


An Abstract Of The Thesis Of

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Administrative Positions In Student Affairs

Abstract approved: 

Studies have found that there are fewer women than men holding senior level administrative positions within student affairs. Factors related to this phenomena were investigated through structured interviews with six women who currently hold the position of vice president or vice chancellor of student affairs at their institutions. The researcher sought answers to three main questions: (a) What factors affect the promotion of women to vice president/vice chancellor positions in student affairs? (b) How have women responded to these factors? (c) What advice do women vice presidents and vice chancellors have for women who are employed at various levels of their student affairs profession?

A content analysis of the interview transcripts yielded several themes and factors which had impacted each woman's progression to a senior level position. Factors which enhanced progression included gaining experience, going above and beyond the call of duty, and developing skills. Inhibiting factors included gender and lack of experience.

The results support research about the over representation of women at

the entry level and under representation at the senior level in student affairs. Further, evidence shows that active steps are being taken to overcome the gender imbalance, but that there may not have been enough time for women to build their experience base for promoting to higher levels of responsibility.

The small sample size and the focused geographical area from which the respondents were drawn limits the generalizability of the study. Additional studies using larger and more diverse employment levels and geographic samples are warranted.

**Factors Affecting The Promotion Of Women
To Senior Level Administrative Positions
In Student Affairs**

A Thesis

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TO SENIOR LEVEL ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS

IN STUDENT AFFAIRS

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Student affairs, sometimes referred to as student personnel, is responsible for preparing students to become "better, more moral, more humane people" (Hughes, 1989). Those within this profession focus on providing students opportunities to become independent and grow in ways which will positively impact the world. Individuals are encouraged to get involved with student activities, organizations, living arrangements, and studying abroad. This department also helps students to receive medical assistance, advice, guidance or counseling, and most importantly, to develop with a freedom they have never before experienced (National Association for Student Personnel Administrators, 1987).

Interested in aiding the growth and development of college students, many individuals choose student affairs as a career (Kuh & Whitt, 1991). Colleges and universities offer a variety of opportunities for students to develop themselves through numerous "paraprofessional" positions. Campus paraprofessionals are students who serve other students through peer educational services and programs. Both graduate and undergraduate paraprofessionals contribute services to the institution within student affairs areas such as new student orientation, resident assistants, academic advising, admissions, peer counselors and international services (Ender & Carranza, 1991).

Similar to other professionals within various careers, student affairs professionals set goals for themselves which customarily include desires to progress to higher administrative positions (Evans, 1988a). For many, "position changes are one of the most important organizational rewards" (Sagaria & Johnsrud, 1987, p.1). Although the directorships and middle level positions are numerous, the student affairs career ladder is considered to be rather short (Evans, 1988a). Research shows that within this already short career ladder, promotions for women usually are a great challenge to overcome (Twale, 1992). For example, a study conducted by Sagaria and Johnsrud (1987) found that women are given fewer opportunities for career advancement than men because of what researchers are referring to as "homosocial reproduction." This allegedly occurs during the hiring process in which employers, most of whom are men, hire those who seem to be most like themselves. It is this type of obstacle that seems to prevent women from being promoted to senior level student affairs administration positions, thus women tend to resign from the overall profession of student affairs (Reinsser & Zurfluh, 1987; Evans, 1988a).

Background of the Problem

Starting in the late 1800s, women in the United States began taking steps toward becoming more recognized as equal citizens with men. Voluntary associations became training grounds for political women activists. By 1910, white women were forming effective alliances with black women, and women's suffrage was becoming more recognized. After the passage of the

19th Amendment in 1920 granting all citizens the right to vote, the Women's Party introduced the Equal Rights Amendment to Congress in 1923 (Evans, 1987). Designed to grant women all of the same rights and powers as men, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) read: "1. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States by any State on account of sex. 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of the article. 3. This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification" (Mansbridge, 1986, p. 1). Even though it was introduced in 1923, Congress did not pass the ERA at that time.

Prior to the passage of the ERA, a married woman who worked outside the home was not a welcome sight especially during the late 1800s. Even so, by the early 1900s, one out of five married women was working outside the home. During the Depression, married women who worked outside the home were criticized for taking over men's work (Evans, 1987). Segregation laws were passed in the 1930s in various states restricting women to work only in specified areas and to accept lower pay since the over-riding belief was that women belonged at home and not in the labor force. However, in 1943 during World War II, an increase in labor shortages changed the national priorities and enabled six million married women to work outside of the home (Hole & Levine, 1971).

Even though the war helped empower women to break through some legal barriers to gain meaningful employment outside the home, many of the

gains made during the war years were reversed after the end of World War II when the men returned and were given back their jobs. In spite of this obstacle, the number of unemployed single women declined to an all-time low because of better educational opportunities. By the 1960s, the number of clerical workers had increased 20 times and 96% of them were women.

Then, during the 1960s and 1970s, a "rebirth of the feminist movement" (Hole & Levine, 1971, p. 57) occurred with the passage of the Equal Pay Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act which prohibited job discrimination on the basis of gender. In addition, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) was finally passed by both the House of Representatives and the Senate in 1972. However, not enough states had ratified the amendment by the deadline in 1982. Even without the passage of ERA, it was reported that more than one-half of all adult women were working outside of the home in 1980 (Barrett, 1987).

Along with the small amount of progress being made by women in America, student affairs programs in higher education were advancing towards greater importance as women pioneers began to have an influence on the future of student affairs (Hughes, 1989). Between 1913 and 1932, 375 women earned diplomas as "Advisor of Women" or "Advisor of Girls." In addition, the first doctorate for a Dean of Women was earned by a woman in 1928 and training began in 1932 for the Dean of Men diploma. At the same time women started advocating the name change of the profession to the gender-free title of Student Personnel Administration. Finally, in 1949,

Esther Lloyd-Jones combined the titles of Dean of Women and Dean of Men to what she believed to be a gender-free title of Dean of Students for Men and Women. Even so, some controversy continued pertaining to the need to have a separate dean for each gender (Hughes, 1989).

During the academic year of 1987-1988, 25% of all chief student affairs officers were women (Touchton & Davis, 1991). In addition, the Digest of Education Statistics (1993) stated that out of the total of 11,000 students earning master's degrees in student counseling and personnel services, over 8,500 were women for the 1990-1991 academic year.

At first glance it may be easy for one to believe that much progress has been made during the twentieth century and especially within the past 20 to 30 years. However, as Shavlik and Touchton (1987) stated, "often progress appears significant largely because women's representation started so dismally small." For example, between 1975 and 1985, the number of institutions of higher education which were headed by women chief executive officers (CEOs) increased by only 5%. At this rate, there will be no parity with men until at least the year 2070 (Shavlik & Touchton, 1987). Barrett (1987) stated that even though progress is being made by women, considering the increase in the amount of experience women are receiving, their hierarchical progress is slower than it should be.

Definition of terms

Ambler (1990) defines the levels of student affairs, which will be used throughout this study, as follows:

Entry level includes program or professional staff. This involves those "who deal in direct instructive, consultative, or administrative service to students" (p. 260). These tend to be the youngest and more energetic workers whose positions may require specialized training with emphasis in staff development.

Middle level to directorship includes directors and coordinators. These involve such individuals as "a medical doctor who directs health services, ...a business manager who supervises housing programs, ...or a student activities coordinator" (p. 260).

Senior level includes the administrative staff, which for this study, mainly involves persons with the title of vice president or vice chancellor. This person has "institution-wide involvement and responsibility" (p. 260).

Statement of the Problem

Today's positions range from entry level to middle management generalist, through middle level and directorship, and to chief of student affairs. Even though many positions are available in student affairs, the career ladder is short. One researcher found that within a one-year time span, 2,055 available positions in student affairs were listed. Of those, 33% were entry level; 60% were middle level, management, and directorship; and eight percent were chief of student affairs positions (Evans, 1988a).

This limited opportunity for advancement has caused many women to leave the field. More specifically, many of these individuals felt they were

not given the same opportunities for advancement as their male counterparts (Evans, 1988a; Reinsser & Zurfluh, 1987). Currently, women are not represented equally in many areas of employment in student affairs (Earwood-Smith, Jordan-Cox, Hudson, & Smith, 1990; Reinsser & Zurfluh, 1987; McEwen, Engstrom, & Williams, 1990; Rickard, 1985; Evans, 1988a). In a survey conducted by McEwen et al. (1990), the majority of the student affairs professionals agreed that white males held most of the higher level student affairs positions while women held more entry level positions.

