ABSTRACT
              Successful strategies and behaviors used by black
women administrators to acquire and maintain their leadership
positions in higher education were examined. A review was undertaken
of qualitative research on black women administrators from both two-
and four-year colleges that are non-church related. Three major
barriers to women seeking administrative positions were identified:
sex-role stereotypes, organizational barriers, and women
internalizing traditional female behaviors. In general, successful
administrators were typically defined as those who had obtained their
doctoral degree. They were described as committed, independent,
dominant, active, adventurous, sensitive, secure, and self-confident.
In addition to mastering the skills that are crucial to all leaders,
black women administrators may experience both sexism and racism. All
the literature concurred on the importance of self-confidence,
technical and interpersonal skills, awareness of organizational
attitudes, conforming to the culture, and having mentors both inside
and outside the university. It was recommended that black women who
aspire to administrative roles in higher education should seek the
doctorate. A five-page list of references concludes the document.
(SW)

Successful Behaviors Of Black Women Administrators

In Higher Education:

Implications For Leadership

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Abstract

This study will examine the successful strategies and behaviors used by Black women administrators to acquire and maintain their leadership positions in higher education.

The ultimate goal of this investigation, is to provide a better understanding of the issues which confront Black Women who aspire to or have already obtained administrative positions in higher education.

Little has been written about this topic and therefore not much is actually known. Of the studies reviewed none specfically addressed this subject, although a few related studies have been found to be helpful.

This study does not seek to verify any given theory or set of prior assumptions; rather it seeks to discover the reality of leadership among Black women administrators in higher education.

Qualitative research on Black women administrators from both four-year and two-year colleges which are non-church related are reviewed. Data on this subject was gathered and tentative conclusions were drawn about how these successful Black women put leadership to work in their administrative positions.

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Introduction

Women administrators is a subject that remains largely unexplored. Studies that do exist, for the most part, borrow heavily from management and complex organizational studies based on industry and government. Little is actually known about the successful behaviors of women in general, and Black women specifically, in positions of academic leadership and responsibility. Thus, the opportunity to study such women administrators in numbers and context similar to men is still not available. Equally constrained are the research concepts and questions being used. Much of the research today is focused upon traits and styles, while little has been done to analyze the structures which arise and operate for women leaders in higher education.

Success or the lack of success in attaining administrative positions must be examined in conjunction with the search for successful behaviors.

Researchers today frequently address three specific factors when attempting to provide a rationale for why women are

underrepresented or unsuccessful in administrative positions. They include the following:

1. Typical female characteristics make it impossible for women to be effective.

2. Sex-role stereotypical attitudes cause discriminatory behavior.

3. The organization's structure and norms form a barrier to securing entry and advancement of women (Donnell & Hall, 1980; Feldman & Poling, 1981; Hennig & Jardim, 1977; Kanter, 1985; Larwood, Wood & Inderlied, 1978; Miller, King & Pizzini, 1979; Petty & Lee, 1978; Rice, Bender & Vetters, 1980; Rosser, 1980).

A fourth factor faced by Black women in higher education includes the element of race. Racism very often teams with sexism to produce what is known as the "double-whammy," a term coined by Epstein (1973) when referring to the double ascribed minority status of Black professional women."

Even though Black professional women have been concentrated in the fields of education and social science, statistics from the 1978 Chronicle of Higher Education survey of university administrators documented their scarcity in management (Middleton). It noted that less than 1% of 7,000 positions at the level of dean and above were held by minority women. Black women not only share the problems experienced by women in general, but in addition, these administrators are frequently confronted with cultural barriers which include being "nigger expert", isolation, deprivation history, and lack of support from Black men (Ayer, 1984; Campbell, 1984; Carroll, 1982; Davis &

Watson, 1982; Fernandez, 1981; Henry, 1981; Mosley, 1980; Poussaint, 1974; Smythe, 1976).

In addition to the underrepresentation of Black women in management, there is also a scarcity of research on Black women in higher education administration (Shivers, 1985). Black women are statistically lumped under the broad headings of women, minority, or Black, and thus are frequently lost to the researcher.

Moore and Wallitzer (1979) stated that "research on women in academic administration is remarkably sparse, undoubtedly owing to both the relative scarcity of such women and the short time span since research awareness has turned to this sector of academia" (p. 65).

