

## **CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM**

### **Introduction**

Statistics revealed that women do two-thirds of the world's work, receive one-tenth of its income, and own one-hundredth of its property, as stated in the 1985 United Nations report on a ten-year study of equality (Palmer & Hyman, 1990).

Since the Second World War when the nation required help of women to keep an economic balance when the men went off to war, women have searched for careers outside the home. Since the 1960s, the number of women in management has doubled to more than 3 million (Palmer & Hyman, 1990).

Although the pool of experienced women who can be tapped for management positions is growing, the pathway to power is blocked with obstacles for women (Josefowitz, 1990). Much discussion in the literature focuses on whether women possess the behavioral and psychological characteristics for a manager. Stead (1985) cites the six different viewpoints regarding the capabilities of women as managers which appear in the literature:

1. Women want to do the work and could do well if the (presumably male) system lets them.
2. Women can do the work but do not want to try, even though the system would let them.
3. Women cannot do the work and do not want to try.
4. Women want to do the work but cannot handle it due to their psychological makeup or prior socialization.
5. Women want to do the work but do not have the requisite technical and administrative skills.
6. Women want to do the work and could do it if they knew how to "wire" the system--that is, if they knew how to gain access to information channels of influence and information, secure mentors, etc.

Much of the research on women leaders has been done using the criteria of leadership and management characteristics from the studies of men (Helgesen, 1990; Gilligan, 1982). In the last five years, more researchers have concluded that women lead and manage differently from men (Helgesen, 1990; Rosener, 1990).

Much attention has surfaced in business journals, studies, and newspaper clippings about the small percentage of women who occupy management positions in school and business. How do women lead? Why aren't they being promoted to the highest levels? Why aren't they receiving top administrative jobs? Do they have mentors? These questions point the way to continued research about women in educational leadership.

Studies have determined that the leadership style of women could be viewed as transformational and operating as a web--connecting with others. Names such as

Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Kathy Ferguson, Colleen Bell, Jane Roland Martin, Peggy McIntosh, Jean Baker Miller, Liz Roman Gallese, Chantal Vessely, Charol Shakeshaft, Sally Helgesen, Susan Chase, and Mary Field Belinky began to emerge through the literature of women's studies in the latter half of the last decade. Carol Gilligan in her studies and eventual book, *In a Different Voice*, led in building public awareness about the different ways of “knowing” and “understanding” for women (Gilligan, 1982).

These authors, all women, identified those female characteristics that contributed to women achieving a leadership position. These characteristics included nurturing, listening, developing relationships, operating from reaching out instead of reaching down, using a web of inclusion instead of a hierarchical structure and empowering others.

As educators, women date back to prehistoric times. H.G. Wells theorized that both education and religion, in their truest form, were initiated by women (Guy & Farrell, 1982). He expressed that women were probably the first in every profession and trade, with the exception of those associated with killing. The question then arises, if women trailblazed different professions, including education, why haven't women achieved at least equitable occupational status with men?

### **Statement of the Problem**

In fact, women's representation in administrative positions is still far from proportionate to their representation in all of education. Women have always been the majority sex in educational systems. Female teachers represented 66% of the teaching force in 1870, and their representation grew to 85% by the 1930s (Shakeshaft, 1989). Today it is about 66%. Women now hold a smaller percentage of leadership positions than they did fifty years ago (Shakeshaft, 1992). The 1993 national survey by the American Association of School Administrators yielded the following results: female superintendents constitute 7.1% of the total; female deputy/associate/assistant superintendents constitute 24.3% of the total; female school principals constitute 34.2% of the total; women in other school administrative positions constitute 40% of the total (Montenegro, 1993). Forty-nine states and the District of Columbia responded to a request for data. Virginia, however, did not respond to the request; consequently, this study will focus on percentages in Virginia.

Given the magnitude of the history and low percentage of females in educational leadership positions, it is important to examine the career paths and numbers of women in educational management and executive levels in Virginia.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the distribution of males and females in line and staff roles in selected school district offices in Virginia and to determine factors, which influenced this distribution. In a two-phase study, data were collected regarding the distribution, job responsibilities, backgrounds, and preparation of men and women holding central office administrative positions in randomly selected school districts in Virginia.

The research questions were:

1. What is the gender distribution in central office positions?
2. What is the percentage of central office positions by gender based upon the total office gender representation in line and staff positions?
3. What is the gender distribution in line and staff positions?
4. What is the gender distribution in central office positions by region?
5. What is the percentage of central office positions by gender based upon the total office gender representation in line and staff positions by region?
6. What is the gender distribution in line and staff positions by region?
7. What is the gender distribution in central office positions by enrollment size?
8. What is the percentage of central office positions by gender based upon the total office gender representation in line and staff positions by enrollment size?
9. What is the gender distribution in line and staff positions by enrollment size?
10. In what way do the selected case study subjects portray their aspirations, their perceived barriers to promotion, their mentors, and their perceptions of gender in central office?

### **Justification of Study**

The distribution of jobs held by males and females along line and staff positions in certain Virginia districts taken from the Virginia Educational Directory gave cause for inquiry ( see Appendix A). Female leadership has declined in the last five decades

in certain administrative levels, yet so many educators are women. The conclusions drawn from a distribution study should be significant to those responsible for equal opportunity for women in these leadership positions.

The Virginia State Department of Education in its annual report does not classify the administrative/central office positions by gender. Therefore, when the Minority/Women Affairs Office of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) published their 1993 report on the numbers of women nationwide in educational administration, they were unable to report the numbers for Virginia. It is intended that one finding of this study is to provide a distribution by gender of central office personnel for certain school districts in Virginia.

### **Assumptions**

Several assumptions can be inferred from the literature on women managers. First, the literature gives a profile of the woman manager and her chosen career path (Shakeshaft, 1989; Kanter, 1977; Helgesen, 1990). Second, the literature indicates barriers to this position, both internal and external. These barriers include sex-role stereotyping, lack of mentoring, and family and marriage. Lack of encouragement from school board members, professors, and male administrators can be a barrier in deciding whether a female reaches a certain administrative position (Marshall, 1986). The literature also assumes that if women do certain things, then they will have a better chance at progressing into an executive position.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

This study is restricted to those women and men currently holding central office positions in the state of Virginia. It is understood that the management, administrative, or leadership team will have different membership and different job duties in different-sized school districts.

### **Definition of Terms**

For the purpose of this study, definitions of the terms include the following:

Administrator. A person who puts into effect the policies and rules of an organized group (Boles & Davenport, 1975).

Coordinator. A coordinator is a person responsible for integrating the work of two or more individuals, each of whom is performing a task related to tasks being performed by other members of the social system (Boles & Davenport, 1975).

Director. A director is a person responsible for getting a given function performed within an organization (Boles & Davenport, 1975).

Executive. An executive is any person who, by virtue of his or her position or knowledge, is responsible for a contribution that materially affects the capacity of the organization in which he or she works to perform and to obtain results (Boles & Davenport, 1975).

Gatekeeper. People who control access to the position of superintendency; i.e., school board members (Chase, 1990).

Glass Ceiling. Those artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevent qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization into management-level positions (Department of Labor, 1991).

Instructional personnel. Personnel who are responsible to the chief school official for the character and quality of the entire instructional program in the school district and who provide the instruction directly to the students (Evans, 1980).

Line position. The position that is the direct link with the basic objective of the organization. The line positions carry out the organization's essential functions. The title of a line position usually reflects task and authority of the individual. Subordinates can not go over this position, but through this position (Starling, 1986). For the purpose of this study, an example of a line position is director of instruction.

Manager. A manager is a person who gets work done by people or things. The term is typically used in regard to persons in business or industry, where it is further defined to mean one who makes decisions about utilization of machines, manpower, materials, and time (Boles & Davenport, 1975).

Mentor. A sponsor, teacher, or coach whose functions are to make introductions or to train a person to move effectively through the system, to promote that person for promising opportunities (Kanter, 1977).

Network. A support system of personal and professional associations which facilitate the professional progress of oneself and other competent professionals: a professional state which occurs when a person who has reached a power position in the system extends herself to facilitate the progress of other competent persons (Gabler, 1987).

Non instructional personnel. Personnel who usually work in a staff relationship with the instructional personnel on matters of budgeting, purchasing of instructional supplies, learning resources, hiring, transportation, and other matters where instruction is provided indirectly to the students (Evans, 1980).

Staff position. An indirect link with the objective of the organization. The staff investigates, researches, and advises the person in charge. Only through their boss can the staff influence line decisions (Starling, 1986). For the purpose of this study, an example of a staff position is the supervisor of special education.

Superintendent. Chief executive officer of the school board whose professional counsel on the administration and cooperation of the system is essential to the board's policy-making, decisions, and other action (Knezevich, 1984).

Supervisor. A supervisor is a person responsible for helping others to improve their work (Boles & Davenport, 1975).

### **Overview of Subsequent Sections**

The remainder of this study will include Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5. Chapter 2 will give an overview of related research on women in leadership and educational leadership. Chapter 3 will contain the research design and methodology for both phases of the study. Chapter 4 will include findings and analysis of the data, charts and tables. Chapter 5 will be a summary and discussion of the research findings, conclusions and recommendations for further research.

## **CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

### **Introduction**

The review of research about women leaders in education covers information on the following categories: Leadership and women, a historical glance at women in educational leadership, numbers of women representing executive positions, glass ceilings for women educators, explanations for the underrepresentation of women in educational leadership, and conclusions.

### **Leadership and Women**

Bennis (1989) notes more than 350 definitions of leadership recorded in the literature. Leaders continue to add to these definitions with their experiences. Cunningham (Phi Delta Kappan, 1985), a superintendent search consultant, states:

Leadership is the capacity to balance big issues and small ones, to respect genuinely those who differ, to avoid compromising larger objectives for short term gains. Leaders must elicit confidence on the part of most of their publics most of the time, and they must do it while openly exhibiting feet of clay. Leadership is being responsive and initiatory simultaneously. It is the curious blend of leading and following, provoking and calming, disturbing and stabilizing, but always in a posture of movement, generating new strength and capacity along the way.

Leadership studies generally have dealt with approaches to leadership; Adler and Rodman (1988) identify (1) the power-influence approach (2) the trait approach (3) the behavior approach and (4) the situational approach. The power-influence approach attempts to explain leadership effectiveness in terms of the source and amount of power available to leaders and the manner in which leaders exercise power over followers. The trait approach emphasizes the personal qualities of leaders, such as tireless energy, unusual foresight, and persuasive skill. The behavior approach emphasizes how leaders act. The situational approach emphasizes the importance of such factors as the nature of the task performed by the group and the nature of the external environment.

Adler and Rodman (1988) segregated leadership over the last decade into three styles: the authoritarian style, the democratic style, and the laissez-faire style. The authoritarian style uses legitimate, coercive and reward power to dictate what will happen in a group. The democratic style invites others to share in the decision making. The third style, the laissez-faire, allows the leaders to give up the power to dictate, transforming the group into a collection of equals without a leader. With each style, interpersonal relationships or productivity is sacrificed. Authoritarian leaders get the job done, but at

the risk of personal relationships. Laissez-faire leaders help build relationships and equality, but sacrifice productivity (Adler & Rodman, 1988).

Fiedler attempted to find out what approach works best in what situation. He attempted to find out when a task-oriented approach was more effective and when a relationship-oriented style was more effective. He developed a situational theory of leadership, the leader's style would change with the circumstances. Leaders consider the relationship needs of their subordinates as well as the demands of the task at hand (Adler & Rodman, 1988).

Many studies have indicated that men's and women's leadership styles are different (Helgesen, 1990; Gilligan, 1982; Rosener, 1990; Gross & Trask, 1976). Women tend to be more nurturing and men tend to be more command and control. Research is now showing those styles demonstrated by women can be as or more effective as those styles depicted by male leaders (Whitaker & Lane, 1990).

Bell and Chase (1989) examined the leadership styles of 27 women superintendents. They found that the women conceived of leadership as an integration of task and relationship concerns. To achieve these ends, the women superintendents committed themselves to teaching and learning. Other researchers indicate that women administrators interact more frequently than men with teachers, students, parents, non-parent community members, professional colleagues and superordinates (Shakeshaft, 1989; Ortiz & Marshall, 1988).

Through their interviews, Bell and Chase (1989) found that women superintendents talked about resisting the dehumanizing effects of bureaucracy but conformed to "bureaucratic norms, procedures, and language, when necessary." The women superintendents used strategies that facilitated the participation and growth of staff and shared decision making with their staff. These women employed strategies that encouraged a two-way exchange of information rather than a top-down flow of information. They encouraged information and dialogue from people working for them.

Women superintendents tend to use participatory team management by involving staff in setting goals and long-range plans and programs. These superintendents tend to have coalitions within the community (Gotwalt & Towns, 1986). Floretta McKenzie, former superintendent of Washington, D. C. public schools, states that one essential quality of the superintendent is to have "political adroitness" and the ability to communicate clearly (Gotwalt & Towns, 1986).

Cooper's study (1993) supported the idea of women resisting the formal bureaucracy. She identified three categories of bureaucratic pressures: those faced by all members within the organization, those faced by administrators, and those faced by women as token members. She discovered that women in administrative positions attempted to empower themselves and to bring about change in the organization.

This style resembles the Theory Z style (similar to total quality management) used in companies and businesses. Theory Z concentrates on cooperation and consensus decision making. It emphasizes the point that involvement of workers helps increase the productivity. It supports integrative management where all workers participate in making decisions about issues that affect them in their work. In education, site-based

management and effective schools research support the use of inclusion, support, and care of all (Palmer & Hyman, 1990).

Gross and Trask (1976) concluded women principals have a greater knowledge of instructional supervision. Superiors and teachers preferred women over men. Students' academic performance and teachers' professional performance rated higher under women principals. Women were more effective administrators as defined by their staff and students. Supervisors and teachers preferred the decision-making and problem-solving behaviors of women. Women principals were more concerned with helping deviant pupils. Women principals placed more importance on technical skills and organizational responsibility as a criterion for evaluating teachers.

According to Banks, who led a 1984 University of Texas study involving fifty leaders in business and organizations, women do not need to suppress compassion, intuition, cooperation and empathy--they need to expand them in their leadership roles. As far as success, it was found that the lack of self-confidence was one of the most significant roadblocks to success (Women's Executive Bulletin, 1989). There was a tendency for these women leaders to be the first-born in their families, to have had strong academic records in high school and college, and to have viewed their fathers or grandmothers as primary role models as they were growing up (Women's Executive Bulletin, 1989).

Studies have indicated that women tend to be more relationship-oriented than task-oriented in their management and leadership styles (Gilligan, 1982; Hollander, 1985; Shakeshaft, 1989; Helgesen, 1990; Rosener, 1990). Sergiovanni (Brant, 1992) states that transformational leaders vary their leadership to be effective. Transformational leadership exhibits both feminine and masculine characteristics. In his studies on leadership in the schools, he found women tend not to define success and achievement in competitive and individualistic terms. As a group, women are more concerned with community and sharing. He bases his opinion on the literature on successful schools which shows that while women are underrepresented in principalships, they are overrepresented in successful principalships (Brandt, 1992). Shakeshaft (1989) reported that women tend to view the job of superintendent as that of a master teacher or educational leader while men view it from a managerial perspective.

Rosener (1990) states that strength exists in a diversity of leadership styles. Women have discovered that using the command-and-control style of managing others usually associated with men in large, traditional organizations is not the way to their success. Women used the "rules of conduct" that spelled success for them to break the new ground because they didn't know any other way. Studies show that certain characteristics ordinarily thought to be feminine and inappropriate in leaders are considered effective. Rosener (1990) indicated that men state that they have "transactional leadership" viewing job performance as a series of transactions with subordinates--exchanging rewards for services rendered or punishment for inadequate performance. Further, men are more than likely to use power that comes from their organizational position and formal authority (Rosener, 1990).

The women in Rosener's study (1990) described themselves in ways that characterize "transformational leadership" by getting subordinates to transform their own self-interest into the interest of the group through concern for a broader goal. They describe their power as personal characteristics like charisma, interpersonal skills, hard work, and personal contacts. Rosener (1990) coined the word "interactive" because the women actively worked to make their interactions with subordinates positive for everyone involved. The women strived to enhance other people's sense of self-worth and to energize followers. One woman even started a "bridge club" at lunch to bring members of the staff together. In Bell and Chase's study (1989), one woman superintendent shared that she answered her phone and made her own phone calls; other women superintendents went for their own lunch .

Being inclusive has disadvantages: soliciting ideas from others takes time, giving up some control, opening the door to criticism, and/or exposing personal and turf conflicts. Asking for ideas and information can be interpreted as not having answers. Sharing power allows the possibility that people will reject, criticize, and challenge what the leader has to say (Rosener, 1990). Most of the women that Rosener (1990) interviewed expressed clear aversion to anything that sets them apart from "others in the company such as reserved parking spaces, separate dining facilities, and pulling rank." In contrast, they wrote personal notes and celebrated achievements. Enthusiasm was a theme for all women.

Mentoring, a word linked with leadership development, provides a vehicle through which an organization can develop one of its most important resources-human potential. Mentoring makes the leader feel good, makes the leader look good, supports the leader's image as a visionary, demonstrates what the leader values, pays dividends, and opens channels of communication (Mertz, Welch, & Henderson, 1990).

According to some writers, there is not a lot of support for helping women gain access to the superintendency (Marshall, 1986). Marshall believes informal mentoring by women does not exist because the numbers of women in the superintendency are so small. A conscious barrier for women in educational administration is that women are not being groomed within school districts for higher levels of administration and the unconscious barrier is that it doesn't really seem to matter (Marshall, 1986).

A way to support women to gain access to executive levels is to shift thinking about power. Dunlap and Goldman (1991) proposed looking at professional power as "facilitative"--a type of power that differs from traditional and authoritative power typical of bureaucratic organizations. Facilitative power is "exercised and actualized through others on the basis of trust and reciprocity" and involves "a relationship between professionals who behave as peers rather than as superiors or subordinate" (Dunlap & Goldman, 1991).

This facilitative power can be developed through team-building, an essential element of the new paradigm on leadership, inclusion of all members of a group. "Females learn to value cooperation and relationships; to disdain complex rules and authoritarian structures; and to disregard abstract notions like the quest for victory if they threaten harmony in the group as a whole" (Helgesen, 1990). Peters (1982) says: "Effective team

builders utilize distinctive techniques aimed at harnessing the power of collective energies, talents, and diverse styles of the teams they supervise. We call this team building. The amount of performance improvement which is possible from these turned-on teams is enormous."

Studies on women executives in the business world have produced the same results on women's leadership (Helgesen, 1990; Rosener, 1990; Kanter, 1977). The Female Advantage (Helgesen, 1990) follows the lives of four female leaders: Frances Hesselbein, National Executive Director of the Girl Scouts; Barbara Grogan, President of Western Industrial Contractors; Nancy Badore, Director of Ford Motor Company's Executive Development Center; and Dorothy Brunson, President of Brunson Communications.

Helgesen (1990) explored how their experiences as wives, mothers, friends, sisters, or daughters contributed to their leadership style. Helgesen shows that the workplaces run by women tend to be "webs of inclusion" as opposed to a hierarchical structure. These women practiced more integrative leadership (Helgesen, 1990).

It is proposed in some literature that adopting an androgynous (both male and female) management style might help women overcome the negative effects of sex-role stereotyping in the workplace (Korabik, 1990). Women who are androgynous have traditionally feminine qualities and masculine task-oriented ones (Korabik, 1990). However, Caffarella (1993) maintains that the criteria for good leadership should be quite different because men's and women's careers develop differently. Men are more likely to progress through sequential developmental stages. Women's experiences in their career can be marked by discontinuities such as raising children and caring for aged parents. Women often place caring for others as a priority and these values are carried in the style of leadership women demonstrate. Women try to build connections and encourage open communication. A woman will share "who she is" as a way to help develop leadership in others (Caffarella, 1993).

The new leadership is what women have been stereotyped to be: "it is a call for engagement, participation in decisions, paying attention to the human side of organizations, and raising the place of individual efficacy over organizational efficiency. The restructuring movement calling for the empowerment of teachers, site-based management, and decentralization of authority is in line with the positive stereotypes of female leadership" (Schmuck, 1994).

### **A Historical Glance of Women in Educational Leadership**

When it seemed that education could advance the goals of society--not the goals of women, then women were viewed as the "cheap labor force" to staff the public schools (Curcio, Morsink, & Bridges, 1989). From the time women entered the education workforce, they have been viewed as the extension of the mother --one of nurturing and caring and help and support. This picture has been created in schools: the men will run the schools and the women will nurture the learners (Shakeshaft, 1989).

Shakeshaft (1989) states that the gender structure of males as managers and females as workers has remained relatively stable for the past 100 years. The history of

women in education began in the early 1800s when the wife of a minister wanted to educate the students in the community by starting her own school. With the high industry growth in the 1820s, more and more women were eventually allowed to enter the work force, particularly in the area of teaching (Shakeshaft, 1989).

Discrimination prevailed in pay equity and even in the way females were categorized in teacher training schools. In an 1805 catalog entitled Teacher Trainers, the class makeup was identified as 29 students and 46 females. Even then, the women outnumbered the men. During the pre-Civil War era, 20% of all women became teachers (Shakeshaft, 1989).

