

WOMEN IN AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF
FACTORS DETERMINING LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL PERCEIVED BY WOMEN
MEMBERS OF THE GEORGIA AGRIBUSINESS COUNCIL

by

MARY ANN DAVIS PARSONS

(Under the Direction of F. Richard Rohs)

ABSTRACT

As the number of women entering the workforce continues to rise, there is an inherent need for leaders having the necessary management and communication skills needed to effectively run an organization. Over the years, this leadership role has been predominately male. As more women enter leadership positions, their ability to satisfactorily perform in a managerial role is brought into question. The “glass ceiling effect,” a common perception that women get to a point in their professional careers and a barrier forms that prevents them from achieving their full leadership potential, is the focus of this study on women in leadership. This study examines women in agricultural leadership professions and their interpretation of barriers, constraints, and motivators within their agricultural leadership profession. This study aims to provide support to disprove the stereotype of women in management and provide equal analysis of gender differences, surveying female members of the Georgia Agribusiness Council.

INDEX WORDS: leadership style, gender prejudice, gender, sex discrimination, agriculture, women, agribusiness, managers, female, glass ceiling, leadership competencies, agricultural leadership

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MARY ANN DAVIS PARSONS

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MARY ANN DAVIS PARSONS

Major Professor: F. Richard Rohs

Committee: Ray Herren
Richard Hudson

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Leaders encourage and facilitate change. The type of change that occurs often depends on the people in leadership positions who are able to make the changes in social and economic factors within an organization. Today, there is an inherent need for quality managers in many organizations in the United States and abroad. Many organizations lack a leader who has the necessary management and communication skills needed to effectively run an organization (Kellogg, 2003). Over the years, this role of a leadership position has been predominately male. As more women enter leadership positions, their ability to satisfactorily perform in a managerial role is examined. Leadership styles, theories, and performance factors aim to explain and understand the differences in the ways in which men and women lead. The common perception seen today of women in leadership roles is that they get to a point in their professional careers and a barrier forms that prevents them from achieving their full leadership potential. The common term associated with this phenomenon is the “glass ceiling” effect. The term “glass ceiling” was first used in 1986 by two reporters for the Wall Street Journal. The reporters developed this term to describe the invisible barrier that seems to exist which blocks women from the top leadership positions (Catalyst Report, 1993).

Women and management research has been dominated by an analyses of women’s “victimization” in relation to executive power and the differences in the leadership styles of both sexes. This victimization is due to the fact that executive leadership is repeatedly referred to as a “man’s world” and is not accepting of the additional challenges presented to women, who

commonly are referred to as the main caregivers of the family. Mainstream management literature has often presented the male manager as the norm, supporting the stereotype that women can not perform well in management positions. Current studies aim to disprove this stereotype and provide equal analysis of the gender differences.

Leadership opportunities available to women within the agricultural community are much the same. The norm has traditionally been associated with a male-driven leadership approach and most executive-level management positions have been held by males. The current trend in agriculture shows that women are beginning to take on major leadership roles within the industry. In Georgia, agribusiness is a \$56.7 billion industry. This figure represents 16 percent of the gross state product and 16 percent of the state's employment base (GAC, 2005, p. 5). This industry that represents such a large portion of the state's economy must therefore be represented. The voice which represents agribusiness in Georgia on the public level is the Georgia Agribusiness Council.

The Georgia Agribusiness Council was formed in 1966 and provides a forum for industry professionals to share views, develop understanding, and work on agricultural issues. The mission is "to advance the business of agriculture and promote environmental stewardship to enhance the quality of life for all Georgians." This mission forms the basis for the council's efforts on behalf of its membership of nearly 650 agricultural businesses and individuals representing the industry (GAC, 2005, p. 4). The GAC mission is carried out through the leadership of the board of directors and the development of a program of work which addresses six primary objectives:

1. To represent the agribusiness industry in the legislative arena;
2. To provide economic services to members;

3. To promote agribusiness development;
4. To build coalitions within the agricultural community;
5. To educate the public about agribusiness issues; and
6. To promote agricultural education through elementary, secondary, college, and adult programs.

The Georgia Agribusiness Council offers a diverse sample of men and women who are guided by these objectives and understand the complexities of leadership in Georgia's number one industry, agriculture.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine leading women in agriculture and their interpretation of barriers, constraints, and motivators within their agricultural profession. Perceived abilities of the competencies of women in leadership positions within the agribusiness sector of Georgia will be examined as they relate to the glass ceiling effect and women in leadership positions.

By collecting data regarding the demographics of the respondents, level of leadership held within organizations, personal motivators and obstacles, overall leadership characteristics, and opportunities and strategies that encourage females within leadership positions, the researcher will provide data to support or refute current theories regarding women in leadership positions.

The specific purposes of the study are the following:

1. To identify selected social background characteristics of women in leadership positions;
2. To describe factors that assist in the advancement of women in careers;

3. To determine if personal life choices and perceptions of women in the workplace affect a woman's ability to obtain executive-level management positions; and
4. To describe what barriers and constraints exist that prevent women from advancing in leadership and management positions within agriculture.

Few studies have examined the leadership styles of women within the agricultural community. The Georgia Agribusiness Council members represent a portion of the state's working population within the field of agriculture, including agribusiness, production agriculture, and individuals involved in education and research fields.

Justification of the Study

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation has reported that there is an increasing need for leadership voices that are needed to catalyze and sustain change in communities (Kellogg, 2003). Research conducted to determine the differences and effectiveness of leadership between gender boundaries has become increasingly important. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the study of gender and leadership behavior, but few studies have examined the leadership of women in the agricultural community. With over three million working adults (those over the age of 16) in the state of Georgia, and a total of 24 percent employed in managerial and professional specialties, Georgia boasts a large agricultural base with a total commodity farm gate value of over eight million dollars (Georgia County Guide, 2001, p. 102).

As the number of women continue to grow in the United States, so will the number that are educated and prepared for leadership positions. Research and extensions of previous studies need to be completed in order to measure leadership effectiveness and answer the growing question of why there are so few women managers within the agricultural community. The current trend observed within the agribusiness community is leading toward more female-driven

leadership within student organizations, but remains male-driven professionally as managers (Dubrin, 2004). Studies that examine the effectiveness, perceived abilities, and constraints of women will provide an opportunity to view a comparison of strengths and weaknesses of women and enhance the overall leadership provided by females in the workplace.

Limitations of the Study

The participants of the study were obtained using a total population of female members of the Georgia Agribusiness Council holding a leadership position. Therefore, the results of this study are limited to this group and may or may not be generalized outside of its female membership.

Since membership in the organization is an external sign of leadership characteristics, selection bias may occur and may threaten the external validity of the study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following review of literature will examine previous studies related to women in leadership and aim to discuss the various definitions and theories of leadership. The review will discuss previous studies of the “glass ceiling” effect and its relationship to perceived abilities of women in leadership positions. A focus on previous studies of agricultural and executive leaders will be included. The review of literature will cite numerous studies supporting the “glass ceiling effect” and perceived barriers to advancement of women in leadership.

Definitions of Leadership

Leadership is defined in numerous ways which reflects the complexity of studying both men and women in leadership positions. Most current definitions place the act of leadership on the leader’s ability and their ability to empower others based on a set of attitudinal characteristics. Historical definitions of leadership base authority in leadership on political, economic, or military power. Today, leadership is defined as encompassing teamwork, collaboration, and empowerment (Eagly, Carli, 2003).

Maxwell (1999) says leadership is the expression of character qualities that activate and empower leadership ability and may stand in the way of success. “Leadership is the capacity and will to rally men and women to a common purpose and the character which inspires confidence” (Maxwell, 1999, p. 1). Dubrin’s (2004) definition is similar in that it seeks to define leadership as “the ability to inspire confidence and support among the people who are needed to achieve organizational goals” (p. 3).

Lack of Women in Leadership

Women currently make up 46 percent of the managers and administrators in the United States, of which only five percent hold top corporate office positions and one percent holding chief executive offices (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, Engen, 2003). This lack of women in executive-level leadership positions has undergone much scrutiny over the years. A common reason associated with the lack of women in leadership is that it was not until the 1870s that women were able to receive a university education (Asplund, 1988). This greatly affected their ability to obtain high-demand jobs during this time. However, over the last 10 or 15 years women have increasingly become dominant in their ability to obtain these high-demand positions. These numbers lead to a major concern as to why there is such a scarcity of women managers. The psychological factor of attitudes and values is one of the most interesting to look at and observe why women seem to have the necessary training, but fail to move up the corporate ladder and become managers (Asplund, 1988). This also leads to a significant concern that women will claim sexual discrimination if they do not move up in the rankings at certain points in their career. Asplund (1988) observes that many women feel that the opportunities for training within the organization is not equal between men and women, noting that only 30 percent of the women compared to 70 percent of the men felt that training was equally available.

Eagly and Karau (2002) observe that the lack of qualified women in leadership positions creates a “pipeline problem” in which the shortage of women is attributed to women’s family responsibilities and the tendency of women to display fewer of the traits commonly associated with success in executive level positions. Asplund (1988) states that women play a very important role in the overall economic growth of the United States and that entrepreneurial ventures are creating positive impacts. Postgraduate education has doubled during a period of

eight years for women, which indicates a growing supply of women who are preparing themselves to take over managerial positions of leadership. Today's women are members of organizations who focus on the problems of working women. It is very easy to find groups of women organizing to find ways to make managing their home and work life easier and more effective (Asplund, 1988). Women are beginning to see that they need to support one another if they want to avoid the stereotypes placed on them as managers.

Theories of Leadership

Several theories on leadership offer insight into how and why leaders react to certain situations and perform the way they do in reaction to certain stimuli in their environments. These theories allow for a better understanding of leadership behavior of both men and women and offer valuable definitions of these actions. It is proposed by Eagly (2003) that leadership styles are among the many areas that receive scrutiny during the interview process. It is these behavioral differences that lead to the importance of examining the various leadership theories.