Although more women than men are reportedly entering student affairs (McEwen, Engstrom & Williams, 1991; Sagaria, 1985) and hold more entry level positions than men, the higher level positions within student affairs are dominated by men. When institutions' top student affairs positions are held by a vast majority of men (Rickard, 1985; Pistole & Cogdal, 1993), is student affairs modeling equal opportunities for all? More specifically, Forrest, Hotelling, & Kuk (1984) stated the following:

If we examine carefully the ideal environment for female development we can begin to understand how non-receptive our current campus environments are for female students, staff and faculty. Thus, equal access to opportunities in our current campus environment is not sufficient to eliminate sexism. (p. 24)

Within the field of student affairs, women are concerned with certain barriers when it comes to job promotion that they seem to encounter more often than their male colleagues (Rickard, 1985; Reinsser & Zurfluh, 1987),

especially in public universities. Barriers include men being sponsored more often through connections with influential personnel and women underestimating their own abilities. A study conducted by Twale (1992) revealed that men tend to be "sponsored," or nominated by employer connections for open positions more frequently than women. This sponsorship is a result of men seemingly making contacts and networking with other colleagues and employers more than women; there are more men, thus more contacts. Women, on the other hand, tend to go through more steps before promotion is granted (Twale, 1992).

Women are not always seen as equals to men in ability and competence. For example, one study conducted by Reinsser and Zurfluh (1987) found that women's abilities were more likely to be judged, downgraded and trivialized. Women's roles are also undervalued just as femininity is viewed as having "little to do with serious world matters" (Hughes, 1989, p. 21). In addition, the study by Reinsser and Zurfluh (1987) revealed that women's communication patterns are interpreted as less powerful and allowed less authority than those of men. More studies show that because of others viewing women as less competent, women tend to underestimate their own abilities and do not envision themselves at higher administrative levels such as senior level administration (Twale, 1992).

Student affairs has many needs which are not being fulfilled including the need for a balance of men and women in higher education positions and equal opportunities for every person. More attention needs to be given to

how student affairs is being perceived by students, the institution itself, and the outside community. In particular, by not focusing on the current gender ratio, student affairs is contradicting its philosophy of striving for a more positive future of opportunities for all (Lyons, 1990).

In summary, research suggests that more women are entering student affairs while more men hold the majority of senior student affairs positions. Studies have shown that women leave the field before reaching higher positions because of various barriers - both external and internal. This unequal representation of women, especially at higher levels, is a contradiction of the student affairs philosophy of representing equal opportunities for everyone.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the factors current female vice presidents or vice chancellors of student affairs have encountered as they were promoted to higher levels of student affairs administration (Reinsser & Zurfluh, 1987). The researcher focused on women who currently hold senior level positions in student affairs. Their perceptions to obstacles or opportunities they encountered during their career moves was investigated. The information derived from this study will enable female and male colleagues to become more informed about strategies in attaining promotion to higher levels within the student affairs profession.

Statement of Significance

Student affairs is a large part of many institutions; therefore, it is

important that this unit model equal opportunities for everyone (Lyons, 1990). This study will enable women to gain a clearer understanding of steps to take in order to advance to top level administrative positions. In addition, the information from this research may convince student affairs professionals to take a closer look at their program and what signals of equality they are sending to both the men and women on their campuses.

Summary

Student affairs is a vital part of every college campus, and the examples it sets can have a major impact on many students. Student affairs personnel have numerous opportunities to assist students in their personal and professional development. For many students, a career in student affairs has become a distinct possibility (Kuh & Whitt, 1991). However, according to several studies, women are not represented equally in the higher level of student affairs administration positions (Reinsser & Zurfluh, 1987; Evans, 1988a; Sagaria, 1985; Pistole & Cogdal, 1993). The purpose of this investigation was to research the factors that may contribute to the gender imbalance primarily in senior level student affairs positions and practices that have been used to overcome this imbalance.

The following chapter focuses on the background of women's progress including the challenges, obstacles, and opportunities women have faced, while advancing toward equality, from the beginning of student affairs in the late 1800s to the 1990s. In addition to summarizing information describing the problem, Chapter 2 will also address the statement of the problem, the

purpose of this study, and its significance.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following chapter focuses on a review of literature, including a summary of theoretical reviews concerning women. Factors in student personnel affecting women's promotion will be addressed. After the presentation of these factors that women seem to be facing, theories will be addressed focusing on the "feminization of student affairs," perspectives about the "inner self," and Carol Gilligan's view on the importance of the woman's voice. In addition, the six tenets of the New Women's Scholarship and the Ecosystem Design Model will be also be described. The inclusion of these theories, findings, and ideas will enable the reader to recognize obstacles women face, what steps are being taken to combat them, and the progress that is being made toward gender equality in student affairs.

Factors Facing Women in Student Affairs

The purpose of this study was to determine what factors women have encountered as they have progressed up the hierarchical ladder to their current senior level position in student affairs. It should be noted that this section points out the many *obstacles* women have encountered. Very little literature was available which described the promotion *opportunities* women encounter in student affairs. "In almost all areas of employment, women are over-represented at the bottom and underrepresented at the top" (Barrett, 1987, p. 101). Women are obtaining starting positions easier and faster than

ever, but promotions for women are not as likely (Wentling, 1993). Even so, approximately 50% of the individuals working toward either a masters' degree or doctorate in all fields together are women (Bronstein, Black, Pfennig, & White, 1986).

There are claims that a "glass ceiling" exists for women who try for promotion to higher levels within their business, corporation or institution. It is a very real, yet invisible barrier that women experience both externally and internally (Davidson & Cooper, 1992). Berman (1988) stated several reasons why women have not broken through the glass ceiling. First, it may simply be too early. The candidates for these top level positions are still too young for promotion to senior level positions. Experience has not yet accumulated thus limiting their abilities to be promoted to senior level positions in comparison to male colleagues who have held positions longer. A second barrier is older white males who lack confidence in women's abilities. These older white males tend to possess a biased and stereotypical view of women's competencies. During a set of interviews with male corporate officials, Berman found that 33% of the men felt that women would never be integrated into corporate life.

An example of a type of an internal glass ceiling is self-concept of women. Women underestimate their own abilities and, therefore, set up a personal barrier that is difficult to break down (Sanford & Donovan, 1987).

Two additional factors affecting promotion of women that surface continuously within student affairs are hiring and promotional practices of

institutions. Several studies addressed "homosocial reproduction" in which the decision makers try to hire someone like themselves (i.e. white males hire white males) (Sagaria & Johnsrud, 1987; Ost & Twale, 1989; Tinsley, 1985). Search committees see it as a risk to hire someone of questionable "fit" (Tinsley, 1985, p. 7). Gender imbalance continues as white males hold a large majority of the administrative positions which results in other men and women who are minorities not being given the same opportunities (Sagaria & Johnsrud, 1987). Due to instances such as these, Rickard (1985) suggested that student affairs' hiring practices need to be monitored to ensure the implementation of affirmative action practices.

Other studies have identified further obstacles that women claim are present in the work place. Women spoke about being victims of sexual harassment by co-workers and by professors in the classroom, feeling isolated and being given a larger workload than male colleagues (Thorner, 1989). Balancing family obligations and work poses an additional obstacle for women. There are more time conflicts for those who have family commitments. Last, many studies have shown that women lack clear set goals for their professional careers, which creates a self-imposed barrier. Some women have found that by the time they decide to work toward a goal involving a higher senior position, it is often too late for them to go beyond mid-level positions (Wentling, 1993).

Feminization of Student Affairs

In 1988 females represented 67% of the population in student affairs

preparation programs (Earwood-Smith et al., 1990). In a study of student affairs professionals' perceptions conducted by McEwen et al. (1990), 85% of the respondents said that there is a preponderance of women in student affairs and this trend will continue. This influx is referred to as the "feminization of student affairs" (McEwen et al., 1991, p. 440).

The feminization of student affairs concept has quantitative and qualitative underpinnings. Quantitatively, more women are entering the field of student affairs. Qualitatively, many believe the functions and roles involved in this field are attracting more women than men to student affairs. McEwen et al. (1990) found that many men and women interviewed felt the only reason more women than men are in student affairs is because of the nurturance, support and care it involves. McEwen et al. (1991) conducted another study one year later to find out what environmental conditions may be causing the "feminization of student affairs" (p. 440). The newer study supported findings of the previous year concerning nurturing and caring aspects of student affairs. In addition, they found that although the pay is lower than other professions in general, women are more likely to enter this field because salary tends to be less of a priority for them.

On the other hand, Hughes (1989) stated that people believe this increase is devaluing the profession. Women and femininity tend to be perceived with less value. Similarly, a study conducted by Shavlik and Touchton (1987) revealed that women are seldom viewed as being competent by institutional governing boards. A widely held belief is based on the idea that

"our institution or our community is not ready for a woman" (p. 239).