By 1920 a true hierarchy began to emerge: teaching on one level and administration on the other. Administration tended to be populated by men in a structure based on scientific management and bureaucratization. Women were not a part of administration unless they founded their own schools. Advocacy groups were starting to form to support women's entrance and advancement into school administration (Schmuck, 1994).

Although the statistics of women in educational leadership do not represent the number of women teachers today, the time between 1900-1930 was considered the golden age for women in educational administration: 55% of the elementary school principals, 25% of the city superintendents, 8% of the secondary school principals, and 1.6% of the district superintendents were women. The feminist movement, the organization of women teachers, the right to vote, and economic advantages were factors in the increase of women in educational administration during this era (Shakeshaft, 1989). In 1922 Edith Lathrop of the United States Office of Education wrote an article encouraging college-educated women to enter careers in public education because the barriers seemed to be coming down (Schmuck, 1994). By 1928 women constituted nearly two-thirds of county superintendents in the west. Women elementary principals were so common in the approximately 100,000 school districts that one board of education published an article entitled, "The Woman Principal: A Fixture in American Schools" (Schmuck, 1994).

Women were not among the majority as executives of larger school districts; it was noted as an exception when Ella Flagg Young became superintendent of Chicago Public Schools. This was indicated in a 1909 editorial which read, "The election of a woman to be the superintendent of schools in the second largest city in the United States is a violation of a precedent. If any man among the candidates had possessed all her qualities, her sex might have been against her" (Schmuck, 1994). Discrimination still prevailed--women earned 3/4 of what men earned for the same work. By 1932 there were still 25 states with no woman serving as superintendent (Shakeshaft, 1989).

An issue in this discrimination was that many people viewed women as incapable of discipline primarily based on their size and presumed lack of strength. Others saw women's commitment as short term. Some states even forbade married women to teach. As recently as 1942, a nationwide survey of the school districts reported that 58% of the respondent school systems would not employ women administrators. Many believed that males have special gifts for dealing with the community and problems (Shakeshaft, 1989).

Perceptions and social changes contributed to the “vanishing woman” in educational administration from 1920-1960 (Schmuck, 1994). School boards promoted men because of the perception that men had families to support and needed more money. During World War II women returned to work, then were fired when peace resumed. During the 1950s, male gatekeepers or School Board members thought there were too many women teachers. They believed students were not developing critical thinking skills--the reason, too many female teachers (Shakeshaft, 1989). So more men were needed to enter teaching and administration to overcome handicaps that boys suffered as a result of being taught by females.

During the 1960s and 1970s very little movement occurred for women in school administration. The GI bill helped pay tuition for men who wanted to work as administrators in the school systems (Shakeshaft, 1989). In 1938 men represented 20% of the teachers; by 1974 they constituted 38% of the teachers (Schmuck, 1994).

School consolidation after World War II caused small schools, run by women, to be combined with larger schools, frequently run by men (Schmuck, 1994). The literature and administration training programs stereotyped management as a male domain (Schmuck, 1994).

By the 1970s a new movement started. Money to study inequities was given by private foundations to study the status of women in education administration. Literature on women in educational administration started appearing. Seventy-one of the 114 dissertations written about women in administration between 1973-1979 were written on women in K-12 educational administration (Schmuck, 1994). Also in 1976, when Gross and Trask investigated the leadership behavior of 185 female and male principals of elementary schools, they chose elementary schools because only there could a comparison be made.

The women’s movement, Title IX and equity funding, and movement by women educators to hire women helped spark the formation of advocacy groups to support women trying to break through the glass ceiling. In 1977, advocacy groups had formed in Oregon, Washington, California, Kansas, and Nebraska. The Northeast Coalition of Educational Leaders comprising four states and a few chapters of the National Council for Administrative Women (1910) were functioning (Schmuck, 1994). In 1973, Schmuck, as one of the first grantees of the Women’s Educational Act Project, with Jean Stockard, co-directed the Sex Equity in Educational Leadership Project (SEEL) from 1976-1979 a state model for achieving sex equity in school administration. They also helped organize Oregon Women in Educational Leadership in 1977 and Northwest Women in Educational Administration .

Schmuck (1994) investigated the number of advocacy groups in the United States. All groups who responded were formed after 1970 and several began after 1985. They ranged from formal organizations with written by-laws to informal organizations without membership lists. Project AWARE (Assisting Women to Advance with Resources and Encouragement) provided support for many state and regional groups (Schmuck, 1994). As a result of Schmuck’s research, a list of the advocacy groups for women

administrators in the United States was created. Forty states were represented; Virginia was not among them.

### **Percentage of Women in Executive Positions (Line and Staff)**

The feminist movement of the 1920s brought more women into educational administration and the workforce. However, there are areas where women are still underrepresented. Mertz (1991) stated the primary problem for data about women administrators is the absence of a reliable national database and systematic data-gathering processes on national and state levels. Without such data, the research is incomplete, less reliable, and difficult to use for comparative purposes (Mertz, 1991). Unlike some state departments of education, the Virginia State Department of Education does not break down the number of administrators by gender for its annual report.

Female teachers represented 66% of the teaching force in 1870 and grew to 85% by the 1930s, then back to 66% in 1986 (Dopp & Sloan, 1986). Fifty-five percent of elementary principals in 1928 were women; in 1978, 18%, and in 1987-1988, 30%. Eighty-seven per cent of elementary teachers were women at that time (Andrews & Basem, 1990). Secondary school principals who were women represented even a lower number. In 1928 women held 7.8% of the positions; by 1984-1985, the figure had dropped to 3.5%.

Recent statistics report that there are 2.3 million teachers in the United States--1.6 million women and 0.7 million men (Koepke, 1990). The fifth survey by the American Association of School Administrators (1993) of women and racial minorities in school administration was published. Forty-nine states and Washington, D.C. responded to the survey; Virginia did not.

The survey showed that women made gains in the superintendency and the assistant superintendencies (deputy, associate, and assistant superintendents). They experienced the least upward movement in the superintendency --where their representation is the lowest. Of the 12,513 superintendents reported nationally, women comprised 7.1%, up from 6% in 1990 (Montenegro, 1993). New England reported the highest representation of women in the superintendency at 14.6%. Of the 6,063 assistant superintendents reported, 24.3% were women, a gain of 3.3 percentage points since 1990. The highest percentage of women in the assistant superintendent's position is in the South Atlantic states with 28.3% (653 women) reported (Montenegro, 1993).

Highest gains for women were in the principalship, higher at the elementary level(40.7%) than secondary (16.0%). Of the 61,539 principals reported nationally, 34.2% are women. The South Atlantic Region reported 7,732 principals with 40.5% of those positions held by women. Of the 33,234 assistant principals reported nationally, 40.8% were women. South Atlantic states led the way with 50% of the total assistant principals reported as women (Montenegro, 1993).

Two out of every five persons in other administrative positions are women. These positions were defined as central office administrators (curriculum directors, personnel directors, supervisors, and similar administrative officers). Women comprised 40% of the 45,423 other school administrators reported. The South Atlantic region

reported 53.1% of their total (2,415) central office administrators were women (Montenegro, 1993).

Two decades ago, men dominated the paid labor force in the United States (62% male to 38% female). These percentages have shifted to 58% male to 42% female by 1980 and to 55% male and 45% female in 1990 (Werth, 1992). Current projections by the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics for the year 2000 forecast this labor division as 52% male to 48% female. What percentage of the executive ranks will be held by women is one question that is being asked as the percentage figure is approaching a 50-50 split (Werth, 1992). According to the central personnel data file maintained by the Office of Personnel Management, only 11% of federal executives (those who belong to Senior Executive Service) are women (Werth, 1992). This is a jump however, from 1974 when 2% of federal executives were women. In the report, Beneath the Veneer, a result of Canada's Task Force on Barriers to Women in the Public Service, it was found that only 12% of the upper echelon of public service managers in Canada were women (Werth, 1992).

Women comprise 40% of all executive, management, and administrative positions, up from 24% in 1976 (Glass Ceiling Report, 1991). They remain confined to the middle and lower ranks, and the senior levels of management are almost exclusively male domains.

Specifically in education, other studies support the idea that women have trouble getting to the superintendent's level (Cryer, 1980; Guy & Farrell, 1980; Pavan & D'Angelo, 1990; Whitfield, 1990). Guy and Farrell (1982) examined the career paths of male and females who aspired to the superintendency. They concluded the career paths of the women were different from the men's; women experienced less opportunity for mobility from a staff to a line position. This lack of success appeared to have placed women in job categories such as staff specialist and supervisor. Another conclusion is that women experience sexual discrimination in their pursuit of professional advancement to higher levels of educational administration. When a woman does obtain the superintendency, it may be a very small district (Guy & Farrell, 1980). Whitfield (1990) examined issues related to the access of women and minorities to administrative positions in Idaho public schools; factors such as "the old boy network," family responsibilities, lack of mentors or role models, late entry into the career track, and difficulty in gaining credibility were cited as contributing factors for low number of administrators.

Pavan & D'Angelo (1990) looked at the differences in the career paths of aspirant and incumbent certificate holders for line positions within educational administration. The 622 respondents included 205 male incumbents, 173 male aspirants, 93 female incumbents, and 151 female aspirants. Two-thirds of the female certificate holders were in staff positions where their performance is directed by line officers, and their contributions tend to go unrecognized, since organizations tend to attribute accomplishments to the line officer.

### **The Profile of the Female Superintendent**

Researchers have profiled the woman superintendent. One study showed that 8 out of 10 women superintendents are between the ages of 36 and 55 (Gotwalt & Towns, 1986). Three-fourths of women superintendents surveyed are usually first born or only child. Education was a high priority for their families. These women tend to have more elementary school experience than their male counterparts, have more years of teaching, and began graduate education at an older age. More than half have spent six years in classrooms as teachers and a quarter of them had taught a decade or longer. They more than likely served as supervisors and were most often appointed to their present positions from outside the district (Schuster & Foote, 1990). The majority are married and have two or fewer children. Very few stated in interviews that they made a conscious decision early in their careers to become a superintendent. The largest percentage of women were in districts with enrollments from 300-2,999 (Dopp & Sloan, 1986). In one survey, 69% of female superintendents had two or more females on their school board. They usually held doctoral degrees and read an average of nine professional books per year (Schuster & Foote, 1990).

Dopp and Sloan (1986) found that qualities associated with the female superintendent were sensitivity, good interpersonal relationships, visibility, positivism and optimism, good conflict resolution skills, hard work, high energy level, honesty. Jenkins (1991) queried a nationwide sample of 175 female superintendents about their contributions before and during their position as superintendent. They saw their contributions as starting programs to provide child care services for the entire region, providing a sex equity program through the state high school association, providing a management compensation plan for the system, providing new strategies to prevent racial bias in the system, and providing mentoring for future and potential administrators. This finding supports Pitner's study (1981) which concluded that women superintendents continued a teaching role, sponsored women teachers, and stayed committed to curriculum and instructional matters.

### **Factors of Role Prejudice and Sex Role Stereotyping**

In 1919 Louise Connolly in her article called, "Is There Room at the Top for Women Educators," wrote, "Women have arrived in numbers only in the lower strata of the upper crust" (Schmuck, 1994). This theme pertaining to the glass ceiling persists in the literature: whatever barriers there are for women in executive levels in one sector, the same barriers exist for women in other sectors. It is clear that there is a barrier for women educators moving from the classroom to an administrative position.

Role prejudice is a preconceived preference for a specific behavior on the part of a visibly identifiable group (Marshall, 1986). Kempner (1989) notes that the culture of education is "based upon the conceptions of control and authority drawn from the metaphors of business, the military, and athletics. Those individuals who do not possess these characteristics, notably women and minorities, face extraordinary difficulties in entering and surviving in educational administration." Scherr (1994) interviewed thirteen women serving as assistant superintendents or directors asking these questions: Have

these women confronted a glass ceiling? Can they rise to a view of the top but proceed no further? Are there explanations for the small percentage of women holding superintendencies?

Four of the women interviewed aspired to the superintendency, another was unsure, one was retiring, and the remaining seven did not intend to become superintendents. Some saw the job carried out in ways which were incongruent with their preferred ways of working. They saw the role as one which is primarily traditional, controlling, political, and public. Their perception was that superintendents needed to portray power in ways in which they did not like (Scherr, 1994). Even though these women worked hours as long as the superintendent, they had the perception that they would have to give up a lot of free time to be the superintendent (Scherr, 1994).

The role as perceived by these women is one of a series of masculine behaviors designed to fit a male stereotype. Rosener (1990) calls this the "masculine style" of leading. The masculine style uses structural power, which is based on authority associated with position, title, and ability to reward and punish. Women are stereotyped into behaviors such as supportive, gentle, and cooperative; and therefore not as fit to administer in certain roles. For example, women are thought to make better assistant superintendents of personnel because they are more nurturing than men. Men are thought to make better assistant superintendents of business because they are better with numbers (Andrews & Basom, 1990). Society views principals and superintendents as male jobs. Women are to be content as curriculum leaders. Therefore, few role models exist for women administrators (Marshall, 1986).

In a study of the career paths of administrators in central office positions in New York Public Schools (Goldberg, 1991), it was concluded that the low number of women superintendents could be due to a lack of career aspiration (Goldberg, 1991). Grady (1992) found that among women certified as administrators but not practicing, most did not apply for administrative positions because they preferred their present job. There was some evidence of psychological acceptance of secondary roles and lack of socialization to administration.

Kanter (1977) found male corporation managers chose men over women because women seemed to be an "unpredictable and unproven commodity." Managers wanted to choose people like themselves. Even where the pool of promotable teachers is predominantly female, male school administrators usually choose males (Kanter, 1977). Men are perceived to have more power while women's power is perceived as a reflection of the power of the man with or for whom they work (Kanter, 1977).

In a survey of 350 males and females, 55% of the females perceived that preferential hiring and promotion of males occurred (Andrews & Basom, 1990). They said that they were often not made aware of job openings in time to complete the application package. Also, a number of administrative job positions specified job qualifications such as coaching experience, which eliminated many female applicants. The job descriptions were often changed to fit the qualifications of male candidates. The women were asked discriminatory interview questions, such as "How will you have time for this job and take care of your children?" Males with less teaching experience and

fewer graduate hours were often hired. Women, when asking why a male received the job, received stereotypical responses: "We need a man to handle the discipline," "the community prefers men in that position," "Now is not the right time to hire a woman" (Andrews & Basom, 1990).

Another perception is that women are viewed as unqualified experientially for the superintendency because they usually don't have secondary line experience.

The female superintendents in Bell and Chase's study (1989) were delighted to share their experiences because they felt somewhat isolated in their male-dominant world. They reported many incidents of discrimination. They believed that men were afraid of women as authority figures because they don't know how they're supposed to react or how they should accept them; that men may perceive women's actions as bitchy instead of assertive; and that they had the responsibility of educating the men around them .

Superintendent search teams sometimes do not include women. Informal mentoring does not always exist because the numbers are so small. Consequently, women are not being groomed within school districts for higher levels of administration (Marshall, 1986). If a woman interviews before a school board, and she has never held a superintendency before, the chances are very low that she will receive the appointment. Boards of education seem more comfortable taking risks with a man as a first-year superintendent than a female. In large urban areas, this is an exception. Minority women are often assigned to strife-ridden positions (Marshall, 1986).

According to Marshall (1986), another hurdle for women can be their college experience in administration. Case studies in the educational administration curriculum don't always depict women as superintendents. There can be a lack of encouragement for women to go into the executive positions in school systems from university professors.

Cohen (1989) states that women who have masked their "noncorporate" feminine values pay a high psychological and professional price. Women are pulled apart by wishes to be themselves and still comply with the perception of what the workplace tends to demand. Women senior executives give up an intimate family life to reach the top. The men usually have both a career and a family.

Reasons relating to sex role stereotyping for not hiring women administrators were given in one study. One reason male superintendents gave for not hiring women in educational administration was that school board members would see something in the relationship between him and female colleague which would affect the superintendent's effectiveness with the board (Shakeshaft, 1992). Another reason superintendents gave for not hiring women assistant superintendents was that it could cause marital friction and they didn't want the stress of "trouble on the homefront." Women assistant superintendents said they made a special effort to build a relationship with the wife of their bosses (Shakeshaft, 1992).

A third reason male superintendents gave for not hiring women assistant superintendents is that they wouldn't feel comfortable working with an attractive woman because these men weren't sure they wouldn't be sexually attracted to them. The superintendents felt they would run the risk of being charged with sexual harassment.

The fear of their own lack of sexual control led superintendents to a position that it was better not to work closely with women (Shakeshaft, 1992).

Whether or not there is a spoken or unspoken response, women always think about the possibility of sexual attraction and think about their responses and actions in light of that possibility. There still exists the stereotype that when women and men are together, the outcome is sexual (Shakeshaft, 1992). This idea dates back to the fact that sex integration rarely occurs in American school systems. In about second grade, boys and girls move apart and segregate themselves along sex. Boys play against girls in spelling bees or athletic contests. Even childhood games are gender specific. Harrigan (1977) states "Males are encouraged to be brave and strong and females are encouraged to be loving and helpful. Boys learned to play competitively and girls played side by side picking up jacks."

Women in administration can cite sexual jokes, references to female anatomy, and sexual innuendos made by male administrators that make them uncomfortable. During Women's History Week at one school, a poster was displayed of a Playboy calendar. When the women complained, administrators said the women didn't have a sense of humor (Shakeshaft, 1992).

Sex-role stereotyping was emphasized in the Report on the Glass Ceiling Initiative (Department of Labor, 1991). Women didn't receive certain assignments because the men assumed the women didn't want them because of family obligations. This study involved nine Fortune 500 establishments selected randomly for review. Several general findings included attitudinal and organizational barriers.

One major finding was that developmental practices and credential building experiences, including advanced education, as well as career enhancing assignments to corporate committees and task forces and special projects--which are traditional precursors to advancement--were often not as available to minorities and women. Accountability for equal employment opportunity responsibilities did not reach to senior-level executives and corporate decision makers (Department of Labor, 1991).

In Scherr's study (1993) the 13 women eligible for the superintendency had had minimal or no experience with women superintendents. The formation of advocacy groups has helped to form a network for women who aspire to higher levels in educational leadership (Schmuck, 1993).

The myth remains that the ideal manager conforms to a masculine stereotype: self-reliant, ambitious, forceful, and a strong leader. Managerial positions are termed masculine. Women in management positions feel they have to act like men. Years ago women were encouraged to dress like males. When women adopted these male behaviors, the male stereotype was reinforced and the dominance of the male dominance theory kept sustained (Cohen, 1989).

### **Research on Gender Issues for Women**

Research on women's ways of knowing (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986), research on women's psychological development (Gilligan, 1982; Miller, 1986), and research on women's ways of leading (Helgesen, 1990, Rosener, 1990) offer

explanations of the differences between men and women: societal enculturation processes, organization socialization processes, and basic gender differences. Literature indicates a need to resocialize men and women--not just the woman resocializing to fit the man's world.

Shakeshaft (1989) and others say that most research that has been done has been on white males, and women do not experience the world in ways that white males do. These outcomes of research have become the standards and norms by which all experiences are measured. Most of the research is androcentric: the practice of viewing the world and shaping reality through a male lens (Marshall, 1986). Research indicates our gender identification has a tremendous influence on behavior, perceptions and effectiveness (Shakeshaft, 1991). One example is in communication. Tannen (1990) states that men and women communicate differently and that they listen for different information. The woman participant is listening for the feeling: the man for the facts. Women in education focus on the instructional issue or a matter concerning the child, while the man looks at it administratively. Women administrators strive to work harder to get male teachers to "hear" them.

Research on women and or gender issues is often considered a special topic and is not central to understanding the behavior of an organization. Research in educational administration is considered weak regarding women in organizations and the impact of gender on behavior. The issue of how women can play a larger role from key positions of leadership within an organization is rarely addressed (Shakeshaft, 1989).

Some researchers state that the leadership models don't hold up when applied to women. Gilligan (1982) refuted Kohlberg's theories on moral development. Kohlberg had used 75 white males as the sample for his study on stages of moral development. When applied to women, this model didn't work. According to Gilligan's research, women had a different voice and a different way of thinking (Gilligan, 1982).

Maslow and Herzberg didn't study females so they espoused motivational theories that had to do with achievement and competitiveness: they didn't think about caring and nurturing relationships (Brandt, 1992). The work of McClelland provided a model of achievement by males that focused on internal criteria for excellence and individual success rather than on community building (Brandt, 1992).

### **Estler's Models of Underrepresentation**

Estler developed three models to analyze the persisting under representation of women administrators in schools: the woman's place model, the discrimination model and the meritocracy model (Dopp & Sloan, 1986). Estler's first model, the women's place model, indicates that women have different socialization patterns than men. Women were taught to be caretakers and nurturers and their place was in the home (Dopp & Sloan, 1986). Estler's second model, the discrimination model, explains the sexist imbalance with preferential hiring and promotional practices. The number of years it takes a woman to achieve the rank of principal or superintendent is greater. The median number of years of teaching before appointment to elementary principalship is 5 years for males and 15 years for females (Dopp & Sloan, 1986). Estler's third model, the meritocracy model,

assumes that we live in a world in which people are promoted according to their ability. It implies men must be more competent because they are chosen more (Dopp & Sloan, 1986).

