proportion of women in management is increasing, doubts and prejudice regarding women's leadership skills and abilities still exist (Mollel & Tshabangu, 2014). Females have served as the core workforce in the field of education and are steadily establishing a presence in educational leadership annually, but this growth is not without challenge.

The research will highlight inherent biases that exist in education related to gender role typecasting. Additionally, this study will examine common responses or styles of leadership adopted by female secondary leaders as a safeguard to any expected or experienced gender biases. The issues that frame the investigation stem from determining a leader's effectiveness potential by applying structured leadership practices.

This study is structured around recognizing two major realities concerning gender bias. There is a realization that people will inevitably engage bias in some form or another and that there are experiences or encounters that occur only to a certain gender. Though bias is expected and specific encounters may be tailored to gender, is it ever acceptable for gender bias to

dominate in a way that it dictates a professional's leadership style? To help formulate an answer

to this question, the study will involve a mixed methods approach. The study will utilize the

Transcendental Phenomenological approach to obtain and explain the descriptive data obtained

from the participants. In brief, the Transcendental Phenomenological (TPh) approach is an

approach used to describe the phenomena. Pure TPh is grounded in the concept and conditioned

upon setting aside all preconceived ideas (epoche) to see phenomena through unclouded glasses,

thereby allowing the true meaning of phenomena to naturally emerge with and within their own

identity (Moustakas, 1994). The combination of the individualized accounts of gender bias

experiences and survey data from the participants is intended to identify trends in both

experiences and reactions to those experiences.

The research will summarize the experiences of five women who serve as secondary

principals through descriptive review, while simultaneously considering the data from their

Multi-factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X) survey to determine if commonalities exist.

The data may show supportive trends that confirm the presence of gender biases and expose a

common leadership style used. This research could inform leadership preparation programs and

provide best practices for aspiring secondary female principals.

Background of the Study

Gender inequality in educational leadership is one example of an issue that attracts

persistent calls for study and remediating action (Grogan & Brunner, 2005). A key but

overlooked component of social equity in public education is the distribution of jobs, especially

high-level positions in U. S. school districts. Throughout history, there have been embedded beliefs that characterize leadership as a traditionally masculine activity (Gedney, 1999). Since the beginning of formalized education systems, it was both common and expected that females would occupy the majority of the teaching positions in education, regardless of level. The rise of females in principal positions has only recently seen significant growth over the last four decades.

Researcher studies suggest the disproportionality of the percentages of women employed in the field of education against the percentages of women in educational leadership. It is important to periodically reexamine questions about gender equity in the area of public education sector job distribution. When considering the rise of women in leadership at the secondary school level, it is important to note challenges that are specific to female secondary school principals. In addition, there must be some consideration given to presumptive biases that exist and could easily be challenged as secondary leaders begin to lead their schools.

Gender biases develop when there is an overwhelming number of one gender occupying a role, thereby aiding in the creation of stereotypes. While surveys of the gender distribution of personnel at the school level are important, it is also important to look at such distributions by school districts. Employment decisions about administrators and principals are made at the district management level. For instance, the gender composition of district administrators may influence the gender composition of school principals and assistant principals. When considering leadership styles, it is often assumed that the environment or the people shape the reactions of the leaders. The study proposes that females in secondary school principal positions assume a

common leadership approach in response to gender bias encounters. The foundation of the study will stem from the rise of women in educational leadership and some commonly documented encounters among them.

The review of literature will be organized categorically, focusing on three prevailing issues: the growth of women in educational leadership, gender bias in the school setting, and the relationship between gender bias and leadership style. Finally, the review of literature will frame the study by utilizing both Social Learning Theory and Critical Feminist Theory.

The Growth of Women in Educational Leadership

Teaching has long been considered to be a "feminized" profession, fitting neatly with traditional societal expectations regarding women's roles as caretakers (Goldstein, 2014). It is not uncommon to walk into an elementary school and see a large number of women on staff. Women have shown a steady presence in the field of education since its formalized inception. Indeed, teaching was often seen as a natural extension of these expectations with female teachers serving as nurturers of children's minds (Weiler, 1989).

Over time society and female teachers themselves came to normalize and internalize these views, focusing their energies on building caring and close relationships with students and treating administration as an endeavor to be pursued by males only (Adams and Hambright, 2004). While there has been a consistent and substantial presence of women in education at the teacher level, the rise in women in educational leadership has become more prevalent in the last decade. The field of education has made strides that defy prehistoric norms that might favor men

over women simply because of gender. Women are given opportunities to apply for high stakes positions and have become a competitive force for the principalship; however, even with the rise in women applicants, gaps still exist in terms of hired principals as compared to men holding the same title at the secondary level.

The topic of women assuming roles in educational leadership has been growing in research. One of the persistent challenges in studying the distribution of public school jobs by gender is obtaining comprehensive data that is collected over time. Recent studies centering on gender equality show upward trends in women acquiring positions in educational leadership. The available data indicate that greater numbers of women are being hired into the top levels of school districts and schools. Kowalski's (2011) survey of approximately 200 school superintendents found that the percentage of female superintendents has increased substantially since the early 1990s. Districts are becoming increasingly more interested in securing the candidate most qualified for the position despite gender. A study released by the American Association of School Administrators reports that in 1990, 27 percent of principal positions were held by women (AASA 1990). The National Association of Elementary School Principals reports that there has been a substantial increase in the number of female principals between 1998 and 2008—and that over 50 percent of elementary school principals are women (Protheroe, 2009).

These numbers show upward growth since initial reports just two decades ago. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) 2011, in 2007-2008 59 percent of elementary public school principals were women, but only 28.5 percent of secondary public

school principals were women. Female teachers outnumber their male counterparts at the secondary level, yet there still appears to be under-representation in positions of educational leadership. In 2007-2008, 84 percent of elementary school classroom teachers were women, but only 59 percent of secondary classroom teachers were women (NCES 2011). If elementary and secondary positions are aggregated, 75.1 percent of public and private K-12 classroom teachers were women in 2007-08 (NCES 2011). Under the former standard, gender equity is achieved when women possess roughly 50 percent of the administrator, principal, or classroom teacher positions.

When reviewing the reported records of employment, women hold principalships at equal rates as men at the elementary level. At the secondary level, however, there is still much room for growth. Statistical data is used to confirm the growth of women in these positions.

Gender Bias in Education

A review of the research literature on women in K-12 educational leadership reveals historical gender issues that continue to persist in the 21st century (Sanchez & Thornton, 2010). Although there has been growth in the secondary educational setting for women principals, remaining subtleties or gender bias creates additional barriers to their leadership. Given the historical context of gender inequities in schools and society, barriers persist despite the fact that many women teachers and other educational stakeholders do not recognize or identify a gender imbalance (Krüger, van Eck, & Vermeulen, 2005; Moreau, Osgood, & Halsall, 2007). Incidences of gender bias vary by school leader so it is necessary to consider the individual

accounts of each identified female principal and synchronize their accounts to identify common events.

Even though institutional hiring practices and awareness of civil rights is greater now than it has been in the past, women as education leaders continue to face many challenges. For example, women with more experience and education than men tend to be hired into leadership positions and promoted at later ages (Roser, 2009). The problem exists beyond simply being hired in the role as female principal. The secondary issue is how the women principals dispel pre-set assumptions and respond to gender biases once in those positions. Although leadership styles in educational settings are widely researched and reviewed, this study couples the topic of leadership style in education and gender at the secondary level to better explain biases that may exist. When considering gender bias from the perspective of secondary women principals, it becomes necessary to reflect on the experiences of men in educational leadership from a statistical viewpoint. The persistence of male advantage in educational leadership has been documented for decades, and it continues to flourish (Mahitivanichcha & Rorrer, 2006). Fugler (2015) writes that Erin Davis, a gender studies professor at Cornell College, identifies our underlying problem as "evaluating men and women on different traits or having different expectations for individuals who are doing the same job (J. Fugler, personal communication, July 02, 2015). How society views an ideal principal has been largely determined by the evidence presented through research, media, and exposure; subsequently, that same exposure can be the springboard for biases.

Women principals consistently have trouble with barriers both external and internal to their leadership roles (Smulyan, 2000). Barriers cited in the past range from personal and familial constraints to internal feelings of inadequacy. Beyond the biases experienced are the typical demands associated with being a female secondary principal. On top of maintaining their families, women leaders are expected to not only adopt the same leadership patterns as men but also perform professional tasks at the same rate as men, thus leading many to report having trouble with the management of increased responsibility (Loder, 2005).

Gender and Leadership Style

When considering how environment often dictates behaviors, one can reason that leadership style could simply be defined as the responses to those charged to lead. In fact, many leaders argue that their style of leadership is more consistent with the situational approach versus any style that maintains a typical pattern or response. Some researchers have examined the relationship between the evaluation of leadership effectiveness and gender-mediated differences in leadership style (Pratch and Jacobitz, 1996). Gender bias often begins when expectations for leadership are summarized in ways that isolate responsibilities to men or women. Women are typically expected to adopt a communal approach to leadership that is driven by social interaction. Men are expected to have high levels of common attributes, including being independent, masterful, assertive, and competent (Pratch and Jacobitz, 1996). These qualities reflect a tendency to promote the self, especially self-competence (Pratch and Jacobitz, 1996). When applied to leadership, gender role stereotypes suggest that female-stereotypical forms of

leadership are interpersonally oriented and collaborative, whereas male stereotypical forms of leadership are task oriented and dominating (Cann & Siegfried, 1990). Although collaborative leadership is a growing trend in educational practice, women seem to utilize this approach to leadership at higher rates than their male counterparts. Eagly and Johnson's (1990) meta-analysis showed that the tendency to devalue female leaders was larger when women behaved autocratically than when they behaved in accordance with any other style.

As numerous social scientists have maintained, expectations about behavior that are appropriate for a leader coincide largely with beliefs about the behavior that is appropriate for men (Kruse & Wintermantel, 1986; O'Leary, 1974). Although women have made many social advances, there is still this underlying understanding that certain roles and responsibilities are reserved to specific genders. In the field of education, though women maintain a dominant presence as teachers, there is still much room for growth (particularly at the secondary level) for women as leaders. In many studies, women report feeling constrained in their leadership styles or bound by public opinion. Women also report that their leadership behaviors are scrutinized because of their role conflict, while male leaders are not ordinarily inhibited by the attitudinal bias of their coworkers. Hence, men are freer to carry out leadership in a variety of masculine or feminine styles without encountering negative reactions because their leadership is ordinarily perceived as legitimate (Pratch and Jacobitz, 1996). Gender bias has the potential to compromise the legitimacy and ingenuity of the leadership style as the focus shifts from effectiveness to favorability.

Statement of the Problem

Undoubtedly one of the growing topics in education is the rise of women leaders in the profession. Over the past decade, topics involving women in leadership have grown to include specific interests. Many comparisons have been made between the female leader and her male counterpart to determine effective strategies for specific school demographics. Other studies have focused on defining the characteristics of a leader with all consideration given to gender. This study will focus specifically on the experiences of the study participants in relation to experienced gender biases that could dictate the style of leadership they employ.

Even though women have made advancements in securing roles as school leaders at the secondary level, the prevalence of biases still threatens to diminish their influence as school leaders. Even with the wealth of existing research, there is little empirical evidence or study focused on the connection between gender bias encounters and leadership style at the secondary school level. Therefore, the primary question is whether or not there is a common leadership style that secondary female principals subscribe to in response to experienced incidences of gender biases or a safeguard against it. Study participants will add to the research on this topic by providing individual accounts of gender biases and their reactions to them. The guiding research questions will ensure that the information gained through descriptive form remains focused with an intent to identify commonalities.

Purpose of the Study

When considering how secondary women principals adapt their leadership style in

response to experiences of gender bias, there are several guiding questions associated with this study. There have been many studies conducted in education specific to gender equality in school leadership. Likewise, there is a wealth of information on gender bias in educational leadership circles. Even with the advancement of research over the associated topics, there is a limited connection made to the leadership styles women secondary principals subscribe to in response to gender bias experiences. The research study seeks to add to the body of literature by identifying common leadership styles used to limit gender bias in the workplace.

For the purposes of delving into the experiences and presence of gender bias specific to women in secondary educational leadership, the researcher chose to explore the topic from a Phenomenological approach through a mixed method data review. Phenomenology is a form of inquiry that seeks to understand human experience (Moustakas, 1994). The study is designed to explore phenomena and how it is perceived and experienced by individuals in the phenomenological event (Lester, 1999). The research establishes the rise of women in educational leadership roles as major phenomena itself but their experiences, which may prove to be common, could also establish phenomena. The women in the study possess two key commonalities: their gender, and their career title.

Despite the common characteristics that weave the women participants together at the forefront, it is possible that each experience yields a different reaction. Moustakas (1994) posits phenomenology as an appropriate tool for exploring and describing shared experiences related to phenomena. Gender discrimination in the workplace is a highly researched topic, but there remains a subtlety associated with the gender bias that often hides in the research when

quantitative data is the source. The descriptive accounts of its presence help add a sense of value or realness that could not be justified otherwise.

Research Questions

When considering the tenants of Moustakas (1994) Transcendental Phenomenology, a focus on the totality of the experience is essential to the process of understanding its influence. Allowing the research participants the opportunity to recall the essence of their gender bias experiences in the work place is a necessary step in the research. As interview questions are developed, they are centered on three research questions:

1. What are the experiences of gender bias in the workplace with secondary female principals?

2. Which leadership style is most utilized amongst women who lead secondary schools?

3. Is the leadership style of the secondary principal influenced by gender bias experiences?

The initial question seeks to first establish the presence of gender bias in the educational leadership setting, it is through this question that we delve into the experience itself. The following question focuses on the typical leadership styles of secondary women principals. The latter question seeks to respond to the research topic by identifying common leadership styles subscribed to in response to gender bias experiences in their work environment.

The study will follow a mixed method approach to investigate the experiences of gender bias and identify common leadership style subscriptions. As mentioned earlier, the study is grounded in Transcendental Phenomenology, which is a philosophical approach to qualitative research methodology seeking to understand human experience. Using data derived from

Schuman's three interview approach, the acknowledgment of gender bias experiences will be established. Additionally, data from the MLQ-5X survey will provide the basis for the descriptive quantitative approach and will be used to identify common leadership styles utilized by the research participants. The study is chiefly interested in determining if there is a common response to gender bias through the adaptation of a leadership style.

Significance of the Study

When considering the literature on women in leadership, many female educators argue that there are huge disproportionalities between gender demographical statistics of an organization's makeup in general in comparison to the same organization's gender demographical statistics of its leaders.

Many researchers have noted that even after a female principal is selected for a principalship at the secondary level, common gender biases will dictate how she functions in her role as principal amid experiences associated with gender bias. The research seeks to confirm the presence of gender biases at the secondary public school level from the female principal's perspective through an individual account. Additionally, the descriptive study will determine whether secondary principals share a common leadership style. The chief goal of the confirmations through testimony is to identify common responses to gender bias experienced through structured leadership styles. The research may aid educational programs that prepare aspiring principals. The study is intended to provide administrators with training protocols and help them develop response techniques or common examples or more problem-solving? The goal

is to also to raise awareness for aspiring principals and current principals of gender biases that exist as a means of informing their practice. The research seeks to identify commonly recommended leadership styles that may combat gender bias experiences. With further research, new secondary female principals may approach their positions armed with best practices and suggested leadership styles that would encourage staff interactions built on student success and absent any biases.

Procedures

The purpose of this study is to identify common leadership styles utilized among the secondary female principals that participated in the study. Akers (1996) believed that individual behavior reflects anticipated rewards and punishments, the anticipation of which can be learned directly (via operant conditioning) or vicariously, by observing the experiences of others (imitation). His research supported the belief that individuals adapt behavior when environmental outcomes are considered. Social Learning Theory is often used to determine how environment dictates reaction. With all consideration to how leadership style among secondary female principals is developed as a reaction to perceived or encountered gender bias, social learning theory serves as the theoretical framework that enhances understanding of this reaction. Burgess and Akers (1966) integrated concepts derived from psychology's operant behaviorism with Sutherland's nine principles of differential association. That achievement laid the foundation for social learning theory (Akers 1973). The belief that people are conditioned to react certain ways in response to their environment has become the underlying premise of the

research.

Previous studies have shown that gender inequity is neither evident nor concerning given low numbers or percentages alone, but it is manifest and substantive given the ways underrepresentation influences both social and organizational norms, values, and beliefs (Marczynski & Gates, 2013). The female principals will be given the opportunity to recall specific events they deemed to be incidences of gender bias in the workplace. Using common interviewing techniques associated with a phenomenological study, the participants will recount their past experiences and any associated emotions they may have garnered.

While much of the research will focus on interview accounts of gender bias from the perspective of the secondary female principal participants, the study will also be a narrowed focus on coping strategies employed by the leaders, commonly referred to as leadership style. By focusing on the leadership style female secondary principals tend to subscribe to, the research can add to the literature on training protocols for new principals with a direct focus on gender experiences. Leadership theory has been challenged and stimulated by those in the field who have been concerned about or interested in gender (Marczynski & Gates, 2013). When considering the leadership styles secondary female principals adopt, a connecting focus (though not one that will be explored through this study) are the characteristics of the schools these administrators lead.

As noted earlier, the research will assume a mixed method approach. Transcendental Phenomenology (TPh) largely developed by Husserl, is a philosophical approach to qualitative research methodology seeking to understand human experience (Moustakas, 1994). In an effort

to gain perspective directly from the primary source, the qualitative approach will allow documentation through an interview.   The research study participants will participate in a multi-part interview process designed at establishing the phenomena through their accounts. Any incidences of gender bias will be captured from the voice of the study participant. Giving consideration to both the Critical Feminist Theory and the Social Learning Theory, the perspectives of the research participants will serve as evidence of the causal relationship that exists between both frameworks. The questions will begin first by establishing the presence of gender bias occurrences. It is through the lens of the Critical Feminist Theory that we recognize the inherent biases that exist, either through a subtle display or overt example. Focusing on established practices for phenomenological interviewing, the study will subscribe to Schuman's (1982) three part interview design. Dolbeare and Schuman (Schuman, 1982) designed the series of three interviews that characterizes the phenomenological interview approach. Their model allows the interviewer and participant to acknowledge the experience and place it in context. The questions listed may encourage follow up questioning during the interview process as such, these should be viewed as a guide. The questions are listed here to provide perspective on the nature of the interviews as well as details on the depth of the information the researcher seeks to solicit. Additionally, it prevents the reader from turning to the appendix to find these as that may consequently disrupt the flow of reading through the content.