Individuals at entry levels in student affairs tend to work a lot with staff development and deal more directly with students than do those occupying higher level positions (Delworth & Hanson, 1990). Therefore, entry level positions are considered the "nurturing fields" within student affairs. Some have even referred to various student affairs positions as "women's work" because of the nurturing and caring that is involved (McEwen et al., 1991, p. 442). Why is "women's work" seen as less valuable? Barrett (1987) stated that many associate it with unpaid work in the home and the perception that women are not vital economic providers.

However, some researchers see this "feminization of student affairs" (McEwen et al, 1991, p. 440) as a positive move for both women and men. Feminization is viewed as being one step closer to creating a more gender balanced environment both quantitatively and qualitatively (Greiner, 1988; Gilligan, 1993).

Factors that seem to be affecting women's progression and increased involvement in student affairs are presented to help understand this phenomenon. The following sections covering "The Inner Self," theories by Carol Gilligan, the New Scholarship on Women, and the Ecosystem Design Model have been compiled to help the reader understand women's professional progression and their personal development. The summary of these theories and models will help explain core components of many of the beliefs about women.

The Inner Self

Self concept is defined by Sanford and Donovan (1984) as "the set of beliefs and images we all have and hold to be true of ourselves" (p. 7). Many times this term is used interchangeably with self-esteem as well as self-respect, self-love, and self-worth. Self-esteem is actually defined as the *measure* of how much we like and approve of our self concept. For example, someone may say, "I am tall," or "I am short," which are both considered to be tangible self concepts. One's self-esteem tells us how much the individual likes and approves of her or his tallness or shortness.

The way in which a person *views or sees* oneself (not approves or likes, but *views*) is a result of two main sources of information: a) how others treat a particular individual, and b) what messages the individual is told by others about oneself. For example, if a girl is continuously told she is fat and unattractive, she will in turn see herself as fat and unattractive even if the opposite is true. Furthermore, Reinsser and Zurfluh (1987) stated that people tend to interpret women's communication patterns as less powerful than men's. When women speak, they are more likely to be interrupted or ignored. This type of degrading treatment towards women as if they are lesser individuals or second class citizens, decreases both their self concept and self-esteem (Sanford & Donovan, 1984).

Having positive self-esteem increases a person's chances for happiness, becomes an important part of one's well-being, and affects the

choices one makes. However, society tends to send messages that women who show signs of high self-esteem are "arrogant, vain and conceited" (Sanford & Donovan, 1984, p. 4). On the other hand, men who show signs of high self-esteem are considered to have a "healthy self awareness" (p. 4). According to Sanford and Donovan (1984), this double standard has always existed and still exists in the twentieth century.

In same study conducted by Sanford and Donovan (1984), six common problems surfaced during interviews with women from the subjects' responses to questions about their self-esteem. First, many seemed to know little about themselves (i.e. who they were and what they stood for). Second, many of these women recognized that they were "good" (p. 13) women, but saw no real value in this because they viewed themselves the way society says they *should* be and are *expected* to be (i.e. kind, a good wife and mother). Third, the women interviewed tended to dwell on and exaggerate the severity of their imperfections. For example, women who were slightly overweight tended to describe themselves as extremely obese. Fourth, the women also underestimated the value of their strengths saying that it must not be very important if they were able to do it. Fifth, a woman's "self-concept dislocation" (p.17) occurs when a major event has taken place in her life and her self concept changes. Adjusting to this concept change may prove to be a very difficult adjustment. As a result, her self-esteem declines for a short or long period of time. Such examples include getting married, having children, having a mastectomy, or experiencing a loss. Sixth, women

seemed concerned about who they should be when circumstances or values change. An example of this is a woman who is debating a career change, possibly expanding her family, and/or caring for a sick parent. She compares her ideal self to her image of herself and must decide which is really her true self.

Interestingly, the same researchers asked 79 mental health professionals to give the characteristics of healthy males and females. The mental health professionals were able to give 37 healthy male attributes while only 11 were given for females. Furthermore, some of the male attributes that were given included attributes such as "very independent," "not at all emotional," "likes math and science very much" and "very worldly." The attributes for healthy females included "very strong need for security," "very aware of feelings of others," "enjoys art and literature," and "interested in own appearance" (Sanford & Donovan, 1984, p. 14).

The inner self plays a vital role in every person's life. As one may already understand, women's abilities are poorly underestimated by key people in our society. According to Sanford and Donovan (1987), studies show that people with whom women work and interact underestimate women's abilities. In addition, when mental health professionals say women are limited to eleven passive attributes to be considered healthy, the message becomes quite clear about the way our society believes women should be. The result is low self-esteem for many women who think they can only fulfill the lowest of positions because of others beliefs that women do

not have the abilities to do certain tasks.

Carol Gilligan

The theme of Gilligan's (1993) book is that women have a different voice - a different yet competent voice that deserves and needs to be heard and respected. Gilligan does not change any part of her original theory in her newest printing of this book. However, she adds in her Preface the following:

...by a voice I mean something like what people mean when they speak of the core of the self. Voice is natural and also cultural. It is composed of breath and sound, words, rhythm, and language. A voice is a powerful psychological instrument and channel, connecting inner and outer worlds. (p. xvi)

She described the voice as "the key for understanding" (p. xvi) and stated the importance of this voice being heard and understood.

Many believe "the male model is the better one since it fits the requirements for modern corporate success" (p.10). "Modern corporate success" refers to what has become the "norm" or the preferred way to lead. Any other way is not the norm and is therefore less likely to be successful (i.e., women's perceptions on different issues or decisions). It is Gilligan's theory which helped to explain the developmental differences between men and women without making one gender to be less valuable or more superior than the other.

Gilligan (1993) also cited theories by Janet Lever concerning play habits

of boys and girls. Lever found that, like adults, if a female wants to be independent, she must play like a boy so that she may be allowed the same options in the game of life since the male model is the most widely accepted model. Gilligan argues that simply because a woman may not operate the same as a man, does not make a woman any less competent.

The basis of male models being most accepted stems from early theorists such as Freud, Erickson, Piaget, Kohlberg and others whose subjects for these theories were predominately males. For example, Erickson and Kohlberg seem to both overlook the importance of connectedness at different levels, interdependence, and relationships in the development of individuals. Their base was more on autonomy and separation because of the number of male subjects used. While it may be true that *male* development is based on autonomy and separation, Gilligan believes that *female* development is explained better by the concepts of connectedness and relationships (Gilligan, 1993; Upcraft & Moore, 1990).

It is developmental differences between genders which need not only to be recognized, but accepted as well. During a presentation concerning the differences between men and women, Becker and Ward (1993) discussed concepts in the John Gray's 1992 edition of Men Are From Mars, Women Are from Venus. Focus is given to each gender's values, dress, and interests. Men tend to value power, competency, efficiency, and achievement while women value love, communication, beauty, and relationships. Whether one believes these differences to be true or not, neither set of developmental

characteristics should be portrayed with lesser value.

The New Scholarship On Women

Even though student affairs was pioneered by women, leadership positions have been primarily occupied by men. Therefore, many of the perspectives and ways in which the profession is run are based on theories and ideas more common to men. The New Scholarship on Women is a theory postulated by Greiner (1988) who strives to balance women's perspectives with those of earlier male theorists. Greiner focuses on six tenets which support the need for the "female voice" in "addressing issues of relevance in theory, research and practice" (p. 486).

The tenets are as follows:

- A. "Women and men are viewed as whole persons, composed of biological, ecological, psychological, social and political aspects" (Greiner, 1988, p. 486).

Each person, whether man or woman, is a whole person in which "all aspects of the individual's development" are recognized (Evans, 1988b, pp. 499-500). People within the student affairs profession foster development of the whole person without overlooking areas of an individual's self.

- B. "The study of each group for example, women, is valued for its own sake and need not be compared to another group" (Greiner, 1988, p. 486).

Greiner (1988) makes the point that any time in which one person, thing or idea is compared to another, one becomes the "norm." This norm becomes the most popular and leaves the rest to be viewed as less valuable

or possibly even wrong. Greiner strives to get individuals to study each gender for its own sake without putting one before the other. In relation to student affairs, this tenet supports the philosophy that each person or group should be valued for "their unique contributions" (Evans, 1988b, p. 500) without being evaluated through comparisons to others.

C. "The use of the dialectic and a feminist process of egalitarianism are essential to the new perspective" (Greiner, 1988, p. 487).