Fiedler's Contingency Theory

Fiedler's Contingency Theory on leadership effectiveness determined that the best style of leadership is based on the situation in which the leader is working (Dubrin, 2004). According to Fiedler, leadership style is difficult to modify and is considered a relatively permanent aspect of behavior. Fiedler suggests that leaders must determine their leadership style and then choose their work situation to match their style. Practical implications of the contingency theory are that leaders should modify situations to best match their leadership style, thereby enhancing their chances of being effective leaders. In most situations, the amount of control the leader exercises or possesses varies, and it is not likely that a leader would be able to modify a situation to better match the subordinate's behavior.

Path-Goal Theory

Robert House derived the Path-Goal Theory which suggests that managers or leaders should choose a leadership style that defines contingency factors based on the types of subordinates and the types of work they perform (Dubrin, 2004). The leader will choose one of four leadership styles depending on the characteristics of the situation and the demands of the task. The leader must choose a “directive,” “supportive,” “participative,” or “achievement-oriented” style in this area. The theory emphasizes that the leader should first assess the relevant circumstances of the environment and then choose from the four leadership styles to achieve optimum results in that situation. The Path-Goal theory says that the leader who is directive (similar to task-motivated in Fiedler’s theory) emphasizes formal activities such as planning, organizing, and controlling (Dubrin, 2004). The supportive leader displays concern for group members’ well-being and creates an emotionally supportive climate. This management style is commonly associated with that of a female leader. The participative leader is best suited for improving morale of well-motivated employees who perform non-repetitive tasks (Dubrin, 2001). Such a leader consults with group members and takes their suggestions seriously when making a decision. The leader who is achievement-oriented emphasizes improved work and sets high expectations and challenging goals for team members. This style works best with achievement-oriented team members who need little or no supervision and who work on ambiguous, non-repetitive tasks (Dubrin, 2001). In the best situations, a leader can successfully combine more than one of the four styles. This theory emphasizes the idea that the leader’s actions have a major impact on the motivation and satisfaction of the group members. Many of the theories don’t take into account the satisfaction, motivation or even the reaction of the follower. With the path-goal theory, research began to focus more on the group members and

the dynamics of the group influence on the leader. Furthermore, it forces the leader to be more observant of the situation, the group members, and the organizational culture, and gives ‘ownership’ and control of leadership back to the individual.

Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Model

The Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Model defines both task and relationship behaviors and the procedures of leadership that may be repeated for effective leadership (Dubrin, 2001). The task behaviors explain the extent to which the leader explains duties and responsibilities to an individual or group. The relationship behavior explains the extent that the leader engages in two-way conversations. The model is divided into four quadrants: delegating, participating, selling, and telling. The delegating quadrant (low relationship, low task) explains the leader’s ability to turn over responsibility for decisions and implementation. The participating quadrant (high relationship, low task) includes the leader’s ability to share ideas and facilitate decision making. Selling (high relationship, high task) is the quadrant explaining the decisions and providing opportunities for clarification to the followers. Telling (low relationship, high task) provides specific instructions and closely supervises performance (Dubrin, 2001).

Role Congruity Theory

Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders proposes that perceived incongruity between the female gender role and leadership roles lead to two forms of prejudice (Eagly, 2002). First, women are perceived less favorably than men as potential leaders. Second, evaluating leadership behavior is seen as less favorable when enacted by a woman. This theory suggests that, due to this incongruity, women leaders are seen as less favorable to hold a leadership position, therefore preventing them from achieving success as a leader. The theory

also proposes that women leaders are evaluated more harshly than men leaders due to this incongruity. It suggests that gender roles involve expectations that are both descriptive, reflecting what is, and prescriptive, or the ideal (Ritter, Yoder, 2004). Other theories offer insight on leadership perceptions, but role congruity theory directly addresses the perceptions of men and women in leadership positions directly (Eagly, 2002).

Androgyny Theory

The concept of androgyny is evolving in the debate on the topic of the lack of women managers and represents the desire to move away from male/female categorizations to a “manly” or “womanly” category. Androgyny is a combination of the Greek word “andro” meaning man and “gyn” meaning woman (Asplund, 1988). The assumptions of this concept are that every individual can possess both male and female psychological attributes, that traditional attitudes were previously determined, and that the attitudes are molded by our culture. “Androgynous individuals can orient themselves towards achievement and human relationships. They try to combine tradition and renewal, rationality and emotionality, conservation and growth, and in this they largely succeed. They are the new people and the new leaders” (Asplund, 1988, p. 73).

Each of these theories offers insight in the various types of leadership exhibited by both men and women. Research focuses on these leadership theories and relates them to the styles of leadership typical of both men and women in leadership positions.

The “Glass Ceiling” Effect

Gender stereotyping is defined as “the belief that a set of traits and abilities is more likely to be found among one sex than the other” (Boyce, 2004, p. 3). Several researchers have studied gender similarities and differences in leadership style and behavior of managers. Rosener (1990) found that men typically had a more authoritative style, while women were more

transformational in style, relying heavily on interpersonal skills. In a study of women leaders, Rosener found that socialization and career paths explain why women lead differently. Rosener's article sparked much debate with her conclusion that men and women tend toward opposite styles of leadership.

The opposing styles are further supported by Griggs (1989) who gave a list of characteristics considered to be feminine in nature to describe differing ways of leading. The female leadership characteristics are summarized as using consensus decision making, viewing power in relational terms as something to be shared, encouraging productive approaches to conflict, promoting diversity in the workplace, and building supportive working environments. These characteristics are important to note when studying women in leadership positions.

An interesting study by Burke and Collins (2001) suggested that male managers, who often make decisions regarding the upward movement of women, were found to perceive the characteristics needed for managerial success with those usually attributed to men.

Gutner (2002) proposes that the pay gap is also a major deterrent for women in leadership positions and supports the glass ceiling effect. Gutner's study suggests that not only do women make less money than men on average, but the wage gap widens in seven of the 10 sectors employing female workers. The Department of Labor (2004) reports that women's earnings were 78 percent that of the earnings reported by men in 2002. Furthermore, female college graduates had median earnings of \$809 per week, compared to \$1,089 for men (Department of Labor, 2004). Female workers 25 years of age and over were twice as likely as men to have earnings at or below minimum wage in hourly positions (Department of Labor, 2004).

Asplund (1988) discovers that women are more likely to be found in the public sector than the private sector and that there are very few women managers in either sector in relation to

the number of women employed in the various organizations. Women are dominating employment positions in areas such as food, graphics, electrical manufacturing, wood products, and the metal industries. Asplund (1988) notes that the progress women make up the corporate ladder is very slow, noting that in a recent international survey women occupy only two percent of all senior executive positions. When looking at middle management positions, women occupy a larger portion of 15 to 20 percent. As the number of women earning MBA degrees has risen over the years, it becomes increasingly disconcerting to females working toward executive leadership positions that women do not occupy a larger portion of the upper management positions. Though it is not clear what is holding these women back, they are facing a clear barrier to upper management. Still to be determined is whether this barrier is self-inflicted or a result of the “glass ceiling” theory.

Barriers to Advancement-The Female Perspective

Asplund (1988) observed that the three main reasons women feel they have not advanced in an organization the same as men is that they do not receive proper training, that they do not start out in positions that lead to promotion, and that the bosses take less notice of women. Men, on the other hand, felt that the reasons were that women did not get enough support from families, they did not care to take risks, and that they did not want a promotion (Asplund, 1988). The comparison shows that women feel that management was stopping them from promotion and men sought more psychological explanations for this lack of managers. Oshagbemi and Gill (2003) further explain that male managers, who are often the decision makers of a woman’s advancement, have been found to perceive the characteristics needed for managerial success to be highly related to those generally associated with qualities attributed to women.

When asked to list the three major obstacles they had to overcome, women responded by saying that the male culture, lack of time, and lack of confidence were the three main barriers (Alston, 1998). Over one-third of those surveyed felt that they had been actively obstructed, with 61 percent of these responding that a member of the organization was the one that prevented them from certain career goals and advancement opportunities (Alston, 1998). Olsson and Walker (2002) suggest that women do not have the traits of leadership, they do not choose to pursue leadership positions, and may become invisible once in leadership roles due to the common perception that women are not competent leaders.

Another interview conducted by Asplund (1988) examined why men succeed in advancing at work and women do not. Women thought that men have an eye on their careers from the beginning, that they get more support from bosses, and receive more training (Asplund, 1988). The men thought the top three reasons were that men expect more, have more self confidence, and agreed with the women that they had more support and encouragement. The major areas that both women and men agree on in the interviews conducted were that men have a wider contact network, a woman should neither be selfish nor unfeminine, men should assume equal responsibility for the home life, women have to be often better than the men co-workers, women managers are not more strict than men, and women cannot persuade upper management to give them equal time for hearing their views as a man. Men appear more goal-oriented and women look more at work for the actual tasks which must be completed. Recent research in the United States suggests that leaders are simultaneously achievement-oriented and emotion-oriented and that the behaviors are not sex-dependent (Dubrin, 2004). Asplund (1988) noted that the 12 hour working days, very little vacation, and little time off does not encourage women who are typically responsible for the children and home life to seek a management position. Most

women managers are found in middle management, not in upper management positions, and it is argued that women are singled out in their treatment as managers due to the fact that they are a minority. It was frequently emphasized by Asplund (1988) that women are not occupying positions of leadership within an organization because of tradition, norms, and attitudes of themselves and by their bosses.

Trends of Women Leaders

A recurrent theme as described by women is that women must be twice as good as men in order to gain respect in leadership positions (Olsson and Walker, 2002). Asplund (1988) explores why there are so few women managers, and why women and men make the choices they make regarding career choices, life patterns, and the leadership style of women and men.