Phase 1 - Rise to the Principalship

1. When did you know you wanted to be a secondary principal, and why did you specifically choose this level?

2. How would you define an effective secondary principal?

Phase 2 - Gender Bias Experience

1. Do you feel that most of your staff members subscribe to certain assumptions of an ideal secondary principal? If so, what are they?

2. Have you ever had a work-related experience where your gender was an underlying concern for someone (be it a staff member, a colleague or a supervisor)?

3. At what point did you know you were being confronted with gender bias? Please detail the account. (Follow-up Question, as necessary)

4. Were there any associated emotions to the gender bias experience that you can recall?

5. Do you believe the experience you have described could only happen to women? Why or why not? (Follow-up Question, as necessary)

Phase 3 – Leadership Style

1. Which leadership style do you subscribe to most (Transformational, Passive-Avoidant, Transactional, etc.)?

2. How have your past experiences shaped your leadership style? Can you provide examples of how your past experiences have shaped your leadership style?

Phase 4 – Concluding Thoughts

1. You were recently promoted to district director over the women in secondary leadership department. During meeting one with the aspiring secondary principals, you are asked to provide some sage advice to the future secondary leaders, what would it be?

2. Are there any additional points you would like to make?

The first two questions establish the scope of the participants' experience. They allow the participants to reconstruct the details of their experience within the context of its occurrence. It is at this point that both the researcher and the participant recognize the phenomena of their experience. It is also when the concept of Transcendental Phenomenology begins to surface. Pure Transcendental Phenomenology is grounded in the concept and conditioned upon setting aside all preconceived ideas (epoch) to see phenomena through unclouded glasses, thereby allowing the true meaning of phenomena to naturally emerge with and within their own identity (Moustakas, 1994).

The next five questions hinge on the principal's reactions to the presence or experiences of gender bias. Focusing on the tenets of the Social Learning Theory, the research participants will help determine if the participant's leadership style is common. Social learning Theory explains human behavior in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences (Bandura, 1977). Through report from the participants, the study seeks to make correlations between participant experiences and responses. The final phase of the interview process encourages the participants to reflect on the meaning their experience holds for them through the adaptation or refinement of a leadership style.

The use of descriptive statistics will serve both the qualitative and quantitative data

through the processes of coded interview responses and data reporting. The Multi-factor

Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X) will allow women principals to rate their leadership styles.

Through disaggregation of data, trends in leadership style will be identified. The MLQ-5X will

be administered to five secondary female principals. The principals will rate their attitudes and

behaviors while serving in their role. The ratings will produce a culminating score. Prevailing

scores will range between 3 and 4 on a Likert scale. The score will then be assigned to a

leadership style as identified through the Multi-factor Leadership Questionnaire.

Many studies have related leadership behaviors to leadership effectiveness while this

study seeks to ascertain common behaviors of effective secondary female school principals.

Indeed, the study will describe how the principals perceive themselves and their documented

accounts of gender bias experiences. The Transformational, Transactional, and Passive-Avoidant

leadership styles are identified through the selection of a sequence of questions designed to

define the leader's style (Antoniadis, Avoid, and Sivasubramaniam, 2003). The three leadership

styles and nine subscales are defined and measured with the MLQ-5X survey through a Likert

scale.

When considering each component of the MLQ-5X, Transformational Leadership

describes a leader who possesses motivating qualities encouraging staff to excel confidently

while taking risks. The Transformational Leadership subscales focus on the behaviors of the

leader through five subscales, which include the following: idealized influence (attributed),

idealized influence (behavior), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and

individualized consideration.

The MLQ-5X also focuses on Transactional Leadership as a style. In Transactional Leadership, leaders work within the structure of an organization, considering the skills of their employees and assigning roles and tasks accordingly. The achieved outcomes are a result of this leader negotiating with followers in an exchange relationship of rewards for compliance (Bass, 1985). The three transactional subscales consider how the leader responds to subordinates when assigning a task and ensuring task completion. Leader responses range from criticism and negative reinforcement when correcting to monitoring for immediate feedback. The three subscales are contingent reward, management by exception (active), and management by exception (passive).

Finally, there is the Passive-Avoidant Leadership style. One subscale identified as "passive avoidant" reflects a leader who is noncommittal and more prone to delegate responsibilities to others. This leader is not as responsive as the aforementioned and does not usually present with an impactful presence. In addition, the MLQ-5X includes three outcome factors: extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction (Avolio, 1999; Bass, 1998).

When considering the human potential to naturally react, especially when in environments of discomfort, one might understand how secondary female principals come to adapt their leadership styles. Social perspectives on learning do not put emphasis on the transference of knowledge or assimilation; rather, it is the ongoing and generative processes unfolding between participants when we learn the most (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). "Learning cannot be designed" (Wenger, 1998). It is more about the negotiation of meanings that transpire and are nurtured between individuals. It is also about building bonds between members

the community who are invested in engaging in meaningful conversations (Leake, 2014).

Limitations, Delimitations and Assumptions

Limitations

A chief limitation for the study was the instrument used to determine the leadership styles the secondary principal chose to subscribe to most frequently. The correlations that could be made between the leadership responses and the accounts of gender biases could only be validated or confirmed by the principals themselves. Through their admission only, can we conclude that their leadership style was adjusted to respond to experiences of gender bias?

Delimitations

Delimitations in this study are specific to the nature of the research. In qualitative studies, the perspectives of the study participants are specific and can only serve as a personal account of experiences as opposed to data that can explain phenomena associated with specific groups. Five female secondary principals will participate in this study on a volunteer basis. To be considered eligible to participate in the study, participants need only two common characteristics: their job title and gender.

Assumptions

Through past experiences, the researcher approached this study assuming that all female principals have experienced some level of gender bias in their careers and would be able to convey those experiences with fidelity. Another assumption is that the secondary principals could confirm that they adjusted their leadership styles as a safeguard against anticipated

encounters that may occur in relation to their gender. Finally, the researcher assumed that there would be common experiences among all of the participants given statistical data and natural assumptions. For example, the disproportionality between the percentages of female principals at the high school level and female teachers at the same level encourage thinking that many believe men are more equipped to lead at this level.

Key Definitions

Gender Bias – unequal treatment in employment opportunity (such as promotion, pay, benefits, and privileges), and expectations due to attitudes based on the sex of an employee or group of employees.

Leadership Style – the manner in which a leader typically provides direction and motivates others.

Secondary School – a school that is intermediate in level between elementary school and college. Typically offered between the ages of 11-18.

Summary

The literature was conducted using a categorical approach. First, there was a focus on the rise of women in educational leadership as a whole. The research confirmed that there has been significant growth in women occupying the position of principal at the secondary level. Though there is still disproportionality of male principals versus female principals at the secondary public school level, the presence of women at this level is becoming far more visible. Second, the literature focused on gender bias in educational leadership. The literature found that even

after a female principal is selected for a principalship at the secondary level, common gender biases will dictate how she functions in her role as principal amidst experiences associated with gender bias. The focus on Social Learning Theory showed that people respond to their environments through set behaviors. In this instance, we consider the leadership styles these secondary principals adopt in an effort to minimize incidences of gender bias.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Women as principals is not a new concept. In fact, data suggests that there will be continued growth of women in leadership in the coming decades. As women continue to occupy the role of secondary school leader, the norms for describing typical behaviors of successful principals will begin to shift. Theories about educational administrative behavior have primarily been based on studies of men in organizations with the findings then generalized to women (Valentine, 1995). Although that may have been the most reliable data, it was far from representative. The presence and experiences of women in education is a statistic that should not be ignored. The stories of women in educational leadership, provide insights and deeper understanding of barriers that may exist for them. In the 1980s feminist scholars questioned the underrepresentation of women in administrative positions in education and called for theory and research that would be more inclusive of women's perspectives (Edson, 1988; Schmuck, 1981; Shakeshaft, 1989). This study seeks to expand on work that has been conducted in prior decades. The experiences of the research participants will add validity and points of reference as it relates to how their leadership styles developed. Moreover, the study seeks to determine if a common leadership style exists between the women.

The body of literature on the topic of women in educational leadership is rapidly expanding. The literature examined in this chapter combined key concepts that would best articulate the focus of the study. At the start of the review of the literature, the research will concentrate specifically on the rise of women in leadership. Once a presence for women in

leadership has been established through the research, there will be an examination of gender biases that exist in education and educational leadership. The summary of this existence will serve to provide an awareness of the presence of bias with an intent to make leaders more conscious. As with any review, there must be a marriage of the prevailing themes in an effort to make the research more meaningful and relevant. The final focus of the literature will center on how or if gender bias experiences influence leadership style.

Literature searches were conducted using keywords: Gender Bias in Educational Leadership, Women in Leadership, Leadership styles and Gender, Educational Leadership, Secondary Female Principals, principal perceptions, school climate, and district principal hiring practices were performed against the following sources: ERIC, Academic Search™ Complete, EBSCOhost, Google Scholar, Galileo, and ProQuest. Finally, a search of the ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database using keywords Women in Leadership and Gender Bias in Education produced relevant dissertations. Searches produced documents consisting of a mix of popular literature, books, theses, dissertations, and journal articles.

Women in Educational Leadership

The literature on the concept of educational leadership spans many decades and includes topics relative to leadership styles, leader effectiveness, leader development, and the significance of having a leader in general. The definition of leader varies based on such factors as profession, time period, and group norms. For many, the concept of leadership is clearly identifiable yet extremely hard to explain. It is the blurred lines and loose interpretations of leadership that

create the basis of the study and also encourage gender biases or stereotypes. For Lovell and

Wiles (1983), leaders have initiative, empathy, and knowledge of the organization and the

workforce, and they are creative, excellent listeners, and service oriented. Given the general

understanding of the concept, leadership should be absent of any consideration of gender, yet so

many times it is the defining factor of how people perceive a leader's effectiveness. Despite the

concept of leadership being widely reviewed, the topic women in leadership is slowly becoming

a consistent topic of interest in educational research.

Statistics on Women in Leadership (1970-1980's)

In the 1970's men held the majority of the school leadership positions primarily due to

their credentials. Weber, Feldman and Poling (1981) wrote that women who sought careers in

educational administration found that equality of the sexes was an illusion. Fresh off the

advancements made over a span of fifty years during the women's rights movement, women

were slowly moving toward creating a more defined and progressive presence in all industries.

Women continued to challenge the assumptions and the traditions associated with gender. The

development of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966 helped women push

toward building their presence in leadership positions. Indeed, the publicly stated goal of this

group was to end sexual discrimination, especially in the workplace, by means of legislative

lobbying, litigation, and public demonstrations.

Part of the reason men outnumbered women in administrative positions in the 1970s was

that men were the primary holders of academic degrees. Men were simply more likely than

women to seek advanced training and certification (Howard, 1975). Loomis and Wild (1978) succinctly summarized that the education system in the United States was generally structured like a traditional home. Men ran the schools, and women nurtured the learners. In 1973 the National Center of Education Statistics reported that while 83 percent of elementary teachers were women, only 20 percent of elementary principals were women. The statistics also noted that at the secondary level, 46 percent of the teachers were women, while only three percent of the principals at junior high school were women and one percent were principals at the high school level.

There were many unwritten expectations of both genders in this era which were confirmed in a study of the hiring practices of superintendents. Patterns of discrimination emerged clearly when rates of promotion and advancement were examined (Muhich, 1973). Taylor (1973) showed that male superintendents were unlikely to hire women as administrators, although there were no written policies to preclude women from assuming such positions. Data from that study revealed that sex was the only factor that had any significant relationship to the hiring practice. In the coming decades, women would increase their pursuit of leadership credentials and begin to slowly move toward occupying more administrative roles.

Statistics on Women in Educational Leadership (1980-1990s)

As the description for school leader became more defined in this decade, trends in statistical research showed a steep rise in women pursuing degrees relative to the role. According to Gupton and Slick (1996), "Women received 11 percent of the doctoral degrees in

educational administration in 1972, 20 percent in 1980, 39 percent in 1982, and 51 percent in

1990." As a result, the numbers and percentages of women in administrative positions increased,

beginning slowly in the 1970s and accelerating in the 1980s (McFadden & Smith, 2004). In just

one decade prior, the number one cited reason for females not occupying the position of principal

was due to lack of credential. Women would later challenge that theory by receiving degrees

that would prepare them for the role of principal.

The National Center for Education Statistics (1998) reported the percentage of female

principals rose from 21.4 percent to 34.5 percent between 1981 and 1994. By 1994, women

comprised 41.0 percent of elementary school principalships, 20 percent of middle school

principalships but less than 13 percent of secondary school principalships in total (NCES, 1998).

Though there were significant advancements made in regard to women assuming the role of

principal, there were still huge disproportionalities noted when comparing the number of women

teachers to the number of women administrators.

Women continued to benefit from federal regulations that equaled the playing field

among gender, particularly in education. On June 23, 1972, the federal government enacted Title

IX of the Education Amendments, which banned sex discrimination in schools. The amendment

stated: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation

in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or

activity receiving federal financial assistance." This victory, though not entirely related to the

hiring of women as principals, highlighted the sense of urgency and need for gender equality in

education.

Statistics on Women in Leadership (1990s-2000)

The nineties were predicted to be the decade in which women would migrate in large

numbers to top CEO positions in many businesses and organizations in the U.S. (Gupon, 2009).

The advancements of the previous decades had set the springboard for the growth in women in

educational leadership, which many believed was inevitable. According to Naisbitt and

Aburdene (1990) authors of *Megatrends 2000: Ten New Directions for the 1990's*, this would be

the decade for females to shatter the glass ceiling which heretofore seemed to circumvent many

capable women from moving up the career ladder to its apex.

The Glass Ceiling Commission, created as part of the Civil Rights Act of 1991, was

charged to study and recommend ways to eliminate the barriers and discriminations faced by

women and minorities as they attempted to advance into management (Gupton, 2009). The chief

barrier to women securing the role, which was their educational credential, had long been

eliminated. During the prior decade, there was even steep growth noted at all levels of

educational leadership, particularly at the elementary level. Despite the Glass Ceiling

Commission's recommendations, attitudinal barriers and organizational practices continued to

exist and limit opportunity and advancement for women in the twenty-first century, (The Gale

Group 2007). The noted barriers listed in the Glass Ceiling Commission report still impacted the

growth of women as school principals at the secondary level. The secondary level of education is

believed to require a more regimented approach to leadership due to the complexities associated

with the level. Women would still need to work to shift perceptions over time and to secure more

balanced percentages of principalships at this level.

The decade spanning 1990-2000 revealed continued growth noted in women occupying principal roles. Women represented 44 percent of public school principals in 1999 and 2000, compared to 75 percent of the teaching force during this same period (Loder, 2005). These numbers were skewed as most of the positions were at the elementary level. Shakeshaft (1998) reported that nearly 54 percent of secondary teachers were female, but only 26% ever served as secondary principals. Although this number increased from 13% in the previous decade, there was still much room for growth. Women represented the majority in the teaching profession and educational leadership graduate programs but were consistently absent in the most influential administrative positions in public education including the role of superintendent, assistant superintendent, and high school principal (Thurman, 2004).

Statistics on Women in Leadership (2000 to present)

Of the United States' almost 14,000 school district superintendents, roughly 15 percent were women in 2000 (Glass, 2000), and even then, that was triple their percentage since the early nineties. Since serving as a principal is a key experience in the career track to the position of superintendent, statistics on gender and school-level leadership are a strong predictor of the gender of the top-level position in school districts (Gupton, 2009).

According to the statistics from the Department of Education (2012), females represent 52% of the principal positions in public school systems now which more than double the percentage just 30 years ago. Secondary and middle schools have the fewest number of female principals while elementary school principals are equally divided between men and women.

Female Principals make up 24 percent of the total population of principals at the high school

level, while teachers at the high school level make up 74 percent of the total population.

Moreover, the disparity between whose leading schools and who is teaching in the schools still

exists. According to statistics from the U.S. Department of Education in 2012, females represent

72% of the teaching population across all levels.

The teaching profession is commonly referred to as "women's work" due to the

overwhelming dominance of females making up the population, yet it still continues to be

primarily led by men. Women have risen to earn the majority of the graduate degrees in

educational leadership and have also assumed a larger presence as school leaders. Today, 67% of

doctoral degrees in educational leadership are earned by women (Branch-Brioso, 2009).

Although there has been significant growth in female principals at the elementary level,

narrowing the proportionality to female teachers at the same level, there is still much progress to

be made at the secondary level. Researchers argue that due to the rise of athletics at the

secondary level, common perceptions help establish men as the most qualified applicant for

leadership at this level. The coming research will further establish gender bias in educational

leadership particularly at the secondary level.

Gender Bias and Educational Leadership

Before delving into the influence of gender bias on educational leadership, it is important

to note the difference between gender and sex in relation to the focus of this study. According to

the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (2009), many researchers have sought

to identify and differentiate the meanings of 'sex' and 'gender' in order to understand the influence of biology and other factors on human behavior.

The term *Sex* refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women (WHO, 2009).

The term *Gender* refers to the economic, social, political and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female. In most societies, men and women differ in the activities they undertake. Additionally, some societies reveal that women as a group have less access than men to resources, opportunities, and decision-making (Desprez-Bouanchaud, 1987).