Moore and Wagstaff stated that Black women in academia continues to be an area of research "victimized by scholarly neglect" (1974, p. 161).

To help obscure matters even more, the term "Black" woman changes throughout the literature, depending upon the time period addressed. Prior to 1967, most literature utilized the heading "Negro." After 1967, the heading changes to "Afro-American" or "Black."

This scarcity of research alone perhaps validates the need for conducting both qualitative and quantitative studies related to Black women in higher education administration.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This review is organized to discuss the literature

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relevant to: the problems faced by women in general; the underrepresentation of Black women administrators; and, the successful behaviors of Black women administrators in higher education.

Women Administrators

Literature on the status of women over the past two decades has changed dramatically to reflect the increase in numbers of women employed in higher education. Although 51% of students enrolled in colleges and universities are women, the percentage of women in the higher levels of administration remains dismal. Less than 5% of all college and university presidents are women; only 16% of high level educational administrators are women; and, only 26% of university faculty are women (Fisher, Thompson & Hall, 1981, p. 2).

A more recent article in the Chronicle of Higher Education discussed the status of women in higher education. It was stated that despite the increase in numbers in administrative ranks, about 90% of the country's students attend institutions where the three top administrative posts,i.e., president, chief academic officer, and dean, are held by men (Sandler, 1984). Additionally, it was reported that the salaries of women remain lower than men. This exists at every age, at every degree level, in every field, and in every type of institution. Women academicians earn approximately 85% of the salary earned by their male counterparts.

In general, most studies on women conclude:

1. Most women in higher education occupy middle and low level posts, which rarely lead to top academic positions;

2. When women are found in postsecondary institutions, they tend to be concentrated in those fields traditionally occupied by women (i.e., social work, nursing, support services);

3. The more prestigious the institution, the fewer women are present;

4. The highest percentage of women in top level positions are found in private women's colleges;

5. Women in higher education earn less than men despite comparable levels of training and education.

Kanter contends that "groups with varying proportions of people of different social types differ qualitatively in dynamics and process" (p. 965). People who are numerically dominant control the group and its culture. The small number of other types are called "tokens" because "...they are often treated as representatives of their category, as symbols rather than individuals" (p. 966). Women often find themselves as tokens in administration. Tokens are more visible because of their difference and are frequently given loyalty tests. "For token women, the price of being one of the boys is a willingness to turn occasionally against the girls" (p. 979). Kanter concluded that relative numbers are important in shaping outcomes for disadvantaged individuals. Women need to be included in sufficient numbers in the organization to counteract the effects of tokenism.

The "old boys" network is prevalent in educational institutions. According to Rosser (1980), "women miss out on superintendencies because they are not part of the national

network which recommends most of the people for the top jobs, especially in the larger school districts" (p. 32). However, her suggestion to become more visible in order to gain more information does not solve the problem, in light of what Kanter has said about the visibility of tokens. High visibility places much pressure on the token to perform.

In general, Black women are faced with the same three major factors used to explain the underrepresentation of all women in higher education administration. Organizational barriers to women`s entry and promotion within the organization are formed by sex-role stereotypes. Sex-typed characteristics of men and women are a result of years of socialization based upon attitudes and beliefs. Women, in turn, internalize these beliefs, which directly affects their behavior. "Discrimination does exist, and it exists because of the belief that men and women have different sex-role characteristics and that the characteristics of women render them incapable of holding leadership positions" (Dohrmann, 1982, p. 43).

Thus, there appears to be three major barriers to women seeking administrative positions: sex-role stereotypical attitudes; organizational barriers; and women internalizing traditional female behaviors.

Black Women Administrators

Recently, scholars and researchers have acknowledged the need to explore the lives of Black women. Smith (1982) noted that "the lack of data on professional Black women in higher education is symptomatic also of their status in the nation . . .

considered too f w in number to warrant a separate cell in
statistical tables" (p. 318). However, Black women continue to
make contributions to education, even though as Smith noted, they
are concentrated in the lower policy making positions, where they
carry out policy as distinguished from making it.

The underrepresentation of Black women in higher education
can best be summarized by Mosley (1980), who stated that Black
female administrators are, for the most part, "invisible beings"
(p. 306).

