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GENDER BIAS AND WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

by  
Rose Mary Judge

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the  
Masters of Arts Degree  
of  
The Graduate School  
at  
Rowan University  
April 22, 1999

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_  
Professor

Date Approved April 30, 99

## ABSTRACT

Rose Mary Judge

Gender Bias and Women in Leadership  
1999

Dr. Theodore Johnson  
School Administration

The purpose of this study is to describe and evaluate the effectiveness of implementing a stronger equity plan to career major areas whose students have experienced inequity in a vocational program that perpetuates gender bias and harassment of female students. This particular sample involves twenty-two students who are in non-traditional career major areas.

Interviews involved the Building Principal, the Affirmative Action Officer, a Guidance Counselor, and two Career Major teachers. Surveys were used to collect data from students in non-traditional career majors. Questionnaires were given to all academic teachers. Data analysis consisted of using the information from the interviews, surveys, questionnaires, and review of literature to discover intervene and alleviate the negative effects of gender bias and harassment. Weaving together the different aspects of gender bias, provides an understanding of how gender bias affects leadership roles for women.

Gender bias is still a problem in American schools and in the work place. In our schools, it continues to perpetuate girls' poor self-esteem, lack of interest in math and science and lost potential. It affects leadership roles for women not only in education but all aspects of the work world.

## MINI-ABSTRACT

Rose Mary Judge

Gender Bias and Women in Leadership  
1999

Dr. Theodore Johnson  
School Administration

Gender bias is a problem in schools and at work. It affects leadership roles for women not only in education but all aspects of the work world. We can no longer ignore half the American population if our country is to remain strong. Gender bias can no longer go unchallenged.

## Acknowledgements

Rose Mary Judge is a graduate student at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. She is completing an Internship for a Master's Degree in School Administration. Rose Mary is employed at the Burlington County Institute of Technology (BCIT) as the Supervisor of Special Education. The study of gender bias took place at BCIT because of the gender equity concerns in some of the non-traditional career major areas. Gender bias has been of interest to Rose Mary for many years, even more so since she has been in a leadership position. This study was of an educational concern as well as a personal journey for Rose Mary.

Rose Mary's life experiences has made it possible for her to be able to deal successfully with many different personalities when interviewing, questioning and working with all of those involved in this study. Rose Mary would like to thank her sisters and brothers, Nancy, Martha, Jean, Paul, Carmela, Andrew, Peter, and Jimmy for those experiences. Being the oldest of eight siblings made it possible for Rose Mary to experience a leadership role from a very early age. Dealing with eight siblings gave her a wealth of experience she has learned to appreciate. These experiences are the foundation Rose Mary has built upon to accept the responsibilities of leadership. They have given her a strong ability to deal with conflict resolution, communication and different individual personalities. She is indebted to her parents who were naïve enough to raise nine children. Last, but not least, Rose Mary would like to thank Lin Dixon, her best friend and soul mate for her support and belief in the things that she has accomplished.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction: Focus of the Study

The Burlington County Institute of Technology (BCIT) is a district whose major goal is to provide vocational education to students who wish to acquire the skills they will need to enter the workforce after graduation from high school. More recently there has been an increase and interest among students to complete a vocational education and continue with higher education in either a two or four-year college program. BCIT provides the academic requirements for students to accomplish this goal.

The Burlington County Institute of Technology, a district whose main goal is to educate students for the world of work, has a major responsibility to provide its students the most equitable learning experience within these four high school years. Equity of vocational experiences is much more visible in a vocational program especially in career major areas that have been traditionally male oriented (auto mechanics, plumbing, auto body, etc.). Like other high schools throughout the country BCIT struggles with the gender equity issues of current times. But unlike the traditional academic high schools, gender equity issues in the career major areas are more blatant, surface more quickly, and need immediate attention.

BCIT needs to develop a stronger gender equity plan for students experiencing a non-traditional career major. This project under study this school year will involve the intern in assessing the needs of students through interviews with the administration, affirmative action officers, counselors, career major teachers, teachers aides and students involved in the non-traditional career major areas. From these interviews, the intern will conduct surveys, distribute questionnaires and develop a needs assessment that will



provide the information needed to complete this project. To eradicate the equity problems within the district everyone involved with students and the students themselves need to become aware of the issues of gender equity and the lifelong effects that inequity allows through gender bias in the classroom and career major areas. The only way this can happen is to bring the problems to the surface, and work together to solve these problems by educating everyone toward preventing future problems involving gender equity.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to describe and evaluate the effectiveness of implementing a stronger equity plan, by providing intervention to career major areas whose students have experienced inequity in a vocational program, that perpetuates gender bias and has been problematic with harassing situations to female students. Using a community-based research design, the study will result in a feasibility report to inform teachers, administrators, board members, students and parents the improvements gained, through intervention which provides educational services that will educate all to gender bias, alleviate harassment and continue to provide an equitable vocational program in the areas of the non-traditional career majors.

If we want our children to thrive in the global economy of the next century, they must become the best-educated people on earth. This simple truth, which explains the growing sense of urgency that fuels the education reform movement, has inspired an outpouring of reports, studies, conferences, proposals, and experiments for improving public education.

The intended organizational change brought about by this project will be the education of students and staff to the issues of gender equity. By addressing the equity problems in the career major areas, change will take place in the way female students are involved, instructed and treated in a non-traditional area. Male and female students will become aware of gender issues and learn to work together in an environment free of harassment from either sex. Instructors will be given the education and training needed to provide a career major area free of gender bias.

#### Limitations of the Study

The educator's and student's truthfulness concerning the needs of each career major area will be instrumental when responding to interviews, surveys and questionnaires for the needs assessment and determining effectiveness of the project. Time constraints will be of concern as to not interfere with too much time being taken away from career major theory and/or work experience. Financial resources will be a limitation in meeting the financial needs of providing necessary services to promote and complete this project.

#### Setting of the Study

The study of this project will take place at BCIT in the career major areas that are considered to be non-traditional. The focus will be on female students but will involve male students and the instructors as well. It will encompass students from grades 9-12. This setting has been chosen, as it is the target of gender equity problems that need intervention.

#### Significance of the Study

The significance of this problem is that the gender inequity in schools is a reflection of societal issues that have been a problem in educating females for centuries. It is not only evident in schools but in the nation's workforce. The problems the schools are experiencing with gender equity do not end once a girl completes her education. This study will make a contribution to scholarly research and literature by providing the intern with a platform for her thesis. It will contribute to social policy issues by improving and strengthening the school's gender equity plan. It will provide intervention, education and services to those who need, and are willing to improve the educational experiences of females in their programs. It will contribute to concerns of practice by bringing attention to those involved, with the education of all students, the issues of gender equity and the effects it has on the district. It will hopefully contribute to the improvement of the vocational educational experiences of girls in the non-traditional career major areas.

#### Organization of the Study

The organization of this study begins with an introduction in Chapter 1, which states the purpose, limitations, setting, significance and organization of the study. Chapter 2 is a review of the literature. In the review of literature the intended goal of the paper will be clearly defined by giving the reader the history behind gender bias and discussing the many paradigms to this subject. Each paradigm will represent one of the many fibers that when woven together form the fabric of gender bias. This literature review will relay the paradigms of history, culture, religion, science, psychology, politics, language and education to give the reader a full understanding of the topic and the importance of this study.

Chapter 3 will include the design of the study. This section addresses the five areas related to the research design used for the study. The first area is a general description of the research design. Second, a description of the development and design of the research instruments actually used in the study. Third, a description of the sample and sampling technique used in the study. Fourth, a description of the data collection approach, and fifth a description of the data analysis plan. Chapter 3 answers the question, “What type of evidence can be gathered to prove that the project is having an impact on a particular practice?”

Chapter 4 presents the research findings. This section answers two major questions, “What information was found?” and “What did it mean?” Chapter 5 gives the conclusions, implications and further study. This last chapter of the thesis describes the study’s major conclusions and their corresponding implications. It also highlights the conclusions and implications of the study on the intern’s leadership development. Furthermore, it addresses how the organization changed as a result of the study. Finally, it addresses the need for further study. Following Chapter 5 are references, appendices and biographical data.

## Chapter 2

### Review of the Literature

Gender bias is still a problem in America today. It continues to show its ugly face in our schools, perpetuating girls' poor self-esteem, lack of interest in math and science and lost potential. It affects leadership roles for women not only in education but all aspects of the work world, and it does not just happen in America. It is worldwide. To be able to fully understand the detrimental effects gender bias imposes on females, it is necessary to study our history, science, psychology, culture, religion, politics and education.

The amount of literature on gender bias is quite extensive. While using the internet to search for topics of interest and pertinent to this subject, the following blurb was found on a web page dealing with the legal rights of women. "Throughout much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the position of women in our society was, in many respects, comparable to that of blacks under the pre-Civil war slave codes. Neither slaves nor women could hold office, serve on juries, or bring suit in their own names, and married women traditionally were denied the legal capacity to hold or convey property or to serve as legal guardians of their own children...and although blacks were guaranteed the right to vote in 1870, women were denied even that right—which is itself 'preservation of other basic civil and political rights'—until adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment half a century later."( J.E.B. v Alabama Ex Rel. T.B. (1994) 114 S. Ct. 1419, 1425. The legal Rights of Women, Legal Subjects That Most Affect the Lives of Women). This quote puts into

words the magnitude of discrimination that has been manifested throughout our history and puts a focus on gender discrimination.

Biology plays a part in what it means to be a male or a female. Brain Sex, The Real Difference Between Men and Women by Anne Moir and David Jessel brings to light the research of many scientists around the world. The sexes are different because their brains are different. The brain is constructed differently in men and in women. It processes information in a different way, which results in different perceptions, priorities and behavior. Until recently, the behavioral differences between the sexes have been explained away by social conditioning. Little attention was paid to the biological view that we may be what we are because of the way we are made. The authors believe there is too much new biological evidence for the sociological argument to prevail.

The biggest behavioral difference between men and women is the natural, innate aggression of men, which explains to a large degree their historical dominance of the species. Men didn't learn aggressions as one of the tactics of the sex war. We do not teach our boy children to be aggressive. We try vainly to unteach it. This is a male feature, and one, which cannot be explained by social conditions.

For virtually our entire existence on this planet, we have been a sexist species. Our biology assigned separate functions to the male and female of Homo sapiens. Evolution strengthened and redefined those differences. Civilization reflected them. Religion and education reinforced them. Other researchers have discovered that the religions and the education were a male plot to maintain the subordinate status of women. This discovery is probably correct. They have found that our so-called civilizations are founded on male aggression and dominance. This is true as well. However, how did the

male sex manage so successfully, in virtually every culture and society in the world, to contrive a situation where the female was subordinate? Was it just men's greater musculature and body-weight that have made the realm of womanhood an occupied country for the past scores of thousands of years? Was it the fact that until recent centuries women were pregnant most of the time? Or is it more likely, as the facts suggest, that the differences between the male and the female brain are at the root of the society we have and the people we are? There are some biological facts of life that, with the best, and most sexually liberated will in the world, we just cannot buck; would it not be better, rather than rage impotently against the differences between the sexes, to acknowledge, understand, exploit, and even enjoy them?