Structural barriers also keep women from advancing (Women's Educational Equity Act, 1990). These structural barriers include hierarchical boundaries which separate the various levels in school organizations and are differentiated by formal requirements such as degrees and certifications. The functional boundaries separate different departments or divisions of the school system from one another such as elementary and secondary principals. The inclusion boundaries differentiate individuals by their position within the organizations relative to the center of power. These are difficult to cross, since crossing them involves negotiating informal processes (Women's Educational Equity Act Digest, 1990). Advancement then is a matter of crossing many kinds of boundaries from the periphery of the organization to the center, from the bottom of the hierarchy to the top. For women it is the intangible of being "one of us."

Marshall's 1979 study of women administrators revealed that women find alternative methods to go around the usual socialization process. They must pass through three stages: cultural definition, transition, and self-definition. There is a conflict between a woman's traditional upbringing and what she wants to do. Schwartz describes career conflict for management women as a continuum that runs from total dedication to job at one end and a balance between career and family at the other (Women's Educational Equity Act Digest, 1990).

### **Conclusion**

Women are still trying to break through the glass ceiling in educational leadership. The shift in concept of what makes a good leader provides an entry for women into positions of leadership. Considering the ways in which the traditional woman was socialized, one can see that her role was not considered one of leadership, but of sensitivity, caring, and other-awareness--the same qualities identified with the new leadership and management models.

As management systems have evolved, scientific management is starting to be replaced by a progressively more caring and trusting philosophy that holds that people are an organization's greatest assets. A kind of humanistic value is expressed in the philosophy of Theory Z: trust, freedom, and respect for the individual. Again this new concept of management emphasizes the qualities historically depicted as feminine (Palmer & Hyman, 1990).

In the past, male leaders didn't always make visible the aspects of sensitivity, awareness, and nurturing because their conditioning and training signaled to them that wasn't the thing to do. Society cannot say males are not nurturing and sensitive to the needs of the people around them. They could be nurturing fathers in the homeplace. When women came into positions of leadership in the workplace and used some of the skills they used in the home, one noticed that these skills were necessary for effective leadership. No longer were relationships always being sacrificed for the task, but a balance was created which brought about more productivity, a high morale, and better

harmony in a working group of people. Women do not have a monopoly on characteristics generally attributed to females, and men do not have a monopoly on characteristics generally attributed to males. Each gender, regardless of their propensity toward “male” and “female” qualities, contributes to the overall effectiveness of an organization.

Awareness of the issue surrounding equity for women in educational leadership is a concern. While the percentages of women in educational administration positions have been increasing, these percentages have not been keeping pace with the percentage of women receiving doctoral and master’s degrees (New York State Education Department, 1988). In order to increase substantially the number of women in educational administration, educators must become aware of the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles and the factors leading to it. Virginia does not keep statistics as to gender and specific positions in central office nor does Virginia have an advocacy group. In 1992 statistics showed that 83% of the public school teachers were women. What is the percentage of women in central office positions in Virginia?

The purpose of this study was two-fold using the school system as the unit of analysis: first, to examine the distribution of males and females in line and staff positions of central offices in selected school districts of Virginia and second, to determine factors which may influence this distribution. Statistics have been gathered from data from the other 49 states; this inquiry will be the beginning of looking at females in line and staff positions in central offices in Virginia.

## **CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to examine the distribution of males and females in central office line and staff positions in randomly selected school districts in Virginia and to determine factors which may influence this distribution. In a two-phase study, data were collected regarding the distribution, job responsibilities, backgrounds, and preparation of men and women holding central office administrative positions in randomly selected districts in Virginia.

This chapter describes the methodology of the study: quantitative analysis, qualitative analysis, population, methods and procedures, interview questions, data analysis, validity and reliability.

### **Phase One: Quantitative**

The purpose of this phase was to use quantitative methods to examine the distribution of males and females in line and staff central office positions in randomly selected school districts in Virginia. Initially, a few school districts were analyzed to determine if a pattern existed in distribution of positions by gender by using the 1992 Virginia Educational Directory. There appeared to be a tendency for males to be in line positions and females to be in staff positions (see Appendix A).

Next, the 134 school divisions in Virginia were divided from largest to smallest based on student population (see Appendix B). The districts of Fairfax County and Virginia Beach were not included due to extremely large student populations in comparison with the third largest school district. The remaining 132 divisions were divided into groups of ten (see Appendix B). The sample was chosen by selecting every other school district in each group of ten or a 50% sampling. This cluster sample from the groups of ten received the requests for an organizational chart and a list of central office personnel (see Appendix B).

The unit of analysis was the school district. A letter of request was sent to the superintendents of these 65 school divisions requesting a list of central office personnel and organizational chart (see Appendix C). This letter was accompanied by a sponsoring letter from the executive director of the Virginia Association of School Superintendents (see Appendix C). Each superintendent or his designee was asked to code the positions in central office as a line or staff position on the school division's organizational chart or on chart created by researcher (see Appendix C). A line position is the position that is the direct link with the basic objective of the organization. The line positions carry out the organization's essential functions. The title of a line position usually reflects task and authority of the individual. Subordinates can not go over this position, but through this position (Starling, 1986). For the purpose of this study, an example of a line position is a director of instruction. A staff position is an indirect link with the objective of the organization. The staff investigates, researches, and advises the person in charge. Only

through their boss can the staff influence line decisions (Starling, 1986). For the purpose of this study, an example of a staff position is the supervisor of special education.

Each person was identified as male or female. Those responses from each school division were charted according to gender, title of position, identification of position as line or staff, region, and student population. A follow-up letter was sent to collect more responses (see Appendix D).

A telephone call or follow-up letter was made to those seven districts where the line and staff coding didn't seem to fit (see Appendix E). A factor in looking at line and staff is the perception of each school district in coding line and female. The superintendent was coded as a staff position and not a line position in some school districts. Some even excluded the superintendent as a central office position even when the superintendent was the one completing the chart. Some districts coded all central office positions as all line. Some superintendents called to clarify how their positions would fall under line and staff. In one case, a school system labeled all their positions as staff members since their role (as they stated) is to support all the principals. Inquiries were made if principals should be listed as part of the survey. In some small systems, the school principals helped perform the work for central office. Another school system labeled as staff any member who may have had a line title and responsibility, but not have anyone reporting to him or her. One such case was the director of finance who was the only female in a central office position and was labeled as the only staff member since she did not have anyone reporting to her. In another system, the superintendent and the assistant superintendent were labeled as the only staff members. They insisted on keeping these identifications.

Statistical analyses were performed to examine the distribution of males and females over line and staff positions statewide, by region, and by student population. The nature of the distribution was investigated: location of school divisions, patterns emerging, outliers, and distribution across state, region, and student population clusters. Measures of central tendency (averages) and frequency distributions (single and grouped) were performed. A cross-break was created within each school division, each cluster, each set or determined clusters, and entire sample. A cross-break is a graphic display in data analysis which has the "graphic power" of pointing out similarities and differences (Isaac & Michael, 1990). Its purpose is to arrange data into frequencies which can display trends or patterns in the relationship.

When researchers are confronted with frequency data, one question to be answered is whether the frequencies observed in the sample deviate significantly from some theoretical or expected population frequencies (Isaac & Michael, 1990). The chi-square test, Z test, and T-test were used as the statistical tests.

### **Phase Two: Qualitative Research**

To determine central office personnel's perceptions of factors which influenced this distribution, a sample of central office personnel was chosen for interviews. Males and females were not designated as criteria when requests were made. These participants in the study were chosen from those school districts with the highest and lowest

percentage of women in central office personnel. Six central office administrators were interviewed: one staff position and one line position from each of three school districts.

The researcher initiated a telephone call followed by a letter to the superintendent of the school district chosen (see Appendix F). The superintendents were requested to choose the two interviewees. A letter and a questionnaire (see Appendix G) were sent to the interviewees. These questionnaires were collected at the time of the interview. Another letter discussing process was presented at the time of the interview (see Appendix H).

The case study using the interview approach was the means to examine factors or perceptions of factors which may influence the distribution of males and females in line and staff positions in central office personnel in selected school districts in Virginia. Data were examined from the responses to questions to determine the way that the selected case study subjects portrayed their aspirations, their perceived barriers to promotion, their mentors, and their perceptions of gender in central offices. The researcher collected data regarding their job responsibilities, backgrounds, and preparation.

A semi-structured guide for the interviews used questions framed around topics taken from an extensive literature review: job responsibilities, career aspirations, networking, mentoring, and gender of selected male and female central office personnel were conducted (see Appendix I). This guide helped the researcher to gain responses concerning job responsibilities, perceptions, problems in the job, and career aspirations. This outline permitted a structured means of data collection while giving flexibility to change the order of the questions and to probe further into responses given by the interviewee. The interview data was recorded with the permission of interviewee. The researcher attempted to establish rapport and trust with the interviewees before the interview by discussing the purpose, intent, and design of the study.

The questionnaire and interviews with three central office personnel not associated with this study (one female line person, one female staff person, and one male line position) were field tested. The researcher collected documents from the three subjects to help validate the information given in these questionnaires and interviews. Changes were made in the questionnaire and interview guide regarding clarity, relevance, and conciseness. These interviews were audiotaped to examine the flow of questions and interviewer's skills. One interview was transcribed.

### **Data Analysis**

Analysis began during data collection and involved studying notes, organizing and clustering these notes into categories, and constructing a picture of the group (Seidman, 1991). Data from the six interviews from this study were coded and grouped for similar themes. All interviews were permitted to be audio taped and were transcribed. The transcriptions were compared with the audio tapes for accuracy and completeness.

After each interview, the open coding process was utilized to determine what categories emerged which could enhance the results of the quantitative section. Clustering helped determine similar subjects.

The original research questions served as a guide for interpreting and analyzing the data. Systematic analysis of the data can yield theory which is grounded in events and objects. These categories are concepts indicated by the data. The researcher searched for categories related to factors influencing the distribution of males and females in certain positions. The researcher also identified new themes that emerged from the interviews.

### **Rationale for Qualitative Research**

Qualitative studies rely on inductive reasoning whereby generalizations emerge from an examination of data. Interviews provide data that could not be gathered from survey forms alone. It enables the researcher to understand details of people's experiences from their own perspective (Seidman, 1991).

Bromley (1986) states that the interview method will allow one to "get as close to the subject of interest as I possibly can, partly by means of direct observation in natural settings, partly by access to subjective factors (thoughts, feelings, and desires), whereas experiments and surveys often use convenient derivative data, e.g. test results, official records."

Yin (1991) says the case study is good for educational evaluation because of its ability to "explain the causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey of experimental strategies. A second application is to describe the real-life context in which an intervention has occurred." Yin also states that "The case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence--documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations" (Yin, 1991).

Descriptive means the end product of a case study is a rich description of the phenomenon under study. Wilson states that "case studies use prose and literary techniques to describe, elicit images, and analyze situations...They present documentation of events, quotes, samples, and artifacts" (Wilson, 1979).

Patton (1990) explains : "We interview people to find out those things we cannot directly observe. We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. The purpose of interviewing is to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective." The purpose of the qualitative methods of data collection and analysis of this study was to provide a different perspective and to provide richer, more descriptive and anecdotal data to support the data from the survey.

The primary method of data collection for the second phase of the study was the interview. The researcher had the opportunity to gain insight, discovery, and interpretation. Patton suggests six kinds of questions that can be used to get different types of information from respondents: experience/behavior question, opinion/value questions, feeling questions, knowledge questions, sensory questions, and background/demographic questions. These kinds of questions were incorporated into the researcher's interview guide.

## **Validity**

To help ensure internal validity, the researcher used triangulation in the following ways: collecting multiple sources such as job descriptions and organizational charts, clarifying data and interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results agree with their interpretation, repeating observations of the same phenomenon, and clarifying the researcher's role and assumptions before the study began (Merriam, 1988).

To ensure that the results were "reliable" and dependable, the researcher explained the basis for selecting informants and a description of them, used multiple methods (triangulation) of data collection and analysis, and described in detail the research trail, how data were collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made from the interviewing process (Merriam, 1988).

To improve the external validity of the results, a rich description was provided as a base of information. A comparison of how typical the individual or event was compared with others in the same class was shared.

The researcher asked consent ahead of time from participants, prepared semi-structured interview questions to maintain a structure for subjects during interviews, was aware of the extent to which her presence changed what was being observed, strived for accuracy to report all data even though it may be contradictory to views, reported all biases that cannot be controlled in the report, and tried to protect the identity of the case being studied (Merriam, 1988).

### **Importance of Internal and External Validity and Reliability**

More concerns appear for case study research than for experimental designs in the literature. All studies in education must be believed and trusted. Guba and Lincoln (1981) state that it is hard to assess the validity and reliability of a study without examining its components including the appropriateness of the data collection techniques and the conclusions drawn and the data from which they were drawn.

Internal validity deals with the question of how one's findings match reality. One assumption underlying qualitative research is that reality is holistic, multidimensional, and ever-changing. The qualitative researcher is more interested in perspectives than truth per se, and it is the researcher's duty to present "a more or less honest rendering of how informants actually view themselves and their experiences" (Merriam, 1988).

Reliability refers to the extent to which one's findings can be replicated (Merriam, 1988). Will the study yield the same results if repeated? This presents a problem in qualitative research because human behavior is never static. Qualitative research attempts to describe and explain the world as those in the world interpret it. Guba and Lincoln (1981) state to sidestep reliability in favor of internal validity. "Since it is impossible to have internal validity without reliability, a demonstration of internal validity amounts to a simultaneous demonstration of reliability." They say to think about the "consistency" of the results obtained from the data. The results are consistent and dependable.

External validity is concerned with the extent to which the findings can be applied to other situations. How generalizable are the results of a research study? Qualitative

researchers cannot think in the same ways as do experimenters using experimental designs. One selects a case study because one wishes to understand the particular in depth, not because one wants to know what is generally true of the many. Cronbach proposes working hypotheses to replace the notion of generalizations in social science research (Merriam, 1988). Lincoln and Guba (1981) state the investigator should provide a detailed description of the study's context to enhance the results.

Case studies, relying on inductive reasoning, can bring about a new meaning or confirm what is known. Inductive means that case studies rely on inductive reasoning. Discovery of new relationships and concepts rather than predetermined hypotheses characterizes qualitative case studies.

## **CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS**

### **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the distribution of males and females in line and staff positions in selected school district central offices in Virginia and to determine factors, which influence this distribution. In a two-phase study, data were collected regarding the distribution, job responsibilities, backgrounds, and preparation of men and women holding central office administrative positions in selected school districts from a stratified sample in Virginia. The second phase included follow-up interviews in selected school districts.

Information from 56 school districts in Virginia was returned for a 86% response rate (see Appendix J). The nine school districts who didn't respond did not differ in the general characteristics from those who did respond. They represented different enrollment sizes and different regions. One school district would not participate unless a copy of the prospectus was sent to the research department of the school system. The survey asked for the total student population, the title of each central office position, the identification of each central office position as line or staff and the gender as male or female. In some cases, an organizational chart was furnished. The distribution of males and females in line and staff positions across eight study group regions (see Appendix K) and across enrollment size was examined to see if region and enrollment size were factors which could be significant in the distribution.

### **Research Questions**

The responses from the surveys were examined and analyzed to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the gender distribution in central office positions?
2. What is the percentage of central office positions by gender based upon the total office gender representation in line and staff positions?
3. What is the gender distribution in line and staff positions?
4. What is the gender distribution in central office positions by region?
5. What is the percentage of central office positions by gender based upon the total office gender representation in line and staff positions by region?
6. What is the gender distribution in line and staff positions by region?
7. What is the gender distribution in central office positions by enrollment size?
8. What is the percentage of central office positions by gender based upon the total office gender representation in line and staff positions by enrollment size?
9. What is the gender distribution in line and staff positions by enrollment size?

The research questions explored the relationship among the numbers of females and males in line and staff positions in the sample of 56 school districts in Virginia, the

school districts clustered according to eight regions in the state, and the 56 school districts clustered according to six total student population sizes.

## QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

### Gender Distribution in Central Office Positions Statewide

This section explores the data for the following research issues of gender distribution in central office positions, percentage of office positions by line and female in central office positions, and gender distribution in line and staff positions.

The data focuses on the information from a statewide perspective.

#### **Research Question #1**

What is the gender distribution in central office positions ?

Table 1: Gender Distribution in Central Office Positions Statewide

	Number of Positions	Percentage	Mean per school district X	Standard Deviation (SD)
Males Statewide	425	51%	7.54	7.45
Females Statewide	402	49%	7.23	8.73
Total Positions	827	100%		

Fifty-six school districts reported 827 central office positions: 425 held by males and 402 held by females. The percentage of females occupying central office positions is 49%.

The null hypothesis ( $H^0$ ) states that there is no difference in the percentage of males and females in central office which means that 50% of the central office positions are female. A test of proportion for the female (50%) was performed with the normal distribution test of proportion (Z-test). The Z statistic is 0.6328 with a p-value =0.5268 ( $P>.05$ ). The Z value does not fall in the rejection region; therefore, one fails to reject the  $H^0$ . It is concluded that the percentage of females does not differ from the percentage of males.

## **Research Question #2**

What is the percentage of central office positions by male and female in line and staff positions?

**Table 2: Percentage of Central Office Positions by Male and Female in Line and Staff Positions**

	Males (N=425)	Females (N=402)	% Difference (F-M)
Number in Line Positions	226	143	
Percentage of Total	53%	36%	-17%
Number in Staff Positions	199	259	
Percentage of Total	47%	64%	+17%

- A (+) indicates the percentage of females exceeds the males.
- A (-) indicates the percentage of females is less than the percentage of males.

Line positions. The percentage of males in line positions over the central office male population exceeds the percentage of females in line positions over the central office female population. The null hypothesis ( $H^0$ ) states that the percentage of males in line positions to total males in central office equals the percentage of females in line positions to total central office females.

To test this hypothesis, the Z-test was chosen for one group since the sample size is over 30. The Z value is 10.72, a value which falls in the rejection region; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected that the percentage of males in line positions equals the percentage of females in line positions. It is concluded that the percentage of males in line positions exceeds the percentage of females in line positions.

Staff positions. The percentage of females in staff positions over the total female central office personnel is larger than the percentage of males in staff positions over the total male central office personnel.

The null hypothesis ( $H^0$ ) states the percentage of females in staff positions over the total central office females is equal to the percentage of males in staff positions over the total central office males. A Z test was chosen since the sample was over 30. The Z statistic is -5.091 with a p-value of 0.00 for a two-tail test. The Z-value falls in the rejection region; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, the percentage of females in staff positions over the total central office females exceeds the percentage of males in staff positions over the total central office males.

### **Research Question #3**

What is the gender distribution in line and staff positions statewide?

**Table 3: Gender Distribution in Line and Staff Positions Statewide**

	Total	Proportion	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Males Statewide	425	51%	7.54	7.45
Females Statewide	402	49%	7.23	8.73
Males in Line Position	226	61%	4.03	3.75
Females in Line Position	143	39%	2.54	2.99
%Difference in Percentage (F-M)•		-22%		
Males in Staff Position	199	43%	3.55	5.25
Females in Staff Position	259	57%	4.62	7.23
%Difference in Percentage (F-M)•		+14%		

•A (+) indicates the percentage of females exceeds the males.

•A (-) indicates the percentage of females is less than the percentage of males.

Line positions. The line positions total 368. These line positions were examined for gender distribution: 142 females and 226 males in line positions.

To test the null hypothesis ( $H^0$ ) that the percentage of females in line positions equals the percentage of males in line positions in central office, the Z-test was chosen. The Z test value is -11.93 with a p-value of 0.00 for a one tail and 0.00 for a two-tail. This number is less than .05 which rejects the null hypothesis that the proportion of males in line positions equals the proportion of females in line positions. It is concluded that males exceed females in line positions.

Staff positions. Fifty-six school districts reported 827 central office positions, 458 of which were labeled as staff: 259 females and 199 males. Statewide, more females in central office occupy staff positions than line positions.

To test the null hypothesis that the mean of females in staff positions and the mean of males in staff positions is equal, the two independent sample T-test for difference in two means was chosen.

Table 4: T-Test for Males in Staff and Females in Staff Across School Divisions

Number	Mean for males in staff (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Mean for Females in Staff (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	t-test of significance p-value
56	3.55	5.25	4.62	7.23	.033*

In Table 4 the p-value is .033 which is lower than .05 ( $p < .05$ ) which indicates a significant statistical difference in the mean number of males and mean number of females in staff positions per school district. This result indicates that the mean of the number of females in staff positions exceeds the mean of the numbers of males in staff positions.

#### Gender Distribution in Central Office Positions by Region

This section explores the data for the following research issues of gender distribution in central office positions, percentage of office positions by line and female in central office positions, and gender distribution in line and staff positions. The data focuses on the information from eight study regions.

#### Overview

Fifty-six school districts represent all eight study regions in Virginia. These school districts range in size from 830 students to 48,000 students. The total number of central office positions is 827 positions.