Several interviews which were conducted concluded that women want to do something “interesting” and men want to have a “career” (Asplund, 1988). The key topics that differentiate women from men managers as cited by interviews conducted were the support level received, level of ambition, motivation, key contacts, time of joining the organization, and at what time in their career they received boosts in their management level (Asplund, 1988). Both men and women suggested that perceived support from others was critical to their success as managers. It is also noted that women have had to work longer to achieve their positions of leadership within an organization than men have, and it is recorded that 82 percent of the men versus only 30 percent of women thought promotion occurred without reference to sex (Asplund, 1988). These obvious differences raise many questions and show that support from others is critical in overall promotion and management.

Another important study is that of Vinnicombe and Cames (1998) which studied the leadership styles of 66 female and male managers in Luxembourg. The findings suggest that

female managers rated themselves higher on instrumental and expressive traits, which further supports the differences noted between men and women managers. Govender and Bayat (1993) suggest that it is most important for organizations to know what blocks managers from making the transition from one style of leadership to another and what individual interventions can be implemented that will allow change to take place. These studies provide valuable insight into the common question of the lack of women managers.

Bass (1990) found that women are less likely to practice management by exception, intervening only when something goes wrong. He suggests that women are more likely to be described as charismatic and scored higher on the transformation factor than men. Phillips (1995) suggests that women business leaders are more likely to describe their business as a family and tend to emphasize nurturing and caring relationships with employees and are often found to buffer criticism with praise. Oakely (2000) examined that a lack of line experience, inadequate career opportunities, gender differences in socialization, gender-based stereotypes, and the “old boy network” at the top were explanations of why women have not risen to the top as managers, suggesting that women avoid corporate life in favor of entrepreneurial careers.

Personal Support

Leading women have fewer female mentors than male mentors (Alston, 1998). This may be due to the fact that there are fewer women in senior leadership positions to turn to for professional advice. When asked to list the three most important factors that led to their leadership aspirations, those women identified the top three as support from others, skills and education, and strength and toughness characteristics (Alston, 1998). Nearly 60 percent of those who responded said that they received total support from their family in pursuit of their careers. Foster’s (2001) study concluded that women agricultural education instructors reported some

type of weekly contact with other female teachers in the profession. Foster's study also suggests that women receive much of their encouragement from their families. Due to the time constraints, recommendations from female agricultural education teachers were to offer seminars and workshops on balancing work and family (Foster, 2001).

Perceived Observations of the Female Workplace

The ability to give praise is a quality that is increasingly becoming important for managers. Male managers are seen to have trouble providing open criticism and feel it is very difficult to show appreciation, which creates an opening for the strengths of women as managers (Asplund, 1988). Asplund (1988) observed that many workplaces today have equal numbers of men and women. The increase of women managers is partially sparked by the notion that current leaders hope that women can bring new and fresh ideas to the organization that men were not able to produce in the past. The problem with the seemingly forced attitude to put women in management will cause problems if the women find out that they were hired because of these womanly qualities and not actual competency.

Women in Agricultural Leadership

Leadership within the agricultural community often reflects the same barriers and challenges as seen throughout all forms of business. Minimal research is available related specifically to women in agricultural leadership positions. Research conducted in this area support similar statements of barriers and constraints to women. Pini (2002) states that "agricultural agencies either deny there are any constraints for women in achieving positions of leadership or, if they do, suggest that the constraining factors relate to problems with individual women" (p. 277). Pini (2002) further explains that women in agricultural groups face the dominance of rural ideologies which emphasize a woman's domestic roles in society.

Alston (1998) reports that the typical woman in agriculture is between the ages of 41 and 50, is married and has no children. She is noted to be primarily responsible for household tasks and spends approximately 20 percent of her time performing these tasks. Alston (1998) suggests that voluntary work is available, but restricts family and leisure time. Typical women spend ten days away from home per year and experience various added costs associated with child care when traveling (Alston, 1998).

The leading agricultural woman sits on at least one board, but is likely to spend time serving on several boards and reports sexual discrimination on these boards. She is likely to have a male mentor. Leading women perceive their main obstacles as the lack of time to devote to work and the male culture that evolves in the agricultural workplace (Alston, 1998).

In response to attitudinal statements proposed, Alston (1998) suggests that 20 percent of those women surveyed stated that they feel they do not have the same leadership opportunities as men. Alston (1998) says that 68 percent of respondents agree that finding time to serve on a board or other executive leadership positions is a major obstacle. Nearly 56 percent responded that child care should be made available to enable women to have more time to work in voluntary positions to advance their positions. Alston (1998) suggests that women are often more supported by other men in their organizations and that fewer networking opportunities are available to allow women to work together and support each other. Alston (1998) observed that 98 percent of all women surveyed agreed that women should take the initiative to put themselves into leadership positions and 38 percent of those surveyed stated that there will not be equal numbers of men and women in leadership positions. Alston (1998) also concluded that 78 percent of those agricultural women surveyed agreed that family responsibilities restrict women's access to serve on agricultural boards and other leadership positions. When asked what

the most important qualities are that constitute a board, the women responded that the first was knowledge/experience, second was diversity, and third was organizational goals (Alston, 1998).

Summary

The review of literature supports the notion that there are few women in executive-level leadership positions, including the agricultural sector. The numerous studies on women in leadership positions have yielded various opinions that may be effects of why there are few women managers. Most of the research focuses only on leadership behaviors of women and perceived barriers to advancement in leadership.

The studies examined identify that there are visible signs that woman reach a certain point in their careers and are blocked from further advancement. The research does not support the theory that women are prevented from advancing in their careers by others. Most studies support the position that the environment that women work in and the additional responsibilities to the family impede on their ability to advance. There is, also, significant research indicating the disparity in pay between female and male workers.

Although little research is available regarding women in agricultural leadership positions, studies available reflect the same trends as seen in other studies of women in leadership positions. Further research in this field is needed to properly identify barriers that exist for women in agriculture.

Research Questions

The following research questions framed the study:

1. What are the demographic and social background characteristics of women in agricultural leadership positions?

2. What factors assist in the advancement of women in the professional careers within agriculture?
3. What are the personal life choices and perceptions of women in the workplace that affect a woman's ability to obtain executive-level management positions?
4. What are the barriers and constraints which exist that prevent women from advancing in leadership and management positions within the field of agriculture?

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

In determining the abilities of women in agricultural leadership and potential barriers to advancement within one's profession, a cross-sectional quantitative survey was used to analyze information obtained from female members of the Georgia Agribusiness Council.

This chapter will review the study population, explain the instrument used in the study, and describe the data collection process.

Study Population

The data for this study was taken from the female members of the Georgia Agribusiness Council who were identified and asked to participate in this study. These female members are represented throughout the state of Georgia and include various agribusinesses, professional associations, and private business owners within the agricultural community. The participants of this study were identified from a list of 105 female members of the Georgia Agribusiness Council. The selection of individuals for this study is based on membership in the Georgia Agribusiness Council. The entire population of female members identified in the membership list provided by the Council were selected and asked to participate in this survey. A total of 50 individuals, or 48 percent, participated in the study and comprised the sample.

Instrumentation

The cross-sectional quantitative survey examined female respondents interpretation of barriers, constraints, and motivators within their profession as it relates to the concept of the glass ceiling effect and women in leadership positions. The instrument used in this study

incorporated several questions used in previous studies By Asplund (1988) and Alston (1998) of women in leadership which were tested for face validity. Female members of the Georgia Agribusiness Council were asked to respond to 45 items relating to the demographics of the respondents, level of leadership held within organizations, personal motivators and obstacles, overall leadership characteristics, and opportunities and strategies that encourage females within leadership positions. For each item, participants were asked to indicate their responses using a self-checklist, an attitude scale that included a Likert scale measuring responses, and three open-ended response questions (Appendix A). The leading questions within the survey were designed to provide the researcher with basic demographic and employment history that was used to categorize the respondent into various categories including age, ethnicity, marital status, child care arrangements, employment history, and level of education. Responses to these questions were indicated using a self-checklist method. The 13 questions using the Likert scale asked participants to indicate whether they: Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Don't Know (3), Disagree (4), or Strongly Disagree (5). Five questions within the survey asked that the participant indicate a percentage or ranking of the most important factors related to each of the questions listed to demonstrate responses. The three open-ended questions were constructed to provide an opportunity to gain responses outside of the outlined questions provided throughout the survey which would indicate aspirations and motivations, as well as strategies involved in encouraging more women in leadership positions.

The final survey was submitted to the University of Georgia Graduate School Office of Human Subjects for final review and approval. Following an eight week review period, the Office of Human Subjects approved the survey instrument after minor modifications to the cover

letter accompanying the survey related to confidentiality issues of electronic submission of the survey instrument.

Data Collection and Analysis

All female members of the Georgia Agribusiness Council received an email requesting their participation in the study. A follow-up email from the researcher, as well as an email from the Georgia Agribusiness Council leadership, was sent to solicit responses to increase response rate. The subject was asked to complete a 15 minute survey and return via email or postal mail to the researcher. An electronic copy of the results from this study (not listing any subjects names or specific responses) was provided to those that requested this information at the completion of the study.

A total of 50, or 48 percent, of the surveys sent to female members of the Georgia Agribusiness Council were returned. The responses were recorded over a 45 day period. The returned instruments were examined for completeness and stored. Responses were coded and analyzed to determine the percentages of responses to each question included in the survey. Percentages were assigned to each category and computed for reporting using the Statistical Analysis System computer program at the Office of Computer Services at the University of Georgia. Once information examined for the purpose of this study was collected from each of the respondents, the returned surveys were destroyed to preserve anonymity of the respondents.

