

**The Impact of Mentoring Relationships and Influences on the Career of Women  
Superintendents of Alabama**

by

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## Abstract

Women make up the majority of personnel in today's school systems yet few hold the highest position of superintendent. According to the Digest of Education Statistics, in 2001, 79 percent of all public school teachers nationally were female. Today, 80 percent of Alabama's teachers are female (Alabama Education Quick Facts 2008). However, there are still a disproportionate number of women superintendents. Glass, Bjork, and Brunner (2000) reported the number of female superintendents increased from 6.6 percent in 1992 to 13.2 percent in 2000. Today the nation's 14,000-odd district superintendents are overwhelmingly white and male with only 15 percent being women (Gewertz, 2006). However, in comparison to the number of women who begin their careers in education, there is still a wide disparity between the percentage in the ranks and the percentage who are leading a school as superintendents (Grogan, 1994; Kamler, 2006).

This purpose of this study was to examine the career and psychosocial mentoring functions on the career development of women superintendents currently serving in Alabama. A researcher developed survey instrument and demographic questionnaire were used to measure career and psychosocial mentoring functions. A population of 28 (N=28) female superintendents/assistant superintendents participated in study.

Descriptive data summarized the demographic characteristics of the most significant mentor of the superintendents who participated. The results of an ANOVA to ascertain differences in career and psychosocial mentoring functions means was conducted. The results of the ANOVA showed a statistically significant relationship among all functions of career and psychosocial mentoring. However, a one-way ANOVA for gender indicated that there was no statistically significant relationship between influences of male and female mentors on the career and psychosocial mentoring functions. Hence, the implication from the results suggests that the career and psychosocial mentoring functions do have a significant influence on the career of women superintendents of Alabama.

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## CHAPTER I Introduction

This chapter contains an overview of the study. It includes an introduction to this study, statement of the problem, purpose of the research, research questions, significance of the study, assumptions of the study, limitations of the study, definition of terms, and organization of the study.

Women make up the majority of personnel in today's school systems yet few hold the highest position of superintendent. According to the Digest of Education Statistics, in 2001, 79 percent of all public school teachers nationally were female. Today, 80 percent of Alabama's teachers are female (Alabama Education Quick Facts 2008). However, there are still a disproportionate number of women superintendents. Glass, Bjork, and Brunner (2000) reported the number of female superintendents increased from 6.6 percent in 1992 to 13.2 percent in 2000. Today the nation's 14,000-odd district superintendents are overwhelmingly white and male with only 15 percent being women (Gewertz, 2006). In Alabama, of the 133 superintendents, 22 percent are women (State Department of Education, 2009). However, in comparison to the number of women who begin their careers in education, there is still a wide disparity between the percentage in the ranks and the percentage who are leading a school as superintendent (Grogan, 1994; Kamler, 2006). One of the reasons for the lack of women in upper level administration is

that there is a lack of mentoring, formal or informal, for women to advance in their careers to aspire to the position of school superintendent. Grogan (2000) believes the need for increased knowledge and skills to help them make sense of the vast amounts of information in the position of superintendent is another important concern of the 21<sup>st</sup> century leader. Mentoring becomes even more important to provide guidance and support for women who aspire to this position.

Mentoring relationships have become increasingly popular in teacher education and school administrator development (Daresh, 2004). The current popularity of mentoring reflects a confluence of interests among jobholders in pursuit of career success and organizations in search of an effective mechanism for developing and retaining employees (Moberg and Velasquez, 2004).

There are many other definitions of mentoring. According to Peper (1994) it is a slippery concept and even more difficult to ascertain whether a person is doing mentoring or not.

A historical use of the word mentor dates back to Greek mythology in Homer's *Odyssey*. According to Colley (2002), this epic poem from Ancient Greece is thought to be the original source for the concept of mentoring. "Mentor" was a teacher and friend of Odysseus who was entrusted to care for his son Telemachus while he fought in the Trojan War. "Mentor" is described as nurturing, supporting, protecting and a role model. This story is used to communicate a particular definition of a practice, mentoring. It places emphasis on the ways a mentor provides support and guidance for the protégé (Daresh, 2004). Today, mentoring is often defined as a process in which a more experienced

person supports and aids a less experienced person in his/her professional or personal growth (Kiltz, Danzig, and Szecsy, 2004).

Mentoring and mentoring relationships are important in any profession (Glass, Bjork and Brunner, 2000). It has been considered one of the salient factors in academic and career success of leaders (Patton and Harper, 2003). Mentoring is viewed as a co-learning opportunity where both mentee and mentor gain valuable insight into their own teaching and learning philosophies (English, 1999; Jones and Pauley, 2003; Mason and Bailey, 2003; Zachary, 2000). In Steven Covey's *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* (1989), Habit 4 says to create a "Win/Win situation." A win/win situation is one in which there is mutual benefits to all involved. "Win/win is based on the paradigm that there is plenty for everyone, that one person's success is not achieved at the expense or exclusion of the success of others" (p. 206). An effective mentoring program creates such a situation.

Mentoring programs can provide several benefits to both mentee and mentor. For the mentee, the obvious benefits are career related. "Mentees tend to advance more quickly in their careers and express positive psychological coping skills" (McDowell-Long, 2004). Being involved in an effective mentoring program helps the mentee build self confidence and self-awareness. As confidence builds the mentee can take on more responsibility and assume more leadership roles with less fear of failure. It allows the mentee the chance to receive constructive criticism and examine areas for improvement.

Another benefit that can be gained from mentoring relationships is the development of networking skills and building a networking base. It is important to

know who can provide support and expertise in different areas as the mentee begins to build their career. Building a networking base can help in providing resources, community support and may provide just another listening ear.

For the mentor, mentoring provides an opportunity for renewal and regeneration (Zachary, 2000). According to Covey (1989) there are four dimensions of renewal: physical, spiritual, mental and social/emotional. The physical dimension involves caring for your body. This includes eating the right foods, exercising, and getting enough rest and relaxation. The spiritual dimension is your commitment to the things you value. It is the private areas of your life that you draw inspiration and peace; usually through prayer, meditation or simply reflection. The mental dimension involves keeping your mind challenged. It may be to continue your education, read a good book or journaling. The idea is that you want to keep your mind sharp. The final dimension of renewal as described by Covey is the social/emotional dimension. The social/emotional dimension is what gives you peace of mind. It is centered on your ability to be a leader through communication and collaboration. Through this dimension you grow as a professional. An effective mentoring program can provide this.

There are also numerous studies on mentoring as an accepted and vital part of the developmental process in many professional fields (Conyers, 2004; Daresh, 2004; McDowell-Long, 2004) as well as the benefits to both mentor and mentee. Still, there is limited research on the influences and benefits of mentoring relationships on the effects on the career development of neophyte administrative leaders, especially women (McDowell-Long, 2004; Walker, 2006). As a female administrator, the issue of

mentoring relationships for women in educational leadership is particularly important to me as well as others who aspire to top-level administrative positions in education.

### Statement of the Problem

Women are still under represented in gaining the highest leadership position of superintendent. Skrla (2000) said that the US public school superintendency is understood to be a man's role, and women who inhabit this role will necessarily have difficulties caused by their femininity. This is particularly problematic for minority women. The lack of minority role models has been partially blamed for the lack of diversity in certain communities and professions (McDowell-Long, 2004).

Bova (2000) studied the mentoring experiences of black women and found that it was difficult for women to obtain traditional mentoring in their organizations. Of the participants, 71 percent were mentored by white men and only 29 percent were mentored by white women. Although mentoring was provided, the women reported that they received little psychological support that they needed to advance their careers.

Mahitivanichcha (2006) cite the demands of work and family as another reason for the lack of female superintendents. In the 2000 study of the American School Superintendents, 13 percent of women reported role conflicts between caregiver for their families and the time demands associated with the superintendency. This conflict continues to be a problem for women's career advancement no matter what the profession. More information is needed on the mentoring of women who seek to become superintendents. This study investigated the effects and influences of mentoring

functions on the career development of women who are superintendents so that the benefits are known for those who aspire to that position.

### Purpose of the Research

This purpose of this study was to examine the career and psychosocial mentoring functions on the career development of women superintendents currently serving in Alabama. It explored both informal and formal mentoring relationships and in particular the way these relationships serve as effective tools on their position attainment and career development. Although more is known about the nature of mentoring benefits, less is known about the nature of those mentoring relationships that women experience. Specifically, what structure of mentoring do women tend to experience and who are their mentors? (Packard, Walsh and Seidenberg, 2004). This study contributes to the small body of literature on mentoring of women, especially those in the position of superintendent.

### Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

- (a) To what extent have women superintendents of Alabama been mentored?
- (b) To what extent have career mentoring functions influenced the career advancement of women superintendents in Alabama?
- (c) To what extent have psychosocial mentoring functions influenced the career advancement of women superintendents in Alabama?

## Significance of the Study

In the 2000 study conducted by Glass, Bjork, and Brunner (2000) which looked at the State of the American School Superintendency, the percent of women superintendents who indicated they were assisted by a mentor in their own career development was 71 percent. However, because there are so few women superintendents, research is still limited on the affects of mentoring for women in pursuant of their career aspirations.

A study done by Enomoto, Gardiner, and Grogan (2000) confirms the importance of women having access to mentors. The women in the study found the mentoring networks and connections especially helpful in creating avenues for them to move into leadership positions. Johnson (2007) also found the benefits of mentoring networks for women as offering guidance and support while integrating professional and personal aspects of their lives.

The significance of this study lies in understanding the importance of mentoring relationships for women who aspire to be superintendents. Further research will contribute to the limited literature on mentoring for women as a means of career development and position attainment.

## Assumptions

1. The participants in the study will be honest, open, and answer truthfully.
2. Additional knowledge will be gained in regards to the value that mentoring contributes to women superintendents.

## Limitations of the Study

The following limitations may have existed:

1. The study was conducted in Alabama and may not be generalized to all states.
2. Collection of the data by surveys alone restricted the quality and quantity of the data collected.
3. The sample size was relatively small, although results may be generalized to the population in the same state.

## Definition of Terms

The following definitions are critical terms used specifically for this study and are provided to enhance or describe terminology. All terms, unless developed by the researcher, have citations.

1. Administration- Those responsible for the supervision of the institution and/or school environment.
2. Career development- The process by which individuals make career choices (Duffy, 2009).
3. Career Mentoring Functions- Those aspects of a relationship that enhance advancement in an organization (Kram, 1985). Career functions include exposure and visibility, sponsorship, protection, coaching, and providing challenging assignments.
4. Formal Mentoring- An institutionalized mentor-protégé arrangement based on assignment to the relationship through one-on-one, group, and cohort formats (Mullen, 2005).
5. Gender- The term that refers to someone as being male or female based on a set of certain characteristics.
6. Informal mentoring- The mentor and mentee “find” each other and guidance and advice is exchanged without any prearranged schedule or agenda (Leslie, Lingard, and Whyte, 2005).



7. Leadership- It is a process of communication that included behaviors, personal characteristics and leadership situations (Howard, 2005).
8. Leadership Styles- Styles are relatively consistent patterns of social interaction that typify leaders as individuals. Leadership styles are not fixed behaviors but encompass a range of behaviors that have a particular meaning or that serve a particular function (Eagly, 2007).
9. Mentee/Protégé- A novice, less skilled or experienced person.
10. Mentor- A person who guides, train and supports a less skilled or experienced person.
11. Mentoring- The relationship between mentors and mentees (Hill and Ragland, 1995).
12. Mentoring Relationships- A confidential relationship between two individuals with the objective of proactively assisting the mentee with career development without providing formal evaluation (Leslie, Lingard, and Whyte, 2005).
13. Psychosocial Mentoring Functions- Those aspects of a relationship that boost an individual's sense of competence, effectiveness in a professional role and identity (Kram, 1985). Psychosocial functions include role modeling, counseling, acceptance and confirmation, and friendship.
14. Superintendent- The chief executive administrator and educational leader for the school system, charged with creating the best possible schools for students based on consensus between community and professional staff (McCabe, 2001)

### Organization of Study

This study is organized into five chapters. The introduction, statement of problem, purpose of the research, research questions, significance of the study, assumptions of the study, limitations, and definition of terms were presented in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 consisted of the review of literature related to (a) leadership and leadership styles, (b) relationship between gender and leadership, (c) definitions of mentoring, (d) mentoring functions and (e) mentoring and the superintendency. Chapter 3 described the

methods used which include the development of the research instrument, sample population, data collection process, and the analysis of the data. Chapter 4 detailed the analyses and findings that resulted from the study. Chapter 5 presented conclusions, implications, and recommendations for practice and future research.