The way our brains are made affects how we think, learn, see, smell, feel, communicate, love, make love, fight, succeed, or fail. Understanding how our brains, and those of others, are made is a matter of no little importance. Recently we have been given the means to build a new framework for understanding sex differences through two, independent and converging scientific advances. The first is the giant progress which has been made in understanding how the brain works; the second, the new discoveries about how, biologically and behaviorally, we are what we are—male or female.

The Feminine Mystique by Betty Friedan, provides a history of gender bias and discrimination against women. In this book Betty Freidan chronicles time from World War II to the present day (1963) in which women had been bludgeoned into the belief that they can find happiness only by confining themselves to their “feminine” role as wives and mothers. This “feminine mystique” influenced women to marry early; have

unprecedented numbers of children; and have housework virtually their career. She traces the history of the mystique from the postwar attack on “mom” to the present-day (1963) phenomenon of “togetherness.” She shows how the influence of Sigmund Freud, Margaret Mead, and the sex-directed educators persuaded to seek the shelter of home, and how the women’s magazines and television, advertising and industry had a vested interest in keeping them there. Freidan’s book deals constructively with problems of vital significance to both men and women, and to American society as a whole.

In the book, The Mismeasure of Woman, by Carol Travis, the readers’ vision of normalcy is expanded by illuminating the similarities between women and men by showing that the real differences lie not in gender, but in power, resources, and life experiences. When “man is the measure of all things,” woman is forever trying to measure up. Carol Travis uncovers the widespread but invisible custom, pervasive in the social sciences, medicine, law and history, of treating men as the normal standard, women as abnormal. Despite women’s gains in many fields in the last twenty years, the fundamental belief in the normalcy of men, and the corresponding abnormality of women has remained virtually untouched. Now even this entrenched way of thinking is being scrutinized. Everywhere we look, it seems, teachers, courses, theories, and books are being challenged to examine their implicit assumption that man is the measure of all things.

In politics we have “important issues” (drugs, economics, war) and then “women’s issues” (day care, birth control, peace), as if these matters could or should be divided at the gender line. Congress and the United Nations worry about international violations of “human rights,” but these rarely include violations of women’s rights such



as denial of suffrage, wife-beating, genital mutilation, forced prostitution, or sweatshops that run on underpaid female labor. Somehow, these are “women’s issues,” not “human rights” issues. We worry about the feminization of poverty, but we do not see its connection to the masculinization of wealth. The phrase “unfit mother” rolls off judicial tongues, but “unfit father,” is nowhere to be heard. We ponder the problem of unwed, “sexually irresponsible” teenage mothers, not the problem of unwed, sexually irresponsible fathers. Boys will be boys, we say, but girls better not be mothers. Reproductive freedom in general is a “woman’s issue,” as if men were merely disinterested bystanders on the matter of sexuality and its consequences.

The perception of female otherness occurs in every field, as we are learning from critical observers in science, law, medicine, history, economics, social science, literature, and art. In medicine students learn anatomy and physiology and, separately, female anatomy and physiology; the male body is anatomy-itself. In art, we have works of general excellence and, separately works by women artists, generally regarded as different and lesser; male painters represent art-itself. In literature, a college course on “black female writers of the twentieth century” is considered a specialized seminar. The works of white male writers are regarded as literature-itself. In psychoanalysis, Freud took the male as the developmental norm for humanity, regarding female development as a pale and puny deviation from it.

In history, the implicit use of men as the norm pervades much of what schoolchildren learn about American and Western civilization. Was Greece the cradle of democracy? It was no democracy for women and slaves. Was the Renaissance a time of intellectual and artistic birth? There was no renaissance for women, at least, not during

the Renaissance. Did the Enlightenment expand “the rights of man” in education, politics, and work? Yes, but it narrowed the rights of women, who were denied control of their property and earnings and barred from higher education and professional training. Was the American frontier “conquered” by single scouts, brave men “taming” the wilderness and founding a culture based on self-reliance? This mythic vision of history excludes the women who struggled to establish homes, survive childbirth, care for families, and contribute with men to the community that was essential to survival.

In economics, the field relies on measures of gross national product as the main gauge of a nation’s economic performance, overlooking the value of women’s unpaid labor in the home and the invisible work they do that lies outside the market economies. Students of economics are left with the impression that women’s unpaid labor and the systematic underpayment of women’s labor in the work force do not matter. That they are aberrations in an otherwise rational system or that women are to blame for allowing themselves to become trapped in low-paying or non-paying jobs.

In philosophy, the centrality in thought and language of the universal male affects the ability to reason about humanity. Tavis points out that the philosopher Elizabeth Minnich reminds us of the famous syllogism:

All men are mortal.  
Socrates is a man.  
Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

But, Minnich suggests, try this one:

All men are mortal.  
Alice is \_\_\_\_\_

Alice is what? We can't say, "Alice is a man." So we say she is a woman. Therefore, what? Alice is immortal? Alice, being female, is in a category that is neither masculine nor mortal:

"Alice ends up in the peculiar position of being a somewhat mortal, somewhat immortal, creature. Or, we must admit, we cannot thus reason about Alice while thinking of her as a female at all. We can think of Socrates as a man without derailing the syllogism; we cannot think of Alice as a woman. Reason flounders; the center holds, with Man in it, but it is an exclusive, not a universal or neutral, center. Alice disappears through the looking glass."

In this book the author examines the stories behind the headlines and popular theories of sex differences. Traveling the trail of the universal male, Tavis shows how the belief in male normalcy and female deficiency guides scientific inquiry, shapes its results, and determines which findings make the news and which findings we live by. The chapters in this book offer some new ways of looking at the old dilemmas that women and men confront daily. The author's goal is not to analyze or solve all the problems that women and men face in their complex lives. It brings hidden assumptions into the light, hoping to show how our ways of thinking about women and men lead to certain predictable results for all of us: in law, and medicine, in social reform, in standards of mental health, in the intimacies of sex and love, and in our private reveries of what is possible.

The implications of gender bias language is discussed in a document produced by Ontario Women's Directorate, Words that Count Women Out/In. This document points out that language can both reflect and shape the way people are treated in today's society. It can be used to open doors when it is gender-inclusive, or to create barriers when it is not. Bias free language is effective language. A number of studies demonstrate that an

audience is more likely to “get the message,” and to remember the information, when inclusive language is used.

“O Canada,” the symbol of Canada’s democratic spirit, excludes half the population. The single word “sons” tells women they do not belong. It could be argued that other words express the anthem’s point, words like “glowing hearts” or “true north strong and free.” Words create images more powerful than any definition. If you don’t choose your words with care, they may send a message you never intended: in this case, that it’s a man’s world.

Study after study shows that biased language is fuzzy language. When the words “man” or “he” are read, people of all ages tend to picture males. Biased language distorts perceptions. It can dampen young women’s aspirations. Getting rid of biased language clearly motivates women. In a study done in 1984, female students recalled information better when the researchers used sex-neutral terms.

At a high school commencement ceremony, a teacher hands a male graduate his award. “This fine young man is an inspiration to his classmates,” she declares. Then the teacher honors his female classmate. She is called, “a spunky little lady, a joy to us all.” “Inspiration” connotes action and leadership, while “joy to us all” connotes the supposedly feminine virtues of kindness and good humor. As for “little lady,” you don’t hear males described as “little men.”

How many articles have been written that identifies an expert as a “woman doctor?” Or heard someone refer to being treated by a “male nurse?” Many references to gender serve no useful purpose, because they put the emphasis on personal characteristics rather than occupational knowledge and skill. Inclusive job titles welcome both women

and men to a variety of occupations, and help organizations maximize their “people power.” Unless there’s a specific reason otherwise (like an article profiling women in traditionally male occupations) emphasis should be kept on the job, not the gender.

In a workshop on “Teaching Excellence,” Lisa M. Orick presented, Gender Bias Communication in the Classroom. This document examines the concept of gender bias communication in the classroom and how educators can avoid it. Gender bias communication is a set of behaviors that reflect bias or stereotyping, but which is not against the law. In the classroom, a teacher may treat male and female students differently without even realizing it. For instance, a teacher may make eye contact with males more than females, or ignore females while responding to males. Verbally, the instructor may ask higher order questions of males, or respond more often to males’ comments. Gender bias communication manifests itself in less teacher attention to, lower scores for, and greater criticism of, female students. In the long term, such bias may result in less academic fields, and lower salaries. It is necessary for educators to be aware of and to work to overcome gender bias in the classroom. Society encourages bias in advertising, in literature, and even in schoolbooks. Teachers must take care to avoid bias through such methods as asking for student evaluation of teaching techniques and requesting classroom observations by colleagues.

A review of relevant literature by Judith A. Rolls discusses The Influence of Language Style and Gender on Perceptions of Leadership Potential. Given the fact that women still do not emerge in leadership positions as often as men, it follows that gender issues and language in the leadership context require further investigation. However, from the current research, it is obvious that gender and language style have important

implications for goal attainment and choice of leaders to meet these goals. Leadership emergence, once thought to be a function of characteristics possessed by relatively few individuals, is viewed now to depend on a series of variables. These include the group's characteristics, the gender composition, and the perceived ability of the individuals to meet the group's goals.

Lakeoff (1973) attempted to outline the differences in the way males and females are encouraged to use language. She isolated a set of language markers that she referred to as "women's language"—a style she thought was confined to women's use. Women are more likely to use the following types of syntactical and lexical items: tag questions, disclaimers, polite forms, few to no expletives, more discriminations in naming colors, intonational patterns that essentially make declarative sentences sound like questions, and so forth. This type of language use is frequently associated with women, therefore, it was (and still is to a certain extent) considered women's language.

However, a series of studies by Erickson, Lind, Johnson, and O'Barr (1978) examined language style in the courtroom setting. They found that both males and females engage in what was considered women's language when they were called upon as witnesses. Speech style was attributed to social status rather than to the sex of the witness and they subsequently labeled this style "powerless language." Bradac and Mulac (1984) reported that both powerful and powerless persons seem to use different speech styles with the powerless style containing more hedges, intensifiers, hesitations, tag questions, polite speech, and so forth. Researchers have come to agree that speech style then, is contextual rather than gender specific (Crosby & Nyquist, 1977; Dubois & Crouch, 1975; Erickson et al, 1978; Lind & O' Barr, 1979; Moore, 1983; Rubin &

Nelson, 1983; Wiley & Erickson, 1985). Still identified by Lakoff's designated markers, "women's language" is referred to in the literature as female register (Crosby & Nyquist, 1977), powerless speech (Erickson, Lind, Johnson, & O'Barr, 1978), differential language (Liska, Mechling, & Stathas, 1981), and ingratiating language (Bohra Y Pandy, 1984).