Our society, including student affairs, is dominated by the male perspective and values. However, other forms of leadership are possible which may not involve a type of hierarchy. Who is to say the best way to lead involves having one person in charge? Another form of leadership could be that of egalitarianism without one person or group dominating another (Greiner, 1988). Leadership within student affairs does not have to follow traditional leadership approaches. Informal interaction to create a less dominating structure allows a more feminist process by working with and not above others (Evans, 1988b).

D. "Qualitative, as well as quantitative, scholarship is valued" (Greiner, 1988, p. 488).

Issues which concern women must be addressed through studies, research and action. Questions are being overlooked and issues are not being addressed (Greiner, 1988). Evans (1988b) encouraged students and faculty to take steps to explore issues which are important to women through qualitative techniques and action steps.

E. "Values are consistently explored in research and practice" (Greiner, 1988, p. 489).

Student affairs professionals must recognize the importance of confronting inequity and correcting unethical behavior as they model their own values. Advocating for students to explore and develop their own values will assist growth in a more positive environment as they learn to respect and appreciate others' values (Greiner, 1988).

F. "Phenomena are embedded in context" (Greiner, 1988, p. 490).

This last tenet is especially important to student affairs practitioners as they strive to recognize the importance of the cohesiveness of both the person and the environment (i.e. the student and the college environment). One cannot simply focus on the student and overlook the surrounding environment - it is connected (Evans, 1988b).

Each of these tenets is an integral part of creating a more acceptable and equal working and learning environment for student affairs workers. Each gender needs to be studied and accepted for its own sake without concern of comparison or ridicule for being different (Greiner, 1988). The meaning of the new scholarship for women in student affairs is "humanizing preparation programs" (Evans, 1988b, p. 499) by expanding the programs to involve more personal as well as professional development. Although one of the basic assumptions of student affairs has been that "each person has worth and dignity" (Lyons, 1990, p. 28), the women's scholarship theory takes this assumption one step closer towards recognizing another perspective - the women's perspective.

Ecosystem Design Model

This model was developed out of the need for colleges and universities to place more focus on the maximum growth of all students by encouraging the coexistence of the "female" (Forrest et al., 1984, p. 24) value system. It strives to help create a greater awareness and recognition of other value systems. The ecosystem design model is defined by Forrest et al. (1984) as combining ecology, the student, and the environment in an effort to work towards maximum growth for all.

The model involves seven basic interdependent steps that must follow the one most important step. This pre-step is the awareness step in which the designer is responsible for creating an awareness which will open minds to other methods, more specifically female development. It is aimed at striving to shift the emphasis from controlling and mastering to harmony and balance within any environment (Forrest et al., 1984).

The seven basic steps start with three steps that focus on goals: selecting educational values, setting goals, and having programs to achieve them. The last four steps surround the inclusion of the environment: fitting the environment to the students, mapping to evaluate the students' perceptions of it, observing the impact of it on student behavior, and getting feedback about the successes and failures of the environmental designs. These steps must be accompanied by motivational factors to have men and women to accept male and female values as different, yet equal (Forrest et al., 1984).

Summary

Several researchers have identified numerous factors which affect women's promotion to higher levels within student affairs administration. One factor is the "glass ceiling" - barriers such as discrimination and hiring processes which prevent women from achieving higher level administrative positions. Other factors impacting the promotion of women include sexual harassment, family commitments, and the lack of clearly stated goals. Despite several studies which stated that fewer women hold higher level positions in student affairs, many studies have shown that student affairs is becoming more feminized. Some professionals view this as a positive move toward equal gender representation, while others fear it will hurt the profession.

Along with introducing the reader to the current situation of women's roles in student affairs, this review of literature has also summarized various authors' views concerning the inner self of women. Knowing more about the inner self of women may help the reader understand the differences between men and women and what factors seem to be affecting women both professionally and personally. Gilligan (1993) stressed the importance of listening to the other voice - the woman's voice. Greiner (1988) suggested six tenets to facilitate understanding of the importance of each gender. The final theory, Ecosystem Design Model by Forrest et al. (1984), stressed the necessity of awareness and recognition of the existence of the female value system.

The chapters which follow describe the method used to identify factors that have affected women senior level student affairs professionals' progression to higher levels of responsibility. Included will be the researcher's procedures in formulating the research questions, collecting and analyzing data, an explanation of the results from the actual study, and the presentation of conclusions. A discussion of the findings, implications, and recommendations for the future are also presented.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the details of the study. The chapter is organized under seven sub-headings including population, sampling, research design, external validity, research questions, procedures, and content analysis.

Population

The target population for this study included women who hold senior level student affairs administrative positions within public colleges or universities. The institutions in which the women were employed exceeded student populations of 5,000 in the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) ten state Region IV-West. Persons holding senior level positions are defined for the purposes of this study as those who possess titles of vice chancellor, vice president, or dean of student affairs. All women who met the above criteria were included in the population of interest regardless of ethnicity, religion, values and/or beliefs.

Seven women within the NASPA ten state Region IV-West were identified who met the defined senior level position criteria. Five hold the title of vice president, one is a vice chancellor, and one is a dean of student affairs (which was considered to be equivalent to the vice president and vice chancellor positions at that particular institution).

Sampling

The subjects studied were chosen from the 1992 NASPA Directory. All

seven women who were listed as full-time senior level administrators and were working within the NASPA Region IV-West were contacted and agreed to be interviewed for this study. However, due to a time conflict, one female vice president was unable to be interviewed for the study bringing the total number of subjects interviewed to six.

Research Design

This research was designed to obtain first person responses to a set of questions aimed to determine factors that have affected the progression of women to senior level administrative positions in student affairs. The responses to interview questions were examined using the content analysis model described by Bogdan and Biklen (1992).

External Validity

While this case study involved only a small number of women holding positions in student affairs, it is reasonable to assume that the results will have relevance to women holding similar positions in other areas of the country. Therefore, the findings from this study are likely to be population generalizable to a larger area than Region IV-West. This study may also be beneficial to other fields because women are underrepresented in higher levels of administration and management in settings other than education (Barrett, 1987).

Research Questions

This study attempted to answer three questions pertaining to the promotion of women to higher level administrative positions within student

affairs: (a) What factors affect the promotion of women to vice president/vice chancellor positions in student affairs? (b) How have women responded to these factors? (c) What advice do women vice presidents/vice chancellors have for women in different levels of the student affairs profession?

Procedures

This study was approved by the Human Subjects Committee at Emporia State University (Appendix A). Before any actual interviews were conducted, an original set of questions (Appendix B) were reviewed and evaluated through a pilot study in order to ensure the relevance of the questions to the study and freedom from bias.

The pilot study was conducted with two women who held the positions of assistant vice chancellor for their university. The reason for using women who did not meet the criteria for the actual study was because of the already limited number of individuals who did meet the criteria (seven women).

For the pilot study, the researcher contacted each individual by telephone and received a verbal consent to participate in the pilot study. From this point, letters (Appendix C) were sent to each pilot study subject containing information about the enclosed materials, how the researcher would set up interview times, the interview process, and the phone number of the primary investigator. An informed consent form (Appendix D), a demographic questionnaire (Appendix E), and a list of the questions to be asked during the telephone interview were included with the letter. Both pilot study

subjects returned the informed consent form and the demographic questionnaire before interviews were conducted.

Before the researcher contacted the subjects for the interview, she connected the telephone to a "Radio Shack Telephone Recorder" and tested it twice. At the time of the interview, the researcher started recording as soon as the subject was on the line. The subject was then reminded that the interview was being recorded, to plan for it to last for approximately 45 minutes to one hour, what the purpose of the study was, and that the questions she received would be asked verbatim. After the subject was asked if she had any questions before the interview began, the researcher began asking the questions. Once all of the questions had been asked, the researcher asked the subject for feedback regarding the questions asked. She also informed the subject about her time-line in compiling the information and the important role the subject played in this study.

After conducting the pilot study, the following changes were made:

- a. The order in which the questions were asked was modified.
- b. The number of questions was decreased from fourteen to nine by combining and deleting several questions.
- c. Minor revisions were made to the letter for the subjects of the actual study.

After these changes were made, the process for the actual study began. It was conducted following the same format as the pilot study. Letters (Appendix F) were sent to each subject containing relevant information. This

included how the researcher would set up interview times, the interview process, and the phone number of the primary investigator. An informed consent form (Appendix D), a demographic questionnaire (Appendix E), and a list of the revised questions to be asked during the telephone interview (Appendix G) were included in the mailing. All seven of the informed consent forms and six demographic questionnaires were returned before interviews began.

Interviews were recorded on a quality 100 minute audio tape in order to ensure fine recording and to minimize inconvenience of having to stop to change the tape during the interview. The interviews were conducted in the exact manner as the pilot study (including reminders of procedures). In addition, the researcher informed each subject about the length of one side of the tape and the possibility of having to pause to turn over the tape. The researcher refrained from stating additional information in order to prevent the subjects from deducing what the researcher was interested in and responding in that way.