## CHAPTER II

### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the career and psychosocial mentoring functions on the career development of women superintendents and assistant superintendents currently serving in Alabama. It explores the relationship between leadership and gender and informal and formal mentoring relationships, in particular the way these relationships serve as effective tools on their position attainment and career development.

This chapter provides a review of literature that will examine the relationship between mentoring, gender and leadership, and the career and psychosocial mentoring functions. Specifically, the chapter begins with an overview of the many definitions of leadership and the various styles of leadership. The relationship between gender and leadership will be discussed next, with attention to the particular aspects of leadership styles of women. A discussion of career and psychosocial mentoring functions followed by the definition of mentoring, including formal, informal and alternative methods of mentoring will then be examined. Finally, the literature related to mentoring and women in the position of superintendency will be reviewed.

## Definitions of Leadership

“Leadership, both its definition and practice, has been an elusive idea” (Lambert, 2003), and despite its popularity, there is not a scientific term with a formal, standardized definition (Vroom and Jago, 2007). Defining leadership has never been a problem (McEwan, 2003); but with the evolving demands of today’s leaders, that definition is constantly being redefined with administrators rethinking leadership strategies (Barnett, 2004).

According to Bennis (2003) “leadership is first being, then doing”. Everything the leader does reflect what he or she is (p. 132). He contends that leaders come in many sizes and shapes but all have several traits in common. The first quality of leadership is to have a guiding vision. A leader must have a clear idea of what they want to accomplish, both professionally and personally. Passion is another important trait of leadership. The leader must love what he or she does and love doing it. Another basic ingredient of leadership is integrity. Integrity is the basis of trust and it cannot be acquired, but earned. Integrity involves self-knowledge, candor, and maturity. Self-knowledge entails knowing your strengths and weaknesses and especially knowing what you want to do and why you want to do it. Candor is based on honesty of thought and action and is the key to self-knowledge. The final aspect of integrity is maturity. Maturity is first being a follower in order to learn and experience things. The last two basic ingredients of leadership are curiosity and daring. Leaders should wonder about everything, want to learn as much as they can as well as not be afraid to take risks. They learn from their mistakes and move forward with even more confidence in their abilities.

“To become a leader, then, you must become yourself; become the maker of your own life” (p. 46).

Hsieh and Shen (1998) conducted a study that investigated teachers’, principals’, and superintendents’ perceptions of leadership. According to the study, there are seven perspectives of leadership: personality, organizational, political, human resources (subjective), symbolic, managerial (administrative), and moral. The personality perspective views leadership as a function of the leader’s personality. The organizational perspective looks at leadership from the official and structural elements of the organization. Political perspective views the power and conflict of leadership. Human resources perspective focuses on motivating the individual rather than the organization. Symbolic perspective uses imagery, such as in theater. The organization is viewed as a stage and each person plays a role in the organization. Managerial perspective views leadership as a manager who is concerned with maintenance, scheduling and budgets. Finally, the moral perspective develops from a relationship between leaders and is of mutual respect, needs, aspirations and values. In the study, all three groups viewed the moral perspective as important. However, teachers view a good leader from the personality perspective; principals stressed the managerial and personality perspective; and superintendents stressed the political perspective. It appears that the conceptions of leadership changes as teachers are promoted to positions of leadership (p. 118).

Wharton (2005) believes that leadership is an “art” (p. 270). In his speech given at the Global Leadership forum on Governance in Washington, D.C., Wharton discusses the five lessons he has learned over the years in his many diverse leadership positions.

Lesson 1: Rely upon and trust individual talent and initiative. Leaders understand the power of individual talents and give them opportunities to make contributions to the organization. Lesson 2: Treasure and protect a reputation for honesty and integrity. Leaders are people whom followers can trust; a person whom people will have faith. Lesson 3: Value collective wisdom and team effort. Leaders recognize that their decisions are strengthened and implementation is improved by relying on the team. Lesson 4: Nurture future talent and plan succession. Leaders encourage and contribute to the success of those who will provide the next wave of leadership. Lesson 5: Avoid the dangers of the power syndrome and appreciate the virtues of dissent. The power syndrome is an “important danger of leadership and governance” (p. 277). Wharton goes on to say that competence, knowledge and interpersonal skills are important traits to have, yet the ways you use these skills is what makes you a leader.

Leadership is indeed a process; a process of communication (Howard, 2005). Lambert (2003) suggested that the most vital aspect of the definition (of leadership) lies in its relation to learning (p. 425). “Ultimately leadership is defined in terms of the character and quality of the relationship between leader and follower” (Owens, 2004). It is a method of motivating people to work together collaboratively to accomplish great things (Vroom and Jago, 2007). Leaders carry out this process by applying attributes of attitude, belief, value and their perceptions of different leadership styles.

### Styles of Leadership

One complexity in the development of an individual’s leadership style is that there are many variations of styles (Taylor, Martin, Hutchinson and Jinks, 2007).

### *Delegative Leadership*

This style of leadership is also known as “laissez-faire” which means “leave it be.” “Laissez faire leadership describes passive leaders who are reluctant to influence subordinates or give direction” (Deluga, 1990). The leader leaves the faculty alone and let them do their jobs. The team members are given lots of freedom in decision making and are able to analyze the situation and determine what needs to be done with little to no group decision making. “This type of leader is inactive, rather than reactive or proactive” (Hartog, Muijen and Koopman, 1997); it applies avoidance or absence of leadership (Eeden, Cilliers, and Deventer, 2008).

### *Transactional Leadership*

Transactional leadership is grounded in Bandura’s social learning theory (Deluga, 1990). Hartog et al. (1997) denoted that this style of leadership is based on a relationship of a series of exchanges or implicit bargains between leaders and followers. They are likened to bargaining agents where power is exchanged for benefits. “Transactional leaders offer job security, tenure, favorable ratings and more in exchange for support, cooperation, and compliance of followers” (Owen, 2004). According to Vera and Crossan (2004), transactional leaders seek to strengthen an organization’s culture, strategy and structure instead of trying to change it (p. 224). Hartog et al. (1997) and Chan and Chan (2005) found that there are three dimensions of transactional leaders: contingent reinforcement or contingent reward, and two types of management-by-exception. In the first dimension the leader rewards the followers for reaching a certain performance level. Chan and Chan (2005) believe that it may be one of the most direct

ways for followers to work harder in accordance with the mutually agreed performance level (p. 415). Dimensions two and three, management-by-exception is used only when things go wrong and standards are not met. Leaders will avoid giving direction if the old ways work and followers still meet their performance levels. A management-by-exception leader can either be active or passive. An active leader seeks out deviations from the standard procedures and takes action when irregularities occur. However, a passive leader only takes action after the irregularity has occurred. The main difference is that an active leader searches for abnormality whereas the passive leader waits for things to happen (Hartog et al., 1997).

### *Transformational Leadership*

“Transformational leaders typically inspire followers to do more than expect whereas; transactional leaders only motivate followers to do what is expected (Hartog et al., 1997). There is a great deal of trust and confidence placed in the leader’s ability. According to Owens (2004), the idea of transforming leadership was conceptualized by James McGregor Burns and later elaborated by Bernard Bass who came up with four dimensions: charisma, inspiration, individual consideration and intellectual stimulation. Several researchers have expounded on the definitions of these dimensions (Chan and Chan, 2005; Deluga, 1990; Hartog et al., 1997; Masood, Dani, Burns, and Backhouse, 2006; Nielsen, Randall, Yarker and Brenner, 2008; Purvanova, Bobo, and Dzieweczynski, 2006; Vera and Crossan, 2004). Charisma is being able to provide vision and a sense of mission while gaining respect, trust and increasing optimism. “It is a necessary but, not sufficient component of transformational leadership” (Masood et. al.,



p. 942). According to Chan and Chan (2005) leaders with charismatic characteristics are highly admired, respected, trusted and have a high level of self confidence, self esteem and self determination (p. 415). The second dimension of transformation leadership is inspiration. Inspiration is the ability to engage and emotionally communicate a future idealistic state (Deluga, 1990, p. 193). It is concerned with the capacity of the leader to act as a model for subordinates, the communication of a vision and the use of symbols to focus efforts (Hartog et. al., 1997, p. 22). The third dimension of individual consideration is in part mentoring and coaching. It describes how the leader gains power by mentoring and providing continuous feedback. The final dimension is intellectual stimulation. “Intellectual stimulation is often employed to encourage and stimulate followers to think about old problems in new ways and to pay extra effort to their work” (Chan and Chan, 2005). The transformational leader looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower (Owens, 2004).

### *Servant Leadership*

Servant leadership is based on the concept first suggested by Greenleaf (1970; 1991) and subsequently studied by many researchers (Bowman, 2005; Crippen, 2005; Eicher-Catt, 2005; Herman and Marlow, 2005; Neil, Hayward, and Peterson, 2007; Taylor et al., 2007). It is, “first to serve, then to lead” (Crippen, 2005). As an extension of transformational leadership” (Taylor et al., 2007) it involves creating and sustaining relationships around a shared sense of purpose and accountability for the whole (Bowman, 2005). Greenleaf (1991) contends that to be a successful leader who is called

to serve in order to make meaning through service to others is one who is truly caring and giving.

This style of leadership is less structured where employees with good ideas are praised. Servant leaders are effective leaders because they are good communicators, listeners and open to learning. Taylor et al. found this style of leadership requires humility and integrity because leaders must be willing to vacate their leadership position to anyone who has demonstrated superior ability (p. 405).

Transitioning to a culture of servant leadership requires time to develop several key characteristics (Autry, 2001). According to Larry Spears, Executive Director of the Robert K. Greenleaf Center (1991) there are ten attributes of servant leadership: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of others, and building communities. Eicher-Catt (2005) believes that those leaders who adopt these basic traits mean that their overall attitude toward leadership is that of putting the needs of the company and employees first. “The integration of servant leadership principles in practice has less to do with directing other people and more to do with serving their needs and in fostering the use of shared power in an effort to enhance effectiveness in the professional role” (Neill, Hayward, and Peterson, 2007).

According to Crippen (2005), servant leadership is one viable leadership “credo for a present day educational institution” (p. 16), and provides a promise of an effective leadership model.

### *Instructional Leadership*

Sergiovanni (1984, 2001) proposed one of the earliest models of instructional leadership. He first identified five leadership forces: (a) technical, (b) human, (c) educational, (d) symbolic, and (e) cultural.

- A technical leader is derived from sound management techniques. It involves the topics of planning, time management, leadership theories and organizational development.
- The human leader encompasses all the interpersonal aspects of leadership such as communicating, motivating, and facilitating. By integrating these skills the leader provides support, encouragement and growth opportunities.
- An educational leader brings expert professional knowledge and bearings as it relates to teaching effectiveness.
- A symbolic leader models important goals and behaviors. This kind of leader tours the school, visits classrooms, and downplays management concerns in favor of educational ones.
- The cultural leader seeks to define, strengthen, and articulate enduring values, beliefs, and cultural strands that give the school its unique identity.

According to Sergiovanni (2001), the technical and human leadership skills are generic and not unique to schools, but should be present in any organization where strong leadership is evident. It is the remaining leadership forces-educational, symbolic, and

cultural-that is specific to the school setting and constitutes instructional leadership (McEwan, 2003).

McEwan (2003) found that there are seven steps to effective instructional leadership. These steps are neither new nor revolutionary but variations of themes from other research (p. 15).

- Establish, implement, and achieve academic standards. There should be consistent and coherent programs at every grade level or content area. A consistent program has similar outcomes and curriculum; a coherent program is connected from the beginning to the end.
- Be an instructional resource for your staff. “Instructional leaders function as unique amalgams of ombudspersons, reference librarians, and genies-in-a-bottle who are constantly helping faculty to find the solutions they need to solve frustrating and difficult instructional problems” (p. 33). They are resource providers who are consistently finding, allocating and planning, and developing programs.
- Create a school culture and climate conducive to learning. The feelings, beliefs, and values of people are defined as culture. The way things are done and how people feel about their culture is climate.
- Set high expectations for your staff and oneself. It is the most time-consuming and emotionally demanding of any of the steps (p. 83), however, it is important in creating a learning community.