Language style has implications for leadership potential because listener perceptions vary according to the speaker's rhetorical style. Witnesses using deferential language were perceived as less competent, less attractive, less trustworthy, less dynamic, and less convincing. These are not the qualities one associates with task leadership. Communication scholars agree that dynamism and trustworthiness are two major components of the credibility factor required for leadership emergence. Wright and Hosman (1983) reported that witnesses using few hedges were observed as significantly more attractive than those using a large number. Both men and women were thought to be more attractive when use of intensifiers was low. Contrary to what is generally reported in the literature, Warfel's (1984) study of gender schemas and perceptions of speech style in the courtroom setting indicated that differential language users were perceived as more competent.

Overall, differential language users are thought to be higher in social warmth, more submissive, less willing to take a stand (Liska, Stathaw, & Mechling, 1981) and less assertive (Liska, Stathas & Mechling, 1981; Newcombe & Arkof, 1979). Newcombe and Arnkoff (1979) found that when males and females used tag questions they were perceived as less assertive. Those individuals engaging in qualified speech were also viewed as less assertive than users of nonqualified speech. Other studies reported that

deferential language speakers were considered more feminine (Liska, Mechling & Stathas, 1981; Quina et al, 1984), less dominant (Warfel, 1984), less credible and attractive (Bradac, Hemphill & Tardy, 1981; Bradac & Mulac, 1984), but more polite and friendly (Quina, Wingard, & Bate, 1987).

Persons engaging in nondeferential language, on the other hand, are generally rated more positively—as more aggressive and as more successful on the job (Wiley & Eskilson, 1985). The results of one study suggested that they were more organized, competent, systematic, decisive, intelligent, confident, logical, serious, and stronger than deferential speakers (Quina, Wingard & Bates, 1987).

Speaker sex also influences interpretations based on language style. Wright and Hosman (1983) found that women who used a large number of intensifiers were seen as more attractive than men who did so (Wright & Hosman, 1983). Females who used qualified speech were considered to be more polite and warmer than males who used this speech style (Newcombe & Arnkoff, 1979). Rasmussen and Moely (1986) reported that men who engaged in a differential language style were thought to be homosexuals and Bradley (1981) found that women who used disclaimers were considered less intelligent than men who used them. The results of these studies signify that women and men are rated as much by their biological sex as by their language style. It is clear that gender bias affects individual's judgments.

Kramer (1978) defines ideal speech as the use of linguistic, verbal and nonverbal features that promote effective communication. Studies attempting to assess ideal speech report that female speech comes closer to the ideal (Giles, Scholes & Young, 1983; Kramer, 1978; Murdock & Kinsky, 1982). Yet “male” language is stereotypically



considered standard and “ideal” language is typically associated with males (Eakins & Eakins, 1978; Giles, Scholes, & Young, 1983; Kramer, 1978; Mulac & Lundell, 1982). Thus, women stereotypically receive lower ratings than men (Berryman & Wilcox, 1980; Bradley, 1981; Newcombe & Arnoff, 1979; Wright & Hosman, 1983) when in fact they may be engaging in more effective communication strategies. While the indices of ideal speech and differential language may differ, the conclusions of these studies imply that women may be rated less favorably than men not on the basis of speech style, but rather on the basis of gender. While women are stereotypically thought to engage in deferential language more often than men (Quina, Wingard, & Bates, 1987; Seigler & Seigler, 1976) there is no conclusive evidence of this in the empirical literature.

Schrader & Liska (1990) found that deferential language was characterized as a more positive language style to achieve the following goals: (1) expressing negative feelings about a mutual friend; (2) discussing dissatisfaction with members of a study group; (3) convincing a housemate to make some behavioral changes; (4) attempting to have an attendance policy modified; and (5) asking two friends to critique a job presentation. Perceptions of nondeferential and deferential conversation styles vary depending on the goal.

The relevant literature on gender and language suggests that use of deferential language and nondeferential language styles produce different listener perceptions. Moreover, gender and/or context/goals simultaneously affect perceptions and thus, subsequent behavior. Given that fewer women assume leadership roles, indicates the presence of gender bias and gender stereotyping.

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) has launched its Initiative for Educational Equity because of its concern that most of the education reform debate of the 1980's has ignored the needs of girls. The results of their concern were the results of a study put into print, Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America: A Call to Action, AAUW Initiative for Educational Equity. The first steps in this initiative were twofold. First, a survey of 3,000 fourth through tenth grade students, girls and boys from across the country, was carried out. This survey examined the impact of gender on self-esteem levels, career aspirations, educational experiences, and math-science interests. Second, findings of the AAUW survey were presented at a roundtable that was held on January 9, 1991. This document summarized the findings of the AAUW survey and highlights comments by some of the roundtable participants. The research pointed out that as girls grow, they lose confidence in their abilities, expect less from life, and lose interest in challenging courses of study and rewarding careers, particularly pursuits involving mathematics and science. Schools play a critical role in limiting girls' aspirations, through various forms of gender bias, including a lower quality and quantity of classroom attention. Girls' declining self-esteem is a social problem the schools can and must play a role in solving. It is crucial that girls receive the education, support, and challenges they need to become part of the highly skilled workforce the United States needs; to reach their full potential as citizens in a demographic society; and grow up to be parents who will challenge and nurture their own children. The pressing need for a workforce unequalled in the world combined with the continuing debate over school reform provides a unique window of opportunity for improving education for girls.

Leaders from education, business, government, and the media attended this roundtable. There they pledged their commitment to working toward providing better educational opportunities for girls and young women.

Failing at Fairness, How Our Schools Cheat Girls, by Myra and David Sadker, is a book that examines gender bias in American schools and provides groundbreaking research that has sparked a national response to sexism in schools. It includes the recent report from the American Association of University Women, “How Schools Shortchange Girls.” In this book Myra and David Sadker provide ten chapters of extensive research on gender bias in American schools. The authors’ realization of sexism in education came about when they were in a doctoral program together. They attended the same classes, prepared the same assignments, read the same books—and realized they were getting two very different educations. Myra and David Sadker embarked on studies spanning a quarter of a century encompassing their own educational experiences and their daughters. They have been welcome guests in schools across the country. They visited with hundreds of teachers and thousands of students who were gracious and candid as they observed their classrooms. Public and private school teachers, principals, professors, students and parents shared their experiences willingly.

Throughout the history of education in America, the angle of the school door has determined the direction schoolgirls travel to different destinies. Sometimes the door was locked and barred; at other times it was ajar a matter of degrees. Today it appears wide open for girls to pursue the curriculum of their choice. But an open-door policy does not by itself result in fair schools. Today’s schoolgirls face subtle and insidious gender lessons, micro-inequities that appear seemingly insignificant when looked at individually

but have a powerful cumulative impact. These inequities chip away at girls' achievement and self-esteem.

The authors realized that there was an even more powerful hidden curriculum that surfaced in the way teachers treat children and the way children treat one another. They have spent a decade, thousands of hours of classroom observation, analyzing this secret system of interaction that is prevalent throughout a child's educational lifetime. Most educators are unaware of the subtle ways in which gender lessons infiltrate the school environment, and while sexism harms girls at school, it damages boys as well. Their book provides ten chapters detailing the findings of their study giving insight to hidden lessons, the history of women's education, self-esteem, testing, higher education, the miseducation of boys and more in which to use to better the educational experience of girls and boys.

The Girls Report, What We Know & Need to Know About Growing up Female, by Lynn Phillips provides an important baseline of knowledge on adolescence as we approach the new millennium. It employs a holistic perspective, exploring adolescent girls' health, sexuality, education, experiences with violence, and economic realities and viewing them across the divides of race, ethnicity, class, and sexual orientation. In doing so, it also assesses how what we know can guide future research and programs. While the report identifies programs and achievements that engender a sense of vitality and empowerment, it also delineates the underbelly of girls' experiences, the many areas in which they remain victimized, harassed, and diminished, and the very real risks that still constrain their healthy development. Throughout, the voices of girls themselves provide a counterpoint to the analyses of researchers. These statements, drawn from interviews

and focus groups, express girls' struggles and aspirations, and their views of how their situations could be improved.

The book, The Difference, Growing Up Female in America, came about when the author, Judy Mann needed to find out what she could do to help and protect her own daughter from the crippling blows that adolescence delivers to girls. For two years Mann investigated by interviewing experts who provided insights into all of the cultural cripplers that affect girls from the time they are born. She visited single-sex and co-ed schools, listened to rock and rap music, read school texts, and talked to parents, psychologists, educators, and scientists researching gender.

Mann traveled back aeons to find out what occurred in the ancient past that led to the imbalance of power that makes today's culture so perilous for girls. In this book she examines the role of political systems and religions in perpetuating boys' sense of entitlement and girls' disabling sense of submission. Mann talked at length to her own teenage daughter and her friends. She offers a new way of raising boys and girls so that they have strategies for dealing with each other that are grounded with mutual respect, not fear and humiliation. She also makes a point that we will never change the outcome for girls unless we change the way we raise boys.

In the book, The Female Advantage, Women's ways of Leadership, Sally Helgesen uses "diary studies" that explore how women leaders make decisions, schedule their days, gather and disperse information, structure their companies, hire, and fire. She investigates how their experiences as women—wives, mothers, friends, sisters, and daughters—contribute to their leadership style. There is an old Chinese proverb: *Women Hold Up Half the Sky*. Helgesen explains the meaning of this proverb to be that half the

work and half the thinking in the world is done by women. For the sky to be complete both halves must work together; nothing can be truly human that excludes one half of humanity. She goes on to explain that until recently half of the sky assigned to women has been the private half; the public half has been ceded to men. But as women assume positions of leadership in the public realm, they are bringing their values with them, and the ancient dichotomies—between male and female, between public and private—are dissolving. This book is about what happens when the feminine principle claim their place in the public realm—when women begin to uphold the public half of the sky. Helgesen’s findings reveal innovative organizational structures and strategies that will benefit everyone.

Women in Leadership: Enacting a New Curriculum in Educational Administration, is a paper presented by Donna M. Schmitt, at the Annual Conference (1995) on Gender Issues in Higher Education. In this paper Schmitt discusses the obvious need for well-qualified women to pursue administrative opportunities in the educational arena at all levels. She questions the elements, which comprise a preparation program for prospective female administrators. Women continue to be underemployed in leadership positions in educational settings, both in K-12 and in higher education. Early attempts to include women in leadership have proposed that women shape their behaviors to conform to male-oriented management models. This paper discusses the success a seminar called “Women in Leadership,” which was introduced into the educational leadership program at Eastern Michigan University in 1979. In response to demand, the course has been offered for the last 16 years. The seminar focuses on applying leadership strategies and developing leadership skills. Course content emphasizes the sociological

and psychological concepts of women's development and gender-socialized processes.

Leadership theory and its historic development are also examined.