Since the number of surveys returned was small (N=50), procedures recommended by Miller and Smith (1983) were employed to compare “early” respondents with “late” respondents on a few key variables in the study. The additional analysis performed showed no significant differences between the “early” and “late” respondents (Table 13, Appendix C). It was therefore assumed that the sample was representative of the population from which it was drawn. It

should also be noted that this study was a descriptive study. Some researchers (Verma & Burnett, 1994) investigating sample sizes have noted that reducing sample sizes to as low as fifty produced no noticeable impact or differences in descriptive outcomes in various studies.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research findings are presented to address the question of barriers to advancement of women in agriculture which are reflected utilizing data collected from surveys returned from female respondents. Data reported are divided into categories which reflect the question addressed in each section of the survey.

Demographics of Sample

Certain data were collected to show the demographics of the women participating in the study. These characteristics included age, ethnicity, marital status, number of children, place of residence, and education.

Age

As illustrated in Table 1, 42 percent of the women respondents indicated that they were between the ages of 41 and 50. The 31 to 40 and 51 to 60 age ranges each included 20 percent of the respondents. No respondents were under the age of 21 participating in the study.

Ethnicity

Table 1 illustrates that 96 percent of the respondents were Caucasian, with only four percent of the African American race. No Asian or Latino women participated in the study.

Marital Status

Seventy percent of the respondents indicated that they were married. Eighteen percent are currently single and a total of 10 percent have been divorced. Table 1 indicates the breakdown of each category.

Children

Nearly 45 percent of the women respondents indicated that they did not currently have children. As seen in Table 1, nearly 25 percent of the women indicated that they have two children, 16 percent with one child, and 14 percent having three children. None of the respondents indicated they had four or more children. Data further exploring child care options for women respondents is included and illustrated in Table 2.

Residence

Table 1 indicates that 40 percent of the respondents currently reside in a suburban area of the state. Thirty-six percent live in a rural, non-farm setting. Only 12 percent of the respondents indicated that they reside on a farm.

Education Level

A majority of the respondents have achieved a bachelors degree or higher. Fifty-two percent have obtained a bachelors degree. PhD, EdD, JD, and MD degrees were combined for purposes of reporting and comprise six percent of the total responses. Only eight percent of the respondents have achieved a high school degree or associates degree (indicated by respondent in other category). This data is represented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographics of Sample		
Variable	Number	Percent
<u>Age</u>		
< 21	0	0
21-30	8	16
31-40	10	20
41-50	21	42
51-60	10	20
>61	1	2

(table continues)

Table 1 (*continued*)

<u>Ethnicity</u>		
Caucasian	48	96
African American	2	4
Asian	0	0
Latino	0	0
Other	0	0
<u>Marital Status</u>		
Married	35	70
Single	9	18
Divorced	3	6
Divorced and Remarried	2	4
Widowed	1	2
<u>Number of Children</u>		
0	22	45
1	8	16
2	12	24
3	7	14
4	0	0
> 4	0	0
<u>Residence</u>		
Urban	6	12
Rural, Non-Farm	18	36
Rural, Farm	6	12
Suburban	20	40
<u>Education</u>		
PhD/EdD/JD/MD	3	6
Specialist	1	2
Masters	16	32
Bachelors	26	52
High School	3	6
Other	1	2

Child care

Respondents indicating the responsibility of one or more children were asked to complete a section addressing child care options within the household. Respondents were asked questions

regarding the primary caretaker of children within the home, the primary source of child care, and, if responding that they do not employ a professional, the reason they do not.

Forty-eight percent of the respondents agreed that both the mother and father were equal partners as primary caretakers for children inside the home. Nearly 15 percent of the respondents indicated that they did not fit any category due to the fact that their children were now adults. The primary source of child care for over 33 percent of the respondents was the employment of a child care professional outside the home. Respondents listed in the “other” category indicated that they utilize relatives or have high school aged children which require no professional child care. Of those responding who did not employ a child care professional, nearly 67 percent indicated that a relative cared for their children, so professional care was not necessary.

Table 2. Child care		
Variable	Number	Percent
<u>Primary caretaker of children in home</u>		
Mother	9	33
Father	0	0
Mother and father are equal partners	13	48
Other	4	15
<u>Primary source of child care</u>		
Employ child care professional outside the home	8	33
Employ child care professional inside the home	6	25
Do not employ a child care professional	6	25
Other	3	13

(table continues)

Table 2 (*continued*)

Reason do not employ child care professional

Professional child care is too expensive	0	0
Skills of professional are not adequate child care for my children	1	11
A relative cares for my children	6	67
Other	2	22

Employment Background

Table 3 indicates all responses related to the employment field, level of leadership, salary, number of years in current position, leave time taken, and the role of the manager in the pursuit of professional development and advancement opportunities.

Employment Field

Forty-six percent of the women indicated they were in an agribusiness-related occupation. Twenty-two percent were employed in an education or extension position. Twenty-six percent of the respondents were engaged in areas that did not fall directly into one of the listed categories. These professions included rural electrification, farm loan program officers, communications, professional associations, manufacturing, and animal husbandry areas, which could each be classified as agribusiness-related employment. It is notable that only two percent of the respondents were engaged in employment on a traditional farm.

Current Leadership Position

Table 3 indicates that 32 percent of the women are currently in an upper management position within their company. An equal number of women are in what was classified as a

middle management position, and 18 percent were in a low level management position. Fourteen percent of the women respondents do not currently hold a management position.

Salary

Although 64 percent of the females indicated they were in a middle-level management position or higher, only 54 percent of those women indicated that they were receiving a salary of 56 thousand dollars or more. Twenty-five percent indicated that they receive between 36 and 45 thousand dollars per year.

Number of Years in Current Position

Thirty-two percent of the respondents have 10 or more years of experience in their current positions. Sixteen percent of the women have seven to nine years. Thirty percent have four to six years of experience, and 18 percent have one to three years. Only four percent of the women indicated that they have one year or less of experience in their current positions.

Annual/Holiday Leave Taken in Past Year

Forty-eight percent of the respondents indicated that they have taken two to three weeks of vacation in the last year. Ten percent have taken less than one week of leave in the past year. Thirty-eight percent indicated they have only taken one to two weeks and four percent have taken three or more weeks.

Full Time Leave Taken

Fifty-one percent of the respondents indicated they have not taken full time leave in their careers. Forty-nine percent have taken full time leave in their careers. Of these, 76 percent was due to maternity leave, eight percent due to attending professional school full time, four percent to serve as caretaker for the family, and eight percent for other health-related reasons such as surgery and degenerative diseases. Comparing the numbers of those that indicated they have not

taken professional leave and those that indicated they have no children, six percent of the respondents have taken leave to pursue other endeavors during their careers.

Manager Assistance in Professional Development

Eighty-seven percent of the respondents indicated they felt their manager had assisted them in their professional development by providing opportunities for them and showing an interest in their job performance. Twelve percent of the women indicated they felt that their manager had not assisted them in the pursuit of their professional development within the workplace.

Table 3. Employment		
Variable	Number	Percent
<u>Employment Field</u>		
Agribusiness	23	46
Research	0	0
Science	0	0
Education/Extension	11	22
Policy Development	2	4
Farming	1	2
Other	13	26
<u>Current leadership position</u>		
Upper management	16	32
Middle management	16	32
Lower management	9	18
Do not hold management position	7	14
<u>Salary</u>		
< 25 K	1	2
26-35 K	5	10
36-45 K	12	25
46-55 K	4	8
56-65 K	13	27
> 65 K	13	27
<u>Number of years in current position</u>		
>10 years	16	32
7-9 years	8	16

(table continues)

Table 3 (continued)

4-6 years	15	30
1-3 years	9	18
< 1 year	2	4
<u>Annual/Holiday Leave in Past Year</u>		
None	0	0
< 1 week	5	10
1-2 weeks	19	38
2-3 weeks	24	48
3-4 weeks	1	2
> 4 weeks	1	2
<u>Have you taken full-time leave at any point in your professional career?</u>		
Yes	23	49
No	25	51
<u>Reason for full-time leave</u>		
Maternity Leave	19	76
Attend professional school	2	8
Caretaker for family	1	4
Other	2	8
<u>Has your manager assisted you in your professional development by showing an interest and commenting on your job?</u>		
Yes	42	88
No	6	13

Allocation of Time During Week

Women leaders were asked to indicate the percentage of time spent on a weekly basis doing household work, child care, farm, paid, voluntary, and leisure work. The data collected is reflected in Table 4 and assigned as an average percent of time dedicated to each task, determined by the mean.

The average week of a woman leader indicated that nearly 62 percent of her time will be spent on paid work, followed by 19 percent on farm-related work. Seventeen percent of the time

will be spent on household chores, followed closely by nearly nine percent of the time spent on child care and a near equal amount of time on leisure activities. Child care numbers may be reflected at a lower rate due to the number of respondents that do not have children or have adult-aged children that participated in this weekly allocation of time. Voluntary work received the lowest percentage of time, equaling nearly eight percent of total time allocated during a normal week.

Table 4. Percentage of Time Devoted to Weekly Tasks	
Variable	Average % of Time
Household Work	17
Child Care	9
Farm Work	19
Paid Work	62
Voluntary Work	8
Leisure	9

Barriers to Advancement in Professional Career

Women leaders were asked to indicate the main factor that has prohibited them from advancing further in their professional careers. Table 5 represents this data.

Sixty-eight percent of the women responding to the survey indicated that they have not been restricted in the pursuit of their professional careers. The leading barrier for advancement was listed as family responsibilities, indicated by twenty-two percent of the respondents. Gendered expectations in the workplace, lack of education and training, and lack of finances received minimal responses, listed at two percent respectively. Four percent of the respondents indicated that they view a barrier related to the lack of encouragement from upper management. None of the respondents indicated that they viewed a lack of encouragement from others as their main barrier to advancement in their professional careers.