In educational leadership research, gender has also been distinguished from sex. The former is viewed as a collection of qualities labeled male or female as a result of cultural constructs, while the latter comprises of attributes that are the result of biological characteristics (Mollel & Tashabangu, 2014). Male gender qualities are often characterized as aggressive, independent, objective, logical, rational, analytical, decisive, confident, assertive, ambitious, opportunistic, and impersonal (Osland, 1998). These are distinguished from female gender qualities described as emotional, sensitive, expressive, cooperative, intuitive, warm, tactful, receptive to ideas, talkative, gentle, empathetic, and submissive (Park, 1996). The notion of male and female gender qualities facilitates the argument that male gender qualities are oriented towards a more impersonal, task-oriented or transactional approach to leadership, while the female gender qualities trend towards a more nurturing, Relationship-Oriented style of leadership. Female gender quality often align more closely to the Transformational Leadership

approach. Views of the differences between gender and sex in western culture are often seen as biological or natural and therefore unchanging. Hutt asserts that women and men are intrinsically different and that, their characteristics are not susceptible to change (Hutt, 1972). A twentieth century conservative summary of this perspective is that differences in behavior between the sexes stem from innate biological differences between girls and boys. Many argue that due to the natural biological makeup, there are certain assumed associated behaviors that are likely. Men are physically stronger, resilient, have greater spatial, numerical and mechanical abilities and tend to see the world in terms of objects, ideas, and theories. Women on the other hand, mature physically and psychologically at an earlier stage, are more affiliative and nurturing, have higher and precocious verbal skills, and see the world personally, aesthetically and morally (Hutt, 1972). This view of women versus men can become a guiding indicator for many in leadership when matching the gender to associated duties of the principalship. Moreover, it can be argued that if the understanding of gender is based on biology, then the associated biases are often developed organically absent of influence.

The progressive approach to this discussion perceives men and women's social roles as shaped largely by influences arising out of history, culture, and society, and thus constantly in the process of change as society itself changes (De Beauvoir, 1953). The point of view is often seen as antiquated, placing women in a more subordinate position. This approach assumes that men have power over women and are consequently in a position to interpret so-called biological differences in stereotyped ways (Harding, 1986). Gender differences could be understood as a phenomenon arising out of the dominant ideas of a particular era or culture. Education is

regarded as an instrument for creating awareness of why particular sex differences are seen as important at particular times. Education also encourages greater equality between the sexes as well as challenges stereotyped assumptions.

Gender Stereotypes and Biases in Educational Leadership

There are many stereotypes and biases that drive assumptions about positional competence, particularly when considering women in educational leadership. According to Harris, Smith, and Hale (2002), identifying the problems that women in educational leadership face is an important component in the process of increasing opportunity for women who seek advancement. Natural biases oftentimes are innately derived and conversations about such biases, help to combat or dispel pre-existing biases. A large body of literature acknowledges that women in educational administration have had barriers that have made it difficult for them to obtain administrative positions.

Valverde (2003) asserted that women and minorities are excluded from positions not because they lack competence but rather because they are a deviation from the status-quo. This assertion suggests that these exclusions are by no means intentionally discriminant. They are simply developed in response to the norm. A few common barriers encountered by women that were identified in the review of literature include family/work conflict and sex/role stereotyping. Women find it difficult to reconcile the traditional role as caretaker, mother, and nurturer with high career expectations (Rossman, 2000). Many of the internal struggles take precedence over the role of school principal for women. There are several women who place priority on their

career and their progression to leadership, but that decision can lead to conflict. Funk (2004) found this conflict is a major source of stress in the lives of women who had the dual responsibility of family and career. Another important point of consideration is the time commitment involved in fulfilling the role of principal.

According to Grogan (1999), some women principals and superintendents do manage to arrange their schedules so that they may balance both work and family commitments. However, this "clash of priorities and values" eventually takes its toll because most good administrators focus their energy and attention on the school. As principals focus their efforts on the success of their schools, familial needs typically take a back seat to career priorities. The familial commitments can influence the growth of women at the secondary principalship as it is likely considered by both the aspiring principal and the hiring committee during the interview process, despite it being an illegal disqualifier.

Shakeshaft (1987) used a woman-centered approach to document differences between women's and men's work environments and styles of leadership, communication, decision-making, and conflict resolution. Her perspective was largely shaped by the response of female leaders. She posited that women were more likely to create a culture in schools based on ethical and relational responses. This "female world" in schools was conceptualized as having five major foci: relationships with others was central for women administrators; teaching and learning was key; building community was an essential part of their style; sexism marginalized them; and in their daily work, the line separating the public world from the private was blurred (Shakeshaft, 1987).

House (1997) writes that when a leader assumes responsibility over constituents of different backgrounds, there are often elements of surprise associated with their leadership that appears unconventional. The ideals associated with gender typecasting or stereotyping are challenged. Sex role stereotypes condition men and women to believe that women are not suited to hold leadership positions and result in discriminatory practices that exclude women from them (Tallerico & Burstyn, 1996). As more women pursue the role of secondary principal, discriminatory practices become appear in a far more subtle manner.

When considering stereotyping and traditional behaviors associated with a secondary principal, women are assumed to be less capable and productive. Historically men have been thought to possess the qualities necessary to manage schools (Harris, 2004). Subsequently, stereotyping may be more impactful than the act alone, as it can compromise the confidence of aspiring leaders. Shakeshaft (1998) comments that women have been socialized to believe that qualities frequently associated with females are antithetical to those qualities needed to manage. As a result, aspiring female secondary principals may resolve to not pursue management positions due to their belief that they are ill equipped to lead.

If there was an intentional focus placed on the psychology behind gender bias development across work fields, one might argue that much of the understanding of the role or the "perfect fit" for the role is largely influenced by its historical context. Leadership has generally been associated specific traits of behavior often displayed by men, and as a consequence, the perception of a leader is dominated by male stereotypes (Klenke, 1996). As women infiltrate secondary principalships more rapidly, new norms are developed. Prior to the

rise of women in leadership, the role of women in education had been relegated to more domestic or supportive tendencies, as opposed to ones of dominance and leadership.

Gender and Leadership Style

When determining principal effectiveness, there must be a move beyond simply representation to a stronger consideration of the influence of gender on leadership. Gender is often perceived as a social creation, which can be affected by the individual's history and choices and by the context of the workplace (Lumby & Azaola, 2011). School leadership often requires the ability of the leader to move between leadership styles in an effort to ensure task completion. However, even with the need to remain flexible in approach, leaders will typically preference a particular management style over another. Much of a leader's success is measured quantitatively by his or her school data. The secondary predictor of a successful leader is his or her ability to engage staff. Rosener (1990) affirmed that "effective leaders don't come from one mold." She noted that female leaders have been forced to pattern their leadership styles based on successful male leadership behaviors. Historically the role of principal was dominated by men, so naturally, their leadership styles established the basis for how future female principals would be both perceived and received. Rosener (1990) articulated that "the first female executives imitated their successful male role models in order to get into top management." As women begin to establish their presence as educational leaders, there was an underpinning need for them to prove their competence through their works. Henderson (1994) noted that women in leadership positions were often in a Catch-22 situation: they are devalued if they displayed 'feminine'

behaviors (nurturing, cooperative, passive) and chided when they exhibited 'masculine' behaviors (assertiveness, independence, aggressiveness). Women had to perform against gender biases and stereotypes that had naturally developed over decades due to the limited examples of female principals available.

Current research concerning gender issues in leadership suggests that "Women, are naturally socialized towards skills in participative leadership, collaborative group management, and quality interpersonal relation, whereas men's styles have been more described as "goal-directed" (Stelter, 2002, p. 1). Women who rise to the position of principal must prove their competence while simultaneously dispelling any preconceived notions their staff may harbor. As a result, women naturally gravitate toward a collaborative approach to leadership so that buy-in is established more easily and social barriers are limited. Rosener (1990) cautioned, however, against attributing Transformational and Participative leadership only to female leaders since numerous male leaders also demonstrate these positive leadership characteristics. Leadership styles that have tenets of collaboration in them are slowly becoming the norm for all leaders regardless of gender. Many principals agree that involving more people in the planning and brainstorming process helps ensure all considerations are given before new plans are implemented.

Broadbringe (2007) advanced a view that there is a gender difference in leadership and that women bring different qualities to leadership and management positions. This helps organizations maintain a competitive advantage. Since many of the perceptions of effective leaders were based on the performance of men, studying how women lead could potentially

expand or redefine the characteristics of an effective leader. Women who represent groups that have not traditionally held power are often situated within this paradox of power and oppression as leaders (O'Conner, 2010). Women can be successful by most standards yet feel limited or may even question their effectiveness. Women can feel both marginalized and empowered because of the reaction to their success. Due of this truth, the research will determine if there is a consistent leadership approach to which secondary female principals subscribe.

Multificator Leadership Questionnaire (5X Short)

The rise of women occupying positions as secondary principals and the documented barriers many have, helped frame the goal of this research. Is there a common response or leadership style often subscribed to by women in secondary principal positions after experiences with gender bias? The study will focus on three leadership styles specifically to include: Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership, and Passive-Avoidant Leadership. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass & Avolio, 1997) was the first instrument designed (and the most widely used) for measuring these three leadership styles. The MLQ-5X also measures three outcomes of leadership: effectiveness, satisfaction, and extra effort (defined as getting others to do more than they expected they could do (Bass & Avolio, 1997). Eagly (2003) notes the possibility that women and men differ in their leadership style. He considers this important because leaders' behavior is a major determinant of their effectiveness and chances for advancement. The Multificator Leadership Questionnaire (5X Short) will help identify a common leadership style used by female principals and through qualitative data, the study seeks to determine why they use that leadership style.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational Leadership assumes that leaders will work with subordinates to identify needed change. Principals that subscribe to Transformational Leadership guide the change process through inspiration. Transformational Leadership combines the art of coaching, mentoring, and supporting the execution of change processes. In a survey of male and female executives with similar ages, jobs and education, Rosener (1990) found that women tended to be more transformational in their leadership style than men. Transformational Leadership provides the leader the freedom to be a nurturer and to be receptive to the input of others. It assumes the natural exchange of ideas, teaching a process, and understanding of process completion. Using their version of Transformational Leadership model, Kouzes & Posner (1990) found that female leaders were more likely than male leaders to practice 'modeling the way' and 'encouraging the heart,' thus identifying women as more likely to be sensitive to subordinates' needs. Gibson (1995) conducted a cross-cultural study involving Norway, Sweden, Australia, and the USA and discovered that male leaders were more likely to emphasize goal-setting than female leaders, while female leaders were more likely to focus on facilitating interaction than male leaders. These trends and character traits among women leaders were also noted in the Malaysian Public Sector Leadership Survey (Salim, 2007).

On the other hand, there are those who have argued that leadership is not necessarily influenced by gender but by personality traits (Powell & Butterfield, 1989; Ronk, 1993). Male and female leaders in organizations tended to exhibit similar amounts of task-oriented and people-oriented leadership behaviors (Powell, 1990). Kolb (1999) asserted that two decades of research

indicated few if any leadership differences in the leadership behaviors of male and female

leaders. He also noted that leadership styles have to do with how a person relates to people,

tasks, and challenges. A person's style is usually a very personal and distinctive feature of his or

her personality and character. Various leadership styles work well in different situations, and

there is often a proper fit between the needs of an organization and the appropriate leadership

style. Eagly's (2003) meta-analysis showed that female leaders displayed more transformational

and contingent reward behaviors and fewer avoidant/passive behaviors compared to men. These

findings have been suggested as representing a female leadership advantage due to their

association with leadership success (Eagly & Carli, 2003).

Transactional Leadership

Although much has been written on gender and leadership, there is still a lack of

consensus as to whether women and men lead in the same or different ways. Transactional

Leadership is a style of leadership in which leaders promote compliance by followers through

both rewards and punishments. This leadership style is often considered top-down or managerial.

The staff is expected to comply with directives, and leader responses are contingent on staff

reaction. Women who serve as principals at the secondary level will likely be faced with

moments when Transactional Leadership is the best recourse for task completion. Transactional

Leadership involves managing, in the sense of clarifying subordinate responsibilities, rewarding

subordinates for meeting objectives, and correcting subordinates when they fail to meet

objectives (Bass, 1985). The review of several studies, especially studies that involve the Multi-

Factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X), shows women subscribing to various styles over

time. Few name Transactional Leadership as the predominant style for female secondary principals.

Avolio and Bass (2004) state that Transformational Leadership is comprised of five dimensions: idealized influence (attributes), idealized influence (behavior), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Transactional Leadership includes two dimensions: contingent reward and active management by exception. The key component to this leadership style is the reaction when the subordinate complies or refuses to do so. Transactional leadership most assuredly has the potential to create feelings of inferiority among staff if communicated negatively. Transactional leaders focus on the basic needs of their staff, but they do not have a characteristic of providing high-level motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment (Bass, 1985). Female secondary principals often rely on their ability to motivate staff and garner buy-in. As a result, many of these principals do not find this style of leadership suitable.

Passive-Avoidant Leadership

The final leadership style examined by the Multificator Leadership Questionnaire (5X Short) is the Passive-Avoidant leadership style. Undoubtedly, in any principal position there will be tasks that somehow become deprioritized and may lead to avoidance altogether. The basis of this style is a pattern of leadership that avoids specifying agreements, clarifying expectations, or providing goals and standards to be achieved by followers (Avolio & Bass, 2004). This style encompasses passive management by exception and laissez-faire. Passive/avoidant leadership is negatively related to leaders' effectiveness and extra effort achieved in their subordinates, as well

as subordinates' satisfaction with their leaders (Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Theoretical Frameworks

Two theoretical frameworks - Critical Feminist Theory and Social Learning Theory - provide the tenants of this phenomenological study. While the Critical Feminist Theory challenges the established norms of education built by the examples of men, the Social Learning Theory provides insight into the results or outcomes of women securing secondary leadership positions.

Critical Feminist Theory

Feminist theory is a generic label for a perspective or group of theories that explores the meaning of gender concepts (Kramarae, 1989). Feminist theories provide a systematic analysis of the importance of gender definitions plus a critique of prevailing patterns of male domination in all areas including the sociological discipline itself (Johson, 2008). Through data tracking, it was clear that at the development of a structured system for public education, the field was dominated by women serving as teachers while the leadership positions were often held by men. As a result of the early delineation of roles, gender bias and stereotyping began to surface as women moved toward securing leadership positions.

Most women (Penelope, 1990) do not question the categories of their language or voice; they become co-opted into the male-dominant system. Feminist theorists argue that almost all aspects of life can be understood in terms of gender qualities or the associated gender norms. Women have made significant strides in education, and their presence has shifted the standard.

Women who subscribe to the concept of feminism do so with the intent to define, establish, and achieve political, economic, personal, and social rights for women that are equal to those of men. The swift movement toward acquiring the principalships seemed to be a both a goal and a response to ensure fair representation at all levels of education.

As a methodology, Critical Feminist Theory does not offer specific or "textbook" ways we can go about creating or transforming spaces. Rather, it calls on us to reconsider our existing understandings of knowledge, power, and spaces of empowerment (deSaxe, 2012). This study is built on the confirmation that women recognized the lack of representation at the secondary principal role and began to pursue higher roles. As they infiltrated the field of education as educational administrators, they challenged the understanding associated with the role of the school principal. Critical Feminist Theory supports the research by explaining why women transitioned into the role of secondary female principal, while Social Learning Theory helps the research understand how they behaved once in the position.

Social Learning Theory

Albert Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory is based on the idea that people learn from their interactions with others in a social context. The theory argues that by observing the behaviors of others, people develop similar behaviors. The research has confirmed that as women transitioned into secondary principalships, they were met with biases and stereotypes. The driving question of this study is how secondary principals respond through their leadership styles to the biases and stereotypes they encounter. Spence and Lee recognize person-behavior-environment interactions that are mediated by cognitive mechanisms. That is, environmental and

behavioral factors directly influence an individual's self-efficacy (Smith & Berge, 2009).

Bandura's Social Learning Theory combines behavioristic reinforcement theory and cognitive psychology to describe the learning process in individuals. It argues that there is an environmental consciousness that forces a reaction. Many refer to this concept as an adaptation. Bandura emphasizes the personal or self-system which controls learning by influencing attentional processes, schematic processing of experiences, memory representation and reconstruction, cognitively-based motivation, emotion activation, psycho-biologic functioning, and the ease and skill to which these are employed to deal with everyday life experiences (Bandura 1986). It is from the perspective of the Social Learning Theory that the study seeks to justify the influence of environmental influences on leadership styles for secondary female principals.

Summary

Gender bias experiences will undoubtedly influence any profession but do those experiences dictate a common response among secondary principals? Can we expect leadership styles to change because of encounters with gender bias? The literature has established a growth in women rising to the position of secondary principal. Although the rise to principal at the secondary level has been steady, there is still much room for growth. It has been authenticated throughout this literature review that a new day has transpired for contemporary leaders, requiring skills and knowledge exceeding that of previous needs in leadership (Caldwell & Hayward, 1998). Women as secondary principals have come to represent a growing group.

Their presence alone challenges the history of the profession. Their leadership style gives insight into the conditions or interactions that helped develop it. The skill and practice that women bring to the role, help to develop new norms among secondary principals. As today's leaders seek to acquire the habits and knowledge necessary to prove effective in current educational organizations, it is important to note that there are no simple answers to achieve leadership excellence (Burns & Martin, 2010). As women continue to build their presence in educational leadership, those connected to them take notice to their approach. Bolman and Deal (2002) affirm that effective leaders are not defined by any one style, personality, gender, or ethnicity. Though Bolman and Deal's assertion that leadership is often not confined to one category is correct, the premise of the study is to identify a common response among the study group. Moreover, the study seeks to make correlations between the leadership style and the rationale behind the common leadership style identified.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

The literature confirmed the rise of women who secure positions as secondary school

principals and some inherent biases that developed over time as a result. This chapter describes

the research methodology utilized to conduct the study. This descriptive study combined the

accounts of the research participants through an interview with the data from the Multi-Factor

Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X). The chapter includes the process of selecting the

participants, collecting the data, analyzing the data, and validating the data through common

strategies. Descriptive research is often used to describe characteristics of a population or

phenomenon being studied. Descriptive research does answer questions about how/when/why

the characteristics occurred. The phenomena connected with women rising to the position of

secondary school principal creates connecting questions that force researchers to dig into the

associated experiences they encounter when assuming the role. Moreover, the question

concerning how they lead also arises as the research attempts to gauge their success in the role.