Women as School District Administrators: Past and Present Attitudes of Superintendents and School Board Presidents, by Sue I. Shepard, is a paper that presents findings of a study that examined the attitudes of superintendents and school board presidents toward women in educational leadership. Recent data show a gradual increase in the number of women in administrative positions; however, women continue to be underrepresented in leadership. The 1996 national survey repeated a similar 1978 survey. Five hundred and thirty superintendents and 530 school board presidents received the Women as School District Administrators (WSDA) survey, and half of each group received the second survey instrument, the Science Research Associates Opinion Survey. The combined response rate of all groups was 30 percent. Findings indicate that those responsible for hiring school district administrators were more accepting of women in educational leadership roles than they were in 1978. Respondents in 1996 expressed concern about women's emotionality, their ability to be aggressive, and their self-confidence. They reviewed women as being more sensitive, conscientious, and adaptable than men, and attributed these characteristics to successful administrators. Finally, school board presidents were less accepting of women leaders than were superintendents

Women As School Executives: A Powerful Paradigm, by Genevieve Brown and Beverly Irby, is a book about America's scarcest natural resource, leadership. Our educational system is in the midst of major upheaval and transformation. No longer can we ignore or subordinate the talents of any who are within the educational community. The leadership of the 21<sup>st</sup> century must not depend on a "good ole boys" network nor the

“good ole girl,” but the “good ole people’s” system dedicated to a quality education for all learners. Contained in this book are 14 articles that examine the role of women in creating a new order of leadership—one that is dedicated to quality education for all learners. It offers a “women-inclusive” model for educational administration, which reconceptualizes research, theory, and practice by taking the female perspective into account. In section one three articles clarify the existing leadership paradigm and document the barriers women face: (1) “Rethinking the Paradigm: Women in Leadership Roles;” (2) “Women’s Style in Leadership Roles;” and (3) “Juxtaposition of Career and Family: A Dilemma for Professional Women.” The second section challenges readers to rethink the prevalent paradigm and proposes that women’s skills and characteristics are particularly suited for dynamic leadership: (4) “Rethinking the Paradigm: The Potential Effect on Aspiring Women Administrators;” (5) “Leadership in School Administration: The Female Advantage;” (6) “Women’s Leadership Style;” (7) “Why Women Are Ready for Educational Leadership Positions;” and, (8) “Paying Our Rent.” Articles in the third section offer insightful observations and strategies for transforming the leadership paradigm: (9) “She Wants to be Principal;” (10) “The Road to Empowerment in Higher Education: How Women Have Broken through the Glass Ceiling;”(11) “Transforming the System: Women in Educational Leadership;” and (12) “Voices of Experiences of Experience: Best Advice to Prospective and Practicing Women Administrators from Education’s Top Female Executives;” (13) “Women in Leadership: A Support System for Success;” and (14) “The Educational Environment of Women: Effects and Equity.”

This literature review has provided the intern with a plethora of research that will provide a basis for her study on gender bias. Using this information the intern will



develop a qualitative research design that will use ethnographic studies in culture, religion, history, science, psychology, language, education and politics. Using knowledge from the research the intern will be better able to design the questionnaire's and surveys needed to study gender bias in her own school. By understanding the effects of the past, one can understand and correct problems in the present. By understanding what's going on in the present and learning from the mistakes of the past, one can provide change that will improve tomorrow.

History, Culture, Religion, Science, Psychology, Politics, Language, and Education are the many fibers that when woven together form the fabric of gender bias. These will be the paradigms that will reveal the effects of gender bias and answer the thesis question, "How does gender bias effect leadership roles for women?"

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## Chapter 3

### The Design of the Study

#### General description of the research design

The working design of this study is qualitative, as research has been done in a natural setting. The design also employs a historical perspective, as the research would not be complete without investigating the past and its effects on the present and future. To completely understand the problem and its reality to those under study in this organization, ethnographic research was needed because, organizations are considered to be composed of cultures, and cultures are made up of perspectives. The design of this study looked closely at male and female cultures and the perspectives of each culture in relation to each other.

An intensive study of research involving a historical investigation into the issues of gender equity throughout the years has formed the basis to understanding the cultural phenomena that has developed historically, in our society. This is important in developing the design of this study because the history of our culture has defined what it means to be male and what it means to be female in this society. There is a definite male perspective as to what it means to be female in this society, just as there is a definite female perspective as to what it means to be male in this society. These male/female perspectives influence how our parents raise us, how we are educated in the public school system, how we relate and communicate to one another and how we work together. Most omnipotent is the female perspective of what it now means to be female in today's society. Without extensively researching the historical perspective of gender equity

issues, it would be impossible to fully develop this study. So, the research instruments used in this study rely heavily on the many books, articles and documents that form the basis in designing this study.

#### Description of the development and design of research instruments used

The research instruments developed to study the gender-equity problem within the organization under study were comprised of interviews, surveys and questionnaires. Interviews involved the Building Principal, the Affirmative Action Officer, a Guidance Counselor, and two Career Major teachers. Surveys were used to collect data from students in a non-traditional career major. Questionnaires were given to all academic teachers. The information obtained from these research instruments allowed the researcher to see, hear, and understand the impact a particular practice may have on the student population, whether in the academic classroom, career major area, or administratively.

#### Description of the sample and sampling technique

Since this qualitative study entails ethnographic and historical research, the researcher selected a sample to meet the purpose of the research. The logic of purposeful sampling is based on a sample of information-rich cases that are studied in detail. This particular sample involves those students who are in non-traditional career major areas. (Example: male/cosmetology, female/auto mechanics). This sample includes 22 students from the Medford Campus who are in grades 9-12 who may or may not have experienced gender bias. This sample of subjects was chosen to study because within this cluster of students and teachers, there has been documentation of equity issues for the past few years. The researcher will use this sampling to study the problem within this

organization. Intervention techniques will be provided to educate and change behaviors, and alleviate the equity problems in certain career major areas. The results of the intervention will be studied to determine its impact on gender issues in the career major areas.

#### Description of the data collection approach

The interviews were used to discover what the gender-equity problems were within the organization and to gain different perspectives from those involved with the students and teachers experiencing the problems. Surveys were given to the non-traditional students after intervention had been completed to discover what students had learned from the experience. The survey also provided a means to determine what steps need to be taken to provide students with further support in the non-traditional career major areas. The questionnaire that was given to all academic teachers provided input into how teachers provide equitable treatment to students and their awareness to their behavior in the classroom.

#### Description of the data analysis plan

The data analysis plan involved a modified analytic induction approach. This approach was part of the plan because qualitative research is very “researcher-dependent.” For data collection the researcher is the instrument. The researcher makes decisions about what data to collect, whom to interview, survey, and/or question. The researcher’s perspectives are highly influential in qualitative research. The modified analytic induction approach begins with more specific research problems (lack of gender equity in non-traditional career major areas) or questions (How has gender bias and harassment affected the learning process of girls in non-traditional career major areas?).

It then attempts to cover all cases of the phenomenon under study (gender bias) to arrive at a comprehensive, descriptive model (How gender bias affects leadership roles for women). This process of data collection of reformulating the model is continued until a satisfactory, universal explanation is obtained for the phenomenon under study. Both non-interactive and interactive techniques were used. Non-interactive techniques involved the use of books, articles, and documents studied when developing the historical research, and the use of surveys and questionnaires for gathering information from students and staff. In developing ethnographic research, using interviews involved an interactive technique.

## Chapter 4

### Presentation of the Research Findings

#### Information Found and What it Means

The Burlington County Institute of Technology (BCIT) provides students the opportunity to learn a trade so they will be ready for the world of work when they graduate from high school. Like all the other public high schools in New Jersey, BCIT follows the Core Curriculum Content Standards of New Jersey, which addresses equity issues. Unique to BCIT is the fact that in every course proficiency there is a section on gender equity that is to be woven into every curriculum as much as possible. The career major teachers are specifically given a gender equity curriculum that they are to introduce to students. They are to take advantage of instilling issues of equity when they can and to be a role model for equitable treatment of all students. For the majority of career major teachers, equity is on their minds and students in their career major areas receive equitable experiences. When there has been a problem, it's been with the individual, not the system.

Currently enrolled at BCIT are a group of students (twenty-three females and four males) who are considered majoring in a non-traditional career. (Example: Male/Nursing, Female/Auto Mechanics). Throughout the years students entering non-traditional careers has increased. However, more female students explore and enter the non-traditional career major areas than do male students. Male students, who explore and enter a non-traditional career major, experience difficulties that are different than those of the female students who are in a traditional "male" career major.

Presently, in their freshmen year, students are given their choice to explore three career major areas. They do not have to choose a non-traditional career major. Beginning in the 99-00 school year, incoming freshmen students will be given a fourth exploratory in which they will be required to choose a non-traditional career major. By requiring students to explore a non-traditional career major, it is the hope that this exposure will increase the number of students that finally choose a non-traditional career major as their final career placement. This requirement is a result of state equity standards that want 25% of the population to be in non-traditional careers.

Since 1995, students in non-traditional career major areas meet monthly with a guidance counselor and the affirmative action officer. In the past female students have experienced ostracizing and isolation from their male peers in their non-traditional career major areas. Male students have not experienced ostracizing or isolation from female students nor have they been made to feel unwelcome or inadequate. The male students have had to deal with other male peers in traditional male shops and their negative attitudes toward these boys being in a "girl's shop." However, these experiences have lessened throughout the years, as teachers have been inserviced and students have been educated to the issues of equity.

The addition of equity standards in the curriculum has helped tremendously with indoctrinating equitable treatment within all career major areas. At different times throughout the school year students are provided an opportunity to learn about equity, through films, guest speakers, lectures and discussion. Students are also able to participate in field trips involving them in equity programs. The objective of providing students this continuing support and opportunity to learn about equity was to alleviate



problems that arose mainly in the non-traditional career major areas. These experiences and the monthly non-traditional group meetings provided students the opportunity, in a safe environment, to voice their opinions. The guidance counselor(s) and the affirmative action officer could then do follow up work if needed.

At these monthly meetings students are provided an opportunity to discuss problems they may be experiencing. They are given the support they may need to address problems, and guided through problem-solving techniques so conflicts can be easily resolved. It was during these monthly meetings that female students would discuss their experiences of being ostracized by and isolated from their male peers, that the affirmative action officer was able to intervene for these female students and troubleshoot problems within many of the non-traditional career major areas.

Also, male and female alumni who are now successful in a traditional “female” or “male” career have returned to campus for seminars given to the high school students. These assemblies have educated our students to the fact that these former students are now earning a good salary, working along with other males/females, despite the fact that their’s is a traditional “male/female” occupation. These young men and women have been able to share with our students their experiences of working in a career that has them motivated and challenged. The enthusiasm for their career choice allows our students to see and hear from former students some of them have gone to school with or were upperclassmen in their shop.