Table 5. Barrier to Advancement in Professional Career		
Variable	Number	Percent
Family responsibilities have restricted pursuit of my career	11	22
Gendered expectations in the workplace	1	2
Lack of encouragement from upper management	2	4
Lack of education/training necessary for advancement	1	2
Lack of finances	1	2
Lack of encouragement from others	0	0
Have not been restricted in the pursuit of my professional career	34	68

Personal Support/Mentoring in the Workplace

Table 6 indicates the responses from women participating in the study relative to their views of support and mentoring from both men and women in the workplace. Sixty-six percent of the women indicated they had a female mentor in the pursuit of their careers. Seventy percent indicated the presence of a male mentor in the workplace. Nearly 82 percent of the women felt that they were a mentor to other women and only 55 percent indicated they felt they were a mentor to other men.

Table 6. Personal Support/Mentoring in the Workplace

Variable	Number	Percent
<u>Have you had a female mentor?</u>		
Yes	17	34
No	33	66
<u>Have you had a male mentor?</u>		
Yes	35	70
No	15	30
<u>Do you feel that you are a mentor to other women?</u>		
Yes	40	82
No	9	18
<u>Do you feel that you are a mentor to other men?</u>		
Yes	22	45
No	27	55

Perceptions Held by Women in the Workplace

Table 7 uses a Likert scale to determine the level of agreement by women respondents to various statements regarding 13 common issues related to females which was discovered during research within the professional workplace.

Forty-eight percent of the women agreed that women have the same opportunities to advance in their careers as their men colleagues. A significant number (36 percent) disagreed with this statement, illustrating an apparent divide between the two groups regarding this variable. A close range of responses regarding the availability of child care in the workplace ranged from 33 percent agreeing to 31 percent who disagree. Fifty-two percent of the women agree that meetings should be held by videoconference.

When asked if the women surveyed received support from other men in their pursuit of a leadership position, a majority (70 percent) of the respondents indicated that they agree with this statement. When presented the same question related to the support received from women, a smaller majority (58 percent) agreed with this statement.

Questions related to restrictions to the advancement of women in their careers were posed which indicate the level of agreement by the respondents. One restriction listed was the statement that finding time to pursue a career was a problem. Fifty-three percent of the respondents agreed that this was a restriction. When asked about the restriction of family responsibilities to their career, 31 percent agreed with this statement, followed by 73 percent who strongly agreed with this statement. Fifty-two percent of the respondents disagreed that they experience stress when they work beyond a normal work day. Thirty-six percent of the women surveyed did not know if the selection criteria for women in leadership positions was clear and transparent and 64 percent agreed that it is up to women to put themselves into positions of leadership.

Overall impressions of women in leadership and their potential for advancement were detected by three statements. Forty-four percent of the women disagree that there are few women qualified to take on leadership positions within agriculture. Thirty-eight percent of the women respondents disagree that the total number of women would equal the total number of men in the workplace, given time. A majority (54 percent) of the women indicated they agree that in order to increase the numbers of women in leadership, the male culture within agricultural organizations must change.

Table 7. Views on Women in Workplace

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Don't Know		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Women have the same opportunities to advance in their careers as men	4	8	24	48	3	6	18	36	1	2
Child care should be made available in the workplace	7	15	16	33	15	31	15	31	10	21
Meetings should be held by videoconference	3	6	26	52	12	24	9	18	0	0
Finding time is a problem for me when contemplating a higher leadership position	9	18	26	53	1	2	9	18	4	8
It is up to women to put themselves forward to agricultural leadership	15	30	32	64	1	2	2	4	0	0
Given time, there will be an equal number of men and women in leadership positions	4	8	14	28	11	22	19	38	2	4
Family responsibilities restrict women's advancement in their careers	11	23	24	31	3	6	8	17	1	2
The selection criteria for leadership positions in agriculture are clear and transparent	0	0	16	32	18	36	15	30	1	2
In my bid for leadership, I received support from other men	8	16	35	70	5	10	2	4	0	0
In my bid for leadership, I received support from other women	6	12	29	58	9	18	6	12	0	0
There are few women qualified to take on leadership positions in agriculture	0	0	8	16	10	20	22	44	10	20
In order to increase the numbers of women in leadership, the male culture of agricultural organizations must change	5	10	27	54	8	16	8	16	2	4
I experience stress when I work beyond the normal work day	6	12	11	22	4	8	26	52	3	6

Factors Assisting in Leadership/Professional Success in Workplace

Table 8 illustrates the top three factors women leaders indicated have assisted them in achieving leadership and professional success within the workplace. Respondents were asked to rank their top three responses using a number 1 as the most important, number 2 as the second most important, and number 3 as the third most important factor. The most important factor indicated by the respondents was the skills and education necessary to obtain higher level leadership and management positions. Skills and education also received the highest number of respondents indicating this as the second most important factor, followed closely by business smarts. People skills, followed closely by strength and toughness characteristics, were listed as the third most important factor assisting women in obtaining leadership and professional success.

Respondents indicating areas not listed as factors was support from a husband, indicated as the most important factor, and being raised in family business, also listed as the most important factor leading to success.

Table 8. Top Three Factors Assisting in Leadership/Professional Success

Variable	Number
<u>Most Important Factor</u>	
Strength/Toughness Characteristics	6
Risk-taking ability	2
Business Smarts	7
Skills/Education	14
Support from others	5
People skills	9
Team-building skills	1
Agricultural background/upbringing at home	4
Awards/Achievements through volunteerism	0
Other	2

(table continues)

Table 8 (*continued*)

Second Most Important Factor

Strength/Toughness Characteristics	3
Risk-taking ability	4
Business Smarts	8
Skills/Education	11
Support from others	5
People skills	9
Team-building skills	2
Agricultural background/upbringing at home	7
Awards/Achievements through volunteerism	1
Other	1

Third Most Important Factor

Strength/Toughness Characteristics	11
Risk-taking ability	6
Business Smarts	5
Skills/Education	1
Support from others	4
People skills	12
Team-building skills	4
Agricultural background/upbringing at home	6
Awards/Achievements through volunteerism	1
Other	0

Major Obstacles in Pursuit of Professional Career

Table 9 illustrates the top three obstacles found in this study that women have been forced to overcome in their pursuit of obtaining higher leadership positions. Respondents were asked to rank their top three responses using a number 1 as the most important, number 2 as the second most important, and number 3 as the third most important factor. The most important obstacle indicated by the respondents was the presence of family commitments which take away from the time available to pursue a career. The second most important obstacle indicated was a lack of time, which may tie into family commitments in that there are fewer hours available to pursue professional development, education, and work opportunities. The third most important

obstacle listed was the lack of education, experience, skills, and knowledge necessary to advance into a higher leadership position.

Respondents indicated areas not listed as obstacles were the lack of management support, listed as the most important obstacle, the lack of time and the perception that women are inadequate to re-enter workforce after raising children, both listed as the second most important barrier to advancement for women in the workforce.

Table 9. Top Three Major Obstacles to Overcome in Pursuit of Career

Variable	Number
<u>Most Important Major Obstacle</u>	
Family commitments	16
Lack of time	12
Lack of education/experience/skills/knowledge	3
Lack of confidence	4
Male culture	7
Financial constraints	1
Work commitments	4
Lack of support from others	1
Own lack of initiative/motivation to advance	1
Other	0
<u>Second Important Major Obstacle</u>	
Family commitments	8
Lack of time	18
Lack of education/experience/skills/knowledge	1
Lack of confidence	3
Male culture	5
Financial constraints	0
Work commitments	2
Lack of support from others	3
Own lack of initiative/motivation to advance	5
Other	3
<u>Third Most Important Major Obstacle</u>	
Family commitments	6
Lack of time	4

(table continues)

Table 9 (*continued*)

Lack of education/experience/skills/knowledge	10
Lack of confidence	4
Male culture	7
Financial constraints	3
Work commitments	8
Lack of support from others	1
Own lack of initiative/motivation to advance	2
Other	0

Glass Ceiling and Barriers to Advancement

Women respondents indicated their perceptions of barriers which have led to the advancement of their professional careers. Table 10 reflects these perceptions. Sixty-eight percent of the women leaders indicated that they have received total support toward the pursuit of their careers from their family members. Only two percent indicated they had received no support and thirty percent indicating they had limited support.

When the surveyed women were asked if they had been actively obstructed from achieving higher success levels in their careers, 98 percent indicated that they had not been obstructed by anyone in their lives. Of the two percent indicating that they were actively obstructed, a member of the organization was the person creating this barrier for the female leader. No respondents indicated that a spouse or other family member was the primary source for their lack of success.

The perception of a glass ceiling effect was examined in this study and is reflected in Table 10. Seventy-four percent of the respondents indicated that they did not believe that there was a glass ceiling prohibiting them from advancing in their professional careers. However, 26 percent of the women indicated that they did believe in this theory.

Table 10. Glass Ceiling and Barriers to Advancement

Variable	Number	Percent
<u>Level of support received from family</u>		
No support	1	2
Limited Support	15	30
Total Support	34	68
<u>Do you believe anyone has actively obstructed from achieving higher levels of success in your career?</u>		
Yes	1	2
No	49	98
<u>Person obstructing professional advancement</u>		
Member of the organization	1	100
Spouse/Family Member	0	0
Other	0	0
<u>Do you believe there a glass ceiling that exists which prohibits you from advancing in your professional career?</u>		
Yes	13	26
No	37	74

Competencies of a Leader

Table 11 illustrates the top three factors women leaders of this study indicated were competency areas that constitute a leader. Respondents were asked to rank their top three responses using a number 1 as the most important, number 2 as the second most important, and number 3 as the third most important factor. The results of the study indicated that the most important quality was integrity, followed closely by people skills. The second most important quality was credibility, again followed closely by people skills. The third most important quality listed was people skills.