Descriptive Phenomenological Research

Phenomenological research is the lens from which the topic will be explored. Descriptive

research is the outcome or the presentation of information from the research. The study explored

the phenomena connected to the focus group and use the connected data to describe their

experiences. The philosophies underlying phenomenological research methods were developed

in the scholarship of the major philosophers Husserl, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty (Heidegger,

1927; Husserl, 1913; Merleau-Ponty, 1945). Phenomenology as a whole is focused on the

showing or disclosing of phenomenon in consciousness (Heidegger, 1927; Husserl, 1913).

Descriptive Phenomenology is one of three major types of phenomenological studies.

Descriptive phenomenology, which is based on the philosophy of Husserl (1913/1962), has as its

aim the description of the essence or essential structure of an experience focusing on what is

essential and meaningful (Cohen & Omery, 1994; Husserl, 1913; Lopez & Willis, 2004).

Establishing the presence of phenomena alone is not enough. It is when the researcher can delve

into the essence of the phenomena that the findings become far more impactful.

Transcendental Phenomenology

Because Phenomenology attempts to eliminate everything that represents a

presupposition, it is an opportunity to review a shift in the norm. The research reviewed the

phenomena openly and was not swayed by the habits that existed prior to it. Transcendental

Phenomenology explores the meaning behind the phenomena. A Transcendental

Phenomenological study focuses on rich, textural descriptions, structural descriptions, and an

essence of the study (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994). The voice of the research participants

was crucial to the study, and Transcendental Phenomenology centers on capturing their

experiences. According to Creswell (2013), the textural descriptions examine the participants'

experiences, while the structural descriptions develop through how the participants experienced

the phenomenon. Women rapidly rising to the role of principal over the last five decades is

indeed a phenomenon. In the same way, the study focused on the phenomena, as well as the

influence or meaning of the phenomena. In an effort to help organize the influence of the phenomena, the study specifically reviewed the leadership styles associated with the research participants.

Narrative Interviewing

Qualitative research is designed to reveal a target audience's range of behavior and the perceptions that drive it with reference to specific topics or issues. The research uses in-depth studies of small groups of people to guide and support the construction of hypotheses. The organization of qualitative data may be presented in several forms. In this study, all consideration was given to a narrative approach for data collection. The narrative approach originated from the social sciences (anthropology and sociology), yet it now expands into education, healthcare, and humanities (Creswell, 2013). Narrative inquiry is an umbrella term that captures personal and human dimensions of experience over time and takes account of the relationship between individual experience and cultural context (Clandinin & Connelly 2000). The basis of the method for data collection is the human component, which drives the data received. Narrative inquiry is a form of qualitative research in which the stories themselves become the raw data (Beakley, 2005). Narratives are often collected through interviews. The stories and experiences of the principals will confirm both the presence of gender biases in education and describe leadership style.

Whenever an opportunity is given to any participant to present his or her point of view, an added dynamic of the research is captured that could not have been quantified otherwise.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of secondary school principals and discuss the common leadership style they subscribe to. As such, the overarching question of this study was: Is there a common leadership style that secondary female principals subscribe to in response to experienced incidences of gender biases? The guiding questions for this research topic were:

1. What are the experiences of gender bias in the workplace with secondary female principals?

2. Which leadership style is most utilized amongst women who lead secondary schools?

3. Is the leadership style of the secondary principal influenced by gender bias experiences?

The study was conducted using a mixed method approach. Research participants had the opportunity to convey their experiences through documented interview. The interviews were conducted in three phases and were centered on giving voice to the research participants.

Mixed Method Approach

When attempting to validate the presence of gender bias in educational leadership, the confirmation of its presence is likely confirmed through individual accounts of the research participants. In addition, attempting to make correlations between the influences of gender bias on leadership style requires some level of commonality noted in quantifiable data. Subsequently,

the research question required the merge of both processes in an effort to prove the hypothesis. Through a mixed method approach, the hypothesis was both tested and confirmed. Mixed methods research, at its core, involves a research design that uses multiple methods—more than one research method or more than one worldview (i.e., quantitative or qualitative research approaches)—in a research inquiry (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003).

Due to the need to include both the accounts of the research participants through narrative inquiry and the leadership tendency revealed via the Multi-factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X), a mixed method approach was utilized to conduct the research. Tashakkori and Teddlie identified two major types of multiple methods research: (1) mixed methods research, which is the focus of the current paper; and (2) multimethod research (Mingers 2001, 2003). By definition, mixed methods research is more in line with methodology combination and essentially requires multiple worldviews (Venkatesh, Brown & Bala, 2013). Mixed methods research, in contrast, uses quantitative and qualitative research methods, either concurrently (i.e., independent of each other) or sequentially (e.g., findings from one approach inform the other), to understand a phenomenon of interest. The combination of both qualitative and quantitative data (mixed method) helped to add validity to the study and ensure all data is actively used to test the hypothesis.

Role of the Researcher

Over the course of the research, I assumed the role of interview, observer, data collector, and sole data analyst. The research participants were secondary school principals or principals of

middle or high schools located in a metropolitan school district in southern Georgia. I currently

serve as a secondary school assistant principal, and am also an aspiring secondary principal. The

commonality that connected all of the research participants including myself is both our gender

and the level to which we lead. We are separated by our roles. Their accounts informed my

professional pursuits by providing insight and experience through the indirect account.

Gender is a topic of consideration in educational leadership. Although it is considered

for the purposes of reporting data or maintaining census, it does not appear to be a necessary

requisite for securing a position as a secondary principal in the school district. The district

subscribes to an equal opportunity employment policy. It is important to clarify that the study in

no way suggests that gender is a contributing stipulation for employment in a metropolitan

school district in southern Georgia.

Research participants participated on a voluntary basis. There was no payment, goods, or

services offered in exchange for their participation. The research participants were assured

confidentiality through reporting and were encouraged to speak freely. Participants' names were

confidential as to avoid negative responses in their school, the school district, or the community

at-large. Participants were assigned pseudonyms to further maintain confidentiality.

There were no threats of repercussion for the research participants, so it was assumed that

any information obtained would be honest accounts and experiences specific to each participant.

My personal biases were noted as I prepared to begin to conduct the research. As previously

mentioned, I am a woman, a secondary school assistant principal, and an aspiring secondary

principal. I am aware that my biases developed prior to working as a high school assistant

principal and the associated experiences connected to my current role. Moustakas' (2004)

definition of epoche required that I remove all personal connection prior to collecting data.

Moustakas (1994) writes, although the process of the epoche requires that everything in the

ordinary, everyday sense of knowledge be tabled and be put out of action, I, the experiencing

person, remain present. I, as a conscious person, am not set aside. On the contrary, with an open,

transcendental consciousness, I carry out the Epoche. (1994, p. 87). Subsequently, after

confronting my own biases and the experiences that guide my passion toward this study, I

acknowledged my biases while also excusing own thoughts and feelings. I resolved to commit to

remaining focused on the experiences of research participants. I currently serve as a high school

assistant principal, while the participants are secondary principals, so their accounts were more

significant to where I would like to be and their responses were crucial to informing my future

practice. I privately wrote a few personally motivated goals for the research that would help

keep me accountable and bias free. The conclusions of this research will benefit all women

aspiring to the secondary principalship. The validity of this study depended on my ability to

simply relay the information as it is.

Methodology

The research by itself is only as significant as the methods used to maintain the integrity

of the research. The following sections will clarify how the research was organized.

Descriptions will be provided for how I recruited participants, gathered the data, and reported the

data. The methodology used for participant recruitment remained consistent with the guidelines

set forth by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Georgia Southern University. It also

maintained the integrity associated with other governing bodies of research, as well as provided

measures for collecting, analyzing, and reporting subsequent data.

Sample

The sample involved five women secondary principals from a metropolitan school

district in southern Georgia. For the purposes of maintaining anonymity, specific school

information and race was considered in the selection process. The participants were invited to

participate in the study through a blind copy email, and participants were given an email address

developed specifically for the purpose of the study, to arrange an interview time. The pool of

potential participants included twenty-two secondary women principals. Of the twenty-two

secondary women principals in the district, the first five responders were selected. The

participants in the study ranged in age from 30 - 65. The qualifying criteria for participation was

that the women currently held a position as a secondary principal. Additionally, the length of

time served as a woman principal was captured, but does not add significance to the story.

Creswell (2007) discussed the importance of selecting the appropriate candidates for

interviews. He asserted that the researcher should utilize one of the various types of sampling

strategies, such as criterion-based sampling or critical case sampling (among many others) in

order to obtain qualified candidates that would provide the most credible information to the

study. Due to the nature of the study and the intentional focus placed on women secondary

school principals, the sampling for the research was purposive. Purposive sampling represents

a group of different non-probability sampling techniques. Usually the sample being investigated is quite small, especially when compared with probability sampling techniques. In this case, the sample size of the study was confined to five secondary women principals. Purposive sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Patton 2002).

The main goal of purposive sampling is to focus on particular characteristics of a population that is of interest, which will best enable researchers to answer questions. This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Creswell and Plano Clark 2011). The research participants were selected from a concentrated area (the metropolitan school district in southern Georgia) and their common characteristics included both their gender and their role. In addition to knowledge and experience, Bernard (2002) and Spradley (1979) noted that the importance of availability and willingness to participate and the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner. It is important to note that this study is descriptive and does not represent every woman serving as a secondary principal in the world. The findings were specific to the account of the research participants. The sample that was studied is not representative of the population, but for researchers pursuing qualitative or mixed methods research designs, this is not considered to be a weakness. Rather, it is a choice, the purpose of which varies depending on the type of purposive sampling technique that is used.

Recruitment and Participation

In an effort to make the study available to every secondary principal in the school district, all women working as principals at the middle and high school levels were invited to participate in the research. Initially, I contacted the Research Manager for the school district and completed a request to conduct research packet for the district. Once the packet was approved, the district research manager contacted the twenty-two principals in the school district that fell into the participant criteria, alerting them of my permission to contact them and conduct research. A copy of my flyer and the consent to participate form was sent to the potential research participants. As the district representative raised awareness of the impending study, forms were completed and organized in preparation for approval from the Georgia Southern University IRB.

Instrumentation

This mixed method study used two instruments to conduct data. The quantitative portion of the research was collected through the use of the Multi-factor Questionnaire (MLQ-5X). The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (5X Short) was the standard instrument for assessing Transformational and Transactional Leadership behavior (Bass & Avolio, 2000; Avolio & Bass, 2004). Through the use of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (5X Short) in the study, I conveyed the leadership style the female research participants subscribed to, as well as determined if female principals tended to use a common leadership style. Although a general correlation could not be made, the research did note the common trends in data. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (5X Short) included five transformational, three transactional, one

laissez-faire, and three outcome scales.

Qualitative interviews are categorized in a variety of ways, with many contemporary texts loosely differentiating qualitative interviews as unstructured, semi-structured and structured (Crabtree, 1999). Whereas the unstructured interview is conducted in conjunction with the collection of observational data, semi-structured interviews are often the sole data source for a qualitative research project and are usually scheduled in advance at a designated time and location outside of everyday events (Fontana, 2005). They are generally organized around a set of predetermined open-ended questions, with other questions emerging from the dialogue between interviewer and interviewees. Semi-structured in-depth interviews are the most widely used interviewing format for qualitative research and can occur either with an individual or in groups. Most commonly they are only conducted once for an individual or group and take between 30 minutes to several hours to complete (Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). The qualitative portion of this transcendental phenomenological study was conducted using researcher-created interview questions which were tied to the research questions and based on the review of literature.

It is essential that the interview process remained focused on the goal of the study. As such, developing the interview questions with a structure in mind was crucial to the outcome. Dolbeare and Schuman (1982) designed a series of three interviews that characterize the phenomenological interview approach. This allowed the interviewer and participant to acknowledge the experience and place it in context. The first interview established the context of the participants' experience. The second allowed participants to reconstruct the details of their

experience within the context of its occurrence. The final phase of the interview process encouraged the participants to reflect on the meaning their experience holds for them. Each phase of the interview added a dimension of transparency while simultaneously encouraging the research participants to dig deeper into how the experiences affected them.

Interview Questions

As previously noted, the interview process was divided into four phases. The initial phase focused on the participant's backgrounds in education and their rise to education in general. In addition, Phase one explored whether or not the principals believed others had preconceived notions of an effective secondary principal that might influence their interactions with them. The second phase of the interview focused specifically on the gender bias experiences. Participants not only recounted the experience but discussed the influence the experience had on them. Phase three focused on the principals' leadership style and whether or not they believed the experience influenced their leadership style. There was also an opportunity provided for each principal to give advice to aspiring secondary principals and add to the research any additional questions or comments they had and this was phase four. The four phases are titled: Rise to Principalship; Gender Bias Experience, Leadership Style and Concluding Thoughts.

Data Analysis Plan

Transcendental in this context means looking at the phenomenon with a fresh eye and open mind, resulting in acquiring new knowledge derived from the essence of experiences

(Moustakas, 1994). The practice of epoche was applied prior to the data collection period to ensure the data remained focused on the experiences of the participant and was absent of all bias generated by the researcher. The opportunity to examine experiences is essential to avoid judgment and biases later during the course of research (Merriam, 2009; Moustakas, 1994). After I bracketed my associated experiences, an opportunity to organize the phenomena surfaced. The Transcendental-Phenomenological approach was used to describe the essences of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). Since information obtained through both the MLQ-5X instrument and the interview worked well both in isolation and in unison, data collected includes perceptions and feelings of the phenomenon. Knowledge is constructed by systematically collecting and analyzing the participants' experiences and feelings, making meanings through discourse (Moustakas, 1994).

Qualitative Data Collection

The research participants met at a location convenient for them. Prior to beginning each phase of the interview process, the research participant received a brief synopsis of the research study. Additionally, I reviewed their consent agreement and reminded them of the measures taken to remain confidentiality. Each interview was digitally recorded for transcription at a later time. In addition, a brief summary was captured through note taking to refer to later or use as a springboard to ask any additional questions that may arise. The mannerisms used or points of emphasis made by the research participant was captured through the note taking process. After each phase of interviews was recorded and transcribed, the process of Coding began. Coding is

the process of organizing and sorting data. In Vivo Codes served as a way to label, compile, and organize data. They also allowed for summarizing and synthesizing what was happening in data. Common themes were developed using the common words or phrases provided by the research participants. In keeping with the concept of Transcendental Phenomenology, codes concerning identity shifts were created. I resolved to allow coding to develop organically as it was essential to the outcome. After emergent themes were identified through the coding process, the data were summarized into one harmonious voice.

Quantitative Data Collection

The final step of the data collection process involved the participant completion of the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire. The Multificator Leadership Questionnaire (5X Short) (Bass & Avolio, 1997) is an instrument designed to measure the use of three leadership styles along with the outcomes of the leadership style. The MLQ-5X is widely used for measuring leadership styles (Transformational, Transactional and Laissez-faire). Furthermore, it was utilized in several empirical types of research, particularly those concerned with the relationship between leadership styles and other factors. This scale consists of 45 items answered by the subordinates using a five-point Likert scale. The scale points are 0= not at all, 1= once in a while, 2 = sometimes, 3 = fairly often and 4= frequently, if not always. The original version of this scale consists of three parts. The first part described the information of the respondents. The second part measured the three styles of leadership. The third part measured leadership outcomes. Participants were sent the MLQ-5X via email to complete and scan back as a final

step in the process for data collection. Data obtained from the Multi-Factor Leadership

Questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics and factor analysis through the

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Research Validity

Due to the nature of the study and the claims of the presence of bias, it is imperative that

the research I conducted remained both valid and reliable. Validity is the assurance that the

research practices are sound. More specifically, in this case validity applies to both the design

and the methods of the research. Validity in data collection means that one's research findings

truly represent the phenomenon he or she is claiming to measure. Methods outlined by Lincoln

and Guba (1985) were used to establish the trustworthiness of this study, which includes

credibility, transferability, conformability, and dependability. The task I assumed was to ensure

the research was both credible and transferable so that its validity will never be called into

question.

Triangulation of all data sources was used to gain insight into each informant's

leadership. The three sources used to validate the data were the in-depth multi-part interviews,

the process of coding the interviews to identify similar experiences, and the summarization of

data from the MLQ-5X completed by each research participant. Cross checking the data sources

to identify common themes that emerged from the various sources served to increase internal

validity during the research process (Merrian, 1998). Reliability is defined as "the goodness of

fit between recorded data and the phenomena in the setting being studied (Merrian, 1988) and is

achieved by establishing conformability and dependability. An audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) provided a transparent description of the research steps taken during the study. An audit trail is a transparent description of the research steps taken from the start of a research project to the development and reporting of findings. These are records that are kept regarding what was done in an investigation. I maintained complete records of all of the procedures utilized in this study including transcribed interviews, data reduction procedures, interview protocols, coding procedures, copies of emails relating to correspondence with each informant, and any notes relative theme analysis.

Ethical Considerations

Once final approval from IRB was obtained, each potential research participant was contacted via email requesting their participation. From there, participants who agreed to participate were contacted via phone to explain the interview process, as well as arrange a time to begin the interview process. Each participant was required to give her consent to participate for record keeping purposes. In addition, she was required to sign the district agreement to participate form for district filing.

Participant identity was protected through the assignment of pseudonyms. Participants were fictitiously named to maintain confidentiality. The identification of characteristics were used, including years of experience ranges. No other demographic information was used to describe the participant beyond her gender. Race or age was not considered for the study nor conveyed in any of the research.