- Develop teacher leaders. A teacher leader is an individual who exhibits leadership skills in the areas of collaboration, mentoring and coaching, and creative problem solving (p. 102). Martin (2007) found that there are layers of teacher leadership throughout the school. These layers are formal: those who are assigned and/or volunteer; and informal: those who lead in the framework of their classrooms (p. 17). Effective instructional leaders recognize the importance of teacher leaders and work to help develop them.
- Develop and maintain positive relationships with students, staff, and parents. Effective leaders care about people; is a good listener, counselor and friend. Building a rapport and having effective human relations skills with all stakeholders is vital to instructional leadership.

Hallinger (2000) found that there are also three dimensions of instructional leadership: defining the school's mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting a positive school-learning climate. These dimensions merge traditional leadership models with evolving trends in educational reform such as empowerment, shared leadership, and organizational learning (p. 330).

- Defining the school's mission. Defining the school's mission consists of framing the school's goals and communicating the school's goals. The principal is responsible for ensuring that the school has clear, measurable goals and that the staff is focused on achieving those goals.

- Managing the instructional program. This dimension focuses on the coordination and control of instruction and curriculum and requires the principal to be deeply engaged in the school's instructional development. Managing the instructional program involves supervising and evaluating instruction, incorporating the curriculum, and monitoring student progress.
- Promoting a positive school learning climate. In this dimension the principals creates a climate of high standards and expectations and a culture of continuous improvement by aligning the school's standards and practices with its mission. Several functions in this dimension include protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, maintaining high visibility, providing incentives for teachers, and providing incentives for learning.

Day, Harris, and Hadfield (2001) found that existing theories of leadership do not adequately explain the current practices of effective leaders. The findings from the study define effective leadership as driven by individual value systems rather than instrumental managerial concerns (p. 26). Effective leaders are people-centered and place emphasis upon improving teaching and learning via high expectations of others.

An instructional leader is someone who can bring people together to work on improving teaching and learning (Enomoto, Gardiner, and Grogan, 2002); and committed to education and to students (p. 212). Daresh (2001) found that instructional leaders have a vision that is derived from ongoing discussions with all interested parties; they make use of participative techniques by allowing teachers to give meaningful input to the

decision making; view enhancement of instruction as their primary responsibility; know what is going on in their schools by being visible in the classrooms and hallways; and finally, find needed resources for the school (p. 45-46).

### Gender and Leadership

Leadership is about bringing the people of an organization together so they will be invested and take ownership in achieving the overall mission of that organization (Gardiner, Enomoto, and Grogan, 2000). “The process by which one becomes a leader and the means by which one exercises leadership are very gendered activities” (Grogan, 1996). However, research suggests that women are most likely to exhibit a transformational style of leadership (Funk, Pankake, and Schroth, 2002; Gardiner, Grogan, and Enomoto, 1999; Gosetti and Rusch, 1995; Grogan, 1996; Sherman, 2005).

Funk, Pankake, and Schroth (2002) described several personal and professional qualities of leadership that were identified in outstanding female superintendents. They include leadership characteristics, essential superintendent’s roles, and qualities of leadership, and critical skills that define female superintendents.

- Leadership characteristics included being brave, courageous, committed, confident, reflective, a risk-taker, trustworthy and passionate.
- Essential leadership roles of the female superintendent were that of analyzer, communicator, nurturer, change agent, and team builder.
- Character, vision, integrity, courage, and passion were qualities that were needed by successful superintendents.

- The critical skills that define female superintendents were visioning, delegating, and developing team support, working effectively with people, and producing meaningful and lasting change.

“Successful female superintendents are knowledgeable, hard-working women who select the right people for positions, motivate them to share a collective vision, model their strong commitment to children, and produce meaningful and lasting change in the schools” (p. 12).

Sherman (2005) conducted a study of women from a southeastern school district who had either participated in the leadership program for aspiring leaders and those who had not participated but wished to. The study revealed that each of the participants described themselves as collaborative leaders by nature and preferred a shared-decision making style of leadership (p. 725).

Coleman (2003) also performed a study of women secondary head teachers and one-third of the male head teachers in England and Wales. The study explored two orthodoxies (“the norm”) of gender and leadership: male and “macho-style”. Findings from the survey found that even though the number of women in leadership roles is growing, leadership is still identified as being a male role. Self-perceptions of both men and women were similar in their management and leadership style. They both see themselves as collaborative and people-centered, but incorporating more “feminine” qualities. “Gender may not be a determinant of style, but it has an influence on the self-perceptions of men and women as leaders, and on their own professional and social experience” (p. 337).



Harris, Ballenger, and Leonard (2004) conducted a study of 159 aspiring principal students enrolled in a university principal program in Texas. The study examined the following four instructional leadership competencies: (a) instructional leadership through curriculum and planning; (b) nurturing, advocating and sustaining the instructional program; (c) staff evaluation and staff development; and (d) instructional leadership through decision-making. Based on the study, female principals were consistently perceived as modeling all four instructional leadership competencies more often than male principals. This is consistent with research that says females spend more time in the classroom teaching than male principals, and tend to be more interested in instruction (Funk et al.2002; Glass et al., 2000; Grogan, 1996; Sherman, 2005).

Grogan (1996) conducted a study of 27 self-identified women who were aspiring to the superintendency. Studies revealed that women administrators brought alternative leadership practices to administration. Moreover, the participants described themselves as possessing strong relational skills such as reflection and being focused on students and instruction as well as providing extra attention to decision making and problem solving (p. 162).

In a study conducted by Morriss, Tin, & Coleman (1999) a sample of female Singaporean secondary school principals were investigated about their perceived leadership styles. The participants primarily emphasized an evolving participatory management style of leadership with emphasis on the feminine attributes of leadership. They shared a desire to “develop a consultative, collaborative work environment, and to foster an open, supportive atmosphere responsive to the needs of the students” (p. 201).

Regan and Brooks (1995) found that there are five feminist attributes of leadership: collaboration, caring, courage, intuition and vision. Feminist attributes of leadership are those primarily practiced by women and learned through gender-specific experiences (p. 5).

- Collaboration. “It is the ability to work in a group, eliciting and offering support to each other, creating a synergistic environment for everyone” (p. 26). Collaboration is reaching out to other people, asking for help, gathering people together and collaborating to get the job done.
- Caring. This involves stepping out of one’s own frame of mind to see other’s point of view. It involves responding to personal and professional growth of others.
- Courage. Courage is the capacity to move ahead into the unknown through testing new ideas; risk taking.
- Intuition. “It is the ability to give equal weight to experience and abstraction, mind and heart” (p. 33).
- Vision. Vision is the ability to formulate and express original ideas, persuading others to consider options in new and different ways” (p. 36). Vision is not a destination, not a product but, rather a process through which the leader enables everyone to see the end results.

Katz (2005) found that there are differences in leadership styles of women in smaller and larger districts. In a study of women superintendents of four Midwest states, the data found that women in larger districts perceive themselves as challenging the

process, inspiring a shared vision, and modeling more than women in smaller districts. Katz (2009) later expounded on the participants differing views about leadership and expounded that some participants found that “soft-touch leadership”, establishing relationships, and not being “into power as men are” was a better description of their leadership styles (p. 5).

In a study performed by Skrla (2000) of three women superintendents who had exited their post within three years from public schools in Texas, found that the participants talked about the difficulty of negotiating a leadership style that would be perceived as effective. The participants said their own leadership style of trusting and collaboration was opposite to the expectations of the authoritarian style of a superintendent (p. 309).

Brunner (2000) conducted a study of 36 female participants, to include superintendents and other practicing professionals from the Northeast, Midwest, and Southeast regions of the United States. The study found that the women felt a direct style of leadership was not acceptable. “Although it seems natural to expect superintendents to be direct and decisive, to have ideas and opinions, and to be assertive, if they showed these characteristics they would be referred to as “bitches” (p. 94). The women found that a more “softer style” of demonstrating warmth and expressiveness was more acceptable.

Eagly (2007) also studied leadership style and its link to leadership effectiveness. The study found that leaders have the freedom to choose the particular ways that they fulfill their leadership roles. However, women are faced with the dilemma of their role as

a women and a leader. “They are expected to be communal because of their expectations inherent in the female gender role, and they are also expected to be agentic because of the expectation inherent in most leader roles” (p. 4).

“The literature on leadership is as plentiful as it is diverse” (Eddy and VanDerLinden, 2006). However, according to Hallinger (2003), “leadership must be conceptualized as a mutual influence process, rather than as a one-way process in which leaders influence others. “Effective leaders respond to the changing needs of their context” (p.346).

### Mentoring

“The purpose of mentoring is to promote the newcomer’s career advancement, educational and personal development (Hayes, 2005). It is an important process of training and preparation that has been linked to successful outcomes (Allen, 1995; Bova, 2000; Colley, 2002; Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001; Gardiner, Tiggemann, Kearns & Marshall, 2007; Glass et al., 2000; Karchar et al., 2006; O’Mahoney, 2003; Sherman, 2005; Warren, 2005). But, there are many other definitions of mentoring. “It is a slippery concept and even more difficult to ascertain whether a person is doing mentoring or not “(Peper, 1994).

“The original meaning of the word mentor refers to a father figure who sponsors, guides, and develops a younger person.” It dates back at least 3000 years to Greek mythology in Homer’s Odyssey. Mentor was a teacher and friend of King Odysseus who was entrusted to care for his son Telemachus while he fought in the Trojan War. During King Odysseus’s absence, Mentor educated and guided Telemachus. “Mentor is

commonly referred to as being a wise and kindly elder, a surrogate parent, a trusted advisor, an educator and guide” (Colley, 2002). The twenty year relationship between Mentor and Telemachus can seldom be duplicated (Crow & Matthews, 1998). Although, today, mentoring is simply a process in which a more experienced person supports and aids a less experienced person in his/her professional or personal growth (Kiltz et al, 2004); and defined in terms of the functions (processes) performed by the mentor (Colley, 2002; Young and Wright, 2001).

#### *Characteristics of mentors*

“The road to success is often paved by a good mentor” (Kay, Hagen, and Parker, 2009). Characteristics of good mentors are many; however, the following literature defines the most common and effective.

According to Hayes (2005), characteristics that are necessary for good mentors are willingness to commit and invest time and resources; teaching ability; willingness to share knowledge, interest, values and beliefs; openness to communication and friendship; offering feedback in a positive way and providing a safe environment that encourages growth. Most importantly is being able to provide the novice leader with career guidance and being a competent, confident role model.

McDowell-Long (2004) identify personality traits that promote strong interpersonal relationship as those of a good mentor. Good mentors are also friendly, approachable, understanding and patient. Those that are honest, respectful, dedicated, compassionate and acting with integrity are considered the most effective. In addition to those interpersonal skills, another important characteristic are those of expertise in

teaching skills, professional skills, organizational and communication skills as well as self-confidence.

Leslie, Lingard, and Whyte (2005) found that mentors should be a “good match” in terms of practice, vision, and personality. A good mentor should be able to provide a “broad perspective while prioritizing the junior’s best interest” (p. 694). Trustworthy, nonjudgmental, being accessible, and reliable all other important characteristics of good mentors described by the author.

Johnson (2007) believes a competent mentor is someone who has the presence of virtue, ability and acquired skills and integrates these characteristics into the mentoring relationship. He highlights the following three characteristics of a competent mentor: integrity, caring, and prudence. Integrity is demonstrated through honesty and consistency in behaviors throughout different situations. Excellent mentors respect privacy and hold conversations in the strictest of confidence. Caring is demonstrated through a pattern of respect and sensitivity to others’ needs and welfare. It cannot easily be manufactured and protégés are intensely aware of its presence or lack thereof. The final characteristic of a competent mentor according to Johnson (2007) is prudence. “Prudence indicates planfulness, appropriate action and evidence of good decision making” (p. 75).

The literature is diverse in defining the characteristics of mentoring. A synthesis of the literature suggests that a mentor is open to communication, a good listener, role model, is well respected and has a clear vision on goal attainment.

### *Mentor-protégé relationships*

Mentoring relationships have become increasingly popular in teacher education and school administrator development (Daresh, 2004). The current popularity of mentoring reflects a confluence of interests among jobholders in search of career success and organizations in search of an effective mechanism for developing and retaining employees (Moberg and Velasquez, 2004).