As of the 97-98 school year, one particular career major area was in need of intervention. This intervention was needed to rectify equity problems that were prevalent in Auto Mechanics I. This was as a result of information the affirmative action officer

and guidance counselor, were given during the non-traditional group meetings. The female students reported that they were being told by the male students that, "They didn't belong in this shop." "Girls can't do this kind of work." "They only wanted to be with boys and weren't serious about making auto mechanics a career." The girls also reported feeling alone and isolated from their male peers, because the boys would not let them do many of the "hands on" work. They reported that they felt like "gofers" because they were continuously asked to go get tools and materials that the boys would need to do the work. The girls took a back seat to the work activity and were allowed to watch the boys. This was reinforced by their teachers' behavior. The female students reported that they were told by one teacher that, "They shouldn't be in this shop because they will never be able to make it a career because nobody will hire a girl. There is too much sexism in the world, so they should choose another shop." The other teacher told one of the girls, "Don't pick up that battery it's too heavy, wait and let one of the boys do it." Both teachers continually questioned the girls as to why they wanted to be in a "male" shop. These teachers, the girls reported, would not let them work on the machinery. They were told they couldn't do certain jobs because they were incompetent and inexperienced and one of the boys would be assigned the job. When the girls were given jobs to do, they would immediately be told they needed a boy to help them or to let the boy finish the job. The girls reported that many of the tasks they had been given by these teachers were menial tasks of washing cars and keeping the shop clean. During the interview with one of the girls, who had this experience, she stated that their teachers had the cleanest cars in the state of New Jersey. The girls also reported that they were always kept away from any sort of "live work experience" and were made to watch. They felt isolated from the

male students in the shop, which made them feel they weren't wanted or needed and somehow inadequate.

At this point the affirmative action officer noted that the other non-traditional career major areas, in which there were non-traditional placements, did not have these types of reports. Auto Mechanics I was the only non-traditional career major area in which the female students were experiencing problems and these problems were escalating. The affirmative action officer made the administration aware of the seriousness of the problems. These teachers were spoken to and dealt with by the administration. However, the problems continued. It was during this 97-98 school year that the administration directed the affirmative action officer to intervene with these career major teachers and the problems the female students were experiencing.

The affirmative action officer and the guidance counselor presented the students in auto mechanics shop a video that demonstrated "sending out the right signals" and had an activity and worksheet that the students participated in afterwards. They also provided the students with information pamphlets and continued with the monthly group meetings. The affirmative action officer reported that while he and the guidance counselor visited the Auto Mechanic I shop, it was very obvious that the three girls in the shop were very isolated. There were fifteen students in the shop and the three girls were seated far away from the rest of the student body. It was very clear that the girls were not considered as part of the whole group. It was during this time, that the affirmative action officer felt these career major teachers had developed real negative opinions about the female students in their shop. These teachers described the girls as always wanting to do things

that they felt the boys should do. These teachers gave the girls the impression that they did not belong in this career major area.

Despite the fact that the affirmative action officer and the guidance counselor had provided the students and teachers with an intervention, both sexes were very resistant to their efforts. The boys complained that the girls were getting more demanding, and they viewed the intervention as the girls receiving preferential treatment. The girls complained that they wanted to be treated equally. The shop environment became one in which the boys and girls were at odds with each other and there was continuous bickering. Although the intervention did not alleviate the problems within this shop area, it proved to provide awareness to the female students in which they felt empowered to make reports. It was at the end of the 97-98 school year that, the female students in this shop filed a grievance against the two career major teachers. The grievance was dealt with directly by the building principal, the vice-principals and the affirmative action officer, along with the students and their parents. The administration dealt with these teachers through the annual performance report and the professional improvement plan. The annual performance report would document the teacher's inequitable treatment of female students. The professional improvement plan would stipulate the improvements needed for these teachers to provide equitable treatment and experiences for female students in their career major area.

As one part of five projects to be completed for this internship, the Intern was assigned the task of providing these teachers with an intervention program. This program would educate them to the severity of the problems in their shop and the treatment of the females by them and the male peers. This intervention would be done during the 98-99

school year to insure these girls received equitable treatment and an equitable and positive experience in the shop.

Subsequently, gender bias was chosen as the topic of this thesis. This project was taken on to study this organization and the effects of gender bias on its female students. Since the Intern is a female in a leadership position within this organization (Supervisor of Child Study), these findings would then be tied to the effects of gender bias on leadership roles for women.

While conducting this study, the Intern discovered that her own life experiences would prove useful in addition to the many articles, documents and books used in researching this topic. The Intern also learned that many of the life experiences she has had, proved useful in interpreting and understanding the effects of gender bias, because she has and continues to experience gender bias in her own life. This topic has allowed the Intern to tie some of the many experiences provided by the interviews of female students and the many experiences written about in the articles, documents, and books used for research, to her own life experiences. (The Intern's life experiences consist of those as a daughter, the oldest of nine children, four sisters and four brothers, as a female student educated in the public school system, and college undergraduate and two graduate programs, as a wife and mother of two daughters and as a teacher, and an educational leader). It was at the end of this school year that the Intern took this gender-equity project as one part of five projects and as a thesis topic.

The most difficult part of this project would be to provide an intervention for the two career major teachers that would not only educate them, but allow them to use what they learned to provide an equitable experience for the females in their shop. This was of

great concern because the district had provided numerous inservice opportunities on this topic for its teachers, especially the career major teachers, and something new and creative would have to be used. This would be a difficult task as the career major teachers were two older males that had certain beliefs and understanding about women in the workforce that was somewhat antiquated. The Intern, being female, would have the most difficult task of enlightening these gentlemen to understanding the modern woman. The interview with the affirmative action officer, gave the Intern insight to the possible attitudes and interests of these teachers by stating that, "The older the person in general, the less likely they are to be accepting of the new laws and regulations and new attitudes. What was totally acceptable for someone who is now 60 when they were 20 was what was standard before the civil rights act. Law of the land was discrimination in all areas, and that was legal, even more so toward females. I think you have to be a pretty open minded older person to accept that and you have to work at reeducating. There is a great resistance to change."

Upon returning to school in September, the Intern learned that the two teachers, she had planned to work with during the 98-99 school year, had retired. This was unexpected. A new teacher had been hired for Auto Mechanics I. The difficult part of this study, which would be planning and providing an intervention, was no longer a part of the study. Therefore, the Intern would have to take a different perspective because no intervention with the teachers would take place. The focus of the study of this organization now would not be intervening with the two teachers but providing and studying the programs and activities offered to female students and non-traditional students in particular. The Intern would continue with the questionnaires, surveys and

interviews and take part in the monthly non-traditional group meetings and seminars, or field trips offered the students.

In October, freshmen and sophomore girls participated in the Sister-to-Sister conference, at Gloucester County College, sponsored by the American Association of University Women (AAUW)-New Jersey. At this conference girls got the chance to speak out on issues where their gender can make a difference: sexual harassment, sports, dating, leadership, classroom and curriculum, and career opportunities. This experience allowed female students to receive information through lecture, video, discussion of issues and strategies, and the many handouts that were provided to students enhanced what had taken place that day. Students were able to network with other students and adult professionals and gain experience with meeting new people. The Sister-to-Sister Summits are part of a national AAUW effort to strengthen girls' voices while identifying action steps to promote better opportunities for all students.

In November, all students were involved in an assembly that was provided by the "Positive Impact Ensemble" from Patterson High School of the Performing Arts. The topic was diversity. There were a variety of skits put on by the students that touched on many different topics concerning diversity, race, religion, gender, disability, sexual preference, etc. After the skits, students were able to discuss the topics with the performers.

The month of December the students involved with the Achieving Sex Equity Through Students team (ASETS) and their peer mediator advisor, from the BCIT, Medford Campus participated at the ASETS conference. These students were able to work with trainers in an ASETS leadership program that allowed them to participate in

human relations and sex equity training. On April 30<sup>th</sup> these students, and their peer mediator advisor, will attend another ASETS conference. This conference will be all-day and limited to students from grades 6-10 who have attended ASETS training during the school year. This will be an opportunity for them to showcase the equity projects they have carried out in their schools.

In May a freshmen's women's conference is scheduled to take place at the BCIT, Medford Campus. This conference provides freshmen women the opportunity to meet adult women who are working in non-traditional settings. Last year students were able to speak with female firefighters, heavy equipment operators, entrepreneurs, police and women in leadership roles such as politics and school administration. In May, this experience will be provided again to the freshmen women.

The majority of students in the non-traditional career major areas have reported positive results. This is the result of the many different experiences that the district has provided its students, by involving them in equity programs, educating them with seminars and assemblies and providing support groups dealing with equity issues. There were no problems in the Auto Mechanics I shop this school year. After conducting an interview with the new auto mechanics teacher and observing the students in his shop, it was obvious that the students were totally enjoying their shop experience. The new teacher stated that he had no problems with the students and had been experiencing positive results with all students. He stated that he expected all students to work toward their potential and excluded no one from any tasks. His shop is very structured and his lessons involve all students working together. The girls are not isolated from the boys and he expects all students to respect each other. The female students stated that the



teacher expected them to do the same work that was assigned to the male students. They have not experienced any type of negative treatment by their male peers and feel completely accepted and are productive learners. The male students had no negative statements about their female peers. In fact, one male student pointed out a female student who he said was the hardest worker in the shop and was impressed with what she could do. These male students also made statements that they were aware of the changing attitudes about women in the workforce and realized they may some day work with or even for a female mechanic. Their comments inferred that they valued the experience of working with females in their class. When asked about their teacher, these students all had positive comments. They felt their teacher treated all students equally and he expected them to work together cooperatively. They felt they were learning more this school year than they were in the past. Watching these students work made it obvious to the Intern that the shop environment was conducive to learning. The stress and tension between the male and female students was gone, despite the fact that some of the male students from the previous year were still present in this group of students. The two of the three female students who had experienced the harassment the previous year had moved on to Auto Mechanics II the other graduated.

The two female students who had experienced the harassment and filed the grievance against their teachers were experiencing a positive experience in the Auto Mechanics II shop. The teacher of Auto Mechanics II has been in district for eleven years. He was awarded "Teacher of the Year" in 1996. He is a positive role model for his students and he too expects all students to work to their potential. When asking him about his experience with the two female students now in his shop he had nothing but

positive statements. However, he did report to the Intern that at the end of the previous school year he had been told, by the other two shop teachers, that the students he would be getting from their shop were troublemakers and problems, especially the girls. The Auto Mechanics II teacher was aware of the problems these two teachers were having but he also knew why they were having the problems. He knew these men as colleagues and had formed his own opinion of their personalities and teaching methods. The Auto Mechanics II teacher reported that the two female students now in his shop were timid and shy at first. They were reluctant to participate and apprehensive to use the power tools used to perform certain automotive tasks. He stated that once the girls started to experience success and feel comfortable with him and the other students, they were able to become more assertive and took on whatever task he assigned them. Now these two female students are not fearful to use any of the power tools when performing automotive tasks.

The girls reported that before they came into Auto Mechanics II, they thought they would get the same treatment they had experienced in Auto Mechanics I. They thought this because the two teachers had told them that the Auto Mechanics II teacher never let the girls do anything, that he had a recreation vehicle that he had the girls clean and maintain the inside. The girls stated that everything they were told about the Auto Mechanics II teacher was untrue and that they were learning more than they had in their Auto Mechanics I shop. They felt accepted by their male peers and were assigned to work together with them. They were no longer ostracized, isolated or made to feel unaccepted or inadequate. They were enjoying their experience this year but worried that they had not learned as much as the male students. One of the girls stated that the male

students were “smarter” than they were. The Intern pointed out to these students that the boys weren’t necessarily “smarter” than they were. But, the boys had received better and more experiences in performing automotive tasks than they did and not to underestimate themselves or their abilities. The Intern found that these two female students were now in a positive experience in their career major. Despite the negative experience these students had experienced the previous year, they appeared to be much stronger, educated young women. They have experienced harassment by their peers and male adults that appears to have provided them a learning experience that has made them much more aware of the working definition of gender equity not only in education but when they take on the world of work.