Table 5: Number of School Districts by Region

Region	Total Schools in Region	School Districts/ Respondents	% representing total respondents
(1)	15	6	10.7
(2)	15	3	5.4
(3)	17	6	10.7
(4)	20	8	14.3
(5)	22	9	16.1
(6)	15	6	10.7
(7)	19	10	17.9
(8)	11	8	14.3
Total:	134*	56	100.0

\*Two school districts with a student population of 168,475 and 87,944 were not included due to enrollment size. The study deals with a population of 132 schools.

Table 5 describes the 134 school districts in the state which are divided into eight regional study groups. The 56 school districts in this study represent all eight regions in the state. Region One has six school districts represented; Region Two has three school districts represented; Region Three has six school districts represented; Region Four has eight school districts represented; Region Five has nine school districts represented; Region Six has six school districts represented; Region Seven has the largest representation with ten school districts; and Region Eight has eight school districts represented.

**Research Question #4**

What is the gender distribution in central office positions within the eight regions?

Table 6 : Gender Distribution in Central Office Positions by Region

Region	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Males	42%	45%	49%	53%	46%	62%	55%	68%
Females	58%	55%	51%	47%	54%	38%	45%	32%
% Difference in Percentage (F-M)•	+16%	+10%	+2%	-6%	+8%	-24%	-10%	-36%
Total Positions	140	97	71	114	140	85	124	56

- A (+) indicates the percentage of females exceeds the males.
- A (-) indicates the percentage of females is less than the percentage of males.

As depicted in Table 6, the maximum percentage of females in the regions is 58% and the minimum is 32%. Regions 1,2, 3, 5 have more females than males; Regions 4,6,7,8 have more males than females. Males exceed females by more than 10% in Regions 6, 7, 8 and females exceed males by more than 10% in Regions 1 and 2.

The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) states that there is no difference in the percentage of males and females in central offices within the eight regions. The chi-square statistic is 18.48 with a p-value of 0.010 ( $p < .05$ ). Therefore, we can conclude that gender and region are related. In order to examine the direction of this relationship, Regions 1, 2, 3 were combined into one urban region and Regions 5,6,7,8 were combined into one rural region. The resultant chi square for this comparison is 7.72,  $p=0.005 (<.05)$ , which

indicates that urban areas have more females than males and rural areas have more males than females in central office positions, with Region 4 as an a separate finding.

**Research Question #5**

What is the percentage of central office positions in line and staff over total central office gender representation by region?

Table 7: Percent of Central Office Personnel in Line and Staff Positions by Gender and Region

Region	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Total Males	N=59	N=44	N=35	N=63	N=65	N=53	N=68	N=38
Males in Line Positions	34%	50%	43%	59%	52%	43%	82%	53%
Total Females	N=81	N=53	N=36	N=51	N=75	N=32	N=56	N=18
Females in Line	33%	25%	44%	31%	40%	22%	41%	61%
% Difference in Percentage (F-M)•	-1%	-25%	+1%	-28%	-12%	-21%	-41%	+8%
Males in Staff	66%	50%	57%	41%	48%	57%	18%	47%
Females in Staff	67%	75%	56%	69%	60%	78%	59%	39%
% Difference in Percentage (F-M)•	+1%	+25%	-1%	+28%	+12%	+21%	+41%	-8%

•A (+) indicates the percentage of females exceeds the males.

•A (-) indicates the percentage of females is less than the percentage of males.

### Line Positions

Most noteworthy is the number of regions where the percentage of males in line positions greatly exceeds the percentage of females in line positions. The percentage of females in line positions to total female central office personnel ranges from 22% to 61% across the eight regions. The percentage of males in line positions to total male population ranges from 34% to 82% across the eight regions. The percentage of males to the percentage of females in line positions out of the total gender representation is greater than 20% in four of the eight regions (Regions 2,4,6,7).

The null hypothesis ( $H^0$ ) states that there is no difference in the percentage of males and females in line positions out of total gender representation in central offices within the eight regions. The following chi square values, p-values, and phi coefficient values were identified for Regions 2, 4, 6, and 7.

Table 8: Chi-Square Values for Line Positions in Regions 2,4,6,7

Region	Chi-square value	p-value	Phi Coefficient	Strength of Relationship
(2)	6.763	.009 (<.05)	.264	weak
(4)	10.567	.001(<.05)	.304	moderate
(6)	4.047	.044(<.05)	.218	weak
(7)	22.636	.001(<.05)	.427	moderate

The chi-square value for Regions 1,3,5, 8 and line positions did not produce a p-value less than .05. The relationship is weak in Regions 2 and Region 6; however, there is a moderate relationship in Regions 4 and Region 7. It can be concluded that the percentage of males in line positions exceeds the percentage of females in line positions in Regions 2, 4, 6, and 7 .

Staff positions. The percentage of females in staff positions out of the total female population is larger than the percentage of males in staff positions out of total male population in six of the eight regions. The range of differences between the two percentages (male and female) is 1% to 40%.

The null hypothesis ( $H^0$ ) states that there is no difference in the percentage of males and females in staff positions out of total gender representation in central offices within the eight regions. The chi-square test produced the following results for those regions that showed a p-value of <.05:

Table 9: Chi-Square Values for Staff Positions in Regions 2,6,7

Region	Chi-Value	p-value	Phi Coefficient	Strength
(2)	7.929	.005 <.05)	-.286	weak
(6)	4.047	0.044 <.05)	-0.218	weak
(7)	22.636	0.001 <.05)	-0.427	moderate

It is concluded that gender and staff positions are related in Regions 2, 6, and 7. The relationship is weak in Regions 2 and 6; in Region 7, the phi-coefficient of -0.427 indicated a moderate relationship. The results indicate that more females than males are in staff positions out of each gender's total representation in Regions 2, 6, and 7 .

**Research Question #6**

What is the gender distribution of line and staff positions by regions?

Table 10 : Gender Distribution in Line and Staff Positions by Region

Region	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Total Line Positions	N=47	N=35	N=31	N=52	N=64	N=30	N=79	N=31
Males in Line positions	43%	63%	48%	70%	53%	77%	71%	65%
Females in Line Positions	57%	37%	52%	30%	47%	23%	29%	35%
% Difference in Percentage (F-M)•	+14 %	-26%	+4%	-40%	-6%	-54%	-43%	-30%
Total Staff Positions	N=94	N=61	N=40	N=62	N=76	N=55	N=45	N=25
Males in Staff positions	42%	34%	50%	45%	41%	55%	27%	72%
Females in Staff Positions	58%	66%	50%	55%	59%	45%	73%	28%
% Difference in Percentage (F-M)•	+16 %	+32 %	0%	+10 %	+18 %	+10 %	+46 %	+44 %

•A (+) indicates the percentage of females exceeds the males.

- A (-) indicates the percentage of females is less than the percentage of males.

Line positions. The range for percentage of females in line positions across the region is 23% to 57%. Regions one and three have more females than males in line positions. The remaining six regions have fewer females than males in line positions. The percentage of males exceeds the percentage of females in line positions by more than 25% in five of the six regions.

The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) states that there is no difference between the percentage of males and the percentage of females in line positions in the eight regions. The resultant chi square statistic is 18.532 with a p-value of 0.010 ( $< .05$ ). The phi coefficient is .224 which indicates a weak relationship. This chi-square indicates that more males than females hold line positions in the eight regions.

Staff positions. The range for the percentage of females in staff positions across the eight study regions is 28% to 73%. Females occupy more staff positions than males by 10% or more in seven of the eight regions.

The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) states that there is no difference between the percentage of males and the percentage of females in staff positions in the eight regions. The resultant chi-square statistic is 19.327 with a p-value of 0.007 ( $< .05$ ). The phi coefficient is .20 which indicates a weak relationship. Therefore, one can conclude that there are more females than males in staff positions.

#### Gender Distribution in Line and Staff Positions by Enrollment Size

This section explores the data for the following research issues of gender distribution in central office positions, percentage of office positions by line and female in central office positions, and gender distribution in line and staff positions. The data focuses on the information from the six student enrollment sizes.

The 56 school districts were divided into six student enrollment categories to determine if the student population could be a factor in the distribution of males and females in line and staff positions. Student population was the variable used to select a stratified sample for the study. These 56 school districts range in the size of student enrollment from 830 to 48,000.

Table 11: Number of School Districts Represented in Enrollment Size

Enrollment Size	Total Schools in Population Category	School Districts/ Respondent	Percent of Responding Schools
1-2,500	37	19	33.9
2,501-5,000	39	17	30.4
5,001-7,000	17	6	10.7
7,001-15,000	24	7	12.5
15,001-30,000	8	5	8.9
30,001-50,000	7	2	3.6
	132*	56	100.0

\*Two school districts with a student population of 168,475 and 87,944 were not included due to size.

Table 11 shows the nineteen school districts or 34% of the sample which represent student populations between 1-2500; 17 school districts or 30.4% represent student populations between 2501-5000. Six schools or 10.7% represent student populations between 5001-7000. Seven school districts or 12.5% represent student populations between 7001-15,000. Five school districts have total student populations between 15,001-30,000 and two districts have student populations between 30,001-50,000.

**Research Question #7**

What is the gender distribution in central office positions within each population category?

Table 12 : Gender Distribution in Central Office Positions  
in Six Enrollment Sizes

Population Category	1-2,500	2,501-5,000	5,001-7,000	7,001-15,000	15,001-30,000	30,001-50,000
Positions:	N=124	N=193	N=83	N=141	N=122	N=164
Males	56%	48%	54%	48%	61%	45%
Females	44%	52%	46%	52%	39%	55%
%Difference in Percentage (F-M)•	-12%	+4%	-8%	+4%	-22%	+10%

A (+) indicates the percentage of females exceeds the males.

A (-) indicates the percentage of females is less than the percentage of males.

The range in percentage of females is 39% to 55%. Three student population categories have more women than men; three student population categories have more men than women. Those population categories that have more women than men and more men than women are found in small, medium, and large student populations.

To examine the null hypothesis ( $H^0$ ) that there is no difference between the percentage of women and men in central office in the student population categories, the chi-square was used. The resultant chi-square statistic is 9.52 with a p-value of .090(>.05). The null hypothesis is not rejected; therefore, it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between the gender distribution of the central office positions and the size of the student population.

**Research Question #8**

What is the percentage of line and staff positions for each gender based upon total central office gender representation in the six enrollment sizes?

**Table 13: Percentage of Total Central Office Males and Females and Males and Females in Line Positions in Enrollment Sizes**

	1- 2,500	2,501- 5,000	5,001- 7,000	7,001- 15,000	15,000 - 30,000	30,001 - 50,000
Total Males	N=69	N=95	N=45	N=68	N=74	N=74
Males in Line/Total Males	48%	68%	82%	43%	51%	32%
Total Females	N=55	N=98	N=38	N=73	N=48	N=90
Females in Line/Total Females	50%	47%	58%	16%	29%	23%
% Difference in Percentage (F-M)•	+2%	-21%	-24%	-27%	-22%	-9%
Males in Staff/Total Males	52%	32%	18%	57%	49%	68%
Females in Staff/Total Females	50%	53%	42%	84%	71%	77%
% Difference in Percentage (F-M)•	-2%	+21%	+24%	+27%	+22%	+9%

•A (-) indicates the percentage of females is less than the percentage of males.

•A (+) indicates the percentage of females exceeds the males.

Line Positions. The three lowest student population categories have the highest percentage of women in line positions from the total female central office personnel (50%,46%, 56%). The three largest student population categories have the lowest percentage of women in line positions (16%, 29%, and 23%).

Overall, the percentage of males out of the total male population is higher in five of the six population categories. The percentage of females in line positions is larger than the percentage of males in line positions in the lowest student population. The null hypothesis ( $H^0$ ) states that there is no difference between the percentage of women in line positions and men in line positions out of total central office gender representation in the student population categories. The following resultant chi square values, p-values, and phi coefficient values demonstrate the relationship of student enrollment and line positions in four enrollment sizes.

Table 14: Chi-Square Values for Four Enrollment Sizes

Category	Chi-Square Value	p-value	Phi coefficient	Strength of Relationship
2501-5,000	12.421	.001 (<.05)	.254	weak
5,001-7,000	5.932	.015 (<.05)	.267	weak
7,001-15,000	11.726	.001 (<.05)	.288	weak
15,001-30,000	8.706	.003 (<.05)	.174	weak

Two enrollment sizes are not included in Table 14 since the p-values did not show any significant relationship between size and line position distribution by gender. Based on the p-values in Table 14, it is concluded that gender in line positions and student population are related in four of the six population categories, although the phi coefficients indicate a weak relationship. This indicates that more males than females out of each gender's total representation hold line positions in four enrollment sizes.

Staff Positions. The percentage of females in staff positions out of the total female population is larger than the percentage of males in staff positions out of total male population in five of the six population categories. The percentage of males in staff positions out of total males is higher than the percentage of females in staff out of total females in the enrollment size of 1-2500. The null hypothesis ( $H^0$ ) states that the percentage of males in staff positions out of total males equals the percentage of females in staff positions out of total females. The chi-square test produced the following results:

Table 15: Chi-Square Values for Four Enrollment Sizes

Population	Chi-Square Value	p-value	Phi Coefficient	Strength
2501-5,000	5.561	0.018 (<.05)	-0.170	weak
5,001-7,000	5.932	0.015(<.05)	-0.267	weak
7,001-15,000	12.897	0.001(<.05)	-0.302	moderate
15,001-30,000	5.859	0.015(<.05)	-0.219	weak

It can be concluded that gender in staff positions and total gender represented population are related in four out of the six population categories. The percentage of females in staff positions exceeds the percentage of males in staff positions out of each gender's total representation. Those that do not have a significant relationship are the smallest (1-2500) and the largest enrollment size (30,001-50,000). These two enrollment sizes are not included in Table 15 since the p-values did not show any significant relationship between size and staff position distribution by gender.

### **Research Question #9**

What is the gender distribution of line and staff positions within population categories?

**Table 16: Gender Distribution in Line and Staff Positions by Enrollment Size**

	1-2,500	2,501-5,000	5,001-7,000	7,001-15,000	15,001-30,000	30,001-50,000
Total Line Positions	N=61	N=111	N=59	N=41	N=52	N=45
Males in Line	55%	59%	63%	71%	56%	53%
Females in Line	45%	41%	37%	29%	44%	47%
% Difference in Percentage (F-M)•	-10%	-18%	-15%	-42%	-12%	-6%
Total Staff Positions	N=64	N=82	N=24	N=99	N=70	N=119
Males in Staff	57%	38%	33%	38%	51%	42%
Females in Staff	43%	62%	67%	62%	49%	58%
% Difference in Percentage (F-M)•	-8%	+20%	+8%	+23%	-2%	+19%

•A (+) indicates the percentage of females exceeds the males.

•A (-) indicates the percentage of females is less than the percentage of males.

Line positions. The range for the percentage of females occupying line positions is 29% to 47%. All six population categories have a percentage of 47% or less of females who occupy line positions of total line positions. The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) states that the percentage of males in line positions equals the percentage of females in line positions. The resultant chi-square produced 7.512 with a p-value of 0.185 ( $>.05$ ) which indicates no significant relationship between student population and gender distribution in line positions.

Staff positions. The range of percentage of females in staff positions is 43% to 67%. Three population categories have more than 60% of females in staff positions while one population category has more than 50% of females in staff positions. The remaining two have more than 40% females in staff positions.

The null hypothesis ( $H^0$ ) states that the percentage of males in staff positions equals the percentage of females in staff positions. The chi-square test produced a resultant value of 9.278 with a p-value of 0.098 ( $>.05$ ). Therefore, we can conclude that gender distribution in staff positions and size of school population do not have a significant relationship.

### **Summary**

The research questions explored the relationship among the numbers of females and males in line and staff positions in the sample of 56 school districts in Virginia, the 56 school districts clustered according to the eight study regions in the state, and the 56 school districts clustered according to six student population categories. The findings are summarized as follows:

Males outnumber females in the reported 827 central office positions in 56 school districts. The number of positions range from 2 to 91 in the 56 cases. Regionally, males outnumber females in central office in four of the eight regions. These four regions are located in urban areas. Females outnumber males in a small (2,501-5,000), a medium (7,001-15,000) and a large (30,001-50,000) school district. Males outnumber women in a small (1-2,500), a medium (5,001-7,000), and a large school district (15,001-30,000). One school district has no women in central office.

When the women and men are categorized according to line or staff positions, then the numbers are not proportionally distributed. Fifteen of the fifty-six reporting school districts have no women in line positions. A comparison of females in line positions and males in line positions reveals that more men occupy line positions statewide, in six of the eight study regions, and in the six population categories.

Line positions number 369. When looking at the proportion of line positions held by males out of the male population and the proportion of line positions held by females out of the female population, males have a larger proportion of line positions. This is true statewide, in six of the eight regions, and in five of the population categories.

Staff positions number 458. Women outnumber men in staff positions statewide, in six of the eight regions, and in four of the six population categories. The proportion of staff positions held by females out of total female population exceeds the proportion of males in staff positions out of the total male population.

More men tend to be in line positions while more women tend to be in staff positions. Where women outnumber men in central office positions in the highest student population category, men hold more line positions. Where men outnumber women in school districts in the lowest student population category, women hold more line positions than men.

## **QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS**

### **Purpose of Qualitative Phase**

The purpose of this phase was to interview school district central office personnel in school districts which displayed varying gender distributions. The distribution of line and staff positions held by females and males gave cause for additional inquiry. The interview questions were designed to encourage answers that may explain the distribution, identify any gender issues and offer a glimpse into the phenomenon of gender distribution for further study. In what way did the selected case study subjects portray their aspirations, their perceived barriers to promotion, their mentors, and their perceptions of gender in central office?

### **Interview Subjects**

Six persons were interviewed: two persons from a small-sized school district, two persons from a medium-sized school district, and two persons from a large school district. This plan was to ensure a representative school district in the major population categories--particularly the largest and the smallest.

Respondents were selected purposively. One school district was chosen from the medium-size population category with a large number of females in central office; another school district was chosen from the smallest population category with all males in central office and another school district was chosen based on the largest population category. The researcher chose school districts in the small and medium-size categories that skewed the distribution--the one with the largest number of females in central office and the one with no females in central office.

Table 17: Distributions of Male and Female Line and Staff Members  
in Chosen School Districts

	MSS (Medium- Sized System)	SSS (Small Size System)	LSS (Large Size System)
Total Student Enrollment	6,395	2,460	48,000
# of males in central office	3*	8	41
# of females in central office	10	0	50
# of males in line positions	1	2	11
# of females in line positions	4.5	0	12
# of males in staff positions	2	6	30
# of females in staff positions	5.5	0	38
% of females in line positions	35%	0%	13%

\* From the time of survey return and interview, only one male remained in Central Office.

The first and second interviews were with a secondary curriculum specialist (staff--female) and an assistant superintendent of administrative services and logistics (line--male) in a medium-sized school district; the third and fourth interviews were with a superintendent of schools(line--male) and an assistant superintendent of schools (line and staff--male) from a small school district; the fifth and sixth interviews were with a language arts supervisor (staff--female) and an assistant superintendent for human resources (line--female) from a large school district.

The interview questions centered on job responsibilities, career aspirations, career path, networks, and mentoring. The intent was to see if any glimpses into the gender issues would emerge. The semi-structured interview questions were the following:

1. What are your major job responsibilities?
2. Do you consider your position to be line or staff?
3. How many personnel report to you?
4. Are you accountable for a major functional portion of the organization?
5. How did you arrive here? Describe your career path.
6. What are some challenges or barriers in your present job?

7. What are your accomplishments?
8. What is the next position you would like to achieve?
9. What is your ultimate professional ambition?
10. Would you be willing to move to accept new position with another school system?
11. Do you perceive any barriers in getting promoted to a higher position?
12. Do you have a mentor?
13. Do you have an active network of professional support?
14. Do you participate in a formal or an informal communication link among district personnel?
15. Are you aware of the gender distribution in central office positions?
16. Is there anything you would like to add?

The first school district interviews were transcribed and coded for emerging themes and patterns. The themes that emerged included career paths, career responsibilities, mentors and networking, hiring practices, perceptions of the role of superintendent, perceptions of females in leadership positions, role stereotypes, and career aspirations.

### **A Visit to a Medium-Size School System (MSS)**

This medium-sized school district in Region One has a student population of 6395 students. The female superintendent oversees a central office staff of 10 females and 1 male in central office.

While on travel to the area for a conference, the researcher visited the central office building the week before the scheduled interviews. The receptionist directed her to a staff meeting in the conference room. Laughter echoed down the hallway. A baby shower was part of the staff meeting agenda that day. Somehow the relaxed and spontaneous chatter characterized the atmosphere. Most attendees were women--not surprising since most of the central office personnel are mostly female. Al, the only male in the central office, was not seen at the baby shower.

The following week Sally, the Supervisor of Secondary School Curriculum, and Al, the Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services and Logistics, (the choices of the superintendent) were interviewed. The researcher arrived at the superintendent's office and chatted briefly with the superintendent who was on her way to a regional meeting. It was necessary to report to the superintendent's office who then called the first interviewee, Al. The superintendent had just been appointed to a governor's committee and she was remarking about all the meetings she must attend. When asked how long had she been superintendent, she remarked, "too long." Her career in the district extended for over 30 years and she hoped to retire in a year or two.