Mentor-protégé relationships are based on several fundamental skills that effective mentors need to exhibit (Daresh, 2001). These skills include: listening to others, treating others with respect, facilitating team membership, developing informal relationships, recognizing and responding to individual differences, and demonstrating a willingness to learn from others (p. 70).

Lee, Theoharis, Fitzpatrick, Kim, Liss, Nix-Williams, Griswold & Walther-Thomas (2006) suggest several ways to strengthen mentoring relationships.

- Both mentor and protégé should prepare to be in the mentoring relationship. The mentor should think about traits of other successful relationships with colleagues and build upon them. Protégés should be comfortable asking questions about time management, instructional practices, and professional responsibilities.
- The mentoring relationship should be built upon the sharing of each other's professional philosophy and knowledge. The mentor should share his/her professional vision and the protégé should share his/her professional expectations. Modeling and participating in sharing

opportunities of information, past experiences, and knowledge helps strengthen the mutual relationship.

- Cultivating effective ongoing interpersonal communication such as effective listening is also important. An effective listener is someone who is empathetic and focused on the protégé's interest, needs, and goals.
- The creation and expansion of network support is another way to strengthen mentoring relationships. It is important, although frustrating, to build relationships with others in the school district that can provide access to resources.
- Finally, strive for balance in the relationship. The mentor should provide caring and constructive feedback while the protégé should balance their new job requirements, healthy optimism and problem solving skills.

Research suggests that the forming and sustaining of a solid relationship go through several phases (Bouquillon, Sosik and Lee, 2005; English, 1999; Gardiner et al., 2000; Hayes, 2005; Hill and Ragland, 1995; Kochan and Trimble, 2000; Welch, 1996; Zachary, 2000). These phases include: preparing and developing trust; negotiating roles and responsibilities; implementing and maintaining the relationship, and finally reflection and coming to closure.

Preparation. Creating an effective mentoring relationship begins with preparation. This phase is critical in building and maintaining a solid relationship that will last over time. Formal mentoring programs usually provide some assistance and training prior to assuming the role of mentorship (Zachary, 2000). However, those in



informal relationships may not take the time to prepare to be a mentor or to be mentored. The relationship should begin with a self assessment of strengths and weaknesses (Kochan and Trimble, 2000). This will help in developing professional and personal learning goals. Next, is the sharing of each other's professional philosophy and communicating expectations. Lee, et. al., 2006, suggests that the protégé should create a vision statement of their professional and personal goals while the mentor should reflect on their own personal beliefs. In communicating with each other about their expectations, the relationship becomes more focused. It is imperative that a solid working relationship is established from the start, or the mentoring process runs the risk of being perfunctory and carried out merely as routine (Portner, 1998).

Effective communication is also critical to successful mentoring, just as it is in any other relationship (Zachary, 2000). It is built on supportiveness, effective listening, and trust. An effective listener is one who is able to listen and learn about others interest, needs, and goals (Lee et. al, 2006). Trust is also important in a relationship because it allows both the mentor and protégé to recognize, accept, discuss, and consequently work to improve ineffective practices (Portner, 1998). The development of trust is a critical factor. It is built over time through mutual respect, openness and confidentiality in sharing information and feelings, and support (Zachary, 2000). Building trust is a continuous process and takes time. Without it the relationship will not survive.

Negotiating Roles and Responsibilities. In negotiating the roles and responsibilities of mentoring relationship, both parties agree upon expectations, well-defined goals of the relationship and expected outcomes. Well-defined goals are like the

mission statement of the relationship; they maintain the focus of the relationship and keep it on track (Zachary, 2000). To have well defined goals, you first must begin with goal setting. According to Pritchard, Roth, Jones, Galgay, and Watson (1988) there are two general approaches to setting goals. The first is targeted goal setting. Targeted goal setting involves setting goals for a specific aspect of the job that needs improvement. Building better community and/or school relationships will fall under this category. The second approach is overall goal setting. The emphasis here is to improve the protégés overall performance. The goals and objectives agreed upon by protégé and mentor should be challenging, yet attainable. Jung (2007) says the guide to the development of quality goals and objectives is through specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely goals (S.M.A.R.T). A specific goal is one that both parties should be able to define as well as know what is being targeted. Measurability allows you to know when you have reached the goal. Looking at the goals and determining if it can be achieved with the resources provided in the time allotted is having attainable, realistic and timely goals.

Mentors, as well as the protégés must also be clear about their role and responsibility. Ground rules are set to ensure effective use of time, accountability and confidentiality. Zachary (2000) acknowledges that there are three levels of accountability: accountability for the relationship, accountability for the learning process and the accountability for the achievement of the learning goals. Discussion between protégé and mentor about these three dynamics of accountability are helpful in establishing a solid mentoring relationship.

Implementing and maintaining the relationship. A key task in implementing and maintaining a solid mentoring relationship is through providing support and creating a learning environment. Zachary (2000) describes a learning environment as a dynamic climate. It encompasses a combination of elements such as behavior, attitudes, physical setting, resources and opportunity. The learning environment should be an environment that provides opportunities to grow, both professionally, and personally. Creating this type of environment ultimately depends on building and maintaining the relationship through respect, trust, and communication.

Reflection and coming to Closure. According to English (1999) mentoring is not a lifelong commitment; rather it is way of working through the challenges of the first year. Coming to closure or ending the relationship is always a difficult task. It is an evolving process (Zachary, 2000). The mentoring relationship may have lasted between six months to two years and transitioning away takes some skill within itself. Protégé and mentor should be reflective of the process, putting new ideas to use and engaging in dialogue about what worked and what did not work (Jones and Pauley, 2003).

### *Mentoring Functions*

Gurvitch, Carson and Beale (2008) believe that Kram's (1985) mentoring framework is the most comprehensive approach to studying and understanding the mentoring relationships. Kram (1985) proposed that there are two basic functions of mentoring: psychosocial and career. Many subsequent researchers acknowledged these areas as basic to the mentoring experience (Bauer, 1999; Bouquillon, Sosik, and Lee, 2005; Bova, 2000; Cox, 2005; Crow and Matthews; 1998; Daresh, 2004, 2001; Davidson

and Foster-Johnson, 2001; Gardiner, Enomoto, and Grogan, 2000; Giddis, 2003; Gurvitch, Carson and Beale, 2008; Hall, 2001; Johnson, 2007; Kamler, 2006; Kay, Hagan, and Parker, 2009; Knouse, 2001; Lund, 2007; McDowell-Long, 2004; Mertz, 2004; Mullen, 2008; Rose, 2005; Tillman and Cochran, 2000; Warren, 2005; Welch, 1996; Wesley, 1997); and contend that the most effective mentoring programs contain elements of both (Lund, 2007).

#### *Career Development Function*

Career functions are those aspects of the relationship that enhance career advancement. They are primarily designed to develop and hone professional knowledge and skill (Johnson, 2007). Examples of career mentoring functions provided to protégés include exposure and visibility, coaching, sponsorship, protection and assigning challenging projects (Kram, 1985).

Exposure and Visibility. This function involves providing assignments and/or responsibilities where the protégé will be able to develop a relationship with key people in the organization. The goal is to make the protégé visible in positive ways (Johnson, 2007). Exposure and visibility is beneficial to the protégé because it gives key people in the organization a chance to see the protégés potential for career advancement. “Mentors use their networks and reputations to support and promote their protégés for advancement, sharing power and influence in the process” (Mertz, 2004). Enomoto, Gardiner, and Grogan’s (2000) study of the mentoring relationships of eighteen women in educational administration found the participants expressed the need to gain access to

networks and organization through their mentor by opening doors as an important factor of the mentoring relationship.

Coaching. This function helps a protégé understand the political dynamics of an organization while helping to achieve his or her potential. Mentors provide advice on the requirements of the job as well as sharing ideas and providing feedback after presentations.

Sponsorship. According to Kram (1985) sponsorship is the most frequently observed function. It involves the mentor providing public support, recommendations, nominations and endorsements on behalf of the protégé for promotions or other advancements and advancing their interests and ambitions in the organization (Johnson, 2007; Mertz, 2004). In a study conducted by Allen (1995) of fifty-two African American women who were enrolled in an administrative certification or working in an administrative field, 50% percent said sponsorships was important to their career success. They felt sponsors helped them to attain their career goals because of their ability to provide access to critical professional resources and networks such as recommending them for senior positions (p. 418).

Protection. As a protector, the mentor provides support by shielding the protégé from untimely or potentially damaging contact. This function involves the mentor's interference when necessary and appropriate.

Assigning Challenging Projects. This function allows the protégé a chance to develop and showcase their skills. They develop technical and managerial skills through work that is challenging, yet encouraging (Kram, 1985; Smith, 2007). According to

Johnson (2007), these assignments may include: (a) submitting and presenting papers at conferences; (b) co-authoring a manuscript for publication; and (c) participating with the mentor as a presenter, teacher, or researcher.

### *Psychosocial Function*

Psychosocial functions are those aspects of the relationship that enhance a sense of identity, effectiveness, and competence. Acceptance and confirmation, counseling, friendship, and role modeling are examples of psychosocial functions (Kram, 1985). The primary objective of these activities is to improve the protégés sense of self and their social relations within their environment (Davidson and Foster-Johnson, 2001). It is the main reason for seeking external mentors (Patton, 2009).

Acceptance and Confirmation. This function allows both mentor and protégé to gain a sense of self from each other. A relationship built upon trust encourages the protégé to take risks and venture into unfamiliar activities.

Counseling. This function enables the individual to discuss internal conflicts with their mentor. The mentors provide a sounding board as well as provide feedback to aid in self exploration.

Friendship. Elements of a friendship between mentor and protégé are more like a teacher, parent, and a good friend. It is characterized by the social interactions that results in mutual liking and understanding about work and events outside of work. In a study conducted by Kamler (2006) of 56 superintendents of Nassau County, the participants noted “friendship” behaviors such as providing encouragement, support, and being open and available as important components of mentoring (p. 311).

Role Modeling. Role modeling is the most reported psychosocial function according to Kram (1985). It is both a conscious and unconscious process where the mentor may not be aware that he or she is providing an example and the protégé may be unaware of the “strength of identification” (p. 33). A role model is someone to whom the protégé can look to or turn for social and emotional support, and affirmation. It literally is someone who models for you the skills and behaviors necessary for successfully inhabiting a certain role (Mason and Bailey 2003; O’ Mahoney, 2003). Its primary focus is on the personal, inner life of the individual (Mertz, 2004). Having a role model provides validation for those entering a new role which is particularly important for traditional outsiders, such as women (Kochan, Spencer and Mathews, 1999).

Research supports the benefits of career and psychosocial mentoring function. In Ehrich, Hansford, and Tennent (2004) a review of 300 research-based articles on mentoring across the disciplines of education, business and medicine, 50% of the studies cited career satisfaction, motivation, and promotion as the positive outcomes from mentor-protégé relationships. In the field of education, 35% of the studies reported positive outcomes as a result of mentoring.

#### *Types of Mentoring Relationships*

The relationship of mentoring can vary from a more structured program to one of alternative methods. However, Kay, Hagan, and Parker (2009) argue that formal and informal, the two most popular forms of mentorship are distinguished along three dimensions: initiation, structure, and process. These dimensions explain the types of relationships and the duration of these relationships.

### *Formal Mentoring*

Formal mentoring programs differ greatly in nature, focus, and outcomes (Ehrich et al., 2004). “It is only in the last two decades that mentoring has found a more formal role in the teacher-development continuum” (Bartell, 2005). According to Mullen (2005), formal mentoring is an institutionalized mentor-protégé arrangement based on assignments to the relationship through one-on-one, and cohort formats (p. 25).

Research conducted by Bloom and Krivetz (2001) explored the New Teacher Center at the University of California Santa Cruz where experienced and new administrators gather to discuss creating better mentoring opportunities. One concept that came from these meetings is the development of a mentor/apprentice agreement. Both parties agreed to share outcomes with defined roles and responsibilities. They found when experienced administrators build relationships and focus on cultivating talents within their own system, the program excels.

Pence (1995) conducted a survey of 417 administrators of Oregon’s School Administrators about mentoring relationships. Based on the study, she formulated several considerations for initiating a formal mentoring program.

- Establish a plan for the program. Decide who should be involved in the program and develop the program’s purpose.
- Develop goals and objectives. There should be structured guidelines to help both mentor and protégé plan their time together.