In conclusion, the Intern believes that the students she has interviewed, observed and interacted with, in completing this study, have grasped an understanding of gender equity that continues to grow. Gender equity is a set of actions, attitudes, and assumptions that provide opportunities and create expectations about individuals, regardless of gender. Gender equity is an equal chance for females and males at

- learning, regardless of the subject
- preparing for future education, jobs, and careers
- high expectations
- developing, achieving, and learning
- equitable treatment and outcomes in school and beyond.

Gender equity is linked to and supports race, ethnic, economic, disability, and other equity concerns. Our students learn this because they are being educated in a district that values all students and strives to provide equitable treatment to all of them.

Gender bias affects leadership roles for women in different ways. Some women resolve themselves to the fact that this is a man's world and succumb to the pressures of patriarchal logic. Patriarchal logic refers to the systemic, pervasive ordering of our bodies/minds/souls/selves in relation to one another through hierarchical construction of unchanging power-relations. In this manmade world, certain people—"the fathers"—are ordained by birth, race, class, religion, education, profession, custom, accumulation of wealth, or simply by their gendered genital structure, to hold and use power over others in a way that is benign, ethical, "logical": that is, both to "help others" and to secure their own power so that it does not change hands; thus power—the actual embodied ability to effect change, to make things happen, to create—is, by definition, patriarchal power, passed on from generation to generation. Historically, these have been white, economically privileged, ostensibly heterosexual males. (Carter Heyward, 1993).

The year is 1965. The eighth grade students are called down to the gymnasium to meet with guidance counselors from the local high school they will attend in the fall. They are to discuss with the guidance counselors what program they wish to enter and select the courses needed for their freshmen year. One at a time the students are called to the desk of the counselor that has been assigned to follow them throughout their four years in high school.

As Rhea hears her name being called she rises and walks over to her guidance counselor. Mr. Kildreams explains the program offerings. When he is finished explaining, Rhea tells him she wishes to take the college preparatory program. Mr. Kildreams quickly responds by asking Rhea what she wants to study in college. Thirteen year old Rhea answers that she is not real sure what she wants to study, but she thinks she

would like to be a nurse. Smiling, Mr. Kildreams tells Rhea that she doesn't really need to go to college because she is a girl. The school is getting crowded and the college preparatory courses need to be given to the boys first. She can enroll in the secretarial program. Rhea responds that she isn't interested in being a secretary. She has time to decide what she would like to study before she goes off to college. Becoming perturbed with Rhea, Mr. Kildreams impatiently explains that she cannot take the college preparatory classes because she does not have a high enough average. Mr. Kildream selects the courses Rhea will take and enrolls her in the secretarial program. Rhea, whose average at this time is an 87%, wonders how high an average you need to go to college.

That evening, Rhea tells her father that she wanted to enroll in the college preparatory program for high school. She retells the day's events and experience with the guidance counselor. Her father, listening intently replies, "Why do you care about going to college? You'll have a man take care of you." Rhea spends the next four years of high school in a program which she has no interest, did not choose and believes is all she is qualified and capable of achieving. Rhea's high school experience excluded her from higher level math and science courses. What happened to Rhea happened to hundreds of thousands of girls throughout the country at this time. What is most disturbing about this experience is that Rhea had no idea she was a victim of blatant sexism. There were no names for discriminatory practices back then. Girls believed what was told to them about being female. Rhea completed high school feeling and believing she was lesser than and not as capable as her male peers were. Although gender bias had shown its ugly face, Rhea had no concept of how she had been cheated educationally. She had internalized this experience as being her fault because she's not smart enough, good enough or

important enough. She defined herself by what she was told by significant males in her life. What would be the effects of gender bias on her future? Rhea would experience and feel the bite of gender bias and experience the devastating relational effects of patriarchal logic but not be unable to understand or put a name to it until many years later. Sexism would be at the forefront of most of the experiences in Rhea's young adult life. Dealing with gender bias in her education, career choice(s) and personal life would be the catalyst that would affect Rhea to overcome these obstacles before she will reach her fullest potential.

Different versions of this scenario took place for many female high school students throughout the country during this time period. There were no equity laws, affirmative action officers or equal rights. Girls were routinely placed in educational programs that would prepare them for traditional female roles, (secretaries, beauty operators, store clerks, nurses, wives and mothers). Patriarchal logic, while devastating to American women, also robbed females and males in the minority races. It made their lives a struggle. Like women, to find a voice in their country where they would receive the same rights and freedoms that those who benefited from patriarchal logic, would take a Civil Rights Movement. From the negative affects of patriarchal logic, we were blessed with leaders, male and female, that would raise the consciousness of a whole country to form a movement so strong, that the face of our nation would be changed forever.

Women today are challenging patriarchal logic. These women realize change cannot take place without competing with men for positions of leadership, power and control. More and more women who take on this challenge, grow from the experience achieve positions of power, and discover they don't need to control others to be powerful.

Countries that recognize the value of women, as an economic resource today will be the best prepared to compete internationally tomorrow, for everywhere in the world there is a limited pool of potential managers. However, in the United States there are more women than elsewhere poised to assume leadership positions.

Gender bias, while it can hinder and harm, can also strengthen and alarm a girl into standing up and fighting for what she wants. This was evident in this study, because the girls, who experienced the most blatant forms of gender bias, made their voices heard. They brought attention to their plight and stood their ground to get the support and results they wanted and deserved—a positive, equitable shop experience. Only time will tell what leadership roles these girls may achieve.

Many years passed before Rhea could define, understand and put a name to the stifling of sexism. The life experiences that made her feel inferior to the males in her life spurred her on to continually work on educating herself to be able to overcome the, obstacles of being female in a male world. Proving to herself that she does have worth, potential and much to offer and can compete with and be as productive as a male despite being a female. Rhea is now in a position of leadership where her voice is heard and she is making a difference. The Intern knows this because Rhea's experience has been her own. They are one and the same.

These experiences carry on into adulthood and as young women mature, they learn to become assertive and compete with their male peers. It is not an easy transition. It takes time but it is a life experience that grows and builds upon itself and if the woman uses the knowledge and education she gains from these life experiences, the evolution of her personal growth and power in this “man's” world will prove fruitful, positive and

rewarding. Many changes in the world today are taking place because women's voices are being heard. Women have not shattered the "glass ceiling" but there is now a crack that is open and continues to widen as women become more and more competitive and successful in this changing "man's" world.

"The majority of the country now believes that women can do what men can do. But we haven't begun to realize that men can do what women can do" (Gloria Steinem).



## Chapter 5

### Conclusions, Implications and Further Study

#### Conclusions

Gender Equity because: “Nothing can be more absurd than the practice that prevails in our country of men and women not following the same pursuits with all their strengths and with one mind, for thus the state, instead of being whole, is reduced to half.” (Plato)

Women are not inferior to men. Women are not superior to men. Women are not the same as men. The sexes are different because their brains are different. We have been a sexist species since our existence on this planet. Human biology has assigned separate functions to the male and female. Evolution has strengthened and redefined those differences. Civilization reflected them. Religion and education reinforced them.

Gender-specific behavior begins at birth. Sex role expectations are reinforced by everyday experience. Girls learn that their role in life is to provide service and support, and boys learn that their role in life is to command and control. American girls and boys are acculturated quite differently: Girls are taught to be fragile, dependent, compliant cooperative, and nurturant, while boys learn to be sturdy, independent, active, assertive, aggressive, and unemotional.

Boys grow up playing time-bound, goal oriented games. The ticking clock gives them only seconds to discuss their options. The coach, team captain, or leader will therefore decide the next move, and the rest will follow. Men see competition as cementing relationships on their team and establishing relationships with members of the

opposing team, because of these childhood experiences. Competition is why they bother to play in the first place.

Girls play games that focus on getting along, being nice, and receiving approval. Their focus is on the interpersonal process. Women feel that competition and conflict are not only potentially damaging to good human relations but even their antitheses, because women strive for intimacy and believe a good relationship is based on personal closeness. Boys separate their feelings about a person from his behavior during a game. Girls, as a rule, do not. Since there are no winners or losers in dolls, the game is never over for girls.

Women tend to see their work as an integral part of their personal lives, while men regard business as just a game. Women don't compartmentalize different aspects of their lives—work in one cubicle, friendships in another. This integration can cause women to be mystified by male behavior. Obviously, our differing cultural patterns have an impact on how men and women behave in the world of work. Women's conflict resolution strategies and their career can be influenced by gender differences.

To settle disagreements in their business and personal lives all people use the following basic behaviors:

- Accommodation
- Avoidance
- Comprise
- Collaboration
- Competition

Early training has taught men to resolve conflicts differently from their female colleagues. Boys are more likely to demand having their own autonomous, independent way when conflicts arise. They, most often, resolve disputes using competition. When girls have differences, instead of competing they negotiate in order to preserve relationships. In their desire to dodge confrontations that might damage relationships, girls are more apt to accommodate, avoid, compromise, or collaborate when resolving conflicts. One behavior they diligently avoid is head-on confrontation and competition. Yet on the playing field and in the boardroom competition is the name of the game.

Women are most adept at collaboration because of childhood experiences. Collaboration takes time and trust. You must both care about your underlying concerns, be willing to understand each other, and be open to influence to have a meaningful discussion. You can improve your relationships with your coworkers because the level of trust increases when you resolve conflicts collaboratively. They're more apt to work with you in the future and less likely to sabotage your progress.

Language can both reflect and shape the way people are treated in today's society. Bias free language is effective language. An audience is more likely to "get the message," and to remember the information, when inclusive language is used. Biased language is fuzzy language. Biased language distorts perceptions. It can dampen young women's aspirations. Female students recall information better when sex-neutral terms are used.

Many references to gender serve no useful purpose, because they put the emphasis on personal characteristics (male nurse, woman doctor) rather than occupational knowledge and skill. Inclusive job titles welcome both women and men to

a variety of occupations, and help organizations maximize their “people power.” Unless there’s a specific reason otherwise emphasis should be kept on the job, not the gender.

Women’s language differs from men’s in that women are more likely to use the following types of syntactical and lexical items: tag questions, disclaimers, polite forms, few to no expletives, more discriminations in naming colors, intonational patterns that essentially make declarative sentences sound like questions, and so forth. Men’s language is direct and to the point. Women use more collaborative language and avoid use of direct statements by using such terms as “it seems, it appears.” Men’s language lacks emotional content: Men say, “I think,” women say, “I feel.” Men tend to speak declaratively, as “I want the report by Friday.” Women are likely to ask, “Will the report be done by Friday?” The declarative statement seems more leaderlike because it is consistent with the traditional command-and-control leadership style.