This statement is also supported by a minimally fruitful
computerized search of the literature. Prior to 1985, there were
no dissertations related to Black women administrators in higher
education. As of this date, there are only three dissertations
known to this researcher. All three were published in 1985.

One dissertation focused upon the roles and perceptions of
Black administrators in predominantly white institutions of
higher education in the New England area (Norvell, 1985).
Another focused on four aspects of perceived influences of sex
and race discrimination and affirmative action on Black women
administrators in California community colleges (Shivers, 1985).
The final dissertation addressed an in-depth analytical
description of the career development of ten Black women
administrators in academia, and the degree to which a mentor had
an impact upon their careers (Lewis, 1985). None specifically
addressed the issue of successful behaviors of Black women
administrators in higher education; although both Lewis and

Shivers provided some background that will be useful to this study.

A book of thirty readings entitled Women in Educational Administration (Berry, 1979) does not once address the concerns of Black women, nor even the broader issue of minority women. A Contemporary Bibliography of Women in Higher Education (Hull, Scott, & Smith, 1982), compiled by researchers at Pennsylvania State University, listed a total of six studies under the heading of minority women, and only one study (Alperson, 1975) dealt with the issue of minorities in academia.

Chapter Ten of the book entitled Women and Educational Leadership is devoted to the "Black Female Administrator: Women in a Double Bind." The chapter appropriately begins with the famous poem from Langston Hughes titled **Life for [her] Ain't Been No Crystal Stair** (Doughty, 1980, p. 165). Doughty acknowledged that Black women embody two negative statuses at the same time. Being Black and female presents a certain texture of life for the Black woman administrator. Doughty found that Black women administrators are: rarely found to be high school principals or superintendents; are usually older when assuming their first administrative position; have substantial experience and education; tend to be non-mobile or placebound; and, have healthy, positive self perceptions in spite of the system and the pathological literature (pp. 167-169).

It is popular to believe that because Black women satisfy two criteria, race and sex, they have a corner on the employment market. If that were the case, then why are there so few visible Black women? Some of the problems noted by Doughty include:

role isolation; divide and conquer tactics; daily challenges of self perception; and, the need for a significant other. A supportive outlet was found to be essential for survival (p. 173).

The theme of isolation is repeatedly acknowledged in the literature on Black women (Campbell, 1984; Carוll, 1982; Lerner, 1972; Mosley, 1980). Perhaps the most apparent cause of this isolation is due primarily to a lack of numbers.

Tobin (1981) noted that estimates of the number of Blacks in decision making positions vary between 1% and 2% of the total 12% employed in the labor force. He agreed that Black women administrators in higher education, indeed, appear to be an endangered species, since less than 10% hold doctorates.

Tobin also noted that "the majority of highly educated Black women are employed in Black colleges and universities, with education being the leading field of concentration" (p. 31). In his study of Black female Ph.D.'s, Tobin stated that "there are few models to help establish the doctorate as a visible goal to be sought after by young Black women as they plan and live their lives" (p. 1). Even the academic community, "without even a rationale or intellectual defense, has permitted the educational involvement and contribution of Black females in higher education to go almost wholly unexplored" (p. 4). Both contribute to the scarcity of Black women in higher administration. Conquering the double discrimination of sexism and racism is seen as paramount to the successful career development of Black women administrators.

Touchton (1984), in a report from the Office of Women in
Higher Education of the American Council on Education, stated
that in 1983 there were only 22 minority women who held a chief
executive officer position in higher education - the college or
university president. The breakdown included: 10 Black, 10
Hispanic, 1 Asian Pacific, and 1 Native American woman. Touchton
noted that minority women comprise 9% of all women presidents,
head smaller institutions that do women in general, and are more
frequently appointed to two-year, rather than four-year,
institutions.