- Identify mentors and protégés. Establish criteria for selecting mentors and protégés. It is highly recommended that the matches be based on voluntary participation.
- Conduct an orientation for mentors and protégés. An orientation should focus on program responsibilities and expectations.
- Provide resources for the program. Due to limited resources it may be an option to use retired administrators as mentors. Planning for the use of these resources is important.
- Develop a system for monitoring all programs. There should be some type of reporting back to the program directors of the successes and failures of the mentoring relationship. Mid-year reports and periodic group meetings will allow mentors and protégés a chance to share ideas and discuss concerns.
- Develop an evaluation process. To determine the outcomes of the mentoring relationship, it is imperative that mentors and protégés agree on ways to evaluate the relationship effectiveness.

### *Informal Mentoring*

Informal mentoring is a mentor-protégé relationship that is spontaneous and self-directed, not managed, structured, or officially recognized (Mullen, 2005, p.25). Cox (2005) calls it “coincidence and developed capability” (p. 410). The relationship usually develops without formal pairing or organizational incentives and is particularly important

in organizations that do not have formal mentoring programs (Hu, Thomas, and Lance, 2008).

Bova (2000) found that the women participants of his study indicated that mentoring was very important to their career development. However, they also indicated that it was difficult for them to obtain traditional (formal) mentoring. They indicated that their mentoring relationship focused more on aspects of career development and much of their psychosocial support came from other people in their lives (p. 10).

In a study conducted by Gurvitch, Carson, and Beale (2008) of mentoring relationships within three teacher education doctoral programs, they found that informal mentors are just as valuable as formal mentors. “Parents, family members and friends may not always understand the technical aspects of the student’s specific doctoral program experiences, but they can still be solicited for words of encouragement, advice and counseling” (p. 258).

Informal mentoring can also come in the form of family support. In Henry’s (1997) study of one superintendent, the strongest support came from the participant husband, the board president and the middle school principal; all of whom she considered isolated like herself. Although, not a form of mentoring, the support from these people help to ease the separation. As the participant said, “you really have to face the fact that it’s going to take a good two years of being pretty isolated until you begin to establish other friends or a support base within the community” (p. 45).

### *Other Types of Mentoring*

Traditional mentoring falls short of fulfilling the deeper, multiple demands required for professional development (Mullen, Whatley, and Kealy, 2000). Zachary (2005) believes the practice of mentoring has developed to the point where conventional one-to-one mentoring is only one item on a menu of organizational menu options. Research suggests several alternative approaches to mentoring for professional learning and development. These include e-mentoring (Bierema and Merriam, 2002; Goldman, 1997; Karcher, Kuperminc, Portwood, Sipe, and Taylor, 2006; Kealy & Mullen, 2003; Mueller, 2004; Muller, 1997; Single and Mueller, 1999); and collaborative-mentoring (Kochan and Trimble, 2000; Mullen, 2000).

E-mentoring. With the widespread availability of the Internet and the World Wide Web in the 1990s, mentoring programs went “virtual” (Mueller, 2004). “In this age of the Internet, innovative educators are combining the concept of mentoring with the reach and convenience of new telecommunications technology” (Goldman, 1997). Virtual mentoring, or e-mentoring, is one of the newest concepts to come forward and offer many benefits over traditional mentoring.

Single & Mueller (1999) defines e-mentoring as a computer-mediated relationship that is established between a mentor and a protégé, primarily using electronic communications. Bierema & Merriam (2002) characterizes e-mentoring as the use of email or computer generated conferencing system to support a mentoring relationship when a face-to-face relationship would be impractical. According to Knouse (2001) virtual mentoring is an alternative to personal mentoring that uses the resources and

accessibility of the Internet as a mean of mentoring. “E-mentoring need not be bound by local or national culture, a factor that can be both beneficial and detrimental” (Bierema and Merriam, 2002, p. 219).

One of the advantages of e-mentoring is the flexibility. The asynchronous nature of email allows mentors to respond at their convenience. There is immediate access to vast amounts of information (Knouse, 2001). Individuals can send email at anytime of the day or night, seven days a week (Wah, 2000). The flexibility of e-mentoring also allows for participants to write reflective responses. According to Single & Muller (1999), using email allows for the construction of attentively written messages without the pressure of immediately responding.

Another advantage of e-mentoring is that protégés will have access to a wider variety of mentors. Communicating via email, chat room or list serve breaks down the barriers of geography and allows more people to be mentors who would otherwise not participate (Muller, 1997), and opens the possibility for relationships that cross boundaries of time, geography, and cultures (Bierema and Merriam, 2002, p. 220). In a study conducted by Mullen and Forbes (2000) a female faculty member indicated that she has many meaningful relationships and collaborations with faculty at other universities via email (p. 38).

Protégés may be more open to discussing sensitive issues or interpersonal problems with anonymous people through an e-mentoring relationship than with face-to-face contact (Knouse, 2001). People find it easier to talk about areas of concern where there is not fear of rejection or disappointment. It can actually open the door for more

reflective and personal dialogue between mentor and protégé. Bierema and Merriam (2002) say that while technology can be viewed as an impersonal approach, email can promote easier access and perhaps more candid communication that would occur with face-to-face.

A final advantage to e-mentoring is that it is cost effective to the organizations. “Software for emailing and access to chat rooms is already in place” (Muller, 2000). There is no added cost of scheduling time off, printing brochures, extensive training, or travel expenses. Mueller (2004) stated e-mentoring is efficient because a large pool of mentors and protégés can be recruited, matched, coached, and trained continuously via blogs, video, conference calls, or through email.

There are several drawbacks to e-mentoring; one is the potential for miscommunication. According to Mueller (2004) the possibility to deduce meaning from a variety of non-verbal cues can lead to the wrong idea and subsequently miscommunication. It is important to clarify what you write and limit attempts at humor. Purcell (2004) says it is important to point out that email is good for some communication, but not all things. It is good for providing critiques of articles or scheduling meetings. However, handling difficult or sensitive issues may require face-to-face contact.

Computer malfunctions is another drawback of e-mentoring. Technical support is critical given the heavy reliance on technology for communication (Kealy and Mullen, 2003). With computers the question is not “if” but, “when”. Mentors and protégés must have alternative ways to communicate with each other such as telephone or fax (Mueller,

2004). What's important is to accept the technology, or lack thereof, and not let it be a hindrance to a successful mentoring relationship.

One of the most important considerations of e-mentoring is the lack of time to nurture a successful relationship between mentor and protégé. Knouse (2001) contends that the Internet offers few options for direct visible contact. He says that in its present configuration it is largely a "key pad input and monitor output system" (p. 106). Mentors never get a chance to invest the time nor energy to provide worthwhile support and encouragement to protégés (Dickey, 1997). It is also important to consider that "as with any other type of long distance relationship, it can be challenging to build and maintain a long distance mentor-protégé relationship" (Purcell, 2004).

In today's changing organizational cultures, it is important to find new and innovative ways to maintain mentoring relationships. According to Bierema and Merriam (2002) e-mentoring can allow for a new definition of mentoring. It can offer a contemporary method of facilitating learning and mentoring in this technological age (p. 223).

Collaborative-mentoring. Co-mentoring is a relationship that is both reciprocal and mutual. In this form of mentoring, a more equal relationship exists wherein each person contributes to the growth and development of the other (Holmes, Land, & Jinton-Hudson, 2007). It is an opportunity for professionals to be directly involved in each other's learning and to provide feedback while developing through their mentoring relationship (Mullen, 2000).

Kochan and Trimble (2000) found three elements were important in their co-mentoring relationship: collaboration, shared decision making, and systems thinking; adapted from Senge's (1990) components of innovative learning communities. Based on their co-mentoring experience they found that both emerging and established professionals can benefit from mentoring relationships; mentoring relationships can enhance the development of personal and professional collaborative work skills; and mentoring relationships involves overlapping phases that can foster the development of success of the mentoring relationship (p. 27).

“When professional support networks use a collaborative mentoring model, new possibilities become available for human relationship and institutional change” (Mullen, 2000, p. 1). It is important to note that mentoring relationships will undoubtedly increase the likelihood of academic success (Holmes, Land, and Hinton-Hudson, 2007). “A truly effective mentoring program should be designed, developed and implemented in an inclusive and well-resourced manner” (Ewing, Freeman, Barrie, Bell, O'Connor, Waugh, and Sykes, 2008), no matter what type of relationship it is.

In summary, the literature has identified and explored the similarities and differences among a variety of types of mentoring relationships. Although traditional mentoring relationships, formal and informal, are still the most recognized and studied form of mentoring, women utilize a variety of relationships to experience career development and psychosocial support. However, this study focused primarily on the traditional mentoring relationships.

## Mentoring and the Superintendency

Although still greatly underrepresented in the superintendency in comparison with their proportion to teaching, women have made gains in attaining the superintendency in the last decade (Jackson and Shakeshaft, 2003).

In a focus group style study conducted by McClellan, Ivory, and Dominquez (2008) of 50 superintendents from seven states, members found that it was important for them to support each other. Newcomers to the superintendency found it important to be valued for their contributions to the group as well as having opportunities to learn from more experienced superintendents. Group discussions focused on many aspects of the superintendency such as assistance with negotiating contracts, understanding board policies and politics, developing budgets, and working with parents and personnel. Although the participants found it difficult to find time for formal mentoring, an informal system of on-the-job training with peers was more valuable.

Gardiner, Grogan, and Enomoto (1999) conducted a study of women being mentored into educational leadership positions in public schools. It sampled 55 mentors and protégés in Washington, Maryland, and Virginia. The study found that although the women had a mentor who was of the same gender, it was not always possible to find someone with experience in the role to which they were aspiring. One participant said “as I look around there are not many women that are superintendents” (p. 15). The women in the sample feel they needed additional and specific mentoring. They said they often felt inadequate and unprepared as leaders, despite extensive background in teaching and academic preparation (p. 27).



In a study conducted by Gilmour and Kinsella (2009), several dozen female superintendents across New York State suggest that aspiring superintendents find two mentors, one in the field of education and one outside the field of education. This was helpful because you had an expert in the field of education and outside to give support and feedback. Conversely one participant shared three things she learned from failed mentoring experiences. First, forging a mentoring relationship with someone who has similar values and goals is vital, although some priorities may be different. Second, the mentor should be committed to the relationship, especially with their time. Effective relationships are fostered through connections that are made through ongoing communications. Lastly, the relationship is hierarchical. The mentor is in the position of power based on knowledge and experience and the protégé tries to transition that hierarchical relationship once they acquire skills and confidence. “Engaging in a dialogue along the way about the mentoring relationship and what the needs are for both individuals helps to provide a healthier and smoother transition to a new collegial relationship” (p. 43).

### Summary

Brunner (1999) contended that women seeking the superintendency are “crawling through the window of a dream” in order to survey the terrain of the superintendency (p. 8). Mentors and mentoring relationships can greatly shape women’s growth and potential in school leadership. It can boost confidence and develop a sense of connection and identity as a leader (Gardiner et al., p. 34). However, women are left out of these vital mentoring relationships and their exclusion results in a negative cycle whereby women

lacking mentors are less likely to advance and more inclined to leave the practice (Kay, Hagan, and Parker, 2009). According to Alston (2000), women are identified and trained for the principalship; however, encouragement towards the superintendency must be intentional and purposeful (p. 530).

The research on the benefits of mentoring for professional are well documented (Ehrich, Hansford, and Tennent, 2004; Kay, Hagan, and Parker, 2009; Sherman, 2005), yet gaps remain in the literature. This study tackles these shortcomings by providing an in depth literature review addressing the issues surrounding the definition of leadership, leadership styles and its relationship to gender, description of mentoring and its interactions, and finally, mentoring and the superintendency.

Research on women in the superintendency has been limited because there are so few of them; however, even a small sample can prove valuable to the understanding of this selective group (Beekley, 1999). Brunner (1998) considered that research on women superintendents is beneficial to dispel the myth that since women aren't in the position, they aren't able to fulfill the responsibilities of the position

## CHAPTER III Methods

This study explored the impact of mentoring relationships and the influences of those relationships on the career of women superintendents in Alabama. As noted in chapter II, the literature revealed that there is a profusion of research dealing with leadership and mentoring. However, there is limited research on the influences of mentoring relationships, especially for women in the highest leadership position in the field of education, the superintendency.

This chapter provides a discussion of the research methods used in this study. The following areas are discussed, namely: (a) research question, (b) design of the study, (c) instrumentation, (d) identification of the population in the study, (e) data collection and procedures used, (f) data analysis, and (g) summary.