Participants were interviewed at a convenient location for them or a mutually agreed upon location. Research participants were given the opportunity to omit a response from the research. Any omissions were noted in the data review. All data, transcripts, and analyses will be kept in a locked file box and will be for at least five years after the study concludes. I will be the only person with access to the data and the person solely responsible for destroying the information after the study concludes. After this time, the transcripts will be destroyed.

Summary

The focus of chapter three was to provide a thorough explanation of the mixed method approach utilized for the study. This explanation included information on the research design, conceptual framework, ethical considerations and the validity of the research. It is through the use of a Transcendental Phenomenological design that the research participants were able to not only share their accounts, but purposefully reflect on how those accounts influenced their roles. The research placed added emphasis on drilling down to the essence of the phenomena. Chapter three also outlined the instruments used to conduct the research. It was through the process of both narrative interviewing and completion of the Multi-Factor leadership Questionnaire that data were captured to convey the voice of the secondary female principals.

CHAPTER 4

Researcher's Experience

Having survived a critical career disappointment, I am aware of how the experience has informed my leadership and image I currently have of myself. Before revealing the participant stories, it is important to share my experience to illustrate the lens from which I view these types of events. As an aspiring secondary principal, it is critical that I confront my own encounters and the experiences shaped my leadership style. Alan Atkinson, in the journey to understand whether or not a good historian should allow compassion to stain their work, concluded that to not experience and project emotion is inhuman (Atkinson, 2004). Prior to receiving my first administrative position, I distinctly recall meeting with my male principal to discuss the transition into the role of assistant principal.

My former principal had all but promised me the position as I worked various teacher leadership roles in the school. The school was allotted funds for a new assistant principal. My colleagues and I assumed the position would be offered to me. As I met with my former principal and expressed my interest in the position, I was interrupted with the announcement that this newly allotted position would not be given to me. As I sat astounded by this news, he continued by offering me the opportunity to become an assistant principal the very next time the district gave him another allotment. He disclosed that the school needed a strong disciplinarian, as recent student behaviors were of grave concern. He applauded my skill as a leader and noted that one day I would make a phenomenal curriculum assistant principal. When I asked, why I

could not be considered for the discipline position for which he was preparing to hire, he comfortably explained that the role of discipline assistant principal was designed traditionally for a man. It was a life altering experience.

This principal, whom I held in high regard, temporarily shattered my belief in my abilities as a school leader and made me question whether or not I should continue to pursue the role. In an empowered moment, I announced to the principal that I would not return to the school at the conclusion of the school year. He innocently believed he was offering sage advice about how people receive educational leaders. Although much of what he said was a common thought amongst educators, I was unprepared to accept that to be my truth. I did find an administrative position, the next year at another school. That gender bias experience inspired me to become a tenacious and transformative leader. The experience encouraged me to never go faint when pursuing goals and inspiring change efforts. It also keeps me focused on supporting those I am charged to lead and empowering them to hone their craft. Recognizing that my experience shaped my desire to conduct this research, I confront the past and acknowledge my own biases. It is through my acknowledgement of personal biases, that a connection between the participants and I is established. By releasing my inhibitions during the interview process encourages the participants to speak freely.

DATA REPRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This mixed method study describes the influence of gender bias experiences on leadership styles amongst women who lead secondary schools. The overarching question of this

study is: Is there a common leadership style that secondary female principals subscribe to in response to experienced incidences of gender biases? Each principal was given the opportunity to recount past experiences associated with gender bias while considering whether or not that experience shaped their leadership style. Five women principals participated in the completion of both an interview and the MLQ-5X-Survey. The interview data is presented in four categories: the participant's rise to the principalship, each principal's gender bias experience, the leadership style each principal subscribed to, and any concluding recommendations for aspiring women who hope to lead secondary schools. The experiences described by the participants were coded to find patterns. Within the documents the quotes from the participants are used to provide further evidence of common threads. Some quotes remain fairly lengthy to give the reader a complete story of the event. The researcher believes these were necessary to establish the connections between each participant's stories. Previous work by Bernard (2000), also considers sharing of the stories and not slicing for particular quotes is vital to developing an unimpaired depiction of the experience and may further work to support the theoretical framework. The qualitative analysis of common themes and leadership styles as discovered through the MLQ-5X survey data is also presented.

Much of the information presented was derived solely from the principals' accounts during the interview phase. There was a particular focus on the principals' leadership style as measured both by the interview and the results of the MLQ-5X survey. The MLQ-5X survey was used to confirm the presence of one particular leadership style. The interview and the MLQ-5X survey identify associated characteristics of a particular type of leader. Finally, the findings

reveal if the five participants shared common leadership styles and whether or not they shared common bias experiences. Moreover, the themes with participant quotes further describe the experiences each principal encountered that shaped their leadership style.

The interview was used to establish the presence of a gender bias experience with each participant along with any associated feelings the experience created. The interview was also used to consider the principal's perception of their leadership style and whether or not their leadership style was influenced by their gender bias experience. Additionally, participants were asked to complete an MLQ-5X survey to determine their leadership style based on the associated characteristics consistent with the Transformational, Transactional and Passive-Avoidant leadership styles. The MLQ-5X was used in gathering data about the respondents' views on a set of 45 inclusive practices questions.

In completing the MLQ Leader Form, participants were asked to evaluate how they frequently engaged in certain leadership behaviors. All participants used a 5-point Likert scale to rate their frequency. The rating scale was: 0 means 'not at all', 1 means 'once in a while', 2 means 'sometimes', 3 means 'fairly often', and 4 means 'frequently, if not always'. An item with a number 3 or 4 signified a certain leadership behavior. On the, the transformational scale was identified as items 2, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 26, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34 and 36. The transactional scale was identified as items 1, 4, 11, 16, 22, 24, 27, and 35. The passive avoidant scale had items 3, 5, 7, 12, 17, 20, 28, and 33. Data from the MLQ-5X were reported both individually and collective during the cross-case analysis.

Table 1.1: Grouped Items

Leadership Style	Scale Name	Items
Transformational	Idealized Influence (Attributes)	10,18, 21, 25
Transformational	Idealized Influence (Behavior)	6, 14, 23, 34
Transformational	Inspirational Motivation	9, 13, 26, 36
Transformational	Intellectual Stimulation	2, 8, 30, 32
Transformational	Individual Consideration	15, 19, 29, 31
Transactional	Contingent Reward	1, 11, 16, 35
Transactional	Management by Exception (Active)	4, 22, 24, 27
Passive-Avoidant	Management by Exception (Passive)	3, 12, 17, 20
Passive-Avoidant	Laissez-Faire	5, 7, 28, 33
Outcome of Leadership	Extra Effort	39, 42, 44
Outcome of Leadership	Effectiveness	37, 40, 43, 45
Outcome of Leadership	Satisfaction	38, 41

Table 1.1 shows the distribution of survey questions in relationship to the three leadership styles.

For the purpose of keeping the research centered on the experiences of the participants', data were collected and analyzed descriptively, making no correlations between one account or the other. The research seeks to present the unique experiences of each principal separately and connect any commonalities among the group collectively.

Introduction to the Research Participants

Research is particularly meaningful when the voices of the influenceed participants is captured through their story. When recruiting potential participants, I asked one question: Have you ever had a gender bias experience that burned you to your core at work? It is through that singular question that the results were birthed. Five principals were interviewed for the survey. The school setting for which these principals lead, range from extremely diverse settings to large

populations of students from lower socio-economic statuses. The typical size of each school represented was 1000 students. Each principal had worked in a variety of settings. There was little information that concluded that the school population itself altered the leadership style of the principal. The familial life of the principal varied, some having a husband and children, while others had one, the other or none. The participants were each encouraged to speak freely about their experiences with hopes of providing insight to aspiring secondary principals. In an effort to maintain confidentiality, pseudonyms were assigned to each principal as noted on the table.

Table 1.2: Descriptive Data

Pseudonym	*Total Years' Experience*	*School Level*	*Size of School*
Ms. Brady	More than five	Middle School	1000-1500 students
Ms. Huxtable	Less than five	High School	2000-2500 students
Ms. Lyon	Less than five	Middle School	1000-1500 students
Ms. Greenleaf	More than five	Middle School	1000-1500 students
Ms. Lopez	Less than five	Middle School	Under 500 students

Ms. Brady

Rise to the Principalship

Ms. Brady is the principal of a middle school. She possesses over five years' experience as and immediately struck me as a person that was quite responsive and organized as evidenced by our communications via email and my initial survey of her office. I was immediately made comfortable in her presence. She had reviewed the interview questions prior to our meeting and eagerly awaited the opportunity to learn more about the research. I began the session by requesting that no descriptive information be conveyed during the interview and that she feel free to be as open as possible, taking all the time needed to recall information. Before beginning the questions, I recounted my own experience as listed above, to break the ice. We discussed the experience and how it shaped the research project and immediately delved into the interview session. Ms. Brady began by explaining why she chose to pursue the principal position.

> *I did not know I wanted to be a secondary school principal until after I served as an assistant principal for several years. It goes back to my teaching career, I taught for thirteen years, in a secondary school. I had worked with many strong principals and administrators during my teaching career, that I felt a desire to become one. It was the female administrators that I was exposed to toward the end of my teaching career that further inspired me to pursue going into administration; that coupled with getting my specialist degree in leadership. It was when I was an AP (Assistant Principal) and had done that for several years; that led me to the decision to be a principal.*

Gender Bias Experience

As we moved to the second phase of the interview, describing the gender bias experience, Ms. Brady continued by recalling a significant gender bias experience in her career.

> *I really can only recall one experience. It was as a teacher and I was asked to step in and serve as an assistant coach. Knowing that I really did not have any experience as a coach; it was a vacancy and the school needed someone. The head coach was someone that was new that year as well, not as knowledgeable and I made it clear that I was there to help. I certainly could not run this whole thing, I was not qualified, I was not experienced in this but I was willing to give it 110% and so we proceeded. The head coach actually ended up moving halfway through the season, which traditionally does not happen with a head coach position at the secondary level. We had a particularly challenging booster club comprised of a lot of parents who had several kids come through the program. It was a co-ed sport, cross country, so I was faced with a lot of opposition. Cross-country does not get the most attention during football season, so a lot of things went unnoticed and a lot of the parents really made a lot of comments and really tried to undermine authority and decisions and it was really in my opinion gender bias. I went to my principal, who was a new principal at the school at that time, had a conversation with him and brought it to his attention. He quickly moved in and started speaking with parents that were involved and delving in and finding out what the dynamics were. This was kind of a long standing problem with this booster club; there was a meeting, to determine whether it would be disbanded. It really was not just me, it*

had been going on for years. The thing that cemented in my mind the fact that it was gender bias was that there was a lot of references to the two previous coaches. They had several coaching changes each year but they were all male and so everything that had been done by the male coaches was absolutely fine but it seemed to dramatically change with female coaches.

As the interview continued, I asked Ms. Brady how that specific experience made her feel.

I felt like I was not good enough. I felt like nothing I could do would be able to overcome that. I just felt that there was a lot of ignorance on the part of other people that were involved. I could try to make a change, by changing their mindset, but I realized people that had that kind of philosophy or mentality, were not worth my energy to try to focus on. I am about lifting people up.

Leadership Experience

The interview continued with me describing the three leadership styles associated with the MLQ-5X survey as transformational, transactional and passive-avoidant. Ms. Brady was asked to explain if she was familiar with the three leadership styles, she confirmed that she was. She was then asked which leadership style she subscribed to and why.

Transformational leadership definitely because I believe in helping through change. Identifying whatever change needs to occur for a situation and then working with a group of people in order to execute that change. I am all about doing so through things that are motivational and inspiring and trying to elevate. I use those words all the time: lift up, elevate

and build and grow. That really describes my leadership style.

MLQ-5X Survey Results

Table 2.1: Ms. Brady

Participant	Mean	Standard Deviation	Items Scored
Leadership Style			36
Transformational	3.90	0.2236	20
Transactional	2.25	1.7678	8
Passive-Avoidant	0.75	0.3536	8
Outcome of Leadership			9
Extra Effort	4	-	3
Effectiveness	4	-	4
Satisfaction	3.5	-	2

Ms. Brady completed the MLQ-5X leadership survey. Through the qualitative interview phase,

she expressed a belief that her leadership style tendencies were consistent with the

transformational leadership style. Included in Table 2.1 is an analysis of her MLQ-5X survey

data. The MLQ-5X survey data for participant one shows an average score of 3.90. This means

that she expresses transformational leadership behavior frequently, if not always. Ms. Brady also

believes in extra effort to get things done, effectiveness and satisfaction resulting from work well

done. Both the survey data and the data derived through interview were consistent indicators of high characteristics of a transformative leader.

When asked how or if the gender bias experience shaped her leadership style, Ms. Brady admitted that she did take away key principles to leadership as a result of the experiences. I think the one that is important is; I really try to be fair and consistent when it relates to gender with all things. Whether it is something dealing with students or whether it is hiring. I will have applicants come in with preconceived notions stating: "I know you must be looking for someone who has a lot of experience, you are probably looking for someone that is younger, that knows technology. You might be looking for a female or a male." I simply reply: "I am looking for the most qualified." I really think that I believe that you cannot just talk the talk you got to walk the walk. I am a role model and I try to share my philosophy and make that apparent that that is really not an issue. I want my kids in the building to be able to have every opportunity to get where they need to be and to provide that to them. I really do not tolerate any kind of discrimination in any form and people are aware that I am not going to tolerate that. Whether it is from parents that come in and make any kind of claim or from a staff member. I really just try to be fair and consistent. That is really my moral compass. That is what I believe deep in my heart.

Ms. Brady emerged as an administrator with a diverse set of experiences in various settings. Her gender bias experience enables her to maintain fair practices when interacting with people. She believes in maintaining a level, non-discriminant playing ground. She also sees herself as a transformational leader, believing that a crucial part of the role rests with empowering those to

whom she is charged to lead. The key terms she often used were: support, lift up and inspire.

Ms. Huxtable

Rise to the Principalship

Ms. Huxtable is a high school Principal with less than five years' experience. While sitting in the waiting area of the main office, I noticed a room filled with movement and energy. Several students and staff members walked in with a purpose as I waited.   Ms. Huxtable and I met in her office. We took a few moments to learn a bit about each other. After brief introductions, we immediately delved into the interview. I began by providing a small summary of who I was as a leader and why this research was of particular interest to me. When asked to provide a bit of background for why she chose to go into administration, participant two revealed:

> *I, like you, am a first-generation college graduate. It meant a lot to me. I did not*
> *start out on this path, I started out wanting to be a teacher, got out of education for a*
> *while because I thought that I wanted to pursue, money. I was tired of being a broke grad*
> *student. In my heart of hearts, I knew that that is what I was set to be, but I still did not*
> *see myself in a leadership role. Until one day, while working on my Ed.S, I got bitten by*
> *the bug of school improvement and what it takes. I decided I wanted to take that step. It's*
> *been a good journey and I feel like I've had very successful runs.*

As Ms. Huxtable continued, she explained how she believed many people perceived her at the secondary level as principal.

I think a lot of how you are perceived and how people respond to you is based on who

you are as a person and how you approach each situation. I have seen leaders that

approach, I do not really want to say defensive, but with authority and power, "You are

not going to get inside this wall where I am; not that way at all. We are here to be a

partner in making this school great, this community great and that has worked well for

me and for the schools where I have had the pleasure of working."

Ms. Huxtable provided much insight into the position of principal and her preferred style of leadership. When asked why she chose the secondary level her response was as follows:

When growing up, I always felt like I loved school, until I got to high school and met a

couple of teachers that just sucked the joy out of learning. I always said when I went into

teaching that I like this age, because they generally know how to behave. When they go

off track, they know they are off track, so the discussion is much different than feeling

like I have to teach children how to behave.

Gender Bias Experience

As the interview began, Ms. Huxtable described her thoughts on the topic of the research and her interest in the study outcome in general. She was clear to point out her belief that gender biases existed in education:

I will tell you, there have been times throughout my career that I have wondered if

gender was a factor, and even commented on it at times. It has seemed easier for male

administrators to move into principal leadership roles. Sometimes it seems to be the

coaching AD (athletic director) kind of brotherhood that fosters. There have been a

couple of times where I felt like male leaders were closed off to my potential. Now I feel

like I have moved beyond that over time with proving myself, but yes, at times it seems it

took a little bit longer. I had to step out of the box a little bit. When it came down to the

true interview, especially for the principalship in this district, I felt like that it was fair

and equitable.

As the interview progressed, we were able to move into a significant gender bias

experiences participant two believed would have concluded differently had she been a male. I

gave participant two the freedom to consider a time in education in general, be that teacher or

administrator when she experienced a situation relative to gender bias.

There is nothing really earth-shattering, though there was one time that I was passed up

for a leadership role and a male had been selected over me. I heard about that person's

past and really that hurt that the person was selected over me. I felt like I had

demonstrated integrity and work ethic and a proven history. That was one time that I

was just like, I do not get it. Even recently there was a situation where some information

was given to me second hand by somebody at a higher level, and I just wondered if the

communication would have been handled a different way, had I been a male instead of a

female.

Ms. Huxtable went on to explain how she responded to both of the experiences.

I try not to put much stock in it because if you dwell on it too much, it will pull you

down. I think you have to have your trusted individuals, your confidantes, I can still call

my mom and discuss things. I also have a couple of good work acquaintances that I can

call and ask, "Does this seem weird that it would go down this way?" that helps a lot just to be able to let it go.

Leadership Style

As the interview progressed, we began to focus on the leadership style participant two believed she subscribed to the most. I provided a brief explanation of three leadership styles (transformational, transactional and passive-avoidant) and asked participant two which of three were most consistent with her daily practices.

I would say, I am probably more transformational. It is funny, other people have called me the fix-it person. I do take stock in where things are and then determine how to make that transformation. I think I am very open to new ideas and approachable. I am constantly sharing something that I read if it is a good quote. I put together a weekly newsletter that I share with the staff and I try to make sure that there is at least one nugget of professional wisdom that I find through readings and things like that.