Table 11. Top Three Factors Constituting a Leader

Variable	Number
-----------------	---------------

Most Important Factor Constituting a Leader

Knowledge/Experience	12
Diversity	0
Credibility	4
People Skills	13
Flexibility	1
Risk Taker/Ability to Change	4
Integrity	16
Good Judgment	0
Other	0

Second Most Important Factor Constituting a Leader

Knowledge/Experience	8
Diversity	1
Credibility	14
People Skills	13
Flexibility	1
Risk Taker/Ability to Change	6
Integrity	6
Good Judgment	1
Other	0

Third Most Important Factor Constituting a Leader

Knowledge/Experience	8
Diversity	0
Credibility	6
People Skills	17
Flexibility	6
Risk Taker/Ability to Change	3
Integrity	3
Good Judgment	7
Other	0

Factors Contributing to Women's Effectiveness in Obtaining Leadership Positions

Table 12 illustrates the top three factors women leaders indicated would allow them to become more effective in obtaining higher leadership positions. Respondents were asked to rank

their top three responses using a number 1 as the most important, number 2 as the second most important, and number 3 as the third most important factor. The most important factor indicated by the respondents was the ability to have a higher level of business skills and training which they could apply to their daily work. The second most important factor indicated by the respondents was to have credibility and the ability to inspire confidence with peers and subordinates. The third most important factor listed was the ability to turn around difficult or volatile leadership situations.

Respondents indicated areas not listed as priorities were the ability to deal with difficult people, which was indicated at the second most important factor level, the ability to move to corporate headquarters, indicated as the most important factor, knowing the right people within the organization, listed as most important, and the willingness of management to provide professional development opportunities to female leaders to grow and develop into better leaders, indicated as the second most important factor.

Table 12. Top Three Factors Contributing to Women's Effectiveness in Obtaining Leadership Positions

Variable	Number
<u>Most Important Factor for Effectiveness</u>	
Greater commitment to organizational goals	4
Greater communication/consultation skills	6
Higher level of business skills/training	12
Higher capacity for effective thinking	4
Insight into how to use organizational resources	2
Sensitivity to other people's feelings	0
Willingness to listen	2
Ability to work with diverse people	1
Team building capacity to contribute to performance	3
Effectiveness as an advocate for his/her people	0
Capacity to get people enthusiastic and involved	5
Credibility and ability to inspire confidence with peers and subordinates	1

(table continues)

Table 12 (*continued*)

Higher level of credibility with management	6
Ability to turn around difficult, perhaps even volatile leadership situations	1
Other	5

Second Most Important Factor for Effectiveness

Greater commitment to organizational goals	7
Greater communication/consultation skills	2
Higher level of business skills/training	3
Higher capacity for effective thinking	4
Insight into how to use organizational resources	6
Sensitivity to other people's feelings	0
Willingness to listen	3
Ability to work with diverse people	2
Team building capacity to contribute to performance	2
Effectiveness as an advocate for his/her people	0
Capacity to get people enthusiastic and involved	1
Credibility and ability to inspire confidence with peers and subordinates	10
Higher level of credibility with management	3
Ability to turn around difficult, perhaps even volatile leadership situations	3
Other	1

Third Most Important Factor for Effectiveness

Greater commitment to organizational goals	0
Greater communication/consultation skills	1
Higher level of business skills/training	2
Higher capacity for effective thinking	6
Insight into how to use organizational resources	3
Sensitivity to other people's feelings	4
Willingness to listen	1
Ability to work with diverse people	3
Team building capacity to contribute to performance	4
Effectiveness as an advocate for his/her people	0
Capacity to get people enthusiastic and involved	5
Credibility and ability to inspire confidence with peers and subordinates	2
Higher level of credibility with management	5

(table continues)

Table 12 (*continued*)

Ability to turn around difficult, perhaps even volatile leadership situations	12
Other	0

Open-Ended Responses Summary

Participants in the study were given three open-ended response questions which further identified factors which they feel assist in the aspiration of attaining higher positions of leadership, strategies to encourage more women in leadership, and an open additional comments section for any un-addressed concerns or observations. An itemized list of the data collected is located in Appendix B.

Factors assisting in the attainment of higher leadership positions included many of the factors accessed within the survey instrument, but did identify some new concepts, including the comment that the shift of middle management to upper management over the past few years has blocked the advancement of women and men into higher leadership positions. Three of the respondents listed that a need for more women within management was a major factor that would assist in the attainment of higher leadership positions, followed closely by more industry-specific training and the need for stronger teamwork skills.

Respondents indicated that strategies to encourage more women in leadership positions included the promotion and inclusion of more women in management and the overwhelming need to look at skills and assets of individuals, without regard to gender, which would reduce the perception that a female was hired based solely on her gender. Other strategies indicated also mirrored previous questions, but included more risk taking ability, the need for more education, and flexibility within the workplace.

Additional comments made by participants focused on the role that families play in the professional advancement of women, as well as the general culture that women live in which poses certain unintended restrictions on women. One respondent referred to the “good old boy network” which she felt still existed that prohibited women from advancing.

Discussion

The results of this study were mostly consistent with the results of previous studies examining the role of women in leadership. Results did not significantly vary due to the fact that women in this study were engaged in agriculture. Further comparisons and parallels between this study and previous studies are discussed below:

Personal Characteristics

This study was consistent with previous studies by Alston (1998) which indicated that the typical woman in this study is between the ages of 41 and 50, married, and has no children (Table 1). They spend ten to 14 days away from home per year (Table 3) and are primarily responsible for household tasks outside of their paid work responsibilities (Table 4). Previous studies indicated that women were the primary caretakers of children in the home, with a majority of respondents indicating that child care should be made available in the workplace, which was not supported in this study. Respondents to this survey indicated that the mother and father are equal partners in caretaking, which may be an indication of a shift in responsibility and the movement of more women into professional positions, forcing equal responsibilities (Table 2).

Table 3 indicates the main employment area was in agribusiness, that an equal number of respondents are currently in middle and upper management positions, and that the salary indicated was more consistent with middle management ranges.

Personal Support and Mentoring

In this study, 87 percent of the respondents indicated they felt their manager had assisted them in professional development. A previous study by Alston (1998) noted that women have fewer female mentors than male mentors and that there are fewer women in senior leadership positions, which was consistent with the results of this study (Table 6). Further parallels between previous studies and the results of this survey was that the top indicators identified that would assist them in their professional advancement would be support from others, skills and education, and strength and toughness (Table 8). Contrary to previous studies, respondents indicated that they have not been restricted in the pursuit of their professional careers (Table 5).

Perceptions in the Workplace

Respondents agreed that women have the same opportunities to advance in their careers as men and that it is up to women to put themselves forward into leadership positions. A majority of respondents agree that the male culture of agricultural organizations must change before women can advance, which is supported by previous results of studies (Table 7). Eagly and Karau (2002) observed that the lack of qualified women in leadership was due to the “pipeline problem” of a shortage of women due to responsibilities within the family, supporting the results of this study indicating the constraints that a family imposes on women.

Major Obstacles in Pursuit of Career

The main reasons perceived by women respondents were that they have not advanced further in their careers due to the presence of family commitments, the lack of time to pursue professional development and advanced degrees, and the lack of experience and education necessary. Each of these areas has been supported by previous studies by Asplund (1988) addressing this issue (Table 9). Although a high percentage of women list their family as their

major barrier, a majority of women respondents indicated they receive limited to total support of their careers from their family and that most have not been actively obstructed by other members within their professional organizations, as illustrated by previous studies (Table 10).

Factors Constituting a Leader and Contributing to Effectiveness

Integrity, people skills, and credibility were the top three factors constituting a leader in this study (Table 11). These factors are closely associated with those exhibited by women as defined by the androgyny theory proposed by Asplund (1988). Table 12 indicates the top three factors contributing to women's effectiveness in the workplace as the ability to have higher level training, the credibility and inspiration necessary to encourage others to follow, and the ability to turn around volatile situations. The ability to turn around volatile situations ties closely to Dubrin's (2001) Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership model indicating the delegating quadrant where females lack skills in the workplace to effectively turn over responsibility, make decisions, and implement decisions. Respondents also indicated there was a need for more support structure within the workplace, which was consistent with Griggs (1989) study listing this as one of the top areas lacking in management and also supports Dubrin's (2001) path-goal theory, stating that this type of leader displays concern for the group members' well-being and creates an emotionally supportive climate.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As the number of women entering the workforce continues to rise, there is an inherent need for a leader that has the necessary management and communication skills needed to effectively run an organization. Over the years, this role of a leadership position has been predominately male. As more women enter leadership positions, their ability to satisfactorily perform in a managerial role is brought into question and examined. The common perception that women get to a point in their professional careers and a barrier forms that prevents them from achieving their full leadership potential is an important component of the study on women in leadership.

An examination of the barriers and opportunities available to women in professional careers become more apparent as the question regarding the glass ceiling effect is continuously brought into question. The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of women within the workplace and to provide input regarding why women get to a point in their professional careers and a barrier forms which prevent them from achieving their full leadership potential. This study aimed to provide support to disprove the stereotype of women in management and provide equal analysis of gender differences.

Purpose and Objectives of Study

The purpose of the study was to examine women's interpretation of barriers, constraints, and motivators within their profession as it relates to the concept of the glass ceiling effect and women in leadership positions. By collecting data regarding the demographics of the respondents, level of leadership held within organizations, personal motivators and obstacles,

overall leadership characteristics, and opportunities and strategies that encourage females within leadership positions, the researcher was able to provide data which supports or refutes current theories regarding women in leadership positions.

The specific purposes of the study were the following:

1. To identify selected social background characteristics of women in leadership positions;
2. To describe factors that assist in the advancement of women in careers;
3. To determine if personal life choices and perceptions of women in the workplace affect a woman's ability to obtain executive-level management positions; and
4. To describe what barriers and constraints exist that prevent women from advancing in leadership and management positions within agriculture.

Summary of Methodology

A total population of 105 female members of the Georgia Agribusiness Council were asked to participate in this study. A total of 50 individuals, or 48 percent, returned the completed survey and comprised the sample for this study. A cross-sectional quantitative survey examined female respondents interpretation of barriers, constraints, and motivators within their profession as it relates to the concept of the glass ceiling effect and women in leadership positions. The survey was administered and responses were recorded over a 45 day period.