### Research Question

The following research questions guided this study:

- (a) To what extent have women superintendents of Alabama been mentored?
- (b) To what extent have career mentoring functions influenced the career advancement of women superintendents in Alabama?
- (c) To what extent have psychosocial mentoring functions influenced the career advancement of women superintendents in Alabama?

## Research Design

The study focused on determining the impact of mentoring relationships and influences on the career of women superintendents. A survey design was used for this study. The term survey represents a wide category of techniques that use questioning as a strategy to gather information (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). Written forms of surveys are called questionnaires. For the purpose of this study, both survey and questionnaire will be used interchangeably. The surveys were mailed to women superintendents and associate/assistant superintendents of Alabama. The survey is described in full in the following section.

## Instrumentation

A researcher designed survey design was used to conduct this study. The survey instrument was based on the *Career and Psychosocial Mentoring Functions Questionnaire* (Hall, 2001; Wesley, 1997), the *Kinnersley Mentoring Survey* (Kinnersley, 2009), and the *Mentoring Questionnaire* (Giddis, 2003). An independent panel of experts, a pilot study, and statistical analysis were used to substantiate the validity of the instrument.

### *Survey Instrument*

The development of the survey was constructed in two stages. The first stage engaged the expertise of a panel of educational administrators, college professors, and professionals. The panel was responsible for selecting the best statements out of 131 possible statements as they related to the three examined variables: the extent that women superintendents of Alabama have been mentored, the extent that career mentoring

functions have influenced the career advancement of women superintendents, and the extent that psychosocial mentoring functions have influenced the career advancement of women superintendents. After the reviewers returned the instrument, the researcher analyzed the comments and made changes.

The second instrument which was narrowed down to 50 possible statements was again sent to the panel of reviewers to select the best 25 statements for the pilot study. The number of items on the third and final draft totaled 24 items. The instrument was judged to have content validity. The content validity of an instrument is determined by the degree to which a test provides a relevant and representative sample of that content that it is designed to measure (Linn and Gronlund, 2000). The final stage was to administer a pilot study to measure the survey instrument's validity and the instrument's appropriateness.

#### *Pilot Test*

A pilot study was undertaken to develop valid data items for the survey instrument and to test the instrument for reliability and internal consistency with women principals and assistant principals in the Montgomery Public School system.

Piloting the research instrument occurred in the spring 2010, with a selected sample of 20 Montgomery County, AL public School System educational administrators. The educators consisted of elementary, middle/junior high school, and high school female principals and assistant principals. The names and addresses of the individuals were acquired from the Montgomery Public School's directory (2009). An introductory letter, the Mentoring Functions Questionnaire for Superintendents (Appendix B), and a

permission form from the school's Superintendent were sent to Montgomery Public Schools educational administrators. One week was given for the administrators to complete the instrument and return it to the researcher. A follow-up letter was sent to those administrators who had not returned their instrument. The pilot group comprised a selected group of 20 female principals and assistant principals. The participants were selected based on several factors including gender, race, location, grade level and years of experience. The survey asked participants to respond to each of the 20 Likert-type questions and is scored on a 1 to 5 scale that includes the following response: 1=strongly disagreed, 2=disagreed, 3= undecided, 4=agreed and 5=strongly agreed. The objectives for the pilot study measured for internal consistency reliability of the survey, instrument's appropriateness and survey item validity.

Internal consistency is a statistical method that approximates reliability by grouping questions in a questionnaire that measure the same concept (Colosi, 1997). Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient is one method used to compute the correlation values. The normal range for Cronbach's alpha is between 0 and 1. The higher the score (closer to 1), the more reliable the scale and the greater the internal consistency (Gliem, 2003; Santos, 1999). The results from the internal consistency reliability tested yielded a .991 Cronbach's alpha coefficient score.

### *The Main Study*

The final survey, titled, The Mentoring Functions Questionnaire for Superintendents consists of 20 items separated into two sections. Section I poses 4 items related demographics such as mentor age and ethnicity of mentor and protégé. Section II,

mentoring functions profile, consisted of 20 items pertaining to the perceived value of the mentor's helpfulness regarding the career and psychosocial functions of career advancement.

Career functions are those aspects of a relationship that enhance advancement in your career (Kram, 1985). Career functions include exposure and visibility, sponsorship, protection, coaching, and providing challenging assignments.

Psychosocial functions are those characteristics of a relationship that improve an individual's sense of identity, competence and effectiveness in a professional role (Kram, 1985). Psychosocial functions include role modeling, counseling, acceptance and confirmation, and friendship.

#### Population

The purpose of this study was to examine the career and psychosocial mentoring functions on the career development of women superintendents currently serving in Alabama. It explored both informal and formal mentoring relationships and in particular the way these relationships serve as effective tools on their position attainment and career development.

The research population consisted of women superintendents and assistant superintendents in Alabama school districts during the 2009-2010 school year. The Alabama State Department of Education reported 133 superintendents in the state with only 22% being women with twenty-nine assistant superintendents. The population is relatively small so all female superintendents and assistant superintendents were surveyed. Confidentiality was preserved for all school districts and participants sampled.

## Data Collection and Procedures

The names and addresses of female superintendents and assistant superintendents were obtained from the Alabama State Department of Education Directory (2009) an annually updated list of all school district personnel in the state. This document lists all school districts in the state alphabetically by county. The names of all superintendents and assistant superintendents are provided in this document. For the purpose of this study, all female superintendents and assistant superintendents were selected.

Data were collected during 2009-2010 school year, recorded and analyzed by the researcher. An introductory letter (Appendix C), the *Mentoring Functions Questionnaire for Superintendents* (Appendix B), a permission letter from the director of the School Superintendents Association (Appendix D), along with a proposal to conduct the study, was submitted to Auburn University's Institutional Research Board (IRB). Following approval of the IRB (Appendix A), *The Mentoring Functions Questionnaire for Superintendents*, an informational letter explaining the study and ensuring anonymity and a pre addressed stamped envelope was mailed to all female assistant superintendents and superintendents of Alabama. The contact information of the principal investigator was also included. The surveys were coded to ensure confidentiality and that they are returned. The participants were asked to return the instrument to the researcher within two weeks. Return of the survey was taken as informed consent for the researcher to use the data. A follow-up was mailed after two weeks of the initial mail out. All questionnaires were maintained in a secured filing cabinet and destroyed upon completion of the study. Findings were distributed to participants as requested.



## Data Analysis

The data were collected and coded for input into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0. Demographic characteristics were described using descriptive data such as mean scores, maximum and minimum scores and frequency distributions were calculated for data obtained from the Demographic Profile, Section I of the questionnaire. Inferential statistics analysis methods were used to compare group differences using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) tests. A univariate  $F$  test (ANOVA) is a research design used to test claims involving three or more means to determine if significant differences exist between the groups (Bluman, 2004).

The impact of mentors and mentoring, the influences of career mentoring functions, and the influences of psychosocial mentoring functions was also examined to isolate the underlying dimensions of success.

## Summary

This chapter presented the purpose of the study and research questions used to guide the study. In addition, it discussed the population, instrumentation, and data collection techniques. The validity of the instrument was confirmed through the use of an independent panel of experts, a pilot study, and an internal consistency reliability test. Data collection is in compliance with the research guidelines as set by the Auburn University Institutional Research Board. All questionnaires, consent forms, and a copy of the instrument are included in the appendices and attachments sections.

## CHAPTER IV Data Analysis and Results

The introduction, statement of problem, purpose of the research, research questions, significance of the study, assumptions of the study, limitations, and definition of terms were presented in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 consisted of the review of literature related to (a) leadership and leadership styles, (b) relationship between gender and leadership, (c) definitions of mentoring, (d) mentoring functions and (e) mentoring and the superintendency. Chapter 3 described the methods used which include the development of the research instrument, population, data collection process, and the analysis of the data. Chapter 4 detailed the analysis and findings that resulted from the study. Chapter 5 presented conclusions, implications, and recommendations for practice and future research.

### Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. To what extent have women superintendents of Alabama been mentored?
2. To what extent have career mentoring functions influenced the career advancement of women superintendents in Alabama?
3. To what extent have psychosocial mentoring functions influenced the career advancement of women superintendents in Alabama?

## Instrument

A researcher designed survey design was used to conduct this study. The survey instrument was based on the *Career and Psychosocial Mentoring Functions Questionnaire* (Hall, 2001; Wesley, 1997), the *Kinnersley Mentoring Survey* (Kinnersley, 2009), and the *Mentoring Questionnaire* (Giddis, 2003). An independent panel of experts, a pilot study, and statistical analysis were used to substantiate the validity of the instrument. Internal reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha test. The final draft of the survey comprised 20 questions divided by two sections. Section I poses 4 items related demographics such as mentor age and ethnicity of mentor. Section II, mentoring functions profile, consisted of 20 items pertaining to the perceived value of the mentor's helpfulness regarding the career and psychosocial functions on career advancement. The survey asked participants to respond to each of the 20 Likert-type questions and is scored on a 1 to 5 scale that includes the following response: 1=strongly disagreed, 2=disagreed, 3= undecided, 4=agreed and 5=strongly agreed. Tables 1 show the career mentoring functions survey questions and Table 2 shows the psychosocial mentoring functions survey questions participants were asked to respond.

Table 1

*Career Mentoring Functions Survey Questions*

<b>Questionnaire item</b>	<b>Mentoring function</b>
1. Your mentor helped you understand how to accomplish the work objectives of a new position.	Teaching
2. Your mentor suggested specific strategies on how to achieve short and long-range career objectives.	Teaching
3. Your mentor provided you with ongoing performance feedback about challenging assignments.	Coaching
4. Your mentor helped you develop a professional reputation.	Exposure/visibility
5. Your mentor discussed career paths with you.	Coaching
6. Your mentor supported your advancement in the organization through mutual association.	Exposure/visibility
7. Your mentor shared insights about administrators held power and influence within the organization.	Sponsorship
8. Your mentor encouraged you to take courses, seminars and workshops to develop your competence in administration.	Sponsorship
9. Your mentor helped prepare you for positions of greater responsibility by providing leadership experiences.	Assigning challenging tasks

Table 2

*Psychosocial Mentoring Functions Survey Questions*

<b>Questionnaire item</b>	<b>Mentoring function</b>
10. Your mentor displayed a positive attitude which provided a model worthy of emulation.	Role Modeling
11. Your mentor provided support and encouragement as you assumed more responsibility and developed competence.	Acceptance/confirmation
12. Your mentor established a trust level which encouraged you to talk openly about anxieties, fears and ambivalence that distracted from the productive organizational work.	Acceptance/confirmation
13. Your mentor was a person whom you could enjoy informal exchanges about work and non-work experiences.	Friendship

Table 2 (continued)

Questionnaire item	Mentoring function
14. Your mentor exhibited positive values with provided a model worthy of respect.	Role modeling
15. Your mentor served as your sounding board for self-exploration.	Friendship
16. Your mentor helped mold your leadership style.	Role modeling
17. Your mentor accepted and supported you as you attempted to resolve personal concerns.	Counseling
18. Your mentor promoted in you a positive self-image as an emerging administrator.	Role modeling
19. Your mentor served as a confidant with whom you could share doubts and concerns without risking exposure to others in the organization.	Counseling
20. Your mentor established a climate which encouraged independence.	Acceptance/confirmation

#### Demographic Descriptions

Fifty-nine practicing superintendents and assistant superintendents from Alabama were selected as the population. Forty-seven questionnaires were returned. This represents a return rate of 80%. Eighteen superintendents and/or assistant superintendents indicated they had not had been mentored during their educational career representing 38%.

Of the remaining 29 instruments, one superintendent had retired. The data analysis was completed by using the remaining 28 instruments. ( $N=28$  participants). This number represented 60% of the returned instruments. The superintendents and/or assistant superintendents were all women; however their most significant mentor was male (53.6%) and Caucasian (71.4%). Table 3 presents the gender composition of the mentors.

Table 3

*Significant Mentor Gender*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	15	53.6	53.6	53.6
	Female	13	46.4	46.4	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	

N=28

The mentors were composed of a group of 28.6% African American and 71.4% Caucasian. There were no practicing superintendents who had mentors representing Asian, Hispanic or Native American descent. The number of mentors from a specific ethnic group was overwhelmingly skewed in the direction of Caucasian. Table 4 presents the descriptive data on ethnic composition of the mentors.