### **Interviewees**

Several hours were spent interviewing Al and Sally. In their career paths they have been teachers and administrators who have worked in several different school districts before coming here at the request of someone in the school system. They have

career aspirations--Al wishes for a superintendent's position and Sally wishes to be an assistant superintendent. They will work in a surrounding district, but they don't want to move.

Table 18 shows their educational background, career experience, and experience at the central office. These responses were from the questionnaire completed by each interviewee (Appendix I).

Table 18: Interviewees in MMS

	Al	Sally
<b>EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND</b>		
Bachelors	History	Education
Masters	History	Education
Doctoral Courses	yes	yes
Major study	Educational Administration	Education Administration
Awarded the degree	Ed. D.	No
First Management Positions	Upon receiving administrative endorsement	Before starting the doctorate
<b>CAREER EXPERIENCE</b>		
Positions	Teacher	Teacher
	Assistant principal	Department Chair
	Principal-elementary, middle, high school	Administrative Aide
	Secondary Supervisor	Curriculum Specialist
	Assistant Superintendent	Staff Development Coordinator
		Testing Coordinator
Taught for	Category 6-10 years	Category 21 or more
Levels Taught	Secondary	Junior High/Secondary
<b>FIRST CENTRAL POSITION</b>		
Age	40-49 (served as principal before 40)	40-49
Time and Appointment	0-3 years	0-3 years
Promoted from within	yes	no
Marital Status	married	married
# children when approved	5	yes
<b>CENTRAL OFFICE POSITIONS</b>		
How many	3	1
Titles	Secondary Supervisor (4 yrs)	Secondary Curriculum Specialist (3 years)

	Assistant Superintendent of Instruction (3 yrs)	
	Assistant Superintendent of Administration (4 years)	
Present Position	Assistant Superintendent of Administration (4 years)	Secondary Curriculum Specialist (3 years)

### **Their Job Responsibilities**

The subject of the first interview hopes to be the next superintendent if it "is in the cards." He is the assistant superintendent for logistics and administrative services. He apologized for his long title. Maintenance of buildings, ground transportation, special education, social services, alternative school, and food services --all fall under his umbrella. He manages the guidance counselors. He states that the students need a wonderful education, but they must first get to school. And that is the focus of his responsibilities--operations and logistics.

After describing these responsibilities, he adds, "And then I have special education and the non instructional piece, the guidance counselors, special education, people like psychologists, and that kind of thing and student services which has to do with the management of pupil personnel especially those that have difficulty in maintaining themselves in traditional classroom settings. That would be the alternative school and various other kinds of things. I am the liaison with the social services, the Compensatory Service Act. I attend those meetings PBMT or CPMT, the organization responsible for the distribution of funds under the Compensatory Services Act. "

"My blood flows all the time" is his response when he cites the most exciting aspect of the job. Asbestos containment, not enough bus drivers, aging equipment in need of repair, increasing numbers of students with special needs, parents' complaints -- he views these as the challenges of his line position.

"It is a part of the business that I really needed to know especially be comfortable with especially if one is aspiring to the superintendency--this is a part of the business that is equally important. The lights don't work and the air conditioners aren't on and the buses don't get there and the food not there. Then you have problems with your children and the community, so it a very important part and I have enjoyed very much this experience."

Reporting to the assistant superintendent of instruction, Sally is in a staff position with aspirations of becoming the next assistant superintendent of instruction in MSS. She stated that her job description is not accurate--she works with elementary supervisors and curriculum K-12. She is in charge of staff development and student testing, even though she states her job description does not include testing. She is responsible for 11 schools and works with the other supervisors for curriculum and instruction. The elementary teachers call and ask for "the staff development coordinator."

And she answers to that title and she prefers that title. (Her position description does not reflect this title.)

Both Al and Sally shared anecdotes to illustrate their job responsibilities, accomplishments, and challenges. Stories about the disgruntled parents whose children had to wait at the bus stop and the test scores that weren't high enough to be allotted money from the state were shared. Sally's accomplishments in curriculum are many. Sally tended to cite concrete projects more than her job responsibilities: she "brought in" the cognitive process and started the Thinking to Write program in MSS. She facilitated the development of a profile management system for each child. She is a trainer in Bloom's Taxonomy and uses the Fulton's Skills Development Institute. She prepared a grant to the state for \$32,000 which her school system received. Her office indicates all the work she has done with curriculum, with stories and plaques decorating the walls. Al's office walls were rather bare as well as his desk and conference table.

### **Networks**

With these challenges in a changing educational world, Al finds networking is his "saving grace." He talks about getting in the car and driving to meet four or five educators from other districts just to talk--these are the people he can trust and they compare ideas--what worked and hasn't worked.

Networks and mentors have worked for him. "I have had the good fortune to have a number of people who have helped me. FB for a brief period of time, a guy named WJ was extremely helpful to me. WM obviously has been. And to be very candid with you, the superintendent here, some of us call her Mama and we do that because there is a true affection we have for her. I have, believe it or not, not always made the right choices and I am capable as anybody you know and the way she deals with it is to work you through it to help you to understand and to develop strategies for plugging up the dam and how to proceed. She is a very instructional kind of administrator."

"So I have a deep affection for her and because she has been so supportive of me as I have developed. You know you don't, to my chagrin, one doesn't stop developing. I am now ready (For superintendent?) because each day is another learning experience. Education is now the most changing and vibrant profession to be in. As soon as you think you got something down, someone in Iowa comes up with another way to skin the cat and changes the entire nomenclature of what you have used to do something."

Like Al, Sally had people who "looked out for her." Her network includes principals, teachers, and department members throughout the state. Both Sally and Al owe their present jobs to someone calling them and "inviting" them to apply. One day five years ago, the assistant superintendent of instruction (the one who will retire soon) called Sally to see if she wanted to return to MSS. And she now serves as secondary curriculum supervisor and specialist.

## **Career Paths and Goals**

Al wants to be the next superintendent and Sally wants to be the next assistant superintendent of instruction.

Al came to MSS as the instructional assistant to the new superintendent, WM, seven years ago. WM, FB and WJ are men who have "taken care of him" throughout his career. He has moved quite frequently following these mentors. He has worked with WM in four different school districts. Al has been an administrator in New Orleans; North Carolina; and Prince Georges County, Hopewell, and Richmond in Virginia. His education career began 25 years ago as a history and government teacher in Richmond. He assumed someone noticed in him an "administrative potential, whatever that is" so the school district (Richmond City) recruited and paid for his administrative training. He went on to state that his doctorate is the only degree he has in education. His titles have ranged from assistant principal, principal, secondary supervisor, instructional assistant to the superintendent, and assistant superintendent.

He feels prepared to be superintendent in MSS. He spent three years in instruction and four years in operations in MSS. He discussed his roots in MSS and that he went to elementary school in the building where the central office staff is now housed. His third grade class was held where the present copier is. He is the fourth-generation of this family to live in MSS, his kids go to MSS, his parents live there. Like he said, "Once a history major, always a history major."

Despite his roots in this area, he has moved around. However, now he does not wish to move around. He wants to stay in Virginia --there is a "higher moral fiber that goes through Virginia and you don't know it unless you have lived somewhere else. That may seem silly and frivolous." Being close to home is a major consideration for any job offer. "My career has led me outside to make a judgment and I have made it and this is where I want to be." He views school boards as a challenge since "they are there to hire you and then look to see how they can fire you."

While Al's experiences took him around the country following his mentors, Sally's experiences have been confined to Virginia. She started as an English teacher, "an innovative, crazy one" in Lunenburg County. She prepared the newsletter for the superintendent and traveled doing school evaluations. She came to MSS after a few years, stayed for 15 years, then opted for an opportunity in LSS, one of the largest school systems in Virginia. There she was a teacher and semi-administrator. A semi-administrator is an administrator who substitutes for principals when they are out. She was in the principal's administrator program there.

Sally looks to becoming the next assistant superintendent of instruction, but does not see herself as superintendent - "superintendents don't get to work on instruction." She mentioned that she would like her present superintendent to focus more on instruction. She admires her superintendent and says the superintendent knows "how to read those test scores since her background is in gifted education."

Sally does not see any barriers to her next move. As she shares, "Well, right now, I don't. Because what I am doing as I said, is aligning with the assistant superintendent for instruction's job. In fact, some of the responsibilities that she cannot do, I get those

responsibilities." She goes on to share that the present superintendent of instruction called me and "brought me back here." And I have been here three years. She feels she is prepared to take over as assistant superintendent. Sally has two masters' degrees and is presently working on a doctorate at William and Mary. She doesn't feel she has really learned anything new since returning to college--just refreshed her thinking.

### **Hiring Practices**

Both Al and Sally state that the system is "not afraid of hiring within." Al elaborated "There is no fear of hiring within. That is not something that one has reasonable expectation of but certainly we interview everyone in this school division. If you're qualified, you will apply and you will get an interview. Now that is inside and outside. Now we love to find people within. For instance, the young lady who is now the principal of an elementary school. She was super as a coordinator of reading and VPRE. Well, the person that took her place was a wonderfully well qualified individual serving as an instructor in the schools so she got the job. But if we couldn't find anybody, we look inside and outside."

In response to the questions about little turnover in central office staff, Al stated, "We mostly have been here for a long time. I am probably the junior person. The superintendent has been here for twenty some years (not as superintendent). There is not a heck of a lot of turnover below the superintendency. They don't need to move out to move up."

### **Gender Distribution in the Central Office--Two Perceptions**

He recognizes that he is the only male member of the central office staff. When asked what he felt contributed to the distribution of gender at central office, he "reckons that the best people for the job are hired for the jobs." He does state that more and more women are becoming superintendent. He identifies the "first one" in Virginia, and that there was a "gal" on the Eastern Shore and "Chicago has had them." "There were some and then they have gone." "Boston has had a woman, Chicago has had them, D.C. has had them, they have been here and there."

My second interviewee Sally, the secondary curriculum specialist, wishes more men would apply for jobs in her school system. She doesn't like having one male in the central office. Although Sally states that when men dominate the central office staff particularly in the larger school divisions, they become a "good old boy system."

When asked about the distribution of gender across line and staff in her school district, she responded, "Yes, yes, we are heavily populated with females. And that is a rarity because males tend to dominate central office."

She went on to state that she doesn't have any idea why this is a rarity. "I would like to see more men. Now Ed is going to leave us, I think on the 21st. Al will be the only person but I would like to see more men apply for these positions as others I know. EH is going to retire as others retire. I would like to see some men apply for positions."

She referred to her previous employer, LSS, with a large central office population, where there are men, as a good old boy system. "In larger school divisions,

you have mostly men. Predominantly men in central office positions and also as principals. I think that is based on the philosophy that a man probably can handle discipline problems a little bit better. Of course, we know that's not true, you need somebody to break up the fights. Often, there are techniques for breaking up a fight without even you know jumping in between the two. And women tend to know those techniques and nobody wants to hit a mama figure. You know so they stop more readily for a female than they do for men." Sally's comments could have been based on her experiences for five years in this LSS.

### **Perceptions on Female Leadership**

Sally volunteered several perceptions about feminine and masculine leadership. She indicated that " we (women) have to act differently in positions of leadership. Oftentimes women will not take the credit. Because we have women who come into the workforce and they're used to playing that female role that a male really is. I am not bashing males but there is a lot of research about women who stayed at home."

"Women usually don't take credit for what they do. We are trained in that particular philosophy and we are not as powerful as men and men actually use strategies- they use strategies to get authority over people and they try to take power you know with the force whatever and I read some research even just the way they just gesticulate, cross their leg or whatever and put the foot down. Do you remember those pictures David standing over Goliath with the foot and so forth? So a lot of that comes out in their characters, but we don't have that."

"We are facilitators or mediators of conflict. Now, my superintendent, she is a female but sometimes you're afraid that she is a male. She is a good leader." Her comment about the superintendent being male reinforced another stereotype about the image of females in authority situations--do women have to act like men?

"You would think that she is a male because she is very authoritative [ another perception] when she needs to be. But a warm person. And she is a people person and people just do things without her asking them to do. She has the knowledge and I would love to see her to get more into instruction because she had been a gifted curriculum specialist and she is an excellent leader. She always knows about the testing. She can read that test data just as good as I can. That is what I really admire about her. And she can answer the questions from the school board members and look them right in the eye. And she has the support and she is just a wonderful person."

### **Summary**

Both persons referred to themselves as "people persons." Sally said she is a "fair person" who can observe and "fire" someone when necessary. Al also used the word "fair when talking about his having "fair expectations" for youngsters.

It seems these two were chosen for administration - they were both satisfied - they chose to be career teachers without any thought of administration before being asked to enter administrative programs. Both have had great educational accomplishments.

Both had mentors who helped them along the way. And both want to advance to their next level: assistant superintendent of instruction and superintendent of schools.

### **A Visit to a Small School System (SSS)**

SSS has a student population of 2500 students distributed among three elementary schools, an intermediate school, a middle school, and a high school. This school district was chosen for its variation since no females serve in central office as indicated in the distribution survey. The question of distribution was addressed in the interviews.

### **Interviewees**

Harold, the assistant superintendent, and William, the superintendent, were interviewed in their respective offices in the central office building located in the middle of the county. Located at one end of the building is a Parent Center and at the other end are the offices for the personnel. The superintendent arranged the interviews including himself as an interviewee. He could not choose one distinct line position and one distinct staff position for the interviews since all four central office personnel are line and staff sharing numerous responsibilities. Harold operates as the assistant superintendent, but also the director of personnel and the Chapter I coordinator, Migrant coordinator, and Chapter 2 coordinator. And he goes on to state anything else the superintendent wants him to do.

The superintendent works mainly with the Board citing numerous personnel matters, guiding the principals, and the contracting of a new school as his main responsibilities. Seven principals report directly to him. He said he probably sees every principal every day and visits every school every day. He views himself as an administrator--a business manager. He states that " he is managing a lot of the things for a common goal and the common goal is to educate the students and to get a product out that can be successful in the workplace."

Table 19 shows the educational background, career experience, and experience at the Central Office. These responses were from the questionnaire completed by each interviewee (Appendix I).

Table 19: Interviewees in SSS

	William Superintendent	Harold Assistant Superintendent
<b>EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND</b>		
Bachelors	Education	Education
Masters	Education	Education Administration
Doctoral Courses	yes	no
Major study	Education Administration	
Awarded the degree	yes, Ph.D.	
First Management Positions	Before doctorate	
<b>CAREER EXPERIENCE</b>		
Positions	Teacher	Teacher
	Elementary Principal	Assistant Principal-junior high
		Elementary School Principal
	Middle School Principal	Middle School Principal
	Director of Elementary Education	Assistant Superintendent
Taught for	0-5 years	21 or more
Levels Taught	Elementary, Middle	Elementary School
<b>FIRST CENTRAL POSITION</b>		
Age	21-29	50 or over
Time and Appointment	7-9 years	0
Promoted from within	yes	yes
Marital Status	married	married
# children when approved	1	2
<b>CENTRAL OFFICE POSITIONS</b>		
How many	1	0
Titles	Director of Elementary Education	NA
Present Position	Superintendent of Schools (5 years)	Assistant Superintendent (5 years)

### Changes in Central Office Since 1990

Males occupy the four central office positions. Females occupied positions in the central office--until 1990--when early retirement was taken by many in the school system--over 62 including the previous superintendent. William states he became superintendent "by default." He received a call in 1989 to come to SSS as director of elementary education and to work with the superintendent. He was in that position for 18 months when the early retirees left and he became superintendent.

He replaced all seven school principals at one time. From May 22 to August 16, 1991, every school had a new principal and every one in central office changed. Harold came from the middle school principalship to the central office and between June 15 and August 16, sixty-eight people were hired--the first three months of William's superintendency. Even though the superintendent felt that the "big retirement benefited the system," he would never recommend the change in this way and this fast. A question he is asked by many is "Would you do it again?" "No, I would not recommend that for anybody. You need to change a system gradually and not massive change."

As he discussed his relationship and challenges with the School Board, he revealed a first for the district in selection of school principals. He hired the first high school woman principal. "That was against everything--that made front-page news it was headlines--it was 'William... Picks Woman Principal for High School' headlines."

This hiring caused some friction with the School Board. He went on to state, "She was the most qualified. I interviewed a lot of people and I had a former superintendent and he says my brother is here and wants to interview for job. I had coaches, head football coach who wanted to be principal--185 games and he is a legend---and this woman had everything I felt I wanted in a high school principal--we hired her and I went up and saw her."

The Board questioned, "How can a high school woman deal with these kids--she is just not strong enough." I asked them, "How many women do we have on staff? They have been dealing with it. Why would she be any different? If we hired her as a teacher, we would expect her to go in the boys' bathroom." They rebutted that she can't break up the fights. But he won out.

He stressed that she is doing an outstanding job. And since then, he has added more women principals. "Three women are very good administrators--very dominant--they tell the other three men principals what to do--and they do it and I like it that way. It is great."

He continued that women need "their shot." He thinks women are given more of their shot. "Three of my closest superintendents are three women. One has always had a lot of people. Her leadership style is a lot of people. She is out front public. But it is different."

His belief is that Virginia hasn't gotten over that it is a man's world. "I guess there is always going to be those things--Even keel--I have been impressed and female teachers and maybe because during my teaching experience, I was surrounded by women and usually I was the only male on the staff."

His background was in elementary education where there tended to be more women on staff. He continued elaborating on the issue of males and females in education. His coaching experience brought him to the conclusion that men never really took education and teaching to heart as the women he knew.

"I have some good men teachers who take it very seriously so maybe my view of always hitching myself with the women was that they have more legitimate concerns for the overall good of education. But...I have some excellent male staff and you need that for the kids, especially for the younger. And it is really hard. The males are dying out; your black females are dying out to an extent. And basically education is a white female profession. And I don't know what causes that. That seems to be the groove that public education has not blossomed. When little girls want to be a teacher, it is because they liked Mrs. Robinson who was teaching and they become teachers."

Harold, the assistant superintendent, also stated that some central office positions weren't replaced after the early outs and he quickly pointed out the three female principals in the district and went on to state that DH was one of the first black females principals in the state. He stated that when William came, he brought some {women} in.

### **Challenges**

Both Harold and William find many challenges working in a small school district. Management of personnel, personnel issues, student discipline, new chair of School Board--these issues challenge the superintendent. In his first year as superintendent five years ago, there was not an expulsion hearing the first year and the next year, 17 students were expelled. Teachers saying "I don't understand" when it is obvious they have not read their contracts presents to him another concern. Another time-consuming challenge for the superintendent is being accessible to his constituents--by phone and in person.

"The third big thing as a rural superintendent is that you are supposed to attend every meeting. Be in church on Sunday. I am expected to be at all high school ball games. I am expected to be at the beck and call of the Board of Supervisors. My average work week is about 60-70 hours. Like a large division you have many demands. In a small division you have the same concerns but you don't have the staff to ultimately deal with it."

"And that is the dynamics in the superintendency... In a small system you wear many more hats because I don't have a reading specialist and I don't have an instructional specialist; and one big thing in a small system is you run lean in very thin and you try to pull what your bigger systems are doing. And somehow, I think when the state, when we lowered the State Department to the point that it has only 286 eventually you want to see that hurt/ that dent/debt in the small systems because many of your people in the State Department helped with the reading programs, our math programs, our science programs, those things. So now we don't have those people. So, in essence when they made those cuts, that hurt us."

He likes to think that he may make a difference in curriculum but in reality some days he doesn't even know what math or reading book the students are in. He deals with money, finance, and budget. He strives to set a standard by which all employees can

work. He compares himself to Lee Iococca who felt good when he saw a car drive off the lot but on some days he didn't even know if Chrysler was building the car.

He handles parent complaints at home. The night before the interview he received 25 calls after 8:30 pm about the teacher who asked the kids to watch OJ Simpson on Dateline on NBC.

The assistant superintendent likes central office due to his involvement in different projects and the travel. He finds Chapter I programs and recruitment of teachers for SSS challenges--"the assistant superintendent in Arlington can offer a contract on the spot and even offer to move them. In SSS I can't even give them a pencil and we are still looking for the same people. It is pretty competitive and sometimes rough out there in recruitment. I have to tell people all the time that we don't have the tax base." And he admits that "you try to select the best people possible and sometimes you get community pressure."

Harold plays another role: he serves on the Board of Supervisors (ran unopposed three times) and served as chair. He assures no conflict exists---that he can vote on the whole budget, but when it comes time to vote on the education part, the rest of the members of the Board of Supervisors vote on the education budget separately.

### **Mentors and Networks**

Like the other interviewees, both were called to SSS and both had mentors. William's mentor is the present state superintendent formerly an adjunct at the University of Richmond. He used the expression he was "called to SSS" in 1989. Harold cites WWC who lives in Richmond. "He was the high school principal in LC. And he brought me here and we have kept in touch ever since he left Lunenburg. Another mentor was my college professor KW who was president of the University. Of course, my father and my uncle."

Each profess to having a network especially since they are in a small school district. William is quick to point out that he hasn't hired someone because he knew someone else. He receives calls from other superintendents asking him to interview certain people. He also serves on the Board of Directors for the State Superintendents whose mission is to help other superintendents.