The cross-sectional quantitative survey examined female respondents interpretation of barriers, constraints, and motivators within their profession as it relates to the concept of the glass ceiling effect and women in leadership positions. Female members of the Georgia Agribusiness Council were asked to respond to 45 items relating to the demographics of the respondents, level of leadership held within organizations, personal motivators and obstacles,

overall leadership characteristics, and opportunities and strategies that encourage females within leadership positions.

The returned instruments were examined for completeness and stored. Responses were coded and analyzed to determine the percentages of responses to each question included in the survey. Percentages were assigned to each category and computed for reporting using the Statistical Analysis System computer program at the Office of Computer Services at the University of Georgia.

Descriptive statistics were computed that indicated the number and percentages of responses to each variable. Mean, Standard Deviations, and Chi Square analysis comparing early and late respondents were computed using data from women respondents.

Summary of Findings

The results of this study were consistent with studies done of women in leadership over the last fifteen years. Many of the same disparities exist between salaries, the number of women in high level management, and the overall perception of women in the workplace as existed twenty years ago. However, major changes have been made within the workplace which are allowing women to advance at a higher rate.

This study indicated that the typical woman is between the ages of 41 and 50, married, and has no children. They spend ten to 14 days away from home per year and are primarily responsible for household tasks outside of their paid work responsibilities. Previous studies indicated that women were the primary caretakers of children in the home, with a majority of respondents indicating that child care should be made available in the workplace, which was not supported in this study. Respondents to this survey indicated that the mother and father are equal

partners in caretaking, which may be an indication of a shift in responsibility and the movement of more women into professional positions, forcing equal responsibilities.

The study indicated that the main employment field in this study was agribusiness, and an equal number of respondents are currently in middle and upper management positions. The salary indicated for female leaders in this study was more consistent with middle management ranges.

In this study, 87 percent of the respondents indicated they felt their manager had assisted them in professional development and that women typically have more male mentors influencing their careers than females. Top indicators identified that would assist them in their professional advancement would be support from others, skills and education, and strength and toughness.

Respondents agreed that women have the same opportunities to advance in their careers as men and that it was up to women to put themselves forward into leadership positions, given the restrictions placed on them by family responsibilities indicated in this study. A majority of respondents agreed that the male culture of agricultural organizations must change before women can advance, which is supported by previous results of studies.

The main reasons perceived by women participating in this study were that women have not advanced further in their careers due to the presence of family commitments, the lack of time to pursue professional development and advanced degrees, and the lack of experience and education necessary. However, a majority of women respondents indicated they receive limited to total support of their careers from their family and that most have not been actively obstructed by other members within their professional organizations.

Integrity, people skills, and credibility were indicated in this study as the top three factors that constitute an effective leader. Factors contributing to women's effectiveness in the workplace

were the ability to have higher level training, the credibility and inspiration necessary to encourage others to follow, and the ability to turn around volatile situations. Further indications implied that there is a need for more support structure within the workplace, which would encourage more women in leadership roles.

Recommendations

Results of this study indicate that women within the workplace must continue to work toward a more equal division of time with their spouse relating to household work and child care. There is a need to continuously focus on proper utilization of time to pursue educational and professional development opportunities. The male culture of management must continuously work toward inclusion of women in the workplace, based on overall skill-set, not hiring based on gender alone. Pursuit of a more equal division of salaries to relieve the salary disparities between men and women must be evaluated to relieve the belief in the glass ceiling effect. With these changes, women can move to higher leadership positions within their organizations and still maintain a healthy home life raising children, with the assistance of their spouses and the development of a plan to address time constraints associated with the many barriers present.

Few studies have aimed at examining the competencies of women in agricultural leadership. This study has explored the competencies and barriers to the advancement of women in agricultural leadership within the state of Georgia, using the female members of the Georgia Agribusiness Council membership as the sample population. Studies in the future should focus on these niche areas of specialization when studying women which will provide industry-specific data which can be used to examine barriers and opportunities for women in leadership. Further research should include a qualitative component which will assist in providing further explanation of the data reflected in this study, rather than framed answers which may not capture

the full intent of the respondent. Future studies should attempt to include data from other states which may be compared to the results of the study in Georgia to provide a more comprehensive picture of women in agricultural leadership and may be more globally generalized.

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APPENDIX A

ORIGINAL SURVEY

February 6, 2006

Dear Georgia Agribusiness Council Member:

Working in agriculture many times is seen as a rewarding and challenging experience. However, current studies show that many women are not advancing in this profession at the same rate that their male counterparts are in the state of Georgia and in the nation, a concept known as the “glass ceiling”. To help shed more light onto this area, I am conducting a survey on women in agricultural leadership entitled “Women in Agricultural Leadership: An Analysis of Factors Determining the Professional Advancement of Women”. This information will be used as a requirement for the completion of my master’s degree and may be published through other avenues. I am completing my masters degree in Agricultural Leadership at the University of Georgia, working with Dr. Richard Rohs in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications.

The purpose of this study is to examine women in agricultural leadership and the factors that lead to success in their chosen careers. All women members of the Georgia Agribusiness Council in Georgia are being asked to participate in this study. The Georgia Agribusiness Council has assisted me by providing contact information for you as a member. Your participation is very important to me, as the accuracy of our findings depends on maximum responses.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You can refuse to participate and can withdraw my consent at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty. You can ask to have all of the information about you returned to you, removed from the research records, or destroyed. If you agree to participate in this study, you will need to complete the attached survey and return it via email to womenagsurvey@yahoo.com or by mailing to the address specified at the end of the survey. Please return the questionnaire by **March 20, 2006**. The questionnaire will take about 15 minutes to complete. Please complete the questionnaire privately so that you are able to answer the questions honestly and as accurately as possible. Please do not discuss your answers with your co-workers until you have returned your questionnaire. There are no right or wrong answers. Your responses will be pooled by a computer with the responses of other members analyzed. Please note that Internet communications are insecure and there is a limit to the confidentiality that can be guaranteed due to the technology itself. However, once I receive the completed surveys, I will store them in a locked cabinet in my office and will destroy them and any names and contact information that I have by June 2006 after the study is complete and results are tabulated. If you are not comfortable with the level of confidentiality provided by the Internet, please feel free to print out a copy of the survey, fill it out by hand, and mail it to me at the address given below, with no return address on the envelope.

Your participation in this study will provide you the ability to access the results and overall responses from your peers in a similar field. There are not any foreseen risks to you for participating in this study, nor should you expect any discomfort or stress. As previously stated, your responses to this study will be locked in my office cabinet and accessible only to the researcher. If data were improperly disclosed, all identifiers would have been removed from your responses. As the researcher, I will be the only person with access to this data. Your responses will not be shared with your employer.

Should you have questions or concerns at any time, please contact me at XXX-XXX-XXXX or email me at parsonsm@uga.edu. Thank you for your assistance. Your time and effort are essential to making this study possible. Remember, please return the questionnaire by **March 20, 2006**.

Sincerely,



Mary Ann Parsons
Masters Candidate, Agricultural Leadership

Directions: Please mark your answer to the following questions by placing an "X" next to your response.

Personal Data

- 1) Age
☐ Under 21 ☐ 41-50
☐ 21-30 ☐ 51-60
☐ 31-40 ☐ 61+
- 2) Ethnicity
☐ Caucasian ☐ Asian
☐ African America ☐ Latino
☐ Other *Please specify:* _____
- 3) Marital Status
☐ Married ☐ Divorced and Remarried
☐ Single ☐ Widowed
☐ Divorced
- 4) Number of Children
☐ 0 *If 0, skip to question 8.* ☐ 3
☐ 1 ☐ 4
☐ 2 ☐ More than 4

Child care

- 5) Who is the primary caretaker of your children in your home?
☐ Mother
☐ Father
☐ Mother and father are equal partners
☐ Other *Please specify:* _____
- 6) What is the primary source of child care for your children?
☐ Employ child care professional outside the home
☐ Employ child care professional inside the home
☐ I do not employ a child care professional
☐ Other *Please specify:* _____
- 7) If you answered no to question 6, why not?
☐ Professional child care is too expensive
☐ Skills of professional are not adequate child care for my children
☐ A relative cares for my children
☐ Other *Please specify:* _____

Directions: Please mark your answer to the following questions by placing an "X" next to your response.

8) Which of the following most accurately describes the location of your home?

☐ Urban ☐ Rural, Farm
☐ Rural, Non-Farm ☐ Suburban

9) Which of the following best describes your current employment field?

☐ Agribusiness
☐ Research
☐ Science
☐ Education/Extension
☐ Policy Development
☐ Farming
☐ Other If so, please list area: _____

10) What is your highest level of education attained to date?

☐ PHD ☐ EDD ☐ JD ☐ MD
☐ Specialist ☐ Masters ☐ Bachelors ☐ High School
Other _____

11) What is your current salary range?

☐ Below 25 K ☐ 26-35 K ☐ 36-45 K
☐ 46-55 K ☐ 56-65 K ☐ Over 65 K

Employment History

12) Number of years you have been in your current position:

☐ 10 or more years ☐ 1-3 years
☐ 7-9 years ☐ 1 year or less
☐ 4-6 years

13) This past year, I went on vacation or took annual/holiday leave:

☐ None ☐ 2-3 weeks
☐ Less than one week ☐ 3-4 weeks
☐ 1-2 weeks ☐ 4 or more weeks

14) Have you taken full-time leave at any point in your professional career?

☐ Yes ☐ No

14 b) *If yes, why did you take full-time leave?*

☐ Maternity Leave
☐ Attend professional school full-time
☐ Caretaker for family
☐ Other Please specify: _____

Directions: Please mark your answer to the following questions by placing an "X" next to your response.