Table 4

*Race of Mentor*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	AA	8	28.6	28.6	28.6
	Caucasian	20	71.4	71.4	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	

N=28

Analysis of Data

The survey instrument consisted of 20 questions divided by two sections. Section I comprised four questions related to the demographic profile of the mentors and used to answer the first research question. Section II related to two examined variables: career mentoring functions and psychosocial mentoring functions. The mean and standard deviation scores for each variable are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Mean and Standard Deviation scores for Career and Psychosocial Mentoring Functions

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Career Mentoring Functions	4.02	.89
Psychosocial Mentoring Functions	4.51	.56
Overall	4.29	.63
<i>N=28</i>		

*Research question 1*

Research question 1 asked “To what extent have women superintendents of Alabama been mentored?” The results of surveys indicate that twenty-eight of the forty-seven surveys returned (62%) of women superintendents in Alabama have been mentored.

*Research Question 2*

Research question 2 asked, “To what extent have career mentoring functions influenced the career advancement of women superintendents in Alabama?” The results of the ANOVA test (Table 6) indicated a statistically significant difference in means when comparing career means to the overall survey mean ( $p < .01$ ). The strength of the relationship between career means and overall mean scores, as assessed by  $\eta^2$ , was high accounting for 98% of the variance on the dependent variable.

Table 6

*Career means compared with the overall mean*

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Overall * CareerMean	Between Groups	(Combined)	10.646	17	.626	34.630	.000
	Within Groups		.181	10	.018		
	Total		10.827	27			

**Measures of Association**

	Eta	Eta Squared
Overall * CareerMean	.992	.983

*Research Question 3*

Research question 3 asked, “To what extent have psychosocial mentoring functions influenced the career advancement of women superintendents in Alabama?” The results of the ANOVA test (Table 7) indicated a statistically significant difference in means when comparing psychosocial means to the overall survey mean ( $p < .01$ ). The strength of the relationship between psychosocial means and overall mean scores, as assessed by  $\eta^2$ , was high accounting for 82% of the variance on the dependent variable.

Table 7

*Psychosocial means compared with the overall mean*

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Overall * PsychoMean	Between Groups	(Combined)	8.973	12	.748	6.052	.001
	Within Groups		1.853	15	.124		
	Total		10.827	27			



Table 7 (continued)

**Measures of Association**

	Eta	Eta Squared
Overall * PsychoMean	.910	.829

*ANOVA Results*

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistic was used to measure the differences between groups on specific career and psychosocial mentoring functions. ANOVA was conducted to determine if there were significant differences between the career mentoring functions of teaching, coaching, exposure/visibility, sponsorship and assigning challenging tasks and the psychosocial mentoring functions of role modeling, acceptance/confirmation, friendship, and counseling. The level of significance was set at the .05 level. Table 8 presents the results of the one-way analysis of variance for career mentoring functions. Table 9 presents the results of the one-way analysis of variance for psychosocial mentoring functions.

Table 8

*Survey of results of one-way ANOVA for career mentoring functions*

Variable	MSE	F	p	Eta <sup>2</sup>
Teaching	2.55	8.92	.000	.718
Coaching	2.769	28.94	.000	.910
Exposure/Visibility	3.03	20.52	.000	.854
Sponsorship	3.09	23.79	.000	.686
Challenging tasks	4.67	41.04	.000	.877

Findings indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the career mentoring functions of teaching, coaching, exposure/visibility, sponsorship and assigning challenging tasks. Because the overall F test was significant, the strength of the relationship between each function of career means and overall mean scores was assessed by  $\eta^2$ . The  $\eta^2$  of .91 for coaching indicated the strongest relationship between the variance on the dependent variable

Table 9

*Survey of results of one-way ANOVA for psychosocial mentoring functions*

Variable	MSE	F	p	Eta <sup>2</sup>
Role Modeling	1.04	19.02	.000	.869
Accept/confirm	1.51	40.95	.000	.903
Friendship	2.27	34.50	.000	.812
Counseling	1.83	39.97	.000	.874

Findings indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the psychosocial mentoring functions of role modeling, acceptance/confirmation, friendship, and counseling (Table 9). Because the overall F test was significant, the strength of the relationship between each function of psychosocial means and overall mean scores was assessed by  $\eta^2$ . The  $\eta^2$  of .90 for acceptance/confirmation indicated the strongest relationship between the variance on the dependent variable.

A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to evaluate the relationship between gender (male or female) of the mentor and the overall mean scores from the survey instrument (Table 10). The independent variable, gender factor, included two

levels: male and female. The dependent factor was the overall mean scores from the survey that measured career and psychosocial mentoring functions. The ANOVA results for gender, was not significant,  $F(1,26) = 2.27, p = .14$ . The strength of the relationship between gender and overall mean scores, as assessed by  $\eta^2$ , was low accounting for 8% of the variance of the dependent variable. Table 11 reports the means and standard deviations.

Table 10

*Gender ANOVA*

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Overall * Gender	Between Groups	(Combined)	.869	1	.869	2.270	.144
	Within Groups		9.957	26	.383		
	Total		10.827	27			

Table 11

*Mean and Standard Deviation for gender*

Gender	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
male	4.1000	13	.77163
Female	4.4533	15	.44820
Total	4.2893	28	.63324

Summary

This purpose of this study was to examine the career and psychosocial mentoring functions on the career development of women superintendents currently serving in Alabama. This chapter presented the descriptive statistics of the population and the data analysis. Descriptive data presented in this chapter summarized the demographic

characteristics of the superintendents who participated in this study most significant mentor. The chapter also provided the results of an ANOVA to ascertain differences in career and psychosocial mentoring functions means. The results of the ANOVA showed a statistically significant relationship among all functions of career and psychosocial mentoring. However, a one-way ANOVA for gender indicated that there was no statistically significant relationship between influences of male and female mentors on the career and psychosocial mentoring functions. Hence, the implication from the results suggests that the career and psychosocial mentoring functions does have a significant influence on the career of women superintendents of Alabama. Chapter 5 presents a summary for the study and discussion of the findings, conclusion, and implications for future research.

CHAPTER V  
Introduction, Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations  
Introduction

This study examined the career and psychosocial mentoring functions on the career development of women superintendents currently serving in Alabama. It explored both informal and formal mentoring relationships and in particular the way these relationships serve as effective tools on their position attainment and career development. Chapter 1 included an introduction, statement of the problem, purpose, research questions, significance, assumptions and delimitations of the study, definition of terms and organization of study. Research had indicated that Caucasian male superintendents hold the majority of the superintendencies in American public schools; although women make up the majority of personnel in today's school systems. The literature also indicates that the establishment of mentoring relationships would be a strategy that could enable women to advance their career and, in particular accessing the superintendency. However, little is known about the benefits and influences of mentoring relationships of women in advanced administrative positions; therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the effects and influences of mentoring functions on the career development of women superintendents. This study was designed to answer the following questions: (a) to what extent have women superintendents of Alabama been mentored?, (b) to what extent have career mentoring functions influenced the career advancement of women

superintendents in Alabama? and (c) ) to what extent have psychosocial mentoring functions influenced the career advancement of women superintendents in Alabama? Chapter 2 presented the review of the literature. The review presented definitions of leadership, several styles of leadership, and definitions of mentoring to include characteristics, relationships, and mentoring functions. The last section presented a discussion on mentoring and the superintendency.

Chapter 3 presented the methods involved in designing this study. A researcher developed survey instrument was used to measure the career and psychosocial mentoring functions. An independent panel of experts, a pilot study, and statistical analysis were used to substantiate the validity of the instrument. The internal reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha test which yielded a .991 alpha coefficient score. Fifty-nine superintendents and/or assistant superintendents from Alabama school district during the 2009-2010 school year were selected as the population. Forty-seven questionnaires were returned representing an 80% return rate. Eighteen superintendents indicated they had not been mentored and one superintendent had retired. The data analysis was completed using a population of 28 (N=28) superintendents and/or assistant superintendents representing 60% of the returned instruments. The demographics section of the questionnaire was used to gather information on such a race, gender, and ethnicity of the participants' most significant mentor. The next section, mentoring functions profile, consisted of questions pertaining to the perceived value of the mentors' helpfulness regarding the career and psychosocial mentoring functions on career advancement. Chapter 4 presented the results of the data analysis for this study. Chapter 5 will provide

an overview of the study, summary of results, implications, conclusions, and recommendations for further research.

### Summary of Results

The findings for this study examined the demographic descriptions, rating scale responses, and the statistical analysis for superintendents and /or assistant superintendents participating in this study. The testing instrument, a questionnaire, consisted of a four item demographic section and 20 statements that included a five point Likert type scale with which to respond. Data were collected over a one month period.

Question one addressed the extent that female superintendents were mentored. Fifty nine participants were invited to participate in this study with 47 returning the questionnaire and 28 have been mentored in their career (62%). Descriptive data included demographic characteristics, such as gender and ethnicity, of the most significant mentor of the superintendents who participated in this study. Table 2 presented the gender composition of the mentors and Table 3 presented the race of the mentors. The mentors were composed of a group of 28.6% African American and 71.4% Caucasian. There were not practicing superintendents who had mentors representing Asian, Hispanic or Native American decent.

Question two investigated the extent career mentoring functions influenced the career advancement of women superintendents. Question three investigated the extent psychosocial mentoring functions influenced the career advancement of women superintendents. The responses were evaluated according to how the superintendents rated the degree of their mentors' helpfulness on the 20 items on the Mentoring Functions Questionnaire Instrument using a Likert scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly

agree). The results of the ANOVA test (Table 6 and 7) showed a statistically significant relationship ( $p < .01$ ) between the career mean and the overall mean as well as the psychosocial mean and the overall mean.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if there were significant differences between mentor and protégé group scores on the career mentoring functions (presented in Table 8). Findings indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the career mentoring functions of teaching, coaching, exposure/visibility, sponsorship and assigning challenging tasks. Because the overall F test was significant, the strength of the relationship between each function of career means and overall mean scores was assessed by  $\eta^2$  which indicated coaching had the strongest relationship between the variance on the dependent variable.

A one-way ANOVA was also conducted to determine if there were significant differences between mentor and protégé group scores on the psychosocial mentoring functions (presented in Table 9). Findings indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the psychosocial mentoring functions of role modeling, acceptance/confirmation, friendship, and counseling (Table 9). Because the overall F test was significant, the strength of the relationship between each function of psychosocial means and overall mean scores was assessed by  $\eta^2$  which indicated acceptance/confirmation had the strongest relationship between the variance on the dependent variable.

A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to evaluate the relationship between gender (male or female) of the mentor and the overall mean scores from the survey instrument (Table 10 and Table 11). The results indicated that there was no



statistically significant relationship between influences of male and female mentors on the career and psychosocial mentoring functions.

### Implications

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of mentoring relationships and influences on the career of women superintendents of Alabama. The results of this study showed that the career mentoring functions and psychosocial mentoring functions did have a statistically significant impact on the careers of female superintendents. It can be concluded from this study that career mentoring functions, in particularly coaching, and psychosocial mentoring functions, acceptance/confirmation, helped influence the careers development of women superintendents. Findings from this research indicate that mentoring relationships have the potential for individuals to make successful transitions for career advancement. These findings support similar research outcomes who acknowledged the role of the mentor as a significant factor in career development (Enomoto, Gardiner, & Grogan, 2000; Giddis, 2003; Peluchette & Jeanquart, 2000), and psychosocial development (Giddis, 2003; January, 2006). Peluchette and Jeanquart (2000) concluded the linkage to both job and career success can be attributed to mentoring. Their findings indicate that in order to maximize career success, professionals should cultivate mentoring relationships throughout their career. Similar results have also been found in studies identifying the career mentoring function of coaching as an important factor in career advancement. Conyers (2004) and Pardini (2003) cited coaching as an essential component of the mentoring process. They indicated that coaching, as a form of personal and professional development had payoffs beyond the benefits of the mentoring program. It allowed the protégés to “tap into their own resources to create answers, identify and vision the future, and align their goals with

their core values” (Pardini, 2003, p. 9). Other studies support the importance of acceptance/confirmation as one of the most important element of effective mentoring relationships (Godshalk and Sosik, 2000). There study suggested that inspirational motivation promotes independence and enhances critical thinking skills.