Finally, disengagement at the end of each interview session consisted of a wrap-up which included an explanation of the purpose for the research and a comment summarizing the important role each subject played in the success of this study. Each subject was asked not to discuss the questions with other colleagues who may be involved in the research until all had been interviewed. After the interviews were finished, the researcher sent a thank you letter to each participant.

Content Analysis

The researcher's objective in analyzing the information compiled from the interviews was to "determine the categories, relationships, and assumptions that informs the respondent's view of the world in general and the topic in particular" (i.e. factors affecting women progressing to higher levels of administration in student affairs) (McCracken, 1988, p. 42). The first step in analyzing this information was to transcribe all of the interview sessions. The researcher completed some of the transcriptions while the rest were transcribed by other graduate student helpers. This task took approximately three weeks.

Because the questions were organized in advance and were presented in a uniform manner, the questions were considered to have "preassigned coding" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 172). Therefore, the questions that were asked became the major codes. However, under the major codes, the researcher found subcodes within each of the responses of the participants .

The subcodes were found by applying a series of five stages suggested by McCracken (1988) to the transcribed interviews. The stages were as follows:

1. *Observations* were developed by focusing on each of the responses.

For each subject, the general responses for each question were written down. For example, if one woman (respondent X) spoke about her many experiences that that affected her progression, the researcher wrote down "experiences" for respondent X under the corresponding number.

2. *Expanded observations* were conducted in which the implications and

possibilities that were developed in stage one were checked against the transcripts to ensure other responses were not overlooked.

3. *Observations were developed in relation to previous observations.*

The researcher refined what was beginning to surface.

4. *Themes* were developed by compiling all of the responses for each answer to find common themes. "What [had] been allowed to multiply profusely [was now ready to] be harvested and winnowed," (McCracken, 1988, p. 46). Therefore, all six of the women's responses were compiled to find common themes for each answer. The common themes were based on three (50%) or more of the responses containing similar ideas. In addition, the researcher included responses that allowed for discussion or further insight. These are reported in Chapter Five.

5. *Interview theses* were developed in which the particulars about each response and the themes that were developed were brought together as "general properties" about student affairs and women's progression in administrative positions.

To ensure the validity of stage one (observations) and stage two (expanded observations), the researcher trained three individuals (one female professional, one male graduate student, and one female graduate student) to conduct a content analysis of the transcripts (McCracken, 1988). The raters were given specific instructions about their purpose and what they were to look for. The raters were to ensure that the subjects answered each question

with a corresponding response, to give general titles for each response by each respondent, and to remain objective. Each respondent was assigned a capital letter (A-F) to ensure confidentiality. The raters were trained to do content analysis through the use of the pilot study transcripts by analyzing specific examples of responses. Due to time conflicts, two were trained together, while the third was trained separately. Throughout the training, the trainees were encouraged to ask questions and to do some examples in front of the trainer to ensure their comprehension of the objectives.

Interrater Reliability

Interrater reliability was established during the training of the three raters. Transcripts from the pilot study were used to train the raters. Training continued until the raters identified at least 80% of the factors in the responses for each question. This percentage of agreement reliability was based on two sources. Bogden and Biklin (1992) state that even if the exact same data is not always found within the same context, the reliability in qualitative research will only be questioned if the results contradict one another or are incompatible. In addition, Borg and Gall (1979) state that if the percentage of agreement is between 70 and 80 it is still considered satisfactory.

Summary

In summary, this case study involved a series of telephone interviews with six women who were currently holding senior level student affairs administrative positions at public colleges and universities in the ten state

NASPA Region IV-West. The positions included in this study were vice presidents, a vice chancellors, and a dean of student affairs.

Personal telephone interviews were conducted to gain insight about the factors women have encountered while striving to progress to higher positions, how they have responded to these positions, and possible advice for other women in student affairs. After all interviews took place, the recorded responses were transcribed by the researcher and a team of graduate students. Based on the content analysis, the researcher made observations and developed themes that progressed from the responses and ended with a conclusion about observations and themes.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

An analysis of the data will be presented in this chapter. This case study approach consisted of structured interviews which were tape recorded and then transcribed onto paper. The analysis was based on common themes found after compiling the responses from interviews with six women who were currently holding senior student affairs administration positions at public colleges and universities in the ten state NASPA Region IV-West. The researcher investigated the "categories, relationships, and assumptions" which surfaced (McCracken, 1988, p. 42). Common themes were based on similar ideas which were given by three (50%) or more of the respondents.

Demographic results

Demographic information was included as a part of the interviews with each of the six subjects as a guide to understanding more about the individuals who were interviewed. Of the six individuals interviewed, five returned their demographic information sheets with one of the five choosing to answer only the last three questions (birth date, ethnicity, and faculty status). Age of the respondents ranged from 42 to 64. Of the five who returned usable demographic surveys, three were Caucasian, one was Anglo Saxon, and one was Hispanic. In terms of faculty status, two were associate professors of education, one was tenured assistant professor, one was adjunct faculty, and one was courtesy appointment and non-tenured

associate professor of educational administration combined.

Geographic results for areas where degrees were earned included three who received their bachelor's degrees in the midwest between 1950 and 1974 and three were unknown. Four received their master's degrees in the midwest along with three who had earned their Ph. D. or Ed. D. (one still had her dissertation to complete). Three of the women had held assistant/associate dean titles, three had held counselor titles, three had held director or advisor titles, and two had held Dean of Women titles. The following section reports the themes which surfaced from the interview responses.

Theme Results

I. *What factors have enhanced your progression in becoming a senior student affairs administrator?*

Each respondent verbalized many factors which helped her in her progression. Of those given, three themes surfaced.

A. Experience -- One hundred percent of the respondents described the importance of their past and present experiences. Fifty percent of the respondents spoke of their experience in the academic arena. Fifty percent had taught while seventeen percent (or one) had worked with faculty members directly by interviewing each one about their departments.

B. Going the extra mile -- One hundred percent of the women emphasized the importance of their extra efforts and doing more than what

was asked of them. This included their involvement with other areas and departments on campus, as well as taking risks to meet new people, learning new skills, building support, and broadening their knowledge.

C. Interpersonal skills -- One hundred percent of the women mentioned a number of skills they had developed. Thirty-four percent spoke of their counseling background. Also included were their good communication skills, being proactive, their strong work ethic, and increased self-confidence.

Other factors which were mentioned but not by a majority included networking, having both male and female mentors, and employers actively seeking out women to fill positions at the time of their searches.

II. *How have you capitalized on the factors that enhanced your progression to becoming a senior student affairs administrator?*

Three themes emerged which were a direct result of the factors discussed in the previous question.

A. Taking risks and trying new ideas -- Sixty-seven percent talked about their willingness to try new ideas, take on new responsibilities even if they were not comfortable, and making unpopular but necessary decisions. This is how they capitalized on their experience.

B. Openness about wants and needs -- Fifty percent spoke of capitalizing on going the extra mile. This included being a good communicator about one's limitations to others, seeking out mentors, and letting others know about professional goals.

C. Utilizing one's knowledge -- Included in this theme is a situation in which one of the women realized that one particular institution was emphasizing the hiring of women, which is where she ended up being hired. Also, being more knowledgeable about legal issues than many others on campus helped one vice president in handling problems which arose where lawyers were involved. This resulted in support and praise from her supervisors as well as from the lawyers themselves. All of the women indicated that increased knowledge afforded them additional opportunities.

III. *What factors have inhibited your progression in becoming a senior student affairs administrator?*

A. Being a woman -- Sixty-seven percent of the women stated that they had experienced situations in which a male supervisor had discredited their abilities because they were female. Thirty-four percent of the respondents had been denied promotions, 17% had male supervisors who did not support the importance of student affairs, and 17% were denied an increase in salary because they were not the "breadwinner" of the family.

B. Lack of experience -- Of the three women who mentioned this inhibiting factor, one recognized this limitation herself at a time in which it was suggested that she apply for a senior student affairs position. Feeling that she was not ready for this move yet, she declined. Another woman's limited experience at a specific level prevented her from obtaining a position while another woman's lack of a doctorate prohibited her from getting

promoted to vice president.

One other factor involved a woman who was "non-mobile" and was not willing to move to another area because of the cost of to her family.

IV. *How have you responded to the factors that inhibited your progression to being a senior student affairs administrator?*

A. Externally --

1. *Confronted the situation* -- Of the fifty percent, or three, who felt that their gender caused some inhibiting factors, all confronted their supervisors. Two then left their institutions after the confrontations. One realized that nothing would change while another could see the relationship with her supervisor would never be the same. The latter of these two stated that she did not leave on "bad terms," yet the move was necessary.