Gender bias is still a problem in America today. It continues to show its ugly face in our schools, perpetuating girls’ poor self-esteem, lack of interest in math and science and lost potential. It affects leadership roles for women not only in education but all aspects of the work world, and it does not just happen in America. The research pointed out that as girls grow, they lose confidence in their abilities, expect less from life, and lose interest in challenging courses of study and rewarding careers, particularly pursuits involving mathematics and science. Schools play a critical role in limiting girls’ aspirations, through various forms of gender bias, including a lower quality and quantity of classroom attention. Girls’ declining self-esteem is a social problem the schools can and must play a role in solving. It is crucial that girls receive the education, support, and challenges they need to become part of the highly skilled workforce the United States

needs; to reach their full potential as citizens in a demographic society; and grow up to be parents who will challenge and nurture their own children. The pressing need for a workforce unequaled in the world combined with the continuing debate over school reform provides a unique window of opportunity for improving education for girls. At a national roundtable sponsored by the American Association of University Women, leaders from education, business, government, and the media pledged their commitment to working toward providing better educational opportunities for girls and young women.

Throughout the history of education in America, the angle of the school door has determined the direction schoolgirls travel to different destinies. Sometimes the door was locked and barred; at other times it was ajar a matter of degrees. Today it appears wide open for girls to pursue the curriculum of their choice. But an open-door policy does not by itself result in fair schools. Today's schoolgirls face subtle and insidious gender lessons, micro-inequities that appear seemingly insignificant when looked at individually but have a powerful cumulative impact. These inequities chip away at girls' achievement and self-esteem. This research has shown that an even more powerful hidden curriculum that surfaced in the way teachers treat children and the way children treat one another. Most educators are unaware of the subtle ways in which gender lessons infiltrate the school environment, and while sexism harms girls at school, it damages boys as well. Girls and boys need to be raised and have experiences that provide them strategies for dealing with each other that are grounded with mutual respect, not fear and humiliation. The outcome for girls can never change unless we change the way we raise boys.

### Implications

As women try to move up the corporate or school ladder, they face many barriers. Traditionally, the view has been “it has always been this way.” There always has been a mismeasurement of women in this country. Men have been the “measure of all things.” Women have had very specific roles in society—to have children and deal with domestic tasks. Traditional attitudes are the most difficult, of all the barriers to address, because they represent the views and perceptions people hold most important.

The education of girls, traditionally, has been limited to those things related to raising a family, males receiving the more formal education. The poet Milton did not want to teach his own daughters Latin and Greek, because he said, “One tongue is enough for a woman.” Women’s speech has been “devalued” because of these attitudes. Gender bias is inherent in our language. Women have been silenced and thus “muted” by a language not of their own making. The practice of using particular pronouns in the case of women helps to make women “invisible.” Women are defined through their relationships to the world not as individuals (officers and their ladies, enlisted men and their wives, working mother, woman driver, female lawyer, etc.). There are words and phrases that denigrate women, that range from terms trivializing their activities (hen party) to terms that treat them as consumable goods (she’s quite a dish).

As women take on the responsibilities of leadership positions, they have to overcome these, often, negative perceptions. Language does not treat women and men equally with regard to leadership styles. A man will be described as “firm” when dealing with a difficult situation. A woman, under the same conditions, will be considered “stubborn.” He may be considered “wise” when making decisions, where she might be described as revealing her “prejudices” when making the same type of decision. A man

“exercises authority” and good judgment when having to make the unpopular decisions. A woman is characterized as “tyrannical” in the same situation. This kind of linguistic bias can mold opinions that harm girls/women more than boys/men. Asymmetrical language becomes a “loaded weapon” when appraising the leadership quality of men and women in today’s educational and business environment. Social change creates changes in our language, not the reverse. Women need to be valued in society beyond their traditional roles. Through being valued, other changes including how women are described in our language will be inevitable. A new way of thinking about women is necessary.

There is an androcentric bias in educational administration theory and research that makes the assumption about male and female roles and it is that the experiences (and motivations) of males and females are the same. These assumptions are invalid and research findings that do not consider the issue of gender can not be appropriately generalizable to females. In the introduction to “Motivation and Personality,” Maslow wrote: “It is possible for a woman to have all the specifically female fulfillments (being loved, having the home, having the baby) and then, without giving up any of the satisfactions already achieved, go on beyond femaleness to the full humanness that she shares with males, for example, the full development of her intelligence, of any talents she may have...” As Maslow does not suggest that men need to go beyond their maleness, the inference for achievement of self-actualization is equated to excellence in masculinity. Of significance is the apparent conflict between a woman’s historical sense of self and fulfillment which are aligned with the needs for affiliation and belongingness and Maslow’s reference to “full humanness.”

In the past, women were encouraged to leave behind their natural management skills and “think like a man.” Women have something unique to offer organizations and its workers. Women should be assured that managing and leading by using their own strengths is acceptable. Researchers have defined the female role of school administration as a feminine culture, metaphorically speaking, which emphasizes relationships, and care and concern for others, with teaching, learning and community building the principal components. Women think mostly in terms of a network or web of relationships, rather than of a hierarchy. Feminine leaders see the world through two different lenses concurrently and, as a result, respond to situations on both the thinking and feeling levels. Sergiovanni views the management structure of schooling not as pyramidal, but rather circular. Acts of discretion, support, preparation, and guidance are involved, which are both rights and responsibilities shared by the entire school community of principals, teachers, students, and parents.

The paradigm shift regarding who should lead means opening doors of leadership to all including women. As never before, the current educational environment has the conditions present to promote and retain women in educational leadership positions. Education’s paradigm shift toward a greater focus on the quality of group interactions and working as a member of a team in a circular organizational structure as opposed to a triangular one, will stimulate a sense of belongingness and power. This is at the heart of empowerment. It is the essence of Sergiovanni’s value-added leadership. The new paradigm, if it becomes the norm, will provide educational milieu more supportive—both extrinsically and intrinsically—of women in administration. This style is in tune with the



megatrends of the day and is now the dominant leadership model. Great leaders are being called forth.

By being involved in this project, the Intern was able to improve and develop various leadership competencies. Although this project did not involve the Intern with providing intervention to the two career major area teachers as planned, she was able to identify, reflect upon, and articulate ethical beliefs and values about equitable educational experiences. This was done through the reflective journal and when speaking with other educators involved with providing the activities reported in this study. The Intern was also able to articulate her ethical beliefs with the many discussions with students in the monthly non-traditional meetings and upon interviewing two of the three students who filed the grievance. The Intern was able to identify and address the two male teachers as perpetuating the gender bias and harassment in Auto Mechanics I. This was made very clear, as she found equitable treatment of all the female students in this area, as a result of their retirement and the hiring of a new teacher. The Intern did apply human relation's skills in interacting effectively with others and communicated orally with students, staff, and the community to motivate them to reflect upon and support this project. This was done by interacting with the students and staff in the monthly meetings, the interviews with students, the affirmative action officer and the Auto Mechanics I and II teachers. The Intern was able to analyze the impact of non-verbal communication and personal image on others, by reading body language. She produced clear, concise, properly structured written communications styled to fit those involved by being sensitive to using unbiased language when preparing the survey's, interviewing and speaking to students in their non-traditional shop areas and meetings. The Intern was heavily involved with

providing the inservice, materials and program necessary for this project by researching articles, videos etc. and attending workshops on male/female communication, and the freshmen's women's conference. The Intern was able to initiate and effectively manage change as both a leader and member of a leadership team by listening to the students and teachers. By doing this and becoming a part of their inservice and monthly meetings, the Intern was able to fulfill their needs by providing support, identifying and improving teaching and learning experiences. Completing the many tasks to finish this project involved the Intern working with guidance counselors, career major teachers, students and community members. The Intern always communicated with individuals and groups in a positive manner. She listened actively and responded appropriately to the ideas and opinions of others. Group activities were used to enhance the motivation and self-esteem of the students and staff. Conflict resolution techniques did have to be used. Effective meetings were planned and conducted.

The Intern was able to seek and provide appropriate human, material, and fiscal resources to support the services needed to implement this program because many of them were already in place and the administrative support was there. Co-curricular activities that promoted and benefited the students and staff were also in place. However, the Intern, with assistance from her mentor, provided staff with a workshop on effective communication between male and females. The Intern when interacting with the career major teachers, recognized, encouraged, and monitored the use of effective teaching methods and strategies, especially in relation to gender equity by observing classes and reading lessons plans. When interacting with students involved with this program the Intern was able to utilize administrative practices, which meet the unique needs of

students. She did this by planning her interviews and surveying at times that did not interfere with their instruction or take them away from their shop experience. By providing guest speakers for the freshmen women's conference the Intern will involve the community appropriately in assessing progress toward achieving this program's goals. Being actively involved with students and staff provided the Intern the opportunity to apply effective strategies for evaluating them. The overall involvement in this project had the Intern use strategic planning skills in managing change by being part of their monthly meetings and activities. In this way the Intern was able to be part of the process for planning and change.

The organizational change brought about by this was the education of students and staff to the issues of gender equity. The equity problems in the career major areas under study were completely alleviated by the retirement of the two problem teachers. Change took place in the way female students are involved, instructed and treated in this non-traditional area. Male and female students were made aware of gender issues and have learned to work together in an environment free of harassment from either sex. This was largely due to the fact that they now have two instructors who use the education and training needed to provide a career major area free of gender bias.

#### Further Study

Study should continue in the non-traditional career areas both for females and males. However, the girls have much more of a support system offered them than do the boys. Because they are girls, these young women find it very easy to discuss their issues and cares. The male students however, are less likely to speak in the group meetings. Also the boys do not have as strong a support system as do the girls. The boys would

benefit from a conference offered yearly, as do the girls. The boys need to speak with and about issues important to young men going into the world of work. Gender issues in the workforce from the male point of view should be addressed. Also, for further study would be providing learning activities and opportunities for the male and female students to learn more about how each other think and grow and experience life. The Intern gained a wealth of knowledge and grew immensely from researching and studying gender bias and its issues. It's obvious to the Intern that many problems arise between male and female because we don't understand the "workings" of the other.

Enlightenment and awareness needs to be given to those in positions of hiring administrators. Ella Flagg Young, Superintendent of schools in Chicago made the following statement: "In the near future we shall have more women than men in executive charge of the vast educational system. It is women's natural field and she is no longer satisfied to do the larger part of the work and yet be denied leadership." This was in 1909.

Superintendents and school board presidents need to be made aware of the winds of change blowing. School organizations need to make room for women. The near future is here. Women continue to be under represented in leadership positions. Leadership roles for women continue to be affected by gender bias. Though there are more female than male teachers, this trend reverses for administrators. The average female principal has spent significantly more years as a teacher, than has the average male principal; and fewer women principals than men are married, a trend holding in the superintendency.