Statistics from the 1980-81 Accredited Institutions of
Postsecondary Education were used to report the increase in women
chief executive officers in colleges and universities from 148 to
219, an increase of 71 officers or 33% over a five year period.
Reference to the ethnic breakdown of the officers was not
addressed. As Hoskins (1978) reaffirmed, "the task of finding
and identifying Black female administrators at white colleges and
universities is difficult at best" (p. 1). However, a timely
article in the Febuary 1986 edition of Ebony identified 14
Black women college presidents as follows: Jewell Plummer Cobb,
California State University at Fullerton; Yvonne Walker Taylor,
WilberForce University; Vera Farris, Stockton State College;
Reatha Clark King, Metropolitan State University; Mable Parker
Mclean, Barbara-Scotia College; Queen F. Randall, American
River College; Norma Jean Tucker, Merritt College; Arnette S.
Ward, Mesa Community College Extension; Mattie Cook, Malcolm-
King: Harlem College Extension; Zelma Harris, Pioneer Community

College; Burnetta Reed Wolfman, Roxbury Community College; Constance Carroll, SaddleBack College; Yvonne Kennedy, S.D. Bishop State Junior College; and Jerry Owens, Lakewood Community College. Four of the 14 presidents are located within california. By far, the majority exist along the east coast.

DeJoie (1977) also wrote about the alienation of Black women in white acrdemia. She noted that Black women are "saddled with the additional distinction of being a member of a traditionally perceived inferior race . . . she is placed in double jeopardy" (p. 4). "Black women cannot separate their femaleness from their blackness" (p. 12). Hoskin (1978) found that "the future of Black women administrators at land grant institutions looks even poorer when one considers that they are less than 3% at these institutions" (p. 97).

The literatv e on Black women administrators in higher education, indeed, has been limited. Consequently, little is known about their career development, successful leadership strategies, and locations within white academic colleges and universities. A few studies, however, have been done, and a review of those research efforts follows.

Alexander and Scott (1983) conducted in-depth interviews with 39 Black women administrators in predominantly white institutions of higher education. Their goal was to i˙ ..ify strategies for personal positional power. They agreed that Black women administrators must:

1. Learn and understand the organizational culture (acceptable and nonacceptable behavior and practice);

2. Develop impeccable interpersonal and technical skills;

3. Learn what standard of performance is expected by their boss and meet those expectations;

4. Develop and mature their own self-confidence, cited as key to personal and ca. .er success;

5. Develop a cadre of supporters both inside and outside their departments and the university.

Of the 39 women administrators studied, all reported varying experiences in which racism, as well as sexism, posed threats to their career progression. Once again, the ability to deal successfully with the double whammy was crucial to the Black woman's career. They noted that resolution of conflicts, whether they were internal or external, hinged upon developing a positive attitude about themselves and the situation. Many stated that they learned and studied the politics of the power structure and became adept at identifying politically motivated behaviors and those based solely on race or sex. In addition, the following characteristics were most frequently cited:

1. Flexibility and consistency of behavior;

2. Attention to non-verbal messages conveyed by body language;

3. Learning to emulate positive behaviors in people who wielded power and influence;

4. Develop a style of dress appropriate to status.

All 39 women consistently reported some significant other person as contributing to their personal or career development. The significant other was typically either their minister, mother, or another Black professional woman, or man, or someone they identified with through the media or some other indirect

association.   Mentor relationships were critical in their career development.   However, to the extent that they had mentors, they have not been the traditional ones such as colleagues.

Alexander and Scott (1983) noted that "women who make it to the top of the professional hierarchy of management are unique and can contribute much to the professions they represent, because they are a valuable untapped resource" (p. 20).   Based upon their findings, these researchers have developed a career management model for Black women which focuses on five major factors:

1. Attitude: conforming to the organizational culture;

2. Image: circumspect demeanor and dress;

3. Competence: technical and interpersonal;

4. Career mapping: clearly outlined career path;

5. Contacts: utilizing people within and outside the institution. (p. 21).

Contacts are most important for Black women in that the "informed networks which are important to career advancement are most crippling to Black women" (p. 4).   They, therefore, cannot rely on the old boys network to provide them assistance.

Shivers (1985) utilized 79 Black women administrators in the 106 community colleges in the state of California during the 1984-85 academic year.   Once again, all of the women surveyed experienced discrimination based upon both racism and sexism. These administrators also felt that overcoming the burden of the double whammy was paramount to a successful career.   Based upon her research, Shivers believed that successful Black administrators must have the following: communication skills;

self-confidence;   decision-making skills; organizational ability;
flexibility; intelligence; and interpersonal skills. She also
noted that fiscal management, skills in institutional planning,
personal management, group dynamics, and knowledge of educational
issues all contribute to and enhance the leadership skills of
these administrators.