### **Career Aspirations**

Neither one had any aspiration of being in their present positions. Harold thought he would end his career as a principal and William thought he would come to SSS to get back into teaching eventually. He said he was at the "tip of his profession" when he was teaching. He shared that the only reason he got into administration was that it provided more money especially for raising a family.

Having been approached several times about being the high school principal, Harold did not follow that path. He liked being the middle school principal. As far as becoming superintendent, he adds, "I don't have any burning desire" and he doesn't want to move since he is on the Board of Supervisors. He states that he has been invited to large divisions to work. And his sons ask why he doesn't go to another county.

During his superintendency here, William has been invited to interview for superintendent in larger school districts. He cites one case in which he was interviewed in a system of 50,000 students. The Board wanted a working superintendent to be accessible to the public and my response to them was "I couldn't do it." "If I got the same number of calls I get here in this small community, that would be to plug the phone in my ear."

### **Summary**

These two men represent two facets of a small school district--one who has been in the district for many years and one who came in seven years ago and became school superintendent. The superintendent didn't have his sights on his position, and the assistant superintendent doesn't know if he wants to become a superintendent. The latter has a long history of being a supervisor on the Board of Supervisors in the school district.

Both have seen the challenge of change in five years--the remaining central office has four members who occupy many different roles and perform various line and staff responsibilities. Over 68 employees have left the system.

At this time there are no females in central office due to early outs. The superintendent hired the first woman high school principal against the wishes of the school board. Subsequently, he has hired other female principals. He admits that he went into administration for money reasons. The assistant superintendent was invited by the superintendent to come to the central office leaving his position as middle school principal.

### **A Visit to a Large School District (LSS)**

LSS is the third largest school system in Virginia with a student population of 48,000. The language arts specialist, a staff position, and the assistant superintendent of personnel, a line position, were interviewed. Much information about their job responsibilities, challenges and accomplishments, and career aspirations was shared from the two females in these positions.

Beverly was charged three years ago "to get the secondary schools in order" as a curriculum specialist overseeing 400 teachers. Joan was charged 20+ years ago to start a paraprofessional program, eventually becoming assistant superintendent of personnel.

Table 20 depicts their educational background, their career experience, and their experience in Central Office.

Table 20: Interviewees in LSS

	Joan Assistant Superintendent	Beverly Language Arts Specialist
<b>EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND</b>		
Bachelors	Sciences	Humanities
Masters	Educational Administration	Education
Doctoral Courses	yes	yes
Major study	Education Administration	Curriculum and Instruction
Awarded the degree	Ed.D	no
First Management Positions	before starting the doctorate	before starting the doctorate
<b>CAREER EXPERIENCE</b>		
Positions	teacher	teacher
	curriculum specialist	department chair
	assistant superintendent	curriculum specialist
	director	
Taught for	0-5 years	16-20 years
Levels Taught	elementary	junior high/secondary
<b>FIRST CENTRAL POSITION</b>		
Age	21-29	40-49
Time and Appointment	0-3 years	0-3 years
Promoted from within	yes	yes
Marital Status	married	married
# children when approved	3	1
<b>CENTRAL OFFICE POSITIONS</b>		
How many	5	1
Titles		Language Instructional specialist
Present Position	Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources (8 years)	Language instructional specialist (3 years)

**Career Aspirations**

Neither female thinks that she will be or wants to be in the top leadership position --the superintendent. The assistant superintendent had been in a line position in LSS since her mid-20s and the language arts specialist had been in her central office position

for three years, after 21 years of teaching, 18 of which were in LSS. When queried about career aspirations for a superintendent's position, the assistant superintendent stated :

"No, I've thought about that at a point and time but my job and the size of this system is enough of a challenge. This is my niche, it's what I do well, it's what I find challenging and I just, I think the superintendent's position at one time it was something that I thought about, but not a great deal, because I like Human Resources and in a system this size if I compared it to a superintendency in a small rural or a smaller division, I have more employees than those systems."

...Definitely, I just really never pursued that. This is a position where I have never regretted coming to work on any day, gone home very tired. But there's a great deal of reward in this school system, maybe in another system, another position, but this one, the way the HR works, we are not an isolated unit, over here by ourselves, very interwoven with what is happening in the system and if I were in the system where HR was a place where if you wanted to hire an employee, you would post a vacancy but your contact with them would be very limited otherwise. Then that would not be challenging, but this one is."

However, at another time during the interview, Joan shared that the opportunity for a superintendency eight years ago was given to her and she said no. She stated that it would have been right at the time with the experiences she had and she did look into it, but she did not want to leave LSS.

She elaborated that she feels she has gone through stages in her life, and she doesn't see her getting a superintendency at this point. She is considering retirement in another two-year period or time. She indicates her challenges she looks forward to are of a different nature.

Beverly, the curriculum specialist, originally thought she would like to be Director of Instruction but would find that too limiting. "I don't want to do that." Then when queried about her thoughts on becoming an assistant superintendent or superintendent, she stated:

"No, because I will never be a principal. I have no desire to be a principal. I live with one and that is enough. One of the funny things that happened when I was first married, my mother said, "Beverly, you should go back to school and become a principal and move up." I looked at her in an incredulous way and said, "What makes you think it is a move up?" ..."I couldn't do it that really is a detail kind of work--the redundancy of it. I just couldn't do it, I have no desire to do it."

Much later in the interview, when asked the question "What if that job (referring to a move up) became available tomorrow?," this time she indicated she didn't know what she would do. "Actually the Director of Secondary Instruction is retirement age and she was saying something well you going to be in this office soon and I thought she was setting me up. Except that you see she is in charge of secondary principals. I don't think the principals would accept me as a director because I have not had their training. I've not been one of them."

The probe continued and when asked, "But only denying the job for that reason?," she responded, "Right-- only because I haven't been a principal." She indicated that the

secondary principals are male. But she said the present director of instruction is a female who had been principal for twenty years in this school system.

Then she went on to explain how, if she received the position, she would reorganize the directors so that one would be in charge of the instructional specialists and one would be in charge of the principals instead of splitting it half and half.

### Mentors

Both women had mentors who helped guide and encourage them. Feeling that she was in the right place at the right time helped Joan enter an administrative program at a young age. She has been with the school system since 1964 and was the youngest member of the central office when she took a position there. Who was her mentor?

"A principal that I had the third year that I taught, who just retired this past year. The third year that I taught she recommended me for the administrative supervisory training program. And she talked to me about it and I can remember I told her I'm not certain that that's what I want to do and she said but I want you to do that. She said I think you will enjoy it. And so that's how I got into that training program.

Through that training program you learned a lot about the school system but you met central office people. And I've always had such good people to work with and TF who's my boss and superintendent now, earlier had personnel as well, and learned a great deal from him. What I alluded to with the teamwork because everyone works so closely together, you learn a lot from others, but working together, is a mentoring all in its own, because you work closely, and you try things together and you throw ideas out and that atmosphere that exists in that real world at times is that when you throw those ideas out, someone else runs off with them and claims them as their own. That never existed in the school system."

A principal of Beverly's also guided her in her career move--"I think he is very responsible for my path." She thinks he is a wonderful leader, but not a wonderful principal. He is a visionary and sees the big picture and sees how we can go beyond that. And he is willing to do whatever it takes to go beyond that. He asked her to do a lot of projects that gave her a lot of opportunities to meet with a lot of people--School Board members, parent groups, business groups.

She believes that the former assistant superintendent of instruction who hired her saw potential in her. She encouraged her by saying, "You do such a good job at this. You need to do something else. When this job (as language specialist) came open, she never called or encouraged me to do this, but I know that the encouragement was there."

### Gender as Barriers

Both felt that gender had not been a barrier in their school district and that their school district offers sufficient opportunities for women.

Neither woman felt gender was a barrier in getting advanced. Both women had been hired from within the system. Joan indicated that gender never was a barrier and she was quick to point to the number of women in administrative supervisory positions in their school district (although few are line). She emphasized that "It's never been a barrier." As far as she could remember, gender was never a barrier.

She stated it could be the culture. "It's that same cultural climate out in the business world, if you had employees who had severe health problems or cancer, mental stress problems, or the discrimination, as the employees, that they go through, that's never thought about in the school system. I've had teachers who've taught in a classroom who've had to have oxygen in that classroom. Teachers who have MS, who have assistants help while their working, and it's just part of the flow. The students that we work with have a handicap, and I think that it's because everyone is so student oriented so people oriented that to discriminate against someone because he or she had a handicap or a problem is unheard of, it's not cultured of this organization to do that, in fact, the culture would be, how dare you."

Joan contributes her perception of the lack of gender barriers to the idea of teamwork in the school district and particularly in her department. She realizes that opportunities exist for women for advancement. Some of the roadblocks are that there are no opportunities. She compared her department to a large corporation "outside the educational realm where she knows there are challenges for women in her position. She cited a Human Resource Department in the next county where two women left the department because it was such a "male-dominated" department. She indicated that the lines are drawn department-wide and if you don't have teamwork, then the barriers are there.

"Here if you didn't move or if you weren't challenged with your job or you couldn't do new things, it would have been more of your limitations and not what the systems offered." And she went on to say... Joan praised the uniqueness of the system and she would be willing to bet that any woman in the school system who was in an administrative or supervisory position, that they would not find a barrier because of their gender."

Whereas Joan felt teamwork led to collaborative efforts which helped erase gender as a barrier in her district, Beverly feels there is no teamwork in her department (with the other specialists). But Beverly also feels that gender is not an issue. She stated, "No, it is not. But she continued to state, "I think that there is an old guard and I think I have a hard time because I wear everything right out here in front and if you want to know something, I will tell you whether it is good or bad and you may not really want to know. I have a hard time with people who don't really mean what they say. And that has been a very difficult job for me too. "

### Summary

While the other school districts had more women than men or all men and no women in central office, these two women felt that representation was fair and no barriers existed for women to become promoted. While Joan perceived teamwork as a part of the culture for no gender barriers, Beverly indicated there is no teamwork in the department of curriculum area specialist. The statistics show that there are slightly more women than men in central office in this district--and 12 women occupy 12 line positions out of the female population of 50 and that 11 men out of 41 males occupy line positions. Most of the positions in central office are viewed as staff positions or 68 out of 91 positions.

For her career aspirations, the assistant superintendent has probably decided to retire from her present position in LSS and maybe teach at a college. The language arts specialist had two conflicting goals--in one statement she would like to go on to be a director but feel hindered by being in charge of principals, and in another statement she wants to get her doctorate and move on to consulting and teaching at university level.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study examined and compared the distribution of males and females in line and staff positions in central office personnel in fifty-six selected districts in Virginia. An analysis of this distribution was made in school districts categorized by student population and by region. The distribution of line and staff positions held by females and males gave cause for additional inquiry.

Six interviews including two central office personnel from one small, one medium, and one large populated school districts followed the quantitative analysis. The interview questions were framed to encourage answers to explain the distribution and to offer a glimpse into the phenomenon of gender distribution for further study.

#### **Summary of Findings**

##### **Summary of Findings: Quantitative**

The data from the surveys were examined and analyzed to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the gender distribution in central office positions?
2. What is the percentage of central office positions by gender based upon the total office gender representation in line and staff positions?
3. What is the gender distribution in line and staff positions?
4. What is the gender distribution in central office positions by region?
5. What is the percentage of central office positions by gender based upon the total office gender representation in line and staff positions by region?
6. What is the gender distribution in line and staff positions by region?
7. What is the gender distribution in central office positions by enrollment size?
8. What is the percentage of central office positions by gender based upon the total office gender representation in line and staff positions by enrollment size?
9. What is the gender distribution in line and staff positions by enrollment size?

## **Major findings**

1. The percentage of males and females in central office positions is approximately equal.
2. The percentage of males in line positions exceeds the percentage of females in line positions. The percentage of females in staff positions exceeds the percentage of males in staff positions.
3. More males than females occupy line positions. More females than males occupy staff positions.
4. Urban areas have more females in central office positions than males. Rural areas have more males in central office positions than males.
5. Males exceed females in line positions in five of the eight regions. Females exceed males in staff positions in six of the eight regions.
6. Of all reported line positions, males exceed females in six of the eight regions. Of all staff positions, females exceed males in seven of the eight regions. In one region, the percentage of females in staff positions equals the percentage of females in line positions.
7. Of the six student population sizes, three student population sizes have more men than women and three student population sizes have more women than men. The greatest difference between men and women in central office is 22% more men than women in student population size of 15,001-30,000.
8. The smallest student enrollment sizes have the highest percentages of women in line positions of all the females in line positions; however, the percentage of males out of total male population is higher in five of the six population sizes.
9. Males occupy more line positions than females in all six population sizes. Females occupy more staff positions than males in five population sizes except for the lowest population size which has more males in staff than females.

## **Other Interesting Findings**

This section includes some frequencies that may be noteworthy when discussing school districts and this study. Twenty-six school districts reporting 20% or more of their line positions occupied by females have fewer than 6600 students with the exception of one school district which has 9062 students.

The two largest school districts have a high percentage of females working in central office, but a low percent of them hold line positions. One has 40 females in central office positions, but only 5 hold line positions. One has 50 females in central office positions, 12 of whom hold line positions.

Fifteen school districts or 27% of the 56 respondents report no females in line positions. Fourteen of these school districts have fewer than 5,303 students and the remaining one has 10,442. The central office has 10 males in line positions and 2 females (one is the superintendent) in line positions.

One school district has 36 central office positions for 4500 students: 18 females and 18 males with 42% of females in line positions. Another school district has 4599 students with 18 central office positions with no females in line positions and another school district has 4300 students with 8 central office positions with 5% of females in line positions.

One school district has no females in central office. This school district reports 8 central office positions coded as 6 staff and 2 line. One school district has 14 females and 5 males in 19 central office positions; the 5 males occupy line positions.

Fifteen school districts or 27% of the 56 respondents report no females in staff positions. Five school districts reported no males in line positions. Fourteen school districts reported no males in staff positions.

### **Summary of Findings: Qualitative**

This part of the study was designed to determine possible reasons for the gender distribution and to report observations and responses of the six interviewees selected by their school superintendents or designees. Responses to questions were analyzed to answer the research question: In what way did the selected subjects portray their aspirations, their perceived barriers to promotion, their mentors, and their perceptions of gender in central offices? These observations and responses were identified in a conceptual matrix, then written in narrative form according to the themes that emerged.

The individual school system was the unit of analysis. Some differences and similarities among the six interviewees in the three systems were identified.

Fewer central office positions are in the smaller populated schools. Two school systems are at each end of a continuum--no females in central office in one school district and one male (now the superintendent) and all females in another central office. In the large school district, 91 men and women occupy central office positions.

The qualitative data was analyzed to look at the interviewees from the perspective of their role, their gender, and their region to see if these data enhanced the quantitative results. This section will summarize the themes from different groupings: the staff positions, the line positions, the males, and the females. Many of these views were similar for the position and gender even though they represented one large, one medium, and one small school district.

### **Interviewees in Staff Positions**

Even though they came from different sized school systems, the interviewees in the staff positions shared common perspectives and characteristics. They were not clear in their future focus: their aspirations and next career steps. The language arts specialist was not sure where she was going in her career even though she insisted she had a five-year plan and felt she needed to get prepared for something by getting a doctorate; the assistant superintendent (with a line title) seems content to stay where he is with no "burning desire to be superintendent"; the secondary curriculum specialist wants to be assistant superintendent of instruction, but not superintendent.

All indicated they helped in a supportive and advisory role: coordinating 400 teachers in one case. The secondary specialist insisted she helped in the hiring and firing of teachers, but didn't cite an example of such a case. During the interview, they were not as sure about their roles using expressions like, "My job description is not accurate"; "other people will tell you I do this when I really do this"; "I do whatever is needed"; "my job description doesn't say testing but I do testing."

At times they emphasized their qualifications and cited all the projects they had done, not their actual job responsibilities--the Parent Centers and the testing program and the substitute programs. The persons in the line positions talked more of the challenges of their jobs concerning personnel and external influences and the reasons they were hired for the job.

All staff interviewees shared other similarities. They had taught for at least 20 years before entering their first central office position. All are over the age of 45. None has a doctorate, an added credential to moving up. One plans to start a doctorate program in 1997 for the purpose of teaching at a college and the other has started a program at William and Mary but doesn't feel she is learning anything "new." The assistant superintendent has not taken doctorate level courses. He has a masters in education administration, unlike the other two whose masters' degrees are in education. The two specialists have worked in the same large district---the one left for a smaller school district, perhaps in hopes of having a better chance of obtaining the position as assistant superintendent of instruction.

Two (the females) of the three didn't mention aspiring to the role of superintendent; the male said he was approached but didn't want to move. The assistant superintendent thought he would retire as a middle school principal until the new superintendent asked him to come to central office.

### **Interviewees in Line Positions**

Two men and one woman in line positions in their districts were interviewed; a superintendent and two assistant superintendents. All talked about the challenges of their jobs, their career paths, and their leadership qualities.

They entered their first central office or administrative positions early in their career between the ages of 20 and 29. They had not sought these administrative positions: the one assistant superintendent was pregnant and received a call if she would consider coming to start a program in central office for paraprofessionals when she was

24; the other assistant superintendent was tapped into an administrative training program; and the third was encouraged by a college professor to get his doctorate even though he intended to go back to his love of teaching reading in the elementary school. The latter stated that he entered administration for the extra money.

All except the one assistant superintendent had been a school principal. All have doctorates in education administration. All but one--the assistant superintendent--have moved to other systems and have been with their present school system for 7 years. The assistant superintendent has been with the school system for 25 years. She uses the term "old as dirt."

The one assistant superintendent is now superintendent and during the interview he was clear about his aspirations and career intent and where he wanted to be. He was tired of moving and wanted to stay in his present school district if it were in the cards. The other superintendent has been offered interviews in large counties but has refused for different reasons including his desire to stay in the country, as he says. The assistant superintendent has been approached (the last about eight years ago) about superintendent jobs, but does not want to leave her system. She compares her job as assistant superintendent in a large system to a superintendent's position in a small system.

### **Interviews with the Males**

Three males and three females were interviewed for this study. The superintendent chose the interviewees. In Small School System, both interviewees were male since no females occupy central office.

Two females served in staff positions and the males served in predominantly line positions. The male person as staff had a line title, assistant superintendent. In his district, he assumes both a line and a staff position.

Two males, when queried on numbers of females in central office, didn't elaborate or express their feelings or opinions. Both responded with statistics and stories about "women being brought" and "hired." They cited places where women are superintendents. The one male, in a later conversation, thought downsizing and the size of the office staff was the focus of this study--he is the only male in central office and presently the superintendent.

They used the following language in their responses and comments: "The young lady as a principal," "gal on the Eastern Shore," Boston has women," D.C. has had them""women need their shot," "Virginia hasn't gotten over that it is a man's world," "We have had very few females that were principals and when Dr. came, he brought some in."

The third male, the superintendent, hired the first woman high school principal and said he was "hitched" to females all his life and has a philosophy that men are not as serious about the education of the child as the female. He thinks his beliefs are rooted in his elementary teaching background where he is surrounded by women. He indicated that three of his closest colleagues are three female superintendents.

### **Interviews with the Females**

None of the women claim to aspire to the superintendent's level. The secondary school specialist wants more men to apply to central office to add to the population of one male in central office. The female assistant superintendent declared gender was not a barrier. She said any woman in her system would agree with her. The interview with the language arts specialist supported what the assistant superintendent of personnel said--that gender is not a barrier. However, she said there is an "old guard" who needs to say what they mean. She referred to them as those who have been in certain positions a certain length of time.

All three females had experience in the same school system: the large size system in this study. The female secondary school specialist was much more revealing in describing the behaviors of school systems. She referred to the system where the other two females worked as a "good old boys." She had worked in that system until five years ago. The other two females didn't refer to their system as "good old boys." One of these two did refer to an "old guard" as part of the system. The female in the line position indicated a certain culture of teamwork in her system exists so that discrimination would be unheard of. The secondary school specialist went on to say that women have to act like men sometimes in situational leadership.

The secondary school specialist had the perception that the superintendent should have her focus as curriculum--"she can read those tests as well as I can." She stated that some women don't advance to the superintendent's level because one doesn't get to work on curriculum. The language arts specialist doesn't see herself advancing to director since she hasn't been a principal, which is not a requirement for the job. She would be director of secondary school principals, positions held by males.

The assistant superintendent manages the courses and issues related to 6,000 employees and 5,000 new applicants a year resulting in 600 new employees each year. She has a staff of 30.

### **Conclusions**

From the quantitative data, one can conclude that in certain randomly selected school districts in Virginia, men outnumber women in central office positions. More men tend to occupy central office positions than women in the rural regions when compared to the urban regions. Fewer women occupy line positions proportionately. Certain regions tend to have a significant difference in the number of men and women occupying line positions. The smaller rural school districts tend to have more women in line positions.