2. *Increased experience* -- Two of the women furthered their education and received a terminal degree. One woman did this in response to her internal barrier about not feeling ready to progress upward; the other wanted to prove her competency to her supervisor.

B. Internal --

1. *Weighed out the importance* -- Thirty-four percent of the women did nothing specifically in response to factors which inhibited progression to senior student affairs positions. They stated the importance of weighing out what was worth confronting and what was not by looking at the whole picture.

2. *Viewed factors as challenges* -- Sixty-seven percent talked about their responses as being proactive, continuously trying for the position they wanted (and finally getting it), and fighting for fairness and equality. They did not give up, but instead became more motivated to keep trying and work even harder.

Thirty-four percent stated they did not feel as though they had ever been confronted by any factors which were inhibiting to their progression. One woman indicated that a possible internal barrier was deciding whether or not advancement was a career direction she wanted to go.

V. *It has been found that women in business management experience a "glass ceiling" as they try to promote to senior levels of management. Glass ceiling can be defined as an invisible barrier which prevents women and minorities from promoting to higher positions within their field. Have you ever experienced a glass ceiling while working within the student affairs profession? If so, in what ways has the "glass ceiling" affected you?*

A. Yes -- Fifty percent, or three, of the respondents had been directly affected by a glass ceiling. All three stated their supervisors had underestimated women's abilities and therefore did not grant them any professional progression. One stated that it had occurred directly out of graduate school. The situation was one in which her supervisors treated her "like a daughter" by being protective and not allowing her to experiment with new ideas. The other two stated that it affected them in a positive way

by utilizing what they had learned from their experience. Each "toughened" up and developed more sensitivity to the plight of others. All three of these situations occurred more than ten years ago. Seventeen percent (or one) of these women spoke of her indirect contact with the glass ceiling. She stated that her indirect experience with it is that even though she does not see it present in student affairs, it is present in other areas of campuses. Therefore, as a result, she has no female peers or colleagues on campus to attend luncheons, consult, or attend meetings with to share the unique female leadership style.

B. No -- Fifty percent of the women stated they felt fortunate to have never experienced a glass ceiling. One did say that even though she had been discriminated against (but gave no specific examples of how), many opportunities were still presented to her and therefore she did not see the discrimination as a glass ceiling.

VI. Would you give different suggestions, recommendations, or advice for women who are currently entering the student affairs profession, those seeking to become senior student affairs administrators, and those already holding senior student affairs positions? Please explain.

The results for this question will be presented in a different manner than previous questions because of the number of items involved. Percentages as to the number of respondents who gave the suggestions follow each piece of information.

A. Currently entering student affairs

1. *Develop a network* by getting involved with other professional organizations and around campus making contacts on and off campus. (67%)
2. *Take risks* by learning new skills and knowledge. Be open to sharing it with others. (67%)
3. *Build up your experience* by exploring the whole picture of your institution and community by getting involved with academic affairs and other areas of student affairs, read, volunteer for positions even if you are not totally comfortable, and take extra responsibilities. (67%)
4. *Be flexible to change*. Be open to geographic changes to increase employment opportunities. When goal setting realize that your wants and needs may change, therefore goals may need to be altered. (50%)
5. *Get your doctorate early*. The longer you wait, the greater your responsibilities toward others become (i.e. family). (34%)

B. Seeking to become a senior student affairs administrator

1. *Seek out mentors* of both genders. (67%)
2. *Teach within the academic department* to develop a better understanding about this area and to develop relationships with the students. (50%)
3. *Inform others* about your interests and goals to advance. (17%)
4. *Go above and beyond* your job expectations by attending and presenting, taking on projects, and seeking offices at regional and national

levels. (17%)

5. *Recognize your strengths and weaknesses.* Focus on areas you need to improve upon, continuously check your progression to ensure you are not skipping steps that may limit your abilities, and allow yourself time to "prove the product" - don't be too anxious to move too fast.

C. Already holding senior level student affairs position

Many of the women did not have much advice for other women who were already holding positions at the same level as themselves. However, they did offer a few suggestions that seemed to have helped them.

1. *Keep your perspective* on the broad picture. Do not get so focused on your area that you lose sight of other areas on campus and in the community. (50%)

2. *Consult* with one another to work through problems and to prevent other problems on your own campus. (34%)

3. *Recognize the importance of bringing other females into student affairs* and working with those who request your assistance, whether it is mentoring, working on projects, or presenting. (17%)

VII. *Rickard (1985) and Twale (1992) have reported that fewer women than men hold senior student affairs positions. In addition, Evans (1988a) found that more women hold the entering levels of student affairs than do men. How accurate are these ratios in the total student affairs division at your university?*

Eighty-seven percent stated that Evans' (1988a) findings, concerning more men holding senior student affairs positions, were accurate at their university. Fifty percent stated that Rickard's (1985) and Twale's (1992) findings, concerning more women holding entry level student affairs positions, were accurate at their university. Only one respondent stated that their overall ratios for both levels were gender balanced.

VIII. Are attempts being made to achieve and/or maintain gender balance in the student affairs division at your university? If yes, what factors contribute to the gender balance in student affairs at your university?

One hundred percent of the respondents claimed to be taking steps toward maintaining or creating a gender balanced division. The steps they were taking included focusing on the representation of women and minorities. If there is an under-representation of individuals within a specific area, they actively sought to fill those positions with the underrepresented group or population. Fifty percent stated they actively seek out specific populations by verbally advertising, presenting information in newspapers and periodicals aimed at specific populations, and networking with colleagues and other professionals.

IX. What career dreams have you had? What career dreams do you currently have?

Fifty percent of the women had dreamed of becoming a chief student affairs officer fairly early in their careers. One stated she knew this was what she wanted to progress to since the middle of her undergraduate years in college.

The other 50% said they had had no specific career dreams about student affairs, even after they had graduated. One stated that she had basically entered college to get her "Mrs. degree." Another one knew that she just wanted to work with people in a helping capacity, while the third was unsure of what she wanted to do for quite some time after graduating from college.

For the future, two stated they may consider taking a presidency, while another one had had this dream at one time but has since changed that dream. Another two respondents said they are currently focusing on being the best that they can be. One stated that she gets more excited about the "here and now" and does not worry much about the future or holding titles. And finally, one woman had other dreams outside of her career because she will be retiring at the end of this academic year.

Summary

The findings within this chapter revealed that, at least with the individuals who were interviewed, their internal drives had a strong impact on their progression. These internal drives consisted of developing many experiences and going above and beyond what was expected of them. Of the fifty percent who had experienced some type of glass ceiling, they confronted the situations and did not allow the glass ceiling to become a barrier. The women's responses also seemed to reveal that their male supervisors are more supportive than ever before. Finally, all of the respondents gave a plethora of advice to those entering student affairs, those seeking to become senior student affairs administrators, and those already

holding senior student affairs administration positions. The advice included gaining as much experience as possible in different areas of their individual campuses as well as regionally and nationally, getting their terminal degree as early as possible, going above and beyond what is expected of them, building networks, and developing mentoring relationships.

The following chapter includes a discussion and some implications of what surfaced from the findings. Recommendations for future studies will also be presented.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The final chapter will involve a discussion of the responses to the three questions: (a) What factors affect the promotion of women to vice president/vice chancellor positions in student affairs? (b) How have women responded to these factors? (c) What advice do women vice presidents/vice chancellors have for women at different levels of student affairs? The most prevalent responses will be highlighted, their connection to the research findings in Chapter 2 will be summarized, other ideas and insights that surfaced from the actual study will be stated, and recommendations for future studies will be presented.

Summary Of Findings

The factors which affect the promotion of women to vice president/vice chancellor positions were twofold - those which *enhanced* each woman's progression and those which *inhibited* their progression. Enhancements included gaining experience, going above and beyond the call of duty, and the development of the skills which seemed to be a direct result of the earlier responses about experience and going the extra mile. The researcher noticed that these factors were in response to their own self-motivation. Although it was not mentioned as often, some women spoke of the importance of support from colleagues and other mentors which aided and encouraged them in their progression. The internal drives of these women enabled them

to achieve and hold onto the positions they currently occupy. They did not depend primarily on outside sources, especially at the beginning of their careers; they relied on self-motivation for their development.

Two inhibiting factors were mentioned by the respondents. They talked about times in which promotions were not granted to them primarily because of their gender. However, the three women who spoke of these incidents all indicated that they all occurred over ten years ago. A second factor included their own lack of experience which was either brought to their attention internally or by an outsider during a job search.