MLQ-5X Survey Results

Table 2.2: Ms. Huxtable

Participant	Mean	Standard Deviation	**Items Scored**
Leadership Style			36
Transformational	3.10	0.52	20
Transactional	1.88	1.24	8
Passive-Avoidant	0.63	0.88	8
Outcome of Leadership			9
Extra Effort	2.7	-	3
Effectiveness	3.75	-	4
Satisfaction	3.5	-	2

Ms. Huxtable completed the MLQ-5X-5 leadership survey. Through the qualitative interview

phase, she expressed a belief that her leadership style tendencies were consistent with the

transformational leadership style. Included in Table 2.2 is an analysis of her MLQ-5X survey

data. The MLQ-5X survey data for participant two shows an average score of 3.10. This means

that she expresses transformational leadership behavior fairly often. Ms. Huxtable also believes

more in effectiveness and satisfaction from work than extra effort. Both the survey data and the

data derived through interview were consistent indicators of a fairly consistent transformative

leader.

Ms. Huxtable believed that her experiences shaped her leadership style as it ensured she used her experiences to keep her focused on operating in excellence. The concluding request was that Ms. Huxtable provide sage advice to aspiring secondary principals and the advice she provided was as follows:

> *Never let the naysayers and any of the negativity sway you from your goals and*
> *ambitions. I think the good thing about schools and leadership is that there is always*
> *going to be someone out there that recognizes your talent.*

Ms. Huxtable stressed good work ethic and blooming where planted. The key terms participant two often used were: collaboration, inspire, results.

Ms. Lyon

Rise to the Principalship

Ms. Lyon is a middle school principal who has served for under five years as a secondary principal. Ms. Lyon and I scheduled our interview via phone. I was immediately taken aback at how personable and charismatic Ms. Lyon came across. She spoke both openly freely about her experiences often interjected jokes and making connections for me to better understand. Much of Ms. Lyon's interview was summarized to omit any responses that included names or statements that compromised her identity, former personnel and current school and district personnel. Ms. Lyons displayed on uncommon enthusiasm over the phone, I immediately felt as if I were speaking to an old friend. I began the interview by explaining why the research was of particular interest to me and then I moved on to ask Ms. Lyon why she chose to be a secondary

principal.

> *I had always worked in middle school, the little kids did not click with me. The*
> *secondary age group was more appropriate and more a fit for what my vision was to help*
> *children. In high school, we could have those conversations about who they want to be*
> *as an adult, where they want to go, and what those dreams are for the future. The middle*
> *school and high school level always seemed to be a great fit for me. My past*
> *administration was not one that I had planned. I was a trainer and wanted to continue*
> *along the path of being a support for teachers. I believe in servant leadership.*

Ms. Lyon continued by revisiting all of the roles she's played in education through support roles and her pros and cons for each position. Each position held, helped her clarify her step toward towards the secondary principalship. She was eventually recommended for an administrative position by a member of the district staff.

Gender Bias Experience

When moving on to the main topic of the interview, I began by asking Ms. Lyon if she believed her staff subscribed to certain ideas about an effective principal before she took the job that may have been grounded in gender specific attributes. Ms. Lyon did believe they had and that was mainly because she followed two men who'd previously led the school.

> *The previous principal was the "let it roll" kind of principal. I was hired through a*
> *panel of ten teachers, a totally different model used now. I knew what was wrong in the*
> *school during the interview because of the questions that were asked during the panel*
> *interview process. I knew that there was no professional learning. He (the former*

principal) was the friendly guy. The teachers grew frustrated. The next principal was

another male principal but his time there was short-lived. So the interview committee

was okay with my being a female principal mainly because they were looking for a

change.

As we continued the discussion on presumptions the staff held prior to her hire, we learned that

the gender bias experience was present, but birthed from fatigue the staff had developed with the

prior male principal. Ms. Lyon reflected on a bit of advice a colleague had given her before

taking the job.

Do not follow the legend, because it does not matter what you are going to do, it will not

measure up. I just laughed because I did not have to worry about that. For some, it is

hard because the preceding principal was beloved and quite successful. That was not

completely my story.

As the interview progressed, I asked Ms. Lyon to search for an experience that provided the

converse example to the first experience she conveyed. After careful reflection, she was

reminded of a particular male parent whom she have had several encounters with.

When I deal with male parents, it still happens to this day. I have one parent right now,

he is a six foot five retired military man. He loves to intimidate by physical presence. He

comes in and stands by the door on a Friday afternoon wanting to meet with me and

almost dare me to say no. I have learned, when I talk to him, to ask him to have a seat

and I will still stand so that I appear in charge. I do not use the round table to have a

collaborative conversation with him, I have tried that but it does not work. Even with my

secretary, his responses are very clipped and short. He often uses his presence to attempt

to intimidate me and I typically prepare for meetings with him to limit his goals of fear

creation. I had decided long ago that despite his attempts at intimidation, I would

maintain control of our meetings.

Leadership Style

Ms. Lyon was asked her level of familiarity with the leadership styles to include: transformational, transactional and passive-avoidant. She was not completely familiar with the leadership styles in formal definition, so I provided a brief summary of each style. Ms. Lyon reflected on the style of leadership she subscribes to most in daily practice.

I am the closest to the first one (transformational). I believe that we have to deal with

what comes to us as far as being proactive. I always tell my APs that we are going to

think two steps ahead. If we are going to make this decision, let us think down the road

or run a worst-case scenario.

MLQ-5X Survey Results

Table 2.3: Ms. Lyon

Participant	Mean	Standard Deviation	Items Scored
Leadership Style			36
Transformational	3.60	0.38	20
Transactional	2.25	1.41	8

Passive-Avoidant	1.63	0.88	8
Outcome of Leadership			9
Extra Effort	3.7	-	3
Effectiveness	3.25	-	4
Satisfaction	1.5	-	2

Ms. Lyon completed the MLQ-5X leadership survey. Through the qualitative interview phase, she expressed a belief that her leadership style tendencies were consistent with the transformational leadership style. Included in Table 2.3 is an analysis of her MLQ-5X survey data. The MLQ-5X survey data for Ms. Lyon shows an average score of 3.60. Her average score of 3.60 is between 3 and 4. Ms. Lyon also believes more in effectiveness and extra effort than overall satisfaction. Both the survey data and the data derived through interview were consistent indicators of a fairly consistent transformative leader.

When asked how or if the gender bias experience shaped her leadership style, participant three revealed that she always considers the people she serves. A chief habit that developed based on the feedback she received through the interviewing process and the first few months on the job, were to always anticipate the outcome. That practice is interwoven in the fabric of every response she provides to any scenario. The key terms participant three often used were: servant leadership, support, and collaboration.

Ms. Greenleaf

Rise to the Principalship

Ms. Greenleaf and I scheduled our interview via phone. We interviewed after school hours as to accommodate both schedules. Ms. Greenleaf is a veteran secondary leader serving for over five years as a middle school principal. Ms. Greenleaf came across quite confidently with succinct matter of fact responses. She has only served at particularly middle school and was clear that it was the only option for her. When asked why she chose the secondary level to serve as a principal, Ms. Greenleaf responded:

I have always taught 8ᵗʰ grade and I have always been at the middle school level as a

teacher and an administrator. I only desire the middle school level. High school is not

an option for me.

When asked if she believed the staff subscribed to certain ideals of a secondary principal when she took the job as principal, participant four responded:

No, none were perceived by me. I have been in a total of three different districts in my

teaching and administrative career and not any time have I received any gender bias

regarding my work or promotion factor.

Gender Bias Experience

As the interview progressed, we focused on a gender bias experience that may have occurred at any time or at any level of when working in education. Ms. Greenleaf did recall an experience she had with a student and the parent/guardian of the student.

There was a scenario that comes to mind and it involved a student who was not

accustomed to dealing with a strong woman. I did get some push back from the student's

mother because of the choices the student was making. In this particular case, the parent

perceived that I was being too strong and too strict with this student. She really did not

appreciate my approach. I think she was trying to compensate for dad not being in the

home. I guess she expected me to treat him like she treated him. I tried to help her

understand that the student would not be able to rule the classroom. That part was a

little bit different for me.

I continued the conversation by asking Ms. Greenleaf why she chose to define herself as strong.

I have high expectations for all the students. I am firm and believe in consistent

discipline policies but I also try to have positive relationships with students.

Leadership Style

Ms. Greenleaf and I moved into a discussion about her leadership style. I provided a

brief explanation of the three leadership styles (transformational, transactional and passive-

avoidant) measured by the MLQ-5X survey she would complete. I asked her which leadership

style she believe she subscribed to most and she believed she was a transformational leader.

I believe I am more a collaborative leader. I try to include others in decision-making

processes. I value the input from my teachers and my colleagues. I just feel that having a

"we" approach is always best. People feel empowered when they feel they are a part of a

process or a part of a decision. I just believe you get more out of people when you are

more inclusive as opposed to authoritative or dictatorial. I am totally the opposite of that

and believe in the power of working together with people.

MLQ-5X Survey Results

Table 2.4: Ms. Greenleaf

Participant	Mean	Standard Deviation	Items Scored
Leadership Style			36
Transformational	3.85	0.14	20
Transactional	2.63	0.53	8
Passive-Avoidant	0.25	0.35	8
Outcome of Leadership			9
Extra Effort	3.7	-	3
Effectiveness	3.75	-	4
Satisfaction	3.5	-	2

Ms. Greenleaf completed the MLQ-5X leadership survey. Through the qualitative

interview phase, she expressed a belief that her leadership style tendencies were consistent with

the transformational leadership style. Included in Table 2.4 is an analysis of her MLQ-5X

survey data.   The MLQ-5X survey data for Ms. Greenleaf shows an average score of 3.85. Her

average score of 3.85 is between 3 and 4. Ms. Greenleaf expresses transformational leadership

behavior characteristics with high frequency. Both the survey data and the data derived through interview were consistent indicators of a highly consistent transformative leader.

Ms. Greenleaf expressed a tendency to work with people especially when circumstances involved a decision that would influence several others. She believed she has always been a transformational leader and resolved early on not to be motivated by hierarchy when leading her staff. She discussed the support systems she had and the model leaders she had observed over the span of her career. She believed it was the combination of several influences and collaborations from others that helped shaped her leadership style. When asked what advice she would give to women aspiring to secondary principal roles, participant four advised that the candidates should always practice equitable and consistent processes in everything they do. The key terms participant three often used were: consistent, firm, fair and working together.

<div align="center">**Ms. Lopez**</div>

Rise to the Principalship

Ms. Lopez and I scheduled our interview via phone. Ms. Lopez was new to the principalship serving for the first year in the role of middle school principal. She served nearly 10 years as a secondary assistant principal and had experiences in both the private and public sector. Ms. Lopez expressed her interest in the study and how excited she was to participate in the research. She is chiefly interested in the outcome and determining whether or not women have shared common experiences.   When asked why she chose the secondary level to pursue a principalship, participant five responded:

Why secondary, because most of my career has been secondary. I really prefer the older

children because of their developmental process and my ability to have more adult,

lifelong conversations with them.

The interview continued with participant five explaining how she defined an effective secondary principal.

I do wonder if an effective secondary principal is any different than an effective

elementary school principal. I think the one biggest difference in regard to that piece, is

that you have to really appreciate where the kids are developmentally. My very brief stint

in elementary school helped me to know that I really do love small kids, I just do not

know if I want to do that every day all day. I think it is just because of where they are,

where I am and what my preference is. I am sensing that the leadership piece is probably

going to be the same at all levels. When I think about effectiveness, I think about

someone who displays a passion for the children. It is different than being a leader of a

bank or a leader of a marketing firm.

As the interview progressed, we begin to delve into the assumptions or perceptions of staff members. I asked Ms. Lopez if she believed there were preconceived notions about her developed amongst the staff when she began the job.

Absolutely, especially when it comes to certain levels. The experience you had with

regard to your former principal wanting a male because he needed a strong

disciplinarian says it all. I think many people still have that concept, that women can not

lead secondary high school levels particularly effectively because they are not strong

enough or because they are not tough enough or because they are not strict

disciplinarians. It is rooted in age-old gender biases that I think we work hard to

counteract.

Gender Bias Experience

Once Ms. Lopez acknowledged the depths of the pre-established perceptions of staff that women often fight to counteract, she likened her thoughts to her gender bias experience with her former principal.

> *What instantly came to mind after you talked about your experience, was the experience I*
>
> *had when I was hired as an Assistant Principal. The principal that hired me, resigned in*
>
> *the middle of the year to pursue her other interests and the interim principal was a male.*
>
> *He was leading another school but took on our school for the remainder of the year.*
>
> *Unfortunately, he very much wanted me to be a quiet silent partner. I use the word*
>
> *partner lightly because I do not really think he wanted a partner. He wanted someone he*
>
> *could tell what to do. We never explicitly talked about gender in the way your story*
>
> *relates but I really do believe that one of his issues was that I was a woman and he did*
>
> *not like my questioning him. Now he did say to me outright, I feel as if you question me*
>
> *all the time in public. To him anytime I asked him a question was disrespectful. To me, it*
>
> *was how I gained clarity.*

We continued the conversation with participant five reflecting on whether or not she believed the outcome would have been different had she been a man.

> *I think so, quite honestly I believe the situation would have been completely*

different had I been a white man. The principal would not have had such an issue

with my questioning, my wondering and my wanting for us to work together to

decide on things. I wanted a partnership and he did not. I think both race and

gender were a significant factor in our problematic relationship. Honestly, it was

one of the most difficult professional experiences I have ever encountered. I felt

disrespected, I felt diminished and he kept taking away responsibilities from me.

Eventually, my only job responsibility was student discipline. I prayed a lot, I

leaned on my faith, I vented a lot, I bit my lip a lot and tried to make it through. I

had never been so demoralized in a position before.

Leadership Style

I asked Ms. Lopez if she believed that experience plays in the back of her head as she

currently serves as secondary principal and whether or not it dictates how she leads her school

and interacts with staff.

That is a good question. What it does do is constantly inform how I mentor and how I

lead other staff members. I try hard to ensure that if I see another person is not well

fitted for a role, I work to coach them along the way. I also try to develop them and help

them to strengthen their areas of weakness. As far as the gender piece is concerned, I

have felt the need to tune into my street credibility if you will and puff out my chest a bit.

The environment dictates that I present to be a bit sterner. This is different from who I am

personally. I am typically easygoing but I work hard to maintain that respect as a leader.

We continued the discussion with Ms. Lopez reflecting on the leadership style she believed she

subscribed to most in practice. I summarized the differences between the three leadership styles (transformational, transactional and passive-avoidant).

> *My style is more transformational. I do believe people are motivated by rewards, I often reward my staff. There are also times when I wait to respond and allow things to play out. However, I prefer to confront issues head on to move onto the next thing, because there is always the next thing. I definitely believe I am more transformative.*

MLQ-5X Survey Results

Table 2.5: Ms. Lopez

Participant	Mean	Standard Deviation	Items Scored
Leadership Style			36
Transformational	3.90	0.14	20
Transactional	1.50	0.71	8
Passive-Avoidant	0.63	0.18	8
Outcome of Leadership			9
Extra Effort	4	-	3
Effectiveness	3.5	-	4
Satisfaction	3.5	-	2

Ms. Lopez completed the MLQ-5X leadership survey. Through the qualitative interview phase, she expressed a belief that her leadership style tendencies were consistent with the

transformational leadership style. Included in Table 2.5 is an analysis of her MLQ-5X survey data. The MQ-5X survey data for participant five shows an average score of 3.90. Her average score of 3.90 is between 3 and 4. Ms. Lopez expresses transformational leadership behavioral characteristics with high frequency. Both the survey data and the data derived through interview were consistent indicators of high characteristics of a transformative leader.

When asked if her gender bias experienced shaped her leadership style, participant five believed that her experience did influence how she interacts with her staff. She expressed a commitment to coaching her staff and ensuring they are at their best professionally. When asked what advice she would give to aspiring women secondary principals she responded:

> *That is a tough question. I hate to say it but it is true. I would not be telling the women anything that they do not know but I would say to them that they are going to have to be twice as good as a man. There will be both visible and invisible barriers to their success based on their gender. They should know that people are going to have immediate stereotypes of them based on who they are and who they believe they should be. So my advice would be: First and foremost always be yourself, make sure you understand what good leadership is and concentrate on being a good leader, regardless of gender.*

The key terms participant three often used were: partnership, relationship, and effective.

<div align="center">

Cross-Case Analysis

</div>

Common Themes and Experiences

This section examined the common themes that emerged during the interviews of the five research participants. When evaluating the shared experiences three salient themes emerged: (a)

A belief that gender bias still exists in educational leadership, (b) The influence the experience had on the leaders, and (c) Why the participants chose transformational leadership as the leadership style they subscribe to most. Each is considered in turn.

A belief that gender bias still exists in educational leadership

The gender bias experience each participant provided was specific to themselves, but common among the group. Each participant that had an experience, outlined a scenario that involved some level of bias created on the job which they believe would not have existed had they been male. Participant experiences ranged from interactions with parents to interactions with district officials. Ms. Lopez added a dimension of bias when she discussed her belief that her outcome would not only have been different had she not been a woman but also had she not been an African-American.

The influence the experience had on the leaders

All of the participants conveyed a varied level of influence after their encounter. Participants reported feeling: demoralized, frustrated, hurt, disrespected and angry after the experience. Participants who had gender bias experiences all believed that in some way, their experience shaped their leadership style, though most had not considered how much until they discussed the incident during the interview.

Why the participants chose transformational leadership as the leadership style they subscribe to most

All of the participants believed they were transformational leaders. They each

acknowledged their tendency to be very involved leaders, focusing efforts on the staff that responded positively to their supports most. They also expressed a desire to cease opportunities to inspire and develop staff members especially when it would benefit the school setting. Transformational leadership is defined as leadership approach that causes change in individuals and systems (Avolio & Bass)

Leaders who fall into this category are generally energetic, enthusiastic, and passionate. Each of the principals described themselves to be change agents and motivators. They each revealed a passion for collaborating with others and helping them grow to their levels of success.