Even though the interview questions were framed to encourage answers that may reflect gender equity or inequity, the answer to the issue--how each district handles the gender issue-- is not clear. The following could be stated on gender from data recorded and analyzed from the six interviewees: the three females and the three males. Males tend to go into administrative positions earlier. Females don't claim to aspire to the superintendency due to their perceptions of the role and duties of the family. Males tend to be perceived as the line positions, while females tend to be perceived as staff positions. Males refer to mark or qualify women as the "first woman" or a "woman

superintendent." Males tend to have male mentors. Males tend to work in several school districts before achieving the top position. Males tend to dominate central office and obtain the position of direct "line" authority.

The following could be stated on central office positions from the six interviews. Line positions have direct authority, building a career path to the executive level. Line position personnel talk about the decisions they have made. Staff positions are perceived as support and their roles aren't as clearly defined. They tend to identify themselves with the people they support and the projects they have helped implement. Mentoring is essential for those selected for staff and line positions. Females have both male and female mentors. During the interviews, the staff personnel tried hard to sound like a position of direct authority. The staff interviewees appeared more ill at ease than those persons in the line positions. School boards don't always view women in the top leadership positions, even as a high school principal.

It can be concluded that even though the representation of women in central office is not representative of the women in the teaching profession, more women are serving in positions in central office than in previous years. They are still not represented proportionately in line positions including the superintendent's position. The findings of this study indicate that more men in line positions seem to be the standard. Even though the representation of men and women do not proportionately reflect the pool from which they were hired, more men are being placed in line positions, particularly in the larger school districts. Women dominate the staff positions.

The findings of this study reflect issues represented in the literature review: the tendency for men to be in line positions, the tendency for women not to pursue the top executive position or the superintendency, the perception of men and women about their roles and the tendency for a perception about women in certain roles in certain regions in the state. There is also a lack of specific demographic data kept for women and men in central office positions in Virginia by the state department of education.

Six persons from three central office settings were interviewed. Additional territory and themes to explore were uncovered: stereotypes about men in central office, use of language to describe women (gal, Mama), too many females in central office, stereotypes of females, females acting like males in positions of authority, and not enough applications by males in central office.

One theme that emerged was the view of the administrator from the bottom up. When one line person saw the superintendent as an instructional administrator, the staff person saw her as a person who acted like "a male" and indicated several times that she wished her superintendent would get more involved in curriculum and instruction. The line person was in curriculum and instruction for four years and stated that he loved it.

Questions emerged such as the following: Why does he aspire to the superintendency and she doesn't? She has been trained in an administrator's program in another school system. Does she know that maybe she won't receive the appointment and is in denial by saying she doesn't want it? Perhaps it is her picture of the superintendent that prevents her from aspiring to the superintendency.

One assistant superintendent seemed to justify her not wanting the superintendent's role several times--but she has stayed in the large system so long she may have a sense of comfort and a true understanding of how things work. She also indicated that her responsibilities are greater in her present position than if she would be a superintendent in another school district.

A lack of clarity about their specific job descriptions resonated with all three interviewees in the staff positions. They talked a lot about their projects and accomplishments with the school system. One person did not like her title because it didn't reflect all the responsibilities she had.

The findings of this study support the research of dissertations by Grady and O'Connell in 1993: Women have more teaching experience. Women are older when they accept their first administrative position. Women are hired for staff positions. Mentors assist women seeking administrative roles. Board members and superintendents differ in their attitudes toward women administrators. Men aspire to higher administrative studies. Women do not aspire to administrative roles without encouragement. Women's career paths differ from men's career paths. A decline in the number of women administrators was reported. Males and females differ in instructional leadership and decision making.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This study could be continued or replicated with a concentration of looking at gender for all employees of the unit of analysis, the school district. For example, citing the percentage of male and female principals at the elementary and secondary levels would indicate another segment of the hiring pool for the central office personnel. It is not clear in the literature or even in the interviews if the line and staff persons come from the same hiring pool in the school district.

Since the purpose of this study was to look at gender across central office positions and line and staff positions, it would be interesting to subdivide those positions in higher and lower echelons and determine how gender plays a role in the distribution. However, lower and higher echelons indicate a hierarchy that one has more authority than the other. The question becomes the amount of power in each position: Is it an advisory role or authority decision-making role which could ultimately lead on an upward track to the chief executive officer of the system?

In Virginia, of the thirteen women superintendents, eleven lead school districts of fewer than 5,000 as reported from the superintendents' list from the Virginia Association of School Superintendents. Forty-one schools have a student enrollment of more than 5,000. These statistics lead to some emerging questions for further investigation: Is there a discrimination in hiring women for larger school districts? Perhaps the women will not interview in the larger school districts. If not, why? If so, why aren't they receiving the appointment? How many women are certified for the superintendency in Virginia and how many of them are active as an assistant superintendent or superintendent? Some practical suggestions would be that the Virginia Department of Education and each school district should keep statistics on gender and specific position. An administrative training

structure in each school district could be determined for all interested in pursuing administrative positions. A structure such as an advocacy group could strive to assure gender equity in the state.

The data from this study can contribute to the structure of administrator training programs with the inclusion of the perspectives of the female educational leaders as well as the perspectives of the male educational leaders. Shakeshaft (1987) indicated the need for female perspectives to be incorporated into practice, theory, and research in the field of educational administration. Professional organizations such as the Virginia Association of School Superintendents and the Virginia Association of School Administrators are encouraged to offer training to benefit both men and women together--not just provide a special women's program on how to get into traditional administrator preparation programs. More attention needs to be devoted to the central office personnel--only 4 of 194 dissertations completed between 1959 and 1989 dealt with women as a central office administrator (Grady and O'Connell, 1993).

Eleven dissertations between 1959 and 1989 (Grady and O'Connell, 1993) dealt with discrimination issues with women in educational administration. Ten of these dissertations stated that discrimination existed for women. The statistical inferential tests for this study lean toward discrimination in certain regions, in line positions, and in the numbers of females in central office from the total hiring pool; more study would be needed to indicate if discrimination exists. There may not be as many opportunities for women and men to be hired into a central office position due to the number of central office positions, the practice of hiring, and the turnover rate. Another beneficial study would be to look at the numbers of central office positions and student enrollment.

Even though questions in this study were framed to encourage responses that may reflect gender equity or inequity and issues relating to gender emerged from the interviews, reasons for the gender distribution is not answerable. Several variables could have affected the outcomes. The superintendent in the three school systems chose the two interviewees. Even though this was part of the methodology, the reasons why the superintendent or designee chose the interviewees could have affected the outcomes and their responses.

In one system a female superintendent chose a male in a line position and a female in the staff position. Is this a perception by the superintendent? Would a female in a line position in the same district respond like the member in a staff position? In another school system, a male superintendent chose a female staff and a female line person for the two interviews. This superintendent had known the person in the line position for more than 25 years. It is not clear whether the superintendents chose the interviewees or they volunteered.

More study needs to be done to see if there is significant evidence of the concept of "domestic ideology" identified in studies by Noddings (1992), Shakeshaft (1987), and Vaugh and Everett (1989, 1992). This ideology promotes the idea that some school districts aren't ready for a female superintendent or even a female high school principal. What would the females do with their children? A woman belongs in the home. Future studies need to go beyond the glimpses of the gender distributions and the phenomenon

noticed as it relates to region and student population to bring equity. Additional studies could include the pathways to an executive position. Do the qualifications of superintendent include written or unwritten expectations that the candidate have been a high school principal or elementary school principal? If so, could a glass ceiling exist at the principal's level, particularly if few women are in the positions of high school principal? Additional studies could include some descriptive statistics on the background of superintendents and the gender of high school and elementary school principals.

One interviewee noted a certain culture of teamwork in her system and that discrimination would not be tolerated. However, this same person indicated a story about a previous superintendent who didn't last long because he didn't understand the "culture." Another interviewee noted that the school board at first rejected his decision to hire a woman high school principal. Another interviewee noted that more men should apply and be hired for positions in the central office in her system. Is this by coincidence or is there a practice of hiring and leading that becomes a part of the culture?

E.H. Schein in *Organizational Culture and Leadership: A Dynamic View* (1985) argues that culture and leadership are "inextricably linked." Institutions have unique histories, symbols, and myths that create particular cultures for the organization's participants. "An organization's culture is reflected in what is done, how it is done, and who is involved in doing it." How are decisions and actions culturally influenced? The underlying values, beliefs and meaning constitute an organization's culture. The resulting attitudes and behavior in part establish the climate.

To understand further the culture of the unit of analysis, the school district, the following persons could be interviewed for a continuation of this study to search for reasons for gender inequity. Interview questions would be framed to determine the filters as school personnel go from school bases to central office to line positions. It is recommended that future duplicative research includes the following persons for interviews:

1. Females and males in both line and staff positions
2. Superintendent of the school system
3. Personnel or human resources officer to identify the number of positions in central office, the number of applicants inside and outside the system for recent vacancies, and the process for selection
4. School board members to identify the make-up of the board, their length of tenure, and their history of appointments from outside and inside the system
5. Members of the community including the journalist who covers school board meetings
6. PTA leaders

To understand further the culture of school district, the following questions could be examined for a continuation of this study to search for reasons for gender inequity.

1. Is gender equity an issue?
2. Why are there so many females in some central office settings?
3. Why are there no females in other central office settings?
4. Why are there so many women in central office and few in line positions in other settings?
5. What are the personal and professional aspects of their work? How many hours a week do they work?
6. How would the interviewees describe the culture of the system?
7. What is the salary of the men and women in central office positions?
8. What is the total number of professional staff in the school system including the teachers and principals?

The interview responses provoked additional questions for future exploration to determine factors for a distribution that is mostly female or all male or almost equally distributed in the central office staff and for other central office distributions. Questions that could be explored:

1. What is the culture of the system?
2. Are there stereotypes in the outlier?
3. Are the previous experiences described planned or by chance?
4. Is there a motivational bias or a gender bias?
5. How does the superintendent set the tone for the central office?
6. Does so much hiring from within discourage outsiders to apply?
7. Is the central office perceived as being occupied by mostly females or males ?
8. Are the jobs advertised internally and externally?

It is obvious from the interviews in this study that there needs to be some kind of study on how to change/transcend the thought processes of women who do not perceive themselves as administrators and persons in a line position to thought processes where aspiring to a line position is included. Women are expected to spend a great deal of time in the classroom before their administrative training while the men do not. Research needs to continue to address how men and women can proceed to bring about change in how they think about gender and culture. Studies to increase the representation of women in educational administration are needed, especially in line positions, those positions of direct authority and decision making. A culture audit for school systems could be in order.

## Epilogue

Many times as I reviewed the quantitative and qualitative data of this study, many ideas and questions kept coming forth, some of which are identified in the recommendations for future research. I wish I had the time and resources to continue all iterations of this study and at times, I wanted to redo this study to include "any information and questions" I didn't ask. I wanted to find out the whys of the phenomenon observed and heard. Some reflections on the process of this study in this section are shared in the following paragraphs.

I learned so much about the structure of the central offices of the 56 districts. After the surveys from the quantitative sections were received, I knew the definitions of line and staff were not as clear to a few even though my definitions were taken from the management books. Some superintendents called and we clarified together how their positions would fall under line and staff. I followed up with phone calls to seven school systems when the identification of the positions didn't fit with the pattern observed from other surveys. In one case, a school system labeled all their positions as staff members since their role (as they stated) is to support all the principals. I wonder who makes the decisions at that central office level.

I received calls inquiring if principals should be listed as part of the survey. In some small systems, the school principals help perform the work for central office. Another school system labeled as staff any member who may have had a line title and responsibility, but not have anyone reporting to him or her. I remember one such case as the director of finance who was the only female in a central office position and was labeled as the only staff member since she did not have anyone reporting to her. In another system, the superintendent and the assistant superintendent were labeled as the only staff members. They insisted on keeping these identifications.

Of course, my imagination sometimes stretched to see if gender had anything to do with the labeling. It was important for the superintendents or their designees to label their positions as line and staff because indeed that is how they viewed the responsibility of that position. Early on, I noticed that females weren't identified in as many line positions and that the order on the survey was a top down ordering starting with the superintendent and then assistant superintendents and then directors and then supervisors and then psychologists.

There was and is no intent on my part to cast any kind of image onto those in the staff positions. They may be the true entrepreneurs of the future in central office, those who are responsible for the multiple possible scenarios and projects. In the complexity of the workplace, it may be that as organizations flatten eliminating many of the line positions, the status of line positions in the future will also diminish. As manager and supervisor positions are being replaced by lead worker positions and self-directed work teams in the business world, will that travel into the educational world? If so, is the present model a valid model and would there be any implications for staff and line positions?

The members in staff positions may not want to aspire in line positions. They may value the staff position since it is not as political from their perspective. There

seems to be a diminishing of the value of the staff positions especially when so many women occupy them. This is a reflection of behavior in our society and not just in the schools. The staff positions may lend freedom to one's way of working. Then the question becomes, "If line positions disappear and so many men are in line positions, will women be squeezed out of the staff positions?"

Margaret Wheatley (1992) explores this idea of not having a specific title in organizations, "This is how organization develops in all living systems. Local activities build on themselves—connecting, expanding, transforming—and all without traditional planning or direction. The system emerges as individuals freely work out conditions of life with their neighbors. No one worries about designing the system. Everyone concentrates on making sense of the relationships and needs that are vital to existence. They are coevolving. From such local, autonomous, and messy negotiations, something large, complex, and useful emerges. Through messy parallel activities, life organizes its effectiveness. It looks like a mess. It is a mess. And from the mess, a system appears that works."

As far as reasons for the distribution of central office positions along gender and line or staff positions, I would have to talk to many more persons other than those who occupy those positions. I could have been co-opted, the interviewees telling me what they think I want to know and my taking what they say as the reasons. I hope that I have brought to surface some phenomena from the perspectives of those in certain positions and those who are of a certain gender. Their choice of words, content of responses, and expressiveness--all were important in the qualitative analysis.

I chose the three school systems based on the distribution of gender along line and staff positions and their proximity to each other. I visited the three systems over a three-day period. If I redid this study, I would visit the one district, then write it up, and choose another district to visit based on the results and findings of the first district. I wrote the second and third set of interviews with a focus of the issues found in the first set of interviews. In any case, I found that similar issues emerged across the three systems.

I identified some statistically significant data in the quantitative section, and I may have opened some frames of thinking for possible reasons behind this distribution from the qualitative section. Is gender an issue in central office positions? Do men make it an issue? Do women make it an issue? Is it so embedded an issue that it is not discussed and explored in a culture audit? Much more to explore. If 83% of the public school teachers in Virginia are female, why aren't more females in positions of direct authority? I hope the results of this study may start some dialogue in the state of Virginia and other areas where the numbers appear to be so unbalanced.

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## APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A:  
SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION OF MALES AND FEMALES IN CENTRAL OFFICE  
POSITIONS**

<u>County</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Accomack	Bus Mgr Co-ord/Pupil Personnel Serv. Cafeteria Spec/Textbooks Maint/Ops. Transportation	AV Services	Voc-Ed. Sec.Ed.	Dir/Spec.Ed. Dir/Elem. Dir./Middle
Albemarle	Co-Ord/Person. Dir/Main/Ops Sup/Bus/Finan Sup/Transp. Dir/Person.	Cafeteria	Co-Ord/Staff D. Dir.Instr.  English Cor.Alleghany	Ass.Dir/Inst. AssDir/Spec Ed Cord/ElemEd Dir/Instr. Elem Ed. Supr/SpecEd
Amelia		Co-ord/Staff D		Dir/Voc
Amherst	Dir/Business	Dir/Per.	Co-ord/Fed.Prog. Elem Supr. SecSchSupv Supv/SpecServ.	Co-ord/gifted
Appomattox	Supv/Trans.			Coord/fdprog

## APPENDIX B : SAMPLE SELECTION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The following list represents the school districts in Virginia. For the purpose of this study, they are divided into clusters of ten according to student population taken from the 1992 Census. The combined school districts have one superintendent. The school districts highlighted in bold print indicate the population for the study.

Fairfax	168,475
Virginia Beach	87,944
Set One	
Chesterfield	56,625
Prince William	51,267
Norfolk	49,221
Henrico	41,874
Newport News	40,344
Chesapeake	39,434
Richmond City	37,665
Hampton	29,189
Arlington	24,541
Portsmouth	20,767
Set Two	
Loudoun	18,707
Roanoke City	17,610
Roanoke County	16,068
Stafford	15,683
Spotsylvania	15,003
Hanover	14,563
Suffolk	13,002
Albemarle	12,944
Alexandria	12,415
Rockingham	12,209
Set Three	
Danville	11,728
York	11,631
Henry	11,511
Pittsylvania	11,067
Lynchburg	10,997
Montgomery	10,901
Bedford County/City ( 9,688+1,095)	10,783

Tazewell	10,641
Washington	10,442
Augusta	10,394

Set Four

Fauquier	10,157
Frederick	10,100
Campbell	9,946
Wise	9,778
Buchanan	8,918
Williamsburg/James City (958+ 7436)	8,394
Franklin County	7,576
Gloucester	7,477
Petersburg	7,376
Mecklenburg	6,812

Set Five

Pulaski	6,674
Smyth	6,648
Lee	6,597
Manassas	6,207
Prince George	6,252
Halifax	6,167
Charlottesville	6,143
Culpeper	6,122
Shenandoah	5,983
Isle of Wight	5,721

Set Six

Amherst	5,699
Botetourt	5,475
Warren	5,443
Accomack	5,425
Russell	5,272
Wythe	5,227
Carroll	4,795
Hopewell	4,746
Scott	4,722
Orange	4,707

Set Seven	
Louisa	4,704
Harrisonburg	4,205
Page	4,189
Caroline	4,117
Salem	4,097
Dickinson	4,091
Dinwiddie	3,919
Staunton	3,787
Winchester	3,784
South Hampton	3,776

Set Eight	
Grayson	3,651
Alleghany Highlands (2,776+ 783)	3,559
King George	3,508
Rockbridge	3,485
Greensville/Emporia (2,110+1212)	3,322
Patrick	3,302
Brunswick	3,366
Waynesboro	3,244
Prince Edward	3,232
Colonial Heights	3,182

Set Nine	
Martinsville	3,171
Fairfax City	3,161
Giles	3,098
North Hampton	3,082
Nottoway	3,019
Powhatan	3,002
Bristol	2,887
Fredericksburg	2,828
Lunenburg	2,786
Appomattox	2,678

Set Ten	
New Kent	2,673
Poquoson	2,666
Nelson	2,656
Fluvanna	2,627

Buckingham	2,572
Greene	2,439
Madison	2,395
Charlotte	2,343
Westmoreland	2,342
Floyd	2,296
Set Eleven	
Goochland	2,260
Sussex	2,205
Clarke	2,123
Lancaster	1,985
Amelia	1,977
Essex	1,910
King William	1,888
Northumberland	1,888
Cumberland	1,877
Manassas Park	1,703
Set Twelve	
Radford	1,566
Middlesex	1,551
Franklin City	1,544
South Boston	1,525
Falls Church	1,506
Richmond County	1,438
Mathews	1,350
Rappahannock	1,314
Buena Vista	1,246
Surry	1,220
Set Thirteen	
Covington	1,183
Bland	1,148
Charles City	1,133
King Queen	1,079
Norton	1,029
Galax	1,023
Bath	840
Lexington	746
Craig	736
West Point	625

Set Fourteen  
Colonial Beach  
Highland

574  
449

## APPENDIX C: REQUEST LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS

November 1, 1994

Hello,

I am a doctoral student in Education at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. As part of my dissertation, I am studying positions at the central office level. The purpose of my study is to collect descriptive data regarding the numbers, job responsibilities, backgrounds, and preparation of men and women holding central office administrative positions in randomly selected districts in Virginia. Your district is one of those selected and your response is important for my study.

I would like very much for your staff to participate in this study. In order to identify the sample, I will need the names and positions of central office personnel in your district. The material you send will be confidential.

Would you please give this request to the appropriate person who could supply me with a copy of your organizational chart and names of persons who occupy those positions? Please note that much of this information isn't available through the Virginia Educational Directory.

I am also requesting that the designated person classify central office administrators as M (male) or F (female) and as L (predominantly line position) or S (predominantly staff position) directly on your organizational chart. Line refers to jobs or roles which have direct authority and responsibility for output and staff refers to jobs and roles of advising the line personnel. If an organizational chart is unavailable or inappropriate, please use the enclosed form for charting these personnel.

It would be helpful to receive this information prior to November 21, 1994. I would appreciate it if you could send or fax information to me. A stamped addressed envelope is provided for mailing.

Elizabeth Tarner, 2904 Regina Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20906-3182  
Fax: 301-460-9534

I thank Dr. Cibbarelli and you for supporting this effort and look forward to receiving this information from your school district. Please call me at 301-460-8683 or my committee co-chairs, Dr. Thomas Gatewood at 703-698-6051 or Dr. Joan Curcio at 703-698-6095 if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth I. Tarner  
Enclosures

## APPENDIX C: SPONSORING LETTER FROM VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS



### VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION of SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

405 Emmet Street • Charlottesville, Virginia 22903 • (804) 924-0538 • Fax (804) 982-2942

#### OFFICERS

August 2, 1994

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**Executive Director**  
Vincent C. Cibbarelli

**Assistant Executive Director**  
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**Administrative Assistant**  
Sandra D. Turner

Dear Colleagues:

Enclosed is a request letter from Elizabeth Turner who is working on her dissertation at Virginia Tech. As she indicates in her letter, she is examining and comparing the distribution of males and females in randomly selected school divisions in Virginia with the objective to determine factors which influence this distribution.

