

Title: Protégé and Mentor Experiences of Three Outstanding female Superintendents in Pennsylvania

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This study was designed to examine the mentoring experiences of three women superintendents, both as protégés and mentors. The dual focus was on the impact the experiences had on the women's successful attainment of the positions as CEOs of educational institutions and on their extension of mentoring to others.

The study was completed through the use of in depth interviews with the women. A series of questions was asked of each interviewee. This researcher traveled to the interviewees' offices and recorded their responses. The responses were then put into transcription form. The responses were compared with research based on men's experiences with receiving and imparting mentoring and examined for similarities and differences.

The results varied between the women's experiences and those of men. Women's career paths were different from men's, and the women found more value in early role model mentoring and situational mentoring. Only one woman was mentored in the manner of the model used as a comparative for men, and she is the woman who is doing the most mentoring of the three women studied. Most of the women's experiences with mentors were cross-gender, and while respectful and close, the relationships never transcended to deep friendship except in one case.

The conclusions of the study led to three distinct qualities that describe the importance of mentoring for women seeking the superintendency. Character and skill are more important than

formal mentoring in attaining success as a superintendent. Role model and situational mentoring are the types of mentoring that have the greatest impact on future success. It is important to pass on to others the collective wisdom of women's experiences.

The results obtained in this study can be used in a variety of situations in which people are seeking to improve their effectiveness and advance their positions. The study was a very rewarding experience for this researcher.