Summary

Five participants were interviewed who lead varied school settings. The principal participants were divided with two groups one group having less than five years' experience and group two having more than five years' experience. The participant experiences also varied, showing interactions between staff, parents and supervisors that they believed involved some level of gender bias. They each had a consistent and common perception of their leadership style. They all believed themselves to be transformative leaders. Results from the MLQ-5 survey that each participant completed, revealed that all five of the participants did in fact exhibit a mean score that placed them in the range of a transformational leader. The principals also provided some level of advice that encouraged aspiring secondary principals to walk in confidence and to maintain practices that created consistent and fair work environments.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Women and men both believe that a "Good Ol' Boy" system still exists, which culturally marginalizes many administrators especially women (Hoff and Mitchell, 2008). People inherit biases oftentimes unknowingly based solely on the influence of the status quo. Males are more commonly associated with roles of leadership, so it is natural that the understanding of a leader is based on the characteristics of a male. The research focused on the gender bias experiences of five women who lead secondary schools and their associated leadership styles. The underlying question of the research sought to determine if common experiences and leadership styles connected the five participants. The guiding questions for this research topic are listed below:

1. What are the experiences of gender bias in the workplace with secondary female principals?

2. How do secondary female principals adjust or adapt their leadership style in response to experiences of gender bias?

This chapter represents summaries of the findings and an overview of each interview along with the leadership style connected to the participant.

Theoretical Frameworks

When considering the theories that framed this study, it is important to note the practical instances when the research participants showed evidence of the framework through their behaviors or verbal acknowledgement. The study hinged on both the premises of Social

Learning Theory and Critical Feminist Theory. The table below summarizes the connection between theories and participant reactions.

Table 3.1: Connecting Theory to Behavior

Theoretical Framework	Framework Summary	Participant Behaviors Connected to Framework
Critical Feminist Theory	Feminist theory (Kramarae, 1989, pp. 157-60) is a generic label for a perspective or group of theories that explores the meaning of gender concepts. Feminist theorists argue that almost all aspects of life can be understood in terms of gender qualities. The feminist critique aims to expose the powers as well as the limits of the gendered division of the world.	• All principals reported a belief that gender biases exist in educational leadership. • Several principals reported their experiences to be specific to their gender. • Research participants described their experiences through terms connected to the theory to include: oppressive, suppressed, discounted, etc.
Social Learning Theory	Social learning theory combines cognitive learning theory (which posits that learning is influenced by psychological factors) and behavioral learning theory (which assumes that learning is based on responses to environmental stimuli). Psychologist Albert Bandura integrated these two theories and came up with four requirements for learning: observation (environmental), retention (cognitive), reproduction (cognitive), and motivation (both). This integrative approach to learning was called social learning theory.	• Principals reported reflecting on their gender experiences when considering their best approach or response to given situations • Principals could readily recall specific events that connects to the way they lead

Critical Feminist Theory

Critical Feminist Theory assumes a similar position as the critical race theory. The theory recognizes the various oppressions that exist in America. The value of feminism is that it helps mobilize and unify the working class (MacKinnon, 1989). This study combined the assumption that there are clear separations in the expectations of a specific gender in the workplace and also a need create a common and inclusive approach to bridging that gap through leadership. The principals reported experiences specific to their gender. These experiences often left them with feelings of oppression, discontentment, and frustration. Through the process of consciousness raising, MacKinnon explains that women move beyond ideas to practice by obtaining "a lived knowledge of the social reality of being a female" (Dobrowolsky & Devlin, 1991). The crucial realization emerging from consciousness raising, are that men possess the power to dominate women or choose not to and that they as a group benefit from the subordination of women (MacKinnon, 1989).

Each participants' story gives insight into the realities of serving in positions that were previously reserved for men. What is greater than their experience alone, is how that experience changed them, more specifically, how that experience changed how they lead. The participants saw or felt some level of gender bias due to interactions with staff, students, parents or district personnel. The varied experiences did confirm the realities of biases and the depth of influence biases have within the educational system. Gender bias takes on a new understanding as the participants use their stories to add validity to its presence in education. Their stories revealed that biases not only influence the attainment of principalships for women, but it also influences

the perspectives of the people women will lead while serving in their roles. MacKinnon asserts

that male power is fundamental and that sexuality is neither natural nor biological but as social

construct of power (Dobrowolsky & Devlin, 1991). As a result, gender dates backward to

sexuality then to power as evidenced by several stereotypical behaviors, to include passitivity.

Based on the research of MacKinnon and the understanding of Bandura's Social Learning

Theory, one can conclude that pre-established assumptions for the role of secondary principal

will naturally influence the responses held by the women in those roles. As a final note, the

principals revealed one acute characteristic of the critical feminist theory, their unwillingness to

surrender. The principals shared a resilience and an unwavering commitment to succeed.

Social Learning Theory

When expanding the understanding of Social Learning Theory, Albert Bandura (1977)

posits behavior is learned from the environment through the process of observational learning.

Bandura believed that humans can learn through observations without the need for imitation.

This belief suggests that simply observing how people react to women principals is enough to

alter the way principals react to people or situations. Learning can be either direct or indirect

(vicarious) in that one could learn through observing others' behaviors and the consequences of

those behaviors (Bandura, 1977). Bandura also introduced the concept of self-regulation,

proposing that by visualizing self-generated consequences, humans can regulate their own

behavior (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1991).   The study centered on the belief that the five

participants had a bias experience relative to their gender which created an adjustment in their

leadership style. The participants all recounted an experience that they lived or observed that

may have altered their approach. Their acknowledgement of both the environmental experience

and the adjustment or regulation to their leadership behavior supports the research connected to

Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory.

At some point, the experience that was lived or observed through the eyes of the women

principals forced the process of reflection and/or adjustment and it plays out in their everyday

engagements as leaders. The principals all believed there to be some observation or experience

that influenced their leadership style and most times, they could readily point to their encounter

with gender bias as the motivating force behind how they lead. When considering the research

surrounding topics relative to women in leadership, traditional viewpoints focus on inhibits to

their success as leaders. Previous studies on the topic of women in leadership revealed common

barriers that women holding principalships face (Valverde, 2003; Rossman, 2000; Funk, 2004).

The barriers identified through previous studies include family/work conflict and sex/role

stereotyping, difficulty reconciling the traditional role as caretaker, mother, and nurturer with

high career expectations (Rossman, 2000).

This study extends beyond examining the barriers and focuses on the culture the women

principals' create while leading. Although the leadership style is a crucial component of this

study, it is not one that was reviewed in isolation. The study recognized that there are significant

differences in the expectations of leaders at the secondary level as opposed to the elementary

level. As such, it was important to review this topic from the perspective of the secondary

principal. The research revealed that over the span of several decades, there has been a steady

incline in women occupying the role of secondary principal. However, because the shift is gradually occurring, conflict and understanding of how to rate effectiveness at this level hinges on the examples set previously by men. These preset expectations assumed by many create opportunities for biases to exist. Although I recognize the biases that might exist at this level, the study expanded on the topic of gender bias in educational leadership to include the influence of those bias experiences on the way principals lead.

Previous literature on the leadership style of women, focus on various leadership styles women typically utilize. The research on this topic is usually conducted through a quantitative review of Likert scale surveys, with a goal of highlighting leadership styles commonly subscribed to by women. This research concluded with similar assertions about the leadership styles of women, having the tendency to be more participatory or collaborative (Stelter, 2002; Rosener, 1990). Each of the participants subscribed to some level of shared or collaborative leadership. They also all believed it was their responsibility to inspire and transform their subordinates.

Data from the Department of Education (2012) revealed that women represent 52% of the principal positions in the public school systems. The increase is nearly double what is was in the 1980s. While the research does suggest an equal balance of power between men and women, it significantly changes when examining women principals at the secondary level. Women principals make up 24 percent of the total population of principals at the secondary level, despite being more than 74 percent of the total teaching population. The disproportionality suggests a bias in the hiring practices and was confirmed through the stories of two research participants.

Phenomenology

When delving into the experiences of the participants individually, we do so from the lenses of phenomenology. Phenomenology is the study of the experience and how we experience it. Hursserl (1913) focused more on the ideal essential structures of consciousness when introducing the concept of transcendental phenomenology. When reviewing the gender bias experiences of the principals through the associated vocabulary terms they used to describe how the experience left them feeling, a richer understanding is gained. Ms. Lopez in particular reported feeling disregarded and demoralized. Having attained a principal position of leadership at the secondary level in itself was a process met with assumptions associated with carrying out the duties. These assumptions from staff, parents and other personnel were only compounded when they were validated by life altering gender bias experiences. The participants all believed that gender bias does exist in educational leadership.

The participants also revealed through their stories that the biases will present themselves in variety of settings, relationships and experiences. The meaning of those experiences served as catalyst for change. An example included Ms. Brady's experience. She believed she had been passed over for positions that she was both qualified and experienced due simply to her gender. She watched as her male counterpart secured a position for which he was significantly underprepared to assume. She also believes it happens more often than most care to admit. That experience in isolation is notable but its impact created the premise behind the process of analysis or reduction. Ms. Brady used the experience to create a more balanced approach to interacting with staff during the interview process. She contends that her experience encourages

her to review potential applicants from the position of equity, focusing only on the strength their credential and experience when hiring. This example is evidence of the concept of Phenomenology of Practice. The phrase "phenomenology of practice" refers to the kinds of inquiries that address and serve the practices of practitioners as well as the practices of everyday life (Manen, 2007).

The experiences held by each of the principals created an opportunity for reflection and consideration. Although all admitted to a belief that gender bias existed and was virtually unavoidable in educational leadership, neither could determine how they would encounter such an experience. They were also unable to predict how the experience would alter their perceptions or practices. Each principal interpreted the meaning of the experience differently. Some participants used the experience to create a normed response to a similar situation, while others merely reflected on the experience as a tool to inform their leadership styles. A brief summary of each case is provided. There will also be a discussion of the cross-case findings relative to each of the research questions.

Summary of Participant Interviews

The stories conveyed by the research participants represented a diverse set of experiences relative to gender bias. There were intersecting outcomes, which hinged on the leadership style they all subscribed to. Additionally, all of the leaders reported feeling the effects of the experience and questioning whether or not the experience would have been different had they not been a woman. A brief summary of each case is provided. There will also be a discussion of the

cross-case findings relative to each of the research questions.

Ms. Brady

Ms. Brady was a secondary principal with less than five years' experience. Her interview revealed an experience with gender bias that involved her interacting with parents as a coach. Ms. Brady believed the experience was an example of gender bias as some of the statements made by parents were specifically related to parent perceptions of her ineffectiveness as a coach because she was a woman. Ms. Brady believed her leadership style to be Transformative. After the data from the MLQ-5X survey she completed was analyzed, it revealed that her leadership style was Transformational Leadership (See appendix J - Table 2.1). Ms. Brady believed her experience shaped her leadership style by ensuring she always remains consistent and fair. She recalls that experience often when approaching any situation and considers how her reactions will affect all involved.

Ms. Huxtable

Ms. Huxtable was a secondary principal with less than five years' experience. Her interview revealed an experience with a gender bias that involved a district decision. Participant two wondered if her delayed promotion was specific to her gender. Ms. Huxtable believed her leadership style to be Transformative. After the data from the MLQ-5X survey she completed was analyzed, it revealed her leadership style was Transformational Leadership (See appendix J - Table 2.2). Ms. Huxtable believes her experience influenced her leadership style by ensuring she is consistently providing support and opportunities to professionally grow her staff. She believes that good work does not go unnoticed long and that accountability and work ethic are at the

center of any interactions with her staff.

Ms. Lyon

Ms. Lyon was a secondary principal with over five years' experience. She presented two gender bias experiences. Her first, was specific to staff at a school she had been appointed to. The former principals had been male and the staff seemingly welcomed the change in leadership and were excited about the attributes she would bring to the job. Her second experience was specific to an interaction with a parent. The parent often used his stature to attempt to intimidate her. She often anticipated the interactions with him and staged any meeting by using her body language to convey her authority and to show that she could not be intimidated. Ms. Lyon believed her leadership style to be Transformational. After the data from the MLQ-5X survey she completed was analyzed, it revealed her leadership style was Transformational (See appendix J - Table 2.3). Ms. Lyon believed her experience affected her leadership style as it always encouraged her to anticipate outcomes. She believes in making plans for success, collaborating often, and not backing down.

Ms. Greenleaf

Ms. Greenleaf was a secondary principal with over five years of experience. Her gender bias experience involved a parent of a student who had accused her of being too strict a disciplinarian. She resolved that her practices were fair and consistent but likely not the norm women displayed. Ms. Greenleaf believed her leadership style to be Transformative. After the data from the MLQ-5X survey she completed was analyzed, it revealed her leadership style was Transformational (See appendix J - Table 2.4). Ms. Greenleaf believed her experience confirmed

her commitment to consistent unwavering practices, despite opposition.

Ms. Lopez

Ms. Lopez was a secondary principal with less than five years' experience. Her gender bias experience involved her former principal, continuously questioning her need to ask questions or gain clarity before proceeding. She often felt inhibited in the workplace as tension between her and her male principal grew. She believed the issues stemmed from both her being a woman and her being an African-American. She believes that experience helped shape her leadership practices as it encourages her to consider to remain a source of continuous support and coaching for her staff. Ms. Lopez believed her leadership style to be Transformational. After the data from the MLQ-5X survey she completed was analyzed, it revealed her leadership style was Transformational (See appendix J - Table 2.5).

Summary of Participant Data Analysis

Table 3.1: Descriptive Analysis for all the Participants

Variable	Mean					Std. Deviation						Number of Items
Participant	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	One	Two	Three	Four	Five		
Leadership Style	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36
Transformational	3.90	3.10	3.60	3.85	3.90	0.2236	0.52	0.38	0.14	0.14		20
Transactional	2.25	1.88	2.25	2.63	1.50	1.7678	1.24	1.41	0.53	0.71		8
Passive-Avoidant	0.75	0.63	1.63	0.25	0.63	0.3536	0.88	0.88	0.35	0.18		8
Outcome of Leadership												9
Extra Effort	4.0	2.70	3.70	3.70	4.0	-	-	-	-	-		3
Effectiveness	4.0	3.75	3.25	3.75	3.50	-	-	-	-	-		4
Satisfaction	3.50	3.50	1.50	3.50	3.50	-	-	-	-	-		2

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics for all of the participants together with the outcome of

each leadership style for easy comparison. It is clear from Table 3 that all of the respondents

expressed a transformational leadership style between fairly often and frequently, if not always

because all their average scores were between 3 and 4. There were smaller standard deviations

from the average scores of the transformational leadership style compared to the transactional and passive-avoidant styles. While standard deviation here may not have much interpretation, it can be said that the values of the data on transformational leadership style obtained from the questionnaire were very close to the mean values obtained in the descriptive statistics.

Summary of Findings

The overarching question of this study centered on whether or not there is a common leadership style that secondary female principals subscribe to in response to experienced incidences of gender biases. In an effort to sufficiently respond to the guiding question, three research questions were considered. Each participant responded to the three research questions through interview and completion of the MLQ-5X survey. The data were then summarized to include common experiences amongst the women participants who lead secondary schools. The data summary for each of the research

Research Question One

What are the experiences of gender bias in the workplace with secondary female principals?

The interview data revealed that 100% of the principals interviewed, had experienced some level of gender bias in the field of education. The gender bias experiences ranged from interactions with parents, district personnel, and supervisors. The most frequently noted experiences were interactions between the women and parents. Secondary principals have to make sense of and approach difficult situations to increase student achievement. This sometimes is further

complicated for female secondary principals who not only have to deal with internal and external

pressures to lead successfully but are also scrutinized because of their gender (Thurman, 2004).

All of the participants sharing a gender bias experience reported having their motives questions

or their methods scrutinized heavily due to their gender. All of the participants believed that

gender bias is still present in educational leadership especially where women as secondary

principals are concerned.

Research Question Two

Which leadership style is most utilized amongst women who lead secondary schools?

According to Northouse (2001) in the simplest terms, transformational leadership is the ability to

get people to want to change, improve and be led. All of the principals believed themselves to be

transformative leaders. Their belief in their leadership style was supported by data derived from

the MLQ-5X survey the participants completed. Table 3 (See Appendix I) shows the descriptive

statistics for all of the participants together with the outcome of each leadership style for easy

comparison. It is clear from Table 3 that all of the respondents expressed a transformational

leadership style between fairly often and frequently, if not always because all their average

scores were between 3 and 4. All of the principals believed in collaborating with staff or

supporting them as they moved toward change efforts.

Research Question Three

Is the leadership style of the secondary principal influenced by gender bias experiences?

Helgesen (1990) proposed that female leaders are more likely to fill the need for participatory

leadership than men, by drawing upon characteristics that are encouraged to uphold as part of their femininity including an emphasis on cooperation rather than competition and equality rather than supervisor-subordinate hierarchy. Many of the secondary principals believed that their leadership style was in fact influenced by the gender bias experience they encountered. Most reported the experience forced them to remain equitable and consistent in their dealings with all stakeholders. They all reported the need to be supportive of their staff and help them achieve their goals. While the study did reveal a varied set of gender bias experiences, no direct correlations could be made between the experiences of the secondary principals and the leadership style they utilize. All principals reported reflecting on their past experiences when leading certain situations but none conveyed their experience to be one that permanently altered their leadership style. The advice the principals provided to aspiring secondary principals focused on maintaining equitable and consistent practices in all circumstances and being a competent and supportive leader.

Conclusions

Five women who serve as secondary principals gave voice to the concept of gender bias in education. Some experiences involved active and obvious interactions while others were minimal or non-existent. The voices the principals gave to the research helped validate the presence of gender bias in education. Moreover, the leadership style all of the women subscribed to was consistent with research findings in educational leadership when considering typical leadership styles of women. Rosener (1990) suggested through study, that women employ different leadership styles than men. However, limited studies have concluded that the

leadership differences among genders, made a difference in the level of effectiveness of the principals. Despite the secondary principal interactions, there was no indication that their effectiveness as a leader was heavily influenced by the experience they encountered. There was evidence to suggest that the experiences created the basis for reflective practices when responding to certain scenarios while leading. Information obtained from the interviews may be used to guide women aspiring to move toward positions of educational leadership. Based on the findings, the following implications are made for leaders in the field of education:

1. Although there were no direct correlations made between the gender bias experience and the leadership style of the women holding secondary principal positions, one may conclude that the experience does encourage reflection when a similar situation arises among the leaders.