Lewis (1985), in her qualitative study, interviewed ten
subjects who supported the following generic propositions:

1. Black females need to become more informed about the
career development process and the choice and control they have
over the direction and focus it can take.

2. Black females need to understand themselves more fully
through an awareness of life stages and developmental tasks.
Understanding how these life stage issues intersect with, and
often impinge on career issues, will assist the administrator to
make better career choices.

3. Black females need to cultivate multiple support
relationships from which they can receive mentoring functions
rather than seek or expect an all-purpose mentor.

4. Networking with other women, specifically Black women,
can provide Black females with the understanding, coping
strategies and vitality needed to function effectively.
(p. 147).

Similar themes also appear here. These administrators agreed
that success in higher education leadership roles is enhanced by
multiple support relationships - better known as mentors - and
that developing networks is important to career advancement.

Discussion

Both studies reviewed here, agree that the major behavior mastered by successful Black women administrators encompasses the issues of the double whammy, racism, and sexism. All of the reseachers agreed that: (a) self-confidence is a crucial ingredient; (b) technical and interpersonal skills are essential; (c) awareness of the organizational attitudes are necessary; (d) conforming to the culture is of paramount importance; and finally, (e) mentors both inside and outside the university provide a wide base of support.

Implications For Future Research

Black women over the past decade have begun to blossom in a variety of leadership roles. However, they have yet to taste all the fruits of their cultivated efforts in large enough numbers. This, perhaps, is related to a lack of a grounded theory, in addition to racism and sexism.

Rost (1984) has requested a new definition of leadership based on performance, practice, and grounded theory. Black women leaders in higher education must be willing to share their successful performance and practice in order that other aspiring minorities and Black women learn to emulate and applaud their successes while avoiding their failures and pitfalls.

All women, no matter what their ethnic background, should be aware that, as a group, they occupy a very small percentage of all administrative positions in higher education. It is conceivable that at some point women in general, and Black women in particular, will be in enough decision-making positions in

academic communities to change the hiring and promotion patterns. Until then, Black women administrators must continue to network in order to prevent isolation, seek advanced degrees, develop mentor relationships, and learn the organizational culture and how to deal effectively with racism and sexism. In addition, providing input for a national data base of successful behaviors for Black women who aspire to leadership roles would be very helpful.

The characteristics expressed by the researchers reviewed here include basic skills required by all leaders: Black and white males and females. All leaders, no matter what their color or gender, need to possess technical and communication skills, self-confidence, cultural awareness, organizational and interpersonal skills, and mentors. Black women who aspire to high level administrative positions must acquire these and other skills, before they can be considered as viable candidates.

Black women, as well as women in general, have tremendous potential for success in management. Yet, only a few are able to succeed in this arena. It would be helpful to look at the factors which have influenced or had a direct impact upon the successful acquisition of administrative roles by Black women in higher education. Dumas (1980) suggested that "even the most succesful Black woman executive finds her life hectic at best, and pays a high price for competent performance" (p. 215).

Obviously, for some Black women, the price is not too high. They continue to insist on a better quality of life for society at large, as well as for the Black community.

Future investigations should provide a better understanding of the issues which confront Black women who aspire to or have already obtained administrative positions in higher education. It may, perhaps, provide a better insight for other minority women who seek high level administrative roles.

Conclusion

The literature on Black women in higher education leadership reflects a curious incongruity. Although women represent 40 % of the labor force, they occupy approximately only 4% of the high level administrative positions in modern organizations. Black women can account for only 1% or less of that total.

In general, successful administrators are typically defined as those who have obtained their doctoral degree. They are described as committed, independent, dominant, active, adventurous, sensitive, secure, and self-confident.

The need to master the common skills which are crucial to all leaders is indeed necessary for Black women, however, in addition to those skills, this researcher would submit that Black women have an additional texture to their lives,(racism) which in turn exerts impact upon their potential for leadership.

Black women who aspire to administrative roles in higher education must see the doctorate as a visible and viable goal to work toward when planning and living their lives.

Future studies should address other specfic strategies for overcoming the double burden of racism and sexism. Understanding

this process is the key to successfully unlocking the leadership potential for a larger number of Black women in higher education.

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