Another implication from the results of this study lies in the importance of identifying and assessing the nature of professional and personal growth. Establishing mentoring relationships allows administrators to direct their talents, strengths and skills in helping aspiring leaders maximize their professional potential. Roberts (2000) concluded that mentoring is a helping process, a teaching-learning process, and a career and personal development process. He found that the consequences of mentoring are performance improvement, growth of mentee confidence, increased awareness of their role in the organization and self-actualization (p. 160). By establishing mentoring relationships, administrators pass on knowledge and values and help others with career and psychological support. This type of mutual relationship is beneficial to both mentor and protégé because it increases the likelihood of success.

The assessment of effectiveness for current mentoring programs is another implication that can be made from this study. Mentoring programs and especially relationships should be developed and implemented consistently and systematically and made available to all aspiring and practicing administrators. While research shows informal mentoring relationships provides more career development and psychosocial functions to protégés (Ragins & Cotton, 1999), formal programs provide a more organized avenue for promoting those relationships. The emphasis and importance of a more formal program is more than a simple view of a relationship, it is one that can be

conceptualized as a process. Therefore, the most successful programs should address the major issues of establishing a plan, developing goals and objectives, identifying mentors and protégés, providing resources, and evaluating outcomes (Pence, 1995).

Universities that prepare aspiring leaders should consider building mentoring functions into their programs and encouraging students to continue forming such relationships as they proceed in their careers. Very few educational courses go beyond the introduction of mentoring and the discussion of its importance and really address the dynamics of building mentoring relationships and establishing mentoring programs. The concept of mentoring should be formally endorsed and encouraged by the University, modeled by its leaders and incorporated into all parts of the school's culture and climate. The widest range of career and psychosocial mentoring functions can be possible, if a culture and climate centered on mentoring is established.

Likewise, school systems and principal associations should establish such programs for females to provide support and encourage them to move up to higher level positions. As professional go through different stages of their career, their mentoring needs change. It is important to cultivate the most effective and appropriate mentoring relationship throughout these stages to maximize career success. Professional development programs that encourage women to hone their leadership skills and encourage and expand networking opportunities should be made available to all aspiring and practicing administrators. Long-range goal setting and career planning should be made an important part of this skilled training. Professional associations could also provide the means to develop peer mentors with similar position within the community by providing financial, physical and emotional support.

Current female Superintendents themselves need to become more actively involved in the development, growth and continuance of mentoring programs for newly appointed and aspiring female leaders. This study found women hold 22% of the superintendencies in Alabama with their most significant mentor being male and Caucasian. Other studies also found similar results (Gewertz, 2006; Malone, 2001). Women typically enter higher level administration positions with experiences different from men (Enomoto et al., 2000) and unique to females. Since the pool of potential same gender mentors, role models and confidants are limited; those leaders in higher level administration positions should be more proactive in providing mentoring to aspiring female administrators. It is up to the profession itself to work towards creating a different culture for the induction and mentoring of new administrators (Jacobson, Hickcox, and Stevenson, 1996).

Program evaluation is seldom done in mentoring programs, which is a lost opportunity in terms of program improvement (Kochan, 2002). The Mentoring Functions Questionnaire is an important outcome of this research, which can help to overcome this deficit in program implementation. It provides researchers, program developers, and organizations a meaningful tool to determine program outcomes and foster program improvement. Using the instrument will help these groups to develop a greater understanding of the dynamics of effective mentoring programs and relationships.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

Based upon these findings of this study, several recommendations for further research can be made concerning the establishment of mentoring relationships and the influence of career and psychosocial mentoring functions in the field of education.

Because this study was based on survey, future research using quantitative as well as qualitative measurement procedures would be beneficial to determine the benefits of a mentoring relationship. Further qualitative studies could be conducted to investigate aspects of sociopsychological functions and career aspirations that most fully related to career success. Additionally, program aspects for those involved in these studies could be examined. Several comparative group studies to include the following: comparing groups of same-gender or cross-gender superintendents with various ethnic backgrounds; comparing groups of aspiring superintendents prior to reaching the superintendency; and comparing groups of superintendents involved in formalized mentoring programs to determine if the same or different results are found. This study could be replicated in other states and regions to investigate whether what occurred in Alabama was similar or different than what occurs in other parts of the country.

Many studies confirm the value of mentoring for those wishing to develop or advance their career. It is expected that the findings in this study add to that body of research. By addressing the ways in which mentoring functions can assist the career advancement of women, some insight in the effectiveness and influences of mentors as they support females transitioning into higher level administration positions can be gained.

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APPENDIX A  
IRB Approval Letter



AUBURN  
UNIVERSITY

Office of Research Compliance  
307 Samford Hall  
Auburn University, AL 36849

Telephone: 334-844-5966  
Fax: 334-844-4391  
hsubjec@auburn.edu

March 11, 2010

MEMORANDUM TO: Ms. Yvette Bynum (EFLT)

PROTOCOL TITLE: "The Impact of Mentoring Relationships and Influences on the Career of Women Superintendents of Alabama"

IRB AUTHORIZATION NO: 10-017EP 1002

APPROVAL DATE: February 22, 2010  
EXPIRATION DATE: February 21, 2011

The above referenced protocol was approved by IRB Expedited procedure under 45 CFR 46.110 (Category #7):

"Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies."

You should report to the IRB any proposed changes in the protocol or procedures and any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or others. Please reference the above authorization number in any future correspondence regarding this project.

If you will be unable to file a Final Report on your project before February 21, 2011, you must submit a request for an extension of approval to the IRB no later than January 15, 2011. If your IRB authorization expires and/or you have not received written notice that a request for an extension has been approved prior to February 21, 2011, you must suspend the project immediately and contact the Office of Research Compliance for assistance.

A Final Report will be required to close your IRB project file. You are reminded that you must use copies of the IRB-approved information letter when you consent your participants.

If you have any questions concerning this Board action, please contact the Office of Research Compliance.

Sincerely,

Kathy Jo Ellison, RN, DSN, CIP  
Chair of the Institutional Review Board  
for the Use of Human Subjects in Research

cc: Ms. Sherida Downer  
Dr. Maria Witte



APPENDIX B  
Mentoring Functions Questionnaire

Section I-Demographic Profile

**Directions:**

Please complete all sections of this questionnaire if you have had a mentor. A mentor guides, advises, sponsors, and counsels a less experienced person and helps the individual advance professionally in the organization.

If you have not had a mentor, check NO under question 1, Section 1, and return the questionnaire.

1. Have you ever had a mentor?

Yes

No

2. What is /was the gender of your mentor(s)?

Male

Female

Please respond to the following questions concerning only your most significant mentor.

3. What is/was the gender of your mentor?

Male

Female

4. What is/was the ethnicity of your mentor?

African American

Asian

Caucasian

Hispanic

Native American

Other, Please specify

\_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:**

This section contains statements about mentoring functions. Mentoring functions can be classified as career or psychosocial functions. Career functions enhance advancement in the organization through sponsorship, exposure and visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging assignments. Psychosocial functions enhance an individual's sense of role modeling, acceptance, counseling and friendship.

To the right of each statement, circle the response that best reflects your assessment

1=SD Strongly Disagree

3= U Undecided

5=SA Strongly Agree

2= D Disagree

4= A Agree

- |   | SD | D | U | A | SA |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Your mentor helped you understand how to accomplish the work objectives of a new position.                       | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 2. Your mentor suggested specific strategies on how to achieve short and long-range career objectives.              | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 3. Your mentor provided you with ongoing performance feedback about challenging assignments.                        | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 4. Your mentor helped you develop a professional reputation.  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 5. Your mentor discussed career paths with you.   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 6. Your mentor supported your advancement in the organization through mutual association.                           | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 7. Your mentor shared insights about administrators who held power and influence within the organization.           | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 8. Your mentor encouraged you to take courses, seminars and workshops to develop your competence in administration. | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 9. Your mentor helped prepare you for positions of greater responsibility by providing leadership experiences.      | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |

SD D U A SA

10. Your mentor displayed a positive attitude which provided a model worthy of emulation.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Your mentor provided support and encouragement as you assumed more responsibility and developed competence.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Your mentor established a trust level which encouraged you to talk openly about anxieties, fears and ambivalence that distracted from the productive organizational work.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Your mentor was a person with whom you could enjoy informal exchanges about work and non-work experiences.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Your mentor exhibited positive values which provided a model worthy of respect.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Your mentor served as your sounding board for self-exploration.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Your mentor helped mold your leadership style.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Your mentor accepted and supported you as you attempted to resolve personal concerns.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Your mentor promoted in you a positive self-image as an emerging administrator.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Your mentor served as a confidant with whom you could share doubts and concerns without risking exposure to others in the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Your mentor established a climate which encouraged independence.	1	2	3	4	5

# APPENDIX C

## Participant Information Letter

EDUCATIONAL  
FOUNDATIONS

1856 2006  
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*Sesquicentennial*

LEADERSHIP AND  
TECHNOLOGY

**(NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS AN IRB APPROVAL STAMP WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN APPLIED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)**

### INFORMATION LETTER

for a Research Study entitled

*"The Impact of Mentoring Relationships and Influences on the Career of Women Superintendents of Alabama"*

You are invited to participate in a research study to examine the impact of mentoring relationships and the career and psychosocial mentoring functions of women superintendents of Alabama. The objectives for conducting this study are to demonstrate:

- 1) To what extent have women superintendents of Alabama been mentored?
- 2) To what extent have career mentoring functions influenced the career advancement of women superintendents in Alabama?
- 3) To what extent have psychosocial mentoring functions influenced the career advancement of women superintendents in Alabama?

The study is being conducted by Yvette Bynum, doctoral candidate, under the direction of Dr. Marie Witte, advisor, in the Auburn University Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership and Technology. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a female superintendent or assistant superintendent currently serving in that position in Alabama and are age 19 or older.

If you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire. Your total time commitment will be approximately 10 minutes. The risk associated with participating in this study is breach of confidentiality. To minimize this risk, all data will be kept in secure file cabinets and/or a password protected computer in the home office of the primary investigator.

Although there are no direct benefits to you, if you participate in this study, you can expect to gain knowledge of the benefits of mentoring, forming effective mentoring relationships and how those relationships served in your own career development.

The Auburn University  
Institutional Review Board  
has sponsored this document for use  
from 4/22/06 to 4/22/10  
Protocol # 06-017-0003

*Owing much to the past, Auburn's greater debt is ever to the future.*

4036 Haley Center, Auburn, Alabama 36849-5221; Telephone: 334-844-4460; FAX: 334-844-3072 Page 1 of 2

w w w . a u b u r n . e d u

Any data obtained with this study will remain confidential. We will protect your privacy and the data you provide by keeping it in a secure file cabinets and/or a password protected computer in the home office of the primary investigator. The code list that will tie you to this study will be destroyed at the conclusion of data collection. Information collected through your participation may be used to fulfill an educational requirement, published in a professional journal, and/or presented at a professional meeting.

If you have questions about this study, please contact Yvette Bynum by phone (334) 215-1434 or email at [bynumyp@auburn.edu](mailto:bynumyp@auburn.edu) or Dr. Marie Witte at [wittenm@auburn.edu](mailto:wittenm@auburn.edu).

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Human Subjects Research or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334)-844-5966 or e-mail at [hsubjec@auburn.edu](mailto:hsubjec@auburn.edu) or [IRBChair@auburn.edu](mailto:IRBChair@auburn.edu).

HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF YOU DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE, THE DATA YOU PROVIDE WILL SERVE AS YOUR AGREEMENT TO DO SO. THIS LETTER IS YOURS TO KEEP.

Yvette Bynum      3/1/10

Investigator's signature

Date

Yvette Bynum

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

The Auburn University  
Institutional Review Board  
has approved this document for use  
from 3/1/10 to 3/31/11  
Protocol # 10-0112P100

APPENDIX D  
Participant Permission Letter

01/05/2010 16:27 3342620344

SCHOOL SUPTS ASSN

PAGE 02/02



January 5, 2010

Yvette Bynum  
Auburn University Montgomery

Dear Ms. Bynum:

I am pleased to learn you are conducting graduate research regarding female superintendents and leadership. The number of women leading school systems in Alabama has grown in the last ten years significantly and I know they are having a positive impact on student learning.

SSA is pleased for you to contact the superintendents in conducting your research. We are also more than happy to provide you with a data base with the names and addresses of all the female superintendents in Alabama: let Kay Jackson know if we can assist you.

Best wishes in your research. We look forward to reviewing a copy when it is complete.

Sincerely,



Susan L. Lockwood, Ed.D.  
Executive Director