2. The experiences captured by the research participants is essential to increase the knowledge base of the topic of gender bias in educational leadership and add clarity on the scenarios in which biases might exist. The findings from this study offer genuine and infrequently considered insight into some common interactions that might occur in the school.

3. The findings and conclusions from this study may serve principal preparation programs, particularly when preparing candidates for the establishment of equitable and consistent leadership practices. Women, in particular, might be interested in learning of the documented experiences of other leaders.

The study could serve as a basis for several additional studies, particularly when a measure of

effectiveness is added. Listed below are recommendations for further research:

1. Conduct research on the gender bias experiences of women through intersectionality of race.

2. Conduct research on principal effectiveness for women who lead secondary schools.

3. Conduct research on staff perspective of an ideal and effective secondary leader.

4. Conduct statistical research of the transition time from Assistant Principal to Principal between men and women comparatively.

Summary

Despite the scrutiny, female leaders are able to work with their school communities to create successful schools (Smuylan, 2000). I am often intrigued by the perseverance, tenacity, and success that is often birth from frustration or discomfort. As a woman who aspires to lead a secondary school one day, it was imperative that I considered all of the propellants along with the hindrances to my leadership effectiveness. I was chiefly interested in determining if my own gender bias experience was common and how women in similar situations moved beyond it. Moreover, I wanted to explore the leadership practices that women subscribe to when leading secondary schools. The methodology utilized in this study helped to create a sense of validity through the quantitative data attained through the MLQ-5X survey along with valuable insight into the stories beyond the numbers as attained through the qualitative interviews. The principal participants provided connected stories despite their different backgrounds, skill sets and leadership experiences. Without knowing it, each participant put words to past wounds that shape their present outlook in similar ways. This study illustrates their solid connection with

gender bias experiences and the participants' words may help to shape the reader's future

direction and leadership aspirations.

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Appendices

Appendix A - IRB Approval

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3" align="center">Georgia Southern University
Office of Research Services & Sponsored Programs

Institutional Review Board (IRB)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Phone: 912-478-5465</td><td></td><td>Veazey Hall 3000
PO Box 8005</td></tr>
<tr><td>Fax: 912-478-0719</td><td>IRB@GeorgiaSouthern.edu</td><td>Statesboro, GA 30460</td></tr>
</table>

To: Coaxum-Young, Angela
Jenkins-Henry, Toby

From: Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs
Administrative Support Office for Research Oversight Committees
(IACUC/IBC/IRB)

Approval Date: 3/10/2017

Subject: Status of Application for Approval to Utilize Human Subjects in Research
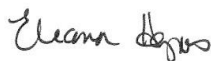

After a review of your proposed research project numbered **H17294** and titled **"Leading Ladies: A Study of the Influence of Gender Bias on Leadership Style for Women Who Lead Secondary Schools."** it appears that your research involves activities that do not require full approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) according to federal guidelines. In this research project research data will be collected anonymously.

According to the Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Part 46, your research protocol is determined to be exempt from full review under the following exemption category(s):

B2   Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (I) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (II) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Any alteration in the terms or conditions of your involvement may alter this approval. *Therefore, as authorized in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to notify you that your research, as submitted, is exempt from IRB approval. No further action or IRB oversight is required, as long as the project remains the same. If you alter the project, it is your responsibility to notify the IRB and acquire a new determination of exemption. Because this project was determined to be exempt from further IRB oversight, this project does not require an expiration date.*

Sincerely,

Eleanor Haynes
Compliance Officer

Appendix B - INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Principal Interview Questions

Participant: **Date:**   **Place:**

Title: LEADING LADIES: A STUDY OF GENDER BIAS INFLUENCES ON LEADERSHIP

STYLES FOR WOMEN WHO LEAD SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The interview process will be divided into a series of four phases. Feel free to be as open

and honest as possible, however, please omit any statements that compromise the confidentiality

of your responses.

Phase 1 - Rise to the Principalship

1. When did you know you wanted to be a secondary principal, and why did you
specifically choose this level?

2. How would you define and effective secondary principal?

Phase 2 - Gender Bias Experience

1. Do you feel that most of your staff members subscribe to certain assumptions of an ideal
secondary principal? If so, what are they?

2. Have you ever had a work-related experience where your gender was an underlying
concern for someone (be it a staff member, a colleague or a supervisor)?

3. At what point did you know you were being confronted with gender bias? Please detail
the account. (Follow-up Question, as necessary)

4. Were there any associated emotions to the gender bias experience that you can recall?

5. Do you believe the experience you have described could only happen to women? Why or why not? (Follow-up Question, as necessary)

Phase 3 – Leadership Style

1. Which leadership style do you subscribe to most (Transformational, Passive-Avoidant, Transactional, etc.)?

2. How have your past experiences shaped your leadership style and can you provide examples of how you're past experiences have shaped your leadership style?

Phase 4 – Concluding Thoughts

1. You were recently promoted to district director over the women in secondary leadership department. During meeting one with the aspiring secondary principals, you are asked to provide some sage advice to the future secondary leaders, what would it be?

2. Are there any additional points you would like to make?

Appendix C - QUESTION MATRIX

Interview Question Matrix

Research Question	Interview Questions
What are the experiences of gender bias in the workplace with secondary female principals?	1.1,1.2; 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5,
Which leadership style is most utilized most amongst women who lead secondary schools?	2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1
Is the leadership style of the secondary principal influenced by gender bias experiences?	2.1, 3.2, 4.1

Appendix D - MLQ 5X

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Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire™

Instrument (Leader and Rater Form)
and Scoring Guide
(Form 5X-Short)

by Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass

Published by Mind Garden, Inc.

info@mindgarden.com

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of an existing Mind Garden instrument, manual, or workbook, you agree that it is your

legal responsibility to compensate the copyright holder of this work -- via payment to

Organization ID #: _____ Leader ID #: _____

This questionnaire is to describe your leadership style as you perceive it. Please answer all items

on this answer sheet. **If an item is irrelevant, or if you are unsure or do not know the**

answer, leave the answer blank.

Forty-five descriptive statements are listed on the following pages. Judge how frequently each

statement fits you. The word "others" may mean your peers, clients, direct reports, supervisors,

and/or all of these individuals.

Use the following rating scale:

Not at all	Once in a while	Sometimes	Fairly often	Frequently, if not always
0	1	2	3	4

1.	I provide others with assistance in exchange for their efforts..	0 1 2 3 4
2.	I re-examine critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate	0 1 2 3 4
3.	I fail to interfere until problems become serious	0 1 2 3 4
4.	I focus attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from standards	0 1 2 3 4
5.	I avoid getting involved when important issues arise	0 1 2 3 4

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Characteristic	Scale Name	Scale Abbrev	Items
Transformational	Idealized Attributes or Idealized Influence (Attributes)	IA or II(A)	10,18,21,25
Transformational	Idealized Behaviors or Idealized Influence (Behaviors)	IB or II(B)	6,14,23,34
Transformational	Inspirational Motivation	IM	9,13,26,36
Transformational	Intellectual Stimulation	IS	2,8,30,32
Transformational	Individual Consideration	IC	15,19,29,31
Transactional	Contingent Reward	CR	1,11,16,35
Transactional	Mgmt by Exception (Active)	MBEA	4,22,24,27
Passive Avoidant	Mgmt by Exception (Passive)	MBEP	3,12,17,20
Passive Avoidant	Laissez-Faire	LF	5,7,28,33

Characteristic	Scale Name	Scale Abbrev	Items
*Outcomes of Leadership	Extra Effort	EE	39,42,44

Outcomes of Leadership	Effectiveness	EFF	
	37,40,43,45		
Outcomes of Leadership	Satisfaction	SAT	38,41

*As the term connotes, the Outcomes of Leadership are not Leadership styles, rather they are outcomes or results of leadership behavior.

For Dissertation and Thesis Appendices:

You cannot include an entire instrument in your thesis or dissertation, however you can use up to five sample items. Academic committees understand the requirements of copyright and are satisfied with sample items for appendices and tables. For customers needing permission to reproduce five sample items in a proposal, thesis, or dissertation the following page includes the permission form and reference information needed to satisfy the requirements of an academic committee.

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To whom it may concern,

This letter is to grant permission for the above named person to use the following

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Authors: *Bruce Avolio and Bernard Bass*

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Sincerely,

Robert Most
Mind Garden, Inc.
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Appendix E - QUESTION MATRIX

Data Collection Matrix

Participant	Interview	MLQ-5X Survey Completion	MLQ-5X Survey Review & Analysis
Ms. Brady	X	X	X
Ms. Huxtable	X	X	X
Ms. Lyon	X	X	X
Ms. Greenleaf	X	X	X
Ms. Lopez	X	X	X

Table 1.2: Descriptive Data

Pseudonym	*Total Years' Experience*	*School Level*	*Size of School*
Ms. Brady	More than five	Middle School	1000-1500 students
Ms. Huxtable	Less than five	High School	2000-2500 students
Ms. Lyon	Less than five	Middle School	1000-1500 students
Ms. Greenleaf	More than five	Middle School	1000-1500 students
Ms. Lopez	Less than five	Middle School	Under 500 students

Appendix F - DATA REPRESENTATION CHART

Participant Name	Less than Five Years Principal Experience	More than Five Years Principal Experience	Leadership Style (Based on Interview)	Leadership Style (Based on MLQ-5X Survey Results)	Experience Relative to: (Staff, Parents, District, Community)
Ms. Brady	X		Transformative	Transformative 3.90	Parent
Ms. Huxtable	X		Transformative	Transformative 3.10	District
Ms. Lyon		X	Transformative	Transformative 3.60	Staff, Parent
Ms. Greenleaf		X	Transformative	Transformative 3.85	Parent
Ms. Lopez	X		Transformative	Transformative 3.90	Staff (Supervisor)

Appendix G - MLQ-5X INDIVIDUAL SURVEY DATA

Table 2.1: Ms. Brady

Participant	Mean	Standard Deviation	Items Scored
Leadership Style			36
Transformational	3.90	0.2236	20
Transactional	2.25	1.7678	8
Passive-Avoidant	0.75	0.3536	8
Outcome of Leadership			9
Extra Effort	4	-	3
Effectiveness	4	-	4
Satisfaction	3.5	-	2

Table 2.2: Ms. Huxtable

Participant	Mean	Standard Deviation	Items Scored
Leadership Style			36
Transformational	3.10	0.52	20
Transactional	1.88	1.24	8
Passive-Avoidant	0.63	0.88	8
Outcome of Leadership			9
Extra Effort	2.7	-	3
Effectiveness	3.75	-	4
Satisfaction	3.5	-	2

Table 2.3: Ms. Lyon

Participant	Mean	Standard Deviation	Items Scored
Leadership Style			36
Transformational	3.60	0.38	20
Transactional	2.25	1.41	8
Passive-Avoidant	1.63	0.88	8
Outcome of Leadership			9
Extra Effort	3.7	-	3
Effectiveness	3.25	-	4
Satisfaction	1.5	-	2

Table 2.4: Ms. Greenleaf

Participant	Mean	Standard Deviation	Items Scored
Leadership Style			36
Transformational	3.85	0.14	20
Transactional	2.63	0.53	8
Passive-Avoidant	0.25	0.35	8
Outcome of Leadership			9
Extra Effort	3.7	-	3
Effectiveness	3.75	-	4
Satisfaction	3.5	-	2

Table 2.5: Ms. Lopez

Participant	Mean	Standard Deviation	Items Scored
Leadership Style			36
Transformational	3.90	0.14	20
Transactional	1.50	0.71	8
Passive-Avoidant	0.63	0.18	8
Outcome of Leadership			9
Extra Effort	4	-	3
Effectiveness	3.5	-	4
Satisfaction	3.5	-	2

Appendix I - MLQ-5X COLLECTIVE SURVEY DATA

Table 3.2: Descriptive Analysis for all the Participants

Variable	Mean					Std. Deviation						Number of Items
Participant	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	One	Two	Three	Four	Five		
Leadership Style	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36
Transformational	3.90	3.10	3.60	3.85	3.90	0.2236	0.52	0.38	0.14	0.14		20
Transactional	2.25	1.88	2.25	2.63	1.50	1.7678	1.24	1.41	0.53	0.71		8
Passive-Avoidant	0.75	0.63	1.63	0.25	0.63	0.3536	0.88	0.88	0.35	0.18		8
Outcome of Leadership												9
Extra Effort	4.0	2.70	3.70	3.70	4.0	-	-	-	-	-		3
Effectiveness	4.0	3.75	3.25	3.75	3.50	-	-	-	-	-		4
Satisfaction	3.50	3.50	1.50	3.50	3.50	-	-	-	-	-		2

Appendix J-   CODING CATEGORIES

Coding Categories

IN VIVO CODES

RISE TO THE PRINCIPALSHIP				
PARTICIPANT ONE	PARTICIPANT TWO	PARTICIPANT THREE	PARTICIPANT FOUR	PARTICIPANT FIVE
Less than five years experience Always worked at the secondary level Believes staff generally want the best person for the job, without consideration to gender Has only served in leadership at the secondary level First school assigned to as a principal	Less than five years experience Career changer Interest in leadership grew from her intrigue with the school improvement process Has served at both middle and high school Believed athletics experience usually a huge factor in deciding on a high school principal	More than five years experience Served in several roles of instructional support before transitioning to administration Is not interested in the elementary level Loves being a part of the decision making process for the older students Knew the school's needs during the interviewing process	More than five years experience Has only worked at the middle school level Has no desire to be a high school principal Taught 8th grade Did not believe staff subscribe to a certain set of ideals based on gender Is a fan of the data teaming process	Less than five years experience Worked in elementary but didn't think it was for her Has worked in the private, public and charter setting as an administrator Spent the bulk of her leadership experience as a public high school assistant principal

GENDER BIAS EXPERIENCE				
PARTICIPANT ONE	PARTICIPANT TWO	PARTICIPANT THREE	PARTICIPANT FOUR	PARTICIPANT FIVE
A parent made comments about gender while serving as head coach	Was passed over for a job in which she knew she was the stronger candidate for	Succeeded a job after two male principals Was welcomed by	Gender bias experience was relative to the way she managed her classroom	A supervisor questioned her loyalty

Feelings of Frustration	Remembered feeling frustrated and hurt	staff in general	Parent(s) accused her of being harsh/strong a disciplinarian	Accused her of not being a team player
Solicited the support of her then principal to resolve conflict	Chose not to allow the feelings to consume her	Had a separate experience involving a parent	She felt the perceptions were steeped in gender as they were seen as acceptable with her male counterparts	She felt the negative interactions stem from both her gender and her race
The experience left her unwilling to coach again	Believed there are gender based undertones in the hiring process	Parent often used his stature to attempt to intimidate her		
Appreciated the support of her then principal	Believes hard work will eventually be noticed	She often prepared for meetings with the parent by using proximity, gestures and body language to assert authority		She eventually learned to simply "do her job" and not question the principal
Still remembers some of the comments the parent(s) made toward her		She always anticipates the worse case scenario when interacting with others		
Wondered what she could have done differently				

LEADERSHIP STYLE				
PARTICIPANT ONE	PARTICIPANT TWO	PARTICIPANT THREE	PARTICIPANT FOUR	PARTICIPANT FIVE
Transformative	Transformative	Transformative	Transformative	Transformative
Believes in Being fair and consistent	Believes in providing opportunities to professional develop staff	Solicits the input from members of her administrative team	Believes in remaining fair and consistent	Believes in collaboration
Makes no consideration to gender when hiring or choosing personnel	Works hard to enhance the experiences of her staff	Anticipates the outcomes	Appreciates collaboration/ Working Together	Works to coach staff and support them
Focuses on getting the best person to do the job as opposed the gender	Believes in collaboration	Is often considered a fix-it type principal		Considers tasks and personnel and finds the perfect fit
		Seizing every opportunity to		

		inspire and support		
of a person Believes in supporting staff Provides Collaborative Leadership Inspirational	Likes to be a support to her staff, students and community			

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

PARTICIPANT ONE	PARTICIPANT TWO	PARTICIPANT THREE	PARTICIPANT FOUR	PARTICIPANT FIVE
Being fair and consistent Looking for the best person for the job	Good work will not go unnoticed Show your worth through your work	Believes in making plans for success Not backing down Collaborate often Maintaining a positive environment amongst staff and interactions with parents and com	Collaborate as often as possible Be firm, fair and consistent	Work twice as hard as male counterparts Be

Appendix K-   Theory to Behavior

Table 3.1: Connecting Theory to Behavior

Theoretical Framework	Framework Summary	Participant Behaviors Connected to Framework
Critical Feminist Theory	Feminist theory (Kramarae, 1989, pp. 157-60) is a generic label for a perspective or group of theories that explores the meaning of gender concepts. Feminist theorists argue that almost all aspects of life can be understood in terms of gender qualities. The feminist critique aims to expose the powers as well as the limits of the gendered division of the world.	• All principals reported a belief that gender biases exist in educational leadership. • Several principals reported their experiences to be specific to their gender. • Research participants described their experiences through terms connected to the theory to include: oppressive, suppressed, discounted, etc.
Social Learning Theory	Social learning theory combines cognitive learning theory (which posits that learning is influenced by psychological factors) and behavioral learning theory (which assumes that learning is based on responses to environmental stimuli). Psychologist Albert Bandura integrated these two theories and came up with four requirements for learning: observation (environmental), retention (cognitive), reproduction (cognitive), and motivation (both). This integrative approach to learning was called social learning theory.	• Principals reported reflecting on their gender experiences when considering their best approach or response to given situations • Principals could readily recall specific events that connects to the way they lead