15) Has your manager assisted you in your professional development by showing an interest and commenting on your job?
☐ Yes ☐ No

16) My current leadership position can best be classified as:
☐ Upper management
☐ Middle management
☐ Lower management
☐ I do not hold a management position

17) Please assign a percentage (%) of time that you spend on each of the following tasks each week:

Note: Total does not have to equal 100%.

☐ Household Work
☐ Child Care
☐ Farm Work
☐ Paid Work
☐ Voluntary Work
☐ Leisure

18) What do you feel has been the main factor that has restricted you from advancing further in your professional career? *Please mark only one answer.*

☐ Family responsibilities have restricted pursuit of my career
☐ Gendered expectations in the workplace
☐ Lack of encouragement from upper management
☐ Lack of education/training necessary for advancement
☐ Lack of finances
☐ Lack of encouragement from others
☐ I HAVE NOT been restricted in the pursuit of my professional career

Personal Support/Mentoring in the Workplace

19) Have you had a female mentor?
☐ Yes ☐ No

20) Have you had a male mentor?
☐ Yes ☐ No

21) Do you feel that you are a mentor to other women?
☐ Yes ☐ No

22) Do you feel that you are a mentor to other men?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Directions: The following statements relate to your views of women in the workplace. Please READ each statement carefully and DECIDE whether you agree or disagree with the statement. For each item, please mark an "X" next to the number that best describes your beliefs.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
23) Women have the same opportunities to advance in their careers as men	1	2	3	4	5
24) Child care should be made available in the workplace	1	2	3	4	5
25) Meetings should be held by videoconference	1	2	3	4	5
26) Finding time is a problem for me when contemplating a higher leadership position	1	2	3	4	5
27) It is up to women to put themselves forward to agricultural leadership	1	2	3	4	5
28) Given time, there will be an equal number of men and women in leadership positions	1	2	3	4	5
29) Family responsibilities restrict women's advancement in their careers	1	2	3	4	5
30) The selection criteria for leadership positions in agriculture are clear and transparent	1	2	3	4	5
31) In my bid for leadership, I received support from other men	1	2	3	4	5
32) In my bid for leadership, I received support from other women	1	2	3	4	5
33) There are few women qualified to take on leadership positions in agriculture	1	2	3	4	5
34) In order to increase the numbers of women in leadership, the male culture of agricultural organizations must change	1	2	3	4	5
35) I experience stress when I work beyond the normal work day	1	2	3	4	5

Directions: Please answer the following questions by ranking your top three responses to each question. (1=most important; 2=second most important; 3=least important).

36) Please rank the top three most important factors that have assisted you in your leadership/professional success:

(1=most important 2=second most important 3=least important):

- ☐ Strength/Toughness Characteristics
- ☐ Risk-taking ability
- ☐ Business Smarts
- ☐ Skills/Education
- ☐ Support from others
- ☐ People skills
- ☐ Team-building skills
- ☐ Agricultural background/upbringing at home
- ☐ Awards/Achievements through volunteerism
- ☐ Other Please specify: _____

37) Please rank the top three major obstacles you have had to overcome in your pursuit of a professional career:

(1=most important 2=second most important 3=least important):

- ☐ Family commitments
- ☐ Lack of time
- ☐ Lack of education/experience/skills/knowledge
- ☐ Lack of confidence
- ☐ Male culture
- ☐ Financial constraints
- ☐ Work commitments
- ☐ Lack of support from others
- ☐ Own lack of initiative/motivation to advance
- ☐ Other Please specify: _____

Directions: Please mark your answer to the following questions by placing an "X" next to your response.

38) What level of support do you receive from your family to assist you in your professional/career development?

☐ No support ☐ Limited Support ☐ Total Support

39) Do you believe anyone has actively obstructed you in achieving higher levels of success in your career?

☐ Yes ☐ No

39 b) If Yes, who has actively obstructed you?

- ☐ Member of the organization
- ☐ Spouse/Family Member
- ☐ Other Please specify: _____

Directions: Please mark your answer to the following questions by placing an "X" next to your response.

- 40) Do you believe there a glass ceiling that exists which prohibits you from advancing in your professional career?
_____ Yes _____ No

Directions: Please answer the following questions by ranking your top three responses to each question. (1=most important; 2=second most important; 3=least important).

- 41) Please mark the 3 most important factors that constitute a leader and rank in level of importance (1-most important; 2-second most important; 3-least important):

_____ Knowledge/Experience
_____ Diversity
_____ Credibility
_____ People Skills
_____ Flexibility
_____ Risk Taker/Ability to Change
_____ Integrity
_____ Good Judgment
_____ Other Please specify: _____

- 42) Please mark the 3 most important factors that you believe would make you more effective in obtaining a higher leadership position:

(1-most important; 2-second most important; 3-least important)

_____ Greater commitment to organizational goals
_____ Greater communication/consultation skills
_____ Higher level of business skills/training
_____ Higher capacity for effective thinking
_____ Insight into how to use organizational resources
_____ Sensitivity to other people's feelings
_____ Willingness to listen
_____ Ability to work with diverse people
_____ Team building capacity to contribute to performance
_____ Effectiveness as an advocate for his/her people
_____ Capacity to get people enthusiastic and involved
_____ Credibility and ability to inspire confidence with peers and subordinates
_____ Higher level of credibility with management
_____ Ability to turn around difficult, perhaps even volatile leadership situations
_____ Other Please specify: _____

Directions: The following questions are open response. Please read each question carefully and then write out your response.

43) What do you feel would assist you in your aspiration for attaining a higher leadership/professional position?

44) What strategies (if any) do you feel would need to be put in place within your workplace to encourage more women in leadership/higher management positions?

45) Additional comments:

[illegible]

Thank you for your time to complete this survey! Please email completed survey by March 20 to: womenagsurvey@yahoo.com or mail to:

Mary Ann Parsons

Address

City, State Zip

Please provide your email address below if you wish to receive a copy of the final report.

Yes, please provide a copy of the report!

My email address is: _____

APPENDIX B

OPEN ENDED RESPONSES

OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES

Factors that assist in aspiration of attaining higher leadership/professional position

More women in management-better networking opportunity-3
Learn more about how to get all employees to work as a team
Learn more about actual process of work-more industry specific-2
Learning to communicate better with peers-encourage teamwork-2
More time to pursue higher education-2
Male mentor to help manage career-2
Gender can make work more difficult-sexual discrimination
Ability to work from home
Create more networking opportunities
Support from spouse so that it opens up ability to travel and pursue other options
Professional development and training
Ability to work on high-profile projects important to upper management
Specific degree for position-2
For upper management to realize that as professional development increases, that there is opportunity to become more productive
Balancing time
Middle management shifted to upper management, blocking males and females from advancing
Self motivation
Opportunity to be in a position which will prepare females directly for higher management

Strategies to encourage more women in leadership positions

Promote more women in management-3
More women involved at entry level who work their ways up to advanced positions
Encouragement from other women-2
Mentoring program for women to spend day with other women leaders
Establish environment that allows women to balance home life and work life
Encourage risk taking
Encourage educational opportunities
Flexible work schedules for both genders-4 (two 20 hr. employees sharing position which would encourage more women to pursue careers with children)
Offer flexibility to take classes
Difficulty in being considered “professional” after taking years off to raise children even when skill set is the same
Both men and women have equal chance to advance based on skill level and dedication to job
Provide child care in workplace
Need to look at skills and assets of individuals, not gender, which requires long range planning
Shift in time for social business appointments-are not friendly to women with family responsibilities
Create more opportunities for flexibility for men as there are for women-makes difficult for both males and females to have demanding work schedules and family-one has to sacrifice
More emphasis on experience than education

Additional Comments

Problems we encounter are due to the culture we live in

Choice to manage the household responsibilities have not subsided, which creates constraints

Success should be measured by happiness and ability to be a good person

Non-traditional groups in the workplace (ie: women), will face resistance in beginning, but can be overcome with hard work

Need for companies to recognize value and “hold” positions for women while on leave time

Problem in 80s with corporate environment not being “mother friendly”

Company allows employees to bring children to work, however, child care facilities are too expensive to provide across all avenues

Family responsibilities are not an obstacle

Men and women should share in family responsibilities and be proud of accomplishments

Culture has changed where clients mostly feel comfortable working with either gender

Good old boy network still prevalent

APPENDIX C

CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS OF EARLY AND LATE RESPONDENTS

Table 13. Chi Square Analysis of Early and Late Respondents

Variable	Early		Late		Chi Square
	N	%	N	%	
<u>Age</u>					
< 21	0	0	0	0	X ² = 2.74*
21-30	3	6	5	10	
31-40	6	12	4	8	
41-50	14	28	7	14	
51-60	6	12	4	8	
>61	1	20	0	0	
<u>Ethnicity</u>					
Caucasian	28	56	20	40	X ² = 1.38*
African American	2	4	0	0	
Asian	0	0	0	0	
Latino	0	0	0	0	
Other	0	0	0	0	
<u>Marital Status</u>					
Married	23	46	12	24	X ² = 5.80*
Single	5	10	4	8	
Divorced	0	0	3	6	
Divorced and Remarried	1	2	1	2	
Widowed	1	2	0	0	
<u>Number of Children</u>					
0	0	0	0	0	X ² = 1.81*
1	15	30.6	7	14.3	
2	4	8.2	4	8.2	
3	6	12.2	6	12.2	
4	5	10.2	2	4.1	
> 4	0	0	0	0	
<u>Main Restrictive Factor</u>					
Family Responsibility	8	16	3	6	X ² = 4.51*
Gender Expectations	1	2	0	0	
Lack Encouragement/Mgmt	1	2	1	2	
Lack Education	0	0	1	2	
Lack Finances	0	0	1	2	
Lack Encouragement/Others	0	0	0	0	
No Restriction	20	40	14	28	

*P=Not Significant