The Virginia Association of School Superintendents supports her study. The conclusions of such a study would be relevant to us who want to ensure equal opportunity for women in educational leadership positions. The data would be helpful to the Office of Women and Minorities of the American Association of School Administrators whose recent 1993 study on women and minorities did not include Virginia. Unlike some other states, Virginia does not categorize the Central Office positions by gender.

I know she would appreciate if you or your designee would respond as soon as possible. Upon request, she will share the study results with you.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Vincent C. Cibbarelli  
Executive Director

**APPENDIX C: FORM FOR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

Please complete the following information on your district's central office personnel.

Line refers to jobs or roles which have direct authority and responsibility for output.  
Staff refers to jobs and roles advising the line personnel.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Population: \_\_\_\_\_

Superintendent: \_\_\_\_\_

Position Title	Name of Person	Male or Female	Line or Staff

**APPENDIX D : FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS**

January 9, 1995  
Response Date: ASAP

Dear

I am following up my request for information about your Central Office staff for my dissertation study. Perhaps your school district hadn't received this request or it was misplaced. Copies of the original request letter and forms are being sent.

I really would like your input. For my study, I have divided Virginia into thirteen clusters based on student population and will compare the statistics based on your cluster.

You may send your information to me at my address or fax to 301-460-9534. I thank you for your efforts and look forward to receiving the information from your school district. Please call me at 301-460-8683 if I can help you in any way or to share the information with me by phone.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth I. Turner

**APPENDIX E: FOLLOW-UP LETTER CONCERNING LABELING**

February 22, 1995

Dear Dr. Daniels:

Thanks for your response to the questionnaire for data from your school system concerning Central Office personnel for my doctoral study. I received 58 responses from my sample of 65 counties, so I was quite pleased.

My next step is to do a random sampling of the responding districts to establish reliability and validity of the responses. Your school district came up in this sample.

You have all the positions on the following copy listed as staff positions in your central office including yours--What is the explanation or model that you follow for labeling the positions as such?

I will try to call you tomorrow morning for your response if it is a convenient time for you. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Liz Turner

## **APPENDIX E: FOLLOW-UP LETTER CONCERNING LABELING**

February 22, 1995

Dear Dr. Blevins:

Thanks for your response to the questionnaire for data from your school system concerning Central Office personnel for my doctoral study. I received 58 responses from my sample of 65 counties, so I was quite pleased.

My next step is to do a random sampling of the responding districts to establish reliability and validity of the responses. Your school district came up in this sample.

I believe we talked earlier about the job positions of your staff. You have the positions on the following copy listed as mostly staff positions in your central office including yours--What is the explanation or model that you follow for labeling the positions as such?

Thanks so much. I will call you sometime Thursday or Friday to see what you think. If you wish and it is more convenient, you may call me at 301-460-8683 or send a fax to 301-460-9534. I appreciate your help.

Sincerely,

Liz Turner

## APPENDIX F : LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS REQUESTING INTERVIEWS

Superintendent, Small School System

Fax:

September 19, 1995

Dear:

I am following up my doctoral study in which your county participated. I believe I spoke to you by phone last year. Thanks so much for sending me the following data sheet. I have completed Phase I of my study and am starting Phase II of my study which involves interviewing Central Office personnel from randomly selected counties. Your district has been randomly selected for follow-up interviews.

I am studying administrative positions at the central office level. The purpose of my two-fold study is to collect descriptive data regarding the job responsibilities, backgrounds, and preparation of men and women holding central office administrative positions.

I would like to interview two members (one line and one staff) of your Central Office staff for a 45-minute interview. I hope I can schedule you as for one of the interviews. Questions will cover job responsibilities, career experiences, mentoring, and networking.

I would like to schedule these interviews for Thursday, September 29 mid-morning or afternoon if at all possible. I am coming to Richmond for a meeting on Friday, September 29, and would like to visit your school on Thursday.

I assure you that this information is confidential and I will protect your anonymity.

Thanks again for participating in this study. If you have any questions, please call me at 301-460-8683 or my committee co-chairs at Virginia Tech, Dr. Thomas Gatewood at 703-698-6051 or Dr. Joan Curcio at 703-698-6095.

I trust you are having a good school year. As always I appreciate your help in my study. I will call you later today to see what your thoughts are.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth I. Tarner

## **APPENDIX F : LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS REQUESTING INTERVIEWS**

Superintendent, Medium School System

Fax:

No original to follow

September 19,1995

Dear :

I am following up my doctoral study in which your city participated. Thanks so much for sending me the following data sheet for Phase I. I have completed Phase I of my study and am starting Phase II of my study which involves interviewing Central Office personnel from randomly selected counties. Your district has been randomly selected for follow-up interviews.

I am studying administrative positions at the central office level. The purpose of my two-fold study is to collect descriptive data regarding the job responsibilities, backgrounds, and preparation of men and women holding central office administrative positions.

I would like to interview two members (one line and one staff) of your Central Office staff for a 45-minute interview with each staff member. Questions will cover job responsibilities, career experiences, mentoring, and networking.

I would like to schedule these interviews for the morning of Friday, September 29, if at all possible or another time convenient for your staff members.

I assure you that this information is confidential and I will protect your anonymity.

Thanks again for participating in this study. If you have any questions, please call me at 301-460-8683 or my committee co-chairs at Virginia Tech, Dr. Thomas Gatewood at 703-698-6051 or Dr. Joan Curcio at 703-698-6095.

I trust you are having a good school year. As always I appreciate your help in my study. I will call you later today to see what your thoughts are.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth I. Turner

Dr.  
Superintendent  
Fax:

October 5,1995

Dear Dr. :

It was a pleasure meeting you last Friday. I believe I mentioned that I would like to interview several members of your Central office staff on Thursday, October 12, 1995. If we could schedule some interviews mid-morning, that would be great.

Your suggestions were to interview . Would you like me to call them for that date or would you like to check first and then call me back?

## APPENDIX F : LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS REQUESTING INTERVIEWS

Dr.  
Superintendent, Large School System  
Fax:

September 19,1995

Dear Dr. :

I am following up my doctoral study in which your county participated. Thanks so much for sending me the following data sheet. I have completed Phase I of my study and am starting Phase II of my study which involves interviewing Central Office personnel from randomly selected counties. Your district has been randomly selected for follow-up interviews.

I am studying administrative positions at the central office level. The purpose of my two-fold study is to collect descriptive data regarding the job responsibilities, backgrounds, and preparation of men and women holding central office administrative positions.

I would like to interview two members (one line and one staff) of your Central Office staff for a 45-minute interview with each staff member. Questions will cover job responsibilities, career experiences, mentoring, and networking.

I would like to schedule these interviews for the afternoon of Friday, September 29 if at all possible. I am coming to Richmond on Friday, September 29, and would like to visit another system in the morning and yours in the afternoon before my meeting that evening in Richmond.

I assure you that this information is confidential and I will protect your anonymity.

Thanks again for participating in this study. If you have any questions, please call me at 301-460-8683 or my committee co-chairs at Virginia Tech, Dr. Thomas Gatewood at 703-698-6051 or Dr. Joan Curcio at 703-698-6095.

I trust you are having a good school year. As always I appreciate your help in my study. I will call you later today to see what your thoughts are.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth I. Tarner

## APPENDIX G: LETTER TO INTERVIEWEES/CENTRAL OFFICE

Name of Central Office person  
School District  
Address

Date:

Dear :

I am a doctoral student in Education at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. As part of my graduate work, I am studying administrative positions at the central office level. The purpose of my study is to collect descriptive data regarding the job responsibilities, backgrounds, and preparation of men and women holding central office administrative positions in randomly selected districts in Virginia.

You are one of XXX chosen to be interviewed. I would like very much for you to participate in this study.

I would appreciate it if I could interview you by phone or at your school or other designated place of your choice. The interview will take approximately one hour. I will be inquiring about your career preparation, job responsibilities, challenges to job, and career aspirations. You may choose not to answer any question you do not want to answer. You may ask me any question about the procedure of the study. In preparation for our interview, could you please complete the attached questionnaire.

I have made plans to completely protect your anonymity and that of your school division. You will be assigned a code which will be the only identification I will give you in written documents.

Please call me on 301-460-8683 or my committee co-chairs, Dr. Thomas Gatewood at 703-698-6051 or Dr. Joan Curcio at 703-698-6095, if you have any questions or concerns.

I will call you on XXXX to see if you are willing to allow me to interview you about your position and if so, to schedule a time. Thank you for considering participation in this study.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth I. Turner

Enclosure

## APPENDIX G: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INTERVIEWEES

Code# \_\_\_\_\_

Time for completion: \_\_\_\_\_

My primary interest is to gather information from you concerning your job responsibilities, your educational background, and your professional experience. The questions for this questionnaire were formulated from the literature review. This questionnaire will take about 20 minutes to complete.

Thank you for taking the time to supply valuable data for my study.

Check letters that apply.

### Educational Background

1. What was your major field for your bachelor's degree?
  - a. Education
  - b. Social sciences
  - c. Sciences
  - d. Humanities
  - e. Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. If applicable, what was your major field for your master's degree?
  - a. Education administration
  - b. Supervision
  - c. Education
  - d. Social sciences
  - e. Sciences
  - f. Humanities
  - g. Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Did you enroll in courses leading to a doctoral degree?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

If yes to the preceding, please answer the following:

4. What was the major field of study?
  - a. Education administration
  - b. Supervision
  - c. Education
  - d. Curriculum and instruction
  - e. Social sciences
  - f. Sciences
  - g. Humanities
  - h. Other\_\_\_\_\_
5. Were you awarded the degree?
  - a. yes  
Type: Ed. D. , Ph. D., DA, other?
  - b. no
6. At what point in your degree program were you appointed to your first management position?
  - a. Before starting the doctorate
  - b. While actively working on the doctorate
  - c. After completing the doctorate
  - d. Other\_\_\_\_\_

Career Experience

7. Check all positions that apply to you in your career.
  - a. Teacher
  - b. Department chairperson
  - c. Grade level team
  - d. Administrative aide
  - e. Assistant principal
  - f. Principal-(high school\_\_\_\_\_, elementary,\_\_\_\_\_ middle\_\_\_\_\_)
  - g. Curriculum specialist
  - h. Assistant superintendent
  - i. Other\_\_\_\_\_
- 8.. For how many years did you teach?
  - a. 0-5
  - b. 6-10
  - c. 11-15
  - d. 16-20
  - e. 21 or more

9. At what levels did you teach? Check all that apply.
- a. Preschool
  - b. Elementary school
  - c. Junior high/intermediate/middle
  - d. High/secondary
  - e. Junior college
  - f. Four-year college/university
  - g. Other

Your first Central Office position

10. At what age did you attain your first Central office position?
- a. 21-29
  - b. 30-39
  - c. 40-49
  - d. 50 or over
11. How much time elapsed between your first application to this type of job and appointment ?
- a. 0-3
  - b. 4-6
  - c. 7-9
  - d. more than 10 years
  - e. other \_\_\_\_\_
12. Were you promoted to your first position from within a school system in which you already worked?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
13. At the time you were first appointed to this position, what was your marital status?
- a. Married
  - b. Separated or divorced
  - c. Widowed
  - d. Never married
  - e. Living with significant other
14. At the time you were first appointed to a Central Office position, did you have children?
- a. Yes                      How many? \_\_\_\_\_ How old at the time? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. No



1. Very important
2. Somewhat important
3. Average importance
4. Little importance
5. Unimportant

- a. Reading trade journals and publications
- b. Attending courses or seminars in your field
- c. Attending management training courses
- d. Attending continuing education courses
- e. Attending leadership seminars
- f. Attending general information lectures
- g. Having contacts in the community
- h. Learning from others in your field

21. Your age:
- a. 30 or under,
  - b. 31-45
  - c. 46-55
  - d. over 56
22. Your ethnic background
- a. Of African
  - b. Of Spanish
  - c. Of European
  - d. Asian
  - e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

Thanks!

Anything you would like to share....

## APPENDIX H: LETTER TO INTERVIEWEES

October 1995

Thanks so much for agreeing to meet with me. I am a doctoral student in Education at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. As part of my graduate work, I am studying administrative positions at the central office level. The purpose of my study is to collect descriptive data regarding the job responsibilities, backgrounds, and preparation of men and women holding central office administrative line and staff positions in randomly selected districts in Virginia.

Your school district is one of six districts chosen and you are one of the persons chosen to be interviewed.

The interview will take approximately forty-five minutes. I will be inquiring about your career preparation, job responsibilities, challenges to job, and career aspirations. I would like to audiotape the interview so I can transcribe it and check with you to validate or confirm any answers.

You may choose not to answer any question you do not want to answer. You may ask me any question about the procedure of the study. Could you please complete the attached questionnaire?

I have made plans to completely protect your anonymity and that of your school division. You will be assigned a code which will be the only identification I will give you in written documents.

Please call me on 301-460-8683 or my committee co-chairs, Dr. Thomas Gatewood at 703-698-6051 or Dr. Joan Curcio at 703-698-6095, if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you for considering participation in this study. I will be glad to share with you the results of this study.

Elizabeth I. Tarner

## APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INTERVIEW

Interviewer will discuss the purpose, intent, and design of study with interviewee. Find out what they do.

### Job Responsibilities

1. What are your major job responsibilities?.
2. Would you consider your position to be line or staff? Explain.
3. To whom do you report? How many personnel report to you?
4. Are you responsible for hiring and firing of personnel?
5. Are you accountable for a major functional portion of the organization?
6. Are you responsible for the development and/or approval of organization-wide policy?
7. What are some challenges in your present job?
8. What do you consider to be the three most influential factors that caused you to be in your current position of leadership?

### Career Aspirations/Professional Development

1. What is the next position you would like to achieve?
2. What is your ultimate professional ambition?
3. Would you be willing to move to accept a new position with another school system?
5. Do you perceive or did you have any barriers in getting promoted to a higher position?

### Networking/Mentoring

1. Did you or do you have a mentor(s)?
2. Do you have an active network of professional support?
3. Do you participate in a formal communication link among district personnel?  
Is one available to you?
4. Do you participate in an informal link with other Central Office personnel?

### On Gender

1. Are you aware of the breakdown in gender in Central Office positions nationwide?
2. What do you think could be some factors influencing this distribution?
3. Are you aware Virginia doesn't keep record by gender the breakdown of administrators? Why do you think that is so?
4. Do you think women have to act differently from men in order to be successful leaders?
5. Are you familiar with the research on the glass ceiling?
6. What do you perceive as the greatest barrier of being your gender in your administrative position?

Is there anything you would like to add?

## **APPENDIX J: RESPONDENTS FOR STUDY**

Region One: Richmond Area

Goochland, Dinwiddie County, New Kent, Petersburg, Prince Georges, Chesterfield

Region Two: Virginia Beach Area

Franklin City, Suffolk, Newport News

Region Three: Fredericksburg Area

Westmoreland, King William, Richmond County, Mathews County, King George County, Spotsylvania

Region Four: Northern Virginia

Madison County, Clarke County, Falls Church, Warren County, Winchester, Shenandoah, Loudoun County, Arlington

Region Five: Shenandoah Valley Area

Nelson, Buena Vista, Bath County, Amherst County, Charlottesville, Louisa County, Lynchburg, Bedford County, Campbell County

Region Six: Roanoke Area

Covington County, Martinsville, Danville, Henry County, Roanoke City, Roanoke County

Region Seven: Southwest Area

Grayson, Radford, Norton City, Carroll County, Lee County, Giles County, Bristol, Buchanan County, Russell County, Washington

Region Eight: South Central Area

Nottoway County, Buckingham, Amelia County, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Greensville, Prince Edward, Brunswick County



## **Vita**

Elizabeth I. Turner  
2904 Regina Drive  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20906-3182  
Voice: 301/460-8683  
Fax: 301/460-9534

Elizabeth I. Tarner

Professional Highlights: 1987-present: Tarner & Associates

Training specialist, facilitator, presenter: Designs, develops, and delivers training and keynotes on communication skills, values, team building, customer service, leadership, and management. Assesses and coordinates needs with company representatives, recommends training for organization and employee needs, and evaluates and follows up on training. Customizes the training for each client, maintaining consistency and flexibility in the training programs.

Clients include government agencies, financial institutions, private industry, nonprofit organizations, school systems, associations, among others. Instructed classes at the Graduate School of Bank Management at the McIntire School of Commerce at the University of Virginia, Northern Virginia Community College, and the American Institute of Banking (Chicago, New England, Washington). Worked in collaboration with Sweetnam Communications presenting business writing workshops.

Special Projects:

- Presently works on team for designing and presenting performance management models to Maryland state employees
- Co-authored 50+ page report on education in Loudoun County
- Appeared on radio talk show "Let's Talk It Over" discussing values and ethics
- Presented communication programs on educational television program, Financial Skylink, broadcast nationally
- Organized conferences and forums for associations
- Translated documents from French to English
- Wrote 100-page leader's manual for The Executive Memo by Sherry Sweetnam
- Organized statewide and national events

Professional Highlights 1969-1987

1971-1987: Instructor of French and English, Chair of Foreign Language Department, Loudoun County High School, Leesburg, Virginia  
College Instructor of French and English, Northern Virginia Community College, Loudoun Campus, Virginia

1969-1971 : Chambersburg Area Senior High School, Pennsylvania

### Curriculum Design and Instruction

Educated multilevel secondary students in English and French; instructed adults seeking the General Equivalency Diploma; conducted classes in Business English for American Institute of Banking; instructed elementary students in teacher-designed French program at Northern Virginia Community College; wrote literature and grammar curriculum for five levels of French, including Advanced Placement; designed and taught honors program in English; designed tests for state competency in English.

### Special Projects

Organized and participated in five study tours of France, England, and Italy; developed workshops in writing, leadership skills, and study skills; co-ordinated Loudoun County, Virginia's high schools and middle schools for the National French Contest (chair 1975-1985); arranged exchange program between American and French students; coordinated fashion show for high school Bicentennial Celebration involving over 100 participants.

### Human Resource Management and Coordination

As chair of Foreign Language Department : served as liaison between teachers and administration, managed budget, ordered all department materials and supplies, informed teachers of latest technology and conferences, maintained up-to-date inventory, and helped develop annual plan.

Served as member of school-related committees: Loudoun County Curriculum Committee, Advisory Council to the Principal, School Accreditation Committee, Foreign Language Subcommittee (Chair), Awards Committee, Faculty Scholarship Committee, Social Committee.

Served as cooperating teacher for student teacher from University of Virginia. Served as the liaison between Loudoun Educational Association and Loudoun County High School.

### Education

Doctoral candidate in Curriculum and Instruction (Ed.D)

Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies, Curriculum and Instruction, Virginia Tech (1992)

Master of Arts, Curriculum and Instruction, Virginia Tech (1976)

Bachelor of Science, French and English, Shippensburg University, Pennsylvania (1969)

## Additional Training and Development

Two-week Executive Education, Leadership/Management Seminar,  
University of Texas, 1997  
Leadership and learning styles (Bernice McCarthy 4-MAT)  
Project and Time Management (Franklin Quest)  
Adult Learning and Education (Malcolm Knowles)  
Northern Virginia Writing Project, George Mason University (1982-1983)  
Data processing and computers  
Leadership workshops (American Association of University Women and The Delta  
Kappa Gamma Society International)

## Professional Organizations

Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)  
National Staff Development Council (NSDC)  
American Society of Training and Development (ASTD)  
National Association of Female Executives (NAFE)  
American Association of University Women (AAUW)  
Chapter Leadership Responsibilities:  
President, 1984-1986  
Scholarship Chair, 1979  
Legislative and Education Chair, 1986-1990  
The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International (professional educators)  
Leadership responsibilities:  
Chair, National Legislative Seminar, 1996-1998  
Southeast Region U.S. Forum representative 1994-1996  
Iota State Convention Co-Chair, April 1993  
Chapter officers: president, 1990-1992; first vice-president 1988-  
1990; recording secretary, 1984-1986  
Iota State Legislative Committee, 1991-1994 (chair 1994-1995).

## Special Recognition

- Chosen as one of thirty women from the United States to attend a two-week Executive Education program at the University of Texas, Austin (1997).
- Recognized by Key Women Educators (The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International) Honor Our Own Award for Outstanding Service (1995).
- Appointed to and co-chaired The Blue Ribbon Panel on Education in Loudoun County by Loudoun County Board of Supervisors (1993-1994).

- Awarded the 1993 Jean Bathurst Award from American Institute of Banking for outstanding instruction.
- Honored with outstanding faculty and service award-American Institute of Banking (1992).
- Awarded Iota State Scholarship for \$2,000 (1991).
- Received International Scholarship (\$5,000) from The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International- one of twenty-three international recipients (1990).
- Served as director on YMCA Board of Directors, 1992-1994. (Presented at Youth Leadership Conferences 1992, 1993.)
- Invited to Who's Who in American Education (1990, 1993).
- Selected for National Honor Society's Most Valuable Teacher Award (1986).
- Recognized by faculty as Best All-Around Instructor (1979).