Efforts must be continued which promote and support women aspiring to be educational administrators. In particular, efforts need to be made to increase the awareness of school board presidents and skills of women to be successful administrators. In all the research, school board presidents were less accepting of women than were superintendents. Superintendents can and must be key participants in this effort by showing their support of women, recommending women for positions and fulfilling the roles of mentor and sponsor. Making gender-biased decisions can mean the loss of a qualified person. We need people to see things, as they should be, not as they have been.

We need to see women in leadership roles and when we don't we need to ask, "Why?"

Appendix A  
Research Instruments

## Interview with Affirmative Action Officer

1. What problems with gender equity has this district experienced not only with traditional but non-traditional students in their career major areas?

“One main problem was one we had in one certain shop that came out of our non-traditional shop group meetings. This was back as early as June of 1995. Some of the kids in that shop shared that, in that shop, they were told they were not to do certain things, like when three girls volunteered to work at the table and were told, “Girls can’t do that,” and boys were selected to work at the table. Females in that shop were also questioned as to why they chose that traditionally male shop. Other shops in which we had non-traditional placements didn’t report those experiences. So, it was really occurring in only one shop, Auto Mechanics I. This persisted into the following year as a result of the information we were getting from the kids in the group. It was a combination of the girls complaining and the boys complaining they felt the girls were getting more demanding, preferential treatment. So, it was pretty much an environment in which both sides were bickering with each other. There was a resistance of the boys to accept the girls and the girls wanting to be treated equally. I didn’t see the girls getting preferential treatment. In fact, on several different occasions, when talking to the teachers, just spontaneously the teachers would start talking about the female students, indicating they were problems because they had attitudes. I felt the teachers had developed real negative opinions about some of the female students. They described the girls as always wanting to do things that they felt the boys should do and they would say to the girls, “that’s not for you to do.” The bottom line was the girls were given the impression of, “why are you in this shop, you must only be in here to meet with the boys, and you’re not really interested in making a career.” The girls would report that when they asked for a job they wouldn’t be given it or when they would be given a job they would be immediately told that, “They can’t do it, that they were incompetent and I’ll have to get a boy to fix it for you.” Some of the girls were able to handle that but some of the girls repeatedly complained about it and we mostly got this information through the non-traditional group meetings. The students were able, in a safe environment, to voice their opinions, and then we could do some follow-up from that.

2. What kind of intervention was done by the administration in these situations?

A couple years in a row, as the affirmative action officer, at the end of the year I wrote notes to the building administrators advising them of my observations throughout the year and indicating that this was a growing problem.

Q: When you say “your observations,” was it other than what you heard from the female students and the teachers in there, or was it as a result of you actually going down into the shop areas and seeing it?

A: It was never direct observation, it was always reported to me by the students and teachers. I never witnessed anything myself.

Q: Basically then, intervention was this non-traditional group that meets?

A: It wasn't even geared as an intervention. It was something that was going on anyway as a support for the non-traditional placements in our school.

Q: Were you able to troubleshoot any of the problems with the kids in that particular shop?

A: Yes, what we did was, the beginning of the next year we had ah...It was interesting that while the kids were complaining, the teachers were bringing issues, saying they say it as a problem. They asked for the affirmative action officer to come down and do sessions in the shop. We did that.

Q: When you say "we" who do you mean?

A: Myself and Diane Bossert (guidance counselor). So we had both a male and female doing the sessions. We presented, as we had in other shops, showed a video that demonstrated "sending out the right signals," and had them involved in an activity sheet afterwards. We handed out information pamphlets. The kids were somewhat resistant. The boys didn't accept it. Both sexes were very resistant to that. It was very obvious tous, when we were down there, the three girls in the shop, were very isolated. There were fifteen kids in the shop and the three girls sat way, away from the rest of the student body. It was very clear that they were not considered part of the whole group. Shortly after that is when there was a grievance filed by some of the girls, and we went through that whole process. That often happens when you do an intervention/prevention thing. As an awareness, it often empowers the kids to then make reports. So, the whole idea of doing interventions and going down there was to...the ideal situation would be to do it routinely, before anything happens, rather than reactive. It's just a very time consuming thing.

Q: As far as you know, were any steps taken by the administration with the teachers and their behavior in that area?

A: I know teachers were talked to. I know the administration had advised me that they had spoken to the teachers. There was definitely involvement when there was a grievance filed. Where we had to deal with that issue directly. It wasn't a very positive experience.

Q: Did any of the girls drop out of that shop? You said it started in 1995, we're in 1999. To your knowledge, the three girls that you're talking about, are they still in that shop today, or did they change shops.

A: To my knowledge, the two girls that brought the grievance are still in school here and are still in the shop.

Q: Have we had more girls enter this shop?



A: This year, I'm not sure how many girls have entered this shop, but I know there are more girls in this shop. But, the other girls have moved on to the next level.

3. What are the strongest gender-equity issues in the academic areas? If any.

I really don't see problems in the academic areas. I think the teachers are all pretty well equipped to deal with that. I think there is sufficient splits. Rarely, we've had one girl in a class of fifteen boys and usually someone brings it to someone's attention if the girl is uncomfortable adjustments have been made. The biggest problem is probably just peer to peer, boyfriend/girlfriend stuff. The confusion between flirting and harassment between the kids. In terms of the teachers, in academic things, I don't think we've ever gotten complaints of teachers favoring either sex. I've never had that. Most of the things have been an incident the teachers have reported of some kind of offensive behavior.

4. What problems have continued to arise from year to year?

The biggest thing is from peer to peer, harassment of some kind, where the confusing messages between kids cause problems.

Q: Do you think the problems are more equal male to female/female to male, or do you think problems are more sided from the boys to the girls?

A: When I see what happens that boys do to girls and girls do to boys, I think it's about even. When a boy gets written up for something his complaint is, "you should see what the girls was doing." A boy may get accused of patting a girl on the rear end, but the boy will say, "You gotta see the girls come up and grab us in the crouch." That's a big thing that the girls do now. Boys are far more reluctant to report that. I've always thought there has been much more incidence of unreported female aggression against the boys, then boys against the girls. I think there is a higher level of aggressive activity on both sexes now.

5. Where have you seen improvements being made as far as gender-equity/gender-bias issues within the goings on in our school throughout the years?

There is a general, greater acceptance of non-traditional kids. I see that in places like building trades. There are several girls in there who are doing very, very well, and when I talk to the teacher, I don't get a difference between the girls and boys. They just as easily report how well a girl is doing as they do a boy. They seem very proud of that. I've seen that in a couple of other shops. When boys go to cosmetology things have been fine.

Q: Do you see the problems that come with adolescence and trying to find their own identity, finding their own place, getting along with peers, Do you see their problems with each other lessening or being heightened?

A: I think, right now being a teenager is so difficult because of all the mixed messages. When kids get called in to discuss something, they are often truly bewildered. They just can't believe that what they've done might be wrong. They've gotten different messages from media, from what they've seen in their families, from the local town in which they live. They just cannot believe that this is wrong, I can't say this kind of stuff. What kind of world is this. They really are in shock about this. They really can't believe it's not OK to tease. What they would consider flirting, they have little knowledge of what another person might be feeling. I think that's a real indication of lack of empathy that kids have in general. They don't seem to be taught that. They don't seem to have that. They just can't understand that they're insulting someone or being offensive. "So what, I was only kidding," is the standard response. They have no awareness that they might really be offending somebody.

6. What programs, if any, has the district provided to students and staff on gender equity?

We've had several inservices. We have the non-traditional group. We have a yearly freshmen's women's conference.

Q: Do they have anything for the males.

A: No, there has never been anything for the boys.

Q: Given what we know about boys and their reluctance to talk about their feelings or experiences of females harassing them, if you had to develop a program for the boys what kind of program would it be?

A: I would set up a career program where boys could explore different careers and then throw in non-traditional placements and have other people come in or have males in non-traditional placements come in, who could show that it's OK to be in Cosmetology, it's OK to be in Horticulture, as part of a bigger program as part of career exploration.

Q: Do you have anything that might be of use to me in developing my research?

A: In every course proficiency there is a section on gender equity that is supposed to be woven into every curriculum as much as the teacher can. It's in the content core standards, but I know in the proficiencies we have, shop included, the shop teachers are specifically given a gender equity curriculum they are supposed to introduce. So, I think it's suppose to be on their minds all the time. It's one of those, take advantage of it when you can. I think for the majority of shop teachers, it is on their minds. Where the problems have been, it's been the individual, not the system. The system itself is pretty equitable.

Q: The difficult part in my study here and putting this thesis together is that I have to take a different perspective because I was going to do some sort of intervention with the two teachers that were causing the problems in the shop we talked about. Since the two teachers have retired and we hired a new, younger man, how have the problems lessened?

A: There have been no reports. I don't know if he has had any fallout from previous years. It's possible the students that were heavily involved had moved on to the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. I don't know if he has any left over affects from the previous year.

Q: Do you think the age of the shop teachers, in this instance, with all the problems we had down there, had to do with their attitude towards females.

A: I think the older the person in general, the less likely they are to be accepting of the new laws and regulations and new attitudes. What was totally acceptable for someone, who is 60 now when they were 20, is what was standard before the civil rights act. Law of the land was discrimination in all areas and that was still legal, toward females even more so. I think you have to be a pretty open older person to accept that and you have to work at reeducating. There is a great resistance to change.

# **Teacher Questionnaire**

## **Are You An Equal Opportunity Teacher?**

**Are you as fair to your students as you would like them to be to one another?**

1. Do you call on girls as often as boys?
2. Do you expect girls to solve difficult problems?
3. Do you give girls specific feedback on problem solving techniques?
4. Are you angry with girls when they break the rules, but assume that boys will be boys, and allow them more freedom?
5. Are you afraid that girls may cry if you criticize them?
6. Do you expect girls to be better in reading than in math?
7. Do you read more stories that have male rather than female protagonists?
8. How often do you include female contributions in your studies of math, science, and social studies?
9. Do you compliment girls for their assertiveness or do you resent "pushy" girls?
10. Do you ask for strong students, or just strong boys to move desks?
11. Do you dislike upper elementary girls because they are, in your opinion, too cliquish, or do not accept the challenge to help them through their growth and identity crisis?
12. Do you get angry when boys cry, get their feelings hurt, or act like babies?
13. Do you encourage both males and females to try harder? Are males admonished for not trying hard enough while females are criticized for lack of ability?
14. In class discussions are girls interrupted more often than boys?
15. Do you make as much eye contact with girls as you do with boys?
16. Do you feel that boys are more fun to teach because they're more spontaneous and exciting?
17. Do you bias-free language such as "people" rather than "mankind?"
18. Do you talk as if certain tasks are related to a specific sex? For example "ask your mother to bake cookies" instead of "check with your parents about baking cookies?"
19. Do you emphasize that career choices are just important to girls as for boys?

# Student Survey

Provide the following information: Grade \_\_\_\_ Male or Female (Circle one)

1. What is your Career Major area? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Define gender-equity.

3. Define gender-bias.

4. What does affirmative action mean to you?

## Biographical Data

Name	Rose Mary Judge
High School	Sterling Regional High School Stratford, NJ
Undergraduate	Bachelor of Arts Special Education Glassboro State College Glassboro, NJ
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