The women's responses about capitalizing on the factors that enhanced their progression involved sharing their increased knowledge with others, making themselves more well-known, and taking risks in presenting information that they had learned. This built their credibility throughout the campus, regionally, and, for some, nationally.

Three of the six women had experienced factors which, to a degree, did limit their progression. However, the way in which they responded to these factors were what made a difference in their futures. They took charge and either confronted the situations "tactfully" or worked harder to overcome those challenges that could have become barriers. One woman stated that although she left a position after having confronted a limiting situation, she believed this turned out to be to her advantage. She stated, "Who knows what would have happened if I would have stayed there?" She questioned if she would have become as strong willed and determined. Two women also

stated that an inhibiting factor for them was not having a terminal degree.

However, in realizing that the lack of a terminal degree was limiting opportunities for professional advancement, the women worked to earn their degrees.

Women continue to dominate entry level positions in student affairs while men dominate the senior levels. However, steps are being taken to overcome these gender imbalances. Institutions are actively seeking out those which are underrepresented through networking with colleagues and publicizing vacancies at meetings and in periodicals aimed at specific populations. Yet, the importance of hiring qualified individuals is an overriding factor. As long as these efforts for equity continue, women's opportunities for progress will increase tremendously.

The women were very open about giving advice to women, as well as men, in student affairs. Although most of the women separated their advice for the different levels, it became quite obvious that the suggestions, recommendations, and advice would be important for all responsibility levels. It seems especially important for student affairs professionals to use these suggestions as a guide within each level.

Quite a number of recommendations, suggestions, and advice were given for those just entering and those seeking higher level positions within student affairs. Advice included the following suggestions: (a) Individuals should gain as much experience and knowledge as possible. Concentrate on developing areas that one knows needs to be improved upon - even if it

means taking risks, broadening one's knowledge about both academic affairs and other areas in student affairs, and getting a terminal degree. (b) Give more than what is expected. Attend programs that are not necessarily convenient to go to and volunteer to take on extra responsibilities such as offices or projects. (c) Seek relationships with other professionals to build networks and credentials. (d) Seek out mentors - both male and female - to assist one in career moves, increase one's experience, and receive guidance. Teach and/or make contact with faculty on one's campus to develop more credibility through one's connections with the students by being seen and by interacting with the students in an academic setting.

The most repeated pieces of information each woman had for other senior level women was to consult with one another and to keep one's own perspective. Most were reluctant to give any type of advice to other senior level women administrators because if the women were already in the position, they probably did not need more advice about what to do.

Discussion

An important aspect to be considered about these inhibiting factors is that the ones which involved having unsupportive supervisors occurred over ten years ago. Since then, all of the women stated that they have had very supportive supervisors, many of whom are men. In addition, the researcher noticed that when these questions were asked, there seemed to be some hesitation as if the respondents had to "dig" to find any inhibiting factors.

In response to the inhibiting factors, one woman made a very important

point which could have easily been overlooked. She commented that it was difficult for her to find any type of inhibiting factors because of her connection with the president and chancellor of the university. She stated that her networking and connections with them helped her to get promoted, and even "skip a few steps." This is an example of a type of sponsorship among some men, who have obtained positions of greater responsibilities and, in some cases, more easily than women because of their connections.

The researcher also questioned other areas which could have proven to be factors in each woman's promotion including a glass ceiling and career dreams. Although there did not seem to be much of a glass ceiling for any of these women, three important points were made.

First, one respondent stated that she felt the glass ceiling is more prevalent throughout the universities today than 15 years ago. She was the first and only woman vice president at her university and foresees it to stay this way because of the glass ceiling. In the 1960's, 70's, and 80's, the pressure by student activists for greater recognition and involvement by influential women in higher education is what she credits for her movement through and rise in the administrative hierarchy. She believes the societal pressure of the earlier period for recognition of women's potential and achievements and subsequently their involvement in senior administrative roles has diminished in recent years. The rationale for her response was unclear.

Second, one woman pointed out that although it is not present in student

affairs, the glass ceiling is present in academic affairs which results in her having fewer female peers in other parts of the institution. She emphasized the importance of having female peers as colleagues who share a similar leadership style.

Finally, another woman stated that even though she had been discriminated against, she had never experienced a glass ceiling. It is unclear whether it is possible to be discriminated against, yet not experience some type of glass ceiling. Further research in this area seems warranted.

Several generalizations can be made from these factors and responses. Progress and promotion to higher levels of institutional responsibility and leadership are dependent to a large degree upon several elements. Having a wide variety of experiences in higher education which may mean taking some risks, going above and beyond expectations, developing specific skills and knowledge, and initiating contacts and involvement with diverse persons and groups within the institution were most notable. Other factors that emerged as critical for timely promotion are effective interpersonal skills, being proactive in communicating professional goals and personal limitations, and consciously seeking mentoring relationships with both male and female professionals.

Two factors still seem to prevail to inhibit reasonable progression for women toward greater leadership roles: gender and lack of experience. As long as society in general and higher education in particular continue to deprive women of opportunities to progress toward greater leadership roles

based on their gender, women will not be able to enjoy nor will society benefit from the administrative strengths women offer. Likewise, the absence of encouragement and assistance for women to develop meaningful levels of experience, will inadequately prepare them for greater administrative responsibilities.

Along with the help of other individuals assisting in creating more gender balanced student affairs departments, more strides are being taken by women themselves when inhibiting situations that affect their progression arise. Women are challenging and confronting unjust situations, increasing their own experiences to become more marketable, and making their own decisions about the importance of certain situations. Women are not sitting back and allowing others to fight their "battles." They are proving to themselves and society that not only can they stand their ground, but they can work through inhibiting factors tactfully and respectably through their unique mannerisms and communication styles.

Responses concerning the over representation of women at the entry level and under representation at the senior level are consistent with and support findings by Rickard (1985), Twale (1992), Pistole & Cogdal (1993), and Evans (1988a). Additionally, factors which seem to inhibit women's progression are also consistent with Berman (1988) who pointed out that it may be too early because there has not been enough time for women to build their experience. Finally, the researcher found only seven women employed as vice presidents or vice chancellors in a ten state region. This may support

Shavlik and Touchton's (1987) findings about influential males stating that their institutions are not ready for women in administrative positions.

However, the responses from the participants did not reflect this at all. In fact, the factors concerning hiring practices which were mentioned by the participants were inconsistent with studies by Forrest et al. (1984), Sagaria and Johnsrud (1987), Ost and Twale (1989), and Tinsley (1985). According to the women respondents, active steps are being taken to overcome the gender imbalances, especially for females. Another factor found in this study that is inconsistent with Sanford's and Donovan's (1987) study is that women are taking on challenges without dwelling so much on their past experiences and are dealing more with the here and now. Lastly, many women spoke of the support and encouragement they currently receive from their male supervisors which is contrary to evidence found by Berman (1988).

One of the advantages of using a case study research approach is that it allows for a greater amount of information to be obtained about a somewhat narrower range of topics than would be possible if the respondents were given a structured forced-choice questionnaire. This type of research also allows the respondents to use their own voice instead of the voice of the researcher. A limitation is that more responsibility is placed on the researcher to clarify and codify the information in a meaningful way. The narrow focus of the interview and the limited number of respondents may restrict the identification of factors which were identified as impacting

women's progression toward greater responsibilities on their importance in student affairs administration.

It appears that the results which were reported are reasonable on the intuitive level. However, the size of the sample and the focused geographical area from which they were drawn does limit the strength of the generalizations that may be made. In addition, the interviews were conducted by telephone rather than in person. This allowed no follow-up contacts to clarify unclear points which emerged during the content analysis. These two factors alone may also have contributed to less precision than might be possible under different circumstances.

A final consideration and possible limitation was the researcher's use of the term "inhibiting" when describing factors that may have prevented women from progressing to higher levels of administration. Inhibiting factors could be interpreted as factors from within. Therefore the responses may have been less focused on outside factors, or prohibiting factors.

Implications

Overall, these women reported more advantageous factors than they did factors which inhibited their progression. In fact, as it was pointed out earlier, some seemed hesitant to give examples of specific inhibiting factors - especially ones which may represent recent events. Perhaps, because of an obligation to their current institution, the respondents felt they could not be candid about their recent experiences. Also, because these women currently hold senior level positions, maybe they are different from other women and

did not experience the traditional inhibiting factors in their progression that have been reported as true for other women.

Even so, it is encouraging to witness the progress these women have made over the years despite the odds that were against at least half of them during their earlier years. Given the ages of these women, most of them were seeking promotion at a time when many women were still predominately working in the home. Possibly the emphasis in recent years on gender equity has been effective in helping some women progress to higher levels of responsibility not only in student affairs, but in other administrative positions as well.

Recommendations

Several future research questions have surfaced as the result of this investigation. One woman stated that she has been discriminated against, but has never experienced a glass ceiling. Is it possible to be discriminated against, yet not experience *some type of glass ceiling*? How would the responses to the questions used in this study compare with responses from women holding entry level positions and with women and men at various other levels? How would the responses to the questions used in this study compare to responses by individuals from a different part of the country? Lastly, the researcher believes it would be possible for an investigator to take any one of the interview questions and do a more intensive study on that particular question with a larger sample of respondents.

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APPENDICES



Appendix A

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

1200 COMMERCIAL EMPORIA, KANSAS 66801-5087 316/341-5351

RESEARCH AND GRANTS CENTER - BOX 48

November 30, 1993

Jennie Kelly
Morse Hall - H.D. Apt.
Box 53
CAMPUS

Dear Ms. Kelly:

The Institutional Review Board for Treatment of Human Subjects has evaluated your application for approval of human subject research entitled, "A Study of Women Senior Administrators in Student Affairs." The review board approved your application which will allow you to begin your research with subjects as outlined in your application materials.

Best of luck in your proposed research project. If the review board can help you in any other way, don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Faye N. Vowell

Faye N. Vowell, Dean
Office of Graduate Studies
and Research

FV:pf

cc: Edward Butler

Appendix B

Interview Questions

The following questions will be asked during the telephone interview. Please review these before the interview in order to help ensure that the responses will be sincere and well thought-out.

A. Factors

- 1. What factors have enhanced your progression in becoming a senior student affairs administrator?**
- 2. What factors have inhibited your progression in becoming a senior student affairs administrator?**
- 3. To what extent have you experienced the "glass ceiling" effect?**
- 4. In what ways has the "glass ceiling" affected you?**

B. Responses and Reactions to Factors

- 5. How have you capitalized on the factors that enhanced your progression to becoming a senior student affairs administrator?**
- 6. How have you responded to the factors that inhibited your progression to being a senior student affairs administration?**

C. Suggestions/Recommendations/Advice

- 7. What suggestions, recommendations and advice would you give to women entering the student affairs profession?**
- 8. What suggestions, recommendations, and advice would you give to women seeking to become senior student affairs administrators?**
- 9. What suggestions, recommendations and advice would you give to other women holding senior student affairs positions?**

Interview Questions

D. Miscellaneous

10. Rickard (1985) and Twale (1992) have reported that fewer women than men hold senior student affairs positions. How accurate is this ratio in the total student affairs division at your university?

11. a. What percent (how many) of these women are in director or supervisory positions at your university?

b. How does this percent or number compare with the percent or number of men in director or supervisory positions at your university?

12. What factors contribute to the gender balance in student affairs at your university?

13. Are attempts being made to achieve and /or maintain gender balance in the student affairs division at your university? Why or why not?

14. What career dreams have you had? What career dreams do you currently have?

Appendix C

November 1, 1993

Name

Address

Dear :

I am a graduate student at Emporia State University currently working on my degree in Student Personnel. I am doing research for a thesis focusing on identifying factors affecting the employment and promotion of women holding senior level student affairs administrative positions.

In order for this research to be successful, I need insight from women in student affairs who are currently holding senior level administration positions. I would like to interview you for this study. The interview would be a telephone interview consisting of ten questions. It will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes and would be recorded during this time.

Enclosed, you will find an "Informed Consent Form". If you are interested in being a part of this study, please sign the form and return it in the pre-addressed stamped envelope. Once all individuals have responded, I will randomly select twelve individuals to interview. I will be contacting these individuals by telephone to set up a time in which I may conduct the interview.

Thank you very much for taking time to read this! I believe this research will be very beneficial to student affairs. If you have any questions, please contact me at the following numbers: (316)343-1250 (work) or (316)342-4329 (home).

Sincerely,

Jennie L. Kelly

Appendix D

Informed Consent Document

The Department of Counselor Education/Student Personnel Services supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research and related activities. The following information is provided so that you can decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time, and that if you withdraw from the study, you will not be subjected to reprimand or any other form of reproach.

1. You will be asked to participate in an interview concerning your position within the field of student affairs on your campus or university. The interview will be recorded and may last for approximately one hour.

The information gained in each interview will be used to identify common factors affecting the employment and promotion of women holding senior level student affairs administrative positions. All names will be kept confidential and only aggregate data will be reported.

2. There are absolutely no risks involved for subjects taking part in the study.

3. The benefits for this research will be increased knowledge about women holding senior administrative positions within the field of student affairs.

"I have read the above statement and have been fully advised of the procedures to be used in this project. I have been given sufficient opportunity to ask any questions I had concerning the procedures and possible risks involved. I understand the potential risks involved and I assume them voluntarily. I likewise understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without being subjected to reproach. "

Name _____ Date _____

Appendix E

Demographic Questions

The following questions will be asked for demographic purposes only. Please answer the questions and return this sheet along with the Informed Consent Document.

1. What were your majors and what degrees do you currently hold?

2. Where and when did you receive your degrees?

3. What job titles have you held in student affairs?

4. What is your birthdate? _____

5. What is your ethnicity? _____

6. What is your faculty status (i.e. full-time, tenure)? _____

Thank you very much for taking time to answer these questions.

Appendix F

Emporia State University - Box 4009
1200 Commercial Avenue
Emporia, KS 66801-5087
December 22, 1993

Participant's Name and address

Dear Dr. :

This letter and information is in regard to our recent telephone conversation in which I asked you to participate in a study I am doing for my thesis. As you may recall, I am a graduate student at Emporia State University currently working on my degree in Student Personnel Administration. I am doing research which focuses on factors affecting the employment and promotion of women holding senior level student affairs administrative positions.

When I spoke to you, you stated that you were interested in participating in this study. You will remember that this will consist of a telephone interview. It will take approximately 45 minutes and will be recorded.

Enclosed you will find an "Informed Consent Form", a "Demographic Information" sheet, and a list of the questions which I will be asking you during our telephone interview. Please sign the consent form, fill out the information sheet, and return them in the pre-addressed stamped envelope by January 10. You may keep the list of interview questions to preview and consider before our interview. I will be contacting you by telephone to set up a time to conduct the interview once I have the consent form and information sheet from you.

Thank you very much for your participation in this study. I believe this research will be very beneficial to Student Affairs. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at one of the following numbers: work--(316)343-1250 or home--(316)342-4329.

Sincerely,

Jennie L. Kelly

Appendix G

Interview Questions

The following questions will be asked during the telephone interview. Please review these before the interview in order to help ensure that the responses will be sincere and well thought-out.

1. What factors have enhanced your progression in becoming a senior student affairs administrator?
2. How have you capitalized on the factors that enhanced your progression to becoming a senior student affairs administrator?
3. What factors have inhibited your progression in becoming a senior student affairs administrator?
4. How have you responded to the factors that inhibited your progression to being a senior student affairs administration?
5. It has been found that women in business management experience a "glass ceiling" as they try to promote to senior levels of management. Glass ceiling can be defined as an invisible barrier which prevents women and minorities from promoting to higher positions within their field. Have you ever experienced a glass ceiling while working within the student affairs profession? If so, in what ways has the "glass ceiling" affected you?
6. Would you give different suggestions, recommendations or advice for women who are currently entering the student affairs profession, those seeking to become senior student affairs administrators and those already holding senior student affairs positions? Please explain.
7. Rickard (1985) and Twale (1992) have reported that fewer women than men hold senior student affairs positions. In addition, Evans (1990) found that more women hold the entering levels of student affairs than do men. How accurate are these ratios in the total student affairs division at your university?
8. Are attempts being made to achieve and/or maintain gender balance in the student affairs division at your university? If yes, what factors contribute to the gender balance in student affairs at your university?
9. What career dreams have you had? What career dreams do you currently have?

Permission to Copy Statement

I, Jennifer L. Kelly, hereby submit this thesis/report to Emporia State University as partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree. I agree that the Library of the University may make it available for use in accordance with its regulations governing materials of this type. I further agree that quoting, photocopying, or other reproduction of this document is allowed for private study, scholarship (including teaching) and research purposes of a nonprofit nature. No copying which involves potential financial gain will be allowed without written permission of the author.

Jennifer L. Kelly

Signature of Author

May 3, 1994

Date

Factors Affecting The Promotion Of Women
To Senior Level Administrative Positions In Student Aff

Title of Thesis/Research Project

Dana Cooper

Signature of Graduate Office Staff Member

May 3, 